The Art of Coaching for Personal Transformation
by Dr. Keith Merron (USA)

Dynamics and Mechanics in NLP Coaching
by Alina Tudorache (Romania)

Responsible Leadership
How to Give Permission to Treat Employees in a Way that Promotes Natural Human Behaviour
by Guy Ratcliffe (UK)

Industry 4.0 and our Love-Hate Relationship with Change
by Dr Gerhard van Rensburg (South Africa)

In this 27th edition, look out for the article 'Dynamics and Mechanics in NLP Coaching' by Alina Tudorache from Romania. In this article, Alina discusses an individually tailored process - a design of the coaching steps that only a human being can build and deliver to another human being, in order to help this person realise his or her full potential. Another noteworthy article is the 'Using Attentive Listening and Obtaining Physical Responses, for Good Outcomes' by Peter Zoetgig of the United Kingdom. In this article Peter lays out how using embodied coaching techniques can be used to lead and pace clients, advocating a natural approach and conversational style that accelerates the acquisition of new habits, which leads to more attentive listening.

In our Quarterly Column, we introduce Dr. Keith Merron, wherein for his first column 'The Art of Coaching for Personal Transformation', he will offer stories, examples, experiences, models, and perspectives designed to help coaches, or anyone seeking to coach others tap into the patterns of mind. 'The Power of Dissociation and How it Can Improve Your Relationships' by Sarah Haté from France, is an interesting read where Sarah shares the 'Perceptual Positions' coaching technique and how it can greatly improve your personal and business relationships.

Each of our columnists, too numerous to mention individually, has taken some really interesting perspectives, and I would encourage a thorough read-through of this edition.

Just like all our other editions, this is not just an interesting read, but it provides you with helpful personal development ideas and professional development techniques to grow your business and improve your lifestyle. I hope you enjoy this issue and do let us know if there are any topics you’d like to see covered in the future.

Lovelia A. Caracut
Editor, iCN Magazine

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the International Coaching News Magazine, or Noble Manhattan Coaching Ltd.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Editor's Note by Lovelia A. Caracut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>iCN Team &amp; Contributors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Dynamics and Mechanics in NLP Coaching by Alina Tudorache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>An Easy Technique to Control Our Emotional State by Petra Juhászová</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Reprogramming Using Reflection Connection by Gary Gasaway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The Art of Coaching for Personal Transformation by Dr. Keith Merron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>4 Essentials of Effective Communication by Anne Bachrach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>The Power of Dissociation and How it Can Improve Your Relationships by Sarah Haté</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>How Coaching Expands and Enhances Leaders' Capacity by Maria Biquet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Responsible Leadership How to Give Permission to Treat Employees in a Way that Promotes Natural Human Behaviour by Guy Ratcliffe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Top 6 Strategies for Dealing with Difficult Situations by Anne Bachrach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Stop Asking About Life Purpose! Don’t Upset your Clients by Asking About Something that Does not Really Exist! by Maria Biquet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Industry 4.0 and Our Love-Hate Relationship with Change by Dr Gerhard van Rensburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Using Attentive Listening and Obtaining Physical Responses, for Good Outcomes by Peter Zoeftig</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Dynamics and Mechanics in NLP Coaching
Alina Tudorache (Romania)

Starting Point

“A vehicle can successfully reach its destination by having a functional characteristic, enough fuel and being driven with clarity, purpose, passion, on the most fit road for its capacity.”

Eliciting serves both the NLP coach and the coachee

In NLP coaching, the dynamics we use as coaches lead to our coachees’ balance. And we often do so by making them aware of where they actually place themselves in this world, why are they there, what do they believe about themselves, about others and what is their larger worldview, what do they really believe in, who they are for themselves and for others, who they belong to and why, and what is their purpose, meaning in this life. This is how they come to realize their intention for their destination. This is the manner in which any client comes to envision the most powerful desires and the strongest blockages and limits that he or she has. Only by this opportunity to look at themselves, an NLP coach can really start to guide them towards a flow state in a focused manner.

Intention feeds motivation

They all thought they needed coaching. They all thought coaching would offer them direct answers, solutions and hope. Not alignment. Not congruence. Not balance. They wanted magical solutions to their blockages. I asked them all when it was time: ‘Do you really want this coaching? Are you ready to change your life and fully commit to yourself?’. Half were prepared and eager to start. The other half said that they will decide if the change is needed during or after the coaching sessions. So here comes my question, a question that I’ve addressed them, as well: ‘What’s your real intention of going through this coaching session?’.

Intention is a personal contract one makes with himself/herself. The skeptical half represented people sent by specific companies they were working for, and most of them said: ‘I am perfectly comfortable with my wage and my activities within the company. Sincerely, I don’t really understand why the company sent me to these coaching sessions.’ On the other half, individuals representing minority groups, disadvantaged communities, people in Sales and Marketing, were much more opened, engaged and ready to receive coaching and transform their personal and professional life.

Over the years, I had coachees from various fields: Arts, Banking, Politics, NGO’s, Insurances, Permaculture, Agricultural machinery, from different religious groups, or different communities.
When it comes to enhancing performance of any kind with the help of NLP coaching, I have met people who were activated, curious and ready to engage. They came with the intention to access that inner change mechanic and tools and see how this whole process changes them.

On the personal coaching side, the most prepared individuals for the coaching sessions that I had were the ones with terminal affections. They valued time differently. They saw their personal energy and engagement as reasonable and aligned factors in their change process. And the whole coaching was a golden ticket to another meaningful day in their life.

What I appreciate as 100% to be true is the next fact: coaching really adds better significant value and faster change implementation, for people with higher motivation and with a clear intention and clarity of what the soul wants and needs. A clean inward look and dusting off those old beliefs, behaviours, trauma and blockages really offer any person a new life to enjoy - a healthier one with a new behaviour and a new system of beliefs.

In the NLP field, we knew about this for a while now, from the Index Computations model of Leslie Cameron-Bandler, showing how thinking, feelings and physiology are connected with each other in such a powerful way.

Another clear opinion, I have formed after years of coaching people: NLP coaching is a tool in the service of being, not of ego or collectiveness. It’s a deconstructive journey of the self and a self-constructive phenomenal process. So, with proper coaching, even the mind has the power to self-heal, gain healthier beliefs and generate new habits and behaviour.

NLP coaching is a transformative process. It’s a supportive gift from a soul to another.

Any person that comes to our coaching sessions, we meet a mind, a body and a soul. And this person needs to solve a biological, psychological, socio-spiritual aspect of his/her life. In any of these cases, working with these deprecative beliefs, Time Lines, and more, will help our coachees solve inner situations related to their body, mind, relationships and spirituality.

In my opinion, the coaching interventions in NLP have healing properties. There’s nothing esoterical, magical or crazy about this fact. It’s how NLP coaching functions as a cure, as an intervention of the mind to clean its mess, dismantle fear and get out of chaos, find balance, find meaning and purpose, fire up-motivation with intention and clarity of what the soul wants and needs. A clean inward look and dusting off those old beliefs, behaviours, trauma and blockages really offer any person a new life to enjoy - a healthier one with a new behaviour and a new system of beliefs.

Simply put: People did not change, did not adapt to different major aspects in their life. They just found ways to cope. NLP coaching empowers people with coherence. It takes them through a whole process of change and provides them the right instruments to adapt and manage this beneficial change. And this reactivates a new DNA for their life to gain a new purpose and meaning.

### Awakening of the Self

I’ve heard so many times that a coach facilitates the learning process. My belief is that the NLP coach is not a teacher, a trainer, a counsellor, or a mentor. We guide individuals to depict their deprecative beliefs, their limiting self-constructs and we offer them complete freedom to obtain clarity, nurture emotional empowerment in themselves, discover motivation and enhance it towards a new way of living. And for that, we need accurate information through elicitations, observing the verbal and non-verbal. We need precision in the tools we are using. We use consideration and professional empathy to identify what happens to the person in front of us and which is the best method, strategy, model to approach the process of change. It’s all about using the right mechanics for the best coaching experience, where change can start right away.

### Ending with a funny fact

When a coachee I had made a joke and said that maybe one day he will be coached by a AI machine, I’ve told him that’s like playing chess or cards with yourself. It feels like winning and losing, at the same time. There’s no game, there’s no change. An NLP coach’s emotional acuity cannot be replaced in the future with a software or any AI machine. There’s, of course, some software that uses Meta and Milton Language NLP coaching, thinking patterns, etc. And I have used some in the past to make an idea about how they function, both as a client and as a NLP coach. And the conclusion is the same: it takes an individually tailored process, a design of the coaching steps that only a human being can build and deliver to another human, in order to help this person access all his/her resources and attain his or her full potential.

