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The Coaching Psychologist

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Letter from the Chair

Angela Hetherington

AS CHAIR, I am very pleased to be able to report on continued important progress to the work we set out to do at our Strategy Meeting, which itself builds on the foundations of earlier work by so many volunteers. We are pleased to be involving and engaging with a number of new volunteers on the SGCP Committee over this year, including student members.

We continue to enjoy a thriving and interested membership. We have continued with the excellent work aimed at meeting our members' needs, for example, in the British Psychological Society this is all about the thriving preparations for another conference. The SGCP has raised its presence in particular in the international sphere through such events as the 1st International Congress of Coaching Psychology and its collaborations with global coaching psychology bodies in the UK, Australia, Denmark, Ireland, Israel, New Zealand, South Africa, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. The SGCP has/will also present at the planned conferences of 2011 and 2012. In 2011, Switzerland – March; South Africa/ Southern Hemisphere event – May; Ireland – June; Sweden – September; Spain – October. In 2012, Netherlands – January; Australia and New Zealand – February. Further events are planned by Israel, Italy and the Nordic countries with dates to be confirmed.

The Conference Committee, chaired by Haley Lancaster and Judit Varkonyi-Sepp, has worked tirelessly since the beginning of the year on the 2011 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference, 'Innovation in Coaching Psychology', scheduled for the 13–14 December 2011. It will be hosted by City University, London, with key speakers, Adrian Furnham, Siegfried Greif, Stephen Palmer, Alison Whybrow and Siobhain O'Riordan, and Rebeca Viney from the

London Deanary and David Heap from IGCP, Australia. Registration details can be found at: <http://sgcp-conference.bps.org.uk>

The Events Committee, chaired by Sue Watsham and Zorica Patel, has again delivered a valuable range of professional development seminars and workshops. The June event 'Strengths-Based Coaching' presented by Lucy Ryan, provided an excellent workshop, combining theory and practice. A Professional Practice Day was held on 7 October, 2011. This special event, which drew on ethical practice and ethical dilemmas in psychological coaching practice, was tailored to SGCP members. Information on further events can be found on the Events section of the SGCP website: www.sgcp.org.uk. The Events Committee welcomes proposals for workshops/presentations on subjects of interest to coaching psychologists. Proposal forms can be downloaded from the Events section of the SGCP website.

The Accreditation Working Party, chaired by myself and Julie Allan, completed a final draft of the Register of Coaching Psychologists in an effort to achieve formal accreditation of coaching psychologists. This final draft has been founded on the work of previous Chairs and SGCP committee members and will provide the foundation for continuing work on the accreditation of qualifications and experience in coaching psychology, based on the Society's standards of practice of practitioners. The Peer Practice Group, led by Derek Ross, continues to provide a welcome resource to members whilst promoting and promulgating good practice and assuring professional development.

The SGCP's two peer-reviewed publications, the *International Coaching Psychology Review* and *The Coaching Psychologist*, continue to grow both in terms of contributions and readership. Both are abstracted in

leading databases and remain the main sites for publishing coaching psychology papers. The editors, Stephen Palmer and Siobhain O’Riordan, invite papers on subjects of interest to coaching psychologists.

The SGCP, through the Representative Council and the PPB, has over the year worked to influence policy and practice in the broader field of psychology, both providing expert opinion on consultation documents and communicating Society policies and opportunities through to the SGCP membership.

The SGCP Committee, like all member networks within the Society, is comprised of a ‘transient workforce’ and a core requirement of the group is to maintain the transfer of knowledge within its committee membership whilst accommodating change. Achieving consensus, whilst facilitating innovation remains a key and challenging issue for the SGCP.

This has been evident over the last quarter during which the SGCP Committee has continued to adapt to the loss of members and the change of roles of other members, creating a mix of continuity and change. Nadia Nagamootoo, Honorary Secretary of the SGCP Committee, has been a very welcome member of the Executive Committee and has made a significant and welcome contribution to the SGCP. We wish her well in her new work. Jeremy Ridge is acting as an informal coach to the Executive Committee in an effort to model and promote the value of peer coaching within the SGCP and to promote openness and challenge within the exec. His experience in Chair and executive roles working at a strategic level in similar professional bodies is very welcome in particular to the Executive Committee.

Claire Townsend and Judit Varkonyi-Sepp have assumed the roles of Publications and Communications Co-Chairs, introducing additional energy and innovation to the team. Jennifer Liston-Smith has assured a smooth transition in the leadership and remains on the Publications and Communications Committee, assuring transfer of knowledge on both the subject and on Society and SGCP practice and policies. Publications and communications remain a flagship of the SGCP through its website and publications.

The position of the Chair Elect and the Secretary remain open. Meetings continue to take place with interested parties but individuals continue to have reservations about the time commitment and the workload. Attracting those individuals who are familiar with the SGCP and experienced in similar roles such that they can contribute to the SGCP’s continuing development remains a challenge. Strategies such as offering remuneration to Chairs are being considered by the group.

The SGCP is pleased to welcome Annjanette Wells to the SGCP in her role as the Society’s representative. Annjanette is familiar with the SGCP and has been providing a support role to the Group for some time. Her knowledge of Society processes and policies have been instrumental in promoting the integration of SGCP with the Society.

The SGCP welcomes new members to the committees, and in particular representation from student members. Interested applicants please contact the Committee through the SGCP website.

Dr Angela Hetherington

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www.sgcp.org.uk



strength
Creativity
growth

POWER
developments
Surge

Our theme is:
**INNOVATION IN
COACHING
PSYCHOLOGY**

3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference

13th and 14th December 2011 City University, London, UK

In the spirit of continuing to bring together the growing coaching psychology community SGCP is delighted to announce the 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference. This is an event for those that are interested in or currently using coaching psychology in their practice, and those who wish to learn more about how they can benefit from coaching psychology for themselves or their organisations.

Invited speakers include:
Adrian Furnham (UK)
Siegfried Greif (Germany)
Ida Sirolli (Italy)
Stephen Palmer (UK)
Pascale Reinhardt (France)
Ole Michael Spaten (Denmark)

For further information please go to <http://sgcp-conference.bps.org.uk>



Editorial

Siobhain O’Riordan

WELCOME to the December 2011 issue of *The Coaching Psychologist*, in which we are pleased to provide articles, reports and reviews covering a range of interesting topics and contributions. Themes for the forthcoming 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference (hosted by the BPS SGCP, at City University London) are highlighted in our interviews with speakers who share their hopes and expectations for the event and their views on a variety of coaching psychology topics.

This issue also includes our regular Ethics Column from Julie Allan (SGCP Ethics and Social Policy Liaison Officer) and for this issue we are also featuring one book review.

I am always interested to hear your views and suggestions about *The Coaching Psychologist* and can be e-mailed at: siobhain.oriordan@btinternet.com.

On a final note I would like to thank all of the contributors to this issue.

Siobhain O’Riordan

2012

Recognised Modular Programmes

Advanced Certificate in Cognitive Behavioural Approaches to Counselling and Psychotherapy
 Advanced Certificate in Rational Emotive and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
 Diploma in Stress Management – a cognitive behavioural approach

Primary Certificate Courses (2 days unless shown otherwise)

Stress Management	27–28 Feb; 26–27 Mar; 10–11 May
Occupational Stress Management	28–29 May
Cognitive Behavioural Therapy & Training	25–26 Jan; 29 Feb–1 Mar; 23–24 May; 25–26 Jun
Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy	30 Apr–1 May
Problem Focused Counselling, Coaching & Training	8–9 Feb
Assertion and Communication Skills Training	7–8 Mar
Relaxation Skills Training	14–15 Jun
Multimodal Therapy	14–15 May
Trauma and PTSD	30–31 May
Advanced Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy Skills	(3 days) 12–14 Mar
Advanced Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy Skills	(3 days) 11–13 Jun
Mediation Skills	16–17 April

Other Courses

- Certificate in Cognitive Behavioural Therapies
- Certificate in Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapies
- Correspondence Course in Stress Management
- Certificate in Cognitive Hypnotherapy
- Certificate in Cognitive Behaviour Therapies & Hypnosis



Courses held in London and Borehamwood or in-house.

Trainers include:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
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Developing a teaching agenda for coaching psychology in undergraduate programmes

Lindsey Burns & Ewan Gillon

The paper explores the rationale for, and potential benefits of, the inclusion of a coaching psychology module in an undergraduate psychology programme. In 2010 a coaching psychology module was introduced at Glasgow Caledonian University, as an optional module for final year psychology degree students. Although providing a strong academic component, the module was primarily skills-based and driven by the GROW model (Whitmore, 1992). Students spent two-thirds of the module in seminars/workshops where they carried out practical skills-based development and one-third in lectures. In order to evaluate the module written feedback was elicited from all students (N=20) using a semi-structured questionnaire. Feedback from the module was highly positive, with students demonstrating both academic and practical learning. Key findings indicate that the experience of being both coachee and coach in peer-to-peer coaching exercises enabled students to apply psychological principles and to make progress on personal goals. They also reported an improved awareness of the degree to which they could demonstrate key competencies related to employability via the acquisition of coaching psychology skills. The paper argues that this multiplicity of learning outcomes makes coaching psychology a highly valuable addition to any undergraduate psychology programme, with the potential to become a core aspect of the undergraduate psychology syllabus.

Keywords: Students; peer coaching; coaching skills development; employability; educational/teaching framework.

The rationale for including coaching psychology at an undergraduate level

COACHING PSYCHOLOGY is a rapidly expanding and constantly changing area of psychology (Palmer & Whybrow, 2008). The question of whether coaching psychology should be included in the psychology curriculum has recently received a lot of attention (e.g. Spaten & Hansen, 2009; Short & Baker, 2010; Grant, 2011; Cavanagh, Palmer et al., 2011). The main focus of this current interest, however, relates to its inclusion in the educational framework for postgraduate students, although there has been a call for its inclusion in undergraduate programmes (Palmer, 2008). Indeed some have successfully done this, for example, City University London (www.city.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/psychology).

