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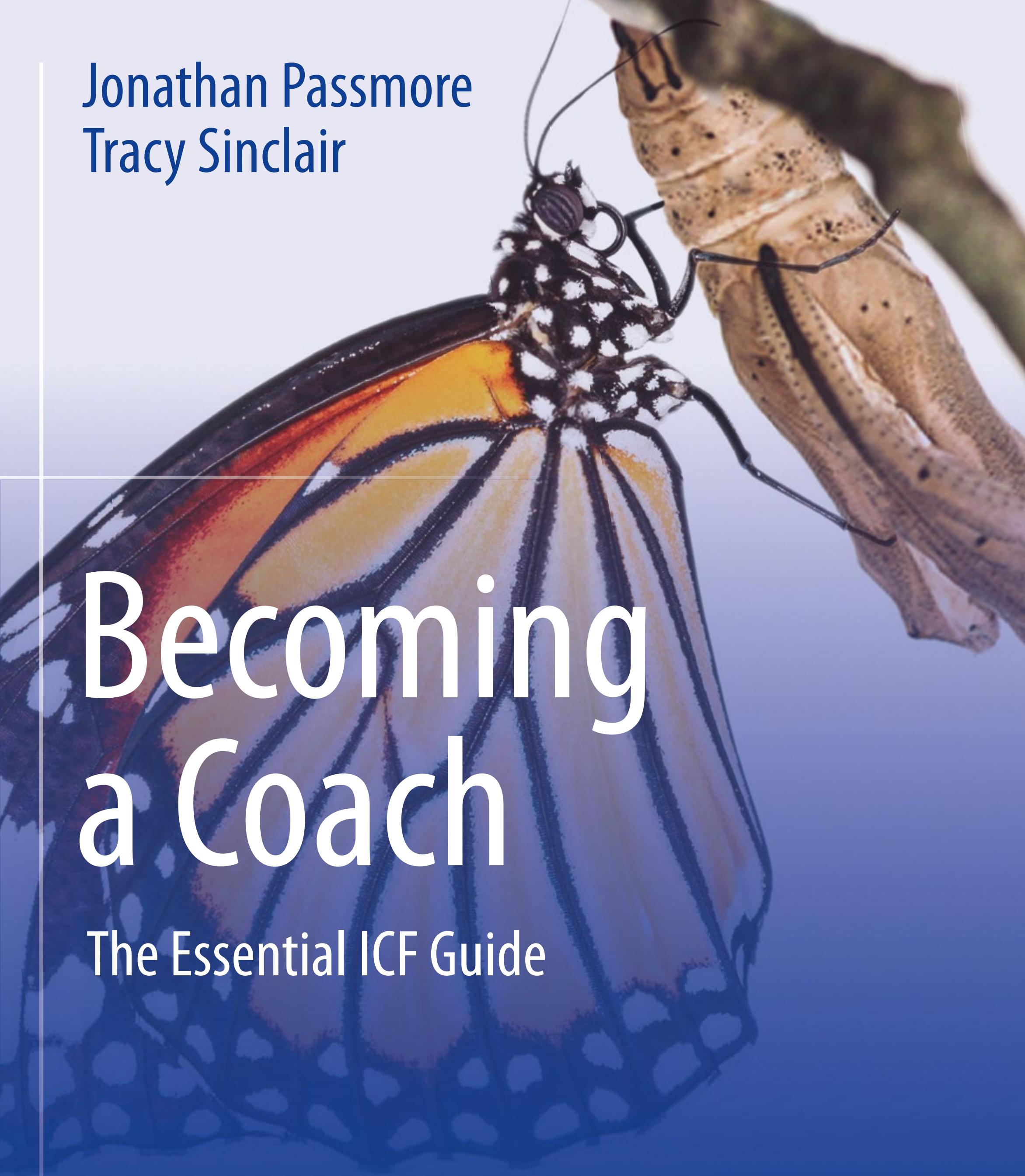

Becoming a Coach

The Essential ICF Guide

Springer

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Jonathan Passmore • Tracy Sinclair

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Book Endorsements

"*Becoming a Coach* is the perfect place to start your coach development journey. The book provides a comprehensive coverage of the issues in coaching and offers an essential guide to the new ICF coach competencies for new and developing coaches."

—**Marshall Goldsmith**—*Thinkers 50* #1 Executive Coach for 10 years.

"In this crowded confusing profession called coaching, Sinclair and Passmore have written the guidebook that clears the fog for coaches on their path to coaching excellence. *Becoming a Coach* clarifies the distinction of coaching and why it is so effective, provides specific practices for embodying a coaching mindset and is full of tools that will elevate your coaching impact. No matter where you are on your journey, this book will give you a bright light to follow."

—**Dr. Marcia Reynolds**, MCC | ICF Global Board Past Chair | Author of *Coach the Person, Not the Problem: A Guide to Using Reflective Inquiry*

"This is a very comprehensive textbook to understand professional coaching from internationally recognized specialists. It includes a wealth of information and tools a coach requires at every stage of development and practice."

—**Osama Al-Mosa**, MCC | Leadership Development Specialist, CCL | Founding President, ICF Jordan Chapter

"I believe that this is the most up-to-date and practical guide for any coach (ICF or otherwise). It provides real, practical examples and offers in-depth understanding of the What, the Who, the How and the Why of coaching backed up with academic rigour. This is an outstanding resource for any coach no matter how skilled. The clarity and life Sinclair and Passmore bring to the competencies and approaches to coaching really demystify the science and the art of great coaching practice."

—**Hilary Oliver**, PCC | ICF Global Board Chair 2017 | Coach, Coach Supervisor, Mentor Coach and Coach Trainer

"Whether you are becoming a coach, or are a seasoned coach supervisor, mentor, trainer or educator, this book is your vital companion. The authors bring decades of experience and research into one powerful resource. Grounded in evidence-based models, plus tools, activities, reflective exercises and more, this book is a must-read!"

—**Dr. Laura L. Hauser**, MCC, MCEC | Training Director, Team Coaching Operating System® | Faculty, Fielding Graduate University coaching program | Executive Officer, GSAEC.org

"This is one of those rare books which has something for everyone. One of the most comprehensive guides to becoming a powerful coach which starts from the basics and takes us to the essentials of mastery.

This book has embraced the complexity of coaching literature, approaches and tools. It has then structured and presented them in a fashion that brings together the chaos to a usable format. I can safely say that this book would offer a new idea, approach or perspective even to the most experienced of coaches."

—**Shweta HandaGupta**, MCC, Change Leadership Coach, QuadraBrain® Transformation Solutions, Global ICF Young Leader Award Recipient, 2018

"An impressively grounded, accessible, comprehensive resource for coaches at all levels of experience. The depth of understanding offered provokes insight, shares knowledge and yet leaves the space to be yourself as a coach."

—**Karen Dean** Master Certified Coach; Co-author *Coaching Stories: Flowing and Falling of Being a Coach,* Originator of me:my™coach online framework for coaches to self-monitor and Coaching Supervisor.

"Discover both inspiration and pragmatic guidance for being fit and sustaining authentic presence as a coach. Explore ways to claim your transcendence from models towards your unique coach expression."

—**Janet M. Harvey**, CEO inviteCHANGE, ICF Master Certified Coach and Accredited Coaching Supervisor.

Acknowledgements

First, we would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to some of our colleagues from the International Coaching Federation (ICF) who have very kindly helped us to ensure that this book is in alignment with the intention and integrity of the ICF Core Competencies. We would especially like to thank Carrie Abner, Vice President, ICF Credentials and Standards; George Rogers, Director of Quality Assurance, Credentialing and Accreditation; and Joel DiGirolamo, Director of Coaching Science, for reviewing various drafts and ensuring the guide is as closely aligned as possible to the ICF competencies.

However, in producing a book of this type errors do occur. While we have tried to ensure the book faithfully captures the ideas and research, these are ours alone.

We would also like to thank everyone who took the time to review this book and share their endorsements. We are delighted and humbled to have received such positive comments and encouragement.

Finally, we would like to thank our family and friends for their support, encouragement and their understanding as we spent many hours immersed in creating this material.

We do hope that you enjoy reading *Becoming A Coach: The Essential ICF Guide* and that it becomes a useful resource and source of reference over time at whatever stage you are in your development as a coach.

Contents

About the Authors

Jonathan Passmore Jonathan is a licensed psychologist, Fellow of the British Psychological Society, an ICF credentialed coach and a trained supervisor and holds five degrees in business and psychology. He has worked in coaching and personal development for over 20 years, with global firms including IBM Business Consulting and PWC and with psychological consulting firms like OPM and Embrion, and most recently as director of Henley Centre for Coaching, Henley Business School, where he is professor of coaching. Over time, his clients have included board directors, celebrities, government ministers, public sector managers and start-up entrepreneurs. Prior to this he has held a number of executive roles, and continues to serve as a non-executive director on a number of boards.

Jonathan has published widely with 30 books, including *The Coaches Handbook*, *Top Business Psychology Models* and *Mindfulness at Work*, and over 100 scientific articles and book chapters.

He has been recognised for his coaching practice and research, winning multiple awards from professional coaching bodies and the academic community. He is listed in the Top 30 Global Gurus and Marshall Goldsmith-Thinkers50 – Top 8 coaches.

Tracy Sinclair Tracy Sinclair is an executive coach and consultant who works internationally with organisations across all industry sectors. She is an ICF credentialed coach who runs her own coaching business offering professional coaching services and coaching culture consultancy to organisations, as well as providing ICF accredited coach-specific training, mentoring and supervision services to professional coaches. Tracy is also a Lecturer in Coaching at the Henley Centre for Coaching, Henley Business School. Alongside her corporate work Tracy founded and leads an initiative called Coaching with Conscience, which exists to have a positive impact on society and our environment through coaching.

Tracy is dedicated to the development of the coaching profession and the coaching community and has volunteered her services to the International Coaching

Federation (ICF) for over 10 years. Tracy was the President of the UK ICF from 2013–2014 and has been an ICF Global Board Director since 2016, serving as Treasurer in 2017, Global Chair in 2018 and Immediate Past Global Chair in 2019. During 2020–2021, she serves as a Director at Large on the International Coaching Federation Global Enterprise Board.

In recognition of her efforts, she was named as one of the Leading Global Coaches winners of the Thinkers50 Marshall Goldsmith Coaching Awards of 2019.

Part I
Setting the Scene

Introduction

This initial part comprises four chapters which are intended to set the scene and provide an introduction and context for the rest of this book.

Chapter 1 addresses the topic of coaching maturity and begins by describing some of the steps a coach can take toward becoming a qualified coach by engaging in accredited training and progressing toward a credential from the International Coaching Federation (ICF). We also position that these steps are not just a means to an end and that in fact there is no end to the level of experience and maturity a person can seek and gain over time. In this way, we propose that maturity is an ongoing and lifelong journey of development and growth.

In Chap. 2 we look at the definition of coaching. Firstly, we describe the reasons why having clarity of the definition of this way of working and communicating is important. We also note that several definitions exist and share with you some examples which highlight foundational themes and similarities, alongside slight nuances and distinctions in each case. This chapter also looks at some of the differences between coaching and other ways of working and other professional services available to clients. We start with the coaching and mentoring continuum as these two modalities are often confused and intertwined. We explore the differences between these ways of working further in Chap. 31. The coaching-therapy and coaching-consultancy relationships are also outlined.

In Chaps. 3 and 4 we look respectively at who we are and who are our clients. The inquiry into who we are looks at the concept and benefits of self-awareness and self-reflection (an area that is also explored in Chap. 30). We position the MBTI model as one of the many lenses we can use to gain insight into ourselves. Furthermore, we emphasize the importance of self-awareness and how it is highlighted within the ICF Core Competency Model. Finally, we offer some suggestions for tools and approaches that coaches can use as reflective practices to enhance their self-awareness as they develop on their own journey toward increased coaching maturity.

The final chapter of this part offers reflections on what is the coaching mindset we hold with regard to our clients. Once again, the idea of lenses is highlighted, and we share several examples of tools we can use to help shape and develop our coaching mindset so that we engage with our clients from a positive vs. deficit perspective. We note that such tools are not only useful for the coach; they may also provide powerful windows for our clients to "see" themselves, thus enhancing their own self-awareness as part of the coaching process.

Chapter 1
The Journey Toward Maturity

Introduction

There is much discussion in professional coaching circles about coach development. The ICF have their own terms for the journey a coach takes in their development from student to associate credentialed coach (ACC) to professional credentialed coach (PCC) and finally to master coach (MCC). In this book we have focused our thinking around the term 'maturity' as an alternative way of thinking about coach development, recognizing that many high performing coaches may not yet be a MCC. In this chapter we introduce the idea of maturity. We suggest that coach development is a continual process, not a destination, and that even for the MCC, development continues. We are all on a developmental journey.

Coaching Maturity

As with all professions there are levels of competence or skill. As a new ICF coach your journey may have started when you first received coaching from a colleague at work, or through a professional coach. This may have got you interested in the power of coaching, and its potential to help you discover for yourself the best options for you. Or you may have decided to attend a short coaching skills course. This engaged your curiosity. Whatever way it may be, you have decided to become a coach. You have formally started on your journey of development.

However, completing a formal training program, ASCTH (Approved Specific Coach Training Hours) or ACTP (Approved Coach Training Program), is only part of the journey. To become an ICF credentialed coach, there are other aspects to complete including:

1. Coaching hours log
2. Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA)

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3. Mentor Coaching log
4. Coaching assessment

You may currently be on that journey now, or you may already be an ICF ACC or a PCC. In fact, you may already be a Master Credential Coach (MCC) who is keen to continue to extend your learning. Or you may be someone who has practiced coaching for years but has never got a formal coaching qualification.

Whichever it is, the journey toward maturity does not stop at any of these points. We have used the phrase ‘maturity’, as opposed to ‘mastery’, as mastery can imply an ending: We become a ‘master’ as a result of years of training and practice. In contrast the phrase ‘maturity’ implies an infinite process, where development never stops. We can always become more mature, more reflective and more insightful about our practice.

In fact, we would suggest that the coach who stops learning, is the coach who is ready to stop coaching. Coaching requires us to remain curious about our clients and ourselves, to see our clients as having the capacity to learn and change and role-modelling this belief in our own behaviors, as a learner and someone open and ready to learn and adapt to clients and the dynamic world in which we work.

In this book we aim to offer multiple ways to continue to develop, from a focus on coaching competencies, coaching models, coaching practice and ultimately eclecticism and integration.

Box 1.1 The Journey to Coaching Maturity

Coaching focus	Approach	Commonly asked questions at this stage of maturity
Model focus	Controlling	How do I take the client where I think they need to go? How do I apply my model with this client?
Techniques and tools focus	Containing	How do I provide space for clients to think, but ensure they achieve their goal? How can I use these tools and techniques?
Philosophy focus	Facilitating	I believe X about the way the world works, given this, how can I best help my client? How does this client, and their issue, fit this world view?
Integrated and eclectic focus	Enabling	Are we both relaxed enough to allow the issue and the solution to emerge through a collaborative conversation, where neither of know the answer or the direction of travel before we start? What multiplicity of models, frameworks, perspectives will best serve this client and this conversation, recognizing the historical, national, cultural and personality differences of this unique person and this moment in time?

The framework, informed by the work of David Clutterbuck and David Megginson (Clutterbuck and Megginson, undated), shows several levels toward coach maturity, we feel there may even be a level beyond what is shown here, which could be the transcendence of the illusion of models.

Most coaches go through a series of common experiences as illustrated in Box 1.1, starting with a focus on Models: "*How do I apply my model with this client*?"

This is followed by a focus on tools "*How do I apply these tools with this client*?" and onwards through to a philosophical approach, where the coach assumes people are similar to them, and toward an integrated approach. In reaching the integrated position the coach aims to draw from a multicity of perspectives, employs a multiple frameworks, models and tools, without becoming obsessed with any of them, and take into account systemic factors, adapting, flexing and partnering with their client, without vested interest or ego to help the client move forward.

Here are some of the changes that you might experience on your journey of personal development

- From a narrow perspective that a single coaching models is best, often the one you were taught on the program, toward a broader perspective that different people may learn and change in different ways
- From a need for certainties, and a search for a perfect solution, to enjoying the journey of coaching, with its uncertainties and ambiguity, and allowing whatever emerges to emerge.
- From a focus on solving the client's current problem, toward a focus on helping the client develop greater self-awareness and personal responsibility
- From a performance orientation and a focus on doing, to a presence orientation with a focus on being
- From preoccupation with either the self or the client, to a focus on the relationships between yourself, the client and the client's systems
- From a focus on the conversation to a focus on the relationship

Where are you on your own journey? You may like to reflect on these questions.

Of course, a series of questions such as these in a book is only a rough guide. What is more important is to start thinking about these elements and explore what your next steps might be in your own developmental journey. We hope this book will offer a useful resource for you: understanding the ICF Competencies, how to apply them in your coaching practice, reflecting on your wider practice as a coach and recognizing your development is to a journey not a destination.

Conclusion

In this chapter we suggested all coaches, whether they are novices, professionals or masters, are on a personal journey of development. We have argued that instead of a focus on a specific stage—ACC, PCC or MCC, it may be more helpful for all coaches to see development as journey of continuous improvement and growth.

Chapter 2
What Is Coaching?

Coaching Defined

Since coaching started its development as a separate discipline in the early 1980s (Brock, 2012; Passmore & Theeboom, 2016) definitions of coaching have been part of the debate within coaching practice and research. Almost every book, article and blog has offered a viewpoint as to 'what is coaching?'

The search for a formal definition of coaching may be considered to be an academic pursuit by many practitioners. However, we believe there are at least three reasons why thinking about 'what is coaching' is important.

First, a clear definition is essential for coaching practice. A standardized definition makes it clear to clients what they can expect from a coach, and that we are all delivering the same service.

Second, a definition of coaching is vital for research. We need to clearly delineate the domain of coaching to understand the phenomena being studied. As coaching is still an emerging research domain, it is crucial to define the key components to differentiate coaching from other similar helping interventions (e.g. counseling or consulting) and provides a platform from which theoretical contributions can develop.

Third, a consistent definition is vital for coach education and qualifications. A shared understand of what we do, enables us to develop a shared body of knowledge and an agreed standard for training, with a scientific-based framework to support its pedagogy.

The ICF holds a similar view and has provided a clear definition of coaching:

> Coaching is partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.

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Alternative Definitions

The reality is there are host of definitions used by different writers, reflecting different nuances placed by the writers, researchers and practitioners on different aspects of their work. We have included in Box 2.1 ten different definitions to compare and contrast with the ICF definition. Only by thinking about how others define coaching can we fully understand the nature and boundaries of our practice.

John Whitmore, widely credited as one of the founding thinkers of coaching, placed a marker in the sand in his seminal book *Coaching for Performance*. For Whitmore, coaching was about "unlocking a person's potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them—a facilitation approach" (Whitmore, 1992, p. 8).

Whitmore drew heavily on Timothy Gallwey's book about the inner game. Gallwey (1986) had noted in sport performance that the internal state of a player was a significant factor. He went further to argue that it was more significant even than the opponent in individual sports like tennis and golf. If the individual could control their self-talk, sizable performance gains could be made. At the core of coaching for John Whitmore was a belief that the purpose of coaching was helping individuals develop greater self-awareness and personal responsibility and through this awareness and responsibility, performance could be improved: "Performance coaching is based on awareness and responsibility" (Whitmore, 1992, p. 173).

Other founding writers offered alternative definitions. Laura Whitworth was one of the pioneers in the US, along with Thomas Leonard (Brock, 2009). Whitworth developed co-active coaching which she defined as "a relationship of possibilities . . . based on trust, confidentiality." (Whitworth, Kinsey-House, & Sandahl, 1998)

These definitions highlight the nature of the coaching process and its dependency on people, interpersonal interactions and collaboration. This relational aspect distinguishes coaching from other training interventions, where arguably knowledge exchange is at the heart of the process.

Jonathan Passmore and Annette Fillery-Travis have adopted a process-based definition in an attempt to differentiate coaching from mentoring, counseling and other conversation-based approaches to change, while linking the concept to John Whitmore's fundamental purpose of coaching; self-awareness and personal responsibility. They define coaching as "a Socratic based dialogue between a facilitator (coach) and a participant (client) where the majority of interventions used by the facilitator are open questions which are aimed at stimulating the self-awareness and personal responsibility of the client" (Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011).

Tatiana Bachkirova, a leading UK coaching academic, suggests that coaching is "a human development process that involves structured, focused interaction and the use of appropriate strategies, tools and techniques to promote desirable and sustainable change for the benefit of the coachee. . ." (Bachkirova et al., 2010, p. 1). While Lai (2014) states that coaching is a "reflective process between coaches and coachees which helps or facilitates coachees to experience positive behavioral changes through continuous dialogue and negotiations with coaches to meet coachees' personal or work goals". Again, positive behavioral changes are highlighted as the main purpose of coaching, with the recognition that a structured process is involved. Moreover, "negotiation" is put forward in Lai's reinterpretation of coaching that reflects the previous definitions, coaching is a relationship-based learning and development process.

The definitions offer the reader a diversity of perspectives, while retaining the essence of the ICF definition of a collaborative, non-directive process between a coach and client.

Box 2.1 Definitions of Coaching

1. "Coaching is directly concerned with the immediate improvement of performance and development of skills by a form of tutoring or instruction." (Parsloe, 1992)
2. "Unlocking a person's potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them." (Whitmore, 1992)
3. "A collaborative, solution focused, result-orientated and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of work performance, life experience, self-directed learning and person growth of the coachee." (Grant, 2001)
4. "The art of facilitating the performance, learning and development of another." (Downey, 1993)
5. [Co-active] coaching is "a powerful alliance designed to forward and enhance a life-long process of human learning, effectiveness and fulfilment." (Whitworth et al., 1998)
6. "Psychological skills and methods are employed in a one-on-one relationship to help someone become a more effective manager or leader. These skills are typically applied to a specific present-moment work-related issues . . . in a way that enable this client to incorporate them into his or her permanent management or leadership repertoire." (Peltier, 2010)
7. "A Socratic based dialogue between a facilitator (coach) and a participant (client) where the majority of interventions used by the facilitator are open questions which are aimed at stimulating the self-awareness and personal responsibility of the participant" (Passmore and Fillery-Travis, 2011).
8. A "reflective process between coaches and coachees which helps or facilitates coachees to experience positive behavioural changes through continuous dialogue and negotiations with coaches to meet coachees' personal or work goals." (Lai, 2014)
9. "A helping relationship formed between a client who has managerial authority and responsibility in an organization and a consultant who uses a wide variety of behavioural techniques and methods to help the client achieve a mutually identified set of goals to improve his or her professional performance and personal satisfaction and, consequently, to

(continued)

Box 2.1 (continued)

improve the effectiveness of the client's organization within a formally defined coaching agreement." (Kilburg, 1996, p 142)

10. "A human development process that involves structured, focused interaction and the use of appropriate strategies, tools and techniques to promote desirable and sustainable change for the benefit of the coachee...." (Bachkirova et al., 2010, p. 1)

Coaching and Mentoring

Coaching and mentoring are often considered to sit on a continuum. Both coaching and mentoring are concerned with personal and professional development, but the amount of input by the coach-mentor increases as one moves along the continuum toward mentoring (Fig. 2.1).

In this sense, mentoring may be better regarded as a form of tutelage, where a more senior, or experienced, mentor shares their knowledge and insights with a more junior or less experienced mentee about how to improve in a specific job, role, vocation or organization.

Some writers have suggested workplace mentoring involves a relationship between a less experienced individual (protégé) and a more experienced person (the mentor), where the purpose is the personal and professional growth of the protégé (Eby, Rhodes, & Allen, 2007, p. 16). The mentor may be a peer at work, a supervisor, someone else within the organization, but someone who is outside of the protégé's chain of command. Others have argued that coaching also differs from mentoring in its use of structured processes, such as the use of coaching models like GROW, and the use of specific tools and assessments, to provide awareness in the client (Joo, 2005).

A further difference is the length of the relationship. While coaching assignments are more frequently completed in several months, mentoring relationships often continue over several years (Passmore, 2016).

Finally, in terms of purpose, while the main purpose of workplace coaching is considered to be on improving performance or wellbeing through self-awareness and learning, the purpose of mentoring varies widely from socialization of newcomers to management development (Joo, 2005).

Coaches need to be cautious not to be drawn in to mentoring relationships when they have contracted to deliver coaching. Specifically, coaches should be wary of

Fig. 2.1 Coaching-mentoring continuum

being drawn into a long-term relationship, where the coach creates a dependency in the client, leading to a coaching relationship than continues for years not months. There is nothing wrong with such a relationship, but in our view, this is more likely to be mentoring rather than coaching.

A second danger for coaches is being drawn into providing advice. Less experienced managers may request this from their coach and less experienced coaches may fall back on past behaviors, sharing their experience or knowledge, as ‘this is what you should do. . .’ advice to their clients. Again, we would see this as mentoring, not coaching.

These styles of engagement can be immensely useful for senior executives, who value having a trusted advisor available to them, talking through regularly their issues and problems, gathering their views and using them as a guide.

Coaching and Therapy

Understanding the difference between therapy or counseling and coaching is important for both coaches and for clients. Clients can sometimes end up in coaching when they really need help from a trained therapist for a clinical condition. At the same time coaches can be drawn into talking about issues outside of their area of knowledge and training.

The need for a clearer differentiation between counseling/therapy and coaching is emerging as the use of psychological models and tools in coaching interventions has increased (Bachkirova, 2008). Such a differentiation is essential to ensure the coach remains within their area of competence and within the terms of their contract.

The similarities between the counseling/therapy and coaching domains are numerous. Both are concerned with the ‘relationship’. They both recognize the need for engagement or ‘client’s commitment’ to the process, both rely on the ‘practitioner’s (coach’s) self-awareness’ to facilitate change, both recognize the need to keep the conversation moving forward. In addition, both counseling/therapy and coaching share a number of basic required professional skills such as listening, presence, trust and evoking awareness.

However, we suggest that there are at least three differentiating aspects. First, the initial motivation of clients to undertake counseling/therapy is different from coaching. For example, the individual usually expects to eliminate psychological problems and dysfunctions through counseling/therapy sessions. In this sense it may be considered to be primarily problem focused. In contrast coaching clients are seeking something different. The coaching client arrives in anticipation of an improvement in personal and professional development. In this sense it may be considered to be solution focused.

Second, the focus of counseling/therapy may involve any matters relevant to the client’s mental wellbeing, while the coaching process is usually restricted to the agreed and contracted goals. The expected outcomes and evaluation methods are usually defined prior to the first session with the involved parties (e.g. clients, supervisors and other stakeholders).

Third, the time horizon for the work is longer. While the coach may contract for 4, 6 or possibly 12 sessions, the therapists, contracts week by week, with a view that the relationship takes as long as it takes. In many cases a counseling relationship will continue for a year, and sometimes for many years.

Coaches need to be wary when working with clients who may be presenting with clinical conditions. Such clients should be referred to their medical doctor or a therapist before starting a relationship. Coaches also need to be careful not to be drawn into extending their work into these areas, for example a workload priority discussion extending into workplace stress, which extends into feelings of distress, anxiety or depression, and a revelation that the client is taking medication as a result of clinical condition. Once again coaches need to be clear during the contracting phases what coaching includes, and where non-coaching themes emerge for these discussions to be signposted to the appropriate trained professionals. Additional guidance and resource references on this can be found in Chap. 6.

Coaching and Consulting

The final area of confusion can be with consulting. Like mentoring, consulting has an advice or input element. Coaches while engaged by the organization may be part of a wider organizational change agenda, but their focus is on individual change, using a facilitative style. Consulting in contrast is more likely to be about providing expert advice to individuals, teams or the board.

One boundary area is team coaching. In our view team coaching is a different intervention to individual coaching. Working with a team as a group, even with a facilitative style, is different from working individually with members of the team. We suggest there is more in common between Team Coaching and Action Learning Sets, than there is in one-on-one coaching, with an intimate, personal and intense relationship is created and where the coach is wholly present with the client moment to moment during the coaching session. Such intensity of connection cannot be created within a group. Team and group coaching can be hugely beneficial, but its successful delivery requires an additional skill set beyond the core competences of a personal coach.

Conclusion

In summary coaching is a distinctive approach. It is different from mentoring counseling, and consulting through its focus on a one-on-one, facilitated relationship, which is short term and generally focused on helping clients identify and work toward a goal or new insight.

In working with clients, coaches need to ensure clients understand during the contracting process what coaching is and how it can help them. This helps to create a shared understanding of how the coach and client will work together and secondly helps to manage the client's expectations as to what the coach will and won't do during the coaching assignment.

Chapter 3
Who Am I?

Introduction

In coaching, understanding who we are, is as important as understanding what is coaching. The coach plays a central role in the work with the client. We might even say the coach is the tool in the coaching relationship. By understanding themselves the coach can help get out of the way of the work the client needs to do, as well as using themselves through self-disclosure and stories to help clients on their journeys of self-discovery.

In this chapter we will think about ourselves as a central tool in the coaching process and consider ways the coach can develop a deeper understanding of themselves by becoming more self-aware. One way for doing this is through self-reflection using personality questionnaires, another is through using a personal journal and the third is by consciously seeing their coaching practice as a continual learning journey of self-discovery. We will look at these different approaches.

Who Am I?

Coaching is a highly personal process. It requires the coach to be authentic. Through this, a relationship of trust can develop, allowing clients to become more open and intimate in their coaching work. At the same time the coach needs to keep out of the way. The coach's task is to manage the process, without significantly shaping, directing or influencing the content.

In our view the coach is a tool that can help their client to achieve their agreed goal. This goal may be a new insight about themselves or a situation, or a plan of action. To achieve this, the coach needs to have a high degree of self-awareness: To know when to intervene and when to step back: Intervening to provide a reflection, reframing, offering a metaphor or insight. Stepping back by using silence, to allow

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the client to reflect and process the conversation, allowing them time for personal insights to emerge.

Self-Awareness and Self-Reflection

The terms self-awareness and self-reflection are often used interchangeably, as if they mean the same thing. We however see a difference between them. For us Self-reflection is a process that the coach can engage in, which will help them develop a greater capacity to be more self-aware. In contrast self-awareness is the outcome of this process. It enables the coach to become more sensitive to and aware of their feelings, behaviors and thoughts, and to place these within the context of their personal history and personality and in response to their environment and their client.

Individuals with a high capacity for self-awareness are more likely to:

- Be willing to take a candid look at them self.
- Identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Be able to experience a full range of emotions.
- Identify and heal their deepest emotions.
- Stop doing things that don't work.
- Think, feel and behave consciously.
- Act more proactive.
- Be willing to learn, grow and change.
- Be open to new experiences.
- Be more comfortable with their own vulnerabilities

Lens

There are wide number of ways we can become more self-aware and understand ourselves better. Coaching is one of these ways, as is gathering feedback from others and observing our own behaviors, thoughts and emotions. However, simply observing, getting feedback and having coaching does not generate the self-awareness. We need to think about the data we are gathering and make sense of it for ourselves. In other words, we need to reflect on this feedback.

The Personality Type Lens

Psychometric questionnaires can be a very useful tool to help us look at ourselves. There are scores of different personality questions that we can use (see for a discussion of a wide range of psychological tools for coaching Passmore, 2012). Some of these questionnaires are Type based models of personality. These draw on the ideas of Carl Jung (Jung, 1923). The most popular examples are MBTI, TDI, Insights, DISC and 16 Personalities. These questionnaires help us think about our behavioral preferences.

Jung proposes that each person has behavioral preferences and by understanding these preferences we can better understand ourselves and also adjust our behavior toward others, reducing conflict or improving our relationships with others (Jung, 1923).

As a coach, we can use the questionnaires with our clients (given appropriate training) and also with ourselves, to deepen our understanding of our own preferences and how these might affect our approach to coaching.

In Table 3.1 we have summarized the four orientations, based on the four key questions that the model asks us to consider. This is followed by a Table 3.2 which explores the preferences in relation to coach behavior.

The theory behind the 16 Personalities, MBTI and the other Jungian questionnaires states that we all have preferred ways of relating to the world. For example, we may have a preference for using either our right hand or our left hand when we write which feel easier or more comfortable. What it does not assess is how capable we are in writing. In doing so, we tend to ignore the possibility of using the left hand. If we do try to use the left-hand we may describe the experience as ‘awkward’ or ‘unnatural’.

Like the left hand/right hand dichotomy, 16 Personalities shows us how we have two choices in relating to the world around us and we tend to choose one at the expense of the other. There are four areas where we are confronted by this choice.

The first area is represented by the choice between Introversion (I) and Extraversion (E). The second area is represented by the choice between Sensing (S) and Intuition (N). The third area is represented by the choice between Thinking (T) and Feeling (F). The fourth area is represented by the choice between Judging (J) and Perceiving (P).

The Personality Trait Lens

A different way of thinking about personality is to look at personality traits. The most common model is the Big Five, which is sometimes called the OCEAN Model. The model is based on five factors: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism (Table 3.3).

Table 3.1 Four questions

Question 1: Where do people gain their energy?	
Extraversion People who prefer extraversion gain energy from the external world of people and events. They focus their attention on things in the external world. They are invigorated by interacting with people and events. • Sociable • Seeks excitement in external world • Gregarious, with a wide circle of friends • Speak first, think later • Breadth of interests • Find out what they think by talking • Expressive • After a hard day's work, extraverts might typically recover their energies by going out with a group of friends.	**Introversion** People who prefer introversion gain energy from the inner world of thoughts and feelings. They prefer to focus attention on their internal world, often because there is so much happening there. They are invigorated by spending time alone with their thoughts and feelings. • Quiet • Deep • Think first, speak later • Private and contained • Prefer one or two close friendships • Depth of interests • Prefer to express ideas through writing • After a hard day's work, introverts might typically recover their energies by having a quiet evening in with a close friend.
Question 2: What type of data do people pay attention to?	
Sensing People who prefer sensing take in information through their five senses, trusting what they can see, hear and touch. They prefer information that is tangible, concrete and present focused. They are observant of the real world around them and are prefer detail and practical problem solving. • Practical • Present focused • Detail conscious • Focused on what is real and tangible • Trust experience • Like facts • Need to have the facts presented one by one	**Intuition** People who prefer intuition take in information by seeing the big picture, focusing on the relationships and the wider, strategic implications of facts. They are attuned to the meanings of facts—the trends, the implications, the patterns behind the facts. They are prefer new possibilities and different ways of doing things. • Abstract and theoretical • Imaginative • Future oriented • Trust intuitive insights • Strategic • Like ideas • Need to have the big picture in order to see the relevance of facts
Question 3: How do people make decisions?	
Thinking People who prefer to use thinking in decision making tend to look at logic, facts and objective analysis. They want to find out the objective truth of a situation. Alternatively, they will look for the best possible outcome according to the ideals of fairness and justice. • Analytical • Objective • Logical problem solvers • Impersonal • Fair • Principled • Task centered	**Feeling** People who prefer to use feeling when making decisions will use their subjective feelings to guide their judgment. They are attuned to the needs of others, are empathic and weigh the feelings of others in their decision making. They value compassion, appreciation of others and interpersonal harmony. • Sympathetic • Compassionate • Attuned to the needs of others • Responsive to others' feelings • Guided by personal values • Subjective • People centered

(continued)

Table 3.1 (continued)

Question 4: How do people orient their lives?	
Judging People who prefer to use their judging process in the external world like to live in a planned, orderly way. They like to make decisions, reach closure and then put a structured plan into place in order to implement them. Plans, schedules and getting things done are important to them. • Scheduled • Organized • Methodical • Decisive • Good at implementing decisions • Get things done • Plan in advance • Dislike last minute changes	Perception People who prefer to use their perceptive process in the external world like to live in a spontaneous, flexible way. They prefer to understand and experience life rather than control it. They prefer to delay decisions until the last minute, staying open to possibilities and options. • Spontaneous • Flexible • Leave things to the last minute • Respond to change • Casual • Prefer to delay decision making • Respond to the moment • Avoid rigid plans

Adapted from Rogers (2017)

While little research has explored personality preferences and coaching styles (see Jones et al., 2014), we might conclude from other areas of research that Conscientiousness will help in learning and application. High Conscientiousness scores are associated with work success. Maybe this is not surprising. As Jack Nickolas the famous golf player is once reputed to have said “the harder I practice, the luckier I get”.

A second factor which may influence coaching outcomes is agreeableness. Individuals more able to build trusting relationships who are empathetic and selfless are likely to be better able to build relationships with clients, and we might suggest this may make them better coaches than those who are selfish or self-serving.

Finally, we might assume that coaches with high neuroticism scores may be less effective coaches. Being highly emotional, insecure and vulnerable, are likely to be negatively correlated with successful coaching outcomes. However, from training hundreds and hundreds of coaches over the years, I know a good many coaches who are Neurotic, and have developed skills to manage their Neuroticism when they are with clients.

The Third Lens

A third personality lens to look at ourselves through is specialist questionnaires. These might include emotional intelligence questionnaires like EQI and MSCEIT, resilience questionnaires like MTQ48, leadership questionnaires like TLQ and ILM72 and strengths questionnaires like VIA. (We will explore VIA in Chap. 4: Who are my clients?)

Table 3.2 Coaching preferences

	Likely strengths	Likely areas for development
Extraversion (E)	• Helping clients explore a wide range of issues. • Establishing the coaching partnership. • Thinking on feet.	• Using silence. • Helping clients explore issues in depth. • Reaching the 'Way Forward' stage.
Introversion (I)	• Helping clients explore issues in depth. • Reflecting on strategies. • Using silence.	• Helping clients move to action. • Helping clients explore all relevant issues. • Establishing the coaching partnership.
Sensing (S)	• Observing details. • Using the 'Reality' stage. • Helping clients decide on practical steps in 'Way Forward	• Taking the big picture into account. • Generating ideas at Options stage. • Using intuition.
Intuition (N)	• Seeing the big picture. • Using intuition. • Generating ideas at Options stage.	• Being specific. • Testing out intuition. • Helping clients decide on practical steps in 'Way Forward'.
Thinking (T)	• Being objective. • Challenging.	• Picking up clients' feelings. • Being empathetic. • Challenging in a supportive way at the right time.
Feeling (F)	• Being warm. • Being empathic.	• Taking thoughts into account as well as feelings. • Challenging the clients. • Being more objective.
Judging (J)	• Being organized. • Being decisive.	• Helping clients make decisions in a timely way. • Being flexible.
Perceiving (P)	• Being spontaneous. • Being flexible.	Being organized. Helping clients make decisions.

Adapted from Passmore, Rawle-Cope, Gibbes, and Holloway (2006)

Table 3.3 The five-factor model of personality

Big five factor	Description
Conscientiousness	Careful, reliable, hardworking, well organized, punctual, disciplined, ambitious.
Extroversion	Sociable, fun loving, affectionate, friendly, talkative, warm.
Agreeableness	Courteous, selfless, sympathetic, trusting, generous, acquiescent, lenient, forgiving, flexible.
Openness to experience	Original, imaginative, creative, broad interests, curious, daring, liberal, independent, prefer variety.
Neuroticism (emotional stability)	Worrying, emotional, high-strung, temperamental, insecure, self-pitying, vulnerable. (Emotional stability: Calm, at ease, relaxed, even-tempered, secure, hardy)

Adapted from McCrae and Costa (1987)

Each of these questionnaires provides a different perspective on who we are, offering us the opportunity to think about ourselves, and how our preferences or style of engaging can help or hinder our approach as a leader or as a coach.

As part of your development we would encourage you to complete 2 or 3 different questionnaires and spend some time journaling and reflecting on how these may impact on you, your approach to coaching, and how you build and maintain relationships with your clients.

Journaling

Having explored a variety of different lens, it is important to reflect on this feedback and to develop a coaching mindset (we will discuss this mindset in more depth in Chap. 7). The coaching mindset aims to encourage us to be open, curious, flexible and client centered.

Box 3.1 Coaching Mindset

1. Acknowledges that clients are responsible for their own choices
2. Engages in ongoing learning and development as a coach
3. Develops an ongoing reflective practice to enhance one's coaching
4. Remains aware of and open to the influence of context and culture on self and others
5. Uses awareness of self and one's intuition to benefit clients
6. Develops and maintains the ability to regulate one's emotions
7. Mentally and emotionally prepares for sessions
8. Seeks help from outside sources when necessary

One way of exploring and noting our development is a personal journal. As part of your daily or weekly practice as a new (or as an experienced coach) is to start writing a journal. The purpose is to provide a record of your developmental journey.

You might start by writing about the start of your journey. We have suggested some useful questions to consider as your start this journey in Box 3.2. These are not an exhaustive list, but may provide a platform to start your exploration.

Some people like to use a long hand style, writing whole sentences about their experiences in a highly structured and considered way. Others prefer to write using a stream of consciousness—dictation software is often great for this style of writing. Finally, others prefer a more fluid approach, using a mind map, drawings, and a less structured style. The style is less important, what is important is that this provides a mechanism for you to capture your thinking and a record to reflect back on each month or each year, that highlights your journey and what you considered to be important at that time.

We appreciate that some people find this process hard. We would urge you to keep in mind this is your ‘secret’ journal. It’s not for anyone else to read, review or assess. There are no right or wrong answers, and no right or wrong way to write the journal. It’s your choice.

Box 3.2 Starting Your Learning Journey
A few questions to consider as your start your learning journey

- What have you done before in your career?
- What do you know about coaching?
- What experience have you had of coaching, what happened?
- What attracted you to coaching?
- What do you want to get from learning more about coaching?
- What gifts are you bringing to the journey?
- What areas of learning do you think you will need to really focus on?

Reflective Practice

The purpose of writing is not only to create a record of where we have come from, but more importantly to provide an opportunity for reflection. In the past there has been a focus in coaching on practice. The more hours the better the coach:

$$\text{More coaching hours} = \text{Better coach}$$

But we know this is not as simple as this. Our experience of driving a car reminds us that simply spending more hours driving a car does not always equate to continuous improvement. What matters just as much in this equation is a growth mindset (i.e. being open to and having a desire for improvement) and reflecting back on each driving experience with a question, what can I learn from that experience to become a better driver. The journal is a tool which we can use to encourage the reflective process. It helps us to make the time to stop and consider what has been going on, and to capture these thoughts. Later in this book (in Chap. 30) we will offer you a structured process for reflection, using eight questions to guide your way.

Understanding Ourselves

Whether you complete 2 or 22 questionnaires, each is only a black and white pen sketch of who you are. The reality is we are infinitely more complex, multi layers and variable than any single questionnaire can explain. Phillip Larkin, a 1960s British poet, noted this complexity of what it is to be human in his phrase "the million petalled flower" of human existence (Larkin, 1974).

While questionnaires are useful, and we would encourage you to use them as one way of exploring more about who you are, we also issue a caution: Don't let the questionnaire define or limit you. The questionnaire only produces a report based on what you put in. The evidence is we all change over time as a result of different learning and life experiences. Thus if you complete the same form after 12 months on a coaching course, your results are likely to show some differences to the report you received on day one of the course. Further, how you see yourself while at home or how you perceive yourself on a course may well be different to how colleagues perceive you at work or how your friends see you at a social event.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have argued that self-awareness is an important part of coach development. Self-awareness can be developed through active self-reflection, based on insights and evidenced gathered from feedback and also tools like psychometric questionnaires. We looked at three different lens; type, trait and what we called the "third lens." By using 2 or 3 questionnaires coaches can help gain new insights when we reflect on this data, as well as reflecting more generally on our coaching practice. We suggest one way of doing this is through a personal journal. We also urged caution. The results from any one questionnaire are not the full picture of who we are, as humans we are multifaceted, complex, and amazing.

Chapter 4
Who Are My Clients?

Introduction

In Chap. 3 we argued that self-awareness was an important aspect for the coach, and we offered some ideas for becoming more self-aware through using different lens to consider who we are. These included psychometrics as well as self-reflection and journaling. We believe the same principles apply to thinking about our clients. We believe each is a unique person, with their own personal strengths, as well as their own biases, prejudices and 'messed-up-ness' of what it is to be human, but in spite or maybe because of these, they are wonderful.

In this chapter we draw again on the concept of the coaching mindset, applying the idea to how we think about and see our clients. Should we see them as people to be 'fixed' or as wonders to behold?

Deficit Psychology Model v Positive Psychology Model

For the first 100 years or so years psychology's primary focus was toward explaining dysfunction. This deficit, or disease model, as it has become known, meant that psychologists were highly active in thinking about, researching and writing about human mental illness and dysfunction. This led to classifications such as DSM, a manual which describes hundreds of mental conditions, how to diagnose them and how to 'fix' them.

What got neglected was the more positive side of human functioning. What do humans do when they are at their best? Of course, there were many examples of individual psychologists like Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, and movements like the Human Potential Movement, who were concerned with these aspects over this period, but this was far outweighed by a focus on negative behaviors and functioning.

J. Passmore, T. Sinclair, *Becoming a Coach*,
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In the last few decades greater focus has been placed on these more positive aspects of human behavior. Out of the Human Potential Movement, also known as humanistic psychology, has come positive psychology. This new approach argues that we need to consider equally positive aspects of human functioning, as opposed to solely focusing on the negative, and to study this with similar methods, specifically quantitative methods, as dysfunction.

Lens

As we suggested at the start of the chapter a useful starting point for this approach is to consider our mindset. As a coach, are we looking for what's wrong in our clients, or are we helping them to look for what's right? The ICF competency of the Coaching Mindset, while sometimes difficult to observe, encourages us to work with a positive mindset toward our clients, being open, curious, flexible and client centered.

While we are not suggesting we need to be naïve and ignore unhelpful behaviors or clinical issues, we start with a focus on the positive and the potential which rests in each and every client. One way of exploring or thinking about this is in terms of strengths.

There are a wide range of strengths tools which have been published (see Box 4.1 for examples).

Box 4.1 Examples of Strength Questionnaires

- The Values in Action (VIA) Inventory of Strengths
- Realize2 Strengths Assessment
- StrengthScope
- CliftonStrengths
- High5 Test

In this chapter we will focus on reviewing the most popular and widely used tool Values in Action (VIA) Inventory of Strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The tool was initially developed from a research project to identify and map human strengths and has now been completed by hundreds of thousands of participants interested in the concept of strengths.

The model identified 24 strengths from the research. These are clustered into five groups under the headings Wisdom and knowledge, Courage, Humanity, Temperance, Justice, and Transcendence (see Table 4.1).

The writers argued that an awareness of an individual's strengths can be helpful for individuals through a virtuous circle. The first step is developing awareness. This may be gained through the completion of a questionnaire such as VIA or from reflecting on personal experience. With awareness the individual can become more

Table 4.1 VIA Inventory of Strengths

Wisdom and knowledge	• Creativity
	• Curiosity
	• Judgment
	• Love of learning
	• Perspective
Courage	• Bravery
	• Perseverance
	• Honesty
	• Zest
Humanity	• Love
	• Kindness
	• Social intelligence
Temperance	• Forgiveness
	• Humility
	• Prudence
	• Self-regulation
Justice	• Teamwork
	• Fairness
	• Leadership
Transcendence	• Appreciation of beauty
	• Gratitude
	• Hope
	• Humor
	• Spirituality

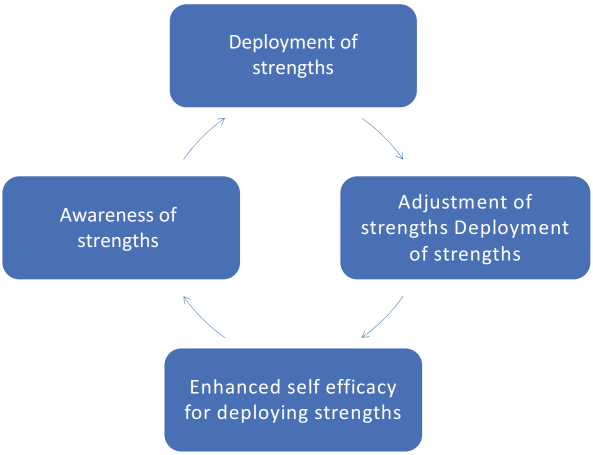

Fig. 4.1 The virtuous cycle

conscious of choices, selecting to draw on one or more of their perceived strengths. By using these strengths more frequently, the idea is that the individual feels more confident and thus is more likely to achieve a positive outcome, which in turn encourages greater use of the strength (see Fig. 4.1).

It's worth saying at this point that as in Chap. 3, we urge caution with all psychometrics. While psychometrics are helpful, we need to be careful they don't define or limit us or how we see our clients. Just because a client scores lower in one strength than another, for example, higher for Brave and Creative, but lower for Forgiveness and Love, this does not mean they are unable to forgive or to love others. Recognize that such tools are tin openers, not tape measures; but we would encourage you to be curious and explore with the client their perceptions about their scores.

A second element to consider is how race and gender may affect how people see themselves and report using the questionnaire. One study (Brdar et al., 2011) investigated gender differences in the relationship between character strengths and life satisfaction. Two questionnaires were administered to 818 students (488 females and 330 males)—the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths and the Satisfaction with Life Scale. The results revealed that zest, hope, and gratitude had the strongest link to life satisfaction. What was also interesting was the gender differences which emerged across 10 of the character strengths, while there was no difference in life satisfaction scores (Box 4.2).

Box 4.2 Strengths by Gender

The five highest weighted strengths for **women** were:

- integrity
- kindness
- love
- gratitude
- fairness

The five highest weighted strengths for **men** were:

- integrity
- hope
- humor
- gratitude
- curiosity

These results suggest that women and men (at least those in this study) see themselves differently in terms of the strengths they report, which could relate to cultural factors about the types of strengths different societies value in men and women in the twenty-first century. A second part of the study also looked at men and women views on predictors for life success, which echoed the main results with gender differences. These again may echo gender roles: women favoring love and beauty and men creativity and perspective (Box 4.3).

Box 4.3 Predictors of Life Satisfaction by Gender
Significant predictors of life satisfaction are also different.

For women, life satisfaction was predicted by:

- zest
- gratitude
- hope
- appreciation of beauty
- love

For men, life satisfaction was predicted by:

- creativity
- perspective
- fairness
- humor

In reviewing these results, the findings seem to be partly congruent with gender stereotypes of what we consider to be desirable in women or men, with women scoring higher on kindness and love and men scoring more highly on humor and curiosity.

Non-judgmental, Unconditional Positive Regard

We suggest the coach seeks to cultivate a mind where each client is held in unconditional positive regard: That we prize each client. This can be hard, as we often bring our own biases and prejudices into the work we do. So how can we do this?

Of course, each experienced coach has their own approach. One strategy that I have found works well for me is to look for “me toos.” What can I find in what the client says, or does that make me think or feel; “me too”? Maybe they like a certain type of music or sports team, wear a certain style of clothes, or have a certain type of accent. These can all be things that turn us off, but by searching for and finding one “me too” we can start to build a bridge for the coaching relationship.

The second aspect is working to be non-judgmental. This requires us as the coach to avoid judging our client as good or bad, and accept the client for who they are. Our role is to help the client to make sense of and to evaluate (evoking awareness) and if they wish to, to plan and implement change in their thinking, feelings or behavior (facilitating client growth). But how can we do this?

Like unconditional positive regard, each experienced coach will have their own approach, and, in some ways, you will need to find your own way, but here is one way that we have found useful. In listening we aim to stay in the present moment—

as when we start reflecting back during a session there is an increased danger of evaluation. By staying present we can be with the client, actively listening, engagement and encouraging the client to explore for themselves. In this way we can work with issues that in other situations might cause distress, anger, frustration or sadness. Our time for reflection is to note such feelings after the session in our journal and to take these emotional responses to supervision.

As you engage in your coaching training it is worth spending time with your supervisor, mentor coach, and your trainer to reflect on the question: What would be the "worst" thing a client could say to you? Here are some examples from our work as trainers (Box 4.4). Of course, someone else's "worst" might be your "best," or at least not cause you any anxiety or emotional response. We each have our own personal perspectives. Thinking through what yours are, will help you to better understand the diversity of the world, and how people may think, feel or behavior toward you.

You may like to give some thought to, and write down in your own personal learning journal your "worst" four or five examples might be.

Box 4.4 Examples of the "Worst" Things a Client Could Say

"I am having an affair with X (*insert the name of someone you respect or love here*)?"

"I think you are a terrible coach and I am going to report you to the ICF for.... (*insert what you feel is your weakest aspect of your coaching practice here*)?"

"I need to tell you I have just been released from prison as I have served a sentence for...(*insert the crime which creates the stronger disgust reaction in you here*)"

"I like to dress in women's clothes at weekends (*insert a behavior you find difficult here*), and am thinking about how I...

"I really hate Christians (*insert the faith, gender, ethnic group of your choice here*), they are completely deluded, and I do my best to avoid employing any in my company"

As we will see later, the ideas of non-judgmental, unconditional positive regard are drawn from the work of Carl Rogers and his "necessary and sufficient conditions" (Rogers, 1957). We will explore these conditions as part of the humanistic person-centered approach to coaching in Chap. 16.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have consider how the coach needs to develop and retain a focus toward their clients. This focus can be developed through the coaching mindset of positivity, non-judgmental, unconditional positive regard. By avoiding stereotypes, seeing each client as a prize to be held, the coach can start and manage the relationship in service of their client, avoiding the dangers of their own expertise and "it's another case of. . . ."

Part II
Developing Core Coaching Competencies

Introduction

This part looks at the International Coaching Federation's (ICF) approach to coaching and coaching competence. We begin in Chap. 5 with a brief history of the ICF and how the ICF core competency model came about along with an overview of the competency review process that gave rise to the most recent body of work being approved in September 2019. We also share a high-level overview of the model, along with an outline of how this model sits within the ICF requirements for a credential application at three distinct levels. The subsequent chapters in this part take each competency in turn and offer a more in-depth exploration of what is intended by each one and how they are demonstrated in coaching practice.

It is important to note that the competencies are not intended to be applied in any specific order. Whilst some aspects lend themselves to being demonstrated at the early part of a coaching conversation and others toward the end of the conversation, the reality is that the competencies are intended to be evidenced as a fluid, and intertwined flow in a natural conversational style. However, for the purposes of this book, each competency will be addressed in turn and in the order they are noted in the overall model.

The ICF Core Competency Model is described under four "domains" and we begin with the Foundation Domain looking at Competency (1) Demonstrates Ethical Practice in Chap. 6 and Competency (2) Embodies a Coaching Mindset in Chap. 7. Professional and ethical conduct along with a commitment to developing and embracing a particular coaching mindset are considered foundational to any good coaching practice and are therefore positioned as prerequisites upon which sit the competencies demonstrated and applied with each coaching conversation.

The second domain is called: Co-Creating the Relationship and covers the three competencies of Competency (3) Establishes and Maintains Agreements in Chap. 8 Competency (4) Cultivates Trust and Safety in Chap. 9 and Competency (5) Maintains Presence in Chap. 10. All three of these competencies focus on the importance of not just building an appropriate relationship with our client, also on creating the environment and the conditions for the client to work in a safe, trusting and supported way. The concept of relationships also extends beyond the immediate client to other parties involved in the ultimate success of the coaching engagement. Specific attention is paid to how those relationships and associated agreements around them are established and maintained. The final aspect of the co-created relationship is how the "being" of the coach influences and informs the relationship and how the coach fully maintains presence with their client in service of their learning and forward movement toward their stated goals and outcomes.

Communicating Effectively is the third domain and compromises the two competencies of Competency (6) Listens Actively in Chap. 11 and Competency (7) Evokes Awareness in Chap. 12. Effective communication as a coach is a sophisticated blend of many advanced communication skills. However, in their simplest form, these two competencies focus on the depth and breadth of how a coach truly and deeply listens to their client, on many levels. Based on such holistic listening, the coach is able to engage in the dialogue with their client in a way that evokes the client's awareness, inviting them to consider what they are learning and noticing about themselves and their situation in light of their coaching goals and how this awareness is useful for their progress toward those goals.

Finally, the domain of Cultivating Learning and Growth comprises Competency (8) Facilitates Client Growth in Chap. 13. In this chapter we explore how the coach invites the client to integrate their learning into forward movement beyond the coaching session or the overall coaching engagement.

Chapter 5
Introduction to the ICF Core Competency Model

Introduction

This chapter introduces the International Coaching Federation (ICF) Core Competency model. We begin with a brief history of how the core competency model came about along with an overview of the job analysis that gave rise to the most recent body of work being approved in September 2019. We also share a high-level overview of the model, along with an outline of how this model sits within the ICF requirements for a credential application at three distinct levels. Finally, we reference some supporting documentation, much of which is fully shared in ICF (2019).

Background

The International Coaching Federation (ICF) is the world's largest organization of professionally trained coaches, with members in more than 145 countries worldwide. The organization was first established in 1995 with the purpose of providing a space for all coaches to support each other's development and help grow the profession of coaching. The ICF has grown rapidly over the past three decades, reflecting the development of coaching and its professionalization. The ICF launched a single credential of Master Certified Coach (MCC), the first 34 of which were awarded in 1998. The following year, the Professional Certified Coach (PCC) credential was added and the Associate Certified Coach (ACC) credential was introduced in 2004.