ABOUT ALINA TUDORACHE

Alina Tudorache is an NLP Business trainer, coach and author. She has designed and delivered premium NLP Business training and coaching over the last 12 years. Alina is also known for her Life coaching as she had the honour of guiding and supporting thousands of socially conscious entrepreneurs, coaches, counsellors, companies, and purpose driven service professionals. Over the past 4 years she has offered practical coaching directly to individuals through platforms such as Mobe Marketplace and Udemy, where she is a premium instructor.

She now holds an honourable place on the global NLP Leaderboard by creating, implementing and receiving a great feedback with the NLP Business strategies: Secret Tactics for Entrepreneurial Couples - NLP Mind Hacks®, Strategic Wealth Generator – Premium NLP Program Level 1©, Organisational Entities©, NLP Says Business©, Repatterning Trust®, Creativity Waves©, Corporate Strategies for Top Management®, NLP Generator for Professionals©.

She recently become an accredited life coach on Authentic Happiness and she’s ready to give more to the world!
An Easy Technique to Control Our Emotional State
by Petra Juhászová (United Kingdom)

Things are never what they seem to be. We all have different experiences and based on those experiences we develop our filters of the world. How I see the world is different from how you see the world. When you say ‘I want to get to know you.’ or ‘I want to be successful.’- mean different things to people.

NLP is the study of excellence which incorporates neuro-linguistic programming that some people achieved outstanding results while others, with the same talent and circumstances, didn’t. They started studying this phenomenon.

NLP is the study of excellence which incorporates neuro-linguistic programming that some people achieved outstanding results while others, with the same talent and circumstances, didn’t. They started studying this phenomenon.

Once I could see that the rapport was established, I started slowing down my breathing. With an inner relief, I could see that she was following my pace. Now, it was time to start the work.

The next stage was to break her state with an unexpected question. This question is supposed to ‘wake up’ the brain from following the pattern it was prepared to follow.

‘Where in your body do you feel this anxiety when you think of your partner?’

I found this technique very profound as it breaks the individual’s state of mind and helps them refocus on the present moment. Once the individual identifies the place of the feeling/sensation in their body, comes the next question:

‘If it had a shape, what shape it would be? What colour would it have?’

These and similar questions help to turn something abstract into something more specific. Specific enough to change it. They help the person to get back in touch with their body and ‘reality’. So once their nervous system is calm, it is more open to work.

When I could see that Anna was in touch with the present moment I asked the following question:

‘Now, as you gave shape, size, texture to this feeling in your body. Which direction is it going?’

There are only 4 possible directions to go - forward, backward, to the left or to the right. When we have the direction defined, we simply change the direction.

By the change of the direction, the reaction is diminishing. And the person won’t have this immobilising emotional reaction in this situation.

Personally, I use this technique a lot. Not just to help people to get in touch with themselves but also to help me navigate in between the challenging periods popping up in my life - for example before some public speaking, or when I am facing a difficult conversation and I feel nervous.

NLP taught me to be more focused on myself and what’s going on inside me. However, it also helped me to look at my interactions in a different way. We are all unique and we react differently in different situations.

NLP believes that people do their actions with good intention. To borrow Dr Marshall Rosenberg’s words - we all have the same needs, but we are using different strategies to achieve those needs.

Once you start applying some of the techniques you become more aware of the world around you and the world within you.

About Petra Juhászová
Transformational Life Coach, NLP Practitioner
Website: www.empinfinity.com

Petra is passionate about helping people to reconnect with themselves and see how much control they have over their own life. Sometimes all, what’s needed is a little help. In her sessions, she uses different techniques to offer people the best possible way to progress on their journey. Her techniques are based on NLP, systemic constellations, mindfulness, EFT and other creative ways of helping people to get unblocked.

On her blog she shares her thoughts on different topics with the intention to inspire people.

Reference:


2. – Nonviolent Communication – A Language of Life by Marshall B. Rosenberg, PhD
Reprogramming Using Reflection Connection
by Gary Gasaway (USA)

Much of my practice as a life coach is working and guiding my clients to attain their ‘life goals’. These life goals are really just everyday responsibilities: family and relationships, money and finances, career and business, spiritual and education, health and well-being, and enjoyment and fulfillment.

To begin their journey, I have them complete an exercise to help control their emotional state and stay focused upon what they really want from life. More importantly, this simple NLP exercise creates a transformation of the renewing of their minds to think differently. This exercise provides them with purposeful focus regarding what I refer to as: reflection connection. That is – thinking, feeling, and acting upon the enhancement of attaining their life goals.

To do this, I have the client visualize the steering wheel of the vehicle they drive (after all, they are in control). Using the life goals listed above, I have them think and reflect upon the two most important goals that they want to make positive changes to as they hold their steering wheel (two goals because it is recommended to have your hands at ‘10AM and 2PM’ on the wheel as you drive – a total focus). With this kind of focused reprogramming, the client experiences getting control of their mind (thoughts), emotional state (feelings), then taking actions to enhance their life.

To better understand the process of this focused reprogramming, let’s start with the foundation to reflection connection. First, a question. Do you reflect upon your life? The answer is yes. We all do. But, do we experience purposeful reflection connections that create better self-awareness promoting enrichment in our lives? The answer unfortunately is few truly experience the essential and wonderful stage of effective reflection – connecting with them. So, this is where the focused reprogramming comes in.

For most, our reflecting derives from unconscious efforts of unintentional thoughts. Why not create purposeful reflections – ones that you truly connect to? It is purposeful reflection connections that allow us to shape our thoughts, inspire and stretch our feelings, and create responses that promote self-awareness.

If this self-awareness is embraced and applied to learning, it leads us to personal growth which produces enrichment in our lives.

The cycle of connecting with our reflections begins with our thoughts and feelings regarding an experience we wish to reflect upon. With thoughts and feelings created, the reflection, then moves to an effective response. It is with the effectiveness of the response that provides the level of connection, you will experience from your reflection.

In short, reflection connection is created intentionally to embrace your thoughts and express your feelings. These thoughts and feelings lead to responding with authority for this creates the foundation of connecting to life experiences. Reflection connection is the most effective way to engage self-awareness that results in enriching your life.

In other words, instead of letting the world create you, you direct the paths of your own world through reflection. With reflection connection, you can discover the real peace and fulfillment you seek in your life.

Reflection connections intentionally expand our thoughts, which in turn create powerful feelings. Being intentional in reflection connection is a focus with purpose. This driven purpose is meant to inspire and transform you towards improving your life.

Reflection connections happen in you. Too many times we are focused only on what happens to us. We forget that we alone direct how we think and feel within. It is then up to us to dictate what happens within us, not by some outside source. Case in point, there are many that try too hard to understand where they wish they were or where they had hoped to be in life, but where that truth lies is within us.

The fact is, reflection connections promote self-awareness – and self-awareness enables us to see within ourselves more clearly. It is self-awareness that opens the doors to our mind and hearts that bring enrichment into our lives. Reflection connections help us see ourselves and hearts that bring enrichment into our lives. Reflection connections intentionally expand our thoughts, which in turn create powerful feelings. Being intentional in reflection connection is a focus with purpose. This driven purpose is meant to inspire and transform you towards improving your life.

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Prepare, Release, Reflect and Connect

Reflection connections are all about your inner world of being, which in turn, affects your outer world of doing. This deep, intentional process allows you to make better sense of your present existence and the opportunity to create the world that could be. For most, this is a breakthrough. With the reprogramming of the mind, it then motivates you to move towards attaining what you want.

True reflection connection is first, learning more about how we respond to our reflection, then taking that learning and applying it for our personal growth.

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True reflection connection is first, learning more about how we respond to our reflection, then taking that learning and applying it for our personal growth.
To get the most out of connecting to our reflections, we must take the time to prepare, release, then reflect upon our experiences for the connection to take shape. These steps must be intentional in thoughts, feelings, and responses. These vital steps will inspire you to reach deep within, to truly reflect upon your past and present experiences. By going deep within, you can connect to reflective experiences with not just any response, but life-changing intentions that can create effective reflection connections.