General skills development

One of the clear arguments for the inclusion of coaching psychology at an undergraduate level is the support this would provide for students' learning more generally. In offering students an 'applied' focus, utilising the developmental principles of coaching psychology, students would be enabled to learn about planning, review and goal setting processes and apply this to their own learning aspirations as well as those of others. It would also offer students a further range of benefits, such as enhanced interpersonal skills and reflective abilities. On the basis of such potential gains, Spaten and Hansen (2009) undertook a process of embedding coaching psychology into their graduate programme in Denmark. The aim of this was twofold: to enhance coaching performance and empower the students' self-esteem. Using pre-term, mid-term and post-course measures they found that

students' coaching competencies (as measured via self-report) and their social and emotional skills (measured through Oestrick's 2007 social and emotional skill rating scale) increased as the course progressed. This would seem to provide evidence that coaching psychology has the potential to offer a highly supportive role for the development of general competencies as well as specific learning in this growing area of psychology itself.

Employability

A further argument for the inclusion of coaching psychology at an undergraduate level is the extent to which planning, review and goal focused activities clearly map onto employability skills as outlined by the Higher Education Academy, and support the personal development planning (PDP) processes now embedded in UK higher education provision at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels (Ward & Watts, 2008). Lantz et al. (2008) in their psychology student employability guide highlight the importance of general competencies gained through a psychology degree including: attention to detail; questioning; planning; listening; interpersonal sensitivity; and life-long learning. They believe that these types of competencies make psychology graduates appealing to employers on a generic level thereby helping any graduate of the discipline find their place in the job market. These same skills are fundamental to successful coaching and helping develop them as students through an academically sound undergraduate coaching psychology module should, therefore, help not only our profession as coaching psychologists but also the quality of our psychology graduates. Its inclusion at an undergraduate level could also help make psychology degrees more relevant to professional practice as this sort of applied topic could be advantageous to a wide variety of careers entered into by psychology graduates outwith the field of psychology (Palmer, 2008).

The need for an 'undergraduate' teaching agenda

In a recent paper Grant (2011) has highlighted the need for the establishment of an educational and teaching agenda relating to coaching psychology. As a relatively young sub-discipline of psychology, there remains an inevitable need for delineating what aspects of coaching psychology should be regarded as the primary 'curriculum' for the purposes of teaching and training, as well as a need for determining how these intersect with other areas of existing psychology education. Based on the Australian Psychological Society and British Psychological Society definitions of coaching psychology, Grant (op cit.) offers a number of proposed core areas of coaching psychology including evidence-based practice, ethics, professional issues, mental health issues and coaching practice drawing on a range of psychological approaches such as CBT, goal theory and solution-focused approaches. However, the focus of this agenda would seem primarily to reside at the postgraduate level, and thus there remains further work to do to establish what specific components of coaching psychology may best articulate with the needs and expectations of undergraduate psychology students, and embed most effectively within the undergraduate psychology curriculum.

There is also the issue of pedagogy to consider. At its heart, coaching psychology is both a theoretical and practical discipline, drawing on psychological theory and research to develop and implement interventions designed to aid coachees to determine and reach personal, educational and/or professional goals. There is thus the need for any educational provision in the area of coaching psychology to articulate with both theoretical and applied dimensions. Although the development of applied skills is common to all professional trainings in psychology (e.g. clinical, counselling, occupational), these are all benchmarked at post-graduate level and hence there remains a question as to how the more applied aspects

of coaching psychology may articulate into the undergraduate psychology curriculum.

An undergraduate module in coaching psychology – an initial ‘model’ of practice

In order to progress the development of an undergraduate teaching agenda for coaching psychology, in 2010/2011 we developed and delivered an initial ‘model’ of an undergraduate module delivered as part of the undergraduate psychology degree at Glasgow Caledonian University. The module consisted of lectures and seminars/workshops where students practiced and refined their coaching skills. Students spent two-thirds of the module carrying out practical skills based development work and one-third in lectures (18 hours face-to-face contact in total), over a six-week period. The balance between applied workshops and lectures was determined in the context of the students having a nominal 100 hours (10 credits) of learning to complete, and the greater amenability of theoretical learning to independent study. Twenty students were registered for the module and all attended classes. All students consented to their reflections and writings being used for the purposes of this paper.

In terms of content, lectures covered some of the fundamental basics of coaching psychology, such as its development and the history of coaching psychology as well as touching upon a number of areas identified by Grant (2011); practices and perspectives in coaching psychology; coaching genres; diversity and development in coaching psychology and professional practice issues. Workshops included a coaching skills development exercise; self-coaching; peer coaching; positive psychology coaching; co-coaching and meta-mirror techniques and team coaching.

The most significant questions we considered as part of the module development process was what the applied, coaching skills focus would be at an undergraduate level. A key question here was the coaching model

we wished to offer to students to work with. Although coaching psychology offers a range of models and approaches, to maintain simplicity in the time available we selected the GROW model (e.g. Whitmore, 1992) which offers an accessible and uncomplicated process suitable to undergraduate-level learning. We also had to decide how students could implement in practice. For ethical reasons (e.g. difficulties in ensuring informed consent) it was not deemed feasible to encourage students to work with coachees outwith the programme (e.g. friend or family members) and hence it was decided that peer coaching offered the most appropriate method of learning. Peer coaching is commonly cited as a useful learning method in educational literature on coaching (e.g. Bowman & McCormick, 2000; Ladyskewsky, 2006; Konstantin, 2008; Huston & Weaver, 2008; Ammarthan & Trautwein, 2010) and its inclusion in this module was designed to enable students to develop their coaching skills practical experience in the role of both coach and coachee. Our decision to utilise peer coaching was also informed by the work of Short and Baker (2010) which demonstrated the ways in which it enhanced insight, personal reflection, goal setting and prioritisation in psychology undergraduates. Similarly, a study by Short, Kinman and Baker (2010) showed the positive value of peer coaching for psychology undergraduates in managing their well-being during a stressful time, and thus further indicated the potential gains of this approach.

There were also strong educational factors favouring a peer coaching focus. Asghar (2010) points out that peer coaching offers a type of formative assessment where students are learning from each other which can help in enabling students to internally construct increasingly advanced constructs relevant to their professional field. Building on the work of Boud (2000) and Sadler (1998) Asghar demonstrates that this type of skills development where constructs are internalised and advanced can work as a

precursor to success in future professional life. Peer coaching helps students to feel relaxed about the learning process, they can be explicit about what they are learning, thinking and can ask questions of someone in a similar position to themselves. As shown by Ladyshevsky and Ryan (2002) and Topping (2005) this can be seen as a more accessible and easier way to learn than through someone in a position of authority.

Methodology and focus of evaluation

Written feedback using a semi-structured questionnaire was elicited from all students and provided a good basis for evaluating and improving the module. Due to the small number of students on the module (20) and the 'trial' basis of the approach we took, we felt a qualitative evaluation would offer a more valuable richness in data than a quantitative study. In analysing the written data we based our approach upon the principles of content analysis (e.g. Neuendorf, 2002) in identifying themes in the meanings provided by participants. These were triangulated by use of observational research undertaken by those teaching the module.

Whilst the theoretical content of the module seemed broadly appropriate, the primary focus of our interest in the evaluation was in terms of the role and effectiveness of peer coaching as a learning tool. In terms of their coaching practice and from our observations, students were able to practice and develop their peer coaching skills in a safe, non-threatening environment, where they were free to make mistakes and learn from them. They choose their own peer coaching dyads and topics (with clear caveats linked to maintaining emotional safety) for the coaching at the start of the module. The topics they chose were confidential and all content remained within the dyad. Class discussion only took place on 'coaching' techniques and experiences. Students spent at least one hour per week for the following five weeks engaged in peer coaching, the same number of sessions as undertaken in the Short and Baker (2010) study.

Findings

Peer coaching experience:

The comments made by students when reflecting on their peer coaching experiences highlighted a range of benefits perceived by the participants as a result of this type of learning intervention for developing coaching skills. Responses tended to orientate around two main themes: (1) enhanced understanding through experience; and (2) personal support and development. Example quotations are as follows.

Theme 1: Enhanced understanding through experience

'The peer coaching allows one to experience what it would be like to be a coaching psychologist which is helpful and encouraging when it comes to picking an area of study in psychology.'

'I enjoyed the interactiveness of the course – actually participating in peer coaching rather than just listening to a lecture about peer coaching.'

Theme 2: Personal support and development

'The experience allowed me to understand that I was not the only person going through the issues and also gave me a chance to talk through possible solutions and actions to achieving my objectives.'

'It was a good motivation to work on achieving my goal, it helped take first steps and realise which areas needs improvement. It made the situation more clear and achieving the goal more realistic.'

'I have found this module extremely interesting and I love how involved you are with the peer coaching. I personally felt that the peer coaching has been beneficial in tackling personal problems.'

Peer coaching seemed to be engaged with well and to lead to positive outcomes for the students. Comparative to the report of Short and Baker (2010) that students found value in peer coaching as coach and coachee, our students reported benefits both to their own goals and to the development of their coaching skills. Overall data was available on this for 17 students. The reported common

points were that peer coaching allowed them to gain perspective on their issues ($N=6$); that it was practically useful ($N=10$); and that it helped them to develop their coaching skills and knowledge of the coaching profession ($N=7$). All students reported positive progress towards achieving the goal or learning objective they had set for themselves. Fifteen had met their goal already, and two reported that the goal was longer term and they were still progressing towards it.

Awareness of coaching skills development:

Students reflected on their coaching skills development at the end of the module. Generally students reported positive progression in their skills development outlining increasing (and sometimes perhaps unrealistic) confidence as a coach and also increasing knowledge of coaching skills. The primary theme identified here was the awareness of coaching as a *facilitative* rather than *directive* process, which was seen as supporting the development of a range of skills, such as active listening, problem solving and goal-setting, and interpersonal competence. Example quotations are as follows.

‘Over the module my skills have noticeably developed as I have learnt not to give my own opinions and input my own experience when acting as a coach in a session. Overall I feel I have developed my skills over the module enough to be an effective coach.’

‘My coaching skills have changed completely. In the past I was more likely to offer advice and possibly assume the role of counsellor. Also I was more likely to interrupt than listen completely. I am now in a position to guide a session around a person’s personal objectives, specifically thinking about the GROW model. It is interesting to hear barriers being verbalised but also encouraging the person to overcome barriers and to look at ways of how they can achieve their goals.’

‘My coaching skills have developed over the course of the module in a variety of ways. Beforehand

I believed that coaching involved one person telling the other what to do in order to resolve some sort of conflict. Now I have learned to listen more and find ways of expressing myself without giving an opinion.’