As an evidenced led organization, the ICF has reviewed the competencies twice using a job analysis process, drawing on experience and research from practitioners and academics. The purpose on each occasion is to ensure the ICF competences reflect both developing practice and our growing understanding of the behavioral

J. Passmore, T. Sinclair, *Becoming a Coach*,
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and psychological processes involved within the coaching process. The insights from these reviews are part of a wider process of the continuous improvement of credentialing which includes the Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA), assessment methods, and the curriculum standards for ICF accredited training programs.

The job analysis in 2018–2019 was based upon a rigorous 2-year coaching practice analysis and was founded on research and evidence collected from more than 1300 coaches across the world who represented a diverse range of coaching disciplines, training, backgrounds and coaching styles. The process is summarized below.

Box 5.1 ICF Job Analysis
ICF Updated Competency Model Phases

The study used a mixed-methods approach that is often used in job analysis and competency modelling. The ICF-HumRRO (Human Resources Research Organization) research team completed the following phases of research:

- Semi-structured interviews with six experienced coaches
- Workshop to gather written critical incidents in coaching
- Workshop to determine tasks, knowledge, abilities and other (coach-specific) characteristics (KAOs)
- Survey to validate the tasks and KAOs
- Workshop to gather feedback on possible competency model updated
- Updated competency model development and validation

A group of subject matter expert (SME) coaches were also asked to link coaching tasks to KAOs. This exercise is primarily used to assist in the development of credentialing assessments rather than updating the competency model and offers a holistic perspective to the process.

ICF Credential

The ICF offers a globally recognized, independent credentialing program for coach practitioners. The term “credential”, to describe the designation the coach receives, reflects that the ICF awards a qualification which requires periodic renewal. The intention behind this renewal approach is to ensure that clients of coaching services from ICF credentialed coaches can be assured that the coach is not only fit for purpose and fit for practice and has met stringent education and coaching experience requirements but that they have also demonstrated a thorough understanding of the ICF Core Competencies. The renewal process verifies that the coach regularly undertakes continuous professional development activities to maintain and further develop their knowledge, while also reviewing practice to ensure coaching skills are maintained and their ethical practice and compliance follows best practice as it develops within the profession. An ICF credential is renewable every 3 years.

The ICF offers three levels of credential: Associate (ACC), Professional (PCC) and Master Certified Coach (MCC) which require different levels of coach-specific training, coaching experience and demonstrable evidence of the use of the ICF's Core Competencies.

Here is a summary of the requirements for an ICF credential (*) at each level:

Associate Certified Coach (ACC):

- 60+ hours of coach-specific training
- 10 hours of mentor coaching
- 100+ hours of coaching experience following the start of coach training
- Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA)
- Core Competence performance evaluation to ACC level minimum requirements

Professional Certified Coach (PCC):

- 125+ hours of coach-specific training
- 10 hours of mentor coaching
- 500+ hours of coaching experience following the start of coach training
- Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA)
- Core Competence performance evaluation to PCC level minimum requirements

Master Certified Coach (MCC):

- 200+ hours of coach-specific training
- 10 hours of mentor coaching
- 2500+ hours of coaching experience following the start of coach training
- Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA)
- Core Competence performance evaluation to MCC level minimum requirements
- Coaches are also required to hold a PCC credential before they can apply for the MCC credential.

(*) more details and the requirements and application process for each credential level can be found on the ICF Global website.

ICF Coaching Core Competency Model

The ICF model consists of eight core competencies that sit under four domains (ICF, 2019b). This competency model reflects the latest work undertaken by the ICF in the 2018–2019 job analysis noted above. The model was developed with the purpose of supporting greater understanding about the skills and approaches used within today's coaching profession as defined by the ICF. In addition, the ICF core values of integrity, excellence, collaboration and respect are intended to be at the heart of the model.

Box 5.2 ICF Core Competency Model

A. **Foundation:**

1. Demonstrates Ethical Practice
2. Embodies a Coaching Mindset

B. **Co-Creating the Relationship**

3. Establishes and Maintains Agreements
4. Cultivates Trust and Safety
5. Maintains Presence

C. **Communicating Effectively:**

6. Listens Actively
7. Evokes Awareness

D. **Cultivating Learning and Growth:**

8. Facilitates Client Growth

The Coaching Core Competency Model (ICF, 2019b) and the ICF definition of coaching (ICF, 2007) are used as the foundation for the Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA) (ICF, 2020a, 2020b) which is part of the assessment process for coaches applying for an ICF Credential. The eight competencies sit within four domains that represent the core characteristics of a coaching conversation. The domains and individual competencies are not weighted and do not represent any kind of priority in that they are all considered core or critical for any competent coach to demonstrate. As such, this competency model also offers support for coaches to calibrate the level of alignment between the coach-specific training expected by the ICF and the training that a coach has experienced.

In transitioning from the original competency model, the job analysis validated that much of the original model, developed nearly 25 years ago, remains critically important to the practice of coaching today. Some elements and themes that emerged from the data as being either new or of enhanced significance have also been integrated into the updated Coaching Core Competency Model (ICF, 2019b).

These elements and themes will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters of this section; however, it is worth noting that the review process highlighted the following areas as paramount for the practice of coaching in today's world:

- Ethical behavior
- Confidentiality
- Coaching mindset
- Reflective practice and professional development

- Expanded focus on the coaching agreement including important distinctions between various levels of coaching agreements
- Enhanced concept of partnership between the coach and the client
- Cultural, systemic and contextual awareness

The combination of the foundational components from the previous model, along with the new themes which emerged from the job analysis, the updated model reflects the key elements of coaching practice today and serves as a strong and comprehensive standard for the next phase of the evolution of the coaching profession.

An important point to make about this competency model is that the domains, the individual competencies and their sub-competencies are *not a checklist and are also not necessarily chronological.* Whilst some aspects of the competencies lend themselves to being evidenced at the beginning or the end of a coaching engagement or session, most of them are seen as behaviors and qualities that the coach might display at any point and, in many cases, throughout the coaching work. As such, this model is intended to describe features and characteristics of coaching that interplay with each other. In this way, the model should be viewed as a holistic body of work as well its component parts.

The model plays an important role in the design and delivery of coach-specific training programs that have been accredited by the ICF. Such programs are required to demonstrate that at least 80% percent of the training is focused on the ICF Core Competencies. In this way, students are well educated and prepared for the relevant assessment process toward their credential application. In the same way that coaches are evaluated as part of the credentialing and renewal process, an ICF accredited training provider also undertakes a performance evaluation, audit and renewal process to maintain their program accreditation, thereby underpinning the rigor and consistency of quality assurance for students.

Useful Documentation

ICF produces several documents as part of the development, assessment and credentialing process.

ACC, PCC and MCC Minimum Skills Requirements

The ICF credentialing process with its three levels is a reflection of the continuum of growth that each coach undergoes. Minimum skills requirements have been created by ICF to support coaches with preparation for either ACC, PCC, or MCC credentialing performance evaluation. The aim is to help coaches successfully complete their ACC, PCC, or MCC performance evaluation and also to help them continue to develop their skill set as coaches.

This structure provides those who want to learn and apply these competencies, as well as those seeking a credential, an understanding regarding what assessors evaluate in relation to each one. They outline the minimum level of skill necessary to successfully demonstrate an ACC, PCC, or MCC level of competency. They also offer an understanding of what behaviors might prevent successful completion of an ACC, PCC, or MCC performance evaluation process. The intention is that these documents also help coaches answer questions such as: What does it mean to be an ACC, PCC, or MCC coach? What do ICF assessors listen for when they are evaluating an ACC, PCC, or MCC coach? As I progress on my coaching journey, what are my strengths and what are the skillset areas that I need to grow to pass the ACC, PCC, or MCC performance evaluation?

Core Competencies Comparison Table

The core competencies comparison table is an adaptation of the Minimum Skills Requirements documents for each credential level and shows the rating levels at ACC, PCC, and MCC including pass and non-pass criteria.

PCC Markers

Assessment markers are the indicators that an assessor is trained to listen for to determine which ICF Core Competencies are in evidence in a recorded coaching conversation, and to what extent. The PCC markers are the behaviors that should be exhibited in a coaching conversation at the Professional Certified Coach (PCC) level. These markers support a performance evaluation process that is fair, consistent, valid, reliable, repeatable, and defensible. The markers are useful as a benchmark and to help understand what is expected at PCC level and they are used as part of the mentor coaching process. However, they are not a tool for coaching, and should not be used as a checklist or formula for passing a performance evaluation or indeed as a checklist for coaching. Details of the PCC Markers can be found on the ICF website (ICF, 2019d).

ICF Code of Ethics

The ICF is committed to maintaining and promoting excellence in coaching. Therefore, the ICF expects all members and credentialed coaches (coaches, coach mentors, coaching supervisors, coach trainers and students), to adhere to the elements and principles of ethical conduct: to be competent and integrate ICF Core Competency Model (ICF, 2019b) effectively in their work.

In line with the ICF core values of integrity, excellence, collaboration and respect, and the ICF definition of coaching (ICF, 2007), the Code of Ethics (ICF, 2019a) is designed to provide appropriate guidelines, accountability and enforceable standards of conduct for all ICF Members and ICF Credential-holders, who commit to abiding by that Code.

The following chapters in this section will take each domain and competency in turn and provide an overview of that competency. In addition, there is an intention to help bring the competencies to life in a practical way with examples and descriptions to help illustrate the essence of each competency and how they come together in a great coaching conversation. Finally, Chap. 33: Progressing your Coaching Skills, outlines some of the differences between ACC, PCC and MCC level coaching and Chap. 28: Continuous Professional Development shares many ways for you to develop your coaching skills toward these credentials and your growth as a coach.

Conclusion

In this opening chapter for section "Background", we have introduced the background to the ICF's core competency model and the associated system for becoming credentialed as a coach at the three levels of ACC, PCC and MCC. Coaching is still a relatively "young" profession with the concept, definition and application of coaching evolving organically. We have therefore also highlighted the key changes that the ICF's job analysis highlighted that gave rise to a body of work that is intended to reflect the skills and actions of an effective coach in today's environment. The subsequent chapters in this section will take each competency in turn and offer a more in-depth exploration of what is intended by each one and how they are demonstrated in coaching practice.

Chapter 6
Foundation Domain, Competency 1: Demonstrates Ethical Practice

Introduction

The Foundation Domain is focused on how coaches should conduct themselves while coaching and in all interactions with related individuals. From a broader competency-development view, the competencies within the foundation domain would be considered a set of coach-focused competencies (i.e., describing who the coach "is;" the "being" of the coach), while the other three domains are focused on coaches' behavior (i.e., what the coach "does"). In the job analysis process, these two perspectives are typically framed as "worker" focused versus "work" focused, respectively."

This domain has two competencies, Demonstrates Ethical Practice and Embodies a Coaching Mindset, the essence of which seeks to highlight the level of professionalism that is expected from an ICF credentialed coach. This professionalism is considered to be *foundational* to the coaching practice, upon which the competencies sit and are applied. The professionalism implied within this domain also particularly embraces two of the ICF core values: integrity and excellence.

Starting with this domain, we see straight away that good coaching is about much more than demonstrating a skillset, it is also about genuinely and consistently demonstrating a mindset. A mindset that informs how we approach our work as a professional and also, how we tend to operate as human beings. In this chapter we will look at the first of these two competencies: Demonstrates Ethical Practice and the competency of Embodies a Coaching Mindset will be address in the next chapter.

The competency is described in Box 6.1.

Box 6.1 Competency 1: Demonstrates Ethical Practice
Definition: Understands and consistently applies coaching ethics and standards.

(continued)

J. Passmore, T. Sinclair, *Becoming a Coach*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-53161-4_6

Box 6.1 (continued)

1. Demonstrates personal integrity and honesty in interactions with clients, sponsors and relevant stakeholders.
2. Is sensitive to clients' identity, environment, experiences, values and beliefs.
3. Uses language appropriate and respectful to clients, sponsors and relevant stakeholders.
4. Abides by the ICF Code of Ethics and upholds the Core Values.
5. Maintains confidentiality with client information per stakeholder agreements and pertinent laws.
6. Maintains the distinctions between coaching, consulting, psychotherapy and other support professions.
7. Refers clients to other support professionals, as appropriate.

Ethical practice as defined within the ICF Code of Ethics (ICF, 2019a) is considered to be the foundation of the coaching relationship. Understanding of the code and its consistent application is required for all levels of coaching and the standard for demonstrating a strong ethical grasp of coaching is similar and rigorous for all levels of ICF credentialing. In addition, it is noted that this competency highlights seven sub-competencies for specific attention.

Demonstrates Personal Integrity and Honesty in Interactions with Clients, Sponsors and Relevant Stakeholders

This sub-competency is rated as having paramount importance and is an overarching statement about the expectation of how a coach behaves, not just in a coaching session but generally as a practitioner in the profession of coaching. The scope of this expectation goes beyond the coaching client and is extended to the sponsor of the coaching engagement and indeed all stakeholders. A sponsor is defined as: "an individual (or entity), usually within an organization, who has a vested interest in a client's progress in coaching, is actively promoting the use of coaching for this individual and is likely providing funds for the coaching". A stakeholder is defined as: "an individual (or entity), usually within an organization, who has an interest in a client's progress through coaching". These could be, for example, HR representatives, a broker who has arranged for the coaching engagement or any number of other relevant third parties. The message here is simply that coaches are expected to operate with an intention of integrity and honesty at all times and this is exemplified in all sections of the Code of Ethics.

Is Sensitive to Clients' Identity, Environment, Experiences, Values, and Beliefs

Sensitivity to these aspects of the client's being implies several important qualities in the coach. The coach's capacity to be inclusive, non-judgmental, unbiased and empathetic in their work with the client are paramount. In addition, the coach's ability to understand the effect of these elements on the client, the coaching work and the coaching relationship are significant. In this way, the coach engages and works with the whole person of the client and not just the coaching goals and topics they bring into sessions. As our human nature leads us to judge and hold bias as part of our own moral, ethical or behavioral platform or compass, self-reflection and self-regulation are important aspects of how a coach consistently demonstrates their integrity and honesty. By way of examples, here are some questions for reflection:

- How do my own religious/spiritual beliefs impact my coaching?
- How do they align (or not) with the beliefs of my client?
- What impact does our alignment/misalignment have on our coaching relationship and the coaching process?
- Is that helpful or unhelpful to the coaching relationship?
- How do I respond if my client shares a particularly traumatic experience?
- How is my response impacted if I have no frame of reference whatsoever for that experience?
- How is my response impacted if I have a strong frame of reference for that experience?
- Perhaps I have had a similar experience. . .might I "over-empathize"?
- How do I ensure that I stay present, open and sensitive when my own beliefs, perspectives, view and/or experiences are different or contrary to the those of my client?
- How does my own "view of the world" impact my coaching?
- How fixed is my view?
- How do my own identity, environment, experiences, values and beliefs impact my coaching, both generally and with my clients?

The reflective practice of coaching supervision is a very useful and powerful resource for coaches to check-in and self-regulate around these qualities and the Code of Ethics also indicates that part of our integrity and honesty means that we will seek professional support if we feel that we are unable to display these qualities with a given client and even to terminate the coaching relationship if we feel unable to resolve any differences or misalignment that might be present. You can read and learn more about the process and practice of coaching supervision in Chap. 29.

Uses Language Appropriate and Respectful to Clients, Sponsors, and Relevant Stakeholders

The inter-relation between these seven sub-competencies is hopefully already becoming apparent and, in this one, we see how our honesty and integrity alongside our ability to display qualities of sensitivity and inclusivity, can be exemplified in our language. The language of a coach is intended to strike a delicate and subtle balance between being considered and intentional as well as spontaneous and intuitive and at all times respectful toward all parties. This item is also an example of how the ICF core value of respect is contained within the code of ethics and competency model.

In order to use appropriate and respectful language, the first question is: do I know what is appropriate and respectful? This takes us back to the previous sub-competency and highlights why having awareness of, and sensitivity to the client's identity and environment is important. Furthermore, we would argue that attitude is of equal, if not more, importance than identity. For example, a coach may be aware of and sensitive to someone's identity, however it is their attitude toward that identity that will inform how they engage with and coach the person, thereby informing the language they use and the behaviors they display in the coaching context. You will see more on attitude and the coach's "mindset" in the next chapter.

Abides by the ICF Code of Ethics

The ICF Code of Ethics is considered core knowledge for coaching and can be found on the ICF website (2019a), however here is the purpose and an overview of the Code:

To elicit the best in each and every ICF coach, ICF members and coaches are expected to commit to:

- Ethical behavior as the foundation of the coaching profession.
- Continued learning in the field of coaching as required.
- Search for continued self-awareness, self-monitoring and self-improvement.
- Acting and being an ethical individual in all professional interactions.
- Full accountability for the responsibility undertaken as an ICF Member and coach
- Complete engagement with and commitment to the coaching profession, setting an example both to the profession overall and to the community.
- Uphold the highest standards in a manner that reflects positively on the coaching profession.
- Be fully present in each and every interaction in which we engage.
- Recognize and abide by the applicable laws and regulations of each country, municipality and local governing body.

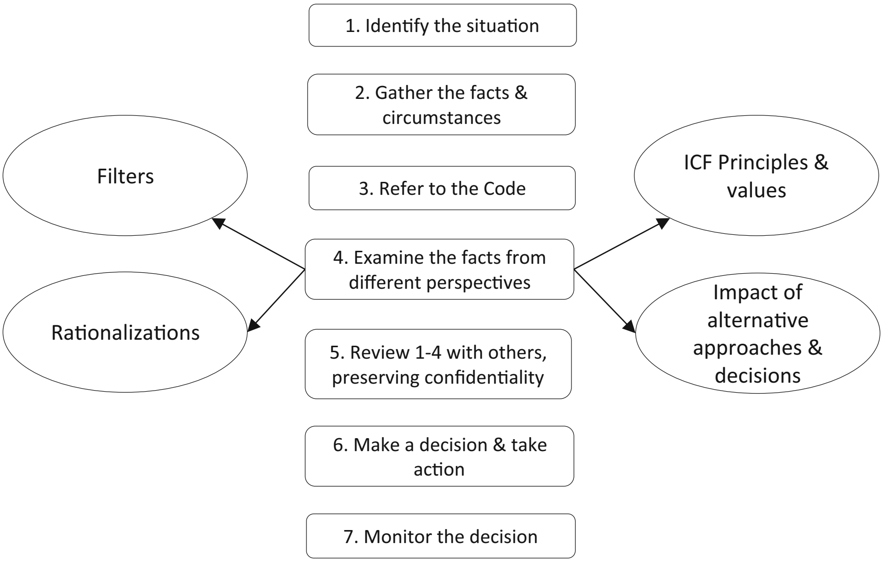

Fig. 6.1 Ethical review checklist

- Provide a safe space for trainers, service providers, coaches and coaches-in-training to learn, excel ethically and strive to become professional coaches of the highest caliber.
- Embrace diversity and inclusion, and value the richness of our global stakeholders.

The importance of the ICF Code of Ethics is exemplified by the fact that it needs to be part of the curriculum of ICF Accredited coach-specific training programs as well as the work that a coach completes with their mentor coach prior to applying for their credential (and credential renewal at ACC level). The ICF also offers a complimentary online course on ethics and one of the ICF Communities of Practice (also complimentary to ICF Members) is dedicated to ethical discussions and development.

Ethics is closely linked to personal morals and values. In many cases ethical decisions are not "black and white", but instead multiple shades of grey. The ethical code provides a foundation from which to work, but a reflective mindset and process of inquiry is vital when it comes to thinking through ethical dilemmas which occur in practice. To help with this, in 2010, Liora Rosen, then Chair of the ICF Ethics Education Sub Committee developed a simple ethical review checklist (Fig. 6.1).

The steps themselves are self-explanatory; however, Step 4 is worthy of some further narrative. This step involves exploring four distinct perspectives, the first one of which is "filters." In this context, "filters" refers to a wide range of sources of reference that we draw upon when making judgments and decisions about something. These filters can include, and are not limited to, references relating to our culture, ethnicity, religion, education, gender, age, geographic location, and socio-economic background as well as our own needs, values, feelings, and motives associated with the ethical issue in question. The nature and influence of these filters will inform how we perceive a particular issue or situation.

The second perspective is "rationalizations", and this refers to the fact that it is human nature to support something that reinforces our own stance, attitudes, beliefs and values etc. When considering this alongside the filters we use as our own personal and unique sources of reference or "moral compass", we find that our biases (conscious and unconscious) will inevitably play a part in how we judge a situation. For this very reason, the model advocates the consideration of two further perspectives as well as discussing the situation with others (Step 5) to gain a range of other inputs in service of a fair and objective review.

The third perspective is to reflect upon the ICF core values of integrity, excellence, collaboration and respect to explore the extent to which they have or have not been honored or breached within the issue under consideration. The final perspective is to explore the feasibility and impact of some alternative approaches and decisions or responses to the situation in order to begin to identify a possible way(s) forward.

One of the best ways to learn and understand more about the ICF Code of Ethics is through discussion. By taking ethical scenarios and discussing them with colleagues with consideration for the steps in this checklist, a thought-provoking conversation can highlight how our approach to such scenarios will very likely be influenced by our own experiences, values, beliefs and biases (conscious and/or unconscious).

Here is an ethical case study for reflection (Box 6.2).

Box 6.2 Ethical Case Study

One morning, Joe, with whom you've been working for several months, arrived at your coaching meeting late, looking and sounding very serious and stressed. At first, he was tight lipped, sharing only that he was extremely busy and under a lot of pressure to meet deadlines.

Suddenly he divulged that he was in trouble. There had been a significant error in quoting a price to a customer. He knew it would take hours of his time to get to the bottom of exactly how and why the error had occurred.

Since he felt pressured for time, he had simply assured the customer that he would not be financially penalized in any way and that Joe's organization would absorb the financial costs of the error.

The next day in a meeting with the executive leadership team, the executives decided that the company would refuse to absorb any of the costs of the error and that the customer would be required to absorb the loss. The executives were unaware of the promise that Joe had made to the customer.

Joe feels trapped. The culture in the client's organization is to take time and care over such proposals and they therefore have less tolerance for rash mistakes and last-minute changes in direction or actions. His organization has a

(continued)

Box 6.2 (continued)
fast-paced and even "aggressive" culture and decisions are made and changed frequently.

He wants your help deciding on a course of action. Your coaching conversation hardly began when he immediately settled on his solution: "I'm going to lie. I'm going to hide the numbers and somehow cover this thing up. It's my only way out."

As the coach of other managers for the same company, you've heard complaints about Joe not being honest in all of his business dealings and you have developed a close business relationship with the HR manager responsible for administering the coaching program.

Although you feel confident that you have navigated confidentiality issues well up until this point, this situation is testing your agreements on confidentiality.

Here are some questions you might take a few minutes to consider:

- What is the ethical dilemma?
- What elements of the code does this refer to?
- What is your recommendation for resolution?
- Which aspects of the ethical review checklist most informed your thinking?

Here are some thoughts and references from the ICF Code of Ethics that could inform the ethical discussion and decision-making around this particular case study:

Part Four: Ethical Standards

Section I: Responsibility to Clients

Item 2: Create an agreement/contract regarding the roles, responsibilities and rights of all parties involved with my Client(s) and Sponsor(s) prior to the commencement of services.

- Who is the sponsor in this situation, and do you have a coaching service agreement with them?
- If so, what is your responsibility in honoring that agreement?

Item 3: Maintain the strictest levels of confidentiality with all parties as agreed upon. I am aware of and agree to comply with all applicable laws that pertain to personal data and communications.

- Has Joe broken the law?
- What type of breach does his lying imply, if any?

- What does your client's organization state about lying or misrepresentation of data etc. in their company policy?
- Does this situation constitute a breach of their company "law"?

Item 4: Have a clear understanding about how information is exchanged among all parties involved during all coaching interactions.

- What have you contracted for in the tri-partite coaching service agreement around the exchange of information?

Item 5: Have a clear understanding with both Clients and Sponsors or interested parties about the conditions under which information will not be kept confidential (e.g., illegal activity, if required by law, pursuant to valid court order or subpoena; imminent or likely risk of danger to self or to others; etc.). Where I reasonably believe one of the above circumstances is applicable, I may need to inform appropriate authorities.

- If Joe lying does constitute an appropriate reason for you to breach your pledge of confidentiality, have you outlined this in your coaching service agreement and did Joe (and the Sponsor) knowingly agree to that limit of confidentiality?

Section II: Responsibility to practice and performance

As an ICF Professional, I
Item 17: Recognize my personal limitations or circumstances that may impair, conflict with or interfere with my coaching performance or my professional coaching relationships. I will reach out for support to determine the action to be taken and, if necessary, promptly seek relevant professional guidance. This may include suspending or terminating my coaching relationship(s).

You have heard complaints about Joe's honesty, and you have a close business relationship with the HR manager responsible for administering the coaching program. . .

- Is this enough to constitute a "personal issue"?
- Do you have a bias (conscious or unconscious) toward Joe based upon what you have heard?
- Does the closeness of your relationship with the HR Manager impact how you view Joe and this situation?
- Is any of this enough to impair your performance as a coach in this situation?

At this stage Joe has not yet lied, he is talking about his decision to lie. How does that impact this situation and your potential response? Finally, are there any other parts of the Code of Ethics that you feel could be relevant or inform your thinking about this type of scenario?

In most cases, ethical breaches by coaches are the result of a simple mistake or lack of awareness, consideration or knowledge as opposed to a deliberate or intentional breach. What is important is that coaches take care to consider ethical matters within their coaching practice and also feel supported by sources of reference and guidance. Peer group discussions, communities of practice and special interest groups are all potential sources of such support (remembering that client and sponsor confidentiality need to be maintained whilst such discussions are being held). Ethical dilemmas and questions are also ideally placed to be taken into a conversation with a coaching supervisor as part of the coach's ongoing practice management and professional development. The ICF offers a mechanism for complaints about individuals or programs to be reviewed, which is the Ethical Conduct Review Process and Program Complaint Process. These are handled by the Independent Review Board (IRB).

In Chap. 23 we offer an alternative model to review ethical decisions; the APPEAR model (Passmore and Turner, 2018). Such models are useful heuristics to guide you through what can be difficult and challenging processes of managing ethical dilemmas, and encourage you to think more widely and take account of the individual and unique circumstances in each case, as we seek to balance the needs of our client, the organization and our own moral, legal and contractual responsibilities.

Maintains Confidentiality with Client Information per Stakeholder Agreements and Pertinent Laws

Confidentiality has always been an important feature of a coaching relationship and has been further highlighted as a paramount characteristic and frequently used task in the latest and current ICF Core Coaching Competency Model. To that end, it is raised several times within the ICF Code of Ethics (Box 6.3).

Box 6.3 Extracts from the ICF Code of Ethics
Part 2: Key Definitions

"Confidentiality"—protection of any information obtained around the coaching engagement unless consent to release is given.

Part 4: Ethical Standards

Section I—Responsibility to clients

Item 3: Maintain the strictest levels of confidentiality with all parties as agreed upon. I am aware of and agree to comply with all applicable laws that pertain to personal data and communications.

Item 5: Have a clear understanding with both Clients and Sponsors or interested parties about the conditions under which information will not be kept confidential (e.g., illegal activity, if required by law, pursuant to valid court order or subpoena; imminent or likely risk of danger to self or to others; etc.). Where I reasonably believe one of the above circumstances is applicable, I may need to inform appropriate authorities.

(continued)

Box 6.3 (continued)

Item 7: Maintain, store and dispose of any records, including electronic files and communications, created during my professional interactions in a manner that promotes confidentiality, security and privacy and complies with any applicable laws and agreements. Furthermore, I seek to make proper use of emerging and growing technological developments that are being used in coaching services (technology assisted coaching services) and be aware how various ethical standards apply to them.

Section II—Responsibility to practice and performance

Item 19: Maintain the privacy of ICF Members and use of the ICF Member contact information (email addresses, telephone numbers, and so on) only as authorized by ICF or the ICF Member.

(ICF, 2019a)

A couple of points are worthy of further highlight as follows.

The term "maintain *strictest* levels of confidentiality" means that a coach must take all steps possible to ensure that the content of the coaching conversations stays only between the coach and the client. This means taking great care with any coaching notes that may have been taken, ensuring they are unseen by others and are anonymized wherever possible. It also means taking care with any client data that may be stored on a laptop, iPad, or other electronic equipment so that it is safe and secure.

Confidentiality also means not verbally sharing content from the coaching conversations with others. Here are a couple of examples on how this can be navigated:

- You may bump into your client's manager in the corridor and they ask how the coaching is going—it would not be appropriate to share any update without the client's clear, prior agreement. This is an important aspect of the tripartite contracting conversation when reporting, updating and confidentiality should be discussed and agreed. Moreover, it is also recommended that it is, in fact, the client who does any updating and reporting. Direct updating between the client and the line manager allows for their workplace relationship to stay intact and also keeps the boundary of accountability for and within the relationship clear and separate from the coach.
- You want to discuss a client case with your supervisor . . . part of your contracting process with your client should include sharing that you engage with a supervisor as part of your ongoing professional development. Your client should be informed that this means some client content may be discussed, however the identity of the client is always kept confidential and the supervisor is also bound by the same Code of Ethics and confidentiality boundaries.
- You want to record or transcribe your client session so that you can use the recording for mentoring or assessment purposes. . .once again, this should be

contracted for with your client who would need to give their permission for their session to be used for these purposes.

- You work with a virtual assistant (VA) who helps you schedule appointments etc. . . . the VA also needs to adhere to the Code of Ethics and the client informed of this as part of the contracting process. A tip here is that, when contracting with the VA, you share and ask them to sign a copy of the Code of Ethics so that you have that on file as part of your contracting documentation with them.

Whilst, it is not stipulated in the competency model or in the Code of Ethics that coaching agreements and contracts need to be in writing, we highly recommend that they are. Documenting the key elements of your coaching engagement and then asking each party to sign that agreement is good professional practice. In this way, all parties are clear of what is expected of them and what their part is in the coaching engagement.

What is perhaps striking about these points is that, in most cases, the vehicle for addressing them professionally is the coaching agreement or contract. When teaching coaching students, we often hear ourselves say: “All roads lead to the contract” and in many, ways this is true. Thorough contracting is the key to setting a great foundation to the coaching engagement. We will take a closer look at coaching agreements in Competency 3, however a final note in this section is that confidentiality also links to privacy. Data privacy regulation around the world is now much more rigorous and therefore it is important that a coach ensures they are complying with requirements such as GDPR and other data privacy requirements around the world and that this is made clear to clients and other stakeholders in all types of interactions.

Maintains the Distinctions Between Coaching, Consulting, Psychotherapy, and Other Support Professions

In a credential application, a coach will pass this aspect of the competency if they engage in a coaching conversation that is focused on inquiry and exploration and if the conversation is based on present and future issues.

A pass would *not* be awarded if the coach focuses primarily on telling the client what to do or how to do it (consulting mode) or if the conversation is based primarily in the past, particularly the emotional past (therapeutic mode). In addition, ICF notes that if an applicant is not clear on basic foundation exploration and evoking skills that underlie the ICF definition of coaching, that lack of clarity in skill use will be reflected in skill level demonstrated in some of the other core competencies. For example, if a coach almost exclusively gives advice or indicates that a particular answer chosen or suggested by the coach is what the client should do, trust and safety, coaching presence, powerful questioning, evoking awareness, and client generated ideas/actions and accountability will also not be present and a credential application, at any level, would be unsuccessful.

Refers Clients to Other Support Professionals, as Appropriate

As well as maintaining the distinctions between coaching, consulting, psychotherapy and other support professions, a coach must also know when and how to refer their client to another support professional and take appropriate action. As always, thorough contracting at the beginning of an engagement is the best way to proactively establish clarity around what is and is not being offered within the coaching relationship and coaching service. This helps mitigate against confusion or misunderstanding and thereby potentially avoiding the need for referral.

However, sometimes the coaching process uncovers information, requirements, expectations and circumstances that mean a different way of working would be more useful to the client. A couple of examples of this are mentoring and counseling or psychotherapy.

Sometimes clients engage with a coach when what they actually want is mentoring. It may be that their requirement is more one of receiving information, advice, guidance, ideas and strategies than it is one of exploring their own thoughts, feelings and behaviors to find their own solution to an issue or a goal. The first thing to consider is whether there is a difference between what they *want* and what they *need*. A client may want the coach to offer them solutions and answers because that is perhaps easier than working it out for themselves. In this case, the coach may encourage, partner with and even challenge the client to reflect for themselves in order to find their own solution, thereby staying in the role of coach.

However, it may be that what the client actually needs is indeed mentoring and there may have been a misunderstanding or miscommunication of the service being offered at the contracting stage. This is an example of where the coach may propose that a different way of working might be more useful to the client and explore with them their options for engaging with a mentor.

Interestingly, this is not as clear as it might appear, and it is not always a simple case of either coaching or mentoring. The reality is that many coaches wear a number of different hats: coach, mentor, trainer, facilitator etc. as part of their professional portfolio. This means that, in practice, some coaches offer a blended service. From an ICF perspective, this is a perfectly acceptable way of working as long as two important criteria are met:

1. It is not appropriate to use an example of a blended service when submitting a client session recording for ICF assessment purposes. The assessment process is to establish that the coach understands and can apply the core coaching competencies and stay in coaching mode. Submitting a recording where the coach more than occasionally steps out of coaching mode is likely to fail an assessment.
2. When logging client hours for ICF credentialing and renewal purposes, the coach must only log those hours that have been contracted for and provided as coaching, and not those where a blended service was provided.

The other key area for potential referral is when counseling or therapy may be more appropriate for the client. There may be a time when the client demonstrates certain behaviors or shares certain information or perspectives which indicate that another form of professional service or resource might be more appropriate and useful to the client. This is referenced in the ICF Code of Ethics under Part 3, Section I—Responsibility to clients, item 8: “Remain alert to indications that there might be a shift in the value received from the coaching relationship. If so, make a change in the relationship or encourage the Client(s)/Sponsor(s) to seek another coach, seek another professional or use a different resource.” Guidance on when and how to refer clients to therapy can be found in an ICF white paper: “Referring a Client to Therapy: A set of Guidelines” (Hullinger and DiGirolamo, 2018).

Some aspects of this competency are not directly assessed during a performance evaluation; in fact, it is more the absence of this competency that would indicate a non-pass result. When an assessor reviews a recorded coaching conversation as part of a credential application, there are two key disqualifiers which are (1) if the coach displays a clear ethical breach (i.e. of the ICF Code of Ethics) and/or (2) if the coach more than occasionally steps into a role other than that of coach (e.g. counsellor, consultant, teacher, trainer).

Conclusion

This chapter has introduction the Foundation Domain of the ICF Core Competency Model and introduced the first competency: Demonstrates Ethical Practice. We have shared the competency definition and sub-competencies and explored the essential elements and expectations for each one. We have seen how this competency places significant emphasis on integrity, professionalism, confidentiality and ethical conduct. Some of the factors that underlie and underpin a person’s ethical platform have been described and an ethical case study has been analyzed to highlight some of the many and varied considerations to take into account when faced with an ethical scenario. This case study has also been used to identify where the ICF Code of Ethics can assist in navigating and informing an ethical query and positions the Code as a very useful source of reference and guidance for coaches as part of their professional coaching practice. We have also included an ethical review checklist which offers simple guidelines on how to thoroughly review and consider an ethical scenario, its implications and its possible solutions.

Chapter 7
Foundation Domain, Competency 2: Embodies a Coaching Mindset

Introduction

The second competency in the Foundation Domain is Embodies a Coaching Mindset. This is a new competency that emerged from the most recent coaching job analysis conducted by the ICF as well as a qualitative study of coach's learning journeys completed by the ICF Academic Research team. Many of the core coaching tasks, knowledge and attitudes identified in the job analysis process included aspects of reflective practice (e.g., reflection, awareness and self-regulation). This has been identified and emphasized as critical "self-work" that coaches must engage in.

A Coaching Mindset

The competency is described in Box 7.1:

Box 7.1 Competency 2: Embodies a Coaching Mindset
Definition: Develops and maintains a mindset that is open, curious, flexible and client-centered.

1. Acknowledges that clients are responsible for their own choices.
2. Engages in ongoing learning and development as a coach.
3. Develops an ongoing reflective practice to enhance one's coaching.
4. Remains aware of and open to the influence of context and culture on self and others.
5. Uses awareness of self and one's intuition to benefit clients.
6. Develops and maintains the ability to regulate one's emotions.

(continued)

J. Passmore, T. Sinclair, *Becoming a Coach*,
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Box 7.1 (continued)

7. Mentally and emotionally prepares for sessions.
8. Seeks help from outside sources when necessary.

(ICF, 2019b)

A Coaching Mindset is considered to be of sufficient importance to be a competency in its own right and is a key part of describing the "way of being" of the coach. In practice, it is intended to be noticeably evident throughout the way the coach works with their client and other relevant parties and notes that, when an individual learns and is able to practice coaching skills, a transformation frequently occurs where the individual embodies these skills, they become an inherent part of the individual's personality and those skills are consciously or unconsciously used in conversations throughout their daily lives. As such, a coaching mindset might be part of how the coach demonstrates all of the other competencies within this framework. As with Competency 1, Demonstrates Ethical Practice, the theme emerges once again that qualities such as professionalism, integrity, honesty and a coaching mindset are *foundational* to good coaching practice.

This competency is specifically outlined through eight sub-competencies:

Acknowledges that Clients Are Responsible for Their Own Choices

This sub-competency immediately focuses on the fact that coaching is client-centered. Partnership and equality are very important themes within the overall competency framework. However, within those principles there is also a clear intention and expectation that it is the client who sets the agenda and direction of the coaching work. The client is also responsible for generating their own ideas, actions and next steps. This acknowledgement is probably initiated right at the very beginning of the coaching engagement when the coach explains to the client (and any other relevant parties) what coaching is, is not, and how it is different from other ways of working.

This type of acknowledgement continues throughout the coaching process and shows up in other competencies, examples of which are when the coach:

- Partners with the client in the creation of coaching agreements (Competency 3: Establishes and Maintains Agreements)
- Demonstrates respect for and acknowledges the client's perceptions, suggestions and work in the coaching process (Competency 4: Cultivates Trust and Safety)
- Invites the client to generate forward moving ideas (Competency 7: Evokes Awareness)
- Partners with the client to design goals, actions and accountability methods and acknowledges and supports the client's autonomy in doing so (Competency 8: Facilitates Client Growth).

Some practical examples of the many things a coach might say or ask to evidence this sub-competency are:

- “What would you like to focus on today?”
- “How would you like to approach this?”
- “What are your options?”
- “What do you think?”
- “What will you do now?”
- “How do you feel about doing that?”
- “How committed do you feel about this?”
- “What will you do to ensure you that you honor your commitment?”

In practice therefore, whilst the coach may explore, inquire, invite, notice, ask and challenge, these activities are done in complete service of empowering the client to own and take responsibility for themselves and, as per the ICF definition of coaching, be inspired to maximize their personal and professional potential.

Engages in Ongoing Learning and Development as a Coach

Ongoing learning and development are fundamental to the ICF’s philosophy of coaching. As outlined in Chap. 5, the renewable characteristic of an ICF credential is to underpin a proactive and intentional commitment to continuous professional development activities to maintain and further develop the coach’s knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors as a professional practitioner.

The credential renewal process requires that all coaches complete at least 40-h of Continuing Coach Education across each 3-year period that their credential is valid. This education is described on the ICF website and can come in various forms, including:

- ICF-approved training
- Other training
- Self-paced courses and other self-study
- Mentor Coaching
- Coaching Supervision
- Research and Teaching

For those coaches who want to renew their credential at the ACC level, part of this development must include at least 10 h of Mentor Coaching so that it is clear that the coach is still fully understanding and applying the core competencies. At least three-hours of development in coaching ethics is also required for coach’s renewing their credential at any level, thereby re-emphasizing the importance of ethical practice and professional conduct. Learning and development opportunities are available from ICF Chapters and ICF Accredited training schools all around the world and also via the ICF’s Learning portal.

This theme of ongoing learning and development is considered a core task and activity of a coach as an important part of the "self-work" with which a coach engages in order to better serve their clients.

From a very practical perspective, taking a proactive approach to this requirement is highly recommended. We can count many, many examples of when a coach has approached us because their 3-year credential period expires within the next couple of months or so and they are suddenly trying to complete 40+ h of development. Not only is there an expectation of intentionality within the credentialing process, it is also so much easier to complete this development in a meaningful and cost-effective way when it is planned ahead across the three periods. It is also this concept of intentionality that supports the self-work and ongoing learning, which is at the heart of a "coaching mindset."

Develops an Ongoing Reflective Practice to Enhance One's Coaching

Reflective practice has been identified as a specific and significant activity within the area of ongoing learning and development as outlined in the sub-competency above. For these purposes, reflective practice includes three core tasks of: reflection, awareness and self-regulation.

Such reflective practice could take on many forms, some examples of which are:

- Coaching supervision (see Chap. 29)
- Peer group reflection
- Journaling
- Mentor coaching
- Observed coaching practice followed by debrief and feedback
- Listening to recordings of client work

As described in Competency 7, Evokes Awareness, the coach is facilitating client insight and learning for their client. In this case, the coach is role modelling this behavior for their *own* insight and learning. Self-regulation can take on several forms including managing one's own emotions within the coaching process, the use of one's own intuition as well as staying in coaching mode and managing one's own inclination to tell, suggest, judge or "fix" the client.

Remains Aware of and Open to the Influence of Context and Culture on Self and Others

A key area being addressed with this sub-competency is that of bias: Biases that a coach may bring into the coaching process and also the biases that clients may have regarding the coaching work and coaching process. Part of the coaching mindset, therefore, is for the coach to stay conscious to the possible (and probable) presence of biases (of self or others) and how this might influence and impact the work that is being undertaken.

In practical terms, this can be evidenced by the coach owning, acknowledging, sharing and checking their own possible assumptions for example about the client and/or the work they are bringing. For example:

- "I realize I am making an assumption here; however, I am wondering if..."
- "I'd like to check my thinking with you here ... is ...?"
- "Please challenge or correct me if I'm wrong, however you seem to me to..."
- "Tell me if this doesn't land, I was thinking that perhaps..."

This sub-competency may also be demonstrated by the coach inquiring about or challenging the client's assumptions which links very closely to some aspects of other competencies which will be explored in each relevant case. However, as far as the coach's biases are concerned, another important and valuable way to explore and address these is through the process of reflective practice as noted in the previous sub-competency.

Uses Awareness of Self and One's Intuition to Benefit Clients

The use of intuition in the coaching process is considered very important and is also a skill to be carefully balanced and managed. Research on the use of intuition shows a vast range of results, from highly flawed to remarkably accurate and still intuition can light a creative spark. Using intuition with careful judgment and good sense, along with a lack of attachment to one's own sharing may very well stimulate client awareness or learning.

The coach can share their intuition with the client in several ways, including:

- "I have a hunch that..."
- "I'm feeling a strong sense of (XYZ), what do you think or feel about that?"
- "It strikes me that..."

Develops and Maintains the Ability to Regulate One's Emotions

This links to sub-competency 2.3 and reflective practice is considered to be a valuable vehicle for regulating one's emotions. Reference to working effectively and appropriately with the *client's* emotions will be further explored in the chapters focused on Competency 5, Maintains Presence and Competency 6, Listens Actively. However, in order to work effectively with our client's emotions, we must first be aware of our own and how to self-manage and self-regulate in such a way that our emotions do not get in the way of the client or the coaching process. In coaching supervision, this is sometimes called "where the personal intrudes on the professional"—you can read more on that in Chap. 29 on Coaching Supervision.

We will bring a particular emotional "state" into the coaching session, based upon how we are at that time, and our emotions may also be influenced by what the client brings into the session. Our ability to regulate our emotions may therefore change from moment to moment and what is expected is that we are mindful of this and that we continually check our own responses and reactions so that we can ensure that our emotions are not coming into the process in an unhelpful way.

The self-awareness that develops as a result of ongoing learning, development and reflective practice is a useful quality that enables us to regulate our emotions. Examples of when we might need to regulate our emotions are:

- You have a client who is really very excited about Christmas and is demonstrating enthusiasm and passion about preparing for the festivities. What if your own relationship with Christmas is not so positive and you find it a period of sadness, loss or disappointment? How will you regulate our own reactions, responses and biases?
- Your client shares that they are getting divorced and you have just recently experienced a very painful and acrimonious divorce yourself. How will you ensure that your own emotional experience does not creep into your coaching practice?
- Your client shares their excitement for an upcoming trip, and they describe a trip that you did last year which was the most amazing experience of your life. How will you regulate your emotions so that your own "story" does not take over the client's space?

In some cases, if we are unable for some reason to regulate our emotions, it may even be appropriate to stop working with that client or suspend our coaching practice for a period of time. For example, if our own life experience means that we are personally going through a very challenging time, or the topic the client brings is one that is particularly triggering and sensitive for us, it may simply be that we cannot be sufficiently self-managing and present for others. This is something that is ideally suited for exploration with a coaching supervisor and is also addressed in the ICF Code of Ethics in Part Four: Ethical Standards, Section II—Responsibility to practice and performance.

As an ICF Professional, I:

Item 17: Recognize my personal limitations or circumstances that may impair, conflict with, or interfere with my coaching performance or my professional coaching relationships. I will reach out for support to determine the action to be taken and, if necessary, promptly seek relevant professional guidance. This may include suspending or terminating my coaching relationship(s).

Mentally and Emotionally Prepares for Sessions

This aspect really helps to bring Competency 2 together, as it highlights a practice that enables us to tap into our optimal coaching state or mindset. It draws upon all of the above aspects of this competency by consciously and intentionally preparing for our client work. This is an ongoing process as part of our continuous professional and personal development and is also a specific activity in readiness for each coaching session. Outputs from the competency review process and also ICF research undertaken into how coaches spend their time highlight that good coaches demonstrate this practice.

Such preparation can take on different forms and will vary based upon the personal preferences of the coach. This could include activities such as going for a walk, taking some exercise, meditating, sitting quietly, and reflection. It could also include consideration for other aspects of when and how the coach can access their optimal coaching mindset, for example:

- Are there days of the week or times of the day when the coach is “at their best”?
- How many clients can the coach engage with in one day and still be fresh, professional, present and available for each one?
- How much space in between client engagements does the coach need in order to be fully prepared for their next client?

A useful paper on this is by DiGirolamo et al. (2016).

Seeks Help from Outside Sources When Necessary

The previous elements of this competency are designed to support the development of a good coaching mindset. However, we have also ready seen above some examples of when and how our mindset could be impaired or impacted in a way that is not helpful to our client or the coaching process. In these cases, it is therefore important that coach seeks the support needed for them to address this in whatever way is most appropriate. Coaching Supervision is a very useful source of support and this is covered more in Chap. 29.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced and outlined the new competency that has become part of the updated ICF Core Competency model. This addition underscores the importance of the being of the coach as well as the doing of coaching and the fact that the role of the coach extends beyond direct interaction with the client and other stakeholders. We have explored each of the sub-competencies and how they in turn link directly to and are in support of other competencies within the model. We have also highlighted various ways that coaches can engage with and meet this competency as a valuable part of their ongoing development towards coaching maturity.

Chapter 8
Co-creating the Relationship Domain, Competency 3: Establishes and Maintains Agreements

Introduction

This domain comprises the three competencies of (3) Establishes and Maintains Agreements, (4) Cultivates Trust and Safety and (5) Listens Actively. It is a collection of competencies which relate to the logistics involved prior to and within coaching engagements and sessions, as well as those which lead to client growth and development.

This chapter focuses on Competency 3. Establishes and Maintains Agreements and positions three distinct levels of agreement that are expected as follows:

1. Agreements for the coaching relationship
2. Agreements for the overall coaching plan and goals
3. Agreements for the session goals and objectives

These distinct levels have emerged more formally in the most recent competency framework and reflect the ongoing development and maturity of the coaching process and the coaching profession.

The competency is described in Box 8.1.

Box 8.1 Competency 3: Establishes and Maintains Agreements
Definition: Partners with the client, and relevant stakeholders, to create clear agreements about the coaching relationship, process, plans, and goals. Establishes agreements for the overall coaching engagement as well as for those for each coaching session.

1. Explains what coaching is and is not and describes the process to the client and relevant stakeholders.

(continued)

J. Passmore, T. Sinclair, *Becoming a Coach*,
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Box 8.1 (continued)

2. Reaches agreement about what is and is not appropriate in the relationship, what is and is not being offered, and the responsibilities of the client and relevant stakeholders.
3. Reaches agreement about the guidelines and specific parameters of the coaching relationship such as logistics, fees, scheduling, duration, termination, confidentiality, and inclusion of others.
4. Partners with the client and relevant stakeholders to establish an overall coaching plan and goals.
5. Partners with the client to determine client-coach compatibility.
6. Partners with the client to identify or reconfirm what they want to accomplish in the session.
7. Partners with the client to define what the client believes they need to address or resolve to achieve what they want to accomplish in the session.
8. Partners with the client to define or reconfirm measures of success for what the client wants to accomplish in the coaching engagement or individual session.
9. Partners with the client to manage the time and focus of the session.
10. Continues coaching in the direction of the client's desired outcome unless the client indicates otherwise.
11. Partners with the client to end the coaching relationship in a way that honors the experience.

(ICF, 2019b)

The essence of this competency is in getting clear agreement as to the appropriateness and suitability of the coaching relationship and the work that is being done within that coach-client relationship for each session.

The essential element of this competency is that the coach:

- Establishes and maintains agreement at all three levels as outlined

Level 1: Agreements for the Coaching Relationship

- Explaining what coaching is and is not and describing the process to the client and relevant stakeholders.
- Reaches agreement about what is and is not appropriate in the relationship, what is and is not being offered, and the responsibilities of the client and relevant stakeholders.
- Reaches agreement about the guidelines and specific parameters of the coaching relationship such as logistics, fees, scheduling, duration, termination, confidentiality, and inclusion of others.

- Partnering with the client to determine client-coach compatibility.
- Partnering with the client to end the coaching relationship in a way that honors the experience.

Level 2: Agreements for the Overall Coaching Plan and Goals

- Partnering with the client and relevant stakeholders to establish an overall coaching plan and goals with associated measures of success for the coaching engagement.
- Establishing an understanding of the importance or significance of the coaching work and the client's commitment to the coaching engagement.
- Continuing the coaching in the direction of the client's desired outcome unless the client indicates otherwise.

In cases of coaching for and within organizations, when agreement is reached that coaching would likely provide positive results, agreements may be made between the coach and the organization for one or more engagements with specific or potential clients. In these cases, the discussions to reach agreement on some aspects of Levels 1 and 2 may be between the coach and the organization.

In cases where a coach engages with clients directly and an organization is not involved, the elements will be agreed upon directly between the coach and client.

The activities undertaken at Levels 1 and 2 are often formalized into a written coaching "contract," which is signed by the relevant parties involved.

Level 3: Agreements for the Session Goals and Objectives

Lastly, in each session coaches frequently begin with an informal, verbal agreement regarding what will be covered in the session, including:

- Partnering with the client to identify or reconfirm what they want to accomplish in the session.
- Partnering with the client to define or reconfirm measures of success for what the client wants to accomplish in the individual session.
- Partnering with the client to define what the client believes they need to address or resolve to achieve what they want to accomplish in the session.
- Partners with the client to manage the time and focus of the session.
- Continuing the coaching in the direction of the client's desired outcome unless the client indicates otherwise.

The Importance of Coaching Agreements

One of the things that we have noticed many times in our roles as coach trainers is that very often this competency is not fully explored. It is the depth and extent to which the coach defines and explores the coaching agreement and the client's desired outcome for the work that is important. So, let's now bring all of these guidelines and requirements together to get to the core of what is required for this competency. Levels 1 and 2 of Coaching Agreements focus on careful and thorough professional practice and are relatively self-explanatory. It is the competence a coach shows at Level 3, i.e., establishing and maintaining the agreement during each coaching session that is worthy of further exploration.

Newly trained coaches sometimes feel that they have to get to the goal of the coaching quickly so that they can get on with the "real work" of coaching the client and yet there is such rich territory in working more extensively and deeply with the client to understand what they want to achieve and why it is important to them. In fact, establishing the coaching agreement is something that can occur over the course of the first half of a session or even take a full session to fully explore and establish clarity for the overall coaching engagement. This process does not have to be completed within the first few minutes of the conversation and indeed may also be revisited at any point throughout the session.

Whilst every coaching conversation is different of course and has its own unique trajectory and pace, there is a concept that we find useful when teaching this competency and that is to imagine a simple structure that holds true for any great story, book, report, project, essay or assignment which is that it has a beginning, a middle and an end. The same is also true for coaching and it is important that all of these three important phases are fully explored and the extent to which we effectively work with one part will inevitably affect how we work with the other two. For example, thoroughly exploring the coaching agreement will undoubtedly inform for the client, and therefore for the coach, the path the work might take. It also helps to establish the most appropriate and important path for the work to take and why, as well as identifying potentially important surrounding circumstances, context or information which underpin the significance of the work for the client.

In addition, thoroughly exploring the coaching agreement will also mean that bringing the coaching conversation to a point of closure and next steps for the client will be enhanced by clearly knowing what it was that the client really wanted in the first place. In this way, you can both revisit that agreement to explore how the client will take this work forward into their life after the session in a way that maximizes their achievement of their goals and outcomes. Moreover, we will go as far as to say that a whole coaching session might even usefully be taken up by getting this foundational work done well, and a coach can evidence all of the core competencies within that process. Indeed, this is often a differentiator between beginning coaches and those who are more experienced and effective. Beginners tend to rush to get an agreement, while more experienced coaches understand the value of full exploration when developing agreements. Ultimately, our mantra is: *don't rush this*!

Coaching Agreements in Depth

Having established the need for thorough exploration of this competency, now let's look at some of the detail around how this can be done. The first thing I'd like to highlight here is the use of the words "... *in the session*" when describing certain aspects of this competency. When a client comes into a coaching session and the coach asks them what they would like to work on, it is quite possible that the client will begin to share information about something that they want to happen, achieve or change etc. "out there" in their life. For example, "I want to improve my relationship with my team", "I want to explore my next career move", "I want to be healthier". Not only are these goals quite high level, they are also things that would ultimately come to fruition outside of the coaching context as part of the client's daily life. Having explored and understood what it is that the client wants to achieve "out there", our role is to then explore with the client what is the piece of work and the outcome from that piece of work that they'd like to accomplish in the coaching session. In this way, we not only know the "out there" goal, we also now know the goal "in here" for the piece of work that we will do together *in the session*.

This further exploration of goals not only helps to get clarity on the piece of coaching work, it also helps the client to really consider what it is that they want to achieve and work on. It is very interesting how often; through this deeper inquiry the client may actually change or reframe the goal for the session based on important insights that may have arisen. If we are working with a client for several sessions, we may have an overarching goal for the package of work (established in Level 1 or 2) and then for each individual coaching session there would still be a specific desired outcome, the achievement of which takes them incrementally closer toward the overarching goal.

Another point to note is that, as with any process, sometimes the goal posts change and sometimes even the goal itself changes. For example, the coach is expected to notice and inquire if the direction of the conversation seems to have deviated from the client's originally stated goal so that there is an opportunity to check in and either continue, change or realign that direction based upon what is most important or relevant for the client. The coach might say, "Now that this new area has emerged, what would be most useful to focus on?" Based upon these inquiries and check-in opportunities, the coach is then continuing the direction of the conversation in line with the client's desired outcome. A notable addition to the most recent description of this competency is the inclusion of the word "maintains" agreements. This addition highlights this idea that agreements need to be revisited throughout the coaching engagement to ensure that they are still relevant to the client and that the coaching is continuing to move in the desired directions.

Establishing measures of success is also an important aspect of this competency. Once again, this specifically relates to getting clarity on those measures of success for what the client wants to accomplish across the overall coaching engagement (Level 1 or 2) and then within each coaching session (Level 3). When the coaching engagement or session ends, how will they know that they have accomplished what they wanted? This is important for enabling the client to connect with a sense of achievement and progress. Also, in the case of coaching engagements where there is a sponsor (e.g. a line manager), it is also a way for the benefit of the coaching to be measured in terms of establishing a return on investment or a return on expectations for the work undertaken. As noted in the previous paragraph, there may be a need to reconfirm these measures if the goal or outcome for the session changes.

We then reach the part of this competency concerned with understanding the importance or meaning of the piece of work for the client and this is useful to establish for several reasons. This inquiry helps the client to consider their level of motivation for and confidence or commitment to this topic. Understanding what it means to them also helps to connect with what difference this would make to them in their life if the issue were resolved or the goal were achieved. This in turn may highlight some of the client's values and the real reasons why this is an important conversation for them. This inquiry may also inform the clarity of the actual goal for the coaching session as the client carefully considers what they want and why. This might be explored with questions such as: "What would it mean to you to resolve or achieve this?", "What is important for you in addressing this now?" or "In achieving this, what would it lead to for you?"

A further point on this competency, the coach is expected to help the client to consider what might need to be addressed for the session outcome to be successfully achieved. The analogy we would like to offer for this is planning a trip. We may decide that we want to travel from one part of the country to another and we look at a route planner to consider how to get there. However, that planner is showing us a route and timings based on certain assumptions and averaged criteria. Therefore, do we simply head off on our way and hope for the best that we'll get there on time and with no challenges or interruptions? Or do we check what the weather is due to be like or if there are any road works or other transport challenges that we might face etc.? In this same way in coaching, the coach invites the client to consider any issues that might be relevant to address, consider or explore in service of the client's successful accomplishment of their goal.