Reflections allow us to shape our thoughts, inspire and stretch our feelings, and then apply the understanding of our life’s lessons to make the reflection connection possible. We start with preparing.

Prepare

• First, find a quiet place to sit and close your eyes to be completely centred. Your location should have minimal distractions. Preparing requires relaxation, which also means no movement.

• Second, focus on your breath. Take several slow inhalations, exhaling slowly and completely.

• Third, pause deeply for the reflections to enter your heart and soul. When we take our thoughts and feelings to heart, there may be a mixture of both joy and sadness. It’s only a fact of life that we all experience positive and negative events.

Now open your eyes, as well as your mind, and especially your heart. With your mind, thoughts are presented. Through your heart, feelings are released. It is the combination of these thoughts and feelings that produce the responses from our reflections. It is from these intentional responses that we begin connecting with our reflections.

The key is to free yourself from distractions so that you are open to all circumstances that enter your mind and heart – both the positive and negative.

This is an opportune time to ask yourself questions first; simply respond to the reflection, then, determine what actions you could take regarding the reflection.

Release

Think about what you want to think about. Be patient. Reflections take time developing into powerful connections with your past, present, and future. The goal in reflection connection is to initiate new perspectives to embrace your life; thus, enriching it towards fulfilment.

Reflect and Connect

Everyone loves when something positive happens in their life, but having a negative situation occur is not the end of the world. Why? Because we can find positive benefits even in the worst of times. One great benefit is the lessons we learn. It is usually from these negative experiences that we connect with life lessons and have opportunities for deeper understanding of our self-awareness which affects personal growth.

Reflection connection goes beyond thoughts and feelings to embrace who you are and where you want to go in life. Being successful in embracing your life will require discipline and developing a habit of reflection connection daily.

Of course, the outcome is different with all clients, but the overwhelming results are a neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) of the clients’ focus upon reaching for life goals that they truly want in their life. It is the use of these techniques that make it possible for more effectiveness to change client’s thoughts; thus, change their feelings, then actions. The results vary from improving or attaining new life goals, enhancing performance, making positive changes, personal development, staying focused upon self-awareness, or just gaining more individual control over life and its ever changing environment.

ABOUT GARY GASAWAY

Gary is the founder of Conflict Coaching Solutions, LLC, a professional life coaching business that focuses on inspiring individuals, couples, and/or groups to transform their conflictive situations into positive solutions.

Before creating his company, Gary was a ‘corporate coach’ for a large utility company in Southern California. During his 32 years with this company, Gary designed and developed several coaching courses and workshops that he facilitated to supervisors and managers throughout the company.

Gary also has now written and published four books: The Coach's Chronicles Trilogy and just published; The Reflection Connection. For additional information regarding Gary and his business or books, go to: www.conflictcoaching.com
7 TIPS ON HOW TO WIN & KEEP CLIENTS

Coaching and mentoring experts IAPC&M are revealing industry secrets on client retention in their brand-new book, How to Win & Keep Clients.

IAPC&M is run by the industry’s most respected coaches and mentors for the benefit of global coaches, mentors and training providers. IAPC&M are the authority on the accreditation of individual coaches, mentors, training providers, and in-house corporate coach/mentoring programmes. Their members can be found worldwide, and they promote the importance of only working with accredited providers to the hiring public.

Speaking regarding this valuable book, IAPC&M’s Director Dawn Campbell shares: “So proud to be introducing the magnificent seven I’ve been working with to create an inspirational business handbook for solopreneurs of the future. Very well done Adele McCormack, Ali Temple, Anna Stapleton, Lorra Phillips, Maria Hocking, Monique Daigneault and Ruby McGuire - you truly are a dream team, and well done for creating something special”.

Their success guide also comes complete with a foreword written by Olympic Team GB Silver medallist Leon Taylor, who is now himself a motivational speaker and coach. To further their coaching support for those ready to grow their businesses and achieve success, IAPC&M have provided 7 go-to chapters filled with success strategies for winning and keeping those all-important clients.

1. Build a trusting relationship with your clients – (Authenticity + Value) x Trust = Clients. These core values can help build a trusting and authentic relationship with clients of your business, and thereby allows you to keep them as loyal business assets. Trust is everything in an important relationship.

2. Allow your spirit to guide you in business, too – get to know your spiritual management team; your Higher Self, Intention, Attention and Love. You’ll learn how to align your spiritual desires with your business purpose to further your success.

3. Always maintain the right mindset – you need to have the mental tools to be able to navigate the challenging journey that is the ‘solopreneur’, and do so with clarity, perspective and confidence. It is about the power of the right mindset and how to best combine this with your knowledge and skills.

4. Pave the right path to success by embracing yourself – the importance of the emotional elements of running a successful business is valid. Your success encompasses both the financial and qualitative aspects of life. Part one covers the “you” (how to take action) and part two covers how to best combine the “you” with the elements of your business.

5. Win your clients’ hearts – when it comes to keeping clients, positive relationships are crucial. You need to explore the way you can win a client’s heart and be passionate, attentive, vocal and exceptional when it comes to those important business relationships.

6. Run your dream business without fear – fear will only get in your way. Learn how to overcome fear to achieve your business. IAPC&M’s book provides a business model to help you create a profitable business, and how to keep those dream clients confidently.

7. Manage your time the best you can – saving time without sacrificing the quality of your product is any business’s priority. Learn how to implement a streamlined time management system which allows you to be organised, efficient and get ahead of the competition. Time is money, after all!

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The Art of Coaching for Personal Transformation

A quarterly column for helping others heal and transform

by Dr. Keith Merron (USA)

Seven executive coaches sat in a coach’s roundtable, each eager to learn from the others; each also feeling a sense of comfort and satisfaction in rubbing elbows with others with similar challenges. Dan, the youngest of the group, was talking about the difficulty he had with one of his clients, a CEO of a growing food chain. Dan, felt, and perhaps rightly so, that his client was overly demanding of his team and told his fellow coaches how he offered guidance to the CEO and how difficult the CEO was—basically how the CEO resisted what was clearly sage advice.

‘Been there, done that,’ responded the wizened elder of the group as he listened compassionately. ‘I’ve got the same problem,’ offered another member of the roundtable. ‘It’s a tough one,’ replied a third. The others all nodded in understanding. Dan felt enormously relieved.

After recounting his story more fully, Dan asked what seemed to everyone to be the natural question. Actually, it was a question they all expected him to ask, and he obliged. ‘What should I do?’

Each member of the group in turn, offered their suggestions. One said that this was par for the course and that Dan shouldn’t worry. ‘Keep at it. The CEO will eventually see the light of day.’ Another pointed out that the more Dan befriended the CEO, the better.

It was clear to this coach, that ‘the relationship wasn’t yet solid,’ and then offered a couple of ideas for how to do that well. Each suggestion was delivered from within a paradigm embedded in the person advising—basically a theory of coaching success born out of a set of assumptions and beliefs.

In no case did the coach delivering the suggestion own the paradigm. And in no case did the group discuss whether giving advice to each other was helpful. They did it rather automatically in spite of the fact that many of them professed to give more than advice when working with their clients.

To all, it was rather obvious. This is a forum for helping each other. When someone asks for help, and when we have little time, give that person advice. That’s what we are here for.
In fact, that is how the whole group is set up, to give and get advice from each other about how to give and get advice or provide good counsel to their clients. No-one considered that such a setup is both flawed and limited. None considered that there might be a more powerful way.

Dan left the meeting with a bunch of suggestions of what he could do, two of which particularly resonated. The others he discarded, reasoning that they did not apply to his particular situation, especially when one understood the more detailed aspects of it, which the other coaches in the roundtable did not.

Without knowing, and without truly knowing the part that Dan played in the drama (they didn’t know because they didn’t ask), their suggestions were more like throwing moist spaghetti on the wall and seeing what sticks.

This is often how we help each other. We don’t go very deep. We don’t invite others to look fully at their own part in the problem they are trying to solve. We don’t wonder about the assumptions and beliefs embedded in the very way the problem is defined or the solutions offered. We just give guidance and advice. And we play a game where the advice seeker believes he or she has done everything possible, so the advice received gets rejected as ‘too simple,’ or ‘unworkable,’ and where the advice giver believes that the person receiving the advice isn’t really that impressed, but we walk away with some satisfaction in telling ourselves, ‘well, I did the best I could. Clearly he/she is unopened.’