‘Over the module I’d say that my coaching skills have improved in two ways. The first is, as time has gone on, we have learned about different approaches and theories to coaching... Secondly I think that as the semester went on, my confidence to simply interact with another classmate in a coaching role grew and as such I think that I was more effective towards the end of the semester (with our sessions becoming shorter but getting more out of them). I found myself more willing to interact with my coaching partner in our last session and was far more confident.’

Data was available from 17 students here. Only one student reported that her skills had ‘not improved much’ with the other 16 all reporting improvement in general coaching skills. They reported their growing ability to work with specific coaching models ($N=10$); and their specific development of skills relating to generic graduate competencies wanted by employers ($N=8$), for example, listening and questioning.

Overall evaluation of the module experience:

Some students gave glowing reports of the value they had taken from the coaching module experience, both applied and academic components, and others reflected in a more balanced way on what they had learnt. There were two main themes elicited here: (1) the applied/practical approach aspect of the module as helpful and enjoyable; and (2) the benefits of coaching skills for ongoing learning, employment and lifestyle. These main themes were often intertwined within each other in participant’s accounts, as follows.

‘I thoroughly enjoyed this module. It was interesting to hear of a new area of psychology that is growing so fast. The lectures were informative and the seminars interactive and very enjoyable.’

The practical co-coaching helped me focus myself across the whole of my uni career and I kind of wish I was carrying it through next semester.'

I find the models and activities can and have been used by myself and others to improve myself to become a more well-rounded student and person.'

'Not only was the course educational it actually helped understand and reflect on some aspects of life/uni work. I found some of the techniques I learnt really useful and will definitely use them when I am working.'

'I found the module interesting as it included new and different methods of teaching. It wasn't just raw lectures and theories but also loads of activities which were sometimes really funny, sometimes a bit annoying but in general informative. Because of active involvement in seminar classes it's easier to memorise all the knowledge.'

'Enjoyed the seminars as they were interactive and I found myself using the coaching skills in other areas of my life. I also tried to use the GROW model on a work colleague to help her give up smoking. I found the lectures very intensive; there was a lot of information to get through. I found some of the coaching a real eye opener on my own life. I'm glad I chose it because I feel that what I have learned I can actually use.'

'I have found this module useful in helping me to understand how coaching works. It was interesting to find out the different techniques used to coach sessions and how these can be applied in different settings. By having practical sessions using these techniques I was further able to understand the way these worked.'

Data was available from 16 students here. They reported that they found the practical focus of the module useful ($N=12$); that they found the module enjoyable ($N=12$) and interesting ($N=8$). They also enjoyed the level of interaction ($N=5$) during the module and noted the knock on positive effects on other university related and life areas ($N=8$).

Discussion

Overall findings:

It would seem as if this coaching psychology module helped students develop their learning in a number of ways. In addition to enhancing an understanding of psychological theory linked to coaching psychology, students seemed to benefit from the practicality of the module in a range of ways. It helped them see how to use theory-based models, and to develop tools for future use; it allowed them to improve their listening skills, to gain clarity, to be non-judgemental and to help without offering advice. These skills are valuable to students about to graduate and enter the job market, and thus demonstrate the potential gains a coaching psychology module may have for employability. The students perceived that their coaching skills had improved and also that they had gained some of the skills necessary to increase their employability (Lantz et al., 2008). Their knowledge of the discipline of coaching psychology had also improved.

Limitations and implications including researchers' recommendations from observation:

Clearly we need to be mindful that the findings we have presented are based solely on our observations and the qualitative feedback from students, and these are limited in scale. The validity of the findings may also be open to challenge on the basis of inevitable presentational bias arising from students imagining they may be identified and marked adversely if giving negative feedback, despite the anonymity of the questionnaire. However, we learned a lot. For the future it is clear that 100 hours (10 credits) is insufficient to allow a deep engagement with coaching psychology, and hence we have increased its credit rating to 20 (200 hours nominal study) for future presentations. This will allow us to develop a broader academic context for the applied work, and continue to work toward developing a specific undergraduate teaching agenda for the theoretical components. The peer coaching aspect will also be expanded and in

the new 20 credit module students will spend more time in peer coaching dyads and quantitative data regarding aspects of their general well-being will be collected pre- and post-peer coaching.

The peer coaching aspect of the module was clearly successful offering a variety of outcomes. This gives rise to the possibility of its inclusion in other psychology modules to help students develop positive ways of working, improve academic performance and help them develop their employability skills. In this regard it might be possible to argue that an undergraduate module on coaching psychology should become a non-elective, central part of all psychology programmes, delivered at an early stage, to enable the skills acquired to be utilised throughout the psychology programme as it progresses. This would be a radical step, but perhaps one in line with the need for undergraduate programmes to offer more clear applied outcomes in the context of increasing student fees.

Coaching psychology could also be beneficial for non-psychology students. Prince, Snowden and Matthews (2010) found that peer coaching had a positive impact on professional development in student teachers. Ladyshevsky (2002) found similarly positive results for the development of clinical competency in physiotherapy students utilising a peer coaching paradigm, and for enhancing depth of learning in business students (Ladyshevsky, 2006). Huston and Weaver (2008) suggest peer coaching can improve continuing professional development in mid career and senior faculty members. These studies, and many more, all show the utility of employing a peer coaching paradigm and suggest that peer coaching can be useful for developing students who are not studying psychology. Coaching psychology could further strengthen development in non-psychology students by utilising and explaining the benefits of peer coaching using a methodology grounded in psychological theory.

Conclusion

If coaching psychology is to establish itself as a unique, important and separate discipline within psychology then there is a need to debate and develop a strong educational agenda for it. The recent invited responses to Grant's (2011) paper on developing an agenda for teaching coaching psychology provide us with a wealth of information from which to strengthen our own provision at an undergraduate level. Passmore (2011) posits that the study of coaching psychology should be accredited mainly at universities able to offer opportunities for doctoral study. He also reports that 'learning should not either start or stop at this point' (p.108). We believe that incorporating coaching psychology into our undergraduate programme is one way of helping the profession of coaching psychology develop through the dissemination of information, tools, techniques and skills development which allow our undergraduates to become aware of this exciting and rapidly developing area of psychology.

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The Solution-Focused Inventory: A tripartite taxonomy for teaching, measuring and conceptualising solution- focused approaches to coaching

Anthony M. Grant

Solution-focused approaches to facilitating purposeful positive change through methodologies such as coaching have great potential to contribute to the broader human change enterprise. To date there has been limited exposition of psychological theory within the solution-focused arena, and few attempts to articulate taxonomies specific to solution-focused research, teaching and practice, thus restricting the development and broader adoption of the solution-focused paradigm. Drawing on the established solution-focused literature, this paper seeks to address this issue by articulating a tripartite taxonomy for solution-focused coaching based on the framework underpinning the Solution-Focused Inventory. This model consists of three factors: (a) Goal-orientation; (b) Resource Activation; and (c) Problem Disengagement – subscales of the Solution-Focused Inventory. Implications of this taxonomy for teaching, research and practice are discussed and a range of future directions for research explored.

Keywords: *Solution-Focused Inventory; solution-focused coaching; coaching psychology.*

ORIGINALLY DEVELOPED in the counselling and therapeutic fields, solution-focused approaches are increasingly being utilised in a wide range of human change methodologies and various coaching applications. Solution-focused approaches to facilitating purposeful positive change are strengths-based approaches which emphasise people's resources and resilience and how these can be used in the pursuit of goals and the enactment of change. Goals, as internal representations of desired states or outcomes (Austin & Vancouver, 1996), are central to solution-focused practice (see de Jong & Berg, 1998, for some useful and detailed descriptions of goal setting protocols as used in solution-focused practice).

Although there is increasing interest in the use of solution-focused approaches in coaching, to date there has been little discussion on ways to teach, measure or conceptualise solution-focused approaches to coaching. The lack of psychological frameworks and models for teaching, measuring or

conceptualising solution-focused approaches to coaching may well be a key factor limiting the broader adoption of solution-focused approaches, and may also be limiting research into this promising area of human change facilitation.

This paper seeks to begin to address this issue by articulating a taxonomy for teaching, measuring and conceptualising solution-focused approaches to coaching. The empirical research on solution-focused approaches is briefly reviewed, the existing state of the theoretical literature on solution-focused approaches is then discussed, and the implications for the teaching of solution-focused approaches is explored. A new taxonomy for the teaching and measurement of solution-focused approaches is then presented.

The empirical context

In a comprehensive review of the literature Corcoran and Pillai (2009) found that solution-focused approaches had been used effectively in a wide number of therapeutic

situations including child behaviour problems (Corcoran, 2006), marital problems (Zimmerman, Prest & Wetzel, 1997) criminal offending (Lindfors & Magnusson, 1997) and orthopaedic rehabilitation (Cockburn, Thomas & Cockburn, 1997). Other reviews of solution-focused counselling and therapeutic interventions have also reported positive effects in relation to increases in good parenting skills, decreased anxiety, stress and depression and reductions in adolescent problem behaviours (e.g. Kim, 2008; Stams et al., 2006). There is also a growing empirical literature on the use of solution-focused approaches in areas such as organisational and personal coaching and sports coaching (Bell, Skinner & Fisher, 2009; Grant, 2003; Jackson & McKergow, 2002; Szabo & Meier, 2009)

This growing body of empirical literature suggests that solution-focused approaches may be applicable in a wide range of settings. However, virtually all the solution-focused empirical literature focuses on reporting *outcomes* of solution-focused interventions. There is hardly any empirical research explicitly looking at *how* a solution-focused approach works (see Grant & O'Connor, 2010), and so the psychological mechanics of how solution-focused approaches create change is relatively unknown.

The conceptual context

Although the solution-focused approach has been used in a wide range of applied contexts, theoretical development that can facilitate causal understandings has fallen substantially behind practical application. Originally conceptualised within a Wittgensteinian framework (de Shazer, 1994) there have been a number of subsequent attempts to relate the solution-focused paradigm to a range of theoretical frameworks. These have included self-determination theory (Visser, 2010), positive psychology (Bannink & Jackson, 2011), hope theory (Michael, Taylor & Cheavens, 2000), discursive psychological theory (Dierolf, 2011) and feminist theory (Dermer, Hemesath & Russell, 1998).

However, at present there seems to be few, if any, clearly articulated solution-specific theoretical frameworks or taxonomies.