Finally, establishing and maintaining the coaching agreement is also closely linked to how the coach partners with the client to effectively manage the time and bring the session or the overall coaching engagement to an appropriate close. From a session by session perspective, the coach is expected to partner with the client, not only to manage the focus of the session as already described, also to manage the time so that the concept of the conversation having a beginning, middle and end is achieved. It is the coach's responsibility to manage the time and to check in with the client periodically to assess progress toward the stated goal and how the client would like to use the remaining time available. In this way, the client can focus on their coaching work and the coach holds the coaching space through carefully tracking time. This could be evidenced by the coach asking for example:

- "We're about half-way through our time today, how are you doing in relation to your goal for today?"

- "We've got XYZ minutes left today, where would you like to focus now" or "how would you like to use the remainder of our time?"

This process of managing time is also relevant for the overall coaching engagement so that progress toward the client's overarching goals is noted and explored and any adjustments the client may want to make are addressed.

Ultimately, the coaching engagement will come to an end and an important part of this competency is that the coach partners with the client to end the coaching relationship in a way that honors the experience. The key word here is: *partners*, and the coach is expected to inquire and co-create an appropriate way of ending, acknowledging and even celebrating the work and client's progress and achievements in the coaching process. This is where the beginning of the work closely relates to the end of the work and this competency links directly to some aspects of Competency 8: Facilitates Client Growth.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have highlighted three distinct levels of contracting that coaches are expected to thoroughly establish and maintain. We have also positioned why coaching agreements are such a significant aspect of the coaching process and have explored each element of this competency in depth.

Chapter 9
Co-creating the Relationship Domain, Competency 4. Cultivates Trust and Safety

Introduction

The next competency in this domain is Cultivates Trust and Safety. Whilst this chapter focuses Competency 4 specifically, its close relationship with Competency 5: Maintains Presence is significant. It is the combination of these two competencies along with the depth and thoroughness of partnering undertaken in Competency 3: Establishes and Maintains Agreements, that truly co-creates the relationship with the client. Whereas the other competencies focus more on how the coach demonstrates their skills for the actual process of coaching, competencies four and five particularly focus on how the coach creates, nurtures, and maintains a good coach-client relationship to underpin and enable the coaching process to happen most effectively. In this regard, the word "cultivates" in the title of this competency, is specifically intended to reflect that trust and safety is something that has to be tended to throughout the relationship and is not a "one-time activity" by the coach.

Inter-related Competencies

The interrelatedness of all of the competencies will hopefully already be apparent, however it is worth noting here that competencies four and five are highly intertwined with the other competencies and ideally form a thread that runs through the conversation enabling an environment and a relationship that is conducive to an effective coaching experience and outcome for the client. Coaching is often described as a dance, where the coach and client work elegantly together in rapport. The dance metaphor is a useful one as there are several parallels with coaching in that the client takes the lead like one partner does in a dance and the fact that at first the dance can feel clunky and we might tread on each other's feet or start to move in different directions. We might even feel as though one of us is dancing a waltz whilst

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the other is doing the jive! Part of the coach's skill here therefore is to seek to work "in-step" with the client as quickly as possible so that the work can be facilitated. For the purposes of assessment, these skills are to be observed within the coaching session, however in reality one would expect both of these competencies to be applied from the very beginning of the coach-client engagement, for example during a chemistry session.

Moving on to look at Competency 4 specifically, it is described in Box 9.1.

Box 9.1 Competency 4: Cultivates Trust and Safety Definition: Partners with the client to create a safe, supportive environment that allows the client to share freely. Maintains a relationship of mutual respect and trust.

1. Seeks to understand the client within their context which may include their identity, environment, experiences, values and beliefs.
2. Demonstrates respect for the client's identity, perceptions, style and language, and adapts one's coaching to the client.
3. Acknowledges and respects the client's unique talents, insights, and work in the coaching process.
4. Shows support, empathy, and concern for the client.
5. Acknowledges and supports the client's expression of feelings, perceptions, concerns, beliefs and suggestions.
6. Demonstrates openness and transparency as a way to display vulnerability and build trust with the client.

(ICF, 2019b)

Essential Elements

The essential elements of this competency are that the coach:

- Creates a safe, supportive environment
- Respects the whole person of the client
- Acknowledges the work of the client in the process

What is being looked for in this competency is that the coach understands and respects the client and his or her contribution to their work as well as the coach creating a safe space for the client to do that work. Given the fact that this competency is intended to co-create the relationship and be evident throughout the coaching conversation, there is an expectation that multiple examples of these skills will be observed during the piece of work. The skills of this competency may be evidenced directly through the language or actions of the coach and also indirectly by the coach's way of being. For example, the friendly exchange of language that can occur between the coach and client when they are in rapport and have a comfortable relationship with each other is a valid way of demonstrating this competency.

Initially, one would expect to notice the coach seeking to understand their client better and effectively to get to know them as a person, as well as gaining clarity on what they are bringing into the coaching process. The focus therefore here is on the *who* of the client and not only on *what* they are bringing. This aspect links to elements of the previous competency, Establishes and Maintains Agreements, where the coach may have invited a deeper inquiry as to the significance, importance and timing of the client's chosen coaching topic. In this way, the coach begins to know and understand the person bringing the topic as well as the topic itself. In this competency, the process of relationship building continues with further exploration of other aspects of the client that may be relevant to the context of the work, including their associated environment, experiences, values, beliefs, need and expectations and even their sense of their own identity in relation to their topic or goal.

Once the coach and client know each other a little better, the process of acknowledgment and respect is facilitated. Acknowledging and demonstrating respect for the client's work in the coaching process might be evidenced by comments such as "You seem to have given this a lot of thought," or "It strikes me that you have already put a lot of effort into this topic." Supporting the client's expression could also be noticed through the coach's continuing invitation to the client to share their opinion throughout the coaching session and to say more about their feelings, perceptions, concerns, beliefs and also their suggestions for how they might move forward. These acknowledgments and invitations are coupled with respect for the client's style of expression and language.

At times, the focus of a coaching conversation may enter into areas which may be quite sensitive for the client. In these cases, this competency also involves the coach meeting this sensitivity by checking in and seeking permission to further explore or inquire in that direction. This respectful, sensitive probing which leaves the client at choice is an important feature in building a strong and safe coach-client connection. In addition, a good level of respect and rapport might also be experienced by the way in which the coach appropriately adapts to or matches the client's way of speaking and, in the case of face to face coaching, how the coach relates to the client with eye contact and body language.

Another aspect of acknowledging and respecting the client's work in the coaching process is to support, encourage and champion the client's courage and/or willingness to make changes in service of accomplishing their goal. This might also include acknowledging the challenges they might face whilst making those changes. This type of acknowledgement could be evidenced by comments such as, "I know that it took courage for you to take the risk and do something different," and "You really seem to be gaining momentum now with this new habit." Being aware and inclusive of the client's life, history, work, values, beliefs, etc. is yet another way of demonstrating acknowledgement and respect and can be evidenced by comments such as "I know how important this is to you and how you have struggled with this in the past. I now notice how confidently you are working through these situations as they arise."

It is important to highlight that support, empathy and concern do not mean rescuing or looking after. A core feature of how these three qualities are evidenced in coaching is the extent to which the coach creates an equal relationship with the client and aligns with one of the coaching principles that clients are creative, resourceful and whole. Therefore, they do not need us to "save" them, "fix" them or do anything that disempowers them or results in their own sense of resourcefulness being limited or undermined in any way. This point also closely relates to a competency we have already covered in a previous chapter, Competency 2, Embodies a Coaching Mindset.

It is therefore important how acknowledgement is framed and offered so that it is not positioned as praise or approval from the coach. To illustrate this point, we draw upon a model from transactional analysis, called Ego States (Stewart & Joines, 2012), in which the coach seeks to establish an adult-to-adult relationship with the client as opposed to a parent-child type relationship. To that end, the coach is expected to offer, when appropriate, empathy versus sympathy, to express confidence in the client's capabilities, and to notice the client's strengths and achievements. The coach should also demonstrate patience whilst the client is processing their work in the coaching process and not be judgmental of them or how they are being.

Support that is positioned in this equal, non-judgmental, non-fixing way can be not only enormously supportive but also very empowering for the client; really inviting them into a safe space where they can truly tap into their resourcefulness and creativity to overcome challenges and make the changes they want to make in service of accomplishing their goals. Examples of this could be, "You can do this. You have achieved so much already," "I feel your sadness, how do you want to be with this right now?" and "Congratulations on making this breakthrough."

Encouraging and allowing the client to fully express him/herself is another key aspect to this competency and also another way of demonstrating respect and support as well as creating a trusting environment. It could also be evidenced in a direct way by the coach actually asking the client to "Tell me more…" or "What are you thinking about this?" The common theme here is that it is the client who does most of the talking, without interruption from the coach and the client is also invited to share more when appropriate in support of forward movement toward their outcome for the session.

Finally, the development of trust and safety is built through the coach demonstrating openness and transparency as a way to display their own vulnerability. This could be evidenced by the client being able to agree or disagree with the coach; this may sound something like, "Tell me if this doesn't resonate with you, what I notice is…"

Conclusion

In this chapter we have highlighted the inter-related nature of the competencies and, in this case, the specific relationship between competencies four and five. We have also highlighted and described the essential elements of Cultivating Trust and Safety. In the next chapter, we will look at the final competency that completes the trilogy in the domain for effectively co-creating the coaching relationship.

Chapter 10
Co-creating the Relationship Domain, Competency 5. Maintains Presence

Introduction

With this competency, we continue to look at how the coach co-creates the relationship with their client and in this case the focus is on the extent to which the coach is present to and curious about what the client is saying and who the client is. The skill and quality of this partnering is also significant in terms of how and how much the coach actively seeks input from the client around the content and direction of the conversation as opposed to offering content and direction themselves.

Maintaining Presence

The competency is described in Box 10.1.

Box 10.1 Competency 5. Maintains Presence Definition: Is fully conscious and present with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible, grounded and confident.

1. Remains focused, observant, empathetic and responsive to the client.
2. Demonstrates curiosity during the coaching process.
3. Manages one's emotions to stay present with the client.
4. Demonstrates confidence in working with strong client emotions during the coaching process.
5. Is comfortable working in a space of not knowing.
6. Creates and allows for silence, pause or reflection.

(ICF, 2019b)

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Essential Elements

Essential elements of this competency are that the coach:

- Maintains full focus on the client
- Demonstrates curiosity
- Manages emotions
- Creates space for reflection

Presence is exemplified in the first sub-competency by the coach being able to remain focused, observant, empathetic and responsive to the client. The following sub-competencies then offer examples of how the coach can demonstrate the quality of presence. Some key themes at the heart of this competency are the extent to which the coach truly partners with their client, staying grounded and open, even when faced with challenge, complexity and uncertainty, and the extent to which the coach works with the client beyond their coaching topic. Sometimes this is called "coaching the person" and not just the topic. Partnering has already been positioned as critical within the competencies covered so far and it is this focus on partnering that enables some significant qualities of a highly effective coaching conversation.

Partnering

Here are the key elements of partnering which are embedded within the philosophy of this competency:

- Shows respect and equality
- Engenders trust and safety
- Empowers the client
- Helps to hold the client accountable for the work in the coaching process (see more on accountability in Chap. 13)
- Underpins autonomous and developmental thinking and positive change for the client

In practice, the coach can demonstrate this partnering in several ways. Firstly, it can be evidenced by the coach inviting the client to co-design the focus and direction of the session with comments such as "Where would you like to start?", "How would you like to approach this?", "Where would you like to go next?" and "How can I best work with you today around this topic?" Partnering is also experienced when the coach is open to and invites the client to disagree with the coach. This could be through the coach comfortably moving from their own frame of reference to that of the client, for example: "What my intuition says is.... however, I may be wrong, what do you think about...?" This invitation to disagree could also be demonstrated by the coach, if offering their perspective, doing so without attachment such as:" What is your reaction to what I just offered and please feel free to disagree with it."

Another aspect of partnering is when the coach plays back options or possibilities the client has expressed and invites them to choose what they would like to do with them. What is significant here is that the client has agency and is the one who, not only sets the agenda, also sets the direction and approach the work will take in the coaching process. For example, the client might share several options for what they would like to move forwards with after the session and the coach may play them back by paraphrasing and clarifying their understanding and then inviting the client to choose which direction is going to be of most use to the client. This might be something like; "You have outlined options A, B and C, what do you want to do?" This approach is also helpful if the client brings several possible coaching topics into the session. Additionally, this play back is useful if and when the client might be exploring possibilities that could potentially be in conflict, not fully aligned or are very different, for example: "I'm hearing that you want to take a 6-month break and you are also intrigued by this new project: what would be most fulfilling for you at this time?"

Coaching is intended to support client's growth and development beyond the coaching conversations and beyond the specific topics they bring into coaching and partnering with them is one of the keys to unlocking that growth and potential. Specifically, the coach can enable this by encouraging the client to formulate his or her own learning as opposed to doing it for them. In this way, the coach champions the client's capability to assess their own experience by asking questions like: "What do you notice as you describe that situation?" and "What does that tell you?" or "What are you learning as you hear yourself describe that experience?"

Coach the Person

Now let's look at the other key aspect of this competency, which is "coaching the person." At an ACC level of coaching the coach is likely to hold a focus that is limited to the topic that the clients bring in to coaching. At PCC and even more so at MCC level, there is an expectation that the coach will not only hold and work with the client's topic, they will also focus on how the client thinks, feels, learns, relates and creates. This might also extend to the client's values and beliefs, how they view the world and how they see or want to be their place in the word. For example, the coach might ask: "How might this new project align with the values you shared earlier?" or "What are the beliefs and values that you will honor when you have that conversation?"

When coaching the person, the coach is also demonstrating empathy and responsiveness and showing they are fully observant to what is happening in the coaching process. This could be noticing and inquiring about client emotions or feelings such as: "I'm sensing some disappointment and I'd like to check . . . how is this for you?" or "I can see your emotion and I know this is important for you, would you like to explore this further?" This brings us to the topic of the client's emotions and in particular strong emotions. The coach is expected to be able to appropriately hold the space for the client to fully express themselves and this may include expressing a strong emotion. This links back to the philosophy that we hold of the client being creative, resourceful and whole. A client expressing emotions, for example crying, does not necessarily become un-resourceful, lacking in creativity or broken! Rogers

(1980) stated: “I regret it when I suppress my feelings too long and they burst forth in ways that are distorted or attacking or hurtful”. Part of what coaching can offer is a place for emotions to be expressed and explored in service of forward movement and growth. It is therefore important that the coach can offer a space for it to be okay for emotions to be expressed. To illustrate this, we make reference to a concept called Life Positions originating from the work of Eric Berne (1962), who founded a psychological approach called transactional analysis. Aspects of Berne’s work were further developed by Franklin Ernst (1971), positioning a model called the OK Corral. In this model, there is a healthy and functional position where both the coach and the client hold the perspective of: “I am OK with me and you are OK with me”. This means that, whilst the client may be emotional or tearful, they are still OK at their core and the coach and the client can still *get on with* the coaching work at hand as opposed to the coach assuming that the client needs to stop or indeed that the coach needs to stop because of the emotions that are present at that time. This aspect of working with emotions is very natural and comfortable for some coaches and less so for others and in this case an opportunity for valuable growth for the coach might be in exploring this aspect of their work and their own responses to emotions in others. This links directly to sub-competency 3: “Manages one’s emotions to stay present with the client” and also to many aspects of Competency 2: Embodies a Coaching Mindset.

Another way to coach the person as well as the topic thereby demonstrating that we are focused, observant and responsive is by exhibiting curiosity with the intention to learn more about the client. Curiosity is shown by the coach genuinely inquiring about the client’s agenda and aspects of the client as a person as well as regularly seeking input from the client around their ideas and perspectives.

It is also relevant at this point to state that coaching is not therapy and there may be a time when the client’s level and nature of emotion indicates that another form of resource might be more appropriate and useful to the client. This is referenced in the ICF Code of Ethics Part 4. Ethical Standards, Section I—Responsibility to clients, item 7: *Remain alert to indications that there might be a shift in the value received from the coaching relationship. If so, make a change in the relationship or encourage the Client(s)/Sponsor(s) to seek another coach, seek another professional or use a different resource*. As previously outlined in Chapter 6, guidance on when and how to refer clients to therapy can be found in an ICF white paper called “Referring a Client to Therapy” (Hullinger & DiGirolamo, 2018).

Getting in the Way

Sometimes the coach’s presence is noticeable in its absence. The absence or reduction of our presence with our client may be due to certain factors, one of which might be strong client emotions which we have just explored. Another factor that can challenge our presence is the need to know. In so many walks of life, what we know seems to be important, we are conditioned and encouraged to know and we are, in many circumstances, valued by what we know. Academics, subject matter experts and specialists are paid because of what they know. Leaders are supposed to know what to do during organizational change, doctors are expected to know what is wrong with their patients. However, if we consider the humanistic approach (see Chap. 16), it may be that our knowledge can in fact be a distraction and even get in the way of the client being able to do their own work.

The humanistic approach embraces the belief that people have a "self-righting reflex" and, given the right conditions, will be able to achieve their goal. A new coach may struggle with this concept as it is often quite a significant mindset shift from the social conditioning we have experienced around knowledge in other aspects of our lives. It can feel almost counter intuitive to think that we add value by not knowing. As we develop in our coaching practice, we come to realize that we do not know exactly what is going on for our client or indeed ultimately what is best for them, not is it our role to do so. They are the subject matter expert on their life and our role is to be comfortable to *be with* them as they navigate their unknown, not trying to solve or fix, simply to create and offer them the space and time to think, being utterly present, deeply listening and supporting their thinking and feeling process with some clean and simple, yet thought provoking questions and observations. This challenge could be exemplified by considering a person who has had a successful career in their field and decides to leave corporate life and become a coach. Whilst they clearly grasp the theory of coaching and understand the competencies on paper, what can be noticeable is that, in their coaching practice, they simply cannot resist the desire or even the need to offer, to suggest, to fix, to drive, to direct. Their conditioning from years of being valued for they know in their professional career and their own perception of they add value that can be tied up and intertwined with that conditioning. This can mean that the coach's own agenda and beliefs begin to seep into the work and in fact have the opposite effect of adding value as they end up getting in the client's way. We have heard many new coaches say things like: "I didn't *do* anything", "I'm just not sure how *I added value* really", "I'm struggling to help my clients *get to* their goal" or even "How can *just listening* help them? Surely, I need to *give them* something, otherwise what value am I being to them . . . and they are paying me for that!"

This shift in our own mindset is also closely linked to coach maturity which we have explored in Chap. 1. Developing the capacity to be comfortable with not knowing may also involve therefore some personal work (perhaps with our own coach or a coaching supervisor) for us to explore our own beliefs about knowing and what it means for us to know, not know and how we perceive ourselves to have value as a coach. As coaches, our value can be enormous, it may be more a question of how we define and perceive that value.

Silence Is Golden

As noted above, this competency also addresses the extent to which the coach creates or allows space for silence, pause or reflection. This is an important aspect of the client being able to fully express themselves and for them to freely engage in the thinking and feeling processes needed for that fullness of expression. This space, the "coaching space", is what then facilitates the client being able to make meaning of their thoughts and feelings. This meaning-making process links very closely to Competencies 7, Evokes Awareness and 8, Facilitates Client Growth. Space for the client could be encouraged simply by the coach staying quiet and allowing the client to share and pause and then share more as their thoughts unfold and come to the surface. By way of illustration, we draw up on the comparison to a game of table tennis. In table tennis, we hear the constant tap, tap, tap, tap as each player hits the ball and passes it back over to the other side. Often when people are first learning to coach, the conversation sounds a little like this as the dialogue is exchanged between the coach and client through a stream of questions and answers with very little space in between. One of the things that we know about how we process information and communicate best, is that it is the space in between the dialogue that makes the difference. It is during that space that the words which have just been spoken are truly listened to, rather than just heard. It is also in that "coaching space" that we digest and process the words and begin to formulate our response. What is noticeable in coaching conversations with more experienced coaches is that the "game" slows down, it's almost as though the table tennis ball becomes momentarily suspended in the air somewhere between the two players before it lands, and the other person speaks again. In this way, the client has the space to really hear themselves and gain insights from their own expression and the coach has the space to truly listen to their client and then take the time to consider what to say or ask next based upon what they are hearing, noticing and experiencing in the coaching process.

It is important for the coach to give the client sufficient time for reflection, time to answer questions and simply to just give them time to think (Kline, 1999). Kline proposes that the quality of someone's thinking is directly comparable to the quality of the listening they receive. All too often, coaches feel that they have to add value by asking great questions or offering some powerful insight and can therefore get caught up in their own agenda and desire for performance when all the client might need is the space and time to think for themselves and be deeply heard and listened to. This is an important part of how the partnership and the dance between coach and client can be almost magical in inviting the client's own wisdom to come forward.

Conclusion

This chapter concludes the trilogy of competencies that describes the domain of Co-Creating the Relationship. We have highlighted and outlined the importance of partnering and the concept of coaching the person and not just the topic. We have also explored some of the things that can get in the way of the coach fully demonstrating this competency and ended with one of the most powerful coaching interventions: silence.

Chapter 11
Communicating Effectively Domain, Competency 6. Listens Actively

Introduction

We now look at the first of two competencies concerned with the effective communication of the coach which involve communication and methods of evoking awareness in the client.

> **Box 11.1 Competency 6: Listens Actively** Definition: Focuses on what the client is and is not saying to fully understand what is being communicated in the context of the client systems and to support client self-expression.
>
> 1. Considers the client's context, identity, environment, experiences, values and beliefs to enhance understanding of what the client is communicating.
> 2. Reflects or summarizes what the client communicated to ensure clarity and understanding.
> 3. Recognizes and inquires when there is more to what the client is communicating.
> 4. Notices, acknowledges and explores the client's emotions, energy shifts, non-verbal cues or other behaviors.
> 5. Integrates the client's words, tone of voice, and body language to determine the full meaning of what is being communicated.
> 6. Notices trends in the client's behaviors and emotions across sessions to discern themes and patterns.
>
> (ICF, 2019b)

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On reading this description, you may notice that there are some themes here which have already been introduced in the competencies covered so far:

- The client's broader context
- Seeking and listening to understand
- Probing and integrating client's way of communicating for greater clarity and depth of meaning
- Noticing and exploring voice, verbal language, energy, and body language
- Playing back
- Noticing and exploring trends, themes and patterns

The above themes also form a thread that is intended to run through the coaching conversation in a natural, intuitive, and appropriate way.

Key Elements

The key elements of this competency are that the coach:

1. Engages in holistic listening
2. Reflects back to ensure shared understanding
3. Integrates understanding of the client to support communication

In essence this competency is about the coach's ability to truly hear what the client is presenting about who s/he is and the client's situation or coaching topic. This ability is evidenced by how the coach responds to what the client presents and how the coach uses the information and language shared by the client to co-create a structure and direction for the conversation including potential areas of exploration.

At a basic level this implies all of the great active listening skills that we know well: actively demonstrating attention, showing genuine interest, paraphrasing, summarizing, mirroring, seeking clarity, encouraging the client to share, withholding judgment, and refraining from pushing their own ideas and agenda. Over and above these skills, we then add another layer of listening that engages both the client and the coach in a deeper exploration of the meaning of what is being presented, which offers greater insight and awareness in service of the client's forward movement.

Listening Through Questioning and Inquiry

One of the ways to initiate this deeper listening is by asking questions or making observations that are truly reflective of what the coach knows about the client and their situation or topic. This may appear to be a very obvious suggestion; however, it is not always so easy to do in practice. It can be very easy for the coach to find themselves in a place where they have a question they want to ask, and the client is still talking. The coach's energy then becomes focused on waiting for the client to stop so that they can ask their question. I have heard this called "question queuing" and it is something that takes the coach's energy, attention and presence away from listening to their client because they are more focused on their own agenda of asking their question. Many times, whilst listening to recordings of coaching sessions, we have even heard the intake of breath by the coach, literally waiting for the client to finish so that they can allow their question to come out. This creates a very different environment for the client to work in compared to the one that allowed for space for the client to fully express themselves as described in the previous chapter on competency five. Offering questions or observations that are reflective of what we have learnt about the client are also evidenced when we draw upon information that we heard from them previously, for example: "In our last session you mentioned how important rest was for you at the moment, what is the impact of this new project on that?" In this way, the coach "notices trends in the client's behavior and emotions across sessions to discern themes and patterns". This is important to reinforce as using cumulative information from listening across sessions is how the coach can come to understand the broader context and full meanings of what the client is saying. This deeper, broader aspect of listening is sometimes overlooked by less experienced coaches and is also one which, once developed, helps the coach to build and maintain their coaching presence with the client.

Deeper listening also involves deeper inquiry. This inquiry might be about the client's use of language and/or the client's feelings, patterns the coach has noticed as well as how the client processes. For example, for language, the coach might ask: "You have mentioned freedom a few times, what does freedom mean to you?" and for feelings the coach might ask: "How do you feel when you think about that freedom?" and for a deeper inquiry into how the client processes it could be something like: "How will honoring your value of freedom support you in achieving your goal?" Inquiry into client's emotions can also link to some of the points discussed in competency five around working with client emotions. For example, the coach might ask about or reflect back the client's emotions by noticing their mood, tone, body language, energy etc. In this instance, the coach could ask: "When you talk about this, your face lights up and you smile broadly, what does this mean for you?" or "I notice your tears, what's going on for you right now?"

Assumptions

What is also important about this is that it helps the coach to check and take care with their own possible assumptions about what the client is saying. When a client mentions "freedom", it can be very quick and easy for the coach's own mind to go directly to what freedom means for them as so often we process what someone else is saying by using ourselves and our own lives and experiences as a point of reference. In coaching, the danger with this is that we may then act upon those assumptions and what freedom means to the coach may be very different to what it means for their client. Whilst we may think we are speaking the same language, in fact we are not, because everyone has their own unique way of choosing words and terms to accurately express the real meaning of our thoughts and feelings. The care we take when choosing our words can be exemplified when we at times struggle to “find the right words” and so it is really important that the coach carefully listens to the words their clients share as they will have been chosen for a reason—the term “words create worlds” comes to mind.

Listening with All the Senses

Noticing and exploring energy shifts is a powerful way to invite deeper listening and communication with the client. There would need to be a noticeable shift in the client’s energy for this to be relevant of course. However, what is expected is that the coach is demonstrating their presence by sharing observational feedback with the client when the client’s body, physical rhythms or posture change. A further nuance to this level of inquiry is to ask about or explore the client’s tone of voice, pace or volume of speech and other changes to vocal qualities. As with energy shifts, changes in the client’s vocal qualities are a way for us to demonstrate our deeper level of listening through observational feedback. For example: “When you talk about that event your speech speeds up quite a bit and your voice gets higher, what do you think that is about?”

Finally, in addition to listening for and inquiring about language, feelings and voice qualities, the coach may also listen for and inquire about the client’s behaviors and also how the client perceives his/her world in terms of their environment, beliefs and values etc. For instance, the client may share a particular situation and the coach might further explore this by inquiring about the client’s actions, reactions and/or responses to people, places and events. What is noteworthy here is that these questions are *not* intended to simply elicit data, e.g. what did he do and what did you do and then what did he do? The focus of the coach should be on exploring the process that was happening before, during or after certain behaviors, for example: “What were your thoughts and feelings that led you to react in that way?” or “What was the impact of your actions in that meeting?” or “How do you want to be when you have that conversation?” How the client perceives his or her experience can be explored by inquiring about the client’s beliefs, assumptions, values and perspectives, such as: “What assumptions might you be making about this?” or “From where you stand, what is your perspective?” or “What is your belief about this?”

Conclusion

What is evident in this chapter is that listening involves questioning. Listening in the coaching relationship is not a passive activity, we listen *actively*. Our listening as a coach has a purpose and this means asking questions to probe, inquire and explore so that the true meaning of what the client is communicating is fully expressed, conveyed, and understood.

Chapter 12
Communicating Effectively Domain, Competency 7. Evokes Awareness

Introduction

The second of the two competencies concerned with the effective communication of the coach is Evokes Awareness. The competency and job analysis process identified and analyzed certain "kernels" that emerged as highly effective characteristics in the coaching process. These included:

- The client being open to change or learning
- The coach listening to the client
- The coach utilizing appropriate coaching methods and approaches to cause the client to shift

This competency is described in Box 12.1.

Box 12.1 Competency 7: Evokes Awareness Definition: Facilitates client insight and learning by using tools and techniques such as powerful questioning, silence, metaphor or analogy.

1. Considers client experience when deciding what might be most useful.
2. Challenges the client as a way to evoke awareness or insight.
3. Asks questions about the client, such as their way of thinking, values, needs, wants and beliefs.
4. Asks questions that help the client explore beyond current thinking.
5. Invites the client to share more about their experience in the moment.
6. Notices what is working to enhance client progress.
7. Adjusts the coaching approach in response to the client's needs.
8. Helps the client identify factors that influence current and future patterns of behavior, thinking or emotion.

(continued)

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Box 12.1 (continued)

9. Invites the client to generate ideas about how they can move forward and what they are willing or able to do.
10. Supports the client in reframing perspectives.
11. Shares observations, insights, and feelings, without attachment, that have the potential to create new learning for the client.

(ICF, 2019b)

The key elements of this competency are that the coach:

- Asks to elicit new insights
- Shares observations to support new learning
- Supports the client in reflection and reframing

What Is a 'Powerful Question'?

We start by looking at powerful questioning as an important coaching tool which causes the client to shift. Sometimes coaches think that a powerful question is one that "blows the socks off the client" because of its *power*. To understand what constitutes a powerful question, we point our attention toward the ICF definition of coaching: "Partnering with clients in a *thought-provoking* and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential" (ICF, 2007).

The tool of powerful questioning relates directly to the "thought-provoking" part of this definition. We know that we are typically creatures of habit and that our habits extend to thinking habits as well as behavioral ones. There is a saying of disputed origin: "If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got" and this really underpins the relevance of this tool in coaching. If the client's current behavioral and thinking habits were working well for them in the situation they have brought into coaching, they probably would not need or want coaching on it. The very fact that they have brought this topic means that they are most likely experiencing some sort of challenge or complexity around it that would be supported by expanding their thinking, their perspectives and therefore the choices they feel they have in that situation. This is the function and purpose of this tool; not to "blow the client's socks off", rather to be able to ask clear questions that help the client to explore issues, his/her part in those issues, their behaviors and how they are being. These questions are intended to help the client to move forward toward his/her desired outcome for the coaching conversation.

There are some common patterns in the effective use of powerful questioning including the focus or types of questions that can be asked, the nature and quality of those questions and the purpose of powerful questions.

Focus and Type of Questions

Taking the focus or type of questions first, words like: evoke, explore, beyond, generate and reframe are noticeable. Therefore, the types of questions that are *powerful* are those which challenge the client and their thinking and invite them to go beyond the boundaries and limitations of their habitual thinking habits to explore and discover new ways of considering their situation, issue or goal. This can be done in several ways; the coach can ask questions about the client's way of thinking, their assumptions beliefs, values, wants and needs etc. For example: "What choices have you considered so far?", "What is important for you about that?", "What assumptions are you making about this situation?", "What will you consider to make a decision?" and "What do you really want?". These expansive questions might also focus on inviting the client to consider new ways of thinking about him/herself and even challenge their current thinking so that they can see the situation from a different angle. In this way, the coach's questions invite the client to move away from their current "story" and look forward toward new and different possibilities. This can be demonstrated by questions such as: "Is that belief *really* true?", "How could you challenge your view about this?" or "How might you think differently about yourself in this situation?"

Apart from exploring the client's thinking and how they view themselves, powerful questions can also focus on expanding their awareness around the situation they are bringing into coaching. With these types of questions, the coach is inviting the client to look at the situation from different perspectives. The questions are intended to support the client to reframe the situation to one which is more empowering for them and could be evidenced by questions such as: "If it were 6 months from now and this were resolved what do you notice?", "What is a different way of looking at this?", "What do you notice when you put yourself in their shoes?" and "What else?" Finally, it is also important for the coach's questions to invite the client to direct their attention and thinking toward their goal. Here, the coach is inviting an inquiry of what success might look like and asks the client to imagine their desired future. This may also include working with time by inviting an inquiry that starts from the future and works backwards to the present moment. These questions assist the client to create new scenarios and possibilities that would enable and lead to the successful accomplishment of their goal. Examples of these types of questions might be: "How do you want things to be in a year from now?", "What would the ideal outcome look like for you?", "What could you change today that will move you closer to that goal?" and the "miracle question": "What if you had a magic wand, what would you change?" The miracle question can be very useful as it directly challenges the limitations imposed by habitual thinking. Sometimes, something is only impossible because of the way we are thinking about it and, once our thinking is unlocked through these powerful questions, so many more options and possibilities become available to us.

As seen above, the focus on future and what is possible also links closely to the client's *ideal* view of self. A question such as: "What if anything were possible?"

speaks very much to the concept of the exploration of fantasy life outlined in Chap. 21 and the psychodynamic approach. Boyatzis's Intentional Change Theory (2008) and the discovery of the "Ideal Self" also reinforces a focus on the benefits of exploring the client's hopes, dreams and vision of success to open up the scope for what is possible in the client's thinking.

Future focus is at the core of the forward-moving philosophy of coaching. Whereas the competency of Listens Actively (see Chap. 11) focuses a great deal on listening to the client and their current view of the world, their situation and their view of self, the competency of Evokes Awareness is much more about shifting that view into what may be possible. Questions are important for both of these competencies; however, the intentions and outcomes for each are distinct.

As we discuss these different types of questions, we refer back once again to the ICF definition of coaching:

"Partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and *creative process that inspires* them to maximize their personal and professional potential" (ICF, 2007).

By provoking new and expanded thought, the coach is able to support the client to access their innate creativity, something which may have been left dormant or impeded by the previous thinking habits. To that end, the role of the coach goes beyond being someone who asks "powerful" questions to the essential idea of the coach helping the client gain new insights. Once their creativity is unlocked and the client can see more options, possibilities and choices, their energy can then be more positively directed toward the accomplishment of their goals, leaving them feeling more inspired and fulfilled.

Nature and Quality of Questions

Moving to the nature and quality of the coach's questions, these are intended to be as clear and concise as possible. Through conciseness, the client can hear and process the question more easily, meaning that their mental energy is being maximized and not distracted by complicated, lengthy questions that take time and energy to understand, let alone process and respond. This is further supported by the coach's questions being primarily open ended, asked one at a time, rather than multiple questions, and at a pace that allows the client time to listen, think, reflect and respond (remember, this isn't a game of table tennis!). The acronym: WAIT (Why am I talking?) is helpful here to remind the coach that their questions are intended to evoke new thought, not interrupt or demonstrate own performance or agenda and so the philosophy of "less is more" is definitely advocated and the coach is encouraged to take their *own* time to reflect so that they can carefully consider, formulate and ask their questions in as few words as possible for maximum positive impact for the client.

The quality of the coach's questions will also be enhanced by using and appropriately mirroring the client's language and elements of the client's learning style and frame of reference. As with many aspects of building connection and rapport that we have already seen in some of the previous competencies, the use of the client's language allows for mirror neurons to be triggered which, not only nurture that rapport, create a level of familiarity for the client, which enables them to connect with and process that language more readily. Questions being clear, concise and using the client's language are qualities that Nancy Kline (1999) notes when describing incisive questions which we have covered further in Chap. 16 on the humanistic approach.

The coach is also expected to consider the client's experience, context and communication style in order to understand and notice what is working so that they can then adapt and work with the client's style. This may be learning by doing, reflecting, experimenting, visualizing etc. For example, the coach might ask: "You mentioned that you had caught a glimpse of that future, what can you see?", "How would you like to approach this part of the work?", "What would you like to do now?" and "You said you are firing on all cylinders, what is that like?" A final note on the quality of the coach's questions is that they are not leading and do not contain a conclusion or direction from the coach. This aspect is a clear way of demonstrating the extent to which the coach is keeping to and holding the client's agenda versus their own and is evidenced with questions such as: "From the options you have outlined, which path do you want to take?", "What ideas do you have?" and "What conclusions are you drawing from this?"

The Purpose of Powerful Questioning

Ultimately, the purpose of powerful questioning is to support the client to explore new and different thinking that equally opens up new and different options, possibilities and choice, supporting the client to be more empowered to make those choices and take steps toward accomplishing their goal. What is important to remember however is that these questions need to be customized by what we have heard and learnt about the client and their situations. Whilst several examples of questions are being suggested within the chapters of this section, we offer a strong caution against thinking about these questions as a list of options. Every coaching conversation is different and unique and the very best way to ask a powerful question is to be deeply connected to the client and the conversation; to be fully present, to listen with all of the senses, to be intuitive and ask questions that arise directly from what is being heard and learnt in the coaching process. Formulaic coaching is in itself a habit, a thinking and behavioral habit, and is the very thing that we are inviting our clients to do differently.

Metaphor

Now let us consider another significant and useful tool in coaching for evoking awareness: the use of metaphor and/or analogy, which is a way of working with the client's language to create the relationship, communicate effectively and evoke awareness. One of the roots of this word is: *metapherein*, which means "to carry over," i.e. to transfer meaning and metaphor is an important way that we give meaning and structure to what we say. Whilst our speech may be structured, measured and logical, our mind and thoughts are more random, fast and multifaceted. Language is therefore used to express what is going on inside and metaphor is used to share how we give meaning to our experience. Working with the client's shared metaphor(s) is a rich way to communicate and engage with the client to more deeply understand what something truly means to them. Imagine the question "How are you?" . . .what is evoked if the answer is: "I'm on Cloud 9" or "I feel like I'm trapped in a dark cave and I can't find my way out"? These metaphors and symbolic language offer an opportunity to draw upon great coaching skills and inquire about the client's use of language and what it means for them, all customized by what we have heard through deep presence and listening.

Silence

Silence is also noted as a really useful way to evoke awareness and once again, the inter-relatedness of the competencies is evident. The coach's ability to allow silence and space, to pause for reflection, consideration and meaning making, offer a powerful opportunity for expansion of the client's awareness. As such, silence is also highlighted and covered more fully in Chap. 10, competency 5: Maintains Presence.

Finding Potential

Another aspect of this competency is the extent to which the coach's questions, intuitions and observations have the potential to create new learning for their client. The key word here is *potential* to create. . .a coach cannot guarantee that the client will take learning, however the role of the coach in this competency is to offer contributions that have the potential for this learning to be evoked. Indeed, this is one of the places in coaching where the coach may in fact offer *occasional* mentoring or consultancy type interventions by sharing their own ideas to evoke insight and forward movement (and always in service of the client's agenda as opposed to indulging the agenda or ego of the coach). For example, "May I share my perspective on this? Please let me know if it's helpful or if you disagree", "I think of you as a highly creative thinker, what happens when you think of yourself that way too?" or "You appear to be limiting your options here, what do you think?"

Offering Perspectives

Part of this activity may include the coach sharing observations, insights, and feelings, without attachment, that have the potential to create new learning for the client. The idea of coaches giving advice is always a controversial topic. We know from years of anecdotal evidence and listening to recordings of coaching sessions that many coaches do this—and frequently with positive results. Evidence of this was seen at all stages of the competency and job analysis process and two important criteria have been identified:

1. It is acceptable to share observations, insights or feelings with clients after getting permission to do so as long as there is no attachment to it.
2. The sharing must broaden (rather than narrow) the range of options or view for the client.

Therefore, such interventions by the coach are expected to be in service of the client's forward movement or learning—not the coach's agenda. This means that the interventions seek to expand and explore the client's thinking; potentially challenge the client's thinking and support the client to have new and different ways of considering and interacting with their issue. This type of intervention means that the coach is described as being "unattached" to their offering and is communicating in a way that enables self-discovery for the client as opposed to the coach telling the client on the basis of the coach holding a sense of being right or "knowing" what the client needs. Such unattached observations, intuitions, comments, thoughts and feelings might be something like: "It sounds like you are much more satisfied with that solution", "I'm hearing disappointment, is that right?" or "My intuition is telling me there's still something missing for you, how are you feeling about it?"

Conclusion

This competency is pivotal to the changes the client makes in their thinking, feeling and behavior, that ultimately lead them closer to their goals and desired outcomes. The process of evoking awareness includes careful questioning, probing and exploration as well the well placed offering of perspectives and observations from the coach that are in service of the client's learning and forward movement. The effective coach notices what is working in the coaching process and adapts to work 'in-step' with their client, which can include working with metaphor and silence in order to elicit the client's full potential for growth and development.

Chapter 13
Cultivating Learning and Growth Domain, Competency 8: Facilitates Client Growth

Introduction

This final competency sits under the domain of Cultivating Learning and Growth and epitomizes the overarching function and purpose of the coaching process. The specific use of the words learning and growth immediately tells us that coaching is not just about solving a problem, working on an issue, reaching a goal, or addressing a challenge. It is about much more than that. On one level, it is about using the coaching process to work with what the client brings into the session in order to establish specific, positive, and forward-moving outcomes. On another level, coaching focuses on how the client can nurture and fully leverage their experience of addressing their topic in a way that maximizes their personal and professional potential in a much broader sense. In this way, coaching most definitely has a micro and macro level of focus in many ways (see Table 13.1). This competency is described in Box 13.1.

Key Elements

The key elements of this competency are that the coach:

- Facilitates learning into action
- Respects client autonomy
- Celebrates progress
- Partners to close the session

Having supported the client to achieve expanded thinking and greater awareness in the previous competency, the essence of this competency is focused on how the client is then invited to consider what learning and insights they are drawing from their work in the coaching process and how that might be applied and integrated for

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Table 13.1 Micro-macro focus of coaching

Micro	Macro
Topic	Person
Current	Future
Topic/situation	Where and what else?
Behavior	Being
Solving a "problem"	Building capacity and maximizing potential

Box 13.1 Competency 8: Facilitates Client Growth

Definition: Partners with the client to transform learning and insight into action. Promotes client autonomy in the coaching process.

1. Works with the client to integrate new awareness, insight or learning into their worldview and behaviors.
2. Partners with the client to design goals, actions, and accountability measures that integrate and expand new learning.
3. Acknowledges and supports client autonomy in the design of goals, actions, and methods of accountability.
4. Supports the client in identifying potential results or learning from identified actions steps.
5. Invites the client to consider how to move forward, including resources, support, and potential barriers.
6. Partners with the client to summarize learning and insight within or between sessions.
7. Celebrates the client's progress and successes.
8. Partners with the client to close the session.

ICF (2019b)

their benefit beyond the coaching conversation. In simple terms, this is about how the coach helps the client leverage their enhanced awareness, thereby facilitating growth as a result. Furthermore, the forward movement implied in the coaching process means that this competency also focuses on next steps and their associated planning and implementation.

Autonomous Learning

What is being looked for and evaluated in this competency is the coach's ability to promote client autonomy and let them create, claim and determine how to use new learning arising from the coaching conversation (and across the coaching process). There is also a focus on how the coach partners with the client to create the potential for that new learning and growth to take place.

Part of this might include the coach inviting the client to explore the learning they are gaining from the session about their coaching topic or issue, such as: "Having explored this topic today, what are you learning about the situation?" However, in the spirit of not wishing to become formulaic in our coaching style, coaches are encouraged to draw upon many other ways to offer this type of inquiry. For example, "What insights are you gaining about...?", "What conclusions are you drawing about...?" or "What is changing now that you have explored this further?" This type of inquiry might also be about the learning the client is gaining about themselves and how they might behave differently as a result or how they perceive themselves now in their situation, such as: "What have you learnt about yourself as a leader today?", "What will you do differently now that you have made these decisions?" or "How will your insights impact the way you want to be as a parent?"

Eliciting, Integrating and Applying Learning

This competency also attends to how the coach invites the client to explore beyond the learning around their specific coaching issue or topic within the session to their broader environment and to their goal "out there" in their life (from micro to macro). Thus, this competency really opens up the possibility for the coaching work and process to offer growth and development opportunities to the client that are focused on them as a person and not limited to the resolution of their issue. Such broader learning and its application might be explored by the coach asking questions like: "Where else might this insight be of use to you?", "How might you apply this learning more broadly?" or "How are you going to use the learning from today in your intention to be more proactive at work?"

In addition to these learning inquiry questions; the coach may facilitate growth by offering their own observations about the client or the client's situation and partnering with them by seeking the client's further input or exploration. This could be offered at relevant points throughout the session and might be by noticing and inquiring about tone of voice, body language, emotions or patterns of thought and language. For example, "I notice that your shoulders dropped, and you sighed heavily when you said that, what is that about?" or "I notice you talking much more confidently about this today, what is different?"

In essence, what is important in this competency is that the coach explores and invites an inquiry about learning, insights, conclusions and decisions etc. This is done without attachment and in a way that evokes self-discovery for the client and not telling or teaching by the coach. In this way, the client is more naturally propelled to a place of forward movement as a result of the learning and this facilitates a conversation about next steps after the session.

An important point to note here is that, whilst this is the final competency, the process of partnering and inquiry that facilitates learning and growth does not necessarily have to show up only at the end of the coaching conversation. Insights, learning, awareness, observations and decisions etc. might naturally surface at any point within the coaching conversation.

What Next?

The process of establishing learning, insights, conclusions and decisions etc. naturally lends itself to a focus on next steps. This competency therefore also addresses how the coach brings the coaching session (and potentially the overall coaching engagement) to a close in a way that is meaningful and forward moving for the client. We spoke in Chap. 7 about a good coaching session having a beginning, a middle, and an end. We might even think about this as forming a third, a third and third of the time for the session. Now, in reality, the middle is likely to be more than a third of the session, however it does highlight the importance of not underestimating the time needed to thoroughly work with the client on the beginning and the end aspects of their work. So often, these two aspects are squeezed into the first and last 2 min of the coaching session when in fact they offer the opportunity for significant insight and progress for the client when done well. Having set a strong and thorough foundation to the work at the beginning of session (and the overall coaching engagement) will help to facilitate bringing the session (or the overall coaching engagement) to closure and it is that closure which we will now explore.

In essence, what is expected in this competency is that the coach assists the client to apply and carry forward the results of the coaching session. An important part of enabling the results to be carried forward is by the coach inquiring about the client's progress toward their goal. This may be done intermittently, for example: "We are about half way through the session now, how are we doing in terms of progress toward what you wanted to take from this session today?" and also in a specific way, such as "At the beginning you said your motivation was at 4 out of 10, and you wanted it to be at least 8 out of 10, where are you right now?"

Another aspect of this competency is that the coach partners with the client around what the client will do after the session in order for them to continue their forward movement toward their ultimate goal. This inquiry is intended to support the client to explore and decide upon additional thinking, behavioral changes, actions, experiments, self-reflection, research or further assessment that the client will engage in to continue with their progress beyond the coaching conversation. Note that there are several ways for "next steps" to be realized and a tangible action is not always necessarily what is most appropriate. Thinking may well be the perfect next step; in which case the coach can inquire about the focus and nature of the thinking and how it will be in service of the client's forward movement.

The development of next steps is intended to be a co-created process between coach and client as the coach assists the client to decide upon steps that are going to inspire them to maximize their potential and fulfill their goal. This may include the coach offering encouragement to the client and being a champion of support and belief in the client's ability to take such steps. It may also include the coach offering acknowledgement for the work the client has done so far in the coaching process and even sharing with the client with an "if not now, when?" challenge in order to support them to take the steps they have concluded will lead them toward their desired outcome. The coach may potentially offer a suggestion to the client as long as it is done without attachment, supports and honors the client's autonomy, is in service of the client's agenda and forward movement and is aligned with the client's style.

Designing actions and goals for after the coaching is completed might include the coach exploring the likelihood of an action occurring after the session as well as how the client feels about taking that action and their willingness to commit. Considering again the ICF definition of coaching: "Partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that *inspires* them to maximize their personal and professional potential."

The key word this time is "*inspires.*" Whilst next steps may challenge the client, the intention is that they can find the resources necessary (from within themselves and/or with the support of others) to take those steps because they are *inspired* to do so in service of maximizing their potential as opposed to feeling they "should" do something. Hence the partnering aspect is very important so that the client feels a sense of self-ownership and that their plans post-coaching session are congruent and accessible to them. This partnering will therefore also include identifying potential obstacles and developing mitigating strategies as well as considering what types of support the client might need to help them take the action. In some ways, this process could be compared to the development of a project plan which can look great on paper when designed within the confines of the project manager's office. However, when taken out into the real world, the plan can fail almost before it has begun because there was no risk analysis or implementation planning undertaken to ensure the viability and success of the plan. This phase of the coaching process therefore supports the client to leave the session with a robust plan that will lead them toward success.

The coach also supports the client to reach a level of commitment to their goals and plans (including mechanisms to apply and measure that commitment) for which they can hold themselves accountable. Apart from establishing accountability, two other aspects of this competency are that the coach partners with the client to bring closure to the session (as opposed to being directive) and that the coach holds both the bigger picture of the coaching work as well as what the client wants to achieve in each session. In this way, the coach helps to hold the client accountable for their overall progress toward their stated outcome, thereby underpinning the process of supporting them to maximize their personal and professional potential.

Conclusion

As you can hopefully appreciate, the exploration and work undertaken within this competency is rich territory for the client to move forward, develop and grow in ways that transcend the boundaries of the topic they brought into coaching and so it is important that this aspect is given sufficient time and space within the coaching process and is *not* intended to be something the coach "shoe-horns" into the end of the conversation when they notice the that session time is coming to a close. In Chap. 7 we looked at Competency 3, Establishes and Maintains Agreements; we explored how important it is to allow sufficient time and space to fully explore the client's goals for the coaching process so that the work has a solid and clear foundation. In the same way, this final competency is a vital part of the coaching process that underpins and enables the work done in the session to carry over into new patterns and habits moving forward. We noted earlier that coaches often rush through establishing the coaching agreement, and this is also often the case for this final competency. Part of a coach's responsibility with their clients is to manage the time boundaries set for the coaching sessions and, far too often, coaches run out of time to work with this part of the coaching process adequately and find themselves squeezing in questions like: "We've got 2 minutes left, what are you going to do after the session?" in a rather inelegant, clumsy and forced way.

The recommendation, therefore, is to remember the simple concept of *beginning, middle, and end* so that the coaching session is balanced and paced, allowing for full and rich exploration of all aspects of the client work.

Reviewing the 8 Core Competencies

Having considered each of the 8 core competencies and by way of bringing this section to a close, I would like to offer a few final thoughts to bring these competencies together. It has been noted before that coaching is sometimes described as a dance and this embodies both the partnership between coach and client and also the intertwined way in which the coach applies the core competencies. Whilst we have covered each competency individually, it is important to remember that they are not a checklist and they are not chronological in their occurrence. Some aspects of some competencies lend themselves to be more present at the beginning or the end of a coaching session, however the reality is that they all interrelate and form a continuous and cohesive thread throughout the piece of work. Just a few examples of how these competencies work together are that a thorough exploration of the client's goals for coaching (Comp 3) not only provides the foundation for the work, it also allows for the perfect benchmark for the session to be brought to a relevant and elegant close with appropriate next steps in place (Comp 8). Complete and active listening (Comp 6) enables well placed and appropriate observations and interventions from the coach (Comp 7). Clear thought-provoking questions (Comp 7) evoke the awareness that can be harnessed into important learning for the client (Comp 8). Harnessing learning allows for the client to make choices and decisions that naturally lead to actions and next steps (Comp 8). As the "dance" progresses, the quality of the coach-client relationship (Comps 4 and 5) runs throughout the coaching process to create the optimal conditions for impactful positive change for the client. When the dance and flow of these competencies have a strong professional and ethical platform (Comp 1) and an embodied coaching mindset (Comp 2) the conditions are set for the client to fully benefit from the power of coaching!

Part III
Approaches to Coaching

Introduction

This part is a collection of nine chapters which explore a variety of different psychological approaches that offer useful insight and application for the process of coaching.

We begin with the universal eclectic approach which draws upon some of the most popular models of psychology. In each case, we offer the background and an overview of these approaches followed by specific examples of how they are relevant and can be applied to coaching. In Chap. 14 we share the Universal Eclectic Framework (UEF) and proceed to offer reflections on key features of this framework including person-centered, behavioral, cognitive behavioral, Gestalt, systems, psychodynamic, evolutionary, and biological.

Chapters 15–21 each look at a different psychological approach. Our intention has been to offer an overview of the history and origins of these approaches and how they developed. For each one, our key area of focus is to share how the principles and philosophies of these approaches can be easily and clearly applied to coaching in both a conceptual and very practical way. Each approach includes tools and models that key figures in the field have developed which bring the theories to life. We also highlight how some of these principles are embedded within the language of the ICF Core Competency Model.

Chapter 22 is the final chapter of this part and positions the idea of integration. The ability to flex and adapt to the uniqueness of our clients and indeed the uniqueness of each coaching conversation means that good coaching practice draws upon multiple sources and resources. This results in an integrated approach that is naturally, organically and intuitively present within the coaching relationship and conversation. The seven streams integrated coaching model is shared as a way of showing how these different approaches come together.

Chapter 14
The Universal Eclectic Coaching Approach

Introduction

In this chapter we will review the Universal Eclectic Coaching model. The model draws on the eight most popular approaches from psychology and applies these to coaching. We will look at each of the psychological models and how each can be applied to coaching, with a focus on the most popular approaches used within coaching; person-centered, behavioral, cognitive behavioral, gestalt and psychodynamic.

Eclectic Coaching

Looking back over history, psychologists and philosophers have shared a common interest in understanding how humans learn. A whole variety of theories have sprung up, each with its own focus. Socrates, the Greek philosopher used questions as a way to help his students to learn, although his provocative questions ultimately got him into trouble. Other writers have suggested alternative approaches. B. F. Skinner (1938) argued rewards can act as a stimulus for learning, while David Kolb (1984) argued that our experiences in the real world are the key component for learning. He suggested that by reflecting, theorizing and testing these out, adults can begin to understand the world in new and different ways.

The Universal Eclectic Coaching model covers eight major psychology approaches: Person-centered, behavioral, cognitive-behavioral, Gestalt, systems, psychodynamic, evolutionary, and biological. The model was developed by Alison Hardingham (2006) as the British Eclectic Model and subsequently developed during her time at Henley Business School into the Universal Coaching Model.

Not all coaching approaches fit neatly into the eight segments of the model, and the model does not cover all psychological approaches. But the model does offer one

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way of thinking about, and trying to categorize, the multiplicity of coaching approaches that are now available for the coach.

The Universal Coaching Model starts by considering how each theory explains how humans learn and develop. The learning is often described through a related theory of learning or change. The development of such theories has often been followed by a coaching approach that applies the theory to the environment of one-to-one work. In many cases the ideas were originally applied to counseling, such as psychotherapy and cognitive behavioral therapy. However, some approaches don't naturally fit one-to-one work, such as evolutionary approaches, which view change as taking place over millennia as opposed to months.

In other chapters in this book we explore some of these different approaches in more depth. We focus on the approach and explore its roots, its application in counseling and its adaptation into the world of coaching. In this this chapter we aim to give a very brief overview of each of the different approaches where they have been applied to coaching (Fig. 14.1).

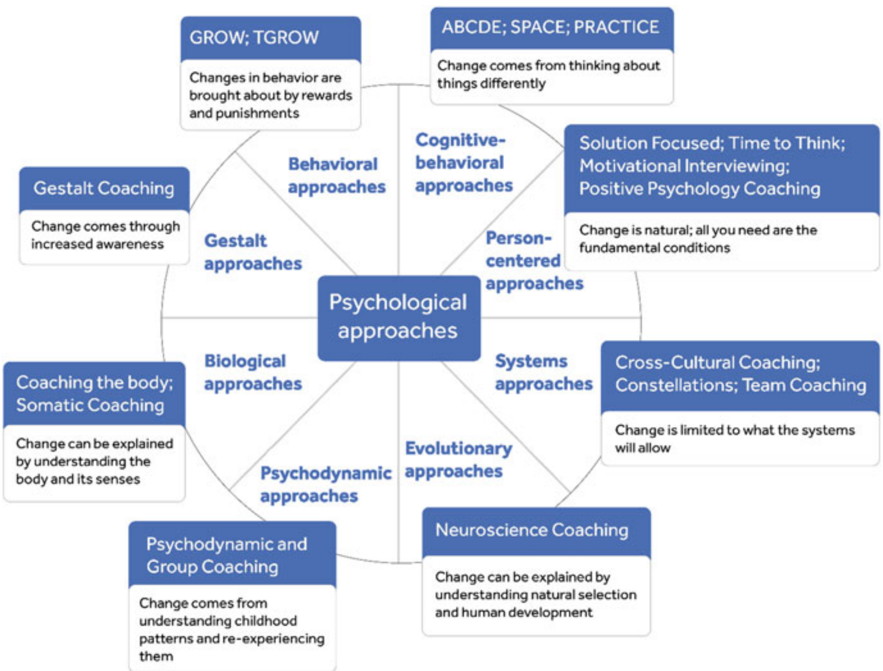

Fig. 14.1 The Universal Coaching Model. Source: Reproduced with permission from Henley Business School (2020)

Person-Centered

The person-centered approach assumes that change is natural, provided the 'fundamental conditions' of warmth, genuineness and unconditional positive regard are present. These fundamental conditions, sometimes called the 'necessary and sufficient' conditions are expressed through the coach-client relationship. Within this relationship, development, growth or healing can take place. The essential tool for the coach, or therapist, is thus the quality of the relationship, ensuring clients experience the warmth and empathy offered by the coach. As a result, tools are a less commonly used within person-centered approaches. In contrast the focus is on the relationship, and how the coach uses listening, and displays empathy toward their client.

