

Geography

The relationship between coach and client exists in space and time. Even in telephone coaching there is definitely an environment created in which the coaching occurs. This environment has many qualities that we call the Geography.

If you recall Geography from your school days, it consists of things like the physical characteristics, the geology below the surface, the weather above, the natural resources of the region, the products, the culture and language and more. As coach and client we actually create geography even when we are unconscious of what we create.

Here's an example from life to illustrate geography in a different setting. There is a geography of a wedding. There is a particular physical environment that includes a certain expected form of dress, music, ritual, special language, movement, all designed to create a particular experience... a geography of a wedding. There is a tone, an undercurrent of experience that is created. You might call it a climate. In the same way there is a geography for a pro wrestling match, which would be quite different from the geography you would find at a performance of a Verdi opera. Being conscious of geography makes coaching enormously more effective.

Geography in Balance Coaching

Any time our clients really change their perspective we will notice a shift in geography. Geography is the energetic and emotional field of the session as well as the physicality of the client. We call it geography because experiencing and exploring it is like the study of geography. We discover this land with our clients.

By attending at Levels 2 and 3 we can notice the geography of our client's initial perspective and then notice how the geography shifts when our client shifts perspectives. Physically the client's posture or way of moving may change. We may notice a more spacious or tight feeling. We may notice a difference in energy level or temperature. We may sense an emotional shift. We may also notice if our client has moved to a new perspective and the geography stays the same.

Here's an example. Our client is unhappy with her job. Her first perspective is "I'm stuck in a dead-end job and I'll never get out." The geography is dead, dreary, anxiety filled, hopeless, defeated. It feels like a smelly swamp whose main export is dead and rotting plants and animals. Her physical energy is low and her body is tight and closed. You move her to the "open prairie" perspective about her job and as she talks your Level 2 and 3 awareness notices that the client's geography hasn't changed. Her words have changed but both the emotional, energetic field and her physical presence are exactly the same. You know that your client has not changed perspectives. At this point you can encourage her to more deeply embody "open prairie." Or you can say out loud, "I notice this feels a lot like your original perspective. Let's go back there and experience it more deeply" and return her to the original perspective before moving again. You can try another perspective entirely and see if that one will break the spell. If there has not been a shift do not keep coaching as if your client has really shifted perspectives. If the client does not truly shift her perspective Balance coaching will become a meaningless game.

Noticing and playing with geography will make your Balance coaching more powerful, fun and effective.