It is perhaps not surprising that the conceptual aspects of solution-focused approaches have gone relatively undeveloped and attempts to link solution-focused approaches to the broader psychological enterprise have been somewhat tenuous. The postmodernist Wittgensteinian stance adopted by the early pioneers of solution-focused approaches (e.g. de Shazer, 1994) is a complex philosophy that, in part, focuses on how language both constructs and constricts our understandings of the world. De Shazer's interpretation of Wittgenstein's philosophy resulted in a therapeutic modality that steadfastly avoids causal explanations and was purposefully distanced from the broader psychological enterprise (de Shazer & Dolan, 2007). Indeed some solution-focused proponents argue that attempts to understand how the solution-focused approach works are at best irrelevant and could even be detrimental, stating that it is only important to know that it does work and how to make it work (Kiser, 1996; McKergow & Jackson, 2005).

Limitations on development

Whilst such a position might appeal to some practitioners, and may well resonate with those who subscribe to postmodern philosophical perspectives, I argue that this position has seriously limited the broader development and adoption of solution-focused approaches (for an informative extended critique of postmodern philosophy in solution-focused approaches see Held, 1996).

Firstly, the lack of guiding theoretical frameworks or taxonomies makes it difficult to conduct research beyond straightforward outcome studies (Chalmers, 1976). We need research that gives insights into the psychological underpinnings of solution-focused approaches, and such research is guided by well-articulated theory. In this way the knowledge-base can be expanded, bringing greater rigour and higher standards of

professionalism – vital for the growth of the area. These issues are particularly poignant in an area such as solution-focused coaching which is moving towards a more evidenced-based approach (Grant & Cavanagh, 2007).

Secondly, the lack of a theoretical framework that includes information about the underpinning psychological mechanics means that solution-focused practitioners and researchers have no explicit theory to drive the development of new techniques. Whilst existing solution-focused techniques might be effective in some circumstances, some of the time, with some clients, the development of any area of psychological practice is dependent on its ability to purposefully adapt and change in response to perceived limitations and to develop new applications. Without an explicit guiding framework on which to base expansion and the development of new applications, any area of psychological practice is likely to stagnate and become irrelevant over time.

Thirdly, without a theoretical framework that gives insight into the underpinning psychological mechanics it is very difficult to purposefully develop conceptually-coherent solution-focused case conceptualisations (or case formulations). Case conceptualisation (sometimes referred to as case formulation) is the process of developing a mental model of the presenting issues in a way that makes those issues amenable to change (Palmer & Gyllensten, 2008). These are typically developed during the process of working with a client, moment by moment as the conversation and issues unfold, in addition to being refined after the session has finished as part of professional reflective practice.

From a diagnostic perspective a full conceptual model incorporates information about past experience which may have shaped client's core beliefs and world view, and links those to the development of beliefs and assumptions about self, others and the world, and also identifies the critical incidents that trigger the relevant problem as well as identifying the factors that maintain the problem (Lane & Corrie, 2009).

From a solution-focused perspective a solution-focused case conceptualisation would, in effect, turn a problem-focused diagnostic conceptualisation on its head. Thus the focus would be on delineating preferred outcomes, articulating potential solutions and specific strategies that might be useful in the goal striving process, and in doing so highlighting the client's personal strengths and resources and how those can be utilised in the goal attainment process.

Whichever perspective is employed, the process of developing a case conceptualisation necessarily involves the use and application of theory. Thus the lack of appropriate theoretical frameworks within the solution-focused approach is a major limitation on its development.

Key presuppositions

Although there has been little work on linking solution-focused approaches to the broader psychological enterprises, there are a number of key presuppositions that are generally accepted as informing solution-focused work (see, for example, Furman & Ahola, 1992; O'Connell, 1998). These include:

- *A non-pathological orientation* – Problems are seen, not as indications of pathology or dysfunctionality, but stemming from a limited behavioural repertoire.
- *Future-orientation* – The emphasis is more on the future (what the client wants to have happen) than the present or the past. The past is seen as a potential reservoir of recourses, but the past is not used as a means of exploring causality.
- *A focus on constructing solutions and disengaging from problems* – The coach (or therapist) facilitates the construction of solutions rather than trying to understand the aetiology of the problem.
- *A focus on articulating preferred outcomes or goals* – The coach helps the client articulate their preferred outcome/s and then works with them to help them identify action steps that may help them attain their goals. Action steps are seen as

being a series of mini-experiments rather than being predetermined prescriptions for change.

- *Utilisation and activation of existing client resources* – The coach (or therapist) helps the client recognise and utilise a wide range of personal and contextual resources of which they may have been unaware.

The above (and other similar) presuppositions can provide useful guidelines for solution-focused practice, and these may well provide the basis of a taxonomy that may be of use in teaching, measuring or conceptualising solution-focused approaches. Importantly, such a taxonomy may be a useful means of linking solution-focused approaches to the extant body of psychological knowledge.

Implications for teaching

The lack of a previously articulated taxonomy for solution-focused coaching also has important ramifications for the teaching of solution-focused approaches. Although solution-focused pioneers such as Steve de Shazer were famously uncompromising in teaching solution-focused work experientially, by demonstration and practice rather than by explaining it, there is some debate in the contemporary solution-focused community about whether or not such theory-avoidance is the best way to engage new learners. Indeed, there is a growing recognition that the explicit articulation of taxonomies and cognitive models is important for the future development of teaching and training methodologies (McKergow, 2011).

It is important to note that whilst a practical hands-on experiential approach to teaching and training might appeal to some pragmatic or experiential learners, those who prefer a more reflective or theorist style of learning may be less engaged (Honey & Mumford, 1982). Whilst some students are able to engage with a theory-free approach to learning solution-focused work, in my personal experience as one who has taught and trained a wide range of individuals in

solution-focused coaching for well over a decade in both university and industry settings, I have found that there is another substantial group of students who find it difficult to grasp the essence of solution-focused coaching without having some kind of taxonomy or theoretical framework. This student group may easily be alienated by positioning theory as irrelevant. Furthermore, the failure to include theoretical models in the teaching of solution-focused approaches limits the ability of students to engage in structured reflective practice (McGonagill, 2002; Schon, 1982) and thus makes it more difficult for them to benefit from subsequent double and triple loop learning (Argyris, 1977).

In addition, the lack of explicit theoretical frameworks may make it more challenging for both teachers and students to further develop sophisticated understandings of some of the essential aspects of professional practice such as the role of ongoing supervision, or how to best assess and measure the effectiveness of solution-focused teaching and training (McKergow, 2011).

These are all important issues that need to be addressed if solution-focused approaches are to develop over time and not become a conceptual or applied backwater in the evidence-based coaching enterprise. We need to bear in mind one of the core principles of the solution-focused paradigm (e.g., Cade & O'Hanlon, 1993); if what we are doing is not working, then we need to try something different. If a theory-free approach to teaching solution-focused skills is becoming a problem then we need to disengage from that problem and move towards creating a new solution!

A proposed tripartite taxonomy of solution-focused coaching

The previous review of the solution-focused literature identified several key presuppositions underpinning solution-focused approaches including; a non-pathological orientation; an orientation towards the future rather than the past; a focus on disen-

gaging from problems and an emphasis on constructing and moving towards solutions; goal orientation and the identification, utilisation and activation of personal and contextual client resources.

From this overview we can posit three broad themes related to the solution-focused approach and these may well form the core of a tripartite taxonomy for solution-focused coaching. These are:

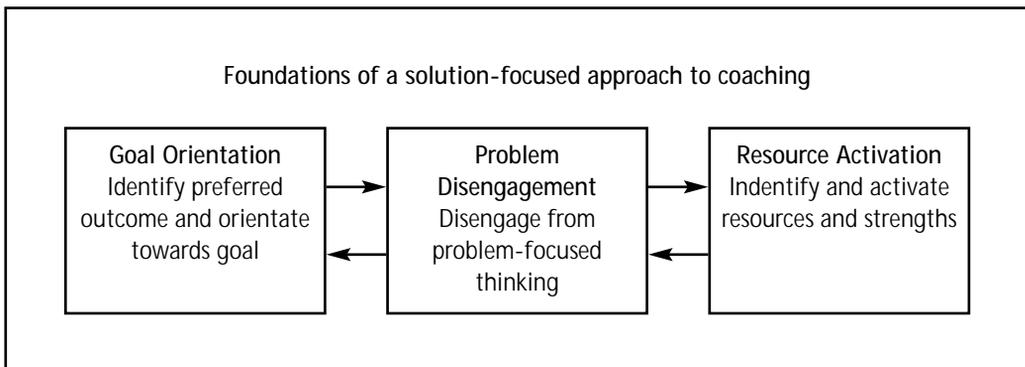
1. *Goal-orientation*: An orientation toward solution construction through the articulating and use of approach goals and active self regulation.
2. *Resource Activation*: A focus on acknowledging, identifying and activating a wide range of personal and contextual resources and personal strengths.
3. *Problem Disengagement*: This third theme recognises that a solution-focused approach involves more than goal articulation and resource awareness and utilisation. It also involves an explicit disengagement from presenting problems. It should be noted that although the ability to disengage from a problem is conceptually independent of one's ability to be orientated towards a solution, problem disengagement is vital for full engagement in the goal pursuit process central to the solution-focused endeavour (Greene & Grant, 2003; Wrosch et al., Schulz, 2003).

In essence the above taxonomy echoes the process of solution-focused approaches to coaching which aim to help clients articulate preferred outcomes, disengage from the presenting problem, and then identify and identify and utilise the personal strengths and resources needed to move towards goal attainment. These three facets when combined can be seen to comprise the core of a solution-focused approach to coaching. This is represented in Figure 1. It should be borne in mind that this taxonomy only represents the core psychological foundations of a solution-focused approach to coaching, factors such as coaching-related micro-skills, contracting, and client relationship management – all important components of the coaching enterprise – are not included in this taxonomy as it stands.

A conceptual basis for measuring solution-focused approaches

The question now arises as how to operationalise the above taxonomy. The following are items developed for the Solution-Focused Inventory – a 12-item self-report measure of solution-focused approaches for use with clients currently in the final stages of psychometric validation (Please contact the author for details regarding the development and validation of the Solution-Focused Inventory.) Note: The SFI may be freely used for research and teaching purposes and each item is scored using a six-point rating scale (1=strongly disagree, 6=strongly agree).

Figure 1: A proposed tripartite taxonomy of solution-focused approaches to coaching.



The *Goal Orientation* items are designed to encapsulate the key features of goal-focused self-regulation which underpins an orientation toward solution construction (Locke & Latham, 2002).