Within coaching, one approach that embodies the person-centered philosophy is Nancy Kline's *Time to Think* (Kline, 1999), which we cover in Chap. 16.

Behavioral

Behavioral approaches emphasize the importance of rewards and punishments. The belief is that animals, including human behavior, can be stimulated by rewards, such as food, or a pay rise, and through this the animal begins to associate the reward with the stimuli. This was illustrated by Ivan Pavlov (1927) who trained his dogs to associate the reward of food with the ringing of a bell, and the work of B. F Skinner who worked with pigeons and rats, training them to follow patterns of behavior through the use of food rewards. The behavioralists believed it was not possible to fully understand the "black box" of the mind, and thus it was better to focus on what we could see: human behavior. If the individual's behavior was "appropriate," it did not matter what people thought or believed, as all we can see was the behavior, not their thoughts.

Behavior-based approaches underpin much of modern organizational management. They form the theoretical basis for the use of competency frameworks and are commonly used in development, such as appraisals ratings.

In coaching, the GROW model is a typical example of a behavior-based approach (Whitmore, 1992). The GROW model as we discuss elsewhere is focused on human behavior, although like other models it has drawn from other models over time adding scaling and an exploration of faulty thinking. We cover more on GROW and the behavioral approach in Chap.15.

Box 14.1 GROW: Commonly Used Questions
What topic do you want to focus on today?
What's your goal for the session?

(continued)

Box 14.1 (continued)
What's the reality of the situation you are facing right now?
What options do you have which will move you closer to this goal?
What do you want to take away from our conversation as your way forward?

Cognitive Behavioral

The cognitive behavioral approach believes that learning, development and change take place as a result of an interaction between behavior, cognition, emotion and an external trigger. Commonly used models within this approach are ABCDEF and the Current Bun model.

The coach will use the ABCDEF model to help the client work through the challenging situation, challenging their unhelpful beliefs, and working to enable the client to establish new more evidenced based, more logical and more enabling beliefs. We explore the ABCDEF Model and the cognitive behavioral approach more in Chap. 17.

Box 14.2 ABCDEF Model
A = Activating event
B = Beliefs (the views we hold about something)
C = Consequences (our reactions; behavior, emotion, thoughts, physiological)
D = Disputing statements (statements we tell ourselves that are helpful and evidenced based
E = Effective new beliefs (a new understanding/belief about the Activating event)
F= Future action

Gestalt

Gestalt assumes that increases in awareness are key to change. By becoming more aware of ourselves, of our environment and of our clients we can begin to observe the patterns and the wider environment in which we are operating.

Gestalt regards the individual as a totality of mind, body, emotions and spirit, with each person being unique. In therapy this means for Gestalt practitioners, focusing on the present moment, and on immediate thought, feelings and sensations, and brining these into the session to deepen understanding. The aim is to build client's self-confidence and to help them live more in the present moment.

In coaching this translates into:

- Paying attention to the body, as well as the mind
- Being aware of the content and the environment

- Using metaphors and images
- Using enactment such as Chairwork to explore ideas.

We explore the Gestalt approach further in Chap. 18.

Systems

Systems approaches are useful for helping the coach to recognize they are situated within a specific role, team, organization, economic sector, national and historical context. These systemic factors, or content, all influence how the individual client and how others act.

Oshry (2007a, 2007b) brings this alive in his organizational system work noting that most employees occur one of four conditions: Tops, Middles, Bottoms, and Customers. Tops have designated responsibility (accountability) for some part of the organisation, whether it is the whole organization, a division within it, a department, a project team, or a classroom. They have all the responsibility, but feel that no one does as they ask. Bottoms carry out tasks, they think higher ups ought to be taking care of and provide them with information, but fail to do so. Middles experience conflicting demands. Bottoms demand resources and information, while Tops demand action. Middle feels they can never satisfy both groups. Finally, customers are looking to some other person to provide a product or service in order to move ahead, but feel continually let down by the "system."

Even in the most complex, multilevel, multifunctional organizations, each of us is constantly moving in and out of Top/Middle/Bottom/Customer conditions. In each of these conditions there are unique opportunities for contributing to total system power; and in each there are pitfalls that readily lead us to forfeit those contributions.

To bring this alive in our coaching work the coach invites the client to:

- Reflect on the importance of the organizational context
- Draws on family metaphors to help clients to recognize the inter relationship between elements
- Helps clients to become more politically astute

Techniques such as Force Field and Constellations can help clients to consider the systemic forces at work and develop plans to manage these. For example Force Field involves asking clients to identify, list and assess the strength of both forces for change (the desired outcome) and those resisting change (the desired outcomes, while Consellations explores the stakeholders and their relationships).

We explore the systemic approach and the Force Field Model in more depth in Chap. 20.

Psychodynamic

Psychodynamic psychology is concerned with the dynamic unconscious. The belief is that as human, much like an iceberg, most of our feelings and behavior are driven by instincts and thoughts that are outside of our awareness (the unconscious).

This can manifest itself in many ways, as defenses, such as projection, denial, projective identification and acting. The role of the psychodynamic coach is to help clients to be more aware of these mechanisms, to understand their origins, triggers and the identify ways to manage these defenses if they are considered unhelpful.

The psychodynamic approach is explored in more depth in Chap. 21.

Evolutionary

The evolutional psychology is concerned with explaining why humans have evolved in the way we have. Given Darwin's theory of the origin of the species (1859), why have certain traits or aspects of human thought, feelings and behavior survived? What benefits do they confer?

In coaching terms these psychological theories have informed neuroscience coaching. By helping clients to understand the brain, its structure, function and operation, clients can be more aware of how the brain as a device can both help and hinder their pursuit of their goals.

Biological

Biological explanations of human behavior are informed by genetics and how our genes determine human behavior. There remains considerable debate about the balance between nature (genes) and nurture (environment and relationships). The general consensus suggests that about 60% of human behavior is determined by our genes, with 40% responding to environmental factors. Even with 40% this leaves huge capacity for clients to make a choice about their behavior.

In coaching terms these psychological theories inform approaches such as Somatic coaching. Somatics is concerned with the whole body, helping clients to be more bodily aware, and through observation of bodily sensations to be more sensitive to their own changing emotions and thoughts.

Box 14.3 Applying the Universal Coaching Model
An initial phone conversation between the coach, Ross, and the client, Sandra, led Ross to recognize a person-centered approach would be useful. Although

(continued)

Box 14.3 (continued)
Sandra had requested a challenging conversation about career aspirations, Ross felt that he was quite needed during the conversation. She was anxious about coaching and about her role in the company. Ross looked to draw on the 'necessary and sufficient conditions' to help provide a relational platform on which the future work could build.

Ross spent the first hour of the session listening to Sandra's story. Ross was warm, and high affirming, reflecting back both what he heard in terms of words and feelings.

Once the relationship was secure, Ross moved onto some cognitive behavioral work. Sandra was inclined to see her lack of leadership promotions as a sign she was less capable than other managers. Ross encouraged Sandra to explore these limiting beliefs and using chaining to identify and ultimately to challenge a core identify that Sandra viewed herself as 'unworthy' to be a leader in her organization.

As the work continued Ross decided Sandra would benefit by thinking about the system in which she worked. The organization leadership was male dominated and there were a limited number of female role models. Sandra felt this was demotivating and was having a negative impact on her relationship with the organization. Ross used the force field analysis technique to explore how the organization currently limited her scope for leading (Systemic). This was followed by some Chair (Gestalt) to help her to plan for a difficult conversation with her boss and HR who has made public commitments to increase the number of women in leadership roles in the organization. The use of that technique was in itself challenging for Sandra, as he had never tried anything like that before. It increased his urgency for change and provided her with a script to take away and explain her perspective in a way which her boss and HR could hear, and to offer some positive suggestions for change.

During the final phases of the coaching assignment Ross drew on behavioral technique, inviting Sandra to observe other senior female leaders and 'model', their approach to leading, as well as to think about what role she was modeling for other female employees who may be looking to Sandra as their role model, as their champion for change.

Lessons About How to Use the Model

The first thing which is worth noting is that like most models we use in coaching, the model is invisible to clients. The aim of the model is to provide a heuristic or map for the coach to guide their approach to working with clients.

What the client will see is the behaviors that the coach employs, and the tools the coach selects. The coach needs to know the tools sufficiently well to enable them to select the most appropriate tool to the client, as opposed to continually selecting their favorite three or four tools with every client. The best coaching is co-created in the moment; it is led by the needs of the client and delivered in partnership with them through a collaborative process.

If you do want to introduce a tool, and you are unsure, or you judge the tool may be well outside of the comfort zone of your client, one way to do this is to describe the use of the tool as an ‘experiment’. In this you can model the idea that it is possible to try out new ideas and monitor their impact before deciding whether to continue or repeat their use more widely. This has the benefit of reducing the pressure on the coach of ‘being perfect’, and simply testing and evaluating the technique, using a cycle of practice, observe, reflect, and adapt for the next iteration of the cycle.

Finally, before adding the technique to your repertoire, it’s worth testing it five or six times with different clients and in different situations. Use a reflective journal to make notes of how and when you used it and what your client feedback to you about how the tool landed. Mastery remerges only through repeated application and reflection.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have aimed to describe the Universal Coaching Model and provided brief insights into eight different psychological perspectives on learning and change, and how these perspectives have been applied by different writers and thinkers to coaching. The Universal Coaching Model is one way to think about using different evidenced based approaches in your coaching practice. It combines eight specific psychological approaches. As you will see from the Integrated Model in Chap. 22, it is not the only way. Ultimately, we believe each coach needs to find their own way to draw together a range of different frameworks, and be able to integrate these for their clients, changing and adapting to meet their clients’ needs.

Chapter 15
Behavioral Approach and the GROW Model

Introduction

The GROW model is possibly the most popular coaching framework in use across the world. Its popularity is due to the combination of its simplicity as a 'four box model' combined with its power to summarize a step-by-step route to problem solving, making use of psychological theory along the way.

The tool was originally developed by Sir John Whitmore, Graham Alexander, and Alan Fine, during their time working as organizational consultants in the UK. Its origins are in behavioral psychology, with a strong goal focus and desire to set, achieve and measure outcomes. GROW can be integrated with other coaching techniques and is also used beyond coaching as a problem-solving process.

Behavioral Psychology

The GROW model can be considered to fit within the behavioral psychology tradition, given its focus on what people do, as opposed to what people think. Few models developed through practice, are a perfect fit to theory. GROW is no exception. However, over the years, the model has drawn techniques from other models, such as scaling from solution focused and perceptual positions from Gestalt.

The model however fits within the behavioral psychological school and the work of researchers such as Skinner, Pavlov, and Watson during the 1930s. Their interest was in understanding how others learned through an objective, quantified approach to explaining and predicting behavior. These ideas were being developed in parallel with modern management that looked to psychologists for ideas on how to improve efficiency and the movement from craft production to modern manufacturing techniques. The outcome was Taylor's scientific management (Taylor, 1911), which

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subsequently has provided the core platform for human resources practice over the past century.

The GROW Model

The model comprises four phases, which are deployed flexibly by the coach (Alexander, 2016; Whitmore, 2017). The coach may start with the Goal, moving to reality, but can return to the Goal to further clarify and refine the goal, before progressing to the Options stage.

Phase 1: Establishing the Goal

The first phase involves the coach working with their client to establish a goal. This may start with a general exploration of the wider purpose for the conversation, taking into account the brief from the sponsor, and contextual factors. It may move into an exploration of the specific goal and the focus for the individual session. In some models the preliminary discussion of the topic has seen the model re-labeled as T-GROW.

During this phase of the model the coach's aim is to help their client to set a clearly defined, measurable and meaningful goal for the session. The more clearly defined the goal is, the more meaningful it is for the client, the more likely progress can be made.

As a result, it is helpful to encourage clients to define clear measures of success, milestones, but also to think about how important the goal is and how it connects to other objectives and their values.

Sometimes the goal that emerges needs to be amended or clarified. The model is intended to be flexible and adaptable to the requirements of each client, so it is possible for the coach to step back into the Goal stage if more work is needed to clarify or refine the goal.

Box 15.1 Goal: Some Helpful Questions

- 'We have an hour together, what do you want to leave the room having achieved in that time?'
- 'What are you hoping to achieve through this goal?'
- Why is this goal important for you now?
- 'How will you know when you have achieved the goal?'
- 'When are you aiming to achieve this by?'

Phase 2: Exploring the Current Reality

In the second phase the coach encourages the client to explore the current situation as it relates to their chosen topic. Sometimes clients may want to move to action quickly, and skip over an exploration of the issue, what they have tried before and why this has not worked. During this phase of the model the coach's aim is to help their client to stand back and, through open questions, take time to reflect on all the ramifications of the situation. In addition to broadening and deepening their client's understanding, the reflective time will provide a foundation for the next phase; generating and evaluating *options*.

During the reality discussion it will be helpful for the client to explore what they have tried so far, blockages to achieving the desired outcome, reviewing the situation from a number of different stakeholder perspectives, identifying likely causes and effects, and thinking about impacts on the client's performance and that of their colleagues. As these aspects are discussed possible solutions may begin to emerge from these considerations. However, it is important for the coach to help their client to "park" these and remain focused on their exploration of the reality.

At this stage it can be easy for the coach to start following their own line of inquiry, gathering evidence to prove their hypothesis. It's important for the coach to remember that the coaching conversation is in the service of the client. This means questions should not be focused toward evidence collection but towards deepening the client's self-awareness and insight.

Box 15.2 Reality: Some Helpful Questions

- What have you done so far to move toward your goal?
- What have you learned from these efforts?'
- 'What is happening now?
- 'What is working well right now?'
- 'What constraints have stopped you moving toward your goal?

Phases 3a and 3b: Generating and Evaluating Options

The Options stage is best seen as having two sub-parts. We have labeled these as 3a option generation and 3b option evaluation. It's important not to get these tangled, as moving to an evaluation of the first two or three pros and cons, may limit the generation of subsequent and often more creative and unusual solutions.

As with the reality phase it is helpful to create the space for clients to explore, brainstorm or use idea writing to enable them to generate as many ideas as possible, before starting to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each.

If a very detailed picture has been created during the reality phase, the client will have a good foundation for generating ideas. It can be helpful to encourage them to think of ‘off-the-wall’ ideas as well as those that may seem more obviously feasible. Using techniques such as VIP and Post-Its (discussed in Chap. 34) can be a helpful in generating more ideas. Sometimes there is the kernel of something very useful in what may first seem a crazy possibility.

They may come up with ideas that are completely novel, or the options they generate may be adaptations of, or can help to confirm existing thinking. What is important here is that the coach supports the client through open questions to expand the options. We find that clients can find this more difficult to do themselves and the role of the coach here can be particularly helpful in expanding their thinking.

Once there is a feeling that multiple options have been generated, the second part of this phase is to evaluate the options. Depending on the client’s preference this can be undertaken formally, using a pre-determined set of criteria which the client generates, or more informally, talking about each option’s benefits and risks.

Box 15.3 Options: Some Helpful Questions

- “What could you do to move toward your goal? What else could you do? And what else?”
- “If you were the chief executive of Google, what would you do?”
- “Have you encountered something like this before? What worked then that might work now?”
- “Think of someone who does this kind of thing really well—What do they do that you could try?”
- “You have 5 min, write down as many ideas for solving this as possible.”

Phase 4: Wrap-Up/Will/Way Forward

By this point in the conversation the client will have generated a score of ideas, a number of which are feasible solutions in their own mind. The W phase involves helping the client to select the specific option, or options they are motivated to take forward. The development of the “action plan” needs to be something they feel confident about and capable of progressing with. The plan also needs to acknowledge how to move forward, including resources, support, and potential barriers (see Chap. 13 for a full discussion of Facilitates Client Growth). It is also helpful to focus on the support that the person can draw on as they progress with their plan. This support team may offer motivation, resources, or be able to hold the individual to account. Then the client can be invited to identify the actionable first steps they wish to take.

The W has also been used for will. We have found it helpful to also invite the client to consider their motivation to act. You might ask them to scale this for example, “On a scale of 1–10, how motivated are you to start progressing with this plan immediately?” What we find is clients who score less than 6, or who use phrases like “I am definitely thinking about this,” or “I would really like to do this,” have yet to commit. We suggest further work is required with these clients to ensure they are committed to any actions in their plan.

It is worth recognizing that in some conversations the outcome or goal will not be a series of specific actions but learning or insights. These are equally valuable.

At this stage it's also worth acknowledging the work the client has done so far in building their plan through an affirmation statement—"Well, that's some great work you have done in thinking through this challenge and coming up with a plan which you are taking away."

The final step is to invite the client to reflect back on their work within the session as a mechanism to develop further insight about themselves and meta-learning. The use of two or three questions at this stage add value for the client from the session and enable them to better understand how the GROW framework may be something they can take away and use as a tool to think through other issues.

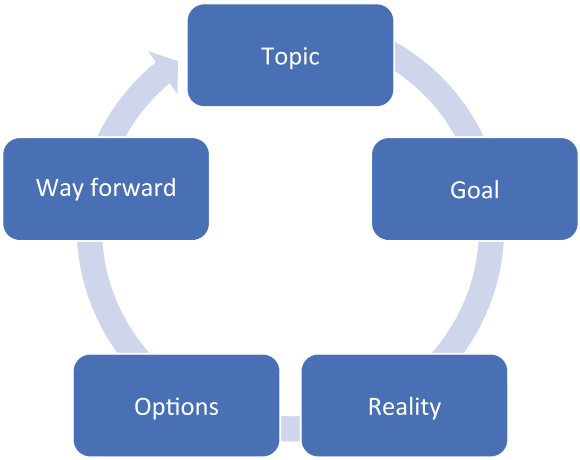
In Box 15.4 we have summarize some of the questions which the coach might use at this stage of the model and which are consistent with the approach in Competency 8.

Box 15.4 Wrap-Up: Some Helpful questions

- Which of all the options you have come up will you take forward?
- What support do you need from your organization?
- How will you go about getting this support?
- What's the very first step you're going to take?
- On a scale of 1–10 (where 10 is high), how committed are you to your plan of action?
- What insights has this conversation provided for you?
- What have you learnt, that you can apply to similar leadership challenges?

The T-GROW diagram (Fig. 15.1) summarizes the stage of the approach from an initial conversation about the topic, to a focus and clarification of the conversational

Fig. 15.1 GROW Model



goal, a review of the current reality, before considering the alternative options and their associated benefits and risks, before moving to close the conversation with a way forward.

Conclusion

The GROW model has become one of the most popular coaching models in the world because of its simplistic. It's easy to remember and when followed, creates a useful structure for a problem-solving conversation, either as a coach or as a self-coaching tool. In this chapter we have explored the GROW model of behavioral change. We described the stages of the model and discussed potential traps for the coach at each stage. We have also provided a series of questions at each stage as a handrail for the new coach.

Chapter 16
Humanistic Approach and the Time to Think Model

Introduction

The humanistic approach (sometimes called person-centered approach) is in some ways at the very heart of coaching. This approach embraces the belief that within all of us is a 'self-righting reflex'. This links well to coaching, where we hold the perspective that our clients are creative, resourceful, and whole. It also relates well to the idea that if we can discover this aspect of ourselves, we can achieve any goal. The Time to Think model (More Time to Think, Kline, 2009) applies these principles to coaching conversations, with a focus on the relationship, suggesting that the role of the coach is more often to get out of the way than to intervene with multiple questions, insights, or reflections.

In this chapter we explore the humanistic approach, its implications for the coaching relationship, and how we can bring this alive in our coaching work through the Time to Think approach.

The Humanistic Approach

The humanistic approach is sometimes called the "third force" as it challenged two previous psychological schools of thought: behaviorist and psychodynamic. Some psychologists felt those two were somewhat limiting whereas the humanistic approach focuses on the whole person and the uniqueness of each individual. This way of working is also directed toward development, growth and progress as opposed to the perceived pessimism or pathology associated with approaches such as psychoanalysis. The emphasis therefore with humanistic psychology is on choice and agency and the person's ability to make healthy conscious choices given the right circumstances.

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Humanistic psychology first developed in the late 1950s and early 1960s and became very popular during the 1970s and 1980s. It is underpinned by some basic assumptions:

- People have free will
- People are basically good
- People are motivated to self-actualize
- The individual's subjective experience is most important
- Challenges scientific methodology
- Rejects comparative psychology (study of animals)

Carol Rogers was central to the therapeutic aspect of this approach and two other key contributors to this field were Abraham Maslow and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. Rogers initially developed the approach and, building upon the assumptions, focused on the principle that people are their own best experts and are, as such, the best source of reference for their wellbeing and development. A core theme to humanistic psychology is what is known as our "actualizing tendency": a motivational drive leading to growth, development and autonomy that can also be described as the "self-righting reflex" noted in the introduction. This concept of self-actualization was first coined by Rogers and further developed by Maslow (1968) when it was positioned at the top of a human being's hierarchy of needs. Csikszentmihalyi (2002) also engaged with this concept in his work on how the combination of certain conditions allows us to achieve and experience a state of "flow" leading to sensations of deep concentration, enjoyment, fulfillment and happiness. In essence, the principle of self-actualization is that it is a natural human process that, given the right conditions, the individual will be motivated to and be able to grow and reach their full potential. Part of the role of the practitioner therefore is to enable the client to feel a stronger and healthier sense of self so that they may access and realize their self-actualization tendency.

Sometimes the humanistic approach can be linked with an existential approach and the inquiry may explore the client's sense of self with regards to their purpose and the meaning of life.

Relationship Is Central

The humanistic approach is relationship based. It can be argued that all forms of coaching (as well as other modalities such as therapy, consultancy and mentoring) are relationship based, however the humanistic approach is considered to be highly non-directive. In this way, the principles and assumptions that underpin this approach are honored. The humanistic way would propose that it is the non-directive nature of the relationship that enables the process of self-actualization. Characteristic of, and in keeping with, this non-directive relationship, Rogers believed that change is a natural human process and that there are six necessary and sufficient conditions for positive change.

Box 16.1 Necessary and Sufficient Conditions for Change

1. Coach-client psychological contact (the relationship must exist and be one that feels safe to the client)
2. The client is in-congruent (in-congruence exists between the client's experience and their awareness of that experience)
3. Coach congruence, or genuineness (the coach is authentic, deeply present with their client, not acting and is able to draw upon their own intuition and experience to facilitate the relationship and the client's progress)
4. Coach holds unconditional positive regard for their client (the coach acts without judgment, disapproval or approval and champions an increase of self-regard in their client)
5. Coach has empathic understanding (the coach demonstrates empathic understanding of the client's inner world and their concerns, thus increasing and evidencing their unconditional positive regard)
6. Client perception (the client perceives and experiences the coach's unconditional positive regard and empathy)

Time to Think Model

A key contributor to the application of the humanistic approach in coaching is Nancy Kline and her work titled *Time to Think* (1999). The sub-title to Kline's book is: *Listening to Ignite the Human Mind*, and this epitomizes the idea that the coach's contribution is largely centered on the belief that their client is indeed creative, resourceful, and whole, and therefore has a self-righting reflex. As such, the role of coach is to honor that belief by building a safe and empathic relationship and to then get out of the client's way, creating space and time for them to think so that they may access and utilize their own inner resources.

With this approach, the coach listens to the client without judgment, allowing the client to come to insights themselves. The role of the coach is to ensure that all of the client's thoughts and feelings about their topic are being considered and that the coach fully understands the concerns of the client, in a non-directive way and which brings a degree of warmth, acceptance and empathy. The coach employs strong skills of active listening, going with the client, at their pace for the client to uncover their insights and make choices that will lead them to fulfill their potential.

Origins of the Time to Think Model

Inspired by her own mother's capacity for listening and deep presence along with her own studies in the fields of education, counseling and philosophy, Kline observed that everything we do depends for its quality on the thinking we do first. Thinking comes first; therefore, to improve action we have to first improve thinking. She had co-founded a school to help teenagers think for themselves and consistently observed the difference when students thought clearly and for themselves and when they did not. What was less obvious was what enabled them to do so. Age, gender, background, intelligence and experience seemed to make little difference. However, one differentiator began to emerge and that was how they were being treated by the people with them when they were thinking. Kline and her colleagues discovered that when someone is trying to think, much of what the "listener" hears and sees is the effect that they themselves is having on the "thinker." They decided that if it were possible to identify what was *thinking-enhancing* behavior, it could be learnt and therefore taught to others. Over the following years, Kline and her colleagues identified and described the components of this *Thinking Environment*.

As the concept of the Thinking Environment evolved, Kline remembered and compared some of the qualities she experienced with her mother, whose listening had such a profound and positive impact for her. These included:

- Naturally keeping her eyes on the other person
- Being at ease in her own posture, settling in to listen carefully
- Her tone and sounds she made while listening
- Laughing with, never at
- Conveying equality and encouragement
- Comfortable and relaxed with the other person's emotion and feelings of fear
- Occasionally and un-intrusively giving information needed
- Affirming, not criticizing
- Not interrupting
- Showing joy when the person discovered an insight

At the heart of these behaviors was attention. Later, a client of Kline's summed this up as: the quality of a person's attention determines the quality of other people's thinking. Kline and her colleagues proposed the following two statements:

1. Everything we do depends upon the thinking we do first.
2. Our thinking depends upon the quality of our attention for each other.

In this case, the most important thing we can do is to listen to people so well and so carefully, to give them attention so respectfully so that they may think for themselves, clearly and in a new way.

Whilst attentive listening is crucial, Kline also noticed that there are times when this is not quite enough. Some blocks to thinking need more than just deep attention alone to enable the person to move beyond them. It seemed clear that the answer had something to do with questions, however it was not known what type of questions or in fact what the blocks to thinking generally were about. After two more years of study, it became clearer that the blocks were almost always associated with *assumptions* being made by the thinker. These assumptions were largely unconscious and yet were being framed or experienced by the thinker as "truths." Of all the possible blocks to thinking, it was found that assumptions were the most powerful and troublesome.

Kline's ongoing work uncovered three types of assumptions with several subsets and concluded that being able to recognize them would help to remove them. Over time, certain questions were found to work in the removal of the assumptions. These were developed into a process called *incisive questions* which, when combined with the best possible attentive listening, can enable the human mind to move past the barriers of assumptions toward new, different and previously inconceivable ways of thinking.

The Thinking Environment

Eventually, the essential behaviors that comprised the thinking environment became clear and ten ways of being together and treating each other were identified.

Box 16.2 The Ten Components of a Thinking Environment

1. Attention: Listening with respect, interest, fascination and without interruption
2. Incisive questions: Removing the assumptions that limit thinking and ideas, freeing the mind to create new and different thinking.
3. Equality: Treating each other as thinking peers. Giving equal turns and attention, keeping arrangements and boundaries.
4. Appreciation: Practicing a five-to-one ratio of appreciation to criticism, encouraging and enabling the person to feel safe to wander and delve into deep free thinking.
5. Ease: Offering freedom from rush or urgency so that the thinking process has space and time to emerge and evolve.
6. Encouragement: Moving beyond competition. Internal competition and judgment make new, high-quality thoughts impossible. With no inner competition, there is no inner conflict, thereby allowing free thinking to happen.
7. Feelings: Allowing sufficient emotional release to restore thinking. Feelings cloud judgment and so the full expression of those feelings creates space for thinking to be restored and for free thinking to happen.
8. Information: Providing a full and accurate picture of reality. Information can help to build up thinking and when faced with the clarity of full facts, the mind can wander and explore strategies and solutions.
9. Place: Creating a physical environment that says back to people, "you matter."
10. Diversity: Adding quality because of the differences between us.

Incisive Questions

The three kinds of assumptions Kline identified are:

1. Facts
2. Possible facts
3. Bedrock assumptions about the self and about how life works

Incisive questions are designed to remove these assumptions by a combination of memory and simplicity. It is important to remember how the thinker has described their assumption, in the *exact words* they used. When applicable, it is also important to remember what words or phrase they have used for the positive opposite of this assumption, again in their exact words.

Regarding simplicity, one of the simplest and cleanest incisive questions starts with: "If you knew. . . ." What makes a question incisive is that it cuts cleanly into the assumption and removes it. It replaces the assumption with a new, freeing assumption, a new truth that is based on positive choice.

The incisive question typically has three parts:

1. Hypothesis: "If you knew. . ."
2. Followed by a freeing true assumption: ". . .that you are perfectly skilled for this task. . ."
3. Attach the new assumption to the goal: ". . . how would you respond to your boss's request?"

If you knew + freeing assumption + goal = incisive question

By asking the incisive question once, you may hear one idea. By asking it again, you will hear another. Repetition of the question, in exactly the same wording and format, is recommended and can give rise to many free and flowing ideas that had been previously blocked by the limiting assumption.

The tense used is also an important characteristic of the incisive question. For example: "If you knew, that you *are* perfectly capable. . . ." By using the present tense, we are stating the positive new assumption as a truth. The hypothetical parts of the question are the first three words ("*If* you *knew*. . .") and in the last part when asking for their ideas about their goal (". . .how *would* you respond to your boss's request?"). Here the verbs are hypothetical because we are just supposing. We are not demanding that the thinker believe it, we are inviting them into playful speculation. This playful speculation provides mitigation against the thinker feeling defensive or resistant, allowing them to think freely and imaginatively without fear of judgment or commitment to act. It is this playful sense of possibility, versus requirement, which opens up the space for ideas to emerge and action to follow.

The best incisive questions are those which emerge carefully an organically from the dance of the coaching conversation, however some useful examples have been collected which also show how the three parts are a consistent feature.

Box 16.3 Time to Think Useful Questions
"What do you want to think about?" "What are your thoughts?"

(Maintain total attention to how the person's thinking is developing).

'What more do you think" "What more do you think, feel or want to say?"

(Repeat this 'more' stage of questions until there is an unequivocal signal that the person has got to the end of their thinking so far. This may be eye contact and a statement such as "*I think that's it*")

"*What more do you want achieve from this session?"*

Repeat the goal using the person's own words. If necessary the coach might ask the client "please can you say that in fewer words".

A question that enables further thinking:

"*What are you assuming that is preventing you from…?"*

(Enter their words for what they want to achieve)*?'*

"What else?"

"'Is it true?"

(Explore the truth behind the limiting belief)

"*If it is not true that* (enter their words for the assumption)*, what are your words for what is true and liberating?*"

"If you knew that (enter their words for what is true and liberating), *how would you* (enter their words for what they want to achieve)*?"*

Listen to the answer.

Ask the question again if required, until it has generated all the thinking it is going to.

End with appreciation.

The Humanistic Approach and the ICF Core Competency Model

Many of the principles of the humanistic approach can be found within the ICF Core Competency Model. For example, these include:

Competency 2: Embodies a Coaching Mindset
- Acknowledges that clients are responsible for their own choices
- Uses awareness of self and one's intuition to benefit clients
- The overarching definition of this competency is also very relevant: Develops and maintains a mindset that is open, curious, flexible and *client-centered*.

Competency 4: Cultivates Trust and Safety
- Seeks to understand the client within their context which may include their identity, environment, experiences, values and beliefs
- Demonstrates respect for the client's identity, perceptions, style and language and adapts one's coaching to the client
- Acknowledges and respects the client's unique talents, insights and their work in the coaching process
- Show support and empathy for the client

- Acknowledges and supports the client's expression of feelings, perceptions, concerns, beliefs and suggestions
- The overarching definition of this competency is also very relevant: Partners with client to create a safe, supportive environment that allows the client to share freely. Maintains a relationship of mutual respect and trust.

Competency 5: Maintains Presence

- Remains focused, observant, empathetic and responsive to the client
- Demonstrates curiosity during the coaching process
- Creates or allows space for silence, pause and reflection

Competency 6: Listens Actively

- This whole competency is relevant. The definition of which is: Focuses on what the client is and is not saying, to fully understand what is being communicated in the context of the client systems and to support client self-expression.

Competency 7: Evokes Awareness

- Asks questions about the client such as their way of thinking, values, needs, wants and beliefs.
- Asks questions that help the client explore beyond current thinking.
- Helps the client identify factors that influence current and future patterns of behavior, thinking or emotion.
- Invites the client to generate ideas about how they can move forward and what they are willing and able to do.

Competency 8: Facilitates Client Growth

- Acknowledges and supports client autonomy in the design of goals, actions and methods of accountability.
- Celebrates the client's progress and successes.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have looked at what is the humanistic or person-centered approach. We have described the roots of humanistic psychology and how it is based upon certain assumptions that embrace the wholeness of the person and a human being's actualizing-tendency toward growth and potential, given the right conditions and environment. We have noted how this approach challenged other psychological schools of thought and highlighted who have been the main developers and contributors to this field. Whilst this approach has its origins in the therapeutic setting, there are many aspects of this approach which have direct relevance and are applicable to the context of coaching. An understanding of human needs, how we achieve a state of "flow" and Rogers's necessary and sufficient conditions for change are all very useful concepts in the coaching space.

We have then seen how Kline's Time to Think model offers great insight into how and why the skills of deep listening, presence and incisive questions build upon the work of Rogers and the create conditions for change to occur by enabling the client remove limiting assumptions, thereby releasing and freeing new and creative thought. Finally, we have seen how this humanistic approach can also be found and is reflected in some of the competencies within the ICF Core Competency Model.

Chapter 17
Cognitive Behavioral Approach and ABCDEF Model

Introduction

Cognitive behavioral coaching (CBC) emerged from cognitive behavioral therapy and the work of therapists like Arnold Lazarus, Aaron Beck, and Albert Ellis in the 1960s and 1970s and has been developed by writers such as Windy Dryden in the 2000s. The approach aims to help clients recognize the connection between their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. It has been developed by coaches such as Stephen Palmer and Michael Neenan to work with non-clinical issues, the aim being to move away from unhelpful thoughts toward more evidence-based, performance enhancing thinking, and in so doing improve performance or wellbeing. In this chapter we will we will explore cognitive behavioral coaching as a tool that can help clients enhance their personal resilience, better manage stress, support them during organizational change, and address faulty thinking.

Cognitive Behavioral Model

Cognitive behavioral therapy argues that for change to take place in a client's behavior, the client needed to understand the forces which were acting on them and triggering their behavior. These forces may be driven by the individual's emotion: "I threw the cup across the room because I was angry," or due to thoughts: "I threw the cup across the room, because I thought the neighbor's cat was about to pee on my kitchen floor."

The development of cognitive behavioral coaching builds on the early work of Albert Ellis (1962), Aaron Beck (1976), and Arnold Lazarus (1981), who developed cognitive behavioral therapy, rational emotive behavioral therapy, and multi-modal therapy for work with their clients, as well as more recent writers such as Windy Dryden, who has written extensively on CBT.

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Ellis looked into the relationship between conscious thought, emotions, behavior, and happiness. He developed Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) on the premise that one's beliefs influence the emotional and behavioral outcomes linked to a particular event. For instance, if an individual believes that they are a bad presenter, and public speaking is part of their job, they might feel anxious when they need to undertake this task. This anxiety, linked to the belief they are a bad presenter, is likely to negatively impact their performance during a presentation. Ellis suggested that challenging and reframing such beliefs and replacing such thoughts with more logical- or evidence based-thinking would be helpful for clients.

Beck argued that automatic thoughts (i.e. repetitive and systematically incorrect thought patterns) are responsible for negative emotions such as depression and anxiety. This internal critical dialogue could impact negatively on an individual's self-esteem, self-efficacy, and overall self-worth. His cognitive behavioral approach suggests that this internal dialogue can be changed by bringing it into awareness, challenging its credibility, and reframing it more positively and constructively. Cognitive distortions (or thinking errors) are another contribution of Beck's cognitive therapy and refer to people's use of distorted or incomplete data to make conclusions that are inaccurate (Beck, 1976).

Some examples of thinking errors are:

- All-or-nothing thinking—also known as black-and-white thinking
- Catastrophizing—anticipation of the worst possible outcome only
- Disqualifying or discounting the positive—seeing this as accidental or lucky
- Labeling oneself—thus accepting a limit to the possible outcome
- Mind reading—assuming one knows what others are thinking or are intending to do without any evidence supporting this view.

Following its development in therapy, cognitive behavioral coaching (CBC) emerged in the 2000s (Williams et al., 2014; Palmer and Williams, 2013). This approach has followed a similar approach: helping clients see links between thoughts, feelings, and behavior; helping clients recognize automatic and incorrect thinking patterns; and challenging these by developing more logical and evidence-based thoughts.

More recently, the "third wave" of CBT has also influenced the development of new CBC practices and models, including acceptance and commitment coaching (Anstiss and Blonna, 2014), mindfulness-based coaching (Hall, 2014), and compassion-based coaching (Anstiss and Gilbert, 2014). The effectiveness of cognitive behavioral approaches has been extensively validated through research in counseling and more in a growing number of coaching studies (Bozer and Jones, 2018).

Cognitive behavioral coaching is goal-directed, focused on the present, and takes place within a limited and defined period of time (Neenan and Palmer, 2001). It holds the same premises as CBT with its focus on emotional, psychological and behavioral blocks to performance. By understanding how their beliefs can lead to negative perceptions, the coach works with the client to develop greater awareness of thoughts and emotions and their impact on behaviors. Using a cognitive behavioral approach the coach aims to help their clients (a) make better progress toward realistic goals; (b) enhance self-awareness of the relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviors; (c) develop more effective thinking; (d) strengthen their internal resources and resilience to support their action plan; and (e) develop their ability to self-coach (Palmer and Williams, 2013; Palmer and Szymanska, 2019).

Cognitive Behavioral ABCDEF Model

There are various CBC models including SPACE (Social Context, Physiology, Action, Cognition, Emotion), (Williams and Palmer, 2013) and PRACTICE (Problem Identification, Realistic Goals, Alternative Solutions, Consideration of Consequences, Target most Feasible Solutions, Implementation of Chosen Solutions, Evaluation) (Palmer, 2007). We will focus on the most popular CBC tool, the ABCDEF Model (Palmer, 2002). The model uses six steps that the client moves through to gain insight into the relationship between their thoughts, feelings, and behavior, and to develop a new, more effective, outlook (see Fig. 17.1).

The six steps are: an activating event (or awareness of the issue); beliefs and perceptions (rational or irrational) about the activating event; consequences (emotional, behavioral and physiological); disputing or examining beliefs; effective new beliefs (response or emotional state); and future focus.

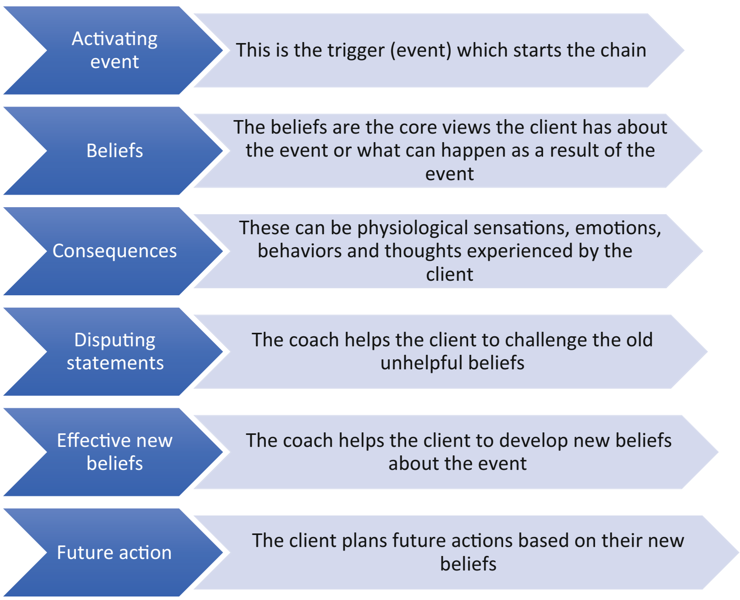

Fig. 17.1 ABCDEF Model

There are a number of different approaches to using the tool. One popular one is to invite the client to initially describe the event (A) and move to exploring the consequences (C). Most clients find it easier to explore what happens to them in terms of the sensations they experience and the emotions, after describing the events and how they behaved in the moment. Clients are generally less capable at describing their thought processes without help. It is thus best to come to explore beliefs, after encouraging clients to talk about consequences (Client: "I could feel the hairs on my arm standing up," or "My heart was racing"). The sensations may be followed by an exploration of the client's emotions (Client: "I knew I was really scared about what would happen next"). Having established the emotion, it is then possible to explore thoughts (Coach: "*What were you thinking was going to happen*?"). Clients may talk about initial thoughts, but it can often be helpful to get clients to think more critically, and in more detail. Many clients hold a series of beliefs; by chaining down through these layers of beliefs, we can help clients establish their core belief. These commonly are about self-worth, self-esteem, or how the client feels they will be judged by others. But it is important not to make assumptions about the client and their thought patterns. Each client is different, and we need to remain open and curious, as we discussed in Chap. 4.

Once the thoughts associated with the trigger and the underlying beliefs have been identified the coach can help the client to begin to challenge these unhelpful beliefs. In most cases the belief is irrational, illogical, as well as being unhelpful. It can thus be helpful at the disputation stage to encourage clients to recognize this. We can do that by asking clients how helpful, logical the belief is, and what the evidence is for the belief.

It is common in cognitive behavioral therapy for the therapist to invite clients to complete a chart to help them identify how frequently these unhelpful beliefs are undermining their efforts. In Table 17.1 we have provided an illustration how clients might complete this between sessions.

Table 17.1 Example of ABCDEF

Activating event	Consequences	Beliefs	Disputing statements	Effective outlook	Future plan
I saw a rat in the garden eating some waste food.	It makes my flesh creep (sensation). I ran inside (behavior). My heart rate went up (sensation). It was disgusting (emotion).	Rats are dirty. I might catch a disease. I might catch something.	The rat was more scared of me, than I should be of him. I was some way away from the rat. People don't die of the plague these days.	If I see a rat, it will probably run away if I move toward it I can take a broom and hit it if it does not move. I can contact the rat catchers to deal with the rat.	In future I will always put food waste in the bin. If I see a rat I will call the rat catchers to come and deal with the rats. I will always keep my front door closed. I will have broom by the front door which I can hit the rat with if it does not run away.

Once the unhelpful beliefs have been disputed through evidence-based perspectives, new beliefs can be identified by the client. With a series of helpful new beliefs, the client can then test these out in the real world and move on to implement their new plan.

What we have found in our own practice is that old beliefs are not like a light; easy to switch off. Old beliefs can be intrusive and pervasive, haunting the client despite the new strategy and the knowledge that the old thinking is unhelpful and irrational. To overcome this, we encourage clients to see a movement toward the new beliefs as a process which can take weeks, months, or years. If the client beats themselves up when the old beliefs hang around, this only serves to reinforce unhelpful core beliefs that they are "not any good" or are "unworthy." Therefore, in the intervening time and whilst new thinking and beliefs are "gaining ground", we encourage clients to be compassionate toward themselves, to thank their old beliefs for reminding them of the risks, while reassuring the old beliefs that it will be okay, as the new beliefs are here to help.

Box 17.1 ABCDEF: Useful Questions

1. Tell me about what happened (Activating event question)?
2. What were you feeling in your body when you saw the spider (or whatever is the trigger event) (Consequences question)
3. What emotion would you associate those sensations with? (Consequences question)
4. What were your thoughts at time? (Consequences question)
5. What would it mean for you if that happened/what did you image happening next? (Belief question)
6. And what would that mean for you if that happened/people thought that? (This question can be repeated several time to chain toward the core belief)
7. What's the evidence for that belief? (Disputing question)
8. How helpful is that belief? (Disputing question)
9. How logical is that belief? (Disputing question)
10. What thoughts might be more helpful to hold about this situation? (Effective outlook)?
11. Given this new set of beliefs what would you want to do to move closer to the goal we started to discuss? (Future planning question)

Conclusion

CBT has developed into cognitive behavioral coaching. The approach can help clients better understand the relationship between their emotions, beliefs and behaviors. In this chapter we have explored the application of cognitive behavioral coaching using the ABCDEF model and how the approach can help clients become more effective thinkers and remove internal blocks to actions, performance and success.

Chapter 18
Gestalt Approach and Chairwork

Introduction

The Gestalt approach aims to help clients to reconnect with their ‘whole selves’, to understand their physiological reactions to the issues, as well as their thoughts and feelings, and how these affect them in the here and now. Gestalt coaching encourages clients to identify and reflect on their patterns of behavior and through their insights to test out new ways of being, before implementing these changes to their lives. In this chapter we will aim to explore the gestalt approach, and how the approach can be adapted to work with coaching clients, with a specific focus on Chairwork, a tool which can be used to help clients take alternative perspectives and express their thoughts and feelings to other stakeholders within the coaching conversation.

The Model

The word *gestalt* has its origin in the German word meaning “form” or “pattern.” In terms of psychology, the perspective of gestalt aims to explore how meaning takes shape in human perception. One well known example of this type of research is the illusion. Examples such as the “old woman-young woman” image, “Rubin’s Vase”, the waterfall and Penrose stairs are well known and illustrate how our brain can make sense of information which is presented to us in more than one way, although on first inspection we sometimes find hard to see more than one image in these illusions (Fig. 18.1).

These ideas about wholeness, and the relationship between parts, were developed by Fritz Perls in his work with clients during the 1940s and 1950s. For Perls, Gestalt offered a way of being, that led to the development of presence with his clients. Unlike behavioral or cognitive behavioral coaching, Gestalt coaching does not offer

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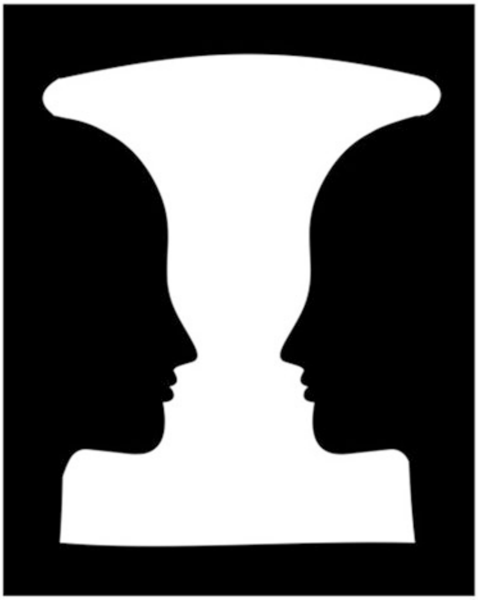
Fig. 18.1 Rubin's vase



a specific model, such as GROW or ABCDEF. Instead, like humanistic approaches, it focuses more on the relationship, and uses this as a basis for exploration of the self.

Key aspects within Gestalt are how beliefs, values, and attitudes affect people's relationships, how they respond to change and therefore impact on the organization and its stakeholders. The approach aims to promote discovery, where more rational approaches, such as cognitive behavioral approaches, may be less effective in helping clients bring together the diverse thoughts and feelings about a topic.

Frequently, when coaches talk about gestalt coaching, they immediately think of Chairwork, but there is much more to the Gestalt perspective.

Using a Gestalt perspective involves talking about the "figure of interest"—this means the particular thing that a person is focused on and is interested in at a moment in time. Where someone has an incomplete picture, they will seek to complete it with their own perceptions. Gestalt provides an opportunity to bring different perspectives to provide a deeper and more complete perspective situation.

Overall, Gestalt is "founded on the notion that human nature is organized into patterns and wholes, and that the whole is more than the sum of its parts" (Gillie and Shackleton, 2009). "Figure" and "ground" are key terms in Gestalt coaching. As highlighted above, the figure is the focus of the client at that moment in time; coaches are likely to see different figures emerging during the coaching session, therefore it is the role of the coach to explore the figure, but also the ground, or the context from which the figure emerges. The work of the coach is to help the client develop full awareness of the figure and the ground.

> The aim of the Gestalt approach is for the person to discover, explore and experience his or her own shape, pattern and wholeness. Analysis may be a part of the process, but the aim of

> gestalt is the integration of all disparate parts. In this way people can let themselves become totally what they already are, and what they potentially can become. This fullness of experience can then be available to them in the course of their life and in the experience of a single moment. (Clarkson and Cavicchia 2013)

Gestalt-based coaching is underpinned by a number of related concepts:

- **Present-centered awareness:** Awareness is seen as curative and growth producing. The coaching process follows the client's experience, staying with what is present and aware. It is essential that the coach is fully aware moment by moment, and this is aligned to mindfulness. Practicing mindfulness is one way this level of present-centered awareness can be developed.
- **Emphasis on the unique experience of the individual:** Individual experience comprises emotions, perceptions, behavior and body sensations, as well as memories and ideas, and is honored and respected as being true for each individual.
- **Creative experimentation:** The collaborative efforts of the client and coach promote growth and discovery through experimental methodology in which the coach "tests" out hunches against the client's experience and modifies accordingly.
- **Relationship:** Relationality is central to the change process. Presence, dialogue, and the visibility of the coach characterize the co-created relationship of client and coach (Toman, Spoth, Leichtman, & Allen, 2013).

How to use Gestalt Coaching with Clients?

There are a number of ways in which to use Gestalt coaching:

Awareness: This can be used in terms of identifying what is going on "in the moment" as data for the coaching conversation. This can be in a couple of forms, for example: after noticing something about the client, the coach may say "When you were talking about your line manager you were frowning; what were you thinking? What were you feeling?" This can help bring to the client's attention something they hadn't thought about—a thought or a feeling. The coach can then use their own awareness to challenge, support or as a line of enquiry to help deepen the client's awareness.

Alternatively, the coach may reflect back something they notice about a feeling they have—"I am feeling anxious at the moment, and I wonder what that might mean." Or, if the client says they are feeling a certain way e.g. anxiety in a certain situation—the coach may then encourage them to explore this by asking "Where in your body does the anxiety sit? What physical sensations do you have?" Asking clients to explore body sensations brings a much deeper awareness. Many coaches focus on the cognitive and rational thoughts when a greater awareness of bodily sensations can bring new data, and insight, thereby opening the door to change.

Tools and Techniques

Chairwork

Chairwork is possibly the best-known technique drawn from Gestalt and is now widely used within other approaches, sometimes using different names such as "Perceptual Positions" or "Empty Chair." The approach can be used with clients under a range of circumstances but works well when the client has a strong stance on a topic, but others might hold different perspective or interpretation of events. It works particularly with clients who are experiencing conflict in the workplace.

The coach begins by placing an empty chair near to the client and inviting them to imagine the person they are in conflict with is sitting in this chair. It's helpful for the client to provide some background to the relationship, and how each of the parties—they and the other person—are feeling and what has happened recently between them. The Typical Day technique (see Chap. 34) might be useful to understand the relationship and typical interactions as preparation for Chairwork. This would involve inviting the client to describe in as much detail as possible a typical day when working with, or being with, this person. What is important is to focus on the detail and not to race through the story providing a summary.

Returning to the empty chair, the coach invites the client to "bring the person into the room" by describing this individual as vividly as possible: what they look like, what they might be wearing, what smell might be present, how they would be sitting, how they move. The next stage is to invite the client to speak to the other person—to say whatever they want and need to say and however they want to say it. It is helpful to remind the client of the confidentiality clauses, and that they can say whatever they want with no consequences.

The client may speak for a few minutes, or longer. This may be calm explanation of their opinion or a torrent of emotion. The engagement depends on the client's style and hidden relationship between them and the other person.

At the end of the communication, and a period of holding the silence, the coach can follow this up with "What more would do you want to say?" The coach can repeat this until it is clear that the client has finished everything they want to communicate to the other person. For some clients this can be a cathartic experience, releasing built up tension and things they wished they could say. The coach can then pause at this stage and invite the client to reflect on how they now feel about the other person. This exploration can again take a few minutes or half an hour.

The next step is to invite the client to sit in the other person's chair. It helpful if the client thinks about the other person's posture and style. Invite the client to reflect: What do they see? How do they feel? What do they hear? What might they say in response to what they have just heard? This element tends to be shorter but can be equally powerful as the client sees the world from the other perspective. We find it helpful if the client addresses the empty chair as themselves, using their own name, and staying in role for as long as possible.

A third, and optional step, is to invite the client to move away from the two chairs and occupy a new perspective, standing outside and at some distance from the relationship. Explain this new perspective as someone who is outside of the relationship, and who is independent from it. Independence is important as some clients want to select someone who shares their viewpoint, which offers little to broadening the clients' understanding of the whole. This position provides a third perspective. In some cases, this perspective (person) does not have a view, or even awareness that there is an issue. This lack of awareness can be itself be interesting to explore and provides insight about the bigger picture.

The final step is to invite the client to return to their original chair and ask them to reflect on the different perspectives. What do these perspectives tell them about the whole? How might they want to move forward? On occasion, it can be helpful to offer the client the opportunity to speak again to the Chair. To act out, or rehearse, what they might say to the other person, as a way to move the issue forward.

This approach works particularly well in a workplace conflict situation. It is also useful when clients have relationship challenges. The approach provides a wider perspective to clients and provides them with an "experience" (talking to the empty chair) that changes the nature of their own subjective experience and perceptions about the other person (Box 18.1 provides useful questions on Chairwork).

Box 18.1 Chairwork Useful Questions

1. What would you like to say to X?
2. What else would you like to say?
3. Now imagine you are X. Position yourself in the chair as they sit. Think about how the speak and the words they use. Now what will X say in reply?
4. What else would they say?
5. Now imagine that we are moving the other side of the room, imagine we are an independent and slightly ambivalent third person (Y), outside of the relationship. What would this person say to you both?
6. What else would they say?
7. As we return to your original Chair, what does it feel like to be X?
8. Why might X feel like they do?
9. As you think about the perspective from across the room, what might those outside feel about the situation?
10. As you reflect on what was said and these different feelings, how do you now make sense of this situation?
11. What would you like to do next?
12. Can I invite you to say a few words, based on what you have just said? Imagine that X is sitting in front of you now.

Conclusion

Gestalt is a valuable addition psychological perspective helping us to invite clients to consider other perspectives in their attempts to better understand the whole. It can help clients gain a new perspective through the techniques like chair work. It has been invaluable in working with interpersonal conflict and in supporting the enhancement of workplace relationships. Overall, it can really support the client when rational approaches have not worked or are not suited to the client or the presenting issue.

Chapter 19
Solution Focused Approach and the OSKAR Model

Introduction

While many of the other psychological approaches to behavioral change focus on the problem, solution-focused approach challenges this mindset. The approach has its origins in Brief Solution Focused therapy which avoids analyzing the problem and instead encourages a focus on identifying solutions. Solution focused coaching, like many of the other approaches described in this book has migrated from therapy into coaching, but its future orientation and solution focus makes the transfer from therapy to coaching an easy one. In this chapter we will briefly explore the model and how it can be applied in coaching through the OSKAR framework.

The Model

The Solution Focused approach has its origins in the work of Steve de Shazer, Insoo Kim Berg and Yvonne Dolan in the Milwaukee's Brief Family Therapy Center, US. The Milwaukee counseling team was interested in how they could create more impact by enabling more clients to access their services. They investigated the idea of reducing the number of counseling sessions but increasing the intensity of each session. Over the course of about 20 years, the team identified what was most useful to clients in their work. This led to the development of brief solution-focused counseling. In its pure form the approach uses three 50-min therapy sessions which discouraged clients from talking about their past failures and focused attention of future actions. Research evaluations by the Milwaukee team suggested success rates as high as 86%, similar to rates achieved by other approached over 30 or 60 sessions spanning 6 to 18 months (de Shazer, 1991).

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Solution-focused coaching can help clients to focus on what they can do to put things right, rather than what's wrong, and what can be achieved rather than what may be considered desirable, or even unrealistic or unachievable.

This "forward orientated—solution approach" contrasts with the majority of other psychological approaches. The traditional approach has been to encourage individuals to look back at the past: to focus on understanding the problem and to explore its cause through understanding the trigger and beliefs (cognitive behavioral approaches), understanding their strategies for denial and defenses (psychodynamic approaches) or simply provide a space for the client to reflect and share their thoughts within a supportive, non-judgmental relationship (person centered).

Solution-focused practitioners argue that a problem orientation is more likely to lead to blame, resistance, and conflict. While focusing on a solution is much better suited for creating a collaborative environment where any past problem is overcome by the will of reaching a common goal. This perspective is supported by research evidence in coaching, which has confirmed that solution-focused questions are more effective than problem-focused questions (Grant and Gerrard, 2020).

Because the basic principle of the solution-focused approach is to help clients to identify and design their solutions rather than analyze and solve problems, the coach needs to remain future focused; paying attention to the client's notion of how they want their life to be different in the future. The coach also needs to trust that the client is the expert; they are the one who is finding their own best solution, as opposed to what the coach might consider to be the right solution. It is also helpful for the coach to encourage the client to focus on their strengths and resources, reflecting upon and thinking through how they have solved problems in the past, when they have been at their best. Finally, having identified a desirable outcome, the coach helps the client to recognize that progress towards the miracle in the real world is achieved by small steps.