This is not a column about how to give advice. Advice is cheap and giving more of it will unlikely penetrate the deeper patterns of our clients such that our clients walk away both helped and more importantly, transformed. I will draw from research on the subject of how the mind works, as well as my own 36 years of experience working with executives and aiding them in their journey toward greater leadership mastery. Mostly, through this column, my intent is to challenge some of the prevailing assumptions about the nature of help and find more powerful, more penetrating alternatives.

In this column, I will offer stories, examples, experiences, models, and perspectives designed to help coaches, or anyone seeking to coach others penetrate the deeper patterns of our clients such that our clients walk away both helped and more importantly, transformed. I will draw from research on the subject of how the mind works, as well as my own 36 years of experience working with executives and aiding them in their journey toward greater leadership mastery. Mostly, through this column, my intent is to challenge some of the prevailing assumptions about the nature of help and find more powerful, more penetrating alternatives.

Dan left feeling, well, just okay. While the suggestions were useful, he didn’t experience any insight about himself. Nor did he learn anything that profound. He didn’t say this to the group for to say it would violate an unspoken agreement that we are all pleasant, understanding, and kind to each other, so he said nothing. Instead, he thanked them for their help. Which of course led them all to feel a sense of self-satisfaction.

Seeing the suggestions as helpful in general, good advice, but not deep enough to change anything about his own perception of the situation, Dan was left feeling satisfied with the group’s knowledge and understanding of his situation. But without the depth of understanding that could have come from a more profound exploration of the situation, Dan was left feeling just okay, and not truly transformed by the experience.

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4 Essentials of Effective Communication
by Anne Bachrach (USA)

Learning how to communicate effectively is crucial to the survival of your business; unfortunately, there’s no other way to cut it. If you approach people too casually, don’t take the time to communicate clear information, or don’t appear cordial, you are risking the success of your business. Below are four essential tips to ensure effective communication.

1 Listening is the No. 1 Rule

Contrary to what some seem to believe, the most important aspect of effective communication isn’t talking, it’s listening. A great amount of miscommunication could be avoided if business owners took the time to communicate effectively, first by listening to the needs of their clients and prospects. Remember, your clients may not need you, but you definitely need your clients or prospects. Be sure they understand you want to help them and will do what it takes to listen.

“ We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.”
- Epictetus, Greek Philosopher (AD 55-c.135)

Grant, it can be challenging to listen without speaking, but it will get easier with time, when you understand the purpose behind first listening. Not only do you have an opportunity to really listen to what your client needs, but you have time to form the best reply or answer.

Give your client all the time they need to explain their concerns. If you are short on time, politely offer your help at the beginning of the conversation and add that you are limited on time. Also offer an opportunity for the clients to speak to you at a later time and offer to call back when it is convenient for both of you. Be sure they understand you want to help them and will do what it takes to listen.

2 Clarity is Always Key

What may be second nature to you may seem like a foreign concept to some people. When in doubt, leave out the jargon. However, if a client shows interest in understanding the small details, offer the acronym after you have explained what it means. The goal here is to be sure your clients understand what you are specifically discussing.

One word of caution: don’t over simplify. Speaking to your client as if they are unintelligent will not win you any fans. You will have to pay attention to their personality and try to gauge how much detail they really need or want. As you know, there are some clients who need to know every single detail of a project or process, while there are others who could care less about the details - they just want to know how to get from point A to point B.

Confidence is an essential role in being able to come across as a master of effective communication. If you demonstrate that you aren’t confident in your abilities, people will instinctively think that lack experience and are bluffing your way. This may lead to one of three outcomes: A) the client tries to talk you down from your initial quote; B) the client does not hire you at all; C) the client hires you at your original rate but isn’t confident that you can complete the task to his or her expectations.

If you are selling a quality service, you should be confident about your skill set. Of course, if you are a startup entrepreneur know that it gets easier as your experience increases - just don’t let the client see that you are at all insecure about your talents. Honestly, being new to entrepreneurship is not a deal breaker. What is a deal breaker, however, is if the client feels you cannot competently complete the task. The more time you spend communicating with clients, the more comfortable you both will feel. In turn, you’ll grasp the true concept of effective communication.

When you take on the role of business owner, you take on the commitment to never-ending personal and professional improvement. Here are four steps that you can implement now that will help you provide effective communication:

1 Action Step #1. Listen before speaking. If you must set the tone for the call, reword the phrase so the subject is about your client, not about you. Instead of saying, “I want to discuss...” you could say, “What questions or concerns would you like to discuss today.”
**Action Step #2.** Be clear with your words. An easy way to keep track of what needs should be addressed, write a brief outline of topics to be covered and check them off as they are discussed. You could additionally, go over the checklist during the introduction part of the call so your client is clear about what you will be providing. Revisit the checklist at the close of the conversation and encourage the client to ask questions if they are unclear about any of the topics.

To obtain more high-value information to help your communication be even more client-centric so you can get even better results, check out the complimentary web class on this subject at http://www.accountabilitycoach.com/free-articles/free-webinars/

**Action Step #3.** If you tend to be nervous during a call, practice the conversation with your assistant or colleague. The more confident you are in the conversation, the more effective your communication will be. This is a great opportunity for questions to be addressed so you can adjust the content as needed to ensure clarity.

**Action Step #4.** It’s going to happen - there will be some clients that you just don’t jive with. Don’t take it personally and focus on the commonality and areas where you see eye-to-eye. Remain professional and pay attention to providing quality service or products until the client moves on.

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**The Power of Dissociation and How it Can Improve Your Relationships**

by Sarah Haté (France)

Perceptual positions is a form of NLP modelling that enables a person to step into somebody else’s shoes, in order to see what they see and feel what they feel. There are three main positions to consider when using this technique: first position or being in your own shoes, second position or being in the other person’s shoes, and third position or being an outside observer.

Being in the other person’s position enables us to see and understand the world through their eyes, and to tap into their emotions and feelings. This can be extremely powerful and in my experience, tearful, as we often realise how our behaviour can have a negative effect on others, even if this is not our initial intention. When we step into the outside observer’s role, we can analyse the relationship and identify the changes that we can make to improve it.
Once they have finished, you need to break state (distract them from their current thoughts) before inviting them to switch positions and step into the other person’s shoes. The questioning will be the same as before. Break state again once your client has finished answering. The last step in this process is to invite them to become an observer, so that they can have an overview of the situation and the relationship dynamics.

The last step is actually the most important because it enables the client to understand the situation from both positions. Your questioning needs to slightly change, as you are now encouraging them to talk in the third person, as an observer. Once everything has been said in this position, you ask your client what they can do to dissipate the tension, the misunderstanding, the conflict. This is always such an empowering moment, because the client takes responsibility for their behaviour and what they want to get out of this particular relationship. As mentioned by Sue Knight in her book NLP at Work, every relationship is a perfect system. What we get is what we allow, encourage and create.

In some cases, this technique will actually leave the client feeling more agitated than before. This could be an indication that the coach has used this in the wrong kind of context, or that the emotions are very deep. If so, the coach should invite the client to step out of the first position and look at the observer, thus putting even more distance between the client and the situation. You should increase this distance until the client is able to see the situation for what it is.

I want to share two case studies with you, demonstrating the power of dissociation when using perceptual positions. One of them is my experience when I was training to become a coach, and involves my eldest child.

He had not done what I had asked him to do – I went mad telling him he should be more active and take initiatives. I was angry. When I changed position and stepped into his shoes, I could feel like I was always on his back, making him feel inadequate, like he couldn’t do anything right and there was no point even trying. As the observer, I saw the mother getting cross with her son, who felt so helpless. She wanted him to be different.

Going through this process made me much calmer and non-judgemental. Afterwards, I asked him why he hadn’t done what I had asked and calmly explained why I thought it was important. This opened up discussion between us and changed our relationship for the better.

The second case study involves one of my first clients. She felt like she was doing everything at home, not getting any support from her partner and having to take all the responsibilities. She arrived at one of our sessions feeling really angry, because she had had an argument with her partner and could not shake it off.

When we began the perceptual positions exercise, she could see herself sitting on the settee when her partner arrived home one evening. He did not greet her, started making a lot of noise, and interrupting what she was doing.

I asked her if she was seeing the scene through her own eyes (in an associated state) or as an observer (in a dissociated state). She was not able to associate herself with her body, so I invited her to place her hands on her shoulders from behind, to establish contact with herself.