The *Resource Activation* items reflect the core aspects of resource activation widely reported in the solution-focused literature (see, for example, de Shazer, 1988; Furman & Ahola, 1992; Miller, Hubble & Duncan, 1996; O'Connell, 1998; Palmer, Grant & O'Connell, 2007)

The *Problem Disengagement* items assess the degree to which an individual tends to engage in problem-saturated thinking, and by reverse scoring these items it is possible to create an analogue measure of problem disengagement.

Application of the taxonomy in teaching, research and practice

This taxonomy can be used to inform teaching, research and practice by providing a framework for linking core aspects of solution-focused practice to the existing psycho-

logical literature on areas such as goal setting (e.g. Moskowitz & Grant, 2009), resource activation as reported in the strengths-based aspects of positive psychology (e.g. Linley & Harrington, 2006), and problem disengagement as discussed in the cognitive literature associated with rumination and problem-saturated thinking (e.g. Nolen-Hoeksema & Morrow, 1991; Trapnell & Campbell, 1999). This would allow theoretically-orientated solution-focused researchers and practitioners to draw on existing psychological research and use that knowledge to advance the development of solution-focused approaches, whilst at the same time linking existing solution-focused work back to the broader psychological knowledge base.

Such an approach may well prove to be a useful aid in the teaching of solution-focused work. A simple taxonomy that encapsulates the core theoretical facets of solution-focused practice and links such practice back into the existing psychological knowledge base, may well make learning the core

Table 1: Items from the Solution-Focused Inventory.

<p><i>Goal Orientation</i></p> <p>I imagine my goals and then work towards them</p> <p>I keep track of my progress towards my goals</p> <p>I'm very good at developing effective action plans</p> <p>I always achieve my goals</p> <p><i>Resource Activation</i></p> <p>There is always a solution to every problem</p> <p>There are always enough resources to solve a problem if you know where to look</p> <p>Most people are more resilient than they realise</p> <p>Setbacks are a real opportunity to turn failure into success</p> <p><i>Problem Disengagement</i></p> <p>I tend to spend more time analysing my problems than working on possible solutions *</p> <p>I tend to get stuck in thinking about problems *</p> <p>I tend to focus on the negative *</p> <p>I'm not very good at noticing when things are going well *</p>

Note: The SFI may be freely used for research and teaching purposes and each item is scored using a six-point rating scale (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree). * = reverse scored item.

concepts of solution-focused coaching much easier for students whose background is in other areas of psychology or who hold reflective or theorist approaches to learning (Honey & Mumford, 1982).

As previously argued, the linking of solution-focused approaches to the existing knowledge bases is important if solution-focused coaching is to continue on its evidence-based journey. The taxonomy outlined in this paper may prove to be valuable in measuring and assessing solution-focused change, and practitioners may find this useful in helping them to assess key areas of their practice.

As regards future research questions: It would be valuable to understand the relationship between insight and solution-focused thinking. To what extent is solution-focused thinking associated with personal insight? Do high levels of insight facilitate solution-focused thinking? Does increasing individuals' levels of insight help them become more solution-focused? Such questions strike at the heart of the solution-focused coaching endeavour, and the further development of theoretical models and measures of solution-focused thinking may well help answer such questions, and in doing so further develop solution-focused practices.

In addition, it would be interesting to explore the relationship between solution-focused thinking, happiness and health. There is considerable interest at all levels of Western society in the measurement and enhancement of happiness and health (Stratton, 2010), and there is also considerable interest in the use of solution-focused approaches as a means of enhancing mental health and well-being (Craven & Bodkin-Andrews, 2006; Linton, 2005). However, to date there has been little research into the possible connections between solution-focused thinking and health and happiness. Does solution-focused thinking lead to enhanced health and/or happiness?

Do healthy and happy people tend to be more solution-focused? If there is a connection between solution-focused thinking, health and happiness, to what extent does solution-focused thinking mediate or moderate the relationship between health and happiness?

Conclusion

The above questions and the taxonomy that they spring from provide a potentially rich platform for future research, teaching and practice of the solution-focused approach. Yet none of these empirical questions can be truly explored without the development of taxonomies or theoretical frameworks from which to articulate specific hypotheses and empirically investigate these issues. The Solution-Focused Inventory may in time prove to be one such taxonomy. These concepts outlined above have the very real potential to significantly develop solution-focused approaches to coaching, to add to the existing knowledge base, expand our understandings of evidence-based coaching, improve our ability to teach and thus contribute to the betterment of our coaching clients on both an individual and societal level.

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Leadership Coaching? No thanks, I'm not worthy

Vicky Ellam-Dyson & Stephen Palmer

The question of what encourages or discourages individuals to be coached, or not, is an interesting one. Particularly when the coaching is being funded and it has been positioned as a useful tool to aid the transition to a more senior position. In a study intended to follow 41 executives through the coaching process almost half of the participants declined the opportunity to receive coaching. It is possible that this is related to avoidance behaviour. In previous research avoidance behaviours have been linked to maladaptive beliefs and demands, such as low self-worth/acceptance, perfectionism and low frustration tolerance. Beliefs data for the coaching and no-coaching group were compared and it was found that those who chose not to be coached had significantly lower unconditional self-acceptance than those that were coached. Implications of the findings in terms of how they relate to potential leadership effectiveness are discussed, along with suggestions for organisations and coaches regarding how to overcome these issues. This paper also describes the pitfalls at various stages in the research which resulted in an unavoidable change of focus and alternative research questions, but also led to unexpected important findings.

Keywords: coaching; leadership transition; unconditional self-acceptance; contingencies of self-worth; frustration tolerance; perfectionism.

COACHING often forms part of leadership development programmes, with organisations investing in methods to aid successful transition up the leadership ladder. It can assist leaders in developing the skills, behaviours and attitudes required to equip them to cope with the transition and the demands of the new role (Kombarakaran et al., 2008). De Haan (2005) reports that coaching is continually growing in popularity and status, and that the stigma of being coached is reducing as leaders recognise the value in working with other professionals to help them to grow and develop. However, some leaders do still consider there to be a stigma attached to seeing a coach. They believe it signifies the presence of remedial problems that need fixing, and they are concerned about what others will think if they know that they are being coached (O'Shaughnessy, 2001; Underhill, McAnally & Koriath, 2007). In consideration of this, organisations are realising that to engage employees in coaching it is important to position it as a positive endeavour, as a tool to aid successful transi-

tion, one which will help leaders to thrive in their new role. Creating a coaching culture is important for changing attitudes to coaching; organisations need to develop an environment where continual growth, change and development are valued by all across the organisation (Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005). It is recognised also that forcing or coercing individuals into going to coaching can be problematic and can result in resistance to coaching (Hardingham et al., 2006). Hardingham and colleagues (2006) describe the choice spectrum which moves from total choice to total coercion, proposing that the further along the spectrum towards total coercion the coachee perceives they are the more difficult it will be to engage them in the coaching process. It would seem then that engagement in coaching is more likely if it is viewed as a positive tool for change, and that individuals have subscribed to the concept of change and development and see it as a choice.

However, consider this real life example: coaching has been positioned as a positive development tool to a group of fast track

leaders, those who have been selected for showing high potential. Almost half of them declined the opportunity to receive coaching, despite it being part of a talent management programme specifically designed for them, on which they had willingly embarked. Each participant had an opportunity to meet with a coach during a development centre day to discuss what their coaching objectives could be. What might have influenced their decision not to be coached?

It is considered here that avoidance behaviours may explain the choice not to be coached. Avoidance behaviours are explained in the rational emotive behaviour (REB) approach as being a consequence of rigid irrational beliefs and demands, with particular focus on beliefs pertaining to perfectionism, low frustration tolerance and low self-acceptance (Ellis, 1995). Perfectionist beliefs such as 'I must never make mistakes, and if I do I am a failure' can result in an extreme fear of failure, worrying about making mistakes and anxiety about what others think. Low frustration tolerance beliefs such as 'life must always be easy otherwise it is intolerable' influence how individuals cope when faced with challenging situations. Such rigid beliefs and demands can lead to procrastination and avoidance as individuals strive to preserve or protect their self-worth and self-esteem (Ellis, 1995). Low self-acceptance beliefs are also reported to influence avoidance behaviours (Crocker & Knight, 2005; Ellis, 1995). Crocker and Knight (2005) suggest that self-acceptance is based on contingencies of self-worth. Contingencies of self-worth are a set of outcomes on which individuals base their self-esteem and sense of worth (Cooper-smith, 1967). Contingencies of self-worth differ across individuals; some may base their self-worth on competencies whilst others may base their worth on approval or disapproval from others. We all want to believe that we are valuable and worthy and as such we typically seek out the emotional highs associated with our contingencies of self-worth; engaging in activities in which we can

prove our worth and avoiding those that may result in failure and feelings of low self-worth (Crocker & Knight, 2005).

One aim of the research described in this paper was to explore whether rigid evaluative core beliefs were present in the executives taking part and whether they were correlated with potential derailment behaviours. Another aim of the research was to observe the extent to which coaching can help rigid beliefs to become more flexible and, therefore, help with developing more positive behaviours. As a consequence of the dropout of almost half of the participants it became possible to explore differences in beliefs for those being coached and those choosing to decline coaching, as discussed below.

Research outline

A public sector department selected 41 managers as potential future senior civil servants from a group of 100 managers that had taken part in an assessment centre initiative. The 41 managers were then engaged in a talent management programme to help them transition to more senior positions. The programme involved development centre days, action learning days, and six hours of coaching for each manager. The public sector department teamed up with a researcher from City University London (VED) to conduct a study looking at the influence of the coaching for meeting the objectives set for their transition plan. The organisation was interested in understanding their employee's attitudes to coaching and whether the coaching had made a difference. They specifically wanted to look at general perceptions of coaching, levels of motivation and enthusiasm to be coached, expected success of coaching, expected levels of line manager support, and what quality the coachees felt was most important in a coach. Post-coaching they wanted to understand the levels of satisfaction with the coaching, the extent to which objectives had been met, the extent to which coachees now believed they were equipped to cope with

the demands of a more senior position, the criteria they used to select their coach, the line managers actual support, and what they believed could have been done differently.