Of course, it can be cathartic to talk about the problem and important for the client, but the skill of the coach is to help clients move from what is often labeled within the approach as a "problem island" to a "solution island." The aim of the coach is to help the client identify the simplest and easiest path to achieving their objective.

OSKAR Model

The OSKAR is a framework that can be used to structure a solution-focused coaching conversation (Jackson and McKergow, 2007). The model is similar to GROW, providing a series of letters as a handrail to structure the conversation and help the coach stay on track.

The model incorporates a number of the commonly used tools in a solution-focused approach, including scaling. Other commonly used tools are the miracle question, which we have included in our techniques section in this book.

Box 19.1 OSKAR Useful Questions

1. Outcome:
   - What is the objective of this coaching?
   - What do you want to achieve today?
   - What does success look like?
2. Scaling:
   - On a scale of 0–10, with 0 representing the worst it has ever been and 10 the preferred future, where would you put the situation today?
   - You are at *N* now; what did you do to get this far?
   - How would you know you had got to $N + 1$?
3. Know-how and resources:
   - What helps you perform at *N* on the scale, rather than 0?
   - When does the outcome already happen for you—even a little bit?
   - What did you do to make that happen? How did you do that?
4. Affirm and action:
   - What is already going well?
   - What is the next small step?
   - You are at *N* now; what would it take to get you to $N + 1$?
   - What else could you do to move to $N + 1$?
5. Review:
   - What is better?
   - What did you do that made the change happen?
   - What effects have the changes had?
   - What do you think will change?

Tools

While the solution-focused approach is very simple, it can be more difficult to put into practice (Grant, 2016). The coach typically draws on a list of frequently used tools.

Exclusive focus on solutions: the coach avoids being drawn into discussions about the problem. They listen until there is a hint of a solution and use this as the element to reflect back to direct the conversation forward. This avoids the session drifting into therapy or a focus on the past.

Explicit goal: the coach ensures every conversation has a clear goal from the start, with a clear measure of success.

Scaling: the coach uses coaching to help the client reflect on and evaluate their experience. This may involve asking the client to evaluate how close they are to achieving their goal: “On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the complete solution, and 1 representing the worst, where would you say you are?” Or it can be used to clarify goals: “What does a 6 look like? How would you know you were there?” Or plan small steps: “So what would be different if you were at a 6.5?”

Exceptions: No matter how bad a situation is, there will usually have been a time when things went well or at least were not so bad. The coach invites the client to focus on such a time and switches the clients’ thinking toward a more positive orientation, with the aim of moving forward: “Tell me about a time when the team worked well on a task.”

‘Do more of what works’: Once the client has identified times when the problem is less pronounced, the factors in this situation can be identified and the client encouraged to do more of this, and thus by implication do less of what they find does not work.

Affirming: the coach looks for ways to acknowledge and affirm the client through genuine positive feedback. The coach aims to “catch the client doing it right” and reflects this back. Such feedback can help clients build self-esteem and confidence.

This can be incorporated into a more detailed framework for a real coaching conversation.

Reframing: the coach may help the client during the conversation to reframe their thinking to open up more possibilities and draw the client toward the resources they have available.

Client: “I really hate my job”

Coach: “It sounds really unpleasant, tell me about which parts of the job are the least unpleasant for you”

Miracle question: this technique is the most commonly associated with the solution focus approach but has multiple variations. The classic question developed by de Shazer (1991) invited the client to think about an overnight miracle: “Let me ask you a strange question . . . which many people find helpful: Imagine that when you go to sleep tonight a miracle happens and all of the difficulties you have been having in this role disappear. Because you are asleep, you don’t know that a miracle has happened. When you wake up in the morning, what will be the first signs for you that a miracle has happened?” This may be followed up with: “So, what would you be seeing if that were so?”

However, both Adler and Erikson developed variations of this question within their own work and these can provide the basis for questions depending on your client and their perspective: “What would be different if all your problems were solved?” (known as Adler’s Fundamental question) (Adler, 1925) Or “If you have a Crystal ball and looked into the future, explain how what has happened has come about?” (known as Erickson’s Crystal ball technique) (de Shazar, 1978)

For all of these reasons the solution-focused approach fits well with coaching and the ICF competencies. In Box 19.2 we have provided an illustration of solution focused coaching and how some of these questions might sit together.

Box 19.2 Example of Solution-Focused Coaching

1. Acknowledge/validate problem:

    "This sounds like a real issue for you at work which is causing you quite a bit of stress"

2. Compliment and affirm:

    "From what you said you have been coping with this well, and still managing to meet most of your objectives"

3. Exception:

    "This sounds like quite a few problems are effecting the team's problems, tell me about a time when the team did work well together?"

4. Reframing:

    "It's great that you can see some of the weaknesses in your team, tell me about some of the team's strengths?

5. Miracle question:

    "Let me ask you a strange question...which many people find helpful: Imagine that when you go to sleep tonight a miracle happens and all of the difficulties you have been having in this role disappear. Because you are asleep, you don't know that a miracle has happened. When you wake up in the morning, what will be the first signs for you that a miracle has happened?"

    "So, what would you be seeing if that were so"

6. Scale goals:

    "On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is complete team dysfunction, and 10 is a high performing team hitting all their goals, where are you now?"

    "What would need to change for you to score this as a higher number?"

Conclusion

The solution-focused approach is a useful model for coaches which can deliver fast paced change when time is limited. Its focus on the solution as opposed to the problem can increase clients' self-ratings of positive effect, increase self-efficacy, decrease negative feelings, and lead to the generation of more action steps.

Chapter 20
Systemic Approach and Force Field Model

Introduction

> A system is a perceived whole whose elements 'hang together' because they continually affect each other over time and operate toward a common purpose.
>
> Senge et al. (1994)

A systems approach can describe how the client's scope of attention might expand beyond that of their immediate goal and extend to include factors such as their role, the team, the organization, industry sector, economic sector and even national, cultural and historical background. Having some level of understanding of and sensitivity to these factors are useful for helping the client to recognize that they are situated within a specific and unique context. Such factors might be considered as "forces" which influence how they and others act. By understanding these forces, clients can recognize and manage the factors which they can control and learn to appreciate and understand they are sometimes only part of a wider system which they and others cannot control.

The Systemic Approach

Systemic approaches can be traced back to the 1970s and the work of writers such as Peter Checkland, a UK academic, who was interested in 'soft systems' and the challenges faced by managers within the systems. The Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) was developed from earlier systems engineering approaches and its primary use was the analysis of complex situations where there were divergent views about the definition of a problem and therefore its possible solutions. The situations were described as "soft problems" such as: "how to improve the provision of healthcare services," or "how to address the issue of homelessness amongst young people." That is, these are complex situations where the specific issue to be addressed may not

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be immediately clear or even wholly agreed upon. As such, the SSM approach seeks to explore the systemic considerations of a situation as opposed to applying a more linear form of problem solving.

More recently other writers have explored systems thinking from a range of different perspectives. Oshry (2007a, 2007b) has brought many of these ideas to life through his work examining organizational systems and the role that different characters play. As a playwright as well as a consultant and writer, he described some of these characters as: Tops, Middles, Bottoms and Customers. He notes that many people play different roles, sometimes at the same time but in different relationships, sometimes over time during the course of their careers. What is notable is that one can identify certain common challenges and themes associated with playing a certain role.

Tops have designated responsibility (accountability) for some piece of the action whether it is the whole organization, a division within it, a department, a project team, or a classroom. They are usually tasked with implementing a vision. They have all the responsibility but feel that no one does as they ask. They can feel that others are not listening, that they are ignored and, as a result, can feel and become isolated. Bottoms are usually embedded deep within a team with a remit to carry out tasks, they think higher ups ought to be taking care and provide them with information but fail to do so. They feel as though they are kept in the dark from wider communications and what is going on in the broader organization. Middles experience conflicting demands from all sides. Bottoms demand resources and information, while Tops demand action. Middles feel they can never satisfy both groups and struggle to balance delivery and meeting targets alongside the need for the training, resources and information needed to achieve that delivery. Finally, Customers are looking to some other person to provide a product or service in order to move ahead but feel continually let down by the 'system'.

The principle of this work is that even in the most complex, multilevel, multifunctional organizations, each of us is constantly moving in and out of Top/Middle/Bottom/Customer conditions. In each of these conditions there are unique opportunities for contributing to total system power; and in each there are pitfalls that readily lead us to forfeit those contributions.

The Systemic Approach in Coaching

The systemic approach in coaching offers a powerful additional scope of attention and consideration when working with our clients. To bring this alive, writers like John Whittington (2012) have developed approaches that are well suited to use in one to one conversation, such as constellations, while others have focused on systemic team coaching approaches (Hawkins, 2017, 2018). These approaches help clients consider and work toward their coaching goals through an exploration of the context and system within which they find themselves.

In coaching, as noted in the introduction, the concept of a system could include considering areas such as the client's role, the team, the organization, industry sector, economic sector and even national, cultural and historical background. Each of these aspects can imply or even impose explicit and implicit "rules" such as legal or regulatory constraints or simply "how we do things around here", i.e. the organization's culture. Whittington's approach seeks to identify an uncomplicated path or way to understand and navigate what can be a potentially complex situation or subject for the client. This is done by identifying the key component parts to the client's system and creating a constellation.

The first stage of every constellation is mapping. Mapping gives clients access to the system-level information and enables them to see and understand their place in that system. The mapping process can allow what is beyond words to be articulated. It also allows clients to go a step further by testing options and ideas to explore the impact they would have on themselves, their goals, and the system itself. Once mapped, the coach can invite the client to start exploring the relationship between different parts or characters including the client and their network, as well as non-human entities such as projects, roles and cultures.

This inquiry enables what is implicit and unconscious to surface and be conscious and more fully understood. By creating a physical representation, the coaching conversation can come alive in a new and dynamic way and help clients to develop plans for the way they manage the system and themselves within that system. The constellations approach to systems coaching is not only useful for one to one client work. Creating and developing constellations is a powerful way to work with teams and groups, shedding light on team and group dynamics, patterns and processes in service of more effective working practices and relationships.

Peter Hawkins has popularized how the concept of coaching can contribute to team development. Hawkins proposes that team coaching combines individual coaching and consulting with inspiration from sports coaching. High functioning sports teams respond to stressful moments instantly because they practice their responses and therefore execute as a team rather than a collection of individuals. In an increasingly complex business and organizational world, leadership teams must work together across departmental divides, professional disciplines and geographic border. They must also contend with and navigate some of the other systemic "lenses" already noted. As a result, and in order to develop high-performing teams, leaders need to address seven challenges:

1. Balance the needs of various constituents
2. Handle tactical jobs and strategy
3. Cope with conflict
4. Wear multiple hats
5. Develop perspective
6. Manage virtual employees
7. Prioritize the connections rather than the parts

This last point embraces the concept of team coaching in that it focuses on the behavior of the team more than on the work of the individual members of the team.

Team coaching is therefore still a one-to-one process as opposed to a one-to-many process: one coach, one team.

Hawkins advocates that in leadership team coaching, coaches must effectively apply eight skills:

Box 20.1 Hawkins: Eight Skills of a Leadership Team Coach

1. **Storming**—The coach supports the team as its members learn to work together.
2. **Team building or forming**—Coach and team focus on its mission and goals.
3. **Team facilitation**—One member takes ownership of the process so other members can focus on the job.
4. **Team process consultancy**—The coach observes how the team works together.
5. **Team coaching**—The coach helps the team learn.
6. **Leadership team coaching**—The coach assists the team in understanding its impact on the organization's constituents and stakeholders.
7. **Transformational leadership team coaching**—The coach helps the team change the organization into its next incarnation. "One CEO described this as having to navigate the ship through stormy seas while rebuilding the ship at the same time."
8. **Systemic team coaching**—The coach focuses on factors that improve or detract from a team's performance.

This last skill speaks directly to the kinds of organizational factors that we have already referenced, and the skillset is underpinned by a team coaching process called CID-CLEAR:

Box 20.2 Hawkins's CID-CLEAR Team Coaching Process

- **Contracting 1**—The coach holds an initial discussion about the team's understanding of coaching, and everyone works toward an agreement about what the coach's job entails.
- **Inquiry**—In this data-gathering phase, the coach learns about how the team works.
- **Diagnosis and design**—The coach analyzes the data from the first two steps.
- **Contracting 2**—The coach and the team create a contract describing the team's goals for the coaching process.
- **Listening**—The coach examines the issues identified in the previous step, while remaining alert to verbal and nonverbal feedback.

(continued)

Box 20.2 (continued)

- **Explore and experiment**—The coach and the team construct new ways of behaving that address the issues they have identified.
- **Action**—The team takes the knowledge it's gained and puts it into practice, sometimes using "SMART (specific, measurable, actionable, realistic and timely)" action steps.
- **Review**—In this final step, the coach and team examine how the process unfolded and make plans for the next stages.

A leadership team must consider the organization's tasks and processes and the intersection of internal and external concerns. This requires practicing five cyclical disciplines and which the team coach can play a significant role in supporting:

1. **Commissioning:** Team members define the group's purpose and establish how it will measure success. To coach a team in the commissioning stage, the coach gathers data about the goals of the organization's transformation plan, how the team enacted the plan and what the members thought of the results.
2. **Clarifying:** The team develops and defines its mission, goals, values and processes. In this stage, the coach helps the team examine why it operates, where the organization focuses, what values mold the organization and what the team hopes to become. This discussion helps team members own their goals and prepare to execute the resulting plan.
3. **Co-Creating:** The team monitors how it functions as a whole, celebrates its achievements and corrects any malfunctions. To achieve co-creation, the coach looks at the team's objectives and the measures it uses to assess success. The team coach can observe meetings or help the team members process the results of their work to help them stay on track.
4. **Connecting:** The team focuses on how each member connects with external stakeholders. In the connecting phase, the coach helps team members look outward to see how the constituents of the organization perceive the team's goals and results.
5. **Core-Learning:** Team members assess their performance and draw lessons from their experience. The coach gives the team members feedback on their performance and what they can change in the future.

Finally, Hawkins proposes that an effective team coach will develop at least the nine capacities of:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-ease
3. Staying in the partnership zone
4. Appropriate authority, presence and impact
5. Relationship engagement
6. Encourage

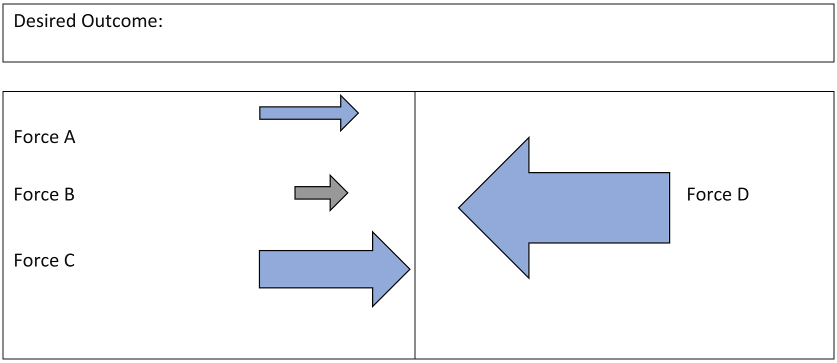

Fig. 20.1 Force Field

7. Working across difference
8. Ethical maturity
9. A sense of humor and humility

Force Field Model

One model based within systems thinking and which can be used by most coaches is the force field model. The Force Field (see Fig. 20.1) helps clients to consider the systemic forces at work and develop plans to manage these. This involves asking clients to identify, list and assess the strength of both forces for change (the desired outcome) and those resisting change (the desired outcome).

The model is based on the work of Kurt Lewin and the forces for change (Lewin and Dorwin, 1951). The model invites clients to think about the forces within their system which are pushing for and resisting change. It invites clients to map these forces, reflect on the power of each respective force and consider what actions can be taken to manage, mitigate or magnify the key forces.

Step 1: Identify the Drivers

This step is about getting confidence that there is enough energy and support for the stated goal, and about seeing where that energy and support will come from.

The coach having got the client to state their goal, starts by encouraging the client to think about the 'drivers' that will help make progress toward that outcome. "Drivers" are any forces that can be a force to support the goal or push you in the right direction. They can be commitment and enthusiasm (from the client, their team and other people's), lobby pressure from others, events, and so on.

Start by identifying all the "drivers" for your outcome, for example by asking yourself some questions:

- What difference will this change make to me? What will I get out of it?
- What will the organization get out of it?
- What difference will this change make to people in my team, customers, suppliers, shareholders and other stakeholders?
- What's in it for them? (e.g. your boss, your colleagues, your subordinates and your family and friends)
- Who wants me to make this change? Why?
- Does this change fit with any other changes that people and/or the organization are making?
- Are any events coming up that are particularly relevant to the change I want to make?
- Has anything happened recently that supports the need for me to make this change?
- Are there people who support and invest in me, who might be interested in helping me to achieve the objective?

Step 2: Identify the Resisters

Once the drivers have been identified, the next step is to consider the resisters. The "resisters" are the people, feelings, events, and forces that will hinder the achievement of the goal. Invite the client to list all the "resisters." Here are some questions to help you identify them:

- What sacrifices will making this change require of me? What will I have to give up? How much will it cost me?
- What negative consequences will my trying to achieve this objective have for others? And if I am successful, are there people who will lose something as a consequence?
- What are the 'obstacles' to my change, and how powerful will their resistance or indifference be?
- Does this change conflict with any other changes that people and/or the organization are making?
- Are there any events coming up that will get in the way?
- Why haven't I made this change before?
- Do I have the resources I need to achieve the change? (time, skill, knowledge, support)

Step 3: Assess the Strength of the Drivers and Resisters

Step three in the process is to map these by size onto a map of the forces (see Resources section for the map). The length of the line can be used as a measure of the size of the force.

Step 4: Manage the Forces

For step four invite the client what they can do to manage, mitigate or magnify these forces to help achieve their outcome. Take each force in turn.

The output from the process is a plan of action for each of the force identified through the process.

Systemic Coaching and the ICF Core Competency Model

The ICF Core Competency model outlines competencies which are relevant and applicable to any approach to coaching, however the systemic considerations are quite explicitly referenced in the model in several places:

Foundation Domain

- Competency 1: Demonstrates Ethical Practice: *Is sensitive to client's identity, environment, experiences, values and beliefs.*
- Competency 2: Embodies a Coaching Mindset: *Remains aware of and open to the influence of context and culture on self and others.*

Co-Creating the Relationship Domain

- Competency 4: Cultivates Trust and Safety: *Seeks to understand the client within their context which may include their identity, environment, experiences, valuers and beliefs*

Communicating Effectively Domain

- Competency 6: Listens Actively: *Considers the client's context, identity, environment, experiences, values and beliefs to enhance understanding of what the client is communicating.*
- Competency 7: Evokes Awareness: *Helps the client identify factors that influence current and future patterns of behavior, thinking or emotion.*

Conclusion

For clients who work within an organization, systemic coaching approaches allow them to better understand their place within the system, how they relate to others and how they can manage these relationships to achieve their goals. Some systemic themes and challenges are explicit and some less so, and the role of the coach is to help the client look at their goals and their situation through a systemic lens. This helps to bring what was unconscious into more conscious awareness so that the client can recognize that some of their challenges are based on systemic considerations. Change can at times be limited to what the system will allow, and the systemic approach helps the client to focus on what they can and can't control, what is an area they can work on for themselves and what is a product of the system within they are operating. In this way, coaching can be more easily focused and targeted on developing resourceful strategies that not only support the individual, but which can also have a positive impact on the system at the same time. This is what is sometimes known as the ripple effect of coaching and is closely linked to the rise in popularity and success of coaching teams and groups as well as individuals.

Chapter 21
Psychodynamic Coaching and Transference

Introduction

> Psychoanalytical consulting maintains the position that the presenting problem may at best be a symptom and often is an issue that services to protect the real problem. (Czander, 1993)

Psychodynamic psychology has its roots in the therapeutic setting and is an approach that focuses on the psychological forces that underlie human behavior, feelings and emotions. It particularly focuses on the dynamic relationship between conscious and unconscious motivation.

This chapter explores what psychodynamic means and how this approach how can be applied to the field of coaching. We will look at some practical psychodynamic tools and concepts and will also see how the ICF Core Competency model invites coaches to explore, uncover and work with the "real issue" with their clients.

What Does 'Psychodynamic' Mean?

It is surprisingly difficult to find a succinct answer which does not mislead or obscure. Czander (1993) and Shedler (2010) offer definitions which approach an answer: "The essence of psychodynamic therapy is exploring those aspects of self that are not fully known, especially as they are manifested and potentially influenced in the therapy relationship."

This way of thinking about the human mind began with Freud at the end of the twentieth century and has since developed and evolved to become the range of therapies known collectively as 'psychodynamic'.

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The Evidence Base for a Psychodynamic Approach to Coaching

In one methodological review of research (Shedler, 2010), considerable evidence is presented that supports the effectiveness of psychodynamic approaches. Psychodynamic psychotherapy is also particularly effective in the longer term, after the therapy itself has finished. In similar ways, executive coaching aims not to resolve short-term symptoms, but to build long-term, sustainable capability and promote independence as opposed to reliance and dependency on the coaching process. Shedler's review outlines several key principles which can be usefully applied to the context of coaching as outlined below.

The Containing Relationship

A psychodynamic coach prioritizes the psychological safety of the relationship between themselves and their clients. This includes such contracting aspects as clarity about confidentiality, frequency and regularity of meetings, and privacy of the encounters. It goes further than these important but rather practical matters, however. The relationship between client and coach needs to become one in which the client feels it is safe to discuss the "undiscussable," that they will not be judged, that their vulnerability will not be exploited. The relationship needs, in short, to function as a reliable container into which they can pour half-formed thoughts and shameful feelings with no fear of the coach's reaction.

Emphasis on Self-Awareness and Self-Determination

In psychodynamic coaching, it is the client who leads the way. It is their insights and resolve that determine what will happen. Not only that, but if they develop self-awareness and self-determination, then these gains can remain long after the program of coaching has ended (Sandler, 2016).

Respect for the Unfathomable Complexity of Mental Life

The psychodynamic coach knows that the enterprise they and their client are engaged in is one of understanding more of what is currently unknown in the client's inner world. The coach may catch glimpses of this inner world, but they can never know for certain. They may offer hypotheses, always tentatively, always ready to hear the client's response. They may say, "I wonder if…," or "I'm thinking perhaps. . . .” By exploring and remaining open to all sorts of fantasies, daydreams and apparent tangents in the client’s thinking, the coach can enable the client to begin to appreciate much more of their inner world.

Exploring Emotion and Intellect

Much of the emotional life of executives is kept private, through habit, fear, shame, and a multiplicity of other cultural and individual factors which seek to deny the importance and prevalence of feelings. The psychodynamic coach will spend at least as much time encouraging exploration of feelings as thoughts, knowing that it is the experience of emotion that enables change. It could be said that unexpressed emotions will never die. They are buried alive and will come forth later in uglier ways. As a client becomes more aware of the feelings which are causing their behavior, they also may begin to feel differently, and to see possibilities for responding differently.

Exploring Attempts to Avoid Painful Thoughts and Feelings

As part of expanding the client’s awareness of what is currently out of their awareness, the psychodynamic coach is interested in the habits they have for avoiding painful thoughts and feelings. If the coach can encourage the client to recognize the thoughts and feelings they have been avoiding, they may well arrive at a point of emotional insight which produces change.

Focus on the Here and Now

Psychodynamic coaches are interested in the pattern of relationship which develops between them and their clients (transference and countertransference). These patterns have the potential to shed a great clarifying light on some of the most intractable relationships in the client’s professional life. For example, if the client is always late for sessions when the coach is always on time, that pattern may serve some function for the client in their life generally. Perhaps the client fears rejection, and so positions themselves as the one who is doing the rejecting? Perhaps they are concerned that they will not be given sufficient attention, and so they make people wait for them? It is in exploring this behavior with a safe and trusted relationship which can make it possible for the client to appreciate more of the unknown in themselves.

Emphasis on Relationships

Through this kind of work the psychodynamic coach creates the possibility for greater flexibility in interpersonal relationships generally. Not only does the client become aware of their motives for, and the impact of, their current choices, but they have the opportunity to develop new ways of relating within the context of a safe relationship with the coach. Since the vast majority of issues that the executive brings to coaching are at least partially to do with their interpersonal relationships, this is a great strength of the psychodynamic approach.

Fancy Dress Party Question

The fancy dress party is ideal for exploring relationships, and particularly unpacking aspects which are outside of the conscious awareness of the client.

Box 21.1 The Fancy Dress Party Question

The coach invites the client to image they are going to a fancy-dress party with the other person: who would they go as? This can be followed by a question to explore what might happen at the party and why the client selected the characters and events shared.

In reflecting on their choice and telling the story, interesting insights can emerge about how they view another person, how they view themselves in relation to that other person, and the story which is unfolding.

A coaching conversation session can unpack these insights and the aspects of the relationship(s), and implications for how they might choose to reimagine the relationship(s) or how they can adapt their behaviour to achieve better outcomes.

Identification of Recurring Patterns and Themes

Psychodynamic coaches work to identify and explore recurring patterns and themes in the client's thoughts, feelings, self-concept, relationships, behaviors and experiences. In some cases, the client may be acutely aware of these patterns and yet feel unable to avoid them (e.g. the client knows that timekeeping is a critical aspect to building a good relationship with their manager and yet, try as they might, they seem unable to arrive on time). In this case, the coach might invite the client to explore what is underneath that pattern of behavior, what does being late represent for the client and their relationship with their manager? In other cases, the client may be unaware of the patterns and the coach helps them to recognize and understand them.

Exploration of Fantasy Life

With the psychodynamic approach, part of the coaching process might include an exploration of the client's hopes, desires, dreams and visions. The client shares freely and fully, leading to the exploration of options and possibilities. This approach can be likened to the coaching "miracle" question: "what if anything were possible?" and also has resonance with Boyatzis's Intentional Change Theory (2008) and the discovery of the "Ideal Self."

By way of bringing these principles together, if we consider that a person who presents themselves for coaching may feel puzzled or challenged. They want change. But then again, they do not. They may seem, to an external observer, to resist change. Even when the coaching begins well, and all has been progressing for some time along a smooth and beneficial path, suddenly they resist and seem to sabotage their own intent. It is precisely at that point that the insights from psychodynamic thinking can be most useful to client. By becoming clearer about *all* of their thoughts and feelings, including those outside of their immediate awareness, the client can begin to remove the barriers to change which have held them back.

The psychodynamic approach in coaching therefore offers clients great scope for self-discovery, using their insights in that process to enable understanding and change. Sandler (2016) proposes that psychodynamic coaching can support coaches to:

- Understand their clients in depth, including those thoughts and emotions that lie 'below the surface'
- Forge strong working relationships with their clients that rapidly engage them in the coaching process
- Promote significant, observable improvement in their clients' behavior and performance at work
- Help clients to remain effective and skillful even when under pressure

Psychodynamic Concepts Useful in Coaching

There are four particular concepts in psychodynamic theory that we feel are noteworthy, and which can have relevance and use in the context of coaching.

Projection

Projection can be defined as our tendency to 'act out' our feelings, unintentionally, in a way that "infects" others with the feelings we, often unconsciously, have. This act of projection is often a defense mechanism in which our ego defends itself against those unconscious qualities or impulses (positive or negative) by denying their existence in ourselves whilst attributing them to others. For example, a leader may feel uncertain and vulnerable in their role. They deny these feelings in themselves and "project" them onto their line report, chastising and confronting them for their lack of confidence, decision-making and assertiveness. What this means for us as coaches is that our own feelings in our clients's presence may give us useful information about our client's inner world. The question: "what is mine and what is theirs?" comes to mind.

Transference

This can be described as our tendency to 'transfer' feelings we have in relation to a significant person in our past and/or present onto others who remind us of them. So, for example, if our mother disappointed us, we may anticipate being disappointed by women in general. In coaching, we might remind our client of their brother, sister, an old boss, a friend and this resonance can lead them to respond and engage with us as if we were that person, like "putting someone else's face" onto us. Naturally, this process can have positive and negative implications for the coaching relationship and can, of course, occur in either direction. It can also occur for the client with other individuals within their system, thereby having implications for their relationships with people in their network.

Countertransference

Countertransference is our tendency to respond to transference, not by noticing it consciously, but by having feelings of our own. So, for example, if someone is anticipating being disappointed by us, what we feel is an unusual anxiety to do everything perfectly for them. This can be thought of emotional entanglement with our client. What this means for us as coaches is that we must pay attention to our feelings. Countertransference can be another source of useful information, or it can get in the way of the work we need to do with our clients. In the example we have been developing here, the coach's countertransference might lead the coach to try to meet all her client's demands, rather than challenge him or her on his or her habit of making unreasonable demands.

Parallel Process

Countertransference and the concept of unconscious emotional entanglement and identification between two parties are also linked to the idea of parallel process. First described by Searle in 1955, it describes where the client can (unconsciously)

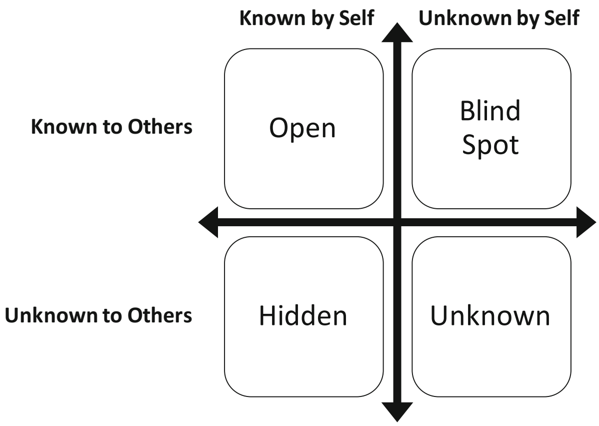

Fig. 21.1 Johari Window

recreate or "parallel" their issue or challenge in the way they relate to their coach. In this way, the work that the client brings into the coaching session "acts out" in the moment, in that session. For example, the client is working on how they can be less directive and more empowering with their team and the coach (potentially unconsciously) finds themselves leading or directing the client more than is helpful in the coaching process.

The role of the coach when working with a psychodynamic approach is to support the client to make known the unknown. Looking at the Johari Window model (Luft and Ingham, 1955) can be a useful way to describe this (see Fig. 21.1). In the psychodynamic approach we may be working with the side that is unknown by self. This information might also be either known or unknown by others and the coach invites exploration with the client to uncover and make known information about thoughts and feelings that help to reach the source of the work they are doing together in the coaching relationship. In the case of the blind spot, part of the role of the coach might be to offer observations of what they notice in the client regarding patterns or themes etc. in order for the blind spot to be reduced, thereby increasing what is "open" and known information. This exploration could also extend to information that is indeed already known to the client but is hidden from others and here the coach seeks to build sufficient trust and psychological safety for the client to feel comfortable for that information to be known in service of the client's forward movement toward their goals.

Another way of looking at this could also be to consider the *"presenting issue"* and the *"real issue"*. When a client says that they want to work on their time management because they are staying late at work every evening, is that simply a case for better organization, delegation and prioritization throughout the day? Or could it be that they are staying late because they feel insecure and lacking in confidence in their role and are staying late in order try and learn or achieve more as they feel like the "weak link" in the team? Taking a psychodynamic approach in coaching can help us to uncover what is really going on and what is the real piece of work that we should be doing.

On the flip side, we also need to take care that we are not slipping into what is known as "confirmation bias," which is the tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms or strengthens our own personal beliefs or hypotheses. In this way, self-awareness and self-regulation of the coach are important qualities to develop and to continually check in and challenge ourselves on. The question: "what is mine and what is theirs?" comes to mind again.

Psychodynamic Principles and the ICF Core Competency Model

Many of the principles of the psychodynamic approach can be found within the ICF Core Competency Model. For example, these include:

Competency 2: Embodies a Coaching Mindset

- Acknowledges that clients are responsible for their own choices
- Remains aware of and open to the influence of context and culture on self and others
- Uses awareness of self and one's intuition to benefit clients
- Develops and maintains the ability to regulate one's emotions
- Mentally and emotionally prepares for sessions
- Seeks help from outside sources when necessary

Competency 3: Establishes and Maintain Agreements

- Partners with the client to *identify or reconfirm* what they want to accomplish in the session

Competency 3: Cultivates Trust and Safety

- Seeks to understand the client within their context which may include their identity, environment, experiences, values and beliefs
- Show support and empathy for the client
- Acknowledges and supports the client's expression of feelings, perceptions, concerns, beliefs and suggestions

Competency 5: Maintains Presence

- Remains focused, observant, empathetic and responsive to the client
- Demonstrates curiosity during the coaching process
- Is comfortable in a space of not knowing
- Creates or allows space for silence, pause and reflection

Competency 6: Listens Actively

- Recognizes and inquires when there is more to what the client is communicating
- Notices, acknowledges and explores the client's emotions, energy shifts, non-verbal cues, or other behaviors
- Integrates the client's words, tone of voice, and body language to determine the full meaning of what is being communicated
- Notices trends in the client's behaviors and emotions across sessions to discern themes and patterns

Competency 7: Evokes Awareness

- Challenges the client as a way to evoke awareness or insight
- Asks questions about the client such as their way of thinking, values, needs, wants, and beliefs
- Asks questions that help the client explore beyond current thinking
- Invites the client to share more about their experience in the moment
- Helps the client to identify factors that influence current and future patterns of behavior, thinking and emotion
- Shares observations, insights and feelings, without attachment, that have the potential to create new learning for the client

Competency 8: Facilitates Client Growth

- Works with the client to integrate new awareness, insight, or learning into their worldview and behaviors

Conclusion

In this chapter we have explored how psychodynamic psychology has many useful applications to the coaching process. Whilst its roots are in the therapeutic setting, the principles and concepts are very relevant when working coaching clients to help them uncover and explore the information about themselves that is useful and necessary for them to more effectively work toward and achieve their goals. We have described what the psychodynamic approach is and shared its principles through the lens of the coaching relationship. We have also looked at some of the core concepts of psychodynamics and how this approach can also be found and is reflected in some of the competencies within the ICF Core Competency Model.

We also want to offer a "handle with care" tag here. As coaches we can use our understanding of psychodynamic concepts to be a more effective and resourceful coach. However, we are not therapists. As one anonymous psychotherapy patient said: "Psychoanalysis was probably the most interesting thing that I've ever done. I learned an enormous amount about myself. Only problem is, I was more depressed than when I started." This approach is to help uncover useful information that is in service of the client's forward movement toward their coaching goals, it is not our role or place to psychoanalyze them.

Chapter 22
Integration

Introduction

Coaching has grown dramatically over the past two decades with a proliferation of different models. While a number of coaching schools and coaches still adopt a one size fits all approach to their coaching, we have consistently argued throughout this book that coaches are likely to be best placed to help their clients when they are able to draw from a wide suite of different approaches and use a wide variety of tools and techniques. Most coaches recognize the important of being able to flex and adapt their coaching to suit each individual client and the different topic each client bring to coaching. This has led most coaches towards developing an integrated approach. In this chapter we will look at the range of different coaching approaches and how coaches can make choices about which model to select in which situation and develop an integrated approach to their practice.

What Is Integration?

Humanity is diverse: We differ not only in our gender, ethnicity, nationality, physical ability and looks, but also in personalities, preferences and experiences. Its far to say that no two people are identically alike, not even monozygotic twins.

If that the case, why would we treat everyone the same in our coaching, using the same model or framework with every client? Not ever DIY job at home requires a hammer. But when the only tool we have is a hammer, ever problem tends to look like a nail.

We believe in an eclectic approach where coaches learn a diverse range of approaches. This may start with learning two or three frameworks or models during their ACC training, and add one or two models as they progress toward their PCC status. While there is no ideal number of models or frameworks which a coach must

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use, drawing on 5–8 models will give coaches the flexibility to be able to meet their clients where they are, as opposed to forcing clients to adapt to their one model or style.

But having a diverse range of approaches is only the start. Coaches need to be able to make choices about which model to use when, and have an understanding of how and when they may deploy these different approaches. This is Integration.

Integration involves bringing together the different approaches to create a coherent way of working, while having the flexibility to adapt to different clients and their different issues. Integration involves synthesizing our mass of learning, of multiple models, ideas about change, and different tools and techniques, to create a unified whole, that is consist with our values and beliefs.

An Integrated Model for Coaching Practice

There are many ways of bringing together different approaches or models within coaching. The following is just one way. You will have your own way of making sense of what you do, which draws on your own experiences, training and practice. One of the challenges for a new coach is to articulate their approach, so they have a sophisticated answer to the question from a potential client: "So how do you coach?" One that goes beyond: "Oh, I am a Time to Think coach"—even if they are trained in Time to Think, and they use this as part of their overall practice.

This framework is based on a series of streams that the coach can swim, or work within, moving between streams as required. The framework developed from practice, during the early 2000s (Passmore, 2007) and has continued to develop over time.

The overall model consists of a pair of streams reflecting the developing and maintaining aspects of the coaching partnership. Within this pair of streams are a series of four streams that the coach can explore, working with the different facets of their client—behavioral, cognitive, emotional, and physiological. All of this work takes place within a systemic context (Fig. 22.1).

People have sometimes asked why use the term stream, as opposed to box, category, or level. We prefer the term stream as this reflects the more fluid nature of the concept we have in mind, and the ability of the coach to be able to move easily, from one to another, and back, as required. Secondly the concept requires that the water in which we work is flowing, moving, changing, which requires us to change and adapt even if we stay within a single stream. We will review each stream in turn.

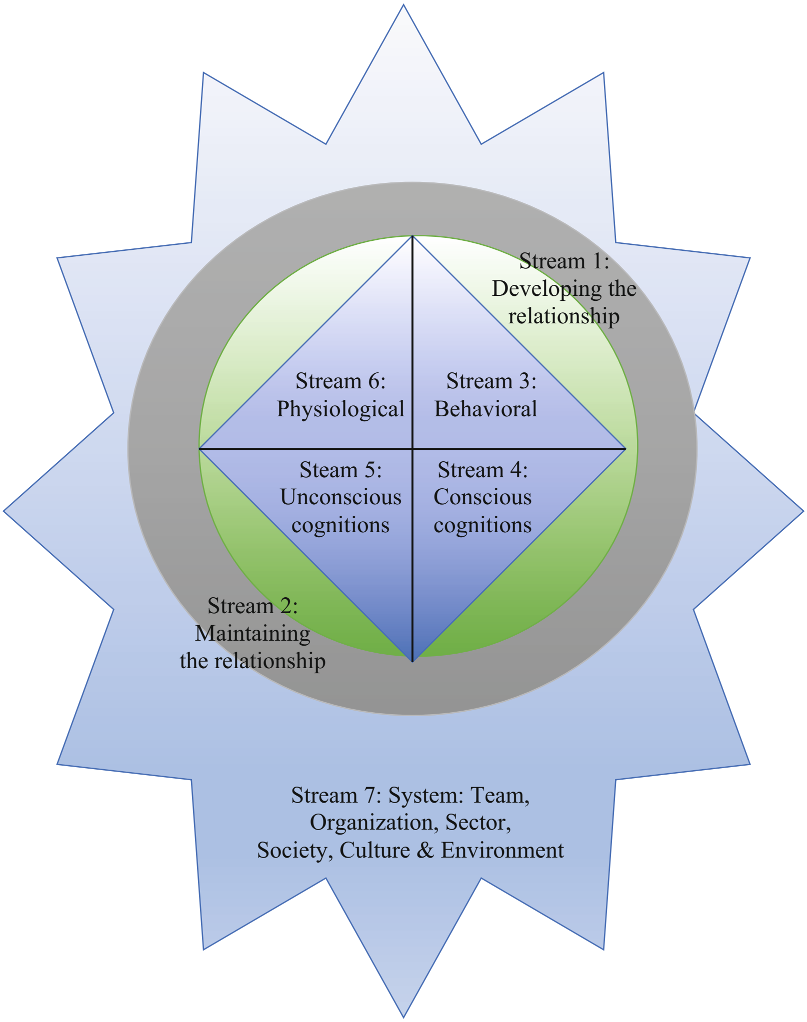

Fig. 22.1 Seven streams integrated coaching model

The Coaching Partnership

Before any coaching can begin, the coach needs to build a working relationship with the client and to maintain this relationship throughout the course of the coaching assignment. The coaching partnership emphasizes the collaborative and equal nature of the coaching relationship. If either party is overly dominant, the coach is likely to feel restricted in their ability to act. Alternatively, if the client feels threatened, they are likely to be less open and willing to talk about intimate issues or may even terminate the relationship.

The first of these two streams, Stream 1 involves the coach working with the client to develop a relationship of mutual trust and respect. To create the right conditions for coaching, the coach needs to invest in the relationship. This starts from the very first contact.

Psychological research tells us that our impressions of people are often formed in the first few minutes of an encounter. For the client this might involve reading the coach's bio or reviewing their website. What image would you want these documents to present of you? Getting the tone and message right, is as important as your physical first meeting. These messages can build your credibility, provide reassurance and provide a platform for the first conversation, be it by email, phone or face to face.

For many coaching assignments the first enquiry is likely to be by phone or email. Taking the time to listen to the client, provide reassurance, clarifications and guidance will further help the relationship. Finally, when you meet, either online or face-to-face, taking time to invest in the relationship before moving to action provides the platform for future work.

The relationship building stream is likely to continue during the contracting phrase, and into the story phrase where clients talk about their current situation and what they want to focus on. During this phrase the coach works hard on three aspects; being non-judgmental toward the client, expressing empathy, and being non-possessive (Rogers, 1957).

However, once established this work on the relationship cannot stop. The coach needs to continue to invest in this relationship. The focus though can begin to shift to start to undertake the work required in the coaching assignment.

The coach thus seeks to create and maintain a safe container for the coaching work. If that container breaks, or is not created in the first place, the coach will be unable to progress the work the client needs to undertake.

Working with Behavioral Issues

The third stream the coach can work in is the behavioral stream. This can often be a useful place to start, helping clients to understand and gain confidence in the coaching process. In this stream the coach encourages clients to use simply problem-solving approaches; to set clear and measurable objectives, think about their current issue and develop action plans (usually things to do) which enable the person to move closer to their goals. Models such as GROW (Whitmore, 1992) are well suited to this space, being primarily behaviorally focused, they direct clients to think of actions which they can take and to use mechanisms for accountability to help them track their progress toward their stated goals.

Working with Conscious Cognitions and Emotions

The fourth stream is centered about the client's thoughts and beliefs. How do these help or hinder the client in their journey to achieving their goal? In this stream the coach will typically draw upon cognitive behavioural techniques, such as those developed by Beck (1976), Ellis (1998), Gilbert (2009) and Hayes (2004), which have been refined by coaches to make them more suitable for the work of the coach (Neenan and Dryden, 2001; Edgerton and Palmer, 2005; Anstiss and Blonna, 2014; Anstiss and Gilbert, 2014).

The aim of the coach is to help clients recognize the relationship between their thoughts, feelings, sensations and their behavior. Through this, the coach can help the client develop more helpful, supportive or evidenced based beliefs, or simply become more accepting and compassionate toward themselves and, through this, change their thinking to improve their performance or reduction their anxiety.

Working with the Unconscious

The fifth stream is the work with unconscious cognitions. In stream four the client may quite easily bring to mind the beliefs they hold, and the words used by their inner critic that inhibit their performance or are a trigger for their anxiety. In stream five the thoughts, beliefs and attitudes, and their relationship with their current situation, are not part of the client's conscious awareness. Often what has brought them to coaching can be something completely different. The aim of the coach in this space, working sometimes over many sessions, is to help the client to explore the topic from multiple perspectives. Through this a greater self-awareness may emerge and ultimately a desire to address the issue. Approaches such as psychodynamic coaching or motivational interview can be particularly useful in this stream, helping clients connect with often unspoken and unconscious drivers, helping the client to connect with these core beliefs and values, where appropriate to challenge them and to develop behaviors that are consistent with their core beliefs and values.

Work in this stream can be a slow and winding journey, where the coach's understanding of them self, as well as an understanding of others, can help the client to uncover layer by layer deeper aspects of themselves, which have been hidden or which lay undiscovered.

Working with the Body

The sixth stream to work with is the body. For some clients and some coaches work in this stream is uncomfortable and beyond the boundaries of coaching. Antonio Damasio's work has demonstrated that Descartes was wrong to suggest a separation of mind and body (Damasio, 2006). He has argued we are one, an integrated whole; mind and body. Understanding our bodies and using them to enhance our performance is thus important if as coaches we are working with clients to help them be their best self.

In this stream the coach works with the client to help them become more aware of their body and its physiological sensations. These sensations may be signals for current emotions, butterflies in the stomach in advance of a presentation, or sweaty palms before a job interview. Or they may be signs of deeper and longer-term issues, a shoulder or neck pain, a sign of stress. For example, one client we have worked with was continually complaining of shoulder pain. While we did not know what the issue was, we suggested he visit his doctor. A referral from his medical doctor to the hospital led him to a triple heart bypass operation within the week. He was lucky that the body gave him a signal before he suffered a massive heart attack, which could well have cost him his life.

Work in this stream may involve somatic coaching or activities like the mindfulness body scan, which can help clients to make the connection between mind and body and become better able to understand the messages their body may be communicating.

Working Within a System

The final stream that we have yet to discuss, but surrounds and influences all of the others, is the Systemic stream: Stream 7. This stream includes the work team (but also our family and friendship circle are other teams), the organization (this includes the organization but also the wider network of stakeholders around their organization from shareholders to suppliers), the sector (this includes professional bodies and the profession), national society (which may set national laws or ways of working), culture (this includes the modes of thinking and what is valued) and the environment (the physical world, which imposes its own rules, from gravity to death).

These aspects become increasing invisible to the client as one moves from team to environment. But these systemic influences inform, and sometimes drive, how we do the things we do at this point in human history, in our national society, in our regional culture, in our city, in our sector, in our organization, in our team and in our family. The aim of the coach is to bring these unspoken forces into the clients' awareness and recognize that systemic forces are both powerful and influence both them and others. In short, the aim of the coach is to "make the invisible visible."

Writers in this space, such as Oshry (2007a, 2007b), have provided fascinating insights into how organizational forces can impact on individuals and what individuals can do to both accept and manage these forces.

In this space the coach's role is to encourage the client to see their actions in the context of other stakeholders: "How would you feel if this appeared on the front page of a national newspaper?" "What would your grandchildren think of your actions looking back when they are sharing these stories with their children?" These questions allow the coach to bring wider perspectives, encouraging greater openness, transparency and accountability. We are sure that some of the actions at Lehman Brothers would not have happened in 2007–08 if the spotlight of openness was shone on these behaviors, and equally we might reconsider some of our behaviors in the use of the earth's finite resources if we thought we had to explain them to our great grandchildren.

How Can Coaches Develop Their Own Integrated Approach?

While using a diverse range of approaches can help coaches to be able to adapt and flex to meet the different needs of individual client, how should the coach go about developing their own integrated approach? The answer lies in what values and beliefs hold together the different approaches that the coach uses with their clients.

A starting point for this model is equality: A core belief that the coach and client are equals. Secondly, that the coach is working in the best interests of their client. There are two riders to this. A recognition the client does not always know what they want all of the time, and that sometimes the coach needs to encourage the client to explore more challenging spaces or be confronted by unpleasant emotions to create a change. Secondly, balancing the need of multiple clients. In many coaching assignments the organization client may be paying for the coaching, while the individual client may be in the room. This requires the coach to act transparently, encouraging both parties to be open about their agendas and negotiating a shared agenda and review process (we discuss this more in Chap. 24 on Contracting).

The thirdly belief underpinning the framework is that change is difficult. It can require failing and recovering several times, before the change is successfully made. In essence coaches need to equip clients to be able to cope with lapses and relapses, and to stay focused on the goal. This is best achieved through a positive and encouraging approach, where the coach is willing to journey with their client, allowing clients to fail and encouraging them to reflect on the experience and learn what to do differently for their next attempt.

The final core belief is that coaching is a brief affair. Each assignment is working toward a clear objective and starts with the end in mind. It is not an indefinite on-going relationship.

New coaches may wish to consider three questions when reflecting on how they will integrate their own approaches and develop a single coherent explanation of their approach to coaching.

Box 22.2 Questions for Reflection

(i) What beliefs underpin your work with clients?
(ii) Which approaches models have you been trained in?
(iii) Which approaches do you feel competent to use and have you found helpful with your clients and their issues?

For some, writing answers to these questions is the best way to think through and develop their own approach. For others drawing their model works best. Either way, as an integrated coach, be able to describe what you do and how you work with clients.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have consider one integrated framework, the Seven streams model, that draws together different approaches to provide a single coherent model, underpinned by a series of core principles. This is just one way. Each coach needs to discover for themselves how they make sense of their practice, and how their can summaries and describe their own personal approach to coaching.

Part IV
Coaching Practice

Introduction

This part focuses on the practice of coaching. The first of the four chapters in this part is dedicated to ethics. Ethical conduct, integrity and professionalism are very high on the agenda for good coaching practice. Codes of ethics guide coaching practice and the behaviors of a coach. They also provide a framework that coaches commit to in order to fulfil their ethical and legal obligations in their coaching practice. Chapter 23 looks at what is ethics and introduces the notion of ethical "dilemmas." We also offer an overview of the ICF Code of Ethics along with a useful model, called APPEAR, to navigate and explore ethical dilemmas. The ICF Code of Ethics can be found on the ICF website (2019a) and is the focal point of Competency (1) Demonstrates Ethical Practice, which is covered in Chap. 6 of Part II.

Closely linked to ethics and professionalism is the process of contracting in coaching. Chapter 24 looks at what is a coaching contract and also positions the idea of frames as a way of outlining the different levels of expectation of and from different stakeholders within the coaching process. A useful model of contracting frames is covered to ensure that all relevant aspects are considered. We also look at multiparty contracting and share thoughts on what should or could be contained within a coaching contract.

Another very practical aspect of coaching is that of notetaking. In Chap. 25 we look at the pros and cons of taking notes as well as important issues of managing those notes, particularly in terms of confidentially and data privacy and data protection. Our general position and recommendation are that notetaking is best kept to a minimum for several reasons outlined in this chapter. However, we also offer some hints and tips on notetaking and also offer a simple model called PIPS to help coaches consider what notes to take.

The final chapter in this part focuses on presence as a central feature of good coaching practice. Coaching presence has already been positioned in two chapters of this book (Chaps. 7 and 10) regarding how presence is an integral part of the ICF Core Coaching Competency model. In Chap. 26 of this part, we look specifically at how our coaching presence can be established, maintained and enabled through the practice of mindfulness. We share some mindfulness approaches and techniques and highlight their direct positive impact on several aspects of the qualities a coach is expected to bring into coaching, both in terms of their *being* as well as their *doing*.

Chapter 23
Ethical Practice

Introduction

All coaches come across ethical dilemmas in their practice. This may be about whether they can work with two different members of the same team in an organization, or whether to report illegal practices to regulators. Ethics is about making choice about what we consider as “right” or “wrong” and is an essential component of good coaching as well as good leadership.

Most professional bodies, including the ICF, publish ethical codes of practice. These codes provide advice as to what the professional body considers to be acceptable conduct. They also provide a standard of practice which members of the public can expect from their ICF coach. The implication for coaches is a failure to comply could result in removal from membership or of a credential.

In this chapter we will briefly explore what is ethics, and what types of ethical dilemmas can arise in coaching. Secondly, we will consider the ICF code of ethics (ICF, 2019a), and ways coaches can become more familiar with the code and its application. Third, we will explore the limitations of professional codes of conduct, recognizing that any attempt to codify ethics risks treating situations as black and white cases. However, in reality coaches need to navigate ethical compliance in a multi-colored world of ambiguity, half facts and multiple perspectives.

What Is Ethics?

Ethics is at its most simple about deciding between what is right and wrong. But really what we mean is morally right” or “morally wrong,” as opposed to financially, commercially, or strategically right or wrong. Morality itself is concerned with the norms, values, and beliefs embedded within society. Such norms, values, and beliefs are often unspoken. They vary across time, culture, and organizations. What might

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be considered acceptable banter 50 years ago at work, would be considered sexual harassment today. What might be considered joking between colleagues in one sector would be considered harassment in another sector. Coaches need to learn to navigate the challenges of their professional code, their personal values and the environments in which they work (Turner and Passmore, 2018).

What Are Ethical Dilemmas?

Ethical dilemmas are choices that occur when the answer about a future course of action is unclear: *"Should I do A, or should I do B?"* In coaching these choices may involve issues about managing, or when to break, confidentiality; in what circumstances would it be acceptable to whistle blow on a client who has revealed during a coaching session illegal activity in their organization? It may involve maintaining appropriate relationships with clients: In what circumstances would it be appropriate to go back to a clients' flat? In what circumstances would it be appropriate to go for a drink with a client after a session? It involves conflicts between the needs of the individual client and the organizational client who is paying for the coaching: In what circumstances would it be acceptable to protect a client who is using their employer's resources to run their own business? In what circumstances would it be appropriate to break confidentiality to protect organizational IP from being stolen?

ICF Code of Ethics

The ICF publishes a Code of Ethics, which relate to individual coaches, and a Code of Conduct, which relates to accredited programs.

The Code of Ethics is divided into five parts, with Part IV itself divided into four sections which contain the real detail. The first part is an Introduction which explains the code and its position within ICF coach practice.

Part II defines coaching and sets out the context for practice of ICF coaches within a professional relationship with clients. It helpfully differentiates between the individual client and the sponsor, being the person responsible for commissioning the coaching. We have summarized these in Box 23.1.

Box 23.1 Definitions

- "Client"—the individual or team/group being coached, the coach being mentored or supervised, or the coach or the student coach being trained.

(continued)

Box 23.1 (continued)

- "Coaching"—partnering with Clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.
- "Coaching Relationship"—a relationship that is established by the ICF Professional and the Client(s)/Sponsor(s) under an agreement or a contract that defines the responsibilities and expectations of each party.
- "Code"—ICF Code of Ethics.
- "Confidentiality"—protection of any information obtained around the coaching engagement unless consent to release is given.
- "Conflict of Interest"—a situation in which an ICF Professional is involved in multiple interests where serving one interest could work against or be in conflict with another. This could be financial, personal or otherwise.
- "Equality"—a situation in which all people experience inclusion, access to resources and opportunity, regardless of their race, ethnicity, national origin, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, immigration status, mental or physical disability, and other areas of human difference.
- "ICF Professional"—individuals who represent themselves as an ICF Member or ICF Credential-holder, in roles including but not limited to Coach, Coach Supervisor, Mentor Coach, Coach Trainer, and Student of Coaching.
- "ICF Staff"— the ICF support personnel who are contracted by the managing company that provides professional management and administrative services on behalf of ICF.
- "Internal Coach"— an individual who is employed within an organization and coaches either part-time or full-time the employees of that organization.
- "Sponsor"—the entity (including its representatives) paying for and/or arranging or defining the coaching services to be provided.
- "Support Personnel"—the people who work for ICF Professionals in support of their Clients.
- "Systemic equality"—gender equality, race equality and other forms of equality that are institutionalized in the ethics, core values, policies, structures, and cultures of communities, organizations, nations and society.

Part III of the ICF code sets out the ICF Values and Ethical Principles, while Part IV sets out expectations for coach conduct under four headings. The full ICF Code of Ethics can be found on the ICF website (2019a). However, we would encourage you to check the ICF website as the code is updated from time to time. The Code of Ethics and ethical practice is also the focus of ICF Core Competency 1 which we explored in depth in Chap. 6.

It may be helpful to look at two examples: conflicts of interest, confidentiality and making public statements and claims.

A common challenge many coaches face is managing conflicts of interest. A guiding principle that coaches can use is transparency. This involves the coach making clear at the start who they are working with, such as coaching a manager and several line reports or coaching several directors from the same board. It can also relate to conflicts between multiple stakeholders, where the coach may be commissioned by the organization to deliver one agenda, while the client believes there is a second hidden agenda. By encouraging transparency by all parties, potential conflicts can be minimized.

Research into coaching practices suggests there remains widespread misunderstanding about what is acceptable and what is unacceptable practice (Passmore, Turner, & Filipiak, 2018, 2019). Confidentiality is often a source of confusion in coaching. Many coaches still refer to coaching being completely confidential, as if the coach is the client's priest and the coaching session a confessional confidential space. While confidentiality is important, there is a danger that coaches prioritize this over other obligations; such as their contractual obligations to the sponsor, and to wider society. Confidentiality does not mean protecting clients from their law or ignoring danger signs where there are serious risks to the client or to others. We would suggest coaches make clear during contracting both the confidential nature of coaching but also the limits of confidentiality. Three key limits are serious criminality, risk of harm by the client to them self and risk of harm to others.

Judging the nature of a criminal offense is difficult for those who are not involved in the criminal justice system. One potential test of whether a crime is "serious" is: "*If I reported this matter to my local police station would the police actively investigate the crime*"? A second test is: "*Does the offence carry a potential custodial sentence*?" This may be best illustrated by an example. Driving a car above the speed limit is a criminal offense in most countries. However, reporting an individual to the police who we have seen speeding is unlikely to be investigated, unless an accident had occurred. In contrast, importing and selling hard drugs, such as cocaine, is a criminal offense and if reported to the police would result in an active investigation. Secondly, in most countries prosecution for this offense is likely to lead to a custodial sentence.