It was very difficult for her to do this and remain in her living room, so I invited her to change scenery. She chose the forest where she feels at one with nature, where she understands and is understood, and is able to communicate. Doing this helped her to feel less afraid, more peaceful and calm. This is when I invited her back into her living room and into an associated state.

She was then able to put herself in her partner’s position, and admitted that he must be feeling very uncomfortable. The image she was reflecting back to him was not nice, leaving him feeling incapable of doing anything right. She told me that she felt that he needed recognition and to feel loved by her. This was such a revelation to her, as it was something that she had never envisaged up until then. Fast forward a few coaching sessions, to when she told me that it was incredible, that they understood each other better and that she felt like new life had been breathed into their relationship. She was able to let her guard down, be less of a perfectionist and allow her partner to step into another role, one where he supported her.

I hope that these case studies have helped you see the power of dissociation and how it can greatly improve your personal and business relationships.

Sarah Haté is a trainer, public speaker and certified professional life coach. She has a passion for giving her clients the space they need to reconnect with themselves and rediscover their authentic self, in order to create a magical, positive life for themselves and their loved ones. She has recently created a private, online community, Walking the Path to Confidence, to empower sensitive men and women seeking a better life balance and more fulfilling relationships.

Sarah created So Free Coaching, to offer one-to-one sessions, group sessions and workshops. As she lives in the south of France, her clients are both French and English-speaking. She trained in Development Coaching with NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) with Simply Changing Limited, and recently obtained her Level-1 certificate in EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques).

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As a Coach I work with high level Executives and Entrepreneurs in developing their skills, abilities and behaviours to match the complex requirements of their roles.

Developing a person is a highly demanding and very revealing process for both the Coach and the Coachee.

People that take up leadership roles usually have a track record of successes in their previous positions either in the ‘functional’ part of the role or in the ‘social’ part of it. For example, the best engineer could be promoted to Head of Operations because he knows every detail of the systems and can solve all sorts of technical problems; an excellent communicator could become the Head of Sales because he can motivate his staff and speed up results in sales. In most cases, both aim at becoming the CEO of the company in the next step of their career.

People who get promoted to Leadership roles combine both sets of skills “technical and people skills” at different levels.

The Leader the Role and the Culture

When we have to work with a person to develop their Leadership skills we first need to understand their role; what does the specific role require?

It is not always the same. The requirements of a specific Leadership role depend on the system (the Organisation) that he/she has to manage and lead.

As a Coach I work with high level Executives and Entrepreneurs in developing their skills, abilities and behaviours to match the complex requirements of their roles.

It is also very important to consider the Culture of the company in which the Leader has to perform. If the Leader is an internal promotion, then he knows the Culture and in most cases, he can navigate in the system successfully. If he is new in the company then it is very important to understand the environment and realise which behaviours he needs to learn or unlearn to be able to lead others in the Organisation (the system).

In both cases, whether internal or external promotion, the level of performance required has increased and it requires the leader to continue their own development in 4 areas that’s consistently and repeatedly appeared as I coach leaders in their new role. I broadly outline what each of these are and bring these learnings to light with one of my case studies.

• Self-awareness
• Expanding the thinking process
• Developing and refining emotional intelligence
• Explore values and ethics

The first step of the Coaching process in Leadership development is to facilitate and promote self-awareness so that the person,
1. Understands their strengths and
2. Their areas for development.

Together with that, we both as Coach and Coachee need to understand what the specific role in the specific culture requires.

Although Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Integrity, Openness etc. appear as common values in most Organizations’ websites, in fact, they are not the real values that we discover when we do an in-depth diagnosis of an Organisation’s culture. In the process of understanding the Culture we discuss with people from diverse functions and levels. During the structured interviews we explore the ‘how we do things here’ which is the essence of the Culture, the subconscious thinking and acting process that affects every person in the Organisation. It usually happens that the elements of the Culture differ from the stated values. In each specific context the Leaders should be aware of what is required for their role within the Culture in order to be able to retain and enhance their position and change the Organisation for the better.

Embarking on a Coaching Programme an Executive will go through a self-awareness process in which he will be able to realize his strengths, his areas of development and his potential. We work together in exploring their dreams, values, aspirations and fears and plan the way ahead with small steps forward and reflection on achievements and alternative actions. Very often I am happy when people discover a much higher potential that they have never used before because they didn’t know they could!

Self-awareness includes a very important element: thinking process and beliefs.

During the Coaching process, we come across hidden dysfunctional beliefs and fears that shape and in most cases – limit the thinking process and deprive the Coachee of valuable opportunities for further achievements. A lot of the work I do focuses on their thinking process in order to expand it and open the way for the Coachee to use their own potential freely, purposefully and systematically.

Supporting the expansion of the thinking process understanding our own fears and emotions is a major step towards self-development. Understanding other people’s fears and emotions is a significant skill required as a Leader.

- Emotional intelligence is a skill that the Coachee develops and enhances in the process of Coaching;
- Self-awareness leads us to better understand how we feel and how others feel at any different situation.

We can only manage ourselves and others if we can understand and manage our own emotions at any different situation. Fear, stress, anxiety block our best thinking and intentions for result; Coaching creates the ‘safe framework’ for the Coachee to learn to manage them successfully and efficiently.

Expanding the thinking process

Exploring values & ethics

Values and ethics are the most complex and challenging topic because both of them influence our decisions and actions unconsciously.

- They are built at an early stage in our lives and form patterns of behaviour that we follow without consciously thinking.
- As we evolve our values and ethics might change slightly, but again this process happens unconsciously without us dictating or deciding it.

We discover our true values when we face dilemmas, challenges and major crisis and even then, we may not realize how far our true values and ethics are from what we declare to believe. This self-deception and incongruence is often a cause of failure and disappointment in life and business. In the Coaching process, we have the chance to reveal the inner values, realise them and understand which of them to keep or change in order to feel more in balance with ourselves and our goals in life.

An example of Leadership development might be useful to illustrate some of the above-mentioned points.

A real case of Leadership development in a very different company environment

My client is a Sales Director in a Real Estate Agency. In fact, it is the biggest Real Estate Agency in the country with thousands of transactions every year. He became a Sales Director after a promotion he got for his high performance as an agent. In the new position he needed to develop different skills and behaviours because his role was completely different. He wouldn’t have to see clients to promote property; he started organizing ‘best practices’ sessions to ease the sale.

He started organizing ‘best practices’ sessions to give them the opportunity to share their experience and learn from each other; new and older agents were looking forward to those meetings in which they both learned and got praised. This practice expanded to their everyday work: they started discussing between them the most difficult cases and find solutions for the agent who had the ‘difficult’ client.

The Sales Director can manage the work but doesn’t really have power over the people because they are freelancers. How can he make them abide by the rules of the company, work as a team and perform?

In a typically structured company there is hierarchy, roles and tasks, salaries and insurance and in some cases a development plan or some sort of career path for the employees. In this specific case people work on commission, get a very basic training on the systems and regulations and they start selling.

From our conversations it was clear that the management of his team should be based on creating a context of trust, belonging and mutual cooperation that would then lead them to become a team and perform. There was a need to create one team from the two teams that were merged and the new people who joined. He should offer what was missing from the context: people should feel supported and stability if not safety.

Because of the specific characteristics of this environment, there was no position for a manager; he should be a leader be the example himself or else the freelancers would act independently and ignore him.

We structured together his plan to develop people by being the example himself;

- He was the first to explain the regulations and apply them in every task.
- He was the one who provided a lot of information and tips on how to manage a client so they would sign the contract and earn their commission.
- He would do all the difficult negotiations and discussions to ease the sale.
As leaders we are responsible for making sustainable business decisions that meet the expectations of the shareholders, customers, the environment and our employees. The performance of our business is constantly measured. Daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly targets are set, and we align our resources and assets to achieve the expectations set by the shareholders, which generally consist of revenue and profit. So, it is not surprising that we find it challenging to find the time to focus on one of our key responsibilities, our employees.

All too often we start to talk about the ‘softer’ aspects of our businesses and commit to taking how we treat our people more seriously as human beings. We hold one to one and group forums and receive great feedback, then overnight the performance of the business becomes the number one priority and our good intentions are diverted to more pressing matters. Sound familiar?