The researcher was particularly interested in observing pre- and post-coaching measures of the participant's beliefs and behaviours to determine whether these changed as a consequence of coaching. The beliefs of interest were those pertaining to perfectionism, frustration tolerance, and unconditional self-acceptance. The behaviours were outlined in the organisations 360° feedback tool, results of which would be collected by the organisation and provided to the researcher. As the approaches used in coaching were likely to be different across participants, due to the coaching being carried out by a number of coaches with different styles, controls were put in place to measure the extent to which different types of coaching were used with each individual; for example, cognitive behavioural coaching, as some methods of coaching target beliefs and behaviours more directly than others.

Due to a change in the 360° feedback tool used by the organisation during the research period it became untenable to compare pre- and post-coaching behaviours as the data could not be matched. However, as the beliefs data was being collected via standardised questionnaires selected by the researcher there was still potential to observe any changes in individuals' beliefs as a consequence of coaching and the data collection went ahead as planned with all 41 managers completing a set of questionnaires. It was hypothesised that there would be lower scores for perfectionism, lower scores for frustration discomfort, and higher scores for unconditional self-acceptance after the coaching. Ethical approval for this study was granted by the research committee at City University London.

Research design

Information was collected via paper-based and online surveys to provide quantitative

and qualitative data for analysis. Initially this was to be collected pre- and post-coaching from one participant group; the coaching group ($N=41$). It was recognised that a control group was required ideally to compare outcomes for the coaching group to a no-coaching group. The ideal design for research is the use of randomised control trials, but these can be difficult in applied settings due to issues of fairness and ethics (Clark-Carter & Marks, 2004). A waiting list group design was considered but this would have put the first group of coachees at an advantage if opportunities for promotion came up during the waiting period. Data collection for the coaching group proceeded whilst a control group was sought. (See Ellam-Dyson & Palmer [2008] for more details regarding the challenges of researching executive coaching in applied settings.)

Materials

A set of pre-coaching and post-coaching questionnaires were used. The beliefs to be observed were those pertaining to perfectionism, frustration tolerance, and unconditional self-acceptance. These were measured using standardised questionnaires. The Perfectionism Inventory (PI; Hill et al., 2004) consists of 59 items measuring two main constructs of perfectionism; self-evaluative perfectionism and conscientious perfectionism. The items are rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. The Frustration Discomfort Scale (FDS; Harrington, 2005) consists of 28 items measuring four constructs of frustration discomfort; achievement, emotional intolerance, entitlement, and discomfort intolerance, as well as total frustration tolerance. Participants were required to rate their agreement to the 28 statements, also on a five-point Likert scale. The Unconditional Self-Acceptance Questionnaire (USAQ; Chamberlain & Haaga, 2001) contains 20 items presented as statements to which participants were required to rate their level of agreement using a seven-point Likert scale; 1=almost always untrue,

2=usually untrue, 3=more often untrue than true, 4=equally as often untrue and true, 5=more often true than untrue, 6=usually true, 7=always true. Some items were reverse scored as some statements were negatively worded whilst others were positively worded.

Participants also completed a pre-coaching questionnaire about their attitudes to coaching; whether they had been coached before or knew somebody else that was coached, their perceptions of the usefulness of coaching to achieve their objectives, their levels of motivation and enthusiasm to be coached, their line managers' perception of coaching, and the level of support they expected from their line manager in assisting them to attend coaching. This was a 14-item questionnaire with a mix of scales, where some questions were to be scored on a five-point Likert scale, others required a yes or no answer, and the final question was qualitative and required a written response. A post-coaching questionnaire was also developed to capture satisfaction with the coaching, level of success in reaching objectives, the usefulness of the coaching for aiding the transition, line managers' actual support, and how they had selected their coach. This was an 18-item questionnaire requiring responses based on a mix of quantitative scales and qualitative written responses. A further questionnaire was developed part way through the research to capture data from a no-coaching group at Time 2. This was a five-item questionnaire asking participants to rate the extent to which different factors had affected their

decision not to be coached, with the opportunity to provide qualitative data.

Procedure

Time 1 measures were collected from all participants ($N=41$) at four development centre events, held on four separate days with approximately 10 attendees at each event. These events were organised as part of the talent management programme for the selected managers to meet other participants, take part in group exercises, and meet with coaches to determine which leadership skills they needed to develop and set their objectives for coaching. Participants completed paper-based versions of the beliefs questionnaires and the attitudes to coaching questionnaire. Following the development centre days the participants were expected to take part in their six hours of coaching over the following 12-month period. As each person concluded their coaching they were contacted to complete online post-coaching surveys to capture the beliefs data and the outcomes data.

Twelve months on, unexpectedly, almost half of the individuals had chosen not to be coached ($N=20$). This was unfortunate in terms of reducing the sample but it did overcome the issue of not having a control group in place. Given that there were now two groups to observe it was possible to test the full hypothesis by comparing beliefs data collected at Time 2 for the coaching and no-coaching groups. Table 1 shows the revised time intervals for the data collection.

Table 1: Time intervals for data collection for coaching and no-coaching groups.

Group	Time 1	Time 2
Coaching	Complete beliefs and pre-coaching questionnaires. Start coaching.	Complete questionnaires for beliefs and outcomes.
No coaching	Complete beliefs and pre-coaching questionnaires. No Coaching.	Complete questionnaires for beliefs and reasons for not being coached.

It was considered important to capture data about why the no-coaching group had chosen not to be coached and an additional Time 2 questionnaire was developed. It included questions about practical and personal elements such as the process for selecting coaches, the choice of coach's available, time implications, knowledge of coaching benefits, feeling at ease to discuss issues, confidentiality, and line manager's support. Having the two comparison groups also offered an interesting opportunity to tap into any differences in the beliefs of those choosing to be coached and those declining coaching. This data was expected to offer some great insights into what discourages individuals from being coached.

Hence four new questions were posed:

1. Were there any significant differences in the extent to which beliefs changed between the coaching group and the no-coaching group at Time 2?
2. What were the reasons for the no-coaching group choosing not to be coached?
3. Were there any significant differences in the levels of beliefs for the coaching group and the no-coaching group at Time 1?
4. Were there any differences in the attitudes to coaching for the coaching group and no-coaching group?

Results

The main aim of the research had been to compare the beliefs at Time 1 and Time 2 to observe any differences as a consequence of coaching (coaching group) or the passing of time (no-coaching group). Unfortunately, after persisting for several months, none of the no-coaching group ($N=20$) completed the Time 2 questionnaires. Moreover, of the coaching group ($N=21$) only nine completed the Time 2 questionnaires. Thus, there was not enough Time 2 data to draw any useful comparisons between Time 1 and Time 2. Nor were there any data to indicate why some participants had chosen not to be coached. Thus, the original hypothesis could

not be tested, nor could questions 1 and 2 be answered. It is acknowledged that as we reached this point in the research it was a particularly demanding time for this Government department; the research was therefore not considered a priority and the required resources were now unavailable to assist with data collection. Such are the frustrations of carrying out applied research.

Nonetheless, there was still a pool of pre-coaching attitudes to coaching and beliefs data available for analysis from all 41 public sector managers and questions 3 and 4 could still be addressed. It was considered particularly interesting to compare the beliefs of the coaching group and no-coaching group to observe whether there were any differences in perfectionism, frustration tolerance, and unconditional self-acceptance at Time 1, pre-coaching.

The beliefs data for the two groups were compared and analysed. When calculating the frustration tolerance scores higher scores on the FDS are indicative of higher levels of frustration, hence lower scores are more preferable than high scores. Items in the scale include 'I can't stand doing tasks when I am not in the mood'. Higher scores on the PI indicate higher levels of perfectionism. Examples of conscientious perfectionism items include 'I drive myself rigorously to achieve high standards'. Examples of self-evaluative perfectionism items include 'If I make mistakes people might think less of me'. Lower scores for perfectionism are more preferable than higher scores. Higher scores on the USAQ indicate higher levels of unconditional self-acceptance. Some items were reverse scored. As such, a high level of agreement for the statement 'I feel worthwhile even if I am not successful in meeting certain goals that are important to me' indicates high levels of unconditional self-acceptance. Conversely, a high level of agreement for the statement 'My sense of self-worth depends a lot on how I compare with other people' is indicative of conditional self-acceptance. A higher overall score for the USAQ is preferable.

The data were analysed using an independent samples *t*-test. There were no significant differences between the attitudes to coaching for the two groups. There was no significant difference in the conscientious perfectionism scores for the coaching group ($M=86.38$, $SD=16.70$) and the no coaching group ($M=84.85$, $SD=14.06$); $t(39)=.317$, $p=.753$. There was also no significant difference in the self-evaluative perfectionism scores for the coaching group ($M=79.24$, $SD=17.04$) and the no-coaching group ($M=87.65$, $SD=18.01$); $t(39)=-1.537$, $p=.132$. The difference in the total frustration tolerance scores (FDS total) for the two groups was also non-significant; coaching group ($M=78.24$, $SD=9.21$) and no-coaching ($M=76.95$, $SD=9.18$); $t(39)=.448$, $p=.656$, as shown in Table 2 along with the mean values for the four sub-categories of frustration tolerance. However, interestingly, the no-coaching group had significantly lower scores for unconditional self-acceptance ($M=84.20$, $SD=14.02$) than the coaching group ($M=92.81$, $SD=10.28$); $t(39)=2.250$, $p=.030$), also shown in Table 2.

Discussion

The influence of findings on the research questions

The original aim of the research was to explore changes in beliefs and behaviours pre- and post-coaching, with a hypothesis that perfectionism scores would be lower, frustration discomfort scores would be lower, and unconditional self-acceptance scores would be higher in the coaching group after coaching. Unfortunately, this could not be tested due to the lack of post-coaching (Time 2) data for comparison. In light of a control group forming as a number of participants ($N=20$) chose not to be coached, four subsequent questions were posed based on the apparent opportunity to do some Time 2 and between group comparisons. However, the unfortunate lack of Time 2 data then meant that questions 1 and 2 could not be answered. Nonetheless, questions 3 and 4 could still be addressed with the Time 1 data and it was considered that the data might bring useful insights into what contributed to the no-coaching group choosing not to be coached.

Table 2: Time 1 beliefs scores for the coaching and no-coaching groups.

	Coaching ($N=21$) Mean	No-Coaching ($N=20$) Mean
Frustration Tolerance		
Achievement	22.81	21.15 ¹
Entitlement	20.95	20.30 ¹
Emotional Intolerance	18.90	19.95 ¹
Discomfort Intolerance	15.57	15.55 ¹
FDS Total	78.24	76.85 ¹
Perfectionism		
Self Evaluative	79.24	87.65 ¹
Conscientious	86.48	84.85 ¹
Unconditional Self-Acceptance	92.81	84.20 ^{2*}

¹ = higher scores preferable; ² = lower scores preferable; * = significant at $p<.05$.