In contracting with sponsors coaches need to agree when contracting some general principles about what is confidential and what the coach may be obliged to disclose. This is a difficult path to tread. The coach needs to be careful not to collude with their clients against the organization or wider society, while also not being overly influenced by the sponsor to share the details of each session. Some of these aspects have been expanded and further articulated in the updated ICF Core Competency Model, particularly in Competency 3. Established and Maintain Agreements (see Chap. 8).

The third example relates to making public statements. This is one of the areas in which the ICF receives the most complaints: A coach claims they are qualified in a psychometric tool or makes a similar claim to a client or on their website, which is not completely true. We would thus encourage coaches to read and think carefully about public statements, and only make statements which are true or which can be proved.

The final Part of the ICF ethical code relates to Pledge, which summaries the coach's commitment to the code and to behave in an ethical way. Further information on the ICF Code of Ethics and how it forms part of the ICF Core Competencies are outlined in Chap. 6.

Continuing Your Ethical Learning

Having completed your training, you may believe you know all you need to about ethics. This would be wrong. Like the development of coaching competencies, ethical understanding and practice is a continual journey of development.

One helpful step after completing your ACC is to continue to engage through the Complimentary Ethics course available on the ICF website. The ICF online course, involves a short video and quiz. The course offers CCE credits and is a useful steppingstone in the journey toward PCC status.

Working with Ethical Dilemmas in Your Coaching Practice

However, as we have suggested above, while Code are vital for setting out general principles, they cannot cover every situation, circumstance or eventuality that can arise between the coach and the client, or the coach and the client organization.

Instead coaches need to be aware of the Code and its contents. They need to be trained in how the code relates to them and their practice and they need to develop internal guides, or process, for working with ethical dilemmas, to guide themselves to the appropriate response in the situations they encounter.

A heuristic is a rule of thumb, or an internal framework that helps us makes decisions. Heuristics can be a valuable tool for coaches, guiding their thinking and improving the quality and consistency of the decisions they make in their practice.

The APPEAR Ethical Model is one such model that can help in guiding ethical decision making (Passmore and Turner, 2018). The APPEAR ethical model offers a step-by-step process from encouraging coaches to develop their ethical antenna to recognizing that making ethical choices brings with it consequences which we and others must live with.

Box 23.2 APPEAR Six Stages
The model has six stages:

- *A*wareness
- *P*ractice
- *P*ossibilities

(continued)

Box 23.2 (continued)
- *E*xtending the field
- *A*cting on Reflections
- *R*eflecting on Learning

The model is non-linear and thus the coach can step back to consider or engage with elements more than once. The first stage of the process is "*Awareness.*" For high quality ethical decision-making, coaches need to be sensitive to identify potentials risks or challenges to their practice that may carry with them a choice or an ethical component. Having one's antenna continually scanning the environment, the relationship and ourselves is the starting point. Without this, potential ethical issues can be missed, and the coach can act without consciously considering their decision or the implications of their action or inaction.

We would also include in this stage of awareness, an awareness of the relevant codes of conduct, of best practice, one's own values and of the cultural and societal norms: what's acceptable and what is unacceptable, at this moment in time and in this cultural, national or organizational context (Fig. 23.1).

We have already emphasized codes of conduct and how some coaches may be members of more than one body and thus be bound by more than one code. Coaches of course also need to be aware of these codes and how to apply it. Secondly, self-awareness, which we stress elsewhere, is also important. What are your values, and how do you maintain these? Thirdly, best practice. Sometimes best, or accepted, practice can change very quickly, and the published code takes a time to catch up. For example, the #Metoo movement in the US focused attention in a new way on the power dynamic that can exist in some relationships and the need for greater sensitivity in recognizing the role played by gender and age.

Values are also situated within a historical context, what may have been common practice 50 years ago, may lead to dismissal in the modern workplace. Ethics also varies between countries, what is acceptable in the USA, may be very different to practices in the Middle East, such as a male coach offering to shake hands with a female commissioning manager. The sector will also have an impact, with higher expectations of public sector bodies than the private sector, and of regulated sectors than non-regulated sectors. Finally, organizations may set different standards for what they consider to be acceptable—whether that's how they report their profits or the ethical standards they expect of their suppliers. There is likely to be vast differences in ways of working in a small family start up in San Francisco to working in for the government in Washington DC.

The second stage is *"Practice."* While coaches engage in their roles, regular reflection through supervision, journaling, or personal reflection can help develop and maintain situational and self-awareness. While we have noted elsewhere supervision has an important role to play in coaching as a means to reflective practice, coaches can and should reflect on their practice in multiple ways.

Stage 3 of the decision-making framework is the emergence of a dilemma and considering the *"Possibilities"* around how to act. In some coaching roles dilemmas

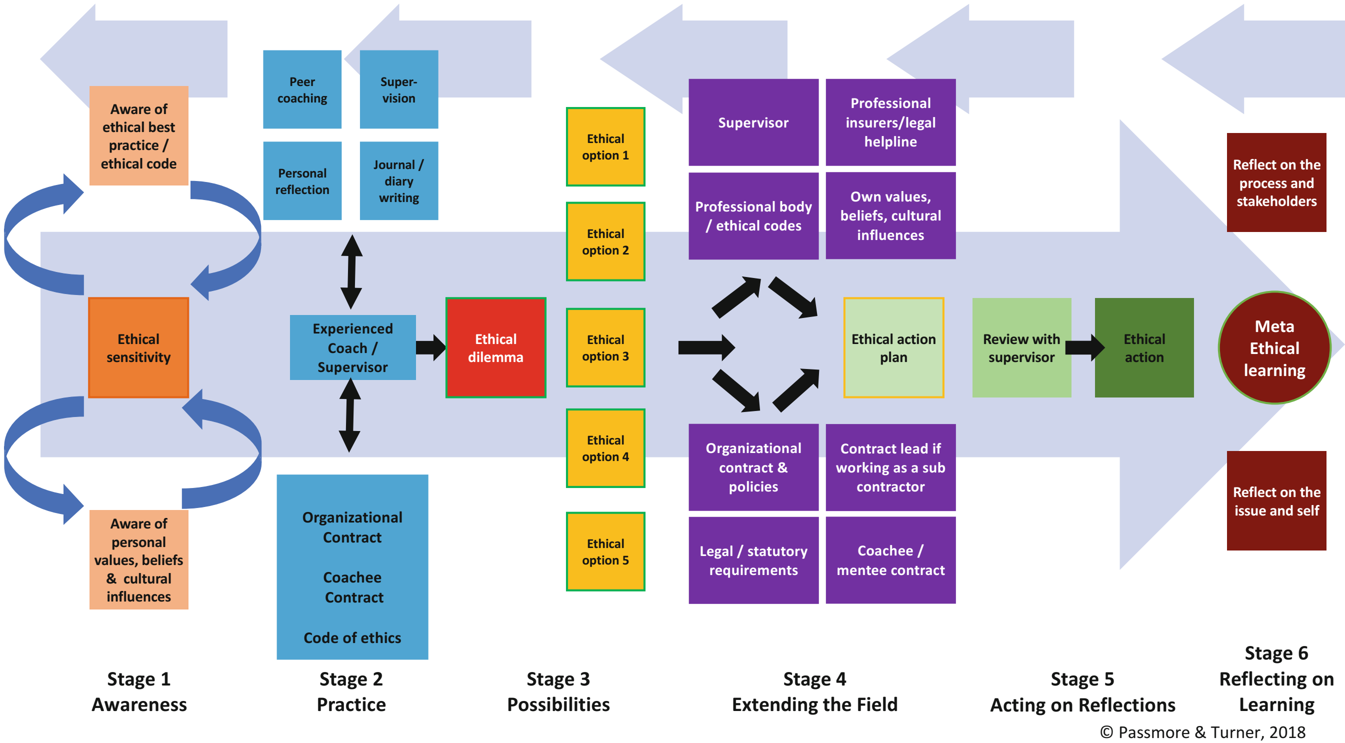

Fig. 23.1 APPEAR Ethical Model

can happen every week. In others, dilemmas may only emerge every few months, or once a year. Of course, the more sensitive we are to possible dilemmas, the more likely we are to spot them. The coach who never has any ethical dilemmas is most likely to be a coach who lacks awareness.

The key action for the coach at this stage is to generate alternative courses of action in response to the emergence of the dilemma. This may start with a dichotomy—"*I can do A, or I can do B,"* but as reflection deepens, and through conversations with others such as a mentor or supervisor, multiple options are likely to emerge.

At stage 4, "*Extending the field*," the individual should aim to work through the options. This involves scenario development, "if I do X, what may follow would be Y, and this can lead to A and B outcomes." This exploration of the consequences, both positive and negative, will help the coach to better understand the options available, discounting less attractive options, and selecting the most ethical and practical option given the circumstances.

The fifth stage, "*Acting on Reflection,"* is about implementing the appropriate course of action. This can take both courage and can come with unpleasant consequences. These consequences may not just be for others, but the coach and their organization too. For example, whistleblowing about an illegal action can carry with it severe consequences. The coach may be criticized by the individual or threatened; the organization may prefer to manage the situation internally. The coach may be ostracized, lose their employment or the contract or suffer damage to their reputation. Sometimes, its right to let the coach manage disclosure, other times its appropriate for the organization to manage the issue internally, while on other occasions, only public disclosure is the right course of action. In coming to this decision, deep reflection and discussion with a supervisor or a trusted colleague can help.

The final stage is for the individual to reflect on the learning that has arisen from the events. This reflection should be at two levels: a reflection on the process and the various stakeholders: What they have learnt as a coach from thinking through and implementing this ethical action. Second, reflection on the issue and themselves: What have they learnt about themselves as they encountered and worked through this situation?

Conclusion

As we have suggested throughout coaching is a journey of development. Developing ethical maturity is part of that process. The ICF Ethical Code is a starting point for this journey. The next step is the ICF CCE course. Alongside of this, thinking about, reflecting on, journaling and discussion in supervision ethical issues will raise your ethical sensitivity and using a framework such as APPEAR alongside the ICF code can help you navigate the challenges of coaching practice.

Chapter 24
Contracting with Clients

Introduction

Contracts are an essential element in the work we do with clients. They enable a shared understanding between the main parties; the organizational clients who be paying for the coaching, as well as individual clients. Research evidence (Passmore, Brown, & Csigas, 2017) confirms that a reasonable proportion of coaches don't use written contracts in their practice. While this varies between different forms of coaching and different countries, we believe that written contracts and agreements are an essential ingredient for successful coaching. A failure to use a written contract or an agreement leads to the potential risk of misunderstanding about the nature of coaching, how the coach will work and what the organization and the individual client can expect, and what the coach can expect. More importantly it also fails to provide a means for clients to hold their coach to account, what ethical standards can the client expect to coach to follow, and how can the client complain about their coach if they are unhappy. In this chapter we will explore the role of contracts, think about the different forms of contract that may exist and what should be included or excluded.

What Is a Coaching Contract?

A contract is a legal agreement setting out the terms between two parties. In coaching this might take the form of a contract for services between the commissioning organization and the organization supplying the coaching service. In other coaching projects, it may be as simple as a written agreement between the individual coach and the individual client.

In most projects it is likely there will be a number of 'contracts' working simultaneously. There is likely to be a contract between the coaching or consulting

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company and the commissioning organization. This is the legal agreement for the service and is likely to cover issues such as indemnity requirements, payment terms and compliance. Many organizations also issue Purchase Orders for work, which set out the specifics of an individual task or series of tasks, such as "*Undertaking 6 coaching sessions with Eva Gray between January and June.*"

Aside from the legal agreement the coach is likely to discuss and explicitly agree some key points about the coaching with both the sponsor (the person who has commissioned the coaching) and the individual client. These discussions may be held separately or together. Each of these "agreements" will contain references to coaching and its expected outcomes. However, alongside these all parties are also following many unspoken "agreements" about how to interact and work together.

Contracts as "Frames"

One way of viewing this series of contracts is as a series of frames. These frames reflect the expectations the different stakeholders bring to coaching. Some may be written, some spoken, while others are unspoken and may even be outside of the conscious awareness of the parties involved, while still influencing how they interact.

These frames operate at multiple levels. In the Eight Contracting Frames model we suggest contracts operate from moment to moment to across the lifetime of the stakeholders (Fig. 24.1). Let's look at each of the frames in turn.

Frame 1 covers the interactions, moment to moment, in the coaching session. Coaching is a social process. The coach and individual client are continually re-contracting; renegotiating the coaching contract in the moment-to-moment interactions. This contract relates to what is happening between them and what each part considers "desirable," "acceptable," and "unacceptable" in the behaviors they display and how they communicate with each other. As an example, the level of challenge the coach brings into a coaching conversation can grow in proportion to the level of trust that exists between the two parties. When there is no trust, high challenge can rupture the relationship. When there is high trust and high respect, challenge can be seen as stimulating and cathartic. While few, if any, of these elements will be explicitly covered in a written contract, they will affect the relationship and the work the parties can do together.

Frame 2 relates to the "session contract." A short contracting conversation at the start of each session allows both parties to agree a shared view on the agenda for the session. For example, does the individual client want to build on what was discussed last time, or deal with a pressing issue that has arisen since they last met? It can also be helpful for the coach to briefly refer to the key terms of the contract, and check nothing has changed. This "contracting" conversation may take sixty seconds but provides a useful platform for each session. We see this an as essential agreement and good practice for the coach to start the session using this checking-in process.

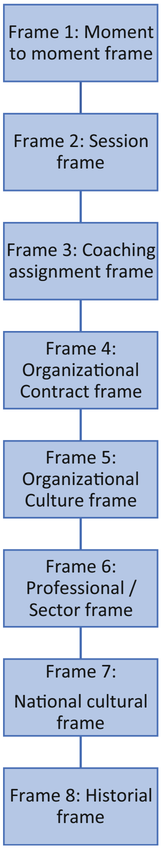

Fig. 24.1 Eight Contracting Frames

Frame 3 and 4 are more likely to be written. Frame 3 covers the agreement between the coach and individual client. Frame 4 refers to the agreement with the organization (assuming someone else is paying for the coaching). Many organizations now have formal coaching contracts that the coach is required to sign. If not, the coach should offer a written agreement, setting out the terms for the assignment. We suggest in finalizing both, a tripartite meeting between coach-individual client and organizational client, or the sponsor, will help ensure there is clarity and transparency about the reasons for, and focus of, the coaching assignment. This also provides a platform for a review meeting between all parties at the end of the assignment.

We differentiate between the formal written contract between the supplier of the coaching and the purchaser and the agreement between the coach and the individual client. The written contract is a legal agreement and could be upheld by the courts. In contrast we see the agreement between the individual client and the coach as being a working document to help clarify how they will be working together. This document thus does not need to be signed, but it is helpful for the coach to talk this through with the individual client to check they are happy with it before the coaching assignment begins. We also think it is useful for the individual client to be given a copy of the agreement for future reference.

We suggest that these formal "contracts" are mediated through a series of other unspoken "contracts," or ways of working. These "contracts" influence how the coach and individual client interact.

Individual clients work for an organization. This is true for most coaches. All organizations, whether a one-person coaching company or a multi-national, will have an organizational culture. This culture will influence how the organization makes sense of and responds to customers, colleagues, its regulators, the government, and its competitors. These are unwritten rules, and reflect day-to-day working practice. In summary, organizational culture is "the way things are done around here" (Deal and Kennedy, 1988) and is reflected in the everyday activities including the coaching session.

The organization is also likely to operate within a specific sector, a national or cultural setting and within a historical context. These unspoken 'contracts' influence such issues from what people in the organization wear, how they greet each other and what they can and cannot say to each other—for example do they wear a tie, a T-shirt or a sword? The later might sound silly, but swords were standard issue 500 years ago, and the UK Members of Parliament still have an allocated space to hang their sword when at work in the Houses of Parliament. Do they shake hands, dap, kiss cheeks, bow, or give high-fives? Different sectors, different countries, different races, and at different points in history (or generations) speak, behave, and interact differently. Effective coaches are aware of cultural differences as they move from an Australian charity sector client to a French fashion house client, and from a US civil rights organization to a Swiss private bank.

Multiparty Contracting

We believe that a tripartite, or multiparty meeting, before coaching starts can be a benefit for all parties. The meeting might include the coach, the individual client, the sponsor (usually the line manager) and possibly the commissioning manager (HR manager).

The coach's role in this multiparty meeting is to facilitate the discussion. The aim is to secure a shared agreement about what the coaching will cover and what outcomes are expected from the process. Specifically, a list of goals, outcomes or themes to be discussed agreed between the parties ensure there are no surprises later in the process. A third useful element to discuss is confidentiality, for example, whether the sponsor is expecting a full written report at the end of each session or accepts that the coach will keep content confidential; and what information the coach will disclose to the organization or other authorities, such as the police or health professionals. This is certainly likely to be included where there is a risk of serious harm, and issues where there is serious illegality, such as fraud, theft, or bribery.

Most large organizations are experienced purchasers of coaching, and many now have bespoke contracts for coaching. However, if the organization is using a general consulting agreement we believe there is value in a written agreement setting out the terms for the coaching work including the number of sessions, length the sessions, contract value, payment terms and means of redress in cases of dissatisfaction, plus the high level goals or focus for the work. This can be given to all parties at the end of the multiparty meeting.

With an initial shared understanding in place the coaching work can begin. The meeting also provides a platform for periodic reviews. On longer assignments, this may include a meeting with the stakeholders at the mid-point to discuss perceptions of progress and to refocus if needed. Whether there is a mid-point review or not, we advocate a final review meeting. The role of the coach in this meeting is to facilitate discussion between the parties, and their perception on what has been achieved. The coach in this meeting needs to take care not to be drawn into sharing confidential content of what was discussed or expressing an opinion on the individual client or organization. Instead with skillful interventions the coach can draw out the views of each party; the individual client, the sponsor, and the commissioning manager, to help each to listen and understand each person's evaluation of the coaching assignment, and the next steps for each.

What Should Be Included in a Contract?

Box 24.2 Comments elements in a sponsor agreement

- Professional Indemnity
- Payment terms
- Termination clause
- Payment terms
- Cancellation terms

Box 24.3 Comments elements in a tripartite agreement

- What is coaching
- Roles of the coach, the sponsor and client
- Tripartite meeting arrangements (commissioning, review and end of assignment)
- A short description of the coach's way of working
- Logistics—frequency and length of sessions
- Statement on confidentially and its limitations
- Statement on supervision
- Focus of the coaching—High level goal or focus
- Coach's professional members & ICF code of ethics
- How to complain about the coach

Box 24.4 What to include in the agreement with the individual client

- Session plan and goals
- Logistics (frequency, length of meeting,
- Contact details (including arrangements for contacting between sessions)
- How both parties can end the relationship—(such as referral arrangements and no-fault divorce clause)
- Notice requires for cancellation

You can read more about how these levels of agreement form part of the ICF Core Competencies in Chap. 8.

Conclusion

Contracting is an essential but often neglected aspect of coaching work. Get it wrong and the coach is vulnerable to complaints from the client or the sponsor, or at least failing to meet client expectations. Get it right, and it provides the bedrock for the subsequent coaching relationship over the coming 4, 6 or 12 months of working together.

Chapter 25
Taking and Managing Coaching Notes

Introduction

Many coaches ask what best practice is in taking notes during a coaching session. The ICF does not offer any specific guidance on note taking. Advice is limited to maintaining the confidentially of information and expecting coaches to be in compliance with national legislation, such as data protection. In this chapter we explore ideas around note taking and make some suggestions about when to take notes, how much information to collect and how to store, manage and delete this data.

Should You Take Notes?

There is little specific guidance or advice from professional bodies, or from thought leaders as to whether, or what, to make notes about within a coaching session or afterwards. The main reason for this is that practices vary. There are few definite right and wrong answers when it comes to note taking.

Most coaches only make brief notes during a session. There are several reasons for this. The first is taking detailed notes during a session can be a distraction. The coach spends more of their time looking down writing, instead of making eye contact and listening to their client's full communication. As a result, it can appear the coach is more interested in gathering evidence than engaging in the conversation. Such behaviors can damage trust and intimacy and reduce client disclosure.

Secondly, our definition of coaching centers on facilitating client insight not evaluating clients based on the information we have gathered. This is very different from the many other activities the coach may have undertaken in the past, such as interviewing, performance appraisals, or disciplinary hearings. In these situations, the interviewer's objective is to gather as much evidence as possible. The evidence must be accurate and comprehensive. In coaching it's all about the client and helping

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the client to discover insights and great awareness, and through this to become more aware of choices.

Some coaches do take detailed notes that run to several pages. The coach may have been asked by the client to take notes for them, for example if they have a disability or the coach may have been asked to write a report for the sponsor. However, as a general rule we caution against, and instead encourage our client to take responsibility for themselves and gather their own notes. In terms of sponsors we encourage the use of tripartite meetings as the mechanism for review and reporting back, where the client reports back to the sponsor instead of the coach, with the coach facilitating this conversation as opposed to providing any input. In this way, the workplace manager or line report relationship is intact and maintained and the coaching process sits outside that relationship rather than in any way replacing or replicating it.

What Should We Make Notes About?

To guide our thinking in what information to capture we use the "PIPS framework":

- **P**ersonal
- **I**deas
- **P**lans
- **S**uggestions

"Personal" issues are non-sensitive, personal details. For example, if the client mentions the name of his partner, Kate, we would make a note. Or if their daughter, Florence, is playing in a netball tournament the following week, we will make a note. In this way we are able to ask about these aspects during the initial informal conversation at the start of the next session. As an example, our notes might simply read "Daughter; Florence-netball tournament at the end of month", and I might ask: "How did Florence get on in her netball tournament?" This helps build the relationship and demonstrates the coach's personal interest in the wider life of their client.

The second area is "Ideas." These may be passing remarks that are worth capturing and may be worthy of exploration at a later time. For example, while focusing on one issue, a client may talk about the challenge of balancing work-home priorities. My notes may simply record "*Future topic: Balancing work-home priorities?*" In this area I would ensure I was careful not to use a label or a diagnosis to describe client behaviors, such as "*workaholic*" or "*narcissist.*" There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, I need to be careful not to issue clinical diagnosis that I am not qualified to use? Secondly, what evidence is there to confirm such a diagnosis? I probably only have limited information and am unlikely to have completed a standardized assessment questionnaire for diagnosis. The final and most compelling argument however is regarding client access to my notes. What would be the implications if the client asked to see my notes? In many counties there is a legal right to see all personal data and the coach may have to release such information for the client to review it. We would thus suggest you keep in mind when making notes that your client is going to read the notes after the session. This encourages you to focus on the essentials and avoid straying into areas of speculation.

The third area for notes is “Plans.” At the end of a session we will typically ask the client to summarize their insights or plans for action. We will encourage them to make a note of this session, and at the same time as the client is writing we will make a note of these for review after the session. These plans are likely to include not just what the client aims to do between now and the next session, but also what barriers and hurdles they need to manage, who will support them and who will hold them to account. If you have a large client list, maybe 30 or 40 clients, this information can be helpful for the coach to be able to recall at the start of the next meeting the actions the client had agreed to explore as the starting point for the next conversation.

The fourth and final area is “Suggestions.” These may be comments, feedback or ideas from the client for the coach to action. There may have been a request for a book to read, website or other material to help the client explore their topic in more depth. It may be feedback from the client, behaviors to continue doing or things to change for the next session. It might also include referrals or actions that the coach needs to implement, such as contacting the organization, sponsor or connecting the client with someone else in their network, such as referral to a therapist or to another coach. If the coach does not write it down its easier to forget and let these requests slip.

What Notes Should We Make After a Session?

This depends on your personal style. We suggest elsewhere in this book the use of a personal learning journal. The coach may use this to write reflections at the end of each session or the end of each week. We believe that reflection is an important component in the coach’s developmental journey and that a journal can be a very useful aid, noting down after each session thoughts, feelings and insights.

If the coach is able to gather information from each session, this provides several benefits. Firstly, it’s a source of material for the coach to take to supervision. What patterns do they observe over weeks or months or with specific clients or type of clients? Secondly, it provides an opportunity to think through issues while writing. Finally, for many people the act of writing is a cathartic process allowing them to let go of the feelings, or thoughts, which are provoked during a session or a day of coaching, allowing them to move on to the next part of their day, leaving these feelings behind.

The journal may be short or long, running to 100 words or 1000, depending on your style and the issues the session or week provokes.

We have described in detail elsewhere in this book one tool for this reflection, known as the Henley8. The Henley8 is a series of questions that provide a useful framework to guide the reflective process.

Box 25.1 The Henley8 questions for self-reflection

1. **What I noticed was:**
   This allows you to explore your observation. What did you notice in your client, the situation, your relationship, the environment?
2. **My response was:**
   The focus here is on how you responded. This could include your behavior, emotion or your cognition. It might also include physiological responses such as blushing or a change in your heart rate.
3. **What that tells me about me is:**
   You may seek to explore the meaning of this for you as a human being.
4. **What this might mean for me as a coach is:**
   You can consider its meaning for you as a coach.
5. **The strengths this offers me as a coach are:**
   All responses have potential benefits and pitfalls. What are the benefits of this response?
6. **The potential pitfalls for me are:**
   What are the pitfalls or the potential things to watch out for?
7. **My learning from reflecting on this topic is**
   What did you learn from this situation? It could be a desire to adapt your behavior or an insight about your automatic responses.
8. **I will apply this new insight in the future by:**
   This is your action plan to consider for the future.

What Should You Do If Your Client or Sponsor Asks for Your Notes?

This issue is best managed before it arises through the contract with the organization, sponsor and the individual client.

As a general rule, using tripartite contracting can reduce the risk of a sponsor asking for a feedback report. Tripartite contracting involves the coach holding a pre-coaching meeting with the individual client, line manager or sponsor to discuss the nature of coaching and the expectations of each party. The coach documents the coaching priorities from each party that is used throughput the assignment to guide the coaching. At the end of the coaching assignment a second meeting is held to review the coaching program. The coach facilitates this conversation, ensuring both the views of the sponsor/line manager and the individual client are heard, while not expressing a personal opinion or judgment. In some cases, a mid-point review meeting can also be useful. This might happen after say the fourth or sixth sessions in an 8 or 12 session assignment, to check in with both parties for their views on progress and to realign priorities if needed.

With a tripartite meeting in place most sponsors don't ask the coach for a report or their notes. If this does happen, we would refer back to the initial meeting saying the details inside the session are confidential.

It is useful to keep in mind any legislative requirements for disclosure of notes. In many parts of the world, such as the European Union, individuals have a right to view any personal data held about them by an individual or organization, such as a coach (Passmore and Rogers, 2018). This would include any notes, files, or records with the individual's name, address, or other personal details. It is worth noting that even if the coach is not based in the EU, coaching someone based in that region via the internet or a conference call will also be covered by the legislation.

Given coaching's spread across the world and the increasing use of the internet and conference call coaching, rules will vary across the globe, so bear this in mind when you are coaching.

The final issue to consider in the requirement to disclosure notes to the police or civil authorities. Again, legislation varies widely. Notes may be required for employment law cases where the organisation (employer) or employee is taking legal action. In most instances the release of such notes needs to be ordered by a Judge as opposed to be requested by the police. It is best to understand how the law operates in your part of the world (Turner and Passmore, 2017). Comments regarding coaching related data can also be found in the ICF Code of Ethics.

Managing and Secure Deletion of Client Data

Once we have collected notes, we need to think about how we will store, manage and destroy these notes at the appropriate time. GDPR (European Union General Data Protection Regulations) requires you to establish a policy for the management, storage and destruction of personal data. This relates to both written and digital data.

In terms of management of notebooks think about what information you keep in them. You might for example only use initials on your notes. At home you might keep the files and notebooks in a locked office or a locked filing cabinet. For digital data ensure your computer is password protected and you use anti-virus software that is regularly updated.

The policy should also make clear when and how you will delete your data. We would suggest approximately 2–3 years after completing the coaching relationship is appropriate. You can make this an annual task to review your files and delete records that are more than 2 or 3 years old. For paper files this requires the use of a shredder. For digital files this requires deletion and emptying the Trash folder on your device. It will also need appropriately disposing of computers and hard drives which contain data to prevent someone accessing the data on your device after you have disposed of it.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have explored briefly the issue of note taking. We have suggested that while it can be useful to take brief notes, coaches are best to spend more time and energy being fully present, rather than taking notes. When they do take notes coaches might use the PIPS model as a guide to note taking focusing on **P**ersonal information, **I**deas which arise in the session, client **P**lans and future **S**uggestions. We also discussed the need to be respectful to clients in our use of language, and to bear in mind in many countries clients will have the right to ask to see our notes. Finally, we have talked about the importance of having styles to store and destroy notes at the need of a reasonable period.

Chapter 26
Maintaining Presence Through Mindfulness

Introduction

A common challenge for many coaches is remaining present during a coaching session. We can often be distracted by events that have taken place before the session, as we think about the previous coaching session, by events during the coaching sessions, as our mind wanders on from what the client has been saying, or as our mind moves on to think about the next session or client. In this chapter we consider one way which coaches can enhance their presence in a session through the development of mindfulness practice.

Maintaining Presence

In Chap. 10 we reviewed the ICF's Competence Maintains Presence, specifically remaining conscious and present with the client, while employing a style that is open, flexible, grounded and confident. In Chap. 7 we also reviewed ICF Core Competency 2: Embodies a Coaching Mindset which positions the need for the coach to draw upon their own self-awareness; develop the ability to regulate their own emotions and be mentally and emotionally prepared for coaching sessions. These practices and qualities help to underpin our capacity to Maintain Presence with our clients and we will look at them further in this chapter.

One approach that we have found helpful in our own practice of establishing a coaching mindset and being present is mindfulness. Mindfulness has become a popular concept, with growing evidence about its positive benefits for health and performance. However, mindfulness is also a useful coaching tool, that coaches can use themselves, helping them to be fully present in the moment and being non-judgmental of themselves and clients.

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What Is Mindfulness?

The term mindfulness is derived from a translation of the Buddhist term *sati*. Sati combines aspects of awareness, attention and remembering, which are conducted with non-judgment, acceptance, kindness and friendliness to oneself and others.

A number of writers have offered definitions of mindfulness over the 2500 years of its history from its Buddhist roots. In the twenty-first century, one of the best-known writers on the subject, Jon Kabat-Zinn, suggests it is a way of paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally. For those who prefer a more formal definition: "Mindfulness is simply a practical way to be more in touch with the fullness of your being through a systematic process of self-observation, self-inquiry and mindful action. There is nothing cold, analytical or unfeeling about it. The overall tenor of mindfulness practice is gentle, appreciative, and nurturing." (Kabat-Zinn, 1991, p13).

The Benefits of Mindfulness

Over the past three decades, research has revealed that mindfulness offers significant benefits to practitioners. These findings have been revealed as a resulted of an explosion of published papers examining mindfulness in both health settings, as well as the workplace (Passmore, 2019a, b).

Research has shown that mindfulness has benefits that can be applied across a range of scenarios, from mental health and depression to cancer care, heart disease, pain management and reduction in blood pressure. Possibly less discussed, however, are the cognitive benefits that mindfulness practice confers. Research in this area has shown positive effects on general brain performance, including working memory and attention, control and brain efficiency (Neubauer and Fink, 2009; Ocasio, 2011; Smallwood and Schooler, 2015). It is in these areas that the regular practice of mindfulness can help coaches.

How Can Mindfulness Help in Coaching?

We can think about this in three elements: firstly, the coach, secondly the client and thirdly the relationship. Effective coaching requires the coach to offer to each client their full focused attention. This is not always easy when our personal and professional lives have blurred boundaries and the pressures of the two merge into a mix of worries and confusion. Mindfulness provides an answer; it focuses our attention to the only moment that is here and now.

Clients too are likely to be caught in their own vortex of pressures and anxieties. Like the coach, they too carry unhelpful baggage from one event to the next, letting feelings and thoughts project from one event or relationship, to the next. Mindfulness can provide them the opportunity to focus their attention to the session and to their learning too.

As both the coach and the client carry with them past events and relationship, as well as fears and thoughts about the future, the coaching relationship too can suffer. Writers like Carl Roger's and Fritz Perl, who we have discussed earlier recognized the importance of the relationship in one to one work.

As we noted, central to Carl Roger's humanistic approach were the concepts of Congruence and Empathic understanding (Rogers, 1961). Congruence is the way for the coach to be true to themselves. Rogers suggests that during this state the feelings the coach is experiencing are available to them, and they are able to live these feelings, and communicate them as appropriate. Through congruence the coach is best placed to facilitate awareness, providing curious inquiry and helping clients identify insight.

Empathy can be described as the ability to "put oneself into somebody else's shoes." This implies that a person who is empathic is able to "step out" of their own reality and into their client's. Mindfulness can help us with this process too, helping us to work with strong client emotions without becoming lost in these emotions. Being empathic creates a support structure necessary for the client to feel the coach's presence, their support and their understanding. While allowing the coach to be aware of the emotions they are experiencing and being able to contain these emotions, helping the client to work with them to achieve insight and move forward.

Similarly, the work of Fritz Perl is centered on the empathic, moment-by-moment exploration of the issues raised by the client. Key ideas are presence and working between the here and now and the next. Presence, in Gestalt, refers to the ability to focus attention on the client so to respond as authentically as possible to their needs. The "Here and Now," and "Next" refer to the exploration of the present, helping the client integrate this learning for future action. We have explored Gestalt in detail in Chap. 18.

From our exploration of mindfulness, we believe there are four main ways mindfulness can be useful to coaching practice.

Box 26.1 Potential benefits of mindfulness in coaching

- Helping the coach to prepare for coaching
- Helping the coach maintain focus in a session
- Helping the coach manage emotional responses
- Available as a tool to share with clients

Developing Presence Before a Session

One challenge most coaches face is the challenge of the wandering mind. The coach may be moving from one client's premises to another, or from one conference call to the next. In these situations, the wandering mind can lead to the mind gravitating

Table 26.1 The lobby/waiting room body scan

Step 1	Find somewhere comfortable to sit and create a posture of erectness and dignity.
Step 2	Start to observe the breath; the in-breath and the outbreath. Follow this for eight or nine cycles of slowly breathing in and out; filling the lungs and slowing exhaling, before starting the cycle again.
Step 3	Start to be aware of what's going on in the body: any pains, tensions, or sensations. Be open to these sensations, not judging them or seeking to explain them, but simply being aware of their existence.
Step 4	Direct the breath to any areas of tension or stress, and allow the breath to hold, caress, and surround any uncomfortable sensations, allowing these sensations to dissolve or subside. Taking each place of tension or stress in turn, and directing eight or nine breathes into each place, or as many as feels appropriate, until each subdues.
Step 5	Start to broaden the breath and become aware of the sensation of the whole body as you close the mindful body scan, sitting erect and dignified in the chair.
Step 6	Take that closing sensation into the next part of the day.

back to the previous call or drifting off to consider the next issue. Mindfulness offers a practical way of putting such demands aside and focusing on the here and now.

One way to achieve this is by the coach incorporating this tool into their practice. Allowing 4 min for a brief body scan before each session. Getting in the right metal space, just like an athlete before their next race, is important. A wide variety of body scans is available on the web and these can be downloaded as a digital file to play on a phone. Alternatively, we have included a guided body scan in Table 26.1.

Maintain Presence During the Session

Mindfulness can also be useful for the coach in helping maintain presence in an individual session. With coaching sessions of an hour to two, the wandering mind can draw the coach away from full attention.

Being aware of this risk, can help coaches to better manage it. This requires the coach to be attentive to what is happening to them in the present moment. Should they find themselves being distracted, for example by noise from the street or thoughts about past or future sessions or other distractions, the coach can catch these thoughts and redirect their attention back to the client. Only when the coach is fully present can they act in service of the client with curiosity and emotional empathy. When out of step, the client risks missing both verbal content and meaning, and thus making the session about themselves not being in service of their client. You can read more on maintaining presence in Chap. 10.

Managing Emotions During the Session

A third challenge faced by the coach is the relationship, specifically managing the emotional content created from a personal and intimate conversation. While supervision and peer mentoring can be helpful tools, depending on the topics that the coach works with, mindfulness can also be a useful tool, helping clients in the moment.

Coaching can create strong feelings of attraction or revulsion toward the client, or their behavior. This leads to a risk of collusion, where the coach becomes an ally of the client, against the 'big bad organization', or other stakeholders who are not present. It can also lead to physical attractions either from the client toward the coach, or vice-versa.

Mindfulness provides a resource enabling the coach to be more aware of themselves, their natural human emotional responses, and with this awareness, better able to manage their responses appropriately.

The coach's ability to manage their emotions is also explored in Chap. 7.

Techniques to Develop Presence

There are a wide number of mindfulness techniques which when practice regularly in coaching sessions or during other tasks, and which can contribute to improving our longer-term presence within sessions (Passmore and Amit, 2017) (Table 26.2).

Table 26.2 Three practices for mindfulness

Awareness of environmental distractions	This exercise is about being aware of what is happening around us: A buzzing insect, noise in the street or the tap, tap, tap of the client's pen. Being aware of, accepting these as these as neither good or bad, simple as noises in our environments, and returning our focus to the client.
STOP	This exercise is a suggestion to help us become more proactive by stopping and choosing mindfully how we want to continue with our day. It's something we can do that does not require much time.
Being the observer	Rumination is a common human trait. It can happen especially when the client is upset about something that has happened or a conversation that did not go as they wished or planned. The client may over-identify with their thinking leading them to become anxious, stressed or upset. In these circumstances the coach can simple notice their client's response, remind themselves they are not their thoughts, and these thoughts are not the truth, but a perception. In this way the coach can avoid being drawn into the emotional turmoil which the client can be experiencing.

Conclusion

Maintaining presence is an important task within coaching. Mindfulness practice can be a useful tool that coaches can use that can help them prepare for each session. The tool is both useful in the present moment, but through regular practice also strengthens the coach's focus over time.

Part V
Developing Your Practice

Introduction

This part is a series of chapters which offer a variety of ways for coaches to embrace the idea of lifelong learning and development. As highlighted in Chap. 1 at the very beginning of this book, by engaging in the process of becoming a coach, there is an embedded philosophy and value of a long-term commitment to our own growth, self-awareness and maturity over time. We begin Chap. 27 by looking at Continuous Professional Development (CPD). We continue in Chap. 28 by exploring one way to bring this into our practice through personal development plans (PDP's). We outline many reasons why your ongoing professional development is not only important but is also of great benefit to you in many aspects of how you position yourselves in a growing market sector. We provide you with the ICF's perspectives and expectations of ICF credentialed coaches regarding their professional development along with an overview of the development process for credential renewal.

Chapter 29 introduces coaching supervision as a very useful and powerful form of ongoing professional development for coaches. We define what is supervision within the context of coaching and share a simple model of supervision which describes the function and scope of this valuable activity. We also cover how supervision works in practice as well as several examples of how it can benefit the coach on both a personal and professional level. Finally, we offer some hints and tips for helping you find a suitable supervisor and some thoughts on how to get the very best out of this kind of development practice.

We continue with an exploration of reflective practice in Chap. 30. We begin by describing what reflective practice is and its benefits for the coach and their coaching practice. We also offer and describe different tools and approaches for you to engage in reflection.

Chapters 31 and 32 explore two aspects of the ICF's credentialing and ongoing development process: mentor coaching and the coach knowledge assessment (CKA). In Chap. 31 we describe and define mentor coaching, specifically from a coaching credentialing perspective and how this differs from other definitions of mentoring. We give an overview of when and how mentor coaching is relevant and required by ICF for credentialing and credential renewal. Mentor coaching can be addressed in several ways; however, we share the key principles and approaches of how it tends to work in practice and also offer guidance on finding a suitable mentor coach and how to get the very best out of this really valuable development process.

Continuing with Chap. 32, the CKA is described, including what it is as well as what its purpose and place is in the ICF credential application process. We share some examples of questions from the CKA and some guidance on how to prepare for this knowledge assessment exercise.

We bring this part to a close with Chap. 33 which explores how you can continue to develop your coaching skills over time. The concepts of coach maturity and lifelong learning return and, in this chapter, we offer guidance on how a coach can continue their development within the ICF credentialing system. We look at what is PCC and what is needed to achieve that next level of credential along with some of the key differences between ACC and PCC level coaching. We also share aspects of coaching that differentiate PCC and MCC level and offer a model of professional development which describes the transition from science to art in terms of how we continue to develop and grow in our coaching practice.

Chapter 27
Personal Development Plans

Introduction

In this chapter we focus on Personal Development Plans (PDP). PDPs are an important aspect of developing our coaching practice and we begin by sharing what is understood by the term personal development plan along with the purpose and benefits of this as an ongoing process. We also look at some of the underlying theory in support of PDPs and the practicalities of creating them. Finally, we suggest that personal and professional development for coaches are intertwined and as such, recommend reading Chaps. 27 and 28 as a combined exercise.

What Is a Personal Development Plan?

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) defines personal development planning as a "structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development."

The QAA go on to state that the primary purpose of PDP is to "improve the capacity of individuals to review, plan and take responsibility for their own learning and to understand what and how they learn. PDP helps learners articulate their learning, achievements and outcomes more explicitly and supports the concept that learning is a life-long and life-wide activity."

As coaches, our personal and professional development may be intertwined, and this chapter seeks to link closely with Chap. 28: Continuous Professional Development which outlines the International Coaching Federation's (ICF) stance and expectations of coaches regarding their ongoing professional growth. A clear commitment to our ongoing learning and development as a coach and our engagement in

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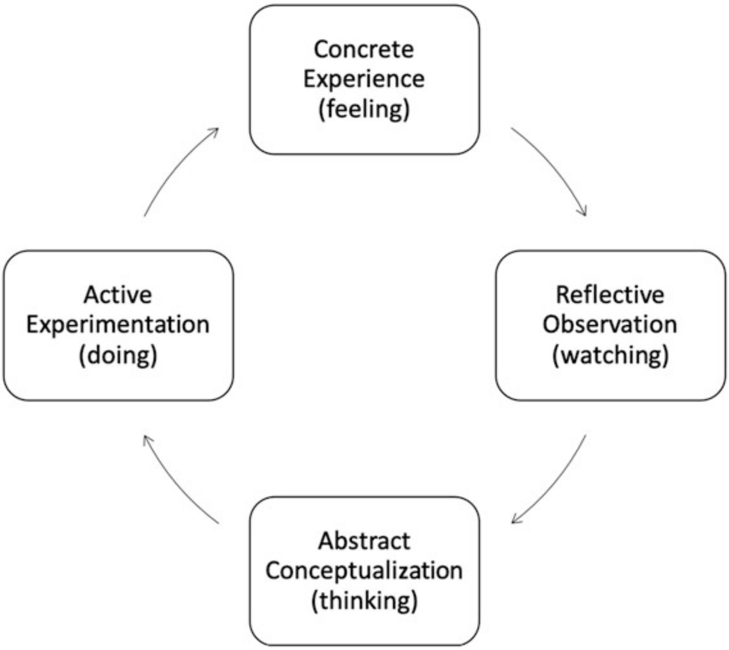

Fig. 27.1 Kolb's Four stages of effective Learning. Source: Kolb (1984)

reflective practice are specifically noted within the ICF Core Competency Model in Competency 2: Embodies a Coaching Mindset which is covered in Chap. 7.

We propose that our approach to our PDP embraces the following principles in that it is:

- Structured and proactively planned with intentionality and a commitment to being a life-long learner
- Holistic in scope, covering academic, personal and professional development activities
- A process with which we feel supported and guided in some way (e.g. from a teacher, mentor coach or supervisor) and which also encourages and enables self-sufficiency and a self-sustaining pattern over time
- An ongoing process involving goal setting, action planning, self-reflection and monitoring toward the achievement of those goals
- A process that enables us to share and demonstrate our incremental learning to others (e.g. with our clients, during learning events and in coaching assessment activities such as credential applications and renewals).

The process of PDP can be linked to learning theory and in particular to the four-stage cycle of effective learning based on the work of Kolb (Fig. 27.1).

How Can a Personal Development Plan Help Me?

The benefits of a PDP are in many ways similar to those of continuous professional development (CPD). In particular, regular and sustained PDP activities help us to:

- Recognize, value, acknowledge and evidence our learning and development in formal and informal ways
- Take ownership for our growth
- Become more aware of how we learn and what different learning strategies work well/less well for us, thereby expanding our own self-awareness on what is effective for us as learners and practitioners
- Be more effective in planning, monitoring and reviewing our own progress
- Develop our sense of identity as a learner and as a continuously developing coach
- Identify and evaluate our strengths and development opportunities and make plans for enhancing the strengths and addressing our development needs
- Be better prepared as coaches, for individual sessions, overall engagements and as a professional coach more broadly
- Be able to maintain our offering to be aligned with current practices and expectations so that we can continue to thrive in our practice

In order for these many benefits to be realized, the following characteristics underpin the most effective personal development plans:

- Our PDP is a mainstream activity that actively and overtly features in our yearly calendar planning
- Development activities are directly linked to development goals that we have set for ourselves
- PDP activities are undertaken regularly and are valued by the coach
- The coach feels supported and encouraged in their learning process
- The PDP activities are recorded and reviewed to establish and acknowledge progress

What Should I Include in My PDP?

When creating your own Personal Development Plan, it is important to make sure it accurately outlines your personal goals, why they're important to you, and how you plan to achieve them. To support the creation of your development goals, you might like to apply the mnemonic/acronym of S.M.A.R.T (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) which can help in fully considering and describing what you will do, when and how, etc.

Although all PDPs are specific to each coach, the plan will generally describe your ideal future based on your short, medium and/or long-term ambitions. Areas of development will be specific to you, and could be centered on further education, coaching practice or personal growth.

Table 27.1 Personal development plan example

What do I need to learn	How will I learn it	When do I am to complete my learning	How will I know if I have been successful?
I would like to develop my understanding of Acceptance and Commitment coaching	I will aim to read a book and then attend a short 2- or 3-day course to develop my practical skills	I will aim to complete the learning by 30 December	I will be able to understand how ACT fits within coaching and my wider professional practice. I will be able to use five or six techniques form ACT in my coaching practice
I aim to complete 10 h of CCEU's on competency rated topics	I will attend ICF or Henley Center for Coaching webinars	I will aim to complete the learning by 30 December	I will have collected 10 CCEU's toward my accreditation renewal. I will have a deeper understanding of the competencies which will be reflected in my progress toward my PCC credential application
I will incorporate a practice of mindfulness into my coaching preparations as part of developing ICF Competency 2: Embodies a Coaching Mindset	I will research two or three mindfulness practices and start using one of them as a daily mindfulness meditation	I will start on 3 January	I will use this daily before I start work.

It is also recommended that you consider the potential obstacles you might face, and how you propose to overcome them—and if the barriers can't be tackled, include a contingency plan to help your development as a coach keep moving forward.

There are many ways to capture and track our development activities and here is a simple template to illustrate how we might do this (Table 27.1).

When Should I Start My PDP?

You can start your PDP at any point; in fact, we would propose the sooner the better. It may be that your attendance at your first coach-specific training marked the beginning of a new personal and professional journey for you; however, it may also be that your development up to that point was part of a plan that had you heading in the direction of coaching. Either way, it is never too early to start this important and valuable process.

In addition, a proactive approach and an attitude of intentionality when it comes to our ongoing development as coaches is something that is much valued and even expected within our profession. At the end of the day, *we* are the tool for our work and, regardless of where we are in our development journey, we can always continue to learn and grow so that we can be the very best version of ourselves, for ourselves and for our clients.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have introduced the concept of personal development planning as a way to develop your coaching practice. We have defined and described what is meant by PDP, with its associated benefits and practical ways to create a plan that works for you. In the following chapter, we continue with the theme of development, this time exploring professional development and propose that both of these aspects of development are core to the growth of a coach and their effective coaching practice.

Chapter 28
Continuing Professional Development

Introduction

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is an important aspect of professional coaching and is integral to the embodiment of a coaching mindset. This chapter looks at how CPD is defined as well as the many benefits it offers to coaches, not just in terms of their professional growth and development, but also its positive impact on the development of their coaching business and practice as a whole. We also outline the International Coaching Federation's (ICF) stance and requirements regarding CPD for coaches to maintain and renew their ICF Credential.

What Is Continuing Professional Development?

Continuing Professional Development is defined by The CPD Certification Service as the "holistic commitment of professionals toward the enhancement of personal skills and proficiency throughout their careers" (CPD, 2020). This commitment usually includes learning to gain and maintain professional credentials through academic degrees or professionally accredited courses of study. It also embraces informal learning and practice opportunities and usually involves some kind of periodic evaluation. What is also noteworthy is the term "throughout their careers," emphasizing the continuity of development over time.

From an International Coaching Federation (ICF) perspective, the coach progresses toward and earns their professional credential (ACC, PCC or MCC). The ICF's position on CPD states that: "as part of a self-regulating industry, ICF is committed to coaches providing consistent value to their clients. In order to maintain these professional standards, ICF's position on CPD keeps pace with industry expectations and emerging standards" (ICF, 2020b) The concept of being a lifelong learner is also one which is commonplace amongst the coaching community

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and this is actively supported and expected via the process of the periodic renewal of an ICF Credential every 3 years, which was referenced in Chap. 5.

The Benefits of Continuing Professional Development

The benefits of continuing professional are many and varied. Apart from enabling us to meet the expectations of professional credentialing bodies and the demands of the coaching marketplace, CPD also offers us rich opportunities for variety, interest and growth.

Reasons for investing in your continuing professional development include:

- Renewing credentials—as already noted, an ICF credential expires after 3 years and the coach is required to demonstrate they have completed at least 40 h of CPD during that period.
- Enhancing your offering—as coaching becomes more widespread, the marketplace is also becoming more competitive. Investing in your own CPD will enable you to enhance the depth and breadth of your offering, enabling you to more clearly articulate your unique selling points and skills, and what your clients can expect when they hire you as their coach.
- Staying fit for practice—linked to the point above, not only does CPD enhance our skillset and professional offering, it also helps us to avoid stagnation. As with any profession and indeed any activity, if we stop learning and developing after our initial qualification is secured, it can be very easy to slip into bad habits, become complacent, and even begin to cut corners.
- Credibility and reputation—the marketplace of coaching, especially within organizations is now increasingly aware of what coaching is and organizations are much more informed about coaching when making their buying decisions. This is part of the increasing competition and therefore differentiation between good and not so good coaches that is characteristic of a self-regulating industry. Coaching is also a profession that in many cases still relies heavily on referrals and so our credibility and reputation within the community of coaches and the buyers of coaching is important for our ongoing employment.
- More client work—as a result of the above points, actively and proactively investing in our CPD plan of activities is going to help us to secure more client work and coaching engagements. Moreover, in many organizations, professional credentials are being set as a requirement for eligibility to work as part of their coaching community. Coaching Supervision, which is explored in Chap. 29, is a very useful form of CPD and is also something that informed organizations are increasingly expecting of coaches as a prerequisite for client engagements.
- Sharpening your saw—we previously noted the concept of "life-long learner" and one of the more personal benefits of CPD can be found if we adopt a mindset that coaching is a craft and that we take pride over the course of our careers to continuously sharpen our own saw so that our craft is the very best it can be.

- Community—Whilst coaches are working with people all the time, their professional relationships and connections often have a transitory nature. In this way, coaches can also be alone in their work and, in some cases coaches can even feel a degree of isolation. CPD therefore offers a great opportunity to be part of a community, to experience a sense of belonging and to engage in stimulating conversations and experiences with other professional colleagues. These coaching communities not only service to offer connection, they can also be useful places for networking which could lead to other client opportunities.
- Growth vs. fixed mindset—Carol Dweck in her book, *Mindset* (2017), describes the many benefits of encouraging our brains to develop a love for learning as a basis for accomplishment. This also links to the Four Stages of Competence and how, even though we may aspire to the benefits of reaching "unconscious competence" when our craft becomes second nature, there is also a danger of complacency and stagnation that might lead to us having become "unconsciously incompetent" once more without realizing it. CPD helps us to avoid this through staying conscious about our learning and development.

What Are CCE's?

The ICF's requirement of a minimum of 40 h of CPD every 3 years is acquired through engaging in development activities which lead to the coach accumulating Continuing Coach Education (CCE) units toward their credential renewal. Typically, 1 h of CPD equates to one CCE unit and these units can be earned in various ways. The CCEs are also split into two different types: Core Competency (CC) CCEs and Resource Development (RD) CCEs. For a credential renewal, the coach must complete at least 24 CCEs that are categorized as Core Competency (CC), at least 3 h of which are in coaching ethics. The remaining 16 h can be in Resource Development (RD) CCEs (see Table 28.1).

One very easy way to earn these units is through participating in events that have received an official CCE accreditation from the ICF. Coach training schools and training providers can apply to the ICF to gain CCE accreditation for the CPD events they offer. In addition, ICF local chapters around the world, as well as the ICF Professional Coaches Global organization, offer CPD activities with CCEs and these are often offered either free of charge or at a reduced rate for members of the ICF. Examples of events and activities that can offer CCEs include webinars, communities of practice (COP), training programs, conferences, mentor coaching, supervision and special ICF approved projects. More details of eligible sources of CCEs can be found on the ICF Global website. The ICF Professional Coaches Global organization also holds a global events calendar where events, both in person and virtual, all over the world are advertised, many of which carry CCEs. Local ICF Chapters often also advertise local events via their websites. The ICF Global organization also has a

Table 28.1 A summary of ICF Continuing Coach Education (CCEs) units (ICF (2020b))

Type	Core Competency (CC)	Resource Development (RD)	Total
Amount required	A minimum of 24 units every 3 years	A maximum of 16 units every 3 years	40 CCE units every 3 years
Examples	Webinars, programs, conferences, COPs, mentor coaching, supervision, approved projects	Non-coach-specific training, reading, writing, research	
Resources	ICF Global website: ● Professional development ● Global events calendar ● Learning portal ● Mentor coaching ● Supervision ICF local chapter websites		

learning portal where members can access a wide range of learning and development opportunities.

In Chap. 29 on Supervision, we note that up to 10 h of supervision can be counted toward a coach's 40 h of CC CCEs every 3 years. In addition, in Chap. 31 we explore Mentor Coaching and coaches can work with a Mentor Coach and allocate up to 10 h of CC CCEs every 3 years toward their credential renewal. This is a requirement for those seeking to renew their ACC credential and optional for coaches renewing their PCC or MCC credentials.

Apart from these examples of ICF approved CCE sources, there are other non-approved activities that can be counted as Resource Development (RD) CCEs. Up to a maximum of 16 h of this kind of development can be allocated toward the 40-h required every 3 years. Examples of these activities include non-coach-specific training, reading, writing and research. Once again, details of eligible activities can be found on the ICF Global website (see: https://coachfederation.org).

Professional or Personal Development?

The concept of Professional Development is one that is probably very familiar to us. We may apply this to ourselves, and also our work as coaches may be in direct relation to the professional development of our clients. Having explored what professional development is, its benefits and how we can engage in it, now let's look at this idea of professional development within the context of today's environment.

Terms like "digital revolution," "4th industrial revolution," and "VUCA" (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) have entered daily business language. Alongside this, we may find ourselves immersed in conversations around climate change, economic and political turbulence, mental health and matters of social progress. In light of the characteristics and challenges this type of environment present, the World Economic Forum has shared that the following Top 10 skills will be most needed from leaders in 2020 and beyond:

1. Complex problem solving
2. Critical Thinking
3. Creativity
4. People Management
5. Coordinating with Others
6. Emotional Intelligence
7. Judgment and decision-making
8. Service Orientation
9. Negotiation
10. Cognitive Flexibility

One of the things we think really stands out is that most, if not all, of these skills are as closely related to our *personal* development as they are to our professional development. By way of an example, we are struck by the distinct shift we see in the focus of our children's' education, which is now centered around equipping them with skills of the type noted above, as opposed to the more traditional approach of helping them develop subject matter expertise. We see the same concept applying to leaders in the workplace. One head teacher recently described their philosophy as "future-proofing" leaders and we propose that in fact the leaders we may be working with today even need "present-proofing," because the future is truly here.

At the ICF Converge19 event in Prague, one of the keynote speakers, Frans Johansson (2019) said: "Today is the slowest day you will ever experience from now on". Looking at the skills above, the ability to handle change and change at speed are crucial and these skills offer a foundation for that to be possible.

So, the first question that comes to mind, is how can we as coaches support these leaders to be most effective in developing these skills? A second question follows closely and that is: how can we as coaches develop these skills and qualities so that we remain useful, relevant and fit for practice in our fast-changing world? Given that the business of coaching has change, growth and development at is heart, how can we ensure that we too are role modelling the ability to change and grow alongside our clients?