The people within our organisations are a key factor as to how well our business performs, all leaders know this, but we forget that they are human with the same fundamental needs that span all cultures and historical periods. We all have the same inner needs to be autonomous or self-reliant and be connected to one another. As leaders we are responsible to ensure these needs are satisfied for the individual, the group and the environment that we operate. To understand what satisfies our people, and ultimately drives their human behaviour, we must firstly give ourselves the permission to take time and find common ground with our people. This requires an interest in others and a measured amount of disclosure or openness from us.

Human behaviour is a result of attempts to satisfy certain needs and it is the leader’s role to influence that behaviour for the benefit of the business. To influence behaviour, we must first understand it before we begin to motivate it, ensuring that the behaviour is an output that satisfies their own needs. By promoting openness and disclosure we find common ground with our people, but we are also giving our people permission to act as we do. Once we find common ground and understand our individual needs, we gain greater insight as to what motivates us and our teams.

The World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs Report 2018 indicates that as the fourth industrial revolution unfolds, companies must seek to harness new and emerging technology to improve productivity and efficiency. To do this, business leaders must plan ahead with workforce strategies to be ready for the challenge ahead. Existing work tasks between 2018 and 2022 show a shift in the average number of task hours performed by humans.
In 2018 the number of task hours average 71% and by 2022 this is expected to be 58% human task hours with the remaining machine task hours being 42%. Although this may present a change in jobs that require dexterity or manual labour, humans will continue to complement the changes if they are granted permission to act in a natural human way.

Humans add value when freed of the need to perform routine or repetitive tasks and make use of their human talents. Human skills such as creativity, initiative, critical thinking and originality will be more relevant as the job market evolves and as our employees become more detached from task-oriented functions they will find other roles that will continue to add value. As leaders we need to understand and give ourselves the permission to take the necessary and often brave steps to promote natural human behaviour.

5 Steps to promote natural human behaviour

1. **Understand your own needs and what satisfies you**
   The first realisation that leaders must have is that our leadership style derives from our own life story and they must work towards understanding and developing themselves.

2. **Be genuine**
   To be a truly authentic human we must treat others as humans. Being authentic in our approach to leadership will help support the alignment of goals.

3. **Allow creativity**
   Promote creativity by not being specific about how a report should look or how a plan should be laid out; sometimes a quick doodle on a white board is ok, if you allow it to be.

4. **Be visible**
   Openly display acts of kindness by helping someone with a task and encourage others to do the same; when people realise it’s ok to stop their own task to help a fellow human being it will become infectious with a ripple of togetherness through the organisation.

5. **Don’t talk about work**
   Not indefinitely! Talk to your teams without mentioning anything to do with the product that you make or the latest business issue – I challenge you to do this for 30 minutes every day, I can admit it is not easy.

As business leaders and experts in our field, we all have the experience and knowledge to provide the shareholders with what is expected. By providing our people with the most natural experiences of being listened too, with permission to express themselves genuinely with no fear of repercussion’s or consequence’s, we provide a catalyst that unravels an infinite world of greater understanding and connection.

Rather than just engaging with our people to achieve what we need, empower them to satisfy their human needs by giving them permission to treat each other in a way that promotes natural human behaviour.

ABOUT GUY RATCLIFFE

Executive Coach, Business Coach & Mentor
Managing Director of Ratcliffe Business Solutions Ltd.

Guy’s career began in the automotive industry, where he was apprentice trained and completed both his bachelor’s and master’s degrees. After seventeen years he moved into the Aerospace sector where spent eleven years in operational leadership roles.

With a burning passion for coaching and people he chose to follow his passion and completed the Diploma in Executive Coaching with the Academy of Executive Coaching in London and soon established Re-Create Coaching & Mentoring.

Combining his industrial experience with his passion for coaching and people, Guy challenges the industry in which he once thrived until a major personal life event gave him a wakeup call and the opportunity to Re-Create who he is today.
Entrepreneurs are often juggling multiple stressful situations and if you let stress take over your life, you’re going to burn out and lose passion for your business. Overcoming difficult issues with ease is an art that can be learned, simply by identifying effective strategies for dealing with difficult situations. Once you learn the basics, you can implement them, in any difficult situation, to help you reach your desired end result.

Here are 6 strategies to help you deal with difficult situations.

1. **Take it One Step at a Time**

   Approach your workload one step at a time. When you are juggling multiple hot issues, it’s easy to get overwhelmed, but taking it one step at a time is one of the best strategies for dealing with difficult situations. Start with the most pressing issue, and then break it down into small manageable increments.

2. **Focus on the Goal**
When you are dealing with a stressful situation, it’s important not to over dramatize. Instead of agonizing about the situation, focus on the desired end result. Focusing on the end goal is one of the key strategies for dealing with difficult situations because it helps prevent you from getting caught up in the stress and anxiety. When you remain focused and calm, you work more efficiently.

Be realistic in what you can accomplish in any given amount of time. Although you would like to think of yourself as Wonder Woman or Superman, there is a limit to what you can accomplish at any one time. Pushing yourself to do more than is physically possible will only create needless difficult situations and add to your stress. Set up realistic goals for accomplishing tasks, without forcing yourself into a whirlwind. Prioritize, create a schedule and stick to it. Using a timer can also help; place one on your desk and use it everyday. If you are swamped at the end of the day, re-prioritise the tasks for tomorrow before going to bed, so you can rest peacefully.

You can overcome difficult strategies with ease just by making a few changes to the way you handle tasks. Once you identify strategies for dealing with difficult situations and implement them, you will be prepared to handle just about any tough situation that’s thrown your way. It’s about focusing on the end result, breaking each task down into manageable steps, and altering the way you work to reach maximum productivity.

Remember, when you are feeling overwhelmed, that is a sign to stop and evaluate the situation. Tough situations are best dealt with calm and objectiveness. If you are too emotionally involved, upset or angry, it may be best to let it go for the time being. Take time to think and reflect upon your desired outcome and form your conversation around that goal. If you are ready to address it in 15 minutes, great. If you need 24 hours, that’s okay too. The important thing to remember is to follow these six strategies to help you achieve your end result - however, long it takes.
Stop Asking About Life Purpose!
Don’t Upset your Clients by Asking About Something that Does not Really Exist!

by Maria Biquet (Greece)

My dear fellow coaches,
I am writing this letter to you with all my love and support to save you time and energy in the coaching relationship.

What is the purpose of the ‘life purpose’ question?

A relatively common question in the coaching process is “what is your purpose in life?” Lots of articles, Coaching methods and proposed Sets of coaching questions include this question as vital for the development of a person.

By asking this serious question, you should/need to consider and think how the client might feel if they have to give you an answer during a coaching conversation, particularly if this isn’t a question instigated by themselves. This is a difficult, almost ‘philosophical’ question, that most people don’t usually think about.

The way that the coaching process is typically applied in the organizational setting has its own purpose: to help the client to achieve a specific result, to attain a goal or to increase self-awareness among others. The process is based on learning and more specifically on learning the ability to learn.

Learning is a continuous never-ending process that leads to our improvement and maturity. The question, driven by the client, is what do they want to learn about.

So, in this context of continuous discovery and learning, is there room for the most important and most serious question that philosophy has asked about the human existence? Since the ancient times of humanity, eastern and western philosophy and most religions have tried to invent answers to this question by creating complex thinking systems, intellectual theories and gods. The existential question ‘why we exist’ happened during your coaching relationship, then the question might come up from the side of the Coachee as part of their internal dialogue in that specific period of time.

All three cases however need to be managed with utmost care and vigilance - especially the second in which you will need to refer the client to a psychiatrist - because the client is in a delicate condition and needs support. If the question arises from his side, you may discuss it in a ‘theoretical – philosophical’ framework which I believe lies outside the coaching framework.

It’s about timing, readiness and openness of the client to explore this question as part of their coaching agenda. And so, when the question about life purpose is suddenly asked, it doesn’t really offer more than a bit of astonishment to clients, particularly those who are more senior executives and or a sense of awe for ‘the Coach who asks so deep questions’ to those who are considered less mature and probably a little naive.

Does it really add value to the conversation?

People seriously wonder about their purpose in life. Some common examples are when:

• They are going through a crisis (midlife, death of a beloved person etc).
• They are in clinical depression.
• Things don’t go well and are disappointed.

If your Coaching assignment is related to one of the above cases, or one of those conditions has happened during your coaching relationship, then the question might come up from the side of the Coachee as part of their internal dialogue in that specific period of time.