There were no significant differences in the attitudes to coaching or the frustration tolerance scores for the two groups. The difference between the perfectionism scores was also non-significant, though it was observed that the no-coaching group did score more highly for self-evaluative perfectionism. The statistically significant difference in the two groups for unconditional self-acceptance was a really interesting finding, particularly when low/conditional self-acceptance is a factor that is likely to influence the confidence to lead. In other words, the people that were likely to need the coaching to help them build the confidence to cope with their transition and the demands of a new role were those avoiding it.

The influence of self-acceptance on avoidance behaviours

As discussed earlier, self-acceptance is based on contingencies of self-worth (Crocker & Knight, 2005). For individuals who experience conditional self-acceptance their contingencies of self-worth must be met for them to feel worthy and to maintain their self-esteem. Where individuals want to prove their success and experience high self-esteem in relation to their contingencies of self-worth they are likely to set and pursue self-validation goals in those domains (Crocker & Park, 2004). If, however, they perceive that failure could be a possibility they may disengage from the tasks required to reach the goal, perhaps deciding it does not matter after all, which is preferable to risking the loss of self-esteem and feelings of low self-worth if failure does occur (Crocker & Knight, 2005). It is considered that participants in this study that did not engage in coaching may have been driven by preservation of self-worth and self-esteem. However, the data is not available to substantiate this.

Crocker and Knight (2005) outline some of the consequences of pursuing self-esteem by proving one's worth to oneself and others. It is interesting to consider how these may influence leadership. They suggest that

focusing on proving one's worth can interfere with building and maintaining relationships, as people tend to be focused on themselves at the cost of others feelings and needs (Crocker & Park, 2004). From a leadership perspective, a lack of interpersonal sensitivity and poor relationship building are suggested contributors to leadership derailment (Bentz, 1985; McCall & Lombardo, 1983). Pursuit of self-esteem through proving self-worth also has implications for learning, particularly for those who set self-validation goals, as they see mistakes, criticism and negative feedback as threats rather than opportunities to learn, grow, and develop (Crocker & Knight, 2005). Furthermore, it can negatively influence goal attainment. As discussed above, where goal attainment may start to look uncertain individuals may disengage to avoid possible failure. It is interesting to consider whether this could be a contributor to a laissez-faire style of leadership, where leaders avoid getting involved in important issues, avoid decision making, and offer little in terms of direction or support to their followers (Bass, 1985). This self-validation approach can also have consequences for mental health, such as stress and depression (Crocker & Knight, 2005).

Limitations of the research

Of course, without the feedback from those who chose not to be coached it is not possible to say exactly what led to their decision. Perhaps the low levels of unconditional self-acceptance led them to decide that a more senior role was in fact too daunting, and perhaps having not been coached provided an excuse not to apply for any upcoming openings for more senior positions. This kind of strategy has been referred to as self-handicapping, where individuals create obstacles to their own success in order to have an excuse ready if failure occurs (Jones & Berglas, 1978; Kearns, Forbes & Gardiner, 2007). Without the data to establish who in fact went ahead and moved into more senior positions this inference can obviously not be

substantiated. With gaps in the data it cannot be asserted unequivocally that low unconditional self-acceptance was a main factor in this decision and it is recognised that there are other factors that may well have fed into this decision. However, the findings reported here do show significant differences between the two groups in their levels of unconditional self-acceptance and this data should not be ignored.

Suggestions for Leadership Coaching

Given the outcomes of the study described in this paper, a pressing question is 'How do we encourage individuals with conditional self-acceptance (i.e. low unconditional self-acceptance) to engage in coaching?' The answer potentially lies in the suggestion of building a coaching culture, where learning and development are accepted, indeed expected throughout the organisation (Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005). Farson and Keyes (2002) suggest that an environment that encourages risk taking and recognises failures as opportunities to learn is important in encouraging individuals to embrace challenges and reduce the fear of failure.

What can be done to avoid the pitfalls of conditional self-acceptance for those who do engage in coaching and are working on leadership development? Crocker and Knight (2005) suggest that it is important to avoid setting goals that are primarily focused on boosting one's self-esteem, but instead to focus on goals that contribute to others' successes. They also suggest setting learning goals instead of self-validation goals. Anderson (2002) explains that he has worked with a surprising amount of executives who have a lack of self-worth and low self-acceptance. He uses techniques drawn from the rational emotive behaviour approach to uncover the beliefs linked to the behaviours and to help the coachees move forward. One example from his work includes the vice president of a dynamic organisation who had problems with relationships, fear of confrontation, problems with delegation and insecurity dealing with her boss. It became apparent

that her behaviours were caused by a lack of self-worth. In another client example, Anderson (2002) found that a brilliant and very quick-minded IT manager had little tolerance for those not performing to his level, deemed himself the judge of their competence, and consequently had difficulties with relationships with his colleagues. He was very intense and prone to holding demanding 'must' beliefs. It was uncovered that as well as frustration tolerance issues he also had low unconditional self-acceptance and felt neglected, ignored and without worth. Palmer and Gyllensten (2008) report a case study of a client who presented with depression and had problems with procrastination. As part of the case conceptualisation, it was hypothesised that her procrastination was related to a belief that, 'If I do not do a perfect job then I am inadequate' (Palmer & Gyllensten, 2008, p.44). Anderson (2002) clarifies that working with these issues can take time, but that clients report it to be a very worthwhile process. Palmer (2009) describes how the rational emotive behaviour approach can be used in coaching with clients to assist them in adapting beliefs and developing more positive behaviours.

Berglas (2002) emphasises how important it is that coaches have the ability to be able to recognise when clients may have deep seated psychological difficulties. He gives an example of an executive who is assigned a coach who focuses purely on raising the executive's assertiveness through role playing, completely missing the fact that the coachee had a morbid fear of failure. The executive became afraid of being exposed as a fake when putting into practice his new 'assertive self', as it didn't mirror how he really felt inside. As a consequence the coachee became severely depressed. Berglas (2002) suggests that the requirement for quick fixes as well as a lack of psychological awareness can also result in coaches turning to behavioural solutions. He emphasises not just the importance of recognising that there may be psychological issues to work with, but that they take time to work with and resolve,

as suggested by Anderson (2002). It should not be about quick fixes. He believes that executive coaches who have not had rigorous psychological training can in actual fact do more harm than good when they fail to recognise or simply ignore problems they don't understand.

In summary, in a study involving public sector fast track leaders it was found that those who chose not to be coached had significantly lower unconditional self-acceptance than those who were coached. Whilst there may be numerous reasons for the choice not to be coached, the findings regarding self-acceptance should not be ignored. Low unconditional self-acceptance and low self-worth can influence leadership behaviours, which can be addressed in coaching, but it does require awareness of the coach/coaching psychologist that psychological difficulties exist. If behaviours are influenced by psychological issues the coach/coaching psychologist should avoid using purely behavioural techniques to influ-

ence change as this may only serve to mask the real issue and can result in more severe problems (Berglas, 2002). With regards how to engage individuals in coaching in the first place, with focus here on those that have low unconditional self-acceptance, it is suggested that organisations develop an environment that encourages learning, development and risk taking and promotes coaching as a positive tool to aid this process. It is recognised that other factors can influence the decision not to be coached. This paper addresses one possible factor.

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Is it time to REGROW the GROW model?

Issues related to teaching coaching session structures

Anthony M. Grant

Although models of how to structure coaching sessions are widely taught in coach training programmes there has been little or no debate in the literature about the use of session structures, the teaching of them, or the relative advantages or disadvantage of different specific session structure frameworks, and there have been few links drawn between the theoretical underpinnings of coaching and session structures. This paper explores these issues, giving examples of session structures and presents some frameworks that may help guide the categorisation and teaching of these structures. A variation of the well-known GROW model is presented; the RE-GROW model which explicitly links coaching session structure to self-regulation theory.

Keywords: GROW; RE-GROW; coaching psychology; teaching coaching; session structure.

VIRTUALLY all programmes that teach coaching and coaching psychology include material about how to structure coaching sessions. But to date there has been little or no debate in the literature about the use of session structures, the teaching of them, or the relative advantages or disadvantage of different specific session structure frameworks. This is surprising because, for many coaches, session structures are seen to be a vital part of their coaching methodology. Further, there has been little or no attempts to draw explicit links between theoretical underpinnings of coaching and session structures. This paper explores these issues, giving examples of session structures and presents some frameworks that may help guide the categorisation and teaching of these structures. Finally, and somewhat tongue-in-check, a new 'improved' version of the well-known GROW model is presented – the RE-GROW model.

What are coaching session structures?

Coaching session structures are models that are designed to help provide a framework for the coaching session. They are primarily designed to act as a guide for the coach, helping the coach and coachee to stay focused on relevant issues and preventing

the coaching session drifting off into a conversation that has no clear purpose or goal. A wide range of session structure models have been developed over the years, often developed and promoted by a specific coach training organisation or consultants as unique intellectual property.

A key purpose of such models is to delineate specific phases of the coaching conversations (for example, the beginning, middle or ending phases of the session), as well as acting as a memory aid to remind the coach, for example, to check levels of motivation (e.g. Mackintosh, 2005), or to ensure that any barriers to change have been addressed (e.g. Smith, 1998).

Minimal existing research on session structure models

It is worth reflecting that within the coaching domain, there has been very little scholarship or empirical research into the use of session structure models in terms of the possible comparative effectiveness of various models, nor indeed if the use of such models *per se* produces better outcomes for clients.

There is some survey data on coaches' use of models such as GROW (GROW will be discussed in some detail in following sections of this article). For example, a 2002 study

conducted by the Work Foundation and the School of Coaching reported that about one-third of respondents used the GROW model, one-third said that they used a number of different models and the remaining third were not able to say what model or process was used in their coaching activities (Dembkowski & Eldridge, 2003). In a survey conducted by Palmer and Whybrow in 2006–2007, GROW was used by 53.2 per cent of the coaching psychologists surveyed. In a 2008–2009 survey, again conducted by Palmer and Whybrow, GROW was used by 40.6 per cent of the coaching psychologists surveyed and 9.4 per cent of coaching psychologists in the 2008–2009 study reported using RE-GROW (Palmer, 2011).