One thing that comes to mind is that we consider the concept of "first look within". What is the personal development opportunity for us as coaches? For example, how are you with change? How are you with uncertainty and ambiguity? How are you with goal posts changing regularly and rapidly? How are you with the balance between perceiving something as an opportunity or a threat? Do you have the skills noted above? By first looking within, the ripple effect of coaching actually starts with us. . .and perhaps this is one of the ways that we can make our biggest contribution.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have described Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and how it is defined and positioned by the International Coaching Federation. We have also outlined several reasons why our CPD is important and the significant benefits to us by investing in this in an active and proactive way. We have described the ICF's CPD approach using CCE units and have shared examples of how to earn these units for credential renewal and general development purposes. Finally, we have also positioned the need for coaches to engage in personal as well as professional growth so that we can be the very best we can be in our coaching practice across the whole of our coaching career.

Chapter 29
Supervision

Introduction

Supervision has become an important element within coach continuing professional development, and while it's not the only way for coaches to reflect on their practice, the use of supervision as a mechanism is now widely accepted. Moreover, purchasers of coaching services want to know that they are buying the best and knowing that a coach is in supervision can be a great way of demonstrating quality assurance, professionalism and integrity in one's coaching practice. Indeed, in some communities, being in coaching supervision is now a prerequisite for being able to provide coaching services within certain organizations. In this chapter we explore what is supervision, the benefits of supervision and how it can form part of a wider portfolio of a coach's professional development and reflective practice.

What Is Supervision?

The ICF defines supervision as: "a collaborative learning practice to continually build the capacity of the coach through reflective dialogue for the benefit of both coaches and clients."

Coaching Supervision focuses on the development of the coach's capacity through offering a richer and broader opportunity for support and development. Coaching supervision creates a safe environment for the coach to share their successes and failures in becoming masterful in the way they work with their clients.

Some writers prefer the term "super-vision" (Passmore and McGoldrick, 2009), recognizing that the aim is not hierarchical, but a collaborative process designed to enhance insight and understanding. When framing this as "super-vision" we describe it as a process whereby the coach and the supervisor reflect together upon the coach's coaching practice and have over (super)-sight (vision), i.e. they are reflecting upon

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the work to identify useful insights for ongoing learning and development. This reflection promotes and enables enhanced professional practice by reviewing, questioning, considering, thinking, and critically assessing our work as coaches. This allows the coach to be the best they can be, which in turn maximizes the results and impact for the client. Supervision is also an opportunity to think about the broader impact and changes our insights will make to our continuing professional practice as a coach as well as to acknowledge and celebrate success. Supervision is an agreement between supervisor and supervisee that the highest function of the process is to be in service of protection and of working in the best interest of the client.

Supervision is a shared learning partnership between equals and the learning is co-created and experiential. Therefore, by engaging in supervision, coaches are making an important commitment that will support them, their clients, their sponsors, and wider society that is impacted by their work.

The Function and Scope of Supervision

Most coaching assignments require the coach to engage in challenging and intimate conversations that take place within complex systems. While doing this, the coach is managing the personal and professional boundaries, noticing the interpersonal dynamics in the relationship between them and their client, managing themselves in the moment, and being alert to the need for best practice and an ethically sound stance. This can be quite a juggling act.

Time spent in supervision gives them some breathing space. It is an opportunity to reflect on the things that affected them in a coaching exchange, other options that might have been explored, things that left them puzzled, where they felt at their most or least resourceful, and how their strengths and vulnerabilities might help and hinder them.

Supervision is there to help reflect on these processes and its function and scope can be seen as covering three main areas:

Learning and Development

In this domain, the focus is on the continuous growth and development of the coach toward increasingly advanced competence. This aspect of the dialogue might focus on the ICF Core Competencies as well as other related theories, models and concepts that could be introduced into the discussion by either party. The focus is on the *coach as a coach* and their ongoing skill development as a practitioner. Mentor Coaching for Credentialing could be seen as sitting somewhere within this domain with regards to the specific focus on the ICF Core Competencies, however the roles of Mentor Coach and Coach Supervisor are not always the same and the focus and training for each discipline is different.

Support

Coaching Supervision also provides support for the coach in terms of them feeling resourced, supported and nurtured. As such, the focus is on the person or the *who* of the coach; the *coach as a person*. In this domain, topics such as confidence, inner dialogue, and helpful or limiting beliefs held by the coach might feature in the discussion.

Safety and Standards

This domain is centered on quality and professionalism. Here, the dialogue may reflect upon how the coach is managing their overall coaching practice, ethical considerations and the safety of the coach and their client, as well as having consideration for the system within which the coaching work is being undertaken. Here, the ICF's gold standard and the core values of excellence, integrity, collaboration and respect are at the forefront of the reflective dialogue and the focus is on the *coach as a professional*.

Within the context of these three areas, coaching supervision is sometimes described as working with "*where the personal intrudes on the professional*" in that the focus is on ensuring that the coach does not get in the way of their client's learning and development but is instead an enabling tool or vehicle for their client.

This triangulated approach to supervision has been articulated and evolved in the last 25 or so years and many models of supervision have been imported into coaching from the fields of therapy, counseling and management (Kadushin, 1976; Proctor, 2000; Hawkins & Smith, 2006; Newton & Napper, 2007) (Figs. 29.1 and 29.2).

How Does Supervision Work in Practice?

In practical terms, coaching supervision bears some resemblance to coaching in that the coach and supervisor need to establish that there is chemistry and rapport for them to work effectively together. They will contract with each other around how they will work, and similar boundaries of confidentiality are upheld. The focus of

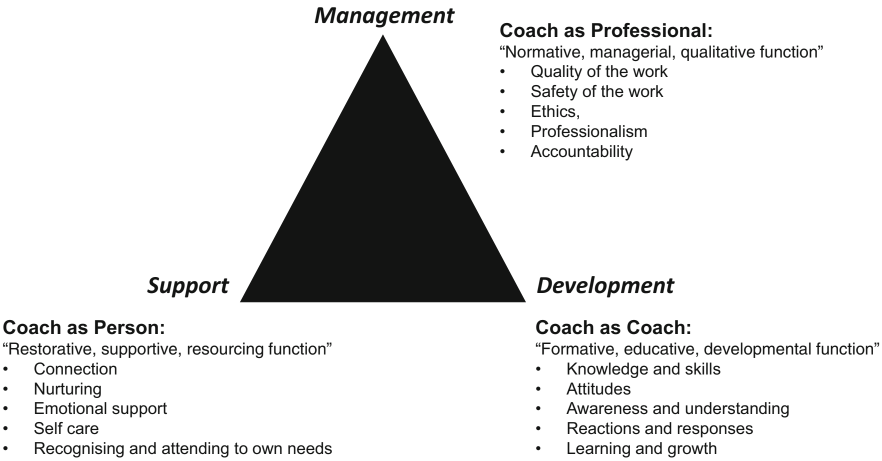

Fig. 29.1 Scope of supervision

Kadushin (1976)	Proctor (2000)	Hawkins (2006)	Newton (2007)
Managerial	Normative	Qualitative	Accounting
Supportive	Restorative	Resourcing	Nurturative
Educative	Formative	Developmental	Transformative

Fig. 29.2 Functions of supervision

each supervision session will be clearly established and may be related to the above domains in the context of, for example:

- Case analysis (i.e., the coach's work with a particular client or a particular session with a client).
- Patterns and themes that the coach is noticing about their coaching practice across their client base.
- Observations that the coach is having about themselves within the context of their coaching practice.
- Review of the ICF Core Competencies or other coaching-related materials and how they are being evidenced in the coach's practice.
- Exploration of the "who" of the coach.

Sometimes, it can be helpful to frame the supervision topic as a question which the coach and supervisor then work collectively to answer. Some examples of supervision questions might be:

- I have a lot going on personally at the moment, how can I be sure that I am fully present for my clients?
- My client has told me they are being bullied; what are my responsibilities as a coach and how can I be of best service to them?
- I find myself getting very distracted and even impatient when coaching client A; what can I learn that will help me be the best coach I can be for them?
- I am usually confident as a coach, however when coaching Client B, I find myself feeling intimidated and trying to impress them; what is it that is triggering this response in me?
- I get so engaged in coaching my clients that I lose track of time and our sessions seem to end abruptly with no clear actions or forward movement; how can I manage the time better for a better ending to the session?
- My client shared something that really goes against my values and I'm finding it difficult to coach them without feeling negatively toward them; how can I resolve this?
- I have noticed that I am more verbose when coaching clients who are younger than me; what is triggering this and what implications does this have for my coaching with them?

These are just a few examples of the many, many questions that a coach might bring into supervision and the common feature of all of them is that the conversation is aimed at supporting the coach to be the best they can be in that situation and across their coaching practice.

Coaching supervision can be undertaken on a 1–1 basis or as part of a supervision group.

The **one-to-one** arrangement is in many ways similar to individual coaching: a supervisor will be identified, perhaps based on recommendation and an exploratory conversation, and a contract will be put in place covering the commercial, practical, and ethical conditions for the work.

A **group** might be "closed" and made up of a specified number of regular members who participate at each session. An 'open' group, by contrast, would accommodate a potentially different mix of attendees each time, while still having a limited number on each occasion. The contract for group work will acknowledge these variations and differences.

There are other ways of bringing supervision into coaching practice, which are perhaps best regarded as supplementary to or even by-products of the more formal options outlined already.

Peer supervision is a process whereby coaches supervise each other, without any one of them needing to have a supervisor's qualification. This can be a vibrant, cost-effective and readily accessible option, making it possible for coaches to work collaboratively one-to-one or in groups, offering mutual support, insights and shared experience.

For the purposes of meeting the supervision requirements of an organizational client, or accreditation bodies, this would generally be seen as a useful supplement to—not a substitute for—work with a qualified supervisor.

Finally, **self-supervision**—or the development of the internal supervisor—is an asset that all coaches seek to nurture as an integral part of their growth and attention to ethical practice. It is the capacity to bring a level of self-awareness and monitoring of oneself as a coach into the moment when working with clients, grounded in a habit of regular, private reflection. Self-supervision is a form of reflective practice which is further described in Chap. 30. Once again, it is not a substitute for formal supervision; however, here are some self-supervision questions which can offer a structure to your reflective practice after a coaching session:

Box 29.1 A Tool for Self-Supervision

1. What went really well? (Reflect upon 2–3 areas of strength, using the coaching competency framework I was trained in (e.g. ICF).
2. Which competencies really showed up in my coaching?
3. Which competencies were less evident, could have been evidenced more?
4. What else could I have done more or less of?
5. Were there any missed opportunities on my part?
6. Deepening my reflection—how do I notice this piece of work through the lens of 1 or 2 models that I am familiar with? (e.g. PAC, Drama Triangle, Life Positions, Hogan or other profile, psychological distance, 7-eyed model, cycles of change, cycles of learning, and others)
7. What are any ethical considerations within the piece of work?
8. How was my doing/being balance and my coaching presence with my client—how was I being? Where was I personally in this piece of work?
9. What conscious bias do I notice or what unconscious bias might be outside of my awareness?
10. What might have been the parallel process and what did that mean for the work?
11. More generally in my coaching work, do I notice any patterns?
12. What are my own takeaways from my work? What am I learning about myself as a person, as a coach, about my work?
13. What difference does that learning make? What and how will I integrate this into my work?

How Can Supervision Help Me?

ICF does not currently require supervision and, in the past was skeptical about the lack of evidence on coaching supervision, and whether supervision was a useful tool for coaching reflective practice. However, over recent years, as further research is undertaken, ICF has changed its position on supervision and is supportive of coaching supervision for full-time professional coach practitioners as part of their portfolio of continuing professional development (CPD) activities designed to keep them fit for purpose.

To that end, ICF Credential holders may submit up to 10 h of Coaching Supervision as Core Competency credits toward their credential renewal.

Further the ICF recognizes that coaching supervision is different from coaching. As a result, specific training is needed for supervisors to provide the knowledge and opportunity to practice supervision skills. ICF also recognizes that supervision is distinct from Mentor Coaching for an ICF Credential, which we will address in Chap. 31.

Coaching supervision may include:

- Exploring the coach's internal process through reflective practice
- Reviewing the coaching agreement and any other psychological or physical contacts, both implicit and explicit
- Uncovering blind spots—for example, beyond the one-to-one, coach-client relationship, the coach needs to stay mindful of the bigger picture—the broader context of the client's circumstances, as well as information and perspectives that might be important yet outside of their awareness. This aspect is also addressed in the ICF Core Competencies which describe the need for a coach to hold an understanding of the client's identity, environment, experiences, values and beliefs.
- Ethical issues
- Ensuring the coach is "fit for purpose" and perhaps offering accountability
- Looking at all aspects of the coach and client's environment for opportunities for growth in the system

There are an increasing number of books and academic articles (see Tkach and DiGirolamo, 2017; Bachkirova, Jackson, Hennig, & Moral, 2020) on the topic of coaching supervision which identify the benefits for coaches who receive supervision. The benefits including:

- Increased self-awareness
- Greater confidence
- Increased objectivity
- Heightened sense of belonging
- Reduced feelings of isolation
- Increased resourcefulness

In our own practice as supervisors and supervisees, we have also noticed and heard reported the following benefits:

- Managing the quality, professionalism and integrity of the coaching work completed with clients
- Due diligence and governance (through underpinning quality and also via the thorough exploration and addressing of any relevant ethical issues or considerations)

- Coach continues to learn, develop and grow their skills through the reflective practice of supervision
- The organization underpins their return on investment in coaching and coaching supervision through the continued professional development of the coach and the subsequent benefit of the coaching work they complete for their clients and the organization at large

Coaching Supervisors

Coaching supervisors will usually be experienced coaches who have undergone additional training to gain a qualification in supervision skills. Many continue to practice as coaches alongside their supervision work and will have supervisors of their own.

Like coaches, supervisors will vary in their style, stance, and the approaches they bring to their work. As with coaching, there are many models and frameworks available in the field of supervision (see Passmore, 2011). Some supervisors will work with preferred approaches; others will adopt a more eclectic stance, drawing from a range of thinking and sources.

This discipline requires specific training which will most likely cover at least one or more fields of (coaching) psychology as well as specific supervision models. A coaching supervisor is also most likely to be an experienced coach and also be self-aware and mindful of their own part in the coach-supervisor dynamic and relationship. For supervisors working with groups, an understanding of group dynamics and group development is needed as well as knowledge of group supervision processes and practices.

How Can I Find a Suitable Supervisor?

Choosing the right coaching supervisor or supervisors is in some ways similar to the process that client might go through when selecting a coach. It is important that the coach knows what they want from supervision, and what specific experience and skills they would want their supervisor to demonstrate.

It can be helpful to consider a blend of one-to-one and group supervision, perhaps with two or more supervisors who may be particularly well suited to different aspects of their work, their needs, and the contexts in which they are coaching.

In Box 29.2 we have included seven key questions to keep in mind when selecting a supervisor:

Box 29.2 Questions to Ask Potential Supervisors

1. What are your qualifications, accreditations, and experience in coaching?
2. What are your qualifications, accreditations, and experience in coaching supervision?
3. What experience do you have in the contexts in which I coach?
4. What experience do you have as a coach?
5. What are your own supervision arrangements for your work as a supervisor?
6. What approach do you use in supervision?
7. Are you familiar with the ICF Code of Ethics and ICF practice?

Roles and Responsibilities

As has already been noted, it is important that the supervisor-coach relationship is one that is contracted for, thus modelling professional coaching practice. Part of that process will be to explore and clarify roles and responsibilities, which might include:

The **Supervisor** will be responsible for:

- Time keeping
- Managing the overall agenda of session
- Monitoring ethical issues of coaching and supervision that may occur
- Minimal note taking
- Reporting any malpractice to the relevant governing body.
- Co-creating a positive learning relationship, encompassing respect, encouraging autonomy and enhancing the supervisory experience.
- Ensuring a high level of professionalism in all interactions.

The **Supervisee(s)** will be responsible for:

- Preparation for supervision—giving consideration to what is the "Supervision Question"
- Learning objectives.
- Keeping notes for their own learning.
- Letting the Supervisor know what is/isn't working in the supervision partnership.
- Ensuring they are in an appropriate location for their Supervision session.
- Co-creating a positive learning relationship, encompassing respect, encouraging autonomy and enhancing the supervisory experience.

Getting the Best from Supervision

Getting the best out of supervision is similar to getting the best out of coaching. Planning and preparation play an important part in this and we recommend the following as guidance for how you can engage in supervision and maximize your learning and development experience:

- ***Find a suitable supervisor(s)***: apart from the qualifications and experiences aspects of a good supervisor, ensure that you have good chemistry with them. Supervision is in intimate working space: you will share your pride, achievement and success in a way that is hopefully fully and abundantly owned and celebrated. You will also share your fears, concerns and vulnerabilities as a coach, as a professional and as a person. Who is the right supervisor for you to do that with in a safe, supportive and developmental environment?
- ***Frequency***: some supervisors have views on this and there are also no hard and fast rules on how frequently a coach needs to be in supervision. Logic might indicate that the more client work you have, the greater the need for supervision. . .and supervision is also very useful to reflect upon just one single coaching conversation. What is the right frequency for you, that will offer you meaningful development and professional over-sight of your coaching practice and be something that is achievable for you from a time and cost perspective?
- ***Contract***: with your supervisor so that you can quickly develop a strong working connection and relationship.
- ***Prepare***: the process of reflective practice starts *before* the supervision session takes place. This preparation could take on many forms according to your preference, however considering some of the self-supervision questions previously noted will certainly help to generate thought.
- ***Co-Create***: work in partnership with your supervisor to co-create your working relationship and how you engage with your supervision topics and questions.
- ***Reflect (again!)***: after your supervision session, take some time to reflect once again on what it is that you are noticing and learning about yourself and your coaching practice and how will you integrate that learning for your ongoing professional development?

Conclusion

In this chapter we have positioned coaching supervision as a powerful reflective practice for professional development. We have explored definitions, function and scope of supervision and what it means in practice to engage with this process. Finally, we have also described some of the benefits of working with a supervisor and how to get the best out of your investment in this form of professional development.

Chapter 30
Reflective Practice

Introduction

Learning to reflect in order to improve one's own practice is seen as increasingly important across a range of professions, from teaching to counseling, and from management to clinical work. We have argued in Chap. 1 that knowing the self and managing the self are key skills for every coach. The ICF competencies also draw our attention to reflective practice, encouraging coaches to develop an ongoing reflective practice. This self-awareness enables us to be in best service of our clients. In this chapter we consider what is reflective practice, why it may be helpful, and how we can incorporate this into our coaching practice.

What Is Reflective Practice?

The ICF competencies encourage coaches as part of the Coaching Mindset to develop an ongoing reflective practice but do not offer a definition or description of what is reflective practice and how one might go about this process. Some work has been undertaken by members of the ICF team (Hullinger, DiGirilamo, & Tkach, 2019a, 2019b) who have reviewed the literature and offered a model for coaches and clients.

Reflective practice may be defined as the ability to reflect on one's actions so as to engage in a process of continuous learning. We believe reflective practice is the foundation of all professional development. It enables the coach to transform experience (coaching hours) into practical insights for personal growth and impact, learning new ways of being and doing which can be applied in the coach. Without reflection, collecting coaching hours can be just collecting stones; we may have a whole pile of them, but they add little to who we are. Reflection allows us to carve statues of insight and meaning from the rubble of coaching conversations.

J. Passmore, T. Sinclair, *Becoming a Coach*,
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Reflective practice involves integrating regular activities into our routine which raises awareness, prompts critical analysis and aids self-management and decision-making. It involves:

- Learning to pay attention—listening to ourselves
- Explore our assumptions
- Observe patterns

We can assume learning is a discreet activity which is restricted to the coaching classroom, where we listen and learn from a tutor or read a coaching book. But we have the potential to learn all the time; from everything we do, every conversation we have, every strand of information that comes our way. Reflective Practice is a way of recognizing and articulating this learning, squeezing every insight from every hour of coaching practice. However, to make best use of our coaching practice we need to integrate reflective practice into our daily routine.

Why Reflective Practice Is Important

As a new coach it can be tempting to think at the end of the 65, 85, or 155 hour of coach training, that you know everything you need to know about coaching—after all you have completed the course. You can now get on with applying what you have learnt. But the learning to coach might be compared with learning to drive. The classroom sessions are no more than the driving lessons, and the ICF ACC, or PCC assessment is the driving test. What we all know is that, during our first few years on the road, we really start to learn how to apply what we have learnt in the complexity and chaos of sharing roads with other road users, in multiple weather conditions and sometimes in different countries, where road signs have different meanings and even which side of the road you drive changes. If we stopped learning in these situations we could be in for a nasty accident. Good drivers, and good coaches, continue to learn.

For the experienced PCC and MCC coach, maybe they have driven thousands of hours and in multiple weathers, in multiple countries and over multiple terrains. But we know that nothing stands still, if anything the pace of change is accelerating, and new technologies are impacting on driving as they are on coaching. Experienced coaches need to engage in reflective practice as much as new coaches.

In summary reflective practice encourages us to continue learning from our coaching practice, and to hold ourselves as eternal students, or as we have suggested elsewhere in the book, holding a ‘Beginner’s Mind’. This allows us to remain open, curious, flexible, and client-centered.

How To Develop Reflective Practice

Understanding what reflective practice is, and how to do it are two different things. The first step is to develop the skills needed for the reflective process. Only once these skills have been identified, can the coach start to find ways to incorporate these into their routine.

A host of writers have offered different strategies for reflective practice. Here are a few examples for consideration:

Schon (1983) suggested the following stages:

- **Puzzlement**: 'What the hell just happened? Or, what the hell *is* happening?'
- **Comparison**: 'How have I really been doing this until now?'
- **Opportunity to experiment**: What can I gain/learn/get/know from this?

Bain, Ballantyne, Packer, and Mills (1999) identify five levels of reflection:

1. Reporting
2. Responding
3. Relating
4. Reasoning
5. Reconstructing.

Moon (2004) refers to four levels:

Level 0: Description of what happened (reporting).
Level 1: Descriptive writing with some reflective potential. Reference to impact of events and indication of points where reflection could occur.
Level 2: Reflective writing (1) Reference to the value of exploring motives or reasons for behavior. Some self-awareness/criticism or possibly reflection on motives of others. This stage is sometimes described as relating or reasoning.
Level 3: Reflective writing (2) There is clear evidence here of the learner standing back from an event, of mulling it over and holding an internal dialogue. There is awareness of the learning involved and how it will be used in the future direction. This phase is sometimes described as reconstructing.

Henley8 Model for Self-reflection

In our coach training we encourage our coaches to use eight practical questions. These eight questions are a handrail to guide the reflective process. They provide one way to structure our thinking (see Box 30.1).

In the Henley8 model the starting point is to notice: *what did I observe?* This requires situational awareness, being fully present and noticing changes in events around us. The observation may be a change in the situation, for example a fire bell rings during the team meeting. It may be observing a behavior of an individual, or an event.

The second step is to identify our response: *what was my response?* This may be behavioral, but is likely to also be cognitive (*what was I thinking and why?*) and also: *what was I feeling?* Our thoughts and feelings often drive our behavior and recognizing the relationship between these is helpful, and how these are associated with the trigger event (what we have observed).

Behind these initial feelings and thoughts are likely to be beliefs and values. Being conscious of these, and bringing these core beliefs to mind, will help us make more sense of our own response.

The third and fourth aspects of reflection involve considering what these behaviors, thoughts, feelings, and possibly our beliefs and values say about us as an individual, and what they say about us as a leader, reflective practitioner or coach within the context in which we are working. Meaning can vary widely depending on the organizational and national culture and taking these into account needs to be part of our reflection.

The fifth and sixth questions explore the pros and cons of these beliefs. How do these beliefs or attitudes help or hinder us in our role? Do they make us more effective? Do they contribute to our happiness and well-being? Do they contribute positively to our team or others? What do we need to be aware of in terms of how we can build on these positives and what we should guard against?

The seventh and eighth questions are what we learn and may take away from the reflection. They set the stage for future development. Reflection without action is meaningless. The purpose of reflection is to understand ourselves and others more deeply and, through this, to learn and adapt in the future to enhance our own effectiveness and that of others.

Box 30.1 Henley8 Question

1. What did I observe?
2. What was my response?
3. What does this tell me about me?
4. What does this tell me about myself as a coach or leader?
5. What strengths does this offer?
6. What are the potential pitfalls?
7. What did I learn?
8. What might I do differently next time?

We have suggested in Chap. 1 that the coach creates a personal learning journal and starts the practice of regularly using this for their reflections. This may be after each coaching session, where the coach spends 10–15 min reflecting on the session using the Henley8 questions, or it may be at the end of each day or week, reflecting back over the sessions in that day or that week. The frequency will depend on how much coaching you are doing and your own schedule. What important is finding a pattern which works for you. If you find you are not regularly writing in your journal, we suggest you review your routine and find a time which will enable you to make this part of your practice.

Of course, there are several aspects to consider when writing your learning journal. The first is to avoid the use of client names (use initials which you may recognize, but others can't) and avoid the use of organizational names or facts that identify the organization. By excluding personal data, you can be more relaxed about the security of your learning journal. The second issue is about reviewing what you have reflected on. There are several ways of doing this, firstly taking issues from the learning journal to your supervision. If for whatever reason you have decided not to use supervision, we suggest finding a way to review and reflect on patterns or themes which may be arising each quarter, and scheduling time in your diary. Without a formal pattern of supervision, it is easy for this to be missed, which is why allowing an hour or two each quarter in your diary ensures that the learning can be incorporated into new behaviors, or into your personal development plan.

Box 30.2 Example of Reflective Writing Using the Henley8

I noticed that Kate was late for the meeting. She came in and apologized.

I observed that my response to this lateness was I had been clicking my pen while I was waiting and that my heart rate had risen. I was conscious that I was irritated by her lateness. I was thinking she is wasting my time when I am so busy at present and could have done with that extra 15 min.

This tells me that timekeeping is very important to me. A commitment is a commitment, and that my interpretation of her lateness was that she was being rude. This tells me that I can be intolerant to others in certain circumstances and that breaking these unwritten rules leads me to be judgmental.

As a coach, it tells me that certain behaviors can lead me to starting sessions in a judgmental mind-frame, and that this may interrupt my client mindset of being open, curious, flexible, and client-centered.

The strengths of being highly sensitive to timekeeping are that I am never likely to be late for a meeting. I always leave sufficient time and extra for client meetings.

The pitfall is that if I am, or others are late, this can be a significant hurdle to recovering the relationship and getting started on the coaching process. The irritation does not quickly pass and can pervade the whole session.

What I learned about myself was that it would be helpful to change my belief: this is their time and thus how they choose to use it is their responsibility and choice, not mine; I will still finish at the agreed upon time.

What I might do differently next time is to be clear with client that we have an hour, with a starting time at point A and a finishing time at point B, 60 min later. It is then their responsibility to make choices about how the hour is used. I will bring something to do, so I can make the best use of any down time should this happen in future coaching meetings.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have reviewed the importance of reflective practice. We have argued that it is central to coach development, but also to an essential for all coaches, and helps us to retain a 'Beginner's Mind' set, which allows us to remain open, curious, flexible and client-centered, whether we have 50 hours of practice or 5000 hours. We have also suggested that using several frameworks, including the Henley8, as a way for the coach to structure and capture their reflections and develop new insights for their practice.

Chapter 31
Mentor Coaching

Introduction

As part of a self-regulating industry, coaches can provide consistent value to their clients by actively engaging in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities so that they can ensure that their skills are still active, current, relevant, and of a high standard. Such professional development can come in many different forms and is covered in more detail in Chap. 28. This chapter focuses on a specific form of professional development: Mentor Coaching.

What Is Mentor Coaching?

There is sometimes confusion around what Mentor Coaching is when it comes to its definition and scope of activity. From personal experience in this field, it is proposed that Mentor Coaching tends to fall into two different categories of: General Coach Mentoring and Mentor Coaching for International Coaching Federation (ICF) Credentialing purposes.

General Coach Mentoring

General Coach Mentoring is quite closely aligned with what we probably understand by mentoring as a discipline. It is typically a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person. The mentor may be older or younger than the person being mentored, but she or he must have a certain area of expertise. It is a learning and

J. Passmore, T. Sinclair, *Becoming a Coach*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-53161-4_31

development partnership between someone with considerable experience and someone who wants to learn.

Given this definition, the scope of this kind of mentoring could be very broad and could cover a range of areas from competency development to building and maintaining a coaching practice or business. Within this broad range, some of the topics the mentee might bring into the conversation with their mentor could even be considered as supervision inquiries, and so we now see a crossover with yet another way of working.

Supervision is a very specific form of professional development, as explored in Chap. 29 and also requires the supervisor to have undertaken specialist training in this field. Mentor Coaching for ICF Credentialing is also a very specific form of professional development, again requiring particular skills and attributes. To that end, it is important that the coach seeking any of these services gains clarity about what is being offered, along with ensuring the person they are thinking of working with has the appropriate skills, qualifications and experience to provide that service. It is therefore proposed that, in practice, there are three different services that in some ways cross over: general mentoring, mentor coaching for credentialing and supervision. Furthermore, with mentor coaching for credentialing and supervision being so much more clearly defined and scoped, it is proposed that general coach mentoring services need to be carefully contracted for in order for the coach to understand exactly what is the service they will be receiving and how will that be of value to their professional development.

A final note on this is that these services may be provided by different individuals or the same person, thereby once again implying the need for clarity of what is being offered and in which modality you are working.

Mentor Coaching for ICF Credentialing

This form of professional development is recognized by the ICF and its purpose is to provide professional assistance in achieving and demonstrating the levels of coaching competency demanded by the desired credential level sought by a coach-applicant (mentee). This way of working is defined and consists of coaching and feedback in a collaborative, appreciative and dialogued process based on observed or recorded coaching session(s) to increase the coach's capability in coaching, in alignment with the ICF Core Competencies.

Mentor Coaching should take place over an extended time (for a minimum of 3 months) in a cycle that allows for listening and feedback from the Mentor coach while also allowing reflection and practice on the part of the individual being mentored. Furthermore, Mentor Coaching means an applicant (mentee) being coached on their coaching skills rather than coaching on practice building, life balance, or other topics unrelated to the development of an applicant's coaching skill.

When Do I Need Mentor Coaching?

Mentor Coaching is a very useful and valuable way of working and developing our coaching competence and is undertaken at various points in a coach's development as follows:

1. Mentor Coaching as part of an initial ICF Credential application
2. Mentor Coaching as part of an ICF Credential renewal
3. Mentor Coaching as part of a coach's general professional development

Mentor Coaching as Part of an Initial ICF Credential Application

As noted in the Introduction to Section "What Is Mentor Coaching?", part of the application process for all three levels of ICF Credential (ACC, PCC, and MCC) requires the applicant to complete 10 h of Mentor Coaching as defined and outlined above. Some coach training schools offer Mentor Coaching as part of their programming and others do not. As such, Mentor Coaching is also a service that is offered by certain coaches within the ICF Credentialed community as well as by ICF-accredited schools.

Mentor Coaching as Part of an ICF Credential Renewal

As outlined in the Introduction to Section "What Is Mentor Coaching?", the ICF credentialing system is based on the credential being renewed every 3 years. When a coach holding an ACC credential seeks to renew their credential at that same level, they need to complete an additional 10 h of Mentor Coaching as part of their renewal process. The rationale for this is that if, in the last 3 year period, they have not built up enough coaching client hours to take them from the 100 h required for ACC to the 500 h required for PCC, this additional checkpoint is put in place via the Mentor Coaching process. This is to ensure that the coach is in fact still current in their coaching skills and is still consistently offering coaching in alignment with the required ACC standard of coaching as per the ICF Core Competencies. The 10-h of Mentor Coaching completed can also be counted toward the 40 h of professional development and Continuing Coach Education (CCE) across that 3-year period required for the renewal process.

Coaches who are renewing their credentials at the levels of PCC or MCC are not required to do this extra 10 h of Mentor Coaching. However, Mentor Coaching is considered to be a very valuable form of professional development. As such, PCC and MCC credentialed coaches can complete and apply up to 10 h of Mentor Coaching as part of the 40 h of CPD required for their credential renewal.

Mentor Coaching as Part of a Coach's General Professional Development

As noted above, Mentor Coaching offers a great form of professional development for any coach and is a highly recommended practice for ICF credentialed coaches to engage in periodically with a Mentor.

How Does Mentor Coaching Work?

As previously noted, the purpose of Mentor Coaching is to support the coach (mentee) to develop their coaching skills against the ICF Core Competency framework. Such development is pitched at whatever is the relevant credential level for that mentee and comprises a full and in-depth review of the ICF Core Competency framework, the ICF Code of Ethics and how the mentee is or is not demonstrating the competencies in their coaching practice. The coach's demonstration of coaching competence could be explored and worked with in several ways:

- Using recordings of client sessions (these need to be real client examples for which the client has given their permission for their session to be used for mentoring purposes).
- Coaches coaching each other in live group webinar sessions
- The coach (mentee) coaching the Mentor

The ICF partnered with the Association of Coach Training Organizations (ACTO) to produce a set of duties and competencies of Mentor Coaches. The duties of the Mentor are described in Box 31.1.

Box 31.1 Duties of a Mentor Coach

1. Model effective initiation and contracting of client relationship
2. Explore fully with a potential mentee what they are looking to achieve
3. Ensure both are clear about the purpose of the mentoring
4. Establish measures of success in partnership with the mentee
5. Fully discuss fees, time frame, and other aspects of a Mentor Coaching relationship
6. Inform the mentee regarding all aspects of the ICF Code of Ethics
7. Inform the mentee of the availability of the Ethical Conduct Review Board

(continued)

Box 31.1 (continued)

8. Support mentee self-confidence by encouraging potential mentees to interview more than one mentor coach candidate in order to find the best match
9. Make no guarantee to the mentee that as a result of the mentoring the mentee will obtain the credential level s/he is seeking
10. Focus on core competency development by reviewing and providing oral and written feedback on a series of the mentee's coaching session.
    (a) These sessions are to be conducted one at a time, with a feedback session between each one, giving enough time between sessions to allow for incorporation of the mentee's learning and development.
11. Provide specific verbal and/or written feedback, using targeted examples from the sessions so that:
    (a) The mentee will know exactly what s/he is doing well.
    (b) The mentee understands what needs to be done to develop a deeper level of mastery in coaching.
12. Demonstrate that s/he is learning about the mentee at many levels at once and is able to hold all of that in the context of:
    (a) Who the mentee is
    (b) What the mentee is seeking
    (c) Honoring the mentee's unique style

This list of duties provides a good overview of what one can expect to be covered across a series of mentor coaching sessions.

In practice, these sessions can be designed in many different ways and part of the initial contracting process with the mentor would be to discuss and decide upon a mentor coaching plan based upon the specific needs and development goals of the mentee.

The 10-h of mentor coaching can be undertaken on a completely 1–1 basis or as blend of 1–1 and group mentoring work. The ICF requires that a maximum of 7 h of mentoring can be undertaken in a group setting (with a maximum of 10 mentees in a group). There is no "right or wrong" way to approach this and it is down to personal preference, timing and budgeting as to which way might be preferable for the mentee. Accredited schools offering mentoring and individual mentors who offers group work may provide this as part of a structured program, whereas fully 1–1 mentoring is down to the mentee and mentor to schedule themselves.

Mentor Coaching could be undertaken on a face to face basis, however most mentoring nowadays tends done via a virtual platform of some kind, thereby benefitting from the associated time and cost savings. The 10 h are typically completed in 1- to 2-h sessions using the examples of client work noted above. As stated in the duties above, these sessions are to be "conducted one at a time, with a feedback session between each one, giving enough time between sessions to allow for incorporation of the mentee's learning and development". This means that the 10 h are a blend of reviewing, discussing and sharing feedback on a series of recordings (or live coaching sessions) ensuring that all aspects of the ICF Core Competencies and the ICF Code of Ethics are covered across the period of time taken for this work.

The ICF's requirement that the 10 h of mentor coaching is completed across a minimum of a 3-month period is so that there can be evidence of the mentee applying their learning and integrating it into their coaching practice for the mentor to observe that development when they review another piece of client work. This means that, whilst the minimum period for completion is 3 months, in practice the 10 h may take longer to undertake. This might depend upon how much client work the mentee currently has (in order to integrate their learning and also to secure additional recorded examples), the availability of the mentee and mentor and the mentees chosen timeline for this exercise. Personal experience as a mentor has shown that typically mentor coaching packages can easily take anything up to 6 or even 9 months to complete.

Planning Your Mentor Coaching Sessions

There are several aspects to consider when planning your mentor coaching package including *when, how and with whom*.

The first aspect of planning your mentor coaching sessions is to consider when to start this part of the process.

As for *when*, this is partly personal choice, however in the case of an ACC credential renewal, the timing will be indicated by the renewal cycle. For first time credential applications, it is recommended that two factors are taken into consideration:

1. The purpose of the mentoring is to assist the mentee in demonstrating their coaching competence in relation to the level of credential they are going to apply for (or renew in the case of ACC). To that end, apart from being a highly developmental process, mentoring is also an assessment preparation process. This means that, wherever possible, it is useful to time the mentoring activity so that there is a minimal time gap between its completion and the mentee applying for their credential and undertaking the assessment process for that purpose. In this way, the mentee's knowledge of the Core Competencies and the Code of Ethics are fresh and current, which is helpful for their completion of the Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA) as outlined in Chap. 32. In addition, the mentee needs to find one (for an ACC credential application) or two (for PCC and MCC credential

applications) recordings of them demonstrating their coaching skills and evidencing the competencies. As such the process of mentoring, which works with recordings of coaching sessions, is a great opportunity to explore finding those recordings for submission, especially during the latter part of the mentoring process, when the mentees skills are hopefully most developed.
2. Because mentoring has a very practical aspect to it, in that mentee and mentor are actively reviewing and working with real examples of coaching, it is ideal that the mentee engages in this work at a time when they are actively coaching a variety of clients. In this way, they can make best use of the opportunity to integrate their learning and keep building the coaching "muscles" alongside the opportunity to review, reflect and receive feedback from the mentor.

Regarding *how* to complete a mentor coaching package, once again personal choice will prevail. There are several factors that one might consider as follows:

- One-on-one mentoring can offer most flexibility in terms of diary planning and the mentee also gets personal, in-depth, one-on-one attention and focus across the whole 10 h.
- However, it could also take longer, possibly be more expensive and the benefit of working with other coaches, exchanging ideas, and learning from each other is not available.
- Group mentoring sessions need to be scheduled for a whole group and are often therefore fixed as part of a program.
- However, some mentees prefer the structure a program offers, and the process can sometimes be completed more quickly and with the benefit or working with colleagues in a safe and collaborative environment.
- With group mentoring, the mentee also still has the opportunity of 3 h of one-on-one work with their mentor.

Finally, and regarding *with whom* to work, the mentee does not have to complete all of their 10 h of mentoring with the same mentor, although in practice many mentees do. One word of recommendation for mentees who do choose to work with more than one mentor is that the overarching mentoring package should ultimately cover the whole competency framework and code of ethics and so some level of coordination is required to ensure this is the case when working with multiple mentors.

This next section offers more guidance on how to find and choose a mentor.

Finding a Mentor Coach

There are several ways to find a Mentor Coach, including via:

- ICF Accredited coach training schools: will either offer mentoring services directly or can often recommend or put the mentee in touch with potential mentors know within their community

- ICF Mentor Coach registry: some Mentors register their services on the ICF Global website and are listed for the mentee to browse and choose some to contact for an exploratory discussion.
- ICF Local Chapters: some ICF local chapters also either list or know of Mentors within their area.
- Word of mouth: this is a common way for Mentors and Mentees to find each other.

Whichever way the mentee finds a mentor, it is important to note that working with a mentor does not guarantee a successful credential application. It is highly recommended that mentees undertake a proper selection process to ensure that they are working with someone who is appropriately skilled, qualified and experienced and who is going to work with the mentee in a way that creates safety, support and useful, developmental feedback.

In order to assist with that process, the guidelines set out by ICF and ACTO (2020) also propose some of the personal traits and competencies a Mentor Coach should display:

Box 31.2 Personal Traits and Competencies of a Mentor Coach
Personal Traits

The ICF Mentor Coach:

1. Is trustworthy and has the ability to connect with the mentee in terms of fit, chemistry, and compatibility.
2. Is someone who encourages the mentee to reach beyond what the mentee initially feels is possible, assisting in broadening their creative process.
3. Demonstrates equal partnership by being open, vulnerable and willing to take appropriate risks, for example, in providing feedback that may make one or both individuals uncomfortable.
4. Understands and is able to model the value of partnership and, as an example, allows/encourages the mentee to lead in designing areas to be worked on between sessions that will lead to more powerful, leveraged coaching.
5. Has the ability to be supportive and authentic in celebrating who the mentee is, her/his achievements and growth throughout the process.
6. Is secure in their own work and is able to demonstrate appreciation and respect for the unique style of each mentee.
7. Encourages the development of the mentee's own coaching style
8. Is willing to hold both self and mentee accountable for performance and to periodically encourage mutual assessment of the effectiveness of the relationship

(continued)

Box 31.2 (continued)

Competencies

The ICF Mentor Coach:

1. Listens beyond content to discern application of the skills related to the core. Competencies (i.e. skill versus direction, skill versus style or skill versus outcome for the client).
2. Listens on all levels: physical, intellectual, emotional, and intuitive.
3. Listens equally for strengths and areas for growth.
4. Is aware of and allows for differences in style, culture, and language.
5. Has a working knowledge of the assessment tools used by the ICF in the evaluation of recorded coaching sessions used in the credentialing exam process.
6. Listens both for the presence of individual competencies and for the overall totality of skill level.
7. Has the ability to distinguish which critical underlying competency(-ies) may be giving rise to ineffective or limited coaching impact.
8. Can discern and articulate the gap between levels of skill demonstrated and next skill level to attain.
9. Discerns and articulates areas of growth, competency use, and skill level using competency-based language and specific behavioral examples from the coaching.
10. Creates a safe and trusting space for the delivery of feedback, using a respectful, clear, judgment-free tone.
11. Articulates with specific detail and examples, what is being observed and the specific development needed to move to the next skill level, delivered with sensitivity to the impact of the feedback.
12. Offers feedback that is relevant to each specific coaching core competency, recognizing strengths as well as potential growth areas.
13. Demonstrates the ability to self-manage relative to any coaching model preferences and stay focused on the skill assessment related to the core coaching competencies.

A final note on finding a Mentor Coach is that they can Mentor for credentials up to the level of their own credential. In the case of Mentors holding an ACC credential, they must have held their credential for at least 3 years and renewed it at least once in order to be eligible to mentor others.

Getting the Best Out of Your Mentor Coaching Experience

Although Mentor Coaching is a requirement for a credential application (and ACC credential renewals), it would be a wasted opportunity if this were treated as a "tick-box" exercise. Mentor Coaching can be a very rich and rewarding developmental experience. In addition, through the process of mentoring, the mentee becomes much more deeply familiar with the ICF Core Competencies and the Code of Ethics and can thereby leave the mentoring process equipped with a powerful self-reflective tool. This enables them to self-reflect periodically by recording their coaching practice and listening back to the session exploring when, if, and how the competencies are being evidenced.

Here are some tips for getting the very best out of your Mentor Coaching package:

- Do your research and ensure that your mentor is appropriately skilled, qualified, and experienced to work with you
- Check that you have a good rapport and chemistry to work well together in a safe, collaborative, and developmental environment
- Contract with your Mentor around your goals for mentoring and all other aspects of how you will work together (in this way you are also both role modelling and mirroring the process of contracting and establishing agreements as is done in good coaching practice).
- Allow enough time and space for you to fully engage in the learning process.
- Plan ahead and consider which clients you will ask for their permission to record your work with them for this purpose.
- Consider how much coaching client work you currently have so that you have sufficient opportunity for ongoing practice and integration of your learning as the mentoring process evolves.
- Think about your preferred timeline. How long do you want to take for this important development activity? How will it fit alongside your other commitments?
- Listen to your own work! Your Mentor will listen to your recorded client work and then discuss it with you and share feedback. However, listening to your own work is an incredibly powerful way to develop, and will most certainly enhance your learning experience. When listening to your work, consider when, if, and how you feel you are evidencing the competencies. When you then debrief the work with your mentor, you can explore your own understand and accuracy of identifying the competencies, thus enhancing your own knowledge for ongoing and future self-reflection.
- Consider your mindset for doing this work so that you can bring openness and a desire to learn and develop and receive useful, albeit at times challenging, feedback in service of your professional growth.
- Once your mentoring package is completed, take the process forward by keeping up with your own reflective practice by periodically recording and reviewing your client work. This can also be a great activity for a peer group of coaches to

undertake; coaching each other followed by review and debrief against the Core Competencies or by using examples from your shared client work (with the client's permission of course).

Conclusion

In this chapter we have positioned Mentor Coaching as powerful professional development tool for coaches as well as outlining how it is a required part of the ICF credential application process. We have covered the when, how and with whom of mentoring as well how to get the best out of this process.

Chapter 32
Coach Knowledge Assessment

Introduction

This chapter introduces the ICF Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA), explains its purpose and describes the assessment process (ICF, 2020a). We also look at how you can best prepare for this assessment for a successful outcome.

What Is the Coach Knowledge Assessment?

The Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA) is an online assessment tool that is used by the ICF to measure a coach's understanding of the knowledge and skills that are important in the practice of coaching. Specifically, it tests coaches on a body of knowledge including the ICF definition of coaching, the Core Competencies and the Code of Ethics.

As outlined in the Introduction to Section "What Is the Coach Knowledge Assessment?", the CKA is a required element of ACC, PCC and MCC credential applications. The purpose of this assessment step is to offer a standardized and scientifically constructed test to underpin fairness and rigor in the credentialing process and it is created from the Competency Job Analysis process also described in the Introduction to Section "What Is the Coach Knowledge Assessment?". Whilst this test measures knowledge, the application of that knowledge is then assessed by the review of actual coaching sessions.

The CKA is periodically reviewed and updated, however its typical format is that it comprises around 155 multiple choice items. Each item contains a short statement or a question with four possible answers. For each item, there is one answer that ICF has established as being the best response.

The test covers the four domains of the ICF Core Competency model: Foundation, Co-Creating the Relationship, Communicating Effectively and Cultivating

J. Passmore, T. Sinclair, *Becoming a Coach*,
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Learning and Growth as well as the eight competencies that sit underneath those domains. The test items are related to the ICF definition of coaching, the core competencies and the code of ethics and they vary in levels of difficulty. Some of the items are intended to assess the coach's awareness of a coaching concept or skill and others present a scenario that requires the coach to be able to demonstrate a deeper understanding for the correct response to be identified.

Here are a couple of examples:

Box 32.1 Examples from the Coach Knowledge Assessment
Domain: Foundation:

The client is a high-energy manager with a generally positive outlook. Just before coming to the coaching session, the client was told that their responsibilities are about to drastically change and will no longer be doing the work they are passionate about. The client has come to the session in a particularly negative mood and has expressed the desire to address this situation in today's session. What is the BEST way for the coach to proceed?

(a) Ask the client about all of the potential positive outcomes from this situation
(b) Remind the client that the agenda for this session was set at the last session.
(c) **Explore the outcomes for the session and ensure the client and coach are both clear on them.**
(d) Point out to the client how extremely important it is to be passionate about the work we do.

Domain: Communicating Effectively:

When dealing with a client who brings many issues to the table, it is best for the coach pick the option:

(a) Where the coach has the most experience
(b) **Of asking what the client would like to start with**
(c) That looks most likely to be handled in the time available
(d) That the coach thinks can do the most good for the client

In practical terms, the coach completes the CKA at some point during the credential application process. The exact timing of this will depend upon which type of credential application path the coach is following (these different paths are dependent upon what type of coach-specific training the coach has completed and details can be found on the ICF website). The test will be received via a link in an email to the coach and, upon receipt of the link, the coach has 60 days within which to complete the test.

Once the link is opened, the test needs to be completed in one sitting (there is *not* a "save and continue later" option) and a total of 3-h are given for this process before the online session expires. In most cases, coaches complete the test in less time (usually around 2-h). Once completed, the results of the test will be available immediately and sent directly to the coach via email. The pass mark for the CKA can also change over time as the questions and test items are reviewed and updated periodically, however the pass mark is typically around 70%.

The score will be broken down into a score for each of the four domain test areas, and no feedback is given regarding any incorrect responses. However, feedback is given for the recorded coaching sessions that are also submitted as part of the assessment process for a credential application. If a coach does not pass the test first time, it can be taken again, at an additional cost, with a maximum of the test being taken twice a quarter. However, if a coach is well trained, has completed their mentoring and prepared for the test, repeating this part of the process will hopefully not be necessary.

How Can I Best Prepare for the Coach Knowledge Assessment?

Preparation for you sitting the CKA actually starts when you enroll and begin your coach training. Coach training programs that have been accredited by the ICF (ACTP and ACSTH programs) are required to include the ICF definition of coaching, the Core Competencies and the Code of Ethics within their curriculum and so you will have received instruction and feedback during your coaching practice sessions that is in alignment with that body of knowledge.

In addition, the Mentor Coaching process as described in Chap. 31, provides another opportunity to discuss, review and reflect upon these areas, thereby deepening the coach's knowledge and understanding.

Advice for Taking the Online Assessment

When it comes to taking the test, here are a few tips to help you:

- Once you receive the link to sit the exam, make sure that you look at your diary and plan ahead so that you can comfortably allocate some time to prepare for the test and also the time needed to take the test.
- As part of your final preparations, review and digest the following materials:
  - Your coach training manuals and notes
  - Your Mentor Coaching notes and feedback
  - The ICF Core Competency Model
  - The ICF Code of Ethics

 - Other ICF competency-related documentation as referenced in the Introduction to Section "What Is the Coach Knowledge Assessment?".

- Have the above materials to hand when you sit the test. The CKA is not intended to be a "memory" test, it is more like an open-book exam and you can have these materials around you, which will provide useful sources of reference when considering your responses to the questions.
- On the day, create a comfortable, quiet, distraction free environment for yourself so that you can complete the test undisturbed.
- Finally, relax!

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have given an overview of the Coach Knowledge Assessment tool as part of the ICF Credential application process. We have provided an overview of the purpose and format of the test, along with some example questions. We have also shared some advice on how to get prepared for this test for a most successful outcome. More details and resources for this test are available from the ICF website.

Chapter 33
Progressing your Coaching Skills

Introduction

The completion of the ACC accreditation is only the first step in your coaching journey. Most coaches aspire to become a PCC or an MCC. The journey toward these is based on reflective practice, during which the coach continues to apply their skills, builds their experience as a coach and also engages in further coach training.

In this chapter we will explain the requirements for PCC and MCC and how you might plan your journey to achieving these standards over the coming few years. If you are already an MCC, we will also look at coach maturity and invite you to think about your own personal journey for development to retain the beginner mind in your practice.

What is PCC?

PCC stands for Professional Certified Coach and is intended to offer a benchmark for a gold standard of coaching offered. Some coaches progress toward their PCC credential having first successfully secured their ACC credential and other coaches apply for their PCC straight away, if they fulfill the relevant criteria and requirements. There is no right or wrong approach and it often hinges largely on the amount of coaching an individual is undertaking, which in turn influences the speed at which the coach can build their client hours and their experience.

Whilst the ACC is a highly reputable and globally recognized credential, many coaches choose to continue with their development in the field of coaching and aim for the PCC. Coaches who remain at the level of ACC are those who are probably using their coaching skills less and for whom coaching is perhaps a smaller part of their overarching role.

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Individuals who practice coaching as a significant or complete part of their work, are recommended to consider pursuing their PCC credential at some point. As coaching is now so widely recognized as a powerful developmental way of working, many organizations are increasingly aware of the credentialing levels and often require that professional coaches who offer their services within those organizations hold at least a PCC level credential. On this note of organizational client expectations, there is also an increasing expectation in some organizations that coaches are engaged in regular supervision as part of their ongoing professional development and reflective practice. See Chap. 29 for more information about Coaching Supervision.

What Do I Need to Do to Achieve PCC Status?

As outlined in the Introduction to Section "What is PCC?", a PCC credential requires a greater amount of coach-specific training and coaching experience as compared to an ACC credential (Table 33.1).

The training hours and the coaching experience hours are incremental. For example, once a coach has completed at least 100 hours of coaching experience for their ACC application, they then continue to coach and build up at least another 400 hours, making a total of at least 500 hours in total to be eligible to apply for their PCC. The same principle applies to the coach-specific training hours.

The other difference in requirements for PCC compared to ACC is that for an ACC credential application, one example of a client session is submitted for assessment and for a PCC application, two examples are required.

What Differentiates the PCC Coach from an ACC Coach?

Apart from the obvious aspects noted above that a PCC coach will have completed more coach-specific training and undertaken more hours of client work, the PCC level coach is expected to know, understand and demonstrate the ICF Core Competencies to a greater level of depth.

Table 33.1 Comparison of ACC and PCC credential requirements

Associate Certified Coach (ACC)	Professional Certified Coach (PCC)
• 60+ hours of coach-specific training • 10 hours of mentor coaching • 100+ hours of coaching experience • Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA) • Core competence performance evaluation to ACC level minimum requirements	• 125+ hours of coach-specific training • 10 hours of mentor coaching • 500+ hours of coaching experience • Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA) • Core competence performance evaluation to PCC level minimum requirements

The ICF Core Competency framework is a single body of work that is applicable to and relevant for all three levels of credential. It is therefore the depth of understanding and demonstration of that framework that typically differentiates coaching at the three credential levels. Here follow some examples of how that might show up in practice. An important point to note when reading these differentiators is that they are reflections on ACC or PCC level coaching, as per the Core Competency model, and are not an evaluation or judgment of the coach. For example, a coach may currently hold an ACC credential; however they may in practice be coaching more at the level of PCC.

Coaching Mindset

The PCC level coach is likely to be one who is quite fully committed to and invested in the practice of coaching and as such is engaging in ongoing learning, development and reflective practice in perhaps a more structured, consistent, focused and in-depth manner. This is in no way an indication that an ACC level coach has less commitment to their work and their development; it is merely the fact that, for a PCC level coach, coaching and coaching development probably forms a greater part of their professional identity.

At PCC level, a coach is expected to be more comfortable and skilled at accessing and using their own intuition for the benefit of their client's. Whereas at ACC level the coach is likely to be more focused on the technicality of the coaching process and competencies and, as such, may either not notice, access or be comfortable utilizing their intuition in their coaching practice.

Coaching Agreements

Whilst three key levels of coaching agreements are outlined in the Core Competency model, the extent to which these agreements are explored and established may vary significantly from ACC to PCC level coaching. Part of what is evaluated in this competency is the depth of creation of the agreement(s) and the degree to which the coach demonstrates they are able to fully partner with their client in that creation.

At ACC level, the coach is expected to establish what the client wants to work on and then proceed to attend to that coaching agenda. In essence, the focus at ACC level is on the "what" of the coaching topic. Whereas at PCC level, there is likely to be a much deeper, richer exploration of "why" the topic is of significance and importance to the client and perhaps "why now" this topic has emerged as a topic for conversation. Furthermore, at PCC level, we may also see an exploration into the "who" of the client that is bringing the topic. This deeper exploration can also include aspects of the following skills:

- Asks and explores with the client what they want to work on (this might include exploring what the topic really is, as opposed to what is initially presented by the client)
- Explores and confirms that the agenda is meaningful for the client and will move the client toward a desired outcome(s)
- Engages in some exploration of the measures of success for each outcome desired in the session
- Engages in some exploration of the issues related to each outcome
- Attends to that agenda, those measures, and those issues throughout the coaching
- May raise unseen issues to the client, but will not change agendas, measures, or issues unless redirected by the client
- Should also check with the client during the session to make sure that the client's goals for the session are in fact being achieved and/or if the goals are evolving or changing.

Although all of the Core Competencies are important, the competency of "Establishes and Maintains Agreements" is critical to the successful foundation of a coaching conversation and a thorough review of Chap. 8 which describes this competency is highly recommended.

Trust and Safety

At all levels, the coach is expected to demonstrate genuine concern and respect for their client and to create a safe, open environment in which to work, adapting their own style if necessary, in order to do so. However, at PCC level, the coach is expected to be more comfortable and skilled at allowing space and support for full client expression as well as being highly attuned to the client's style and way of being.

Presence

As the credential levels progress there is an expectation of increasing ability and confidence with being able to work with the client's expression of emotions (especially strong emotions) and to manage one's own emotions. This also applies to developing a level of comfort working with the unknown and maintaining an open curious mindset allowing space and silence for reflection (for both the client and the coach) as opposed to slipping into a need to begin suggesting or "fixing". As such, coaching presence also speaks to the level of self-awareness and personal development of the coach and this is expected to be increasingly evident for each credential level.

Active Listening and Evoking Awareness

At ACC level, the coach is expected to be fully engaged and to listen attentively to their client. This includes listening with the eyes and noticing how the client's body language is also a form of communication. ACC level coaching also expects the coach to bring a stance of inquiry vs. telling and to ask questions that attend to the client's agenda.

At PCC level, the depth of listening is expected to go further to include a curiosity about what is not being said, to noticing and exploring subtle shifts in the client's energy and to noticing and exploring patterns or themes in the session or across the coaching engagement. PCC level coaching also expects the coach to evoke awareness by asking questions which are less focused on the "data" or "content" of the coaching topic and more focused on the client who brought that topic and how they are processing or are thinking and feeling in relation to their topic.