All three cases however need to be managed with utmost care and vigilance - especially the second in which you will need to refer the client to a psychiatrist - because the client is in a delicate condition and needs support. If the question arises from his side, you may discuss it in a ‘theoretical – philosophical’ framework which I believe lies outside the coaching framework.

Since there are no answers to this question, any opinions expressed for this question depict our personal views and attitudes towards life and might cause a serious breach of connectedness and trust between you and the client at a deeper level, particularly if each has a contrary personal philosophy.

What will happen if you believe that Life doesn’t have Purpose and the Coachee believes that their Life Purpose is their work? How can you persuade them that a Purpose that changes over time is not Life Purpose? What will happen to your ‘rapport’, ‘trust’, ‘reliability’, ‘sense of connectedness’ after such a fundamental disagreement?

In fact the question ‘what is your purpose in life’ is a very deep philosophical question which, like all philosophical questions, doesn’t have an ultimate answer. Have you ever asked yourself about your own life purpose? What have you discovered? Did you end up with a clear answer why you exist and therefore what the purpose of your life is?

When we, the coach, are in a difficult condition we may wonder about why we exist and what life is about but cannot really add much value in a coaching conversation where we need to coach a person to their own improvement. It may confuse or upset or stress the client who is in a process of discovering, learning and evolving their strengths.

We are proud to be coaches and we must be aware that we do a serious profession with our clients leading and supporting them in their journey to self-improvement; our questions should take them to their next step in their learning and not confuse or divert them to vague existential issues that will eventually blur their sight and distract them from their goal, especially if it isn’t their goal/agenda.
Is there purpose in life?

Final words to my dear fellow coaches: In fact there is no answer to the question about life purpose simply because there is no life purpose as such. Life Purpose is linked to our existence and therefore it is a fixed, permanent and steady target throughout our life. It is the answer to the ‘why do I exist?’ question.

In real life we have different ‘purposes’ depending on our stage of life and evolvement; our ‘life purpose’ is in fact a ‘life goal’ that continuously evolves in quality and contents as we become more mature.

In every decade our approach to life changes as we grow older and gain experience; we often see the following stages related to “purposes” in emotionally healthy people:

• In our twenties we want to learn and become good professionals at what we do;
• In our thirties we work hard to become leaders;
• In our forties our efforts are focused on becoming an excellent leader;
• In our fifties we realise that we should start creating other leaders…etc.;

at the same time our life may become more colorful with the addition of some more private ‘purposes’ related to family creation and care for children and spouses, self-development, cultivation of some artistic talent or other interest.

Let’s keep our clients to the present. Help them define real targets and “purposes” and work towards them with joy, passion and dedication. Their learning happens in the process which consists of small targets and small victories that lead them to becoming their better self. And that is the biggest purpose for the journey of life.

ABOUT MARIA BIQUET

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~ Stay Tuned! ~
We have a love-hate relationship with change. In some cases we welcome change with open arms, in others we resist or try to escape it. We love it when the immediate benefits are obvious to us. We hate it when it is demanded of us - when we feel it threatens our comfort, security, or way of life. When we set our eyes on the future and we want to do so in a sincere and meaningful way, not merely as an academic exercise, we need to consider our emotional response to the accelerated change we experience in the 21st century - not only our views about it.

From the earliest days man had to deal with disruptions. The forces behind it were, however simple and recognisable. They were mainly those of nature or hostile people competing for land and resources. Even with three industrial revolutions behind us, we could still be reasonably comfortable with our ability to reflect and learn from past experiences by identifying the cause-and-effect relationships. However, it is our shared experience today that what used to be obvious is not obvious anymore - drafting three and five-year strategic plans feels like a waste of time. It is all happening too fast, too unpredictable and complex. And yet, we cannot be self-defeating, throw our arms in the air and stop trying to apply our minds.

Our challenges with Change

Tackling the future head-on has to do with change - how we respond to it and how we are part of it. It is interesting that when you would ask an audience 'do you want change?' most hands will go up. With no specifics, we assume the change will address our needs or wants - new experiences, a bit of adventure, a better, more comfortable world to live in, etc. When we are asked 'do you want to change', few if any hands go up.

We assume that changing ourselves might dislodge us from our stable sense of self and we don’t want to risk that. And yet, we all want to feel we have value. We all want to feel relevant. So the obvious question is, if indeed we want the change we hope to see, who will take the lead? The pope, the president, the governing party, the CEO, or just the non-specific ‘they’?

Mind-change

A hard, unsympathetic message you hear in the 4th Industry World is ‘disrupt or be disrupted’. The time to rely on heroes and saviours has gone by. As the world becomes flatter, more democratised and open to diverse ideas and influences, we are required to develop our independent and critical thinking. In other words, we need to embrace self-leadership. In leading ourselves more consciously we develop our mind from a socialised mind to a self-authoring mind of a self-transferring mind (Kegan 2009). From being completely tuned in to the voices of authority figures and the collective, we develop into find our own voice and direction and to write our own success stories. We, then, hopefully, develop further to being willing to also listen to others for the rest to follow in their footsteps. In the 21st century, it puts the magnifying glass on each one of us to be willing to develop ourselves for the challenge.

Emotional and spiritual change

We are not only rational beings, but also emotional and spiritual. Tackling the future head-on and going through change can also mess with our emotions, values and beliefs. In a 21st century world we have already experienced the accessibility of information and knowledge. We have experienced interconnectivity and the diversity of worldviews, cultures, belief and value systems as well as customs. We probably have become less judgmental and less defensive.

However, to effectively navigate the stormy waters will require us to collaborate and trust people - which is to not only open our minds but also our hearts. It will be difficult to effectively collaborate if we remain distrusting and cynical, saying one thing but thinking and believing another when we engage. Certainly, we carry the risk of being disappointed when we open our hearts to others. But in leadership we expect to see both sides of trust: being trustworthy and being trusted. In leadership you don’t wait for others to reach out, you reach out first. For some of us it probably means that we have to let go of whatever keeps us in the grip of cynicism and fear.

The 4th Industrial Revolution and our responses

In a nutshell, the 4th Industrial Revolution refers to dramatic social and economic changes as a result of an array of technological breakthrough inventions impacting on all industries. It includes technologies such as the Internet of Things, Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality and Big Data.
Revolution is much more than just a description of power and mechanisation of the first revolution, electricity and mass production of the second and the internet and automation of the third. Klaus Schwab (2018) makes the argument that the 4th Industrial Revolution will disrupt and impact all areas of our lives. In the new world of work it is expected that many jobs of a mechanical, repetitive nature will be done by robots. It is estimated that close to 60% of current jobs have at least 30% of tasks that can be performed by computers today. Furthermore, an expected 35% of skills will change across industries as new technologies, business models and markets develop. Instead of panicking about potential job losses, our response should be to focus on the human only capabilities that will be required in the new world of work - abilities such as creative and innovative thinking and problem solving.

Reskilling, ‘rewiring’ our brains and generally re-inventing ourselves at the young age of fifty will become increasingly important to stay relevant. In addition, it will be more beneficial to think in dynamic terms about the different roles we can play at work to contribute to work organisations or society, than to think of jobs in static or fixed terms. The idea of “best practices” will give way to more divergent thinking, experimentation and creative solutions.

**Leadership in a VUCA world**

The acronym VUCA refers to what we have come to know as features of our 21st Century world, namely, Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous. When we reflect on and discuss leadership, these descriptors of the context within which we need to lead, need to be central in our thinking.

Leadership incorporates leading self, others and change. Effective leadership requires balancing and developing all three leadership areas. In developing our leadership we hope to remain relevant and influential for our times, which leads us to revisit our thinking paradigms, or the lenses through which we view the world. If we recognise the patterns of our thinking as they were influenced by historical and socio-economic factors, art and the march of science, we can match them with appropriate effective patterns of thinking in the modern world and it will highlight the shifts we need to make. One such a shift is from convergent thinking to divergent thinking.

We use convergent thinking to analyse problems and break them down into parts for closer inspection and conclusive judgment and decisions. It is linear and systematic. What’s convergent thinking does not help us with is to come up with creative ideas, explore possibilities and allow ourselves the freedom to experiment. For that we need to develop divergent thinking. Improving our divergent thinking is what would help us facing Industry 4.0. It helps us to see the connections between things, to be flexible, not obsessed with what is best, but take creative risks. In an Industry 4.0 environment, we are challenged to replace the need for the perfection of knowing with the willingness to seize the unknown. Thinking about our education system, the shift is to have universities as the birthplaces of ideas, not degrees to show how much I know, we can always quote google instead.

**Conclusion**

An old African proverb states, ‘If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.’ Industry 4.0 brings a sense of urgency. And it is justified if we apply the principle of global thinking for relevancy. However, our sense of urgency should help us focus on how to connect, collaborate and co-innovate, not on frantic actions to save my own skin. It will be counterproductive and short-sighted to make use of technologies just because we can. We might go fast for a while, but it will not sustain us. We therefore need to follow the advice to integrate our ethics and values in our decision making and do it together. Do not only ask if something is feasible, ask for what purpose.

To tackle the future head-on, commit yourself to the following:

- Be resilient (adaptive and positive)
- Be collaborative
- Be ethical
- Be creative
- Be flexible
- Be agile

Indeed, ‘tackling the future head-on’ should not be interpreted simplistically. If it is interpreted as an encouragement to seize opportunities for own success, to get ahead and win the competition, then it is still old paradigm thinking. The 4th Industry challenges and opportunities are of a global nature and can only be treated as such. As much as there are opportunities to make great advances in all industries, the world is also facing global threats of instability. Think about climate change, nuclear wars and social unrest due to high levels of inequality.
Using Attentive Listening and Obtaining Physical Responses, for Good Outcomes
by Peter Zoetig (UK)

This article lays out how using ‘embodied’ coaching techniques can be used to lead and pace clients, advocating a ‘natural approach’ and conversational style that accelerates the acquisition of new habits and leads to better attentive listening, developing good processing and later, better performance in real life situations. I make reference to language techniques as an understanding of how language operates in affecting change – in conversational therapy and NLP and also general life coaching – is crucial to getting good outcomes, be it for health, relationship, work or other reasons.

Background

When the client says something, what do they mean? What is it telling us about what they need to do? If I say ‘It’s a bit chilly in here’, do I mean, ‘please close the window/tune up the heating’, or ‘can we go somewhere else?’, or ‘I need to get a pullover/eat something/drink something warm’, ‘the atmosphere around me feels cold and unwelcoming’ or something else? In discourse analysis, linguists talk of ‘the illocutionary act’ and the ‘perlocutionary force’ of language, that what we say and the subconscious, indirect and implied message, are more or less clear at some level, and I will refer back to the need for attentive listening in order to do this well.

In training – for example a language - we want a person to speak using a common syntax and lexis. We supply the tools for this and instruct the trainee in what to do. Coaching takes a different route. To reach the goal, the ‘learner’ works through levels of understanding, processing, composition (internal dialogue and visualisation) and performance.

One interesting technique, called Total Physical Response, developed by James Asher, expressed the view that the first goal of a trainer, using TPR, is to help the learners develop listening fluency (1). The other skills are supposed to be learned in a later stage. There are practical ways in which many of these perceptions can be used as a real cornerstone for acquisition, in a way that allows the learner to quickly identify and internalise a helpful syntax and begin to master this quickly. It all has to do with how we listen and how we then visualise and construct meaning internally through our inner dialogue (rehearsal).

The foundations of TPR are essentially neurological and have to do with our scientific understanding of the hemispheres of the brain. Most learning methods are directed at the left brain hemisphere, however, both hemispheres need to play a role, and, in parallel to how a child learns its mother tongue, a learner needs motor movements (which are controlled by the right brain hemisphere). In this way, the movements made when following commands given by the coach help prepare them for processing the language.

These ideas of TPR are based on behaviourism, the theory developed by B.F. Skinner, which sees learning as being a result of imitation, practice, reinforcement and habit formation. According to this theory, with positive feedback, a person will continue to exhibit the new behaviour and eventually this action will develop into a habit. (So, for example, in order to learn a foreign language, a language student only needs to imitate the language he/she hears from the coach and react to feedback; language development is seen as a result of this habit formation.) The connection to ‘trace theory’ in psychology - which claims that the more often and intensively a memory connection is traced, the stronger the personal association will be and therefore the more likely that it will be recalled - is clear here.

Getting to a deeper level

However, one of the problems with TPR was that it is very coach-centred, placing clients in a very passive role in which they are unlikely to make their own choices or develop much ability to construct new styles or utterances for themselves. It might be a fun and relatively stress-free type of exercise, but where does the intellectual challenges lie, and how does the coachee start to access the formatting of visualised or heard ideas into real action? Much beyond ‘Simon Says’ type games this critique seems to me to be rather justified.

For a coach wanting to produce deeper-level change using language and physical movement also, it will be important to connect the two parts/hemispheres and to anchor new understanding and processing in the real.

To answer objections, and show the workings of the use of attentive listening, self-listening, and the real embodiment of new inner dialogue and take the coachee beyond mere mimicry and behaviourist repetition in the hope that the habits formed will magically turn into real understanding and deep processing of syntax, we need to see how the precept can work practically.

The mind needs time to listen and integrate, digest and clearly visualise the transformations that are being made. The goal is to unravel knotty questions, at the client’s own pace, bringing them to a healthier state or one of better performance. A physical response can be elicited using situational and functional language, and whole sessions can be built on whatever has emerged from the last one, since it is possible to extend the scope of the physical responses and use more aspects at the same time. Taking an NLP analogy here, however, it is actually crucial to ‘disassociate’ the coachee momentarily from the experience, by letting their minds wander, before bringing them back to it. This is in order to allow for the so-called ‘kinaesthetic anchor’ to fix itself.

Any situation that has been experienced or could be experienced by the client, can be used, where the story involves exploring what they did or would do, using images, timelines and whatever language they have already expressed in order to access their ‘map’. Moving forwards, when we have developed this into a variety of contexts – separated by moments of reflection and processing the experience, we may be ready to begin a performance and thus engage the physical. This can at first take the form of mimicry to anchor the experience in a physical way. In the same way we can put the emphasis on body language, positioning relative to themselves and others and the situational context of the problem (proxemics) and how they gesture, etc. At certain points this can be given a cultural/environmental aspect.
Coachees need time to prepare, so the performance should not at first be one they are thrown into without any consideration being given to how they want to ‘come over’, and the way in which they see themselves needing to look and sound and feel, for a given context. I feel this is so important. So often coaching is done by throwing coachees into performance right from the moment they arrive, as if following a script or rule-book. ‘Right, we are going to do (such and such), now, I want you to find some questions and then you are going to tell the group what the problem is.’ (Followed by massive stress, mistakes galore, embarrassment which can jeopardise the entire programme, even deeper entrenching of mistakes and of bad listening, and ‘forced’ speaking, which is horrible.)

Coaching takes account of the coachees’ ongoing processing of new information in the choice of vocabulary, structure, sound and context. These processes are translated in their heads into an ‘inner dialogue’, which the coach can access by means of acute observation of gestures, eye movements, vocal pacing and breathing patterns, thus gaining an awareness of the learners’ emotional state, stage of comprehension or preference for certain forms of language and their changing physical state, e.g., if they are searching for meaning, sweating or stressed.

Listening

This leads us to the question of attentive listening and taking care in not raising the ‘affective filters’. In order for the later ‘performance’ to be satisfying, positive, useful and fully anchored into the clients’ ‘repertoire’, sensitive and skillful pacing of them towards their desired outcomes, is essential (which will not happen otherwise); affective filters are very powerful and prevent progress on all levels. This is where the time spent on attentive listening is so vital.

How do we – as coaches – listen, and also, how we can help our clients to listen to themselves and others? I believe that, all too often, coaches talk far too much, imparting information and skills simply by telling the coachees what to do and how to do it.

While coaches often feel they stand on top of the knowledge ‘mountain’ and can see clearly what they believe the coachees’ problems to be, they themselves are often standing either somewhere near the bottom of what they perceive as a dauntingly long climb up and my be unable to understand the instructions for further progress given. We experience this in the baffled looks or in the bored ‘Yes, I know that’ looks that we often see in ‘normal’ dialogue.

Knowing where to go next in the programme and how to lead this to real changes in performance or outcome, depends on how the coach listens. By listening in an enhanced way, we can adapt their responses in light of what they have heard conveyed and what they have learnt about the frame of mind of the client. Using this knowledge, we can consciously work to reduce or modify stress or confusion and will have a better idea of where to lead.

To read part 2 of this article kindly click **HERE**

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4. Kline, N Time to Think: Listening to Ignite the Human Mind Hachette 1999