Client Growth

This aspect of the competencies can highlight significant differences between ACC and PCC level coaching. At ACC level, the coach is likely to ask the client about next steps after the coaching session and also to inquire what the client's key takeaways are from the conversation. This level of exploration often leads to this aspect of the coaching session being relatively brief and contained. Whereas at PCC level, there is an expectation of a much deeper and richer exploration which includes inviting the client to consider and summarize their learning and insights from the session and how that learning will be integrated after the session. There will also be a more in-depth inquiry around next steps, including how those steps might be taken, what support or resources might be needed, what might get in the way and how committed or confident the client is about those steps being accomplished. As such, at PCC level this aspect of the coaching may be a longer, fuller inquiry.

What do I Need to do to Achieve MCC Status?

As outlined in the Introduction to Section "What is PCC?", an MCC credential requires a greater amount of coach-specific training and coaching experience as compared to an ACC or PCC credential (Box 33.1).

Box 33.1 MCC Credential Requirements
Master certified coach (MCC):

(continued)

Box 33.1 (continued)

- 200+ hours of coach-specific training
- 10 hours of mentor coaching
- 2500+ hours of coaching experience
- Coach knowledge assessment (CKA)
- Core competence performance evaluation to MCC level minimum requirements
- Coaches are also required to hold a PCC credential before they can apply for the MCC credential.

Once again, the training hours and the coaching experience hours are incremental. For example, once a coach has completed at least the 500-hours of coaching experience for their PCC application, they then continue to coach and build up at least another 2000 hours, making a total of at least 2500 hours in total to be eligible to apply for their MCC. The same principle applies to the coach-specific training hours.

Like a PCC application, two examples of a client session are required to be submitted for assessment and for a MCC application.

What Differentiates the MCC Coach from a PCC Coach?

In line with the transition from ACC to PCC level coaching, MCC level coaching sees an even greater, deeper and more consistent application of the Core Competencies. It is also worth noting that, as MCC applicant coaches need to pass and gain their credential at PCC level before they are eligible to apply for MCC, a significant level of depth of understanding and use of the competencies will have already been established. Therefore, MCC level coaching is sometimes called coaching “beyond the competencies” and, as such, the MCC level coach will most likely be displaying some of the following traits, skills and qualities over and above thorough attention to the Core Competency framework:

- Demonstrates and maintains full and complete partnership and a relationship of trust and equality with the client in all aspects of the coaching work.
- Thoroughly explores all aspects of the coaching agreement, any potential changes in direction for the coaching and regularly checks in with the client to ensure alignment to all agreements.
- Demonstrates complete trust and confidence in the process of coaching, in their client and in themselves.
- Is at ease with silence and creates a spacious environment for the work, regardless of the length of the coaching session.
- A sense of ease and naturalness will be evident in the coaching conversation.

- Can hold an objective and emotional perspective simultaneously and, as such, can take on the stance of "observer" to the process (immersed and detached simultaneously).
- Works with the "who" of the client, the whole person and considers and holds the client's context, environment, circumstances and background as rich and relevant aspects of the coaching work.
- Is totally at ease with not knowing, working with client emotions, self-regulating and managing own emotions even when there are moments of discomfort.
- Is open to and comfortable being vulnerable and is willing to allow the client to teach the coach.
- Communicates in a way that is clear and simple and is aligned with their client's style.
- Notices and works with the full range of qualities and gifts the client displays as well as their limiting beliefs and patterns.
- Is at ease with and skilled at balancing respect, mutuality and partnership with challenge and provoking new thought, even if this will make either the coach or their client, or both, uncomfortable.
- Is able to share observations, intuitions, and feedback freely and without attachment.
- Frequently invites the client's learning, insights, and intuitions to come forward and be shared and explored.
- Supports the client to develop goals, actions, and next steps that achieve more than just the presenting concerns of the client.
- Is able to appropriately hold the client to account or discussion if agreed upon forward movement does not occur.

A Model of Professional Development

Whilst we have the expression to describe the "art and science" of something, Michael Grinder (2007) proposes that in fact it is the science that usually comes first when we are learning a new skill. We are often drawn to the pursuit of mastery, actively seeking out the magic of the artistic coaching conversation. However, in reality, our growth and development as coaches usually means that we go through learning and understanding the Science of coaching first and then we begin to develop the Art of Coaching. Grinder's model of professional development for communication can be easily overlaid onto the process of coaching, as effective and advanced communication are such core parts of a good coach's skillset (Fig. 33.1).

Within these two stages of first science and then art, sit four levels of development (Fig. 33.2).

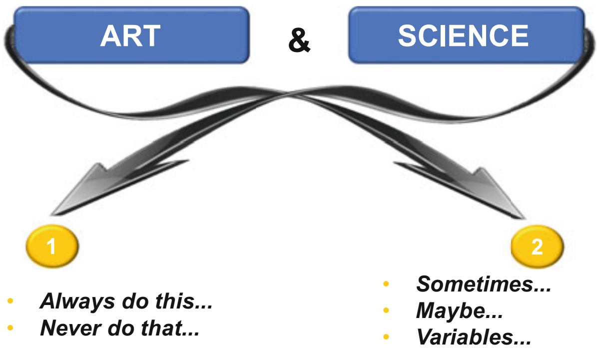


Fig. 33.1 Art and Science

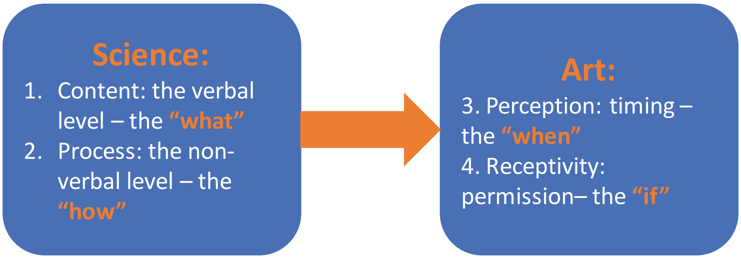


Fig. 33.2 Science and Art

Science

When we first learn to coach, we can be very focused on the content: **"what"** the client is saying to us and what we say in return. We may find ourselves concerned that we that we will forget what they have said, that the whole story is important and that we need to understand the full detail and data of the situation in order to be able to effectively coach our client. At this stage, we may be very grounded in trying to coach the topic the client has brought to our session with them. We may also feel that we need to bring some level of "knowing" or expertise in order to be confident that we have added value to the client. As we develop in skill and confidence, we notice that there is more than simply the content or the words that the client is saying. We begin to realize that some of this content is not even needed for us to coach our client—in fact, the content could even get in the way.

There is also then **"how"** they are saying it and indeed what they are *not* saying. We learn that there is more than simply the words and our listening becomes broader, deeper and more holistic. We find ourselves able to expand our attention to the person bringing the topic as well as the topic itself. We are more observant of body language, energy, emotion and tone etc.

In summary, Grinder (2007) positions that, in order to learn a new skill, we at first need to understand the science of that skill by establishing some clear guidelines to help us know what to do or not do. For example:

> Always ask questions, never give your opinion.
>
> Always allow the client to fully express themselves, never interrupt.

Art

As our development continues, we then begin to expand our own sense of perception and this enables us to increasingly sense **"when"** to intervene, when to ask a question, when to stay silent and allow space and time for reflection, when to challenge, when to probe further and so on. As our own sense of perception with our clients grows, we find ourselves increasingly more present and "in the moment" with them. We work more fluidly and naturally as we sense our way through the conversation with the solid foundation of our understanding of the science of coaching underpinning how we are operating. Our ability to work in this way is also enabled by our growing level of trust: trust in ourselves as coaches, trust in clients and trust in the process of coaching.

Enhanced perception allows us to access our own intuition and, as all of these skills come together, we build higher levels of permission and rapport with our client. In this way, we also begin to know **"if"** now is the time to intervene and how receptive the client might be to what we offer.

At this stage, the somewhat rigid guidelines we needed to follow in the beginning can be relaxed, like taking the stabilizers from a bike, as we can now maneuver and navigate more fluidly and confidently. For example:

> As a coach, I ask questions to evoke my client's awareness . . . and sometimes, depending on the circumstances, I might offer my perspective if I felt it would useful for them.. . . .
>
> As a coach, I encourage my clients to fully express themselves. . .and possibly, if I feel it might be useful for them, I might interject and invite them to summarize what they feel is the key issue for them.

What is also very much worth noting, is that this process of navigating the science and art is in itself a dance, as these two aspects of great coaching interweave, rather than being a singular, linear learning process. As we transition into finding our "art" as a coach, we do not leave the science behind, for it is still there, embedded into the foundations of our knowledge, training and experience and is in fact built upon as we continue with our professional development over time.

Retaining the Beginner's Mind

You may have already become an MCC. It's tempting at this stage, particularly when much of your role is helping and supporting other coaches through mentor coaching, supervision and webinars, to think you have become the expert or guru. After all you are at the top of the tree.

In fact, over the years we know several well-respected coaches who publicly describe themselves as gurus. In our view this is a very dangerous place to be. As soon as we start to think of ourselves as an expert or a guru, there is nothing else for us to learn, and we all know what happens to species that stop learning and changing—today's guru is tomorrow's dinosaur.

To manage this challenge, we suggest a three-step process. Firstly, to acknowledge our expertise, while simultaneously challenging it. We suggest you complete the sentence: "I know a lot about the current ICF competencies and how these can be applied, but I am less skilled at .... In the next two years I will aim to focus my learning on thinking about this aspect of my practice."

Secondly, continuing to foster a beginner's mind. When you started out you were probably curious about everything: "How does this work?", "Why did they say that?", "I wonder what that means?", "What shall I do next?" As we get more experienced and our knowledge grows, we understand more, or at least we think we do. In Buddhism, the Beginners Mind is a term used to describe an empty mind. That is one which holds no preconceived ideas or rules about what is or should be. It is open, eager and receptive.

Box 33.2 A Zen Parable

A student comes to a famous Zen master and asks for instruction in the way of Zen Buddhism.

The master begins to discuss several topics of Buddhism like emptiness and meditation. But the student interrupts the master in an attempt to impress him. "Oh, I already know all that" says the student.

The master then invites the student to have some tea.

When the tea is ready, the master pours the tea into a teacup, filling it to the brim, spilling tea over the sides of the cup and onto the table.

The student exclaims, "stop! You can't pour tea into a full cup."

The master replies, "return to me when your cup is empty."

The master coach needs to remain open and curious.

Thirdly, we suggest the master coach needs to have their own annual personal development plan and remain actively engaged in collecting CCEU's and reflective practice such as through supervision. In this way, the master coach, working with a fellow experienced coach who they know, trust, and respect can be challenged and stimulated to continue their own personal quest toward maturity. Maturity, like infinity is a quest, where the pleasure and delight is in the journey, not destination.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have looked at how it is possible to progress from ACC to PCC to MCC level coaching and have outlined the ICF requirements for each credential level. We have also considered and described some of the differences between each level of coaching in terms of the extent to which the Core Competencies are demonstrated. Finally, we have advocated the adoption of a beginner's mind: when the cup is empty, there is still space or it to be filled with more learning and growth. As are our clients, so are we. . . .

Part VI
Tools and Techniques

Introduction

This final part of the book looks at some tools and techniques that can form part of the coach's pool of resources. These resources are shared in Chap. 34 and offer many ideas for coaches to use in service of their own ongoing growth and development on both a personal and professional level.

From the client perspective, whilst we do not advocate that coaching is a tool-driven process by any means, understanding some of the concepts and approaches contained within this part offer many ways to evoke new awareness, insight and learning for our clients. When these tools are introduced, with permission and in partnership with our clients, in a way that is congruent and intuitively aligned with the work that the client is doing, they can become a great source of new perspective and creative thought.

Some of the tools highlighted will have already been introduced in specific chapters within the book and they are noted again and summarized in this part for easy reference. We then go on to include many other coaching tools and techniques with an introduction, followed by an overview of the tool or technique itself. We also provide a description of how they are used in practice, with examples and other useful and relevant references.

Chapter 34
Coaching Tools

From our experience we find that new coaches like to learn new techniques to try out. For this reason, we have included a selection in this book. We have included techniques in the individual chapters and added to these in this section with additional techniques.

We appreciate that different techniques suit different coaches, different clients and different presenting issues. By having a wide range of techniques and tools to draw on, as well as using a variety of models and approaches, we believe you are best place to adjust and adapt your approach to meet your individual client and their needs.

So far in this book you will have come across the following tools and techniques, summarized in Table 34.1a.

Using a new technique can be tricky. One way of trying out new ones is to ask if the client is willing to do an experiment. You can explain that you are not sure it will work, but also say you know other people have found it helpful. In this way, if it fails, it was just an experiment, and it is less likely to have a negative impact on your relationship with your client. Of course, if it works, the client may ask to use the tool themselves.

In this chapter we have included techniques as listed in Table 34.1b.

Technique 1: Mindfulness Meditation

Introduction

Mindfulness has emerged into popular organizational practice. It has written about widely as a useful tool for use by coaches to enhance presence during the session as well as helping the coach to prepare for a session. We described its use for coaches in Chap. 26. Mindfulness can be an equally useful tool for clients.

J. Passmore, T. Sinclair, *Becoming a Coach*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-53161-4_34

Table 34.1a Coaching Techniques in chapters

Chapter	Technique	When is this tool useful
15	Time to think	Providing space for clients to think
16	ABCDEF	Helping clients explore the connection between their thoughts, feelings and behavior
17	Empty chair	Exploring relationships and our thoughts and feelings about others
18	Miracle question	Ideas generation
19	Force field	Exploring the forces at work supporting and resisting change
20	Desert Island	Exploring the hidden aspects of the relationship between individuals
25	PIPS	Note taking
29	Self-supervision	Reflective questions for reviewing your coaching practice
30	Henley8	Self-reflection or writing your learning journal

Table 34.1b Additional coaching techniques

Technique	When is this tool useful?	Resources section
1. Mindfulness meditation	Preparing for a coaching session/becoming present	
2. Stokers	Goal setting	STOKERS checklist
3. Typical day	Reviewing the current situation/reality	
4. Developing change talk	Helping clients focus on build intrinsic motivation to change	
5. Walking and talking	If clients are stuck	
6. Heaven and hell	Exploring alternative futures	Cartoon template
7. Reflections	Building motivation for action	
8. VIP	Options/ideas generation	
9. Post-it	Options/ideas generation	
10. Desert Island	Exploring relationships between the client and a key stakeholder	
11. Vicious flower	Exploring faulty thinking	Flower
12. Virtuous flower	Exploring strengths thinking	Flower
13. Personal board of directors	Accountability and support	
14. Jelly baby tree	Exploring mood, emotion and relationships	Jelly baby tree
15. Consequences wheel	Option evaluation	Consequences chart
16. Legacy	Making values-based decisions	
17. Wheel of life	Evaluating current reality	Wheel
18. Sphere of influence	Reflecting on the stakeholders involved in the situation	
19. DOUSE	Closing the coaching relationship	DOUSE checklist
20. Three good things	Refocusing on the positive	
21. Blessings	Cultivating compassion	

Tool

There are a wealth of mindfulness podcast, exercises and materials available on the web and in books which coaches can explore (Passmore & Amit, 2017). One technique which we find useful with clients, particularly those who are engaged in high pressurized roles, with multiple completing prioritizes, is STOP (Passmore, 2017a, b).

STOP is useful when we might observe a pattern of distraction or frenetic behavior in our client, where stopping, reflecting and reprioritizing may be helpful. In using STOP, we may reflect back to the client what we are observing, and invite them to clear their mind, to just start to notice what sensations they are experiencing in their body, what thoughts are going through their mind, what emotions they are feeling? We are not inviting the client to share these, but just to be aware of them, as an outside observer, not judging, evaluating or engaging with the thoughts or feelings.

WE next invite the client to move their awareness to their breathing. To be aware, if its fast or slow, if their breathing is deep or shallow, if their breathing is from the diaphragm or lungs. Spending maybe 30 seconds just observing the breath without judgment: observing for the full in breath and the full out breath.

Finally, to move their thinking, now with enhanced awareness of the present moment, to consider, what options or changes they want to make to best achieve their objectives for the day.

Conclusion

The short 2-min exercise can be very useful in a coaching conversation for refocusing. It is also useful for clients to incorporate the technique as part of their routine. To stop work every 2 h. To step back from the whirlwind and to bring their attention to the present moment: sensations, thoughts and feelings, and breath. Having stopped to then review their priorities, before moving forward with new focus.

Technique 2: Stokers

Introduction

The STOKeRS framework was originally developed by Clare Pedrick for supporting clients during the goal setting phase of a coaching conversation. In our work with clients we have developed the tool to STOKERS, offering seven steps for the coach to work through with their clients.

Tool

The STOKER is a person who on a steam train puts the fuel into the engine. They shove coal, while the driver makes decisions about when the train leaves the station, where it goes, and when and where it stops. This is a useful metaphor for coaching. The coach acts to add the fuel for the conversation, but it is the responsibility of the client to make choices about when and where the train goes.

The coach explores each step with the client through a specific question and uses follow-up questions at each stage as required.

1. **Subject**—the conversation starts by the coach inviting their client to identify the subject which the client wishes to discuss during the session.
2. **Time**—This subject is refined by a question which encourages the client to consider and agree to the amount of time for the session.
3. **Outcome**—The aim of the third question is to help the client think about the end point of the conversation. This may be a learning point, a new insight, or a series of actions to take away and implement.
4. **Know**—This question focuses on clarifying the goal with success criteria, making the goal measurable in SMART terms.
5. **Energy**—This is an additional question which encouraged to consider whether and why this topic is a priority now, and this how much energy or motivation is there to address the topic.
6. **Role**—This question explores the roles each party will play in the conversation and provides an opportunity for the two parties to agree how they will collaborate to achieve the client's goal. As the model makes no formal reference to confidentiality, the topic, can be discussed at this stage as part of the working relationship.
7. **Start**—the final question invites the client to identify a starting point and begin.

The tool makes the goal setting a collaborative process, while also ensuring the key elements are included, and thus setting the coaching up for a successful outcome (Fig. 34.1).

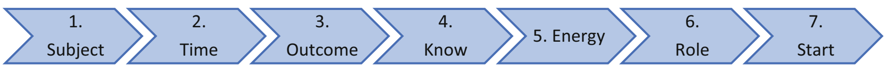


Fig. 34.1 STOKERS for Goal setting

Box 34.1 STOKERS Useful Questions

1. What do you need to think about today? (Subject question)
2. Given we have x time what element should we focus on in our conversation? (Time question)
3. What would you like to be different by the end of our time together (Outcome question)
4. How will you know you have reached this point? (Know question)
5. How important is this issue for you right now? (Energy question)
6. How are we going to do this? (Role question)
7. Where shall we start? (Start question)

Conclusion

The STOKERS model is a shorthand way to help coaches cover the key elements during the goal setting phase of the conversation.

Technique 3: Typical Day

Introduction

The "typical day" exercise is a good way to start a coaching session and can follow on from the initial contracting and goal setting segment of the session which might form the first 10 to 20 min of the conversation. Typical day is a technique drawn from Motivational Interviewing, and originally developed by Miller and Rollnick (2002). More recently it has been adapted for use in coaching (Anstiss & Passmore, 2011).

Tool

The typical day question is a good way to get clients talking about the issue in a non-threatening way. The technique provides the opportunity for the coach to demonstrate to a new client that coaching is about them. It provides a time when the coach can actively listen and as appropriate demonstrate curiosity. The coach can use summaries and reflections, reflecting back words, emotion, and appropriate content about what is said, as well as offer insights about what they themselves may not have said while helping the client place their remarks into a wider cultural and systemic context. Overall, the technique builds empathy and rapport and increases the client's commitment to the process.

The coach may introduce the technique by saying:

> Perhaps you could help me get a better understanding how your average day goes, starting from when you get up in the morning until when you go to bed. How does your day start?

In response to this question some client's will rush ahead and focus on the issue which they wish to discuss, for example work-life balance or relationships with their team. They may say: "Well, nothing really happens until . . . ." We suggest inviting the client to slow down and to take each part of the day in turn, even if they think nothing significant happened. Other clients may take several minutes telling you about their thoughts even before they get out of bed. The coach can manage the process helping the client to explore their day with new eyes, with a specific focus on the issue the client wants to consider in the session.

A second part of this technique is using the content to build the change talk. We will look at this in technique 4.

Box 34.2 Typical Day Useful Questions

1. Perhaps you could help me get a better understanding how your average day goes at work, starting from when you get up in the morning until when you go to bed? Would that be okay? How does your day start?"
2. "Can you tell me more about this?"
3. "Before you move on to the afternoon team meeting, tell me about the morning and what happens in the team?"

Conclusion

The technique offers a useful intervention for coaches to provide a space for clients to open talk about an issue and for the coach to demonstrate active listening and empathy. Used well the technique can also provide an opportunity for the coach to encourage the client to spend time developing change talk and a belief that the situation can be different.

Technique 4: Developing Change Talk: DARN CAT

Introduction

During most coaching conversations clients use language which signals their desire to make a change and also language which signals a reluctance to change. Helping clients explore this ambiguity and build their motivation and commitment for the change is the focus of DARN CAT as a coaching tool.

Tool

During a typical coaching conversation, the client may use both what Bill Miller and Steve Rollnick call “sustain talk” and “change talk” (Miller & Rollnick, 2002). Sustain talk is speech which reinforces the client’s view about a situation (e.g., “I just can’t start stand working in this place, women are treated as second class citizen”) and “change talk” (e.g. “I used to work for a different tech firm and had an enjoyable time working there”). These will spontaneously emerge during the session without coach direction. Such responses provide the opportunity to explore this language.

Miller and Rollnick (2002) suggested that change talk is like a hill. It comes in two parts; the uphill and downhill of change. The uphill side of the equitation is the preparatory change talk. This is most likely to occur during the contemplation phase of the cycle of change. This happens when the person is thinking about change and is weighing up whether change is really for them, and if so how they might do it. In many cases the person is well aware of the advantages of making the change, but balanced against this are a series of barriers which have blocked their path to successfully making the change. It is often these barriers which the coach is helping the client to explore and prepare to overcome (Fig. 34.2).

During the contemplation phase the coach needs to listen for what Miller and Rollnick (2002) have labeled DARNs. It is these statements which reveal an interest in, and consideration of, change. However, the client lacks a specific commitment to making the change. Such statements might express the individual’s personal desires about making a change, the ability to make the change, their reasons for making the change and the need to change. Examples of these are summarized in Box 34.3.

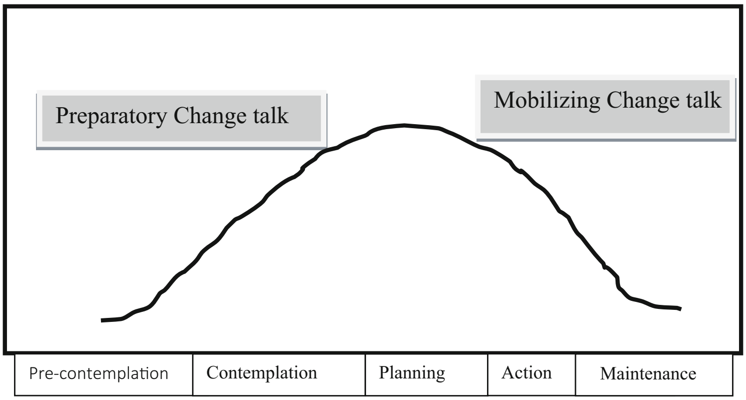


Fig. 34.2 Transpersonal model of change and Change talk phases

Box 34.3 Examples of DARN Statements
Desire: “I really want to do Y”.
Ability: “I think I could do Y if I really wanted to...”.
Reason: “if they did X, then I think that would be enough and I would then do Y”.
Need: “I really need to do Y, or ... will happen”.

In general terms the coach should look out for statements which are conditional or hypothetical. These statements express desires (“I need to....” or “I want to....”), they may express ability (“I can.......” or “I could.......”), they express reasons for making the change and they may also express the risks in their mind. However, while such statements reveal the client has shifted from the pre-contemplation to contemplation phase of the stages of change model (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983) there is no expressed commitment to make the change, or a specific plan as to how the change is going to be made, particularly how barriers and hurdles which have held the individual back will be overcome.

At this stage the role of the coach is to encourage the client to continue to explore the situation and encourage the client to focus more on their values or beliefs which attracted them to this change.

As this happens and the coach maintains effective listening and interventions, the client will grow in confidence and commitment language is likely to develop. In place of DARN statements, CAT statements will emerge (Miller & Rollnick, 2002). CAT statements are likely to reflect a change in the client from early commitment to mobilization; from “I want to....” to “I will.....” Box 34.4 provides examples of the three types of CAT statements which the coach should be looking for.

Box 34.4 Examples of CAT Statements
Commitment: “....next week I will do Y”.
Action: “I am really keen this time to make a success of it, I have thought about what went wrong last time and it’s going to be different on Tuesday”.
Taking steps: “... in advance of next Tuesday, have already done X. This will mean that went the meeting comes on Tuesday Y should be much easier this time”.

As Box 34.4 shows the CAT statements are concerned with intentions and promises. The client makes an unambiguous statement expressing their plans for the future. Key words for the coach to listen for are “will,” “promise,” or “guarantee.” Action statements reflect the individual’s state of being willing, ready, and prepared to act.

Conclusion

DARN CAT is a useful framework to help coaches to listen to the client's language, to understand where clients are within the cycle of change, to encourage clients to focus on values and their desires for change, and through these interventions observe client's language shift from DARN toward CAT.

Technique 5: Walking and Talking: Eco-psychology Coaching

Introduction

This technique can be useful for helping clients break out when they feel trapped or stuck. Changing the physical environment can help clients see issues with a fresh perspective, but more generally getting out into blue-green environments can have a positive impact of wellbeing and make for a welcome change from the office or meeting room.

Tool

Most coaching takes place in corporate meeting rooms or executive offices. These can be sterile environments, with few views or fresh perspectives to stimulate new thinking. Many of us in our "normal" lives go for a walk to clear our heads. We find that a walk offers us a new insight or fresh perspective. Eco-coaching aims to make use of the psychological benefits of being in the outdoors combined with a change of environment for a new perspective to emerge. This may involve a stroll in a rose garden, a hike up a mountain, a walk along a riverbank or on a beach. What seems to make a difference is the introduction of blue-green colors in the environment, combined with the physical movement of walking and a side by side conversation as opposed to a face to face style of engagement.

From our experience this may be a tool to introduce once you have got to know your client, but for some clients it may be an appropriate tool to use from the start. We know some coaches who specialize in this type of approach and use it as part of the way they coach.

Conclusion

Eco-coaching or "walking and talking" can be useful way to freshen up the coaching relationship, and offer clients a different space in which to think in new ways about their issue.

Technique 6: Heaven and Hell

Introduction

Goal setting is a key task in most coaching conversation. Most novice coaches rush too quickly from identifying the topic and diving into the detail of the issue. We think it's important that the coach spends time exploring the topic, understanding its importance and relevance, unpicking what aspect to focus on during this particular conversation and what can realistically be achieved in the 20 min or 2 h planned for the session. Heaven and Hell, is a visual technique that can help the client clarify their outcome in more refined detail by spending some time considering both the perfect outcome (heaven) and its opposite (hell).

Tool

The tool aims to help the client explore the initial topic; to clarify and refine a vague goal toward a more specific and concrete goal. The first part of the process is like a normal goal setting discussion, asking the coach to set out their goal. Given the goal, what might this mean for them. Here the coach aims to ensure the goal is important, and relevant.

The next step in the process is to invite the client to describe (or draw) what the perfect outcome would be ("heaven"). The more detailed the description, the better. The next step is to invite them to do the same for the worst possible, but realistic, outcome.

Having described, or drawn Hell, the coach invites them to consider what steps would lead them to a hell outcome. Now using a cartoon sketch book, with hell being the outcome, the client is invited to draw pictures to represent the key steps that lead to each outcome, but working backwards. Table 34.2 illustrates the box with the steps in sequential order, working backwards from hell.

Try to avoid clients becoming too extreme in their scenario or the events. Encourage them to focus on likely events, as opposed to rare events.

Table 34.2 Heaven or hell cartoon planning

Step 2 Picture of now	Step 9	Step 8
Step 7	Step 6	Step 5
Step 4	Step 3 Key factors starting here and working backwards from heaven to now	Step 1: Picture of heaven

Once the client has worked through hell, they can switch back to heaven, and what steps working back them from heaven to now.

Box 34.5 Heaven and Hell Useful Questions

1. What would you like to focus on during the session today?
2. Given we have x minutes what aspect of this would you like to focus on?
3. Why is this important to you today?
4. What outcome would you want to achieve?
5. If this was the perfect outcome, heaven, what would they look like? Can you describe for me (draw for me) what it would be like?
6. Now for just a few moments, imagine the worst outcome (hell). Can you describe for me (draw for me) what it would be like?
7. Ok, let's start with Hell, working backwards through a series of stages, how could you have ended up here? (Draw or note some of the things that have happened along the way).
8. Okay, let's return to heaven, again working backwards through a series of stages, how can you increase the chances of ending up here? (Draw or note some of the things that have happened along the way).

One important consideration is to ensure that at the end of the coaching session any notes on whiteboard, flipcharts or paper are removed from the room, or rubbed out from the boards.

Conclusion

This technique is really useful for encouraging clients to consider, describe and draw their perfect outcome (heaven) and its opposite (hell).

Technique 7: Using Reflections: Simple, Amplified, and Muted

Introduction

Reflections and summaries are useful tools which coaches should be using as part of active listening to ensure clarity and understanding. This technique offers ways these competencies can be used, by providing different types of reflections: simple and amplified. The technique is drawn from Motivational Interviewing (Miller & Rollnick, 2002).

Tool

Reflective listening is a key coaching skill. In popular language "listening" often means just keeping quite; waiting for our turn to talk. This level 1 style of listening is unhelpful in even basic coaching, although it is a frequently used style in many everyday conversations. Competent coaches should be aiming to listen at level 4, with professional coaches working at an interpretive level and sharing their insights where this is helpful to their client.

Box 34.6 Five Levels of Listening

Level 1: Waiting to speak—at this level we are simply waiting for our turn to talk.

Level 2: Basic listening—at this level the listener focuses on the words being said.

Level 3: Attentive listening—at this level the listener focuses on the words and tone of the communication to understand the true meaning.

Level 4: Active listening—at this level the listener listens to the words, tone and body language of the speaker and is aiming to understand what the speaker is intending to communicate.

Level 5: Interpretive listening—at this level the listener is seeking to move beyond the intended communication, they are interpreting meaning from the whole communication both intended meaning and unintended communications.

At level 1 and at level 2 the coach might be drawn into using an intervention which creates a roadblocks for their client. The roadblock acts to stop the client moving forward (Gordon, 1970). These responses might include agreeing, reassuring, cautioning, labeling, or even asking a question. For the client who is stuck in a dilemma and is seeking a way forward, but remains ambivalent about making a change, a roadblock intervention is likely to result in the person entering a holding pattern, maintaining them in their current position.

Box 34.7 Example of Typical Coach Response

Client "I am feeling feed up with my boss,"

Coach: "Sounds really bad, what are they doing?"

In Box 34.7 the coach uses both an affirming statement ("sounds really bad"), as well as a question to explore in further detail the nature of the behavior which create the feelings. The outcome of this intervention is the client will talk about what is causing the emotion—becoming stuck in the problem.

The coach could employ a different approach. They could encourage the client to focus on more change related talk and thus help the client to begin to move forward.

Change talk is statement from the client which focuses on their desires or plans for making a change. We explored this in Technique 4 in this section.

Simple Reflections

In using "simple reflection" the coach tries to understand the meaning of the client and reflect this back, capturing their words, phrases and critically the meaning of the client's communication. Using a reflective statement is less likely to provoke resistance. For example, if the coach asked about the meaning of the statement, this directs the client to step back and reflect on whether they really do mean what they have said. To illustrate this point, the coach could say: "You're feeling unsure?" This is done through an inflection, with the tone rising toward the end of the sentence in Received Pronunciation English (sometimes called BBC English). In contrast the coach could use reflective listening to reflect back "You're feeling unsure." This involves using a neutral tone throughout the sentence. The reflective statement communicates understanding and becomes a statement of fact. Such statements are more likely to encourage the client to talk more about this emotional state. As the client talks, they think about this state and draw out for themselves the evidence of why they are feeling as they do. This deepens their insight and is more likely to leads into change talk (statements about wishing or planning to make a change).

Reflective statements can be quite simple and can involve reflecting back a single word or a pair of key words from the client's story. The coaches' skill is in listening and selecting the right word or words to reflect back which capture the heart of the message.

A more sophisticated series of options however are also available to the coach. These involve amplified (over-stating) or muted (under-stating) reflections. The use of these and the frequency of application will vary with the coach's skills, and the meaning they carry may vary in different national and cultural contexts.

However, a word of caution. Inappropriate use, or over frequent use, can leave the client believing their coach is not listening to them and can undermine the coaching relationship. As a result, we would invite coaches to use these with caution, and certainly avoid using the technique more than once or twice in any session.

Muted (Under-stated) Reflection

This is best used when the coach wishes the client to continue exploring an issue and to confirm the strength of feeling they have about an issue. The coach may reflect back a lower level of emotion than that communicated by the client. For example, the client communicates "anger," the coach may select to reflect back a lower intensity of "anger," such as using the word "irritation" or "annoyed." This works well where under-statement is a feature of the culture. The effect is the client is likely to speak further about their true emotion, possibly correcting their coach about the strength of feeling and to talking more honestly about their true feelings.

The key skill is to avoid under-stating to the extent that the client feels that the coach has not listened to what has been said. This takes both a high level of listening to the whole communication and a high level of skill in selecting the right word to reflect back.

Amplified (Over-stated) Reflection

In contrast if the coach chooses to amplify the emotional content and over-state the emotion compared with the client's original communication, the likely effect is for the client to deny and minimize the emotion.

This is useful, for example, if the client was speaking about faults in their manager's working style. The coach may repeat an over-statement, in this manner: "So you think your manager is totally incompetent" or "It must be hard working for your manager as it sounds as if you believe they are a walking disaster zone." The coach needs to be careful in their phrasing to make it clear the label is one the client is applying, not one they are applying: "you think" as opposed to "are" is useful in this context to make the ownership of the views clearly placed with the client. This intervention is likely to have the effect of getting the client to recognize some of the positive attributes of their manager and thus begin to build a more balanced and evidence-based perspective.

Once again, the dangers of the client feeling they have not been heard are present. As a result, the coach needs to be careful and limited in their use of over-statement, to avoid damaging the coach-client relationship. There is also the risk the client agrees, and if poorly phrased it can appear is as if the coach is colliding with the client.

Conclusion

Reflection, like coaching, is not a passive process. It is the coach who decides when to intervene, when to be silent, when to nod and what to say. Making a choice is thus important. The coach can direct the attention of the client and encourage them forward toward their goal, to dwell in the moment or to reflect back to the past. Reflections can be a useful tool in the coach toolkit.

Technique 8: VIP

Introduction

This technique is most useful during the ideas generation stage when the client needs to think beyond their current experiences and generate new perspectives. The technique invites the client to consider how others (Very Important People) might deal with the issue they client is exploring and thus provide new ideas to draw from. The technique can be kept serious, or made fun, depending on the characters the coach selects.

Tool

VIP (Very Important Person) can often be inspiration for us and our clients. They often have an image which projects a distinct way of doing things, be it Donald Trump or Nelson Mandela.

The technique is most helpful when a client is stuck at the Options stage of the GROW model, and feels they have a limited range of options available to them. The VIP question invites the client to step out of their own style and way of working to consider alternative was to solve the problem, imaging they are someone else.

The coach can select some commonsense suggestions, such as Warren Buffet or Greta Thunberg. Or they can draw on diverse figures from history or cartoon characters, such as Abraham Lincoln, Genghis Khan or Lisa Simpson (of The Simpsons, a US animation comedy show). In most cases, we and the client will hold a shared stereotype about the character, which is used by the client to imagine their approach to resolving the problem.

Box 34.8 VIP: Useful Questions

1. Would you be happy to do an experiment with me? Let's imagine that Margaret Thatcher was faced with this problem. What would she do?
2. Now let's imagine that Martin Luther King faced this problem. How would he work toward a solution?
3. What about Abraham Lincoln?
4. Finally, what about Greta Thunberg?

Offering four or five characters that the client is familiar with provides the opportunity to generate 4 or 5 different, and creative new insights to move forward with the problem. Once these have been generated the coach can invite the client to think about these ideas and how they may fit the client, their organization and cultural context. In some case the ideas may need to be translated for a modern-day context. As a result, massacring the finance department, by sending in a crack commando squad may be both unrealistic and illegal. But taking the fight to them, by highlighting each and every error, may be a legitimate, all be it a highly confrontational approach.

Conclusions

VIP is a fun technique which clients usually enjoy. The coach needs to take care in selecting VIP's within the client's frame of reference and ones which will not cause offence. Beyond this diversity usually adds value, in bringing creativity into the conversation.

Technique 9 Post-it

Introduction

This technique is useful during the ideas generation stage. It works best with clients who prefer a visual representation of their ideas, and who are better suited to internal processing. The technique involves inviting clients writing out on Post-It notes their ideas, which they spread across the meeting table and which they can take-away at the end of the session.

Tool

The coach invites the client to think about new ways to address the problem, but to do this by writing them down instead of speaking about them. Research has shown that brain writing (Rohrbach, 1969) is a more powerful technique that brain storming in group situations, as individuals are less likely to move from idea into evaluation, but stay focused on generating ideas, thus separating out the two parts of the process more clearly, and find the process more enjoyable and effective (Litcanu, Prostena, Oros, & Mnerie, 2015).

This technique applies the same process to a one to one coaching conversation. The coach invites the client to write as many ideas as possible on Post-It notes. For some clients it can be fun to set a target for 2 min, maybe twelve ideas. Others prefer time with no target. During the writing period the coach will hold the silence. Once the ideas are generated, the coach invites the client to put the Post-It notes out on the desk as a collection. The notes can then be reviewed and discussed individually.

As a collection, it is possible to start to move these around, for example, it would be possible to use a whiteboard or flip chart to write some criteria and with an X-Y axis to consider the Top 5 or 6 ideas against the criteria. Some clients at this stage like to score or rank the ideas against the criteria, others are less data driven and are happy to simply discuss each in turn.

Conclusions

The tool provides an opportunity to expand the number of ideas through an evidenced based approach.

Technique 10: Desert Island

Introduction

The purpose of this technique is to encourage clients to think about the problem they are facing in a different dimension or location. The desert island is outside of space and time and provides an opportunity to develop fresh perspectives on a problem.

Tool

The tool involves a single question, with follow up and deeper exploration of the client's thinking. The question is: "Imagine you were shipwrecked on a desert island with the person, and this problem/situation had just happened. What would happen on the desert island"?

Box 34.9 Desert Island Useful Questions

1. "Imagine you were shipwrecked on a desert island with the person, and this problem/situation had just happened. What would happen on the desert island?
2. "What would happen next?"
3. "How might you survive (with them) if rescue was two-month away?"
4. "What insights does this tell you about your relationship with the X/with the key stakeholders?"
5. "You are now rescued and are transported back to work, given the discussion we have just had how would you wish to progress a resolution to the issue?"

Conclusion

The desert island technique is a helpful technique to introduce when clients are seeking a fresh perspective or want to consider the issue outside of the confines of the organization's processes, systems and culture, which can sometimes simple solutions emerging.

Technique 11: Vicious Flower

Introduction

The *Vicious Flower* is a simple tool which we can help clients explore their faulty thinking. The tool sits within the cognitive behavioral coaching approach and works well alongside the ABC framework, as clients explore their Activating event (trigger), Beliefs and Consequences. The technique encourages clients to explore the maintenance cycles that (often unintentionally) prolong or sustain their faulty thinking pattern.

Tool

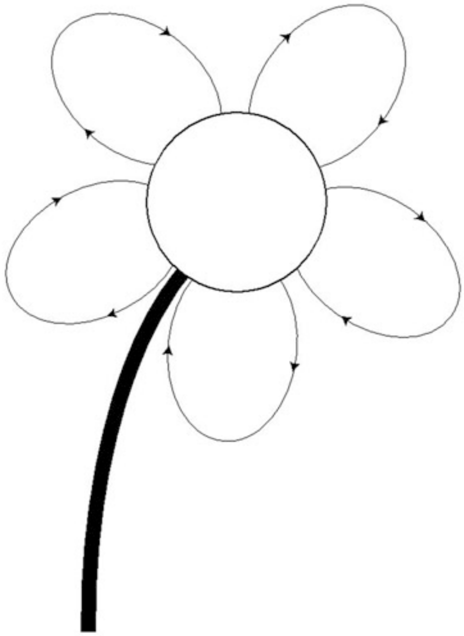
The coach might draw the flower (or use a pre-drawn image) and explain that the petals represent the thoughts that the client has. At the center of the flower is the core belief. The coach might help the client to explore the self-talk statements they are using; for example "I am no good at presenting", "I always forget key parts of my message", "Colleagues will think I am stupid", and "I always lose my thread and start talking about irrelevant things." These thoughts might all be sustaining: "I am not worthy to be a manager."

Having got the client to label the petals, and thus made these thoughts conscious, the coach can work with the client to challenge these thoughts, using questions, such as "How helpful is it to think like this?", "What's the evidence for that statement?", and "Is it logical to think like this"? (Fig. 34.3)

Box 34.10 Vicious Flower Useful Questions

1. I have drawn a flower. We call this the vicious flower as it is poisonous. The aim will be to label as many of the unhelpful thoughts you have and write them in the flower petals. Where would you like to start?
2. How helpful is it for you to have these thoughts?
3. How logical is this?
4. What's the evidence this "always" happens?

Fig. 34.3 The flower



Conclusion

The technique is a useful tool to be used alongside ABC within a cognitive behavioral coaching session.

Technique 12: Virtuous Flower

Introduction

The *Virtuous Flower* is the opposite of the Vicious Flower technique and can be used as a follow up to it or be used as a self-standing tool. The tool sits within the positive psychology coaching approach but is also consistent with compassion-based approaches within third wave cognitive behavioral approaches. Instead of labeling and removing petals which are unhelpful negative self-talk statements, the aim is to develop or capture positive self-talk statements which are reinforcing and compassionate.

Tool

The coach uses the same flower drawing as in technique 11. This time however they explain that the petals represent the client's strengths, virtues or positive statements. The center of the flower represents the client's main virtue or strength. The coach might help the client to explore these virtues, possible based on results from the VIA, or drawing on positive feedback the client has received. If the client does move into negative comments, the coach redirects the attention through an intervention, reminding the client the agreed focus is on strengths, virtues or positive statements.

Having got the client to label the petals, encourage them to reflect on in what situations they demonstrate these virtues and how they draw on these virtues more in different situations to achieve more effective outcomes.

Box 34.11 Virtuous Flower Useful Questions

1. I have drawn a flower. We call this the virtuous flower. What I would like you to do is thinking about yourself when you are at your best. What character words come to mind? Use these words to label the petals.
2. What does it feel like when you draw on these qualities?
3. How could you use one or more of these in the recent challenge we were discussing?
4. How can you cultivate these virtues to use them more frequently?

Conclusion

The virtuous flower is a useful tool for encouraging people to talk about their strengths or virtues and reflect on how they can use these character strengths to be at their best more often.

Technique 13: Personal Board of Directors

Introduction

One element which many clients neglect is how they can leverage their personal network of clients, family and colleagues to help them achieve their goals. Personal board of directors is a metaphor which many clients can relate to provide a support team outside of coaching to help them progress toward their wider goals.

Tool

The technique like most in this section is fairly simply. It seeks to address the challenge that while the coach may meet the client once a week or once a month, between meetings the client needs to call upon their own resources to make progress. For every hour in a coaching conversation there are a further 100 h (or more) of time when the client has to find their own way forward.

The personal board of directors is a way of the client creating their own support team, or *The A-Team* (a popular 1980s American TV show). The technique has its most value as the client develops their plan. The coach can then invite the client to consider whom they would like to support them as they progress with the plan.

Box 34.12 Useful Questions

As you think about the plan, whose help or support would you like to draw on, a bit like a personal board of directors, to help you deliver the plan?

In what ways can each person best help?

How will you engage their support?

Conclusion

This technique helps clients recognize they are not alone, and if they call upon friends, family members and colleagues to support them, providing advice, encouragement, championing them when they slip back, as well as holding them to account, they are more likely to achieve their goal than if they try to achieve behavioral change by themselves.

Technique 14: Jelly Baby Trees

Introduction

The jelly baby tree was originally developed for use in schools. But it has spread widely with lots of different versions available including for use with adults. The origin of the tool is hard to establish, and multiple people claim to be the originators. What the picture does, is allows people to project their feelings onto one of the characters in the drawing, and thus provide an opportunity to explore the feelings being experienced by the character and what it might be like to be one of the other characters in the drawing. A copy of the tree is in the resources section.

Tool

The process starts by sharing the drawing with the clients. Invite the client to look at the drawing, and ask them which character do they most identify with today? Explore what they think the character is feeling? Why are they feeling this way? You can move to explore other thoughts such as what could the character do to change their feelings? Who could they join in with?

Box 34.13 Jelly Baby useful questions

Which character do you most identify with today?

- What might have happened to that character?
- What could you do to change these feelings?
- Which character would you most like to feel like?
- What could you do to move closer to feeling like this?

Conclusion

The technique is great for starting conversations about feelings and provides a safe mechanism to do so, only moving into the personal when you judge the client is ready.

Technique 15: The Consequences Wheel

Introduction

This technique is focused on providing a structure to exploring the advantages and disadvantages of each of the options identified. The tool offers a deceptively simple process to encourage consideration of short and long-term implications, mapping these and from this, enabling clients to plan for how the risks may be mitigated and the benefits harvested.

Tool

The tool invites the client to think through the consequences in a formal way. As most decisions involve multiple consequences its best to focus on the three or four which are high probability outcomes as well as considering the one or two low probability outcomes, but which carry high-risk outcomes. The more important the decision, the more important it will be to consider a wider number of scenarios.

Most clients tend to focus on high probability, but if the actions has a low probability of happening but contains a high risk, this risk may be important to consider. For example, drink driving, being stopped by the police and breath tested is a medium probability. The consequences may be losing your license for a period, which could be inconvenient. However, having an accident with another vehicle and skidding onto the sidewalk killing five preschool age children is a low probability, but this event could result in life-changing events, not only for the children, their families, but also for the driver, their career, and their whole family.

The coach invites the coach to complete a chain of events emanating from each possible consequence, containing short-term events and longer-term events, as well as an opportunity to think through both the desired, or intended, consequences, as well as the unintended consequences.

The output is a diagram (Fig. 34.4) that can help the individual decide the appropriate course of action, and plan to mitigate or manage less desirable potential

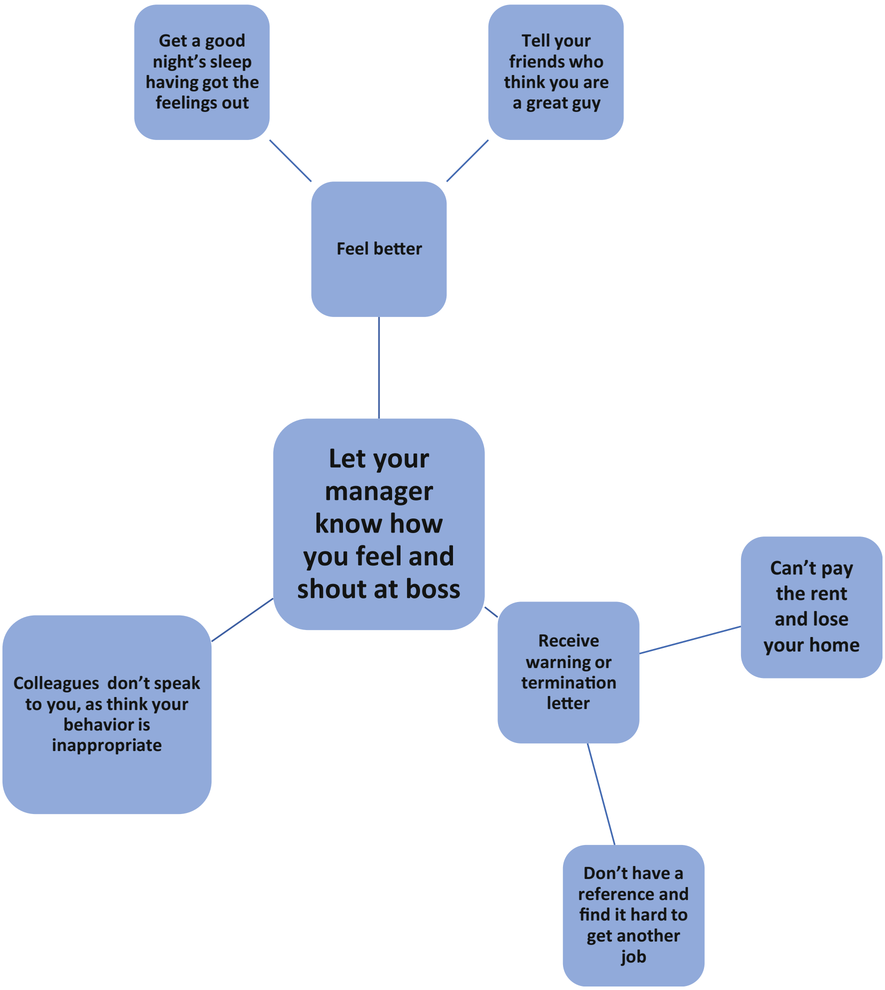


Fig. 34.4 Option A for responding to a frustrating manager at work

consequences, as well as thinking about how to harvest or amplify intended and positive consequences

Conclusion

The technique is simple to use and can be developed as much as the client has time, or inclination, with short-term consequences, developed into longer-term and secondary consequences.

Technique 16: Legacy

Introduction

In our world our focus is too often on the short term—this week, this month, this year. We have a tendency to neglect the longer-term implications of our actions. This technique flips this and invites the client to consider the genuine long-term impact of their plan, or their desires.

Tool

The technique invites clients to think about their legacy. There are a variety of ways of asking the question, and judging which ones depends on the client and their situation. Our most popular way of framing this is: "Imagine you are 80, you are in a care home, and telling fellow residents about your life/this story: what would you want to say looking back on these events about how you handled this?" or "As you think about the long term impact of these events, what legacy do you want to leave behind"? What would you like your fellow team members to say about you after you retired/moved on to a new role" On most occasions, this question creates a reflective stance, in inhalation of breath and a moment of deeper thought, than "So what's your next step?" question.

We can of course make the intervention even more challenging by introducing an emotional element through relationships. This works really well for very senior managers or individuals with a public profile. "As your grandchildren (or even use great grandchildren) look back on this time in history/your stewardship of the company, what do you think they will say about how you should have handled these events?"

This later question invites people to consider their actions against their values, and from experience encourages people to re-orientate their behaviors toward their values compass.

Conclusion

The technique can be very helpful in encouraging clients to consider the long view of their actions, and how they may impact on them and future generations.

Technique 17: Wheel of Life

Introduction

In a fast-paced world with multiple demands on our time, are we making the right choices about how we use our time. How do our current choices make us feel? The Wheel of life offers a tool to enable client to explore how they use their time and how happy they are with the balance between the different aspects of their lives.

Tool The wheel of life is one of the coach's most versatile tools. It's an easy-to-use exercise that can help clients find out which areas of their lives are most satisfying and where they would like to focus attention on improving their quality of life.

There are only two steps to this exercise:

Identify 6 or 8 categories for the segments of the wheel and think about what would represent a satisfying life in each area. Possible areas might include:

- Health
- Friends and Family
- Significant Other
- Personal Growth
- Fun and Leisure
- Home Environment
- Career
- Money

The second step is to draw a line across each segment that best represents the current level of satisfaction, with the center of the wheel equal to 0 and the edge of the wheel equal to 10, the maximum level of satisfaction.

The end result looks a bit like a spider web and can give your client a general idea of their overall life satisfaction in relation to their desired life satisfaction.

The results provide a useful platform to explore client ratings, followed by possible courses of action to address in each area.

Conclusion

This technique provides a useful tool for exploring work-life balance priorities.

Technique 18. Spheres of Influence

Tool

One of the many ways that we tend to get off track or bogged down while striving toward our goals relates to our "spheres of influence." The idea behind the spheres of influence tool is that there are three distinct areas in our lives:

1. Things we can control
2. Things we can influence
3. Things we can't influence, either right now or at all times

While we feel like there is nothing under our control, there is often at least one thing we have direct control over. These are our attitudes, thoughts and behavior. Even when under enormous pressure or when we feel trapped, we always have the opportunity to reframe our thoughts.

We also have the ability to influence certain factors. We can influence these in our direction, even when we cannot completely change them. For instance, while we cannot control others' attitudes or behavior, we can offer them advice and guidance, or provide evidence to help them reflect.

The final area is things that we have no control or influence over. This is for most people the largest area since the majority of what happens in life is not under our direct control. The coach will help clients recognize and accept that there is much we cannot control, and how to concentrate energy on what we can influence.

Conclusion

The framework provides a useful tool for enabling clients focus their emotional and physical energy toward aspects of life they can control or influence, and to develop the ability to accept aspects they have no influence or control over.

Technique 19. DOUSE

Introduction

DOUSE is a useful tool to help manage closing the relationship.

Tool

We use STOKER as a framework to manage the start of the coaching conversation. The STOKER shovels the fuel into the steam engine. It thus seemed appropriate to use a DOUSE, as a second train metaphor for closing the relationship, as we quell the fire of the conversation jointly with our client.

The coach explores each step with the client through a specific question and uses follow-up questions at each stage as required.

1. **Double check**—the coach starts to close by acknowledging the conversation is coming toward an end and inviting their client to review the initial goals or plan set for the conversation.
2. **Obstacles**—the coach invites the client to think about any obstacles which might occur and prevent them from achieving their plan and you can be an ally or hold them to account.
3. **Uncovered**—The aim of the third question is to reflect and enhance their learning and insight about themselves and their situation.
4. **Support**—This question explores what support or resources the individual might need to achieve their plan.
5. **Ending**—the coach invites the client to close the session (Fig. 34.5).

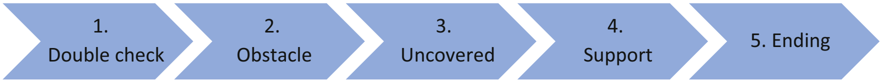


Fig. 34.5 DOUSE for closing a coaching conversation

Box 34.14 DOUSE Useful Questions

1. **Double-check:**
   What progress have you made during the conversation toward the goal you set at the start?
2. **Obstacles:**
   What might stop you taking your next step?
   What allies can you invite to help progress?
   Who can you invite to hold you to account?
3. **Uncovered:**
   What have you uncovered?
   What have you learnt about yourself?
   What have you learnt about this situation that you can apply going forward?
4. **Support:**
   What support do you need from here?
5. **Ending:**
   Is this a good place to end?

Conclusion

The DOUSE model is a shorthand way to ensure coaches cover the key elements to appropriately close the coaching conversation.

Technique 20. Three Good Things

Introduction

This technique revolves a simple question and is a great one to share with clients as a takeaway task for them to use. It works well for clients who can over focus on the negative, and for helping clients develop a more positive orientation.

Tool

The tool is drawn from the positive psychology, and wider humanistic tradition, and a belief that in each of us there is a natural force for good: a self-righting reflex. Our role as the coach is to help clients cultivate the right conditions for this growth and development.

The tool revolves around a single question. The coach can use this within a session, and then follow this by inviting the client to use the question at the end of the day, as the last thing they do before they switch the light out: "Tell me about the three best things that have happened so far today."

It can be particularly useful if the client writes down the event and focuses on how the event made them feel. Different clients like to write down different amounts of detail, some may like to write a short journal entry with all the details, others a single sentence with the emotions.

We have found that for many clients, having experimented with the technique for a few weeks, start to incorporate the technique into their daily routine.

The effect, based on clients reporting back, is they find it easy to go to sleep.

Technique 21. Blessings: Cultivating a Compassionate Mind

Introduction

This technique is useful for cultivating an empathetic or compassionate mindset, either as a tool for the coach or one to use with clients. The process is one to be used regularly, as like a muscle, the more compassion and empathy are used, the more they develop within us (Passmore, 2019a, b, c).

Tools

Like many people I travel frequently on the underground, as well as on trains and planes. I have a habit when sitting in a carriage of looking at each of our fellow passengers and seeking to understand the challenges they face. One passenger may be struggling with a young child, another is looking in a worried way at his phone, a third may look annoyed. I try to empathize with the feelings I discern, or simply offer them a blessing for their day: "May your day be blessed, and you carry with you joy and peace in your heart to the next people you meet."

Occasionally, just occasionally someone looks up and catches my eye. In these situations, I offer a warm smile. Most times, the person smiles back, and sometimes nods, while all around us, our fellow travelers are trying hard to pretend there is no one else there, avoiding eye contact.

I am not sure whether this brightens others day, but my loving kindness toward each fellow passenger brightens my day, and helps me to remember I am one of eight billion people on this planet, and each of them is just like me, trying their best to earn a living for their family and live a peaceful, happy and fulfilled life.

Conclusion

While this technique may not change the world, it may help to change you.

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