There is also some empirical research in the area of clinical psychology which has looked at the effect of structured or manualised treatment programmes compared with non-manualised treatments, although typically no firm conclusions can be drawn about the relative efficacy of manualised treatment programmes compared with non-manualised treatments due the multitude of factors that impact on therapy outcome (e.g. Shirk & Karver, 2003).

A search of the database PsycINFO in August 2011 using the keywords ‘session structure’ found only 31 citations, most of which referred to the use of sessions structures as being a central part of the cognitive-behavioural therapeutic paradigm (e.g. Fairburn, et al., 2008; Friedberg & Brelsford, 2011; Wenzel, Brown & Beck, 2009), but which did not present data regarding the relative efficacy of session structures.

Associated research on session structures from the therapy domain

Only one somewhat relevant paper emerged from this literature search: Stiles et al. (1996) evaluated a total of 2305 therapy sessions of either cognitive-behavioural or psychodynamic-interpersonal therapy, and identified session structure as a key and conceptually coherent facet of treatment. Session structure here was exemplified by

two characteristics; Clarification and Focus. Clarification was defined as ‘to provide or solicit more elaboration, emphasis or specification when client was being vague, incomplete or confusing...’ and Focus was defined as ‘to help get the client back on track, to change subject or structure the discussion if he/she was unable to begin or was being diffuse or rambling’ (Stiles et al., 1996, p.404). Session structure was used to ‘...draw participants’ attention to the matter at hand – the ‘here and now’ – when it has wandered elsewhere’ (p.408); the same purpose for which session structures are typically used in coaching (Wilson, 2011).

Of relevance to the present discussion on the use of session structure in coaching, given the diversity of coaching methodologies, was the reported Stiles et al. (1996) finding that the use of session structure was the same in both cognitive-behavioural or psychodynamic-interpersonal therapy, and that session structure was particularly used when sessions were difficult or slow moving. Interestingly this study found that there was a decrease in focus on session structure towards the end of treatment (treatment was between eight and 16 sessions in length) – that is session structure was strongly used in the initial sessions, but over time this emphasis tended to dissipate somewhat. Because Stiles et al. (1996) was concerned only with processes of therapy, unfortunately no outcome measures were reported. Clearly further empirical research is needed here.

Implications for teaching evidence-based coaching

Regardless of the apparent lack of empirical research on this topic in relation to coaching, a vast range of anecdotal reports over some considerable time, as well as this author’s own personal experience, testifies to the usefulness of such structures, although as will be discussed, the effective use of these structures may not be as straightforward as is sometimes thought.

This situation has implications for those engaged in teaching evidence-based

approaches to coaching and coaching psychology. We need to emphasise to students that the evidence about the effectiveness of coaching session structures is, at this point in time, primarily anecdotal and teachers and supervisors might do well to encourage new research in this area so that the foundational knowledge base of coaching and coaching psychology can be further developed.

Overview of coaching session structures

The GROW model is probably the best known session structure model. Initially developed by Graham Alexander (for discussion on the origins of the GROW model see Alexander, 2010) and popularised by Sir John Whitmore (Whitmore, 1992) the GROW model breaks a coaching session into four interrelated phases: Goals; Reality; Options; and Wrap-up (sometimes called Will or Way forward). See Table 1 for further details.

Over time a wide range of variations of the GROW model have emerged. These have included the T-GROW model (Topic; Goal; Reality; Options; Wrap-up; Downey, 2003); the I-GROW model (Issue; Goal; Reality; Options; Wrap-up; Wilson, 2011). Other variations include McKinsey’s SO*I*GROW (Situation; Opportunities; Implications; Goal; Reality; Options: and Will) and the Mount Eliza School of Business 4-A model (Agenda; Analysis; Agreement; Action). The CLEAR coaching model (Contracting; Listening; Exploring; Action; Review; for details see Hawkins & Smith, 2007) developed by Peter Hawkins in the early 1980s is also similar to GROW, and there are also a range of solution-focused session structures which present variations on the GROW model, most notably the OSKAR model (Outcome; Scaling; Knowhow and resources; Affirm and action; Review; Jackson & McKergow, 2002)

Table 1: The GROW Model.

<i>Acronym</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Example Questions</i>
G – Goal	Coachee is asked to clarify what they want to achieve from each session. Determines the focus of coaching.	What do you want to achieve this session? How would you like to feel afterwards? What would be the best use of this time?
R – Reality	Raise awareness of present realities. Examine how current situation is impacting coachee’s goals.	How have things gone in the past week? How have you handled any problems? What worked? What didn’t work?
O – Options	Identify and assess available options. Encourage solution-focused thinking and brainstorming.	What possible options do you have? What has worked for you in the past? What haven’t you tried yet that might work?
W - Wrap-Up	Assists the coachee determine next steps. Develops an action plan and builds motivation.	What is the most important thing to do next? What might get in the way? Who might be able to support you? How will you feel when this is done?

Sources: Grant & Greene, 2004; Landsberg, 1997; Spence & Grant, 2007; Whitmore, 1992.

Some models present quite detailed steps. The ACHIEVE model (Dembkowski & Eldridge, 2003) has seven steps: (1) Assess current situation; (2) Creative brainstorming of alternatives to current situation; (3) Hone goals; (4) Initiate options; (5) Evaluate options; (6) Valid action programme design; (7) Encourage momentum.

The PRACTICE model (Palmer, 2007) has seven detailed steps or sections: (1) Problem identification; (2) Realistic, relevant goals developed; (3) Alternative solutions generated; (4) Consideration of consequences; (5) Target most feasible solution/s; (6) Implementation of Chosen solutions; (7) Evaluation.

The OUTCOMES model (Mackintosh, 2005) is even more complex with eight highly detailed steps: (1) Objectives for the session; (2) Understanding – the coach should understand why the coachee wants to reach the objective; (3) Take stock; (4) Clarify; (5) Option generation; (6) Motivate to action; (7) Enthuse and encourage; (8) Support.

Gap analysis models

Some models take a gap analysis approach, where the current or existing situation is initially discussed before moving on to detailing the preferred outcome or goal and then, through a gap analysis process, developing action steps or strategies to facilitate goal attainment. Perhaps the oldest model of this type, and one well-used in the counselling domain primarily to structure whole interventions rather than individual sessions, is Egan's (1974) Skilled Helper Model. This has three key stages: (1) Current scenario; (2) Preferred scenario; and (3) Strategies to get there. Each of these three stages has itself three sub stages which are: (1) story; blind spots; leverage; (2) possibilities; agenda; commitment; (3) strategies; best fit; plan.

A simplified version of Egan's work is represented by Greene and Grant's (2003) CIGAR model (Current situation; Ideal outcome; Gap analysis; Action plan; Review). The Coach U five-step coaching conversa-

tion model (Smith, 1998) aims to move clients 'from where they are to where they want to be' (CoachWorks, 1998, pp.2–3) – from their current reality to their goal – and takes a similar 'coaching through the gap' approach. The five stages are: (1) establish focus; (2) discover possibilities; (3) plan the action; (4) remove barriers; (5) recap.

Keeping it simple!

However, every aspect of a coaching session cannot be notarised and codified. It is clear that some of these models are quite complex and many coaches would consider these to be too detailed – a cynic might argue that the only person that could remember what some of these acronyms mean is the person who invented the model!

Nevertheless, the more detailed models may still serve a very useful function in teaching about session structure, because they can give the novice coach some insight into different aspects that may need to be addressed within a specific coaching session. However, in terms of practice applicability within a real-life coaching session I would argue that the strength of some of these models lies in their simplicity. This simplicity allows for great flexibility in responding to the demands of any specific session. This is a key point and one that should probably be emphasised when teaching students who are new to coaching about session structures.

A bipartite typology for understanding models

From the above it can be seen that approaches to session structures tend to broadly fall into one of two categories: (1) models that ask the client to identify the preferred outcome or broad presenting issues before exploring the current situation or reality, and then developing options and action steps; and (2) models that explore the current situation before moving on to goal setting and developing options and action steps.

In addition, coaching sessions themselves can be seen to lie on a dimension from those sessions that are very tightly structured to

those that are much less structured. Which end of this dimension could be considered the ‘correct’ approach for any specific session depends on a wide range of factors. These could include issues such as the coach’s preferred theoretical framework; the client’s readiness to change; the issue or goal under discussion; client’s levels of emotionality; and the complexity of the goal and contextual factors (see Figure 1).

The key point here for the teaching of session structures is that the coach needs informed flexibility. Coaches need to be comfortable in moving from a highly structured approach to a less tightly structured approach as the situation demands. The primary driver should be the needs of the coachee and how the coach can be flexible in best serving the needs of the coachee, not how attached the coach is to any specific model. GROW (and other session structures) are methodologies to be used, not ideologies to be rigidly adhered to!

The non-linear nature of coaching sessions: The novice to expert shift

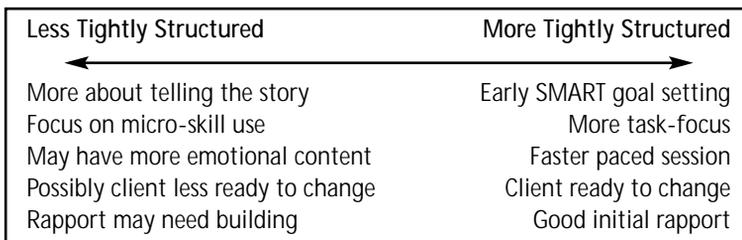
Many session models give the impression that coaching is a linear process and that coaches work through the steps in a straight-forward fashion. This notion may especially appeal to novice coaches who are looking for clear and simple rules to follow as they begin to master their craft. But coaching is frequently an oscillating, non-linear process as the coach helps the coachee untangle their convoluted thinking.

This kind of oscillating process is well-exemplified using the GROW model. When

using GROW the coaching session typically starts with goal setting. Even if the client is not clear about what they want to achieve, the coach asks them to state in broad terms what they want to get out of the session. Having set a direction, the conversation moves on to discussing the reality, what is really happening. Frequently, in this section ideas are uncovered which lead to the goal being redefined, and so the coach will cycle back to the goal and help the client to re-define their goal. Having redefined the goal, and explored the reality again, the coach will then guide the conversation to the discussion of options. In this section a wide range of client-generated options are explored, and there will probably some cycling back and forth between different sections of the model until a range of action steps emerge. Sometimes at this point the goal will be revisited again to make sure that the options meet the goal, or alternatively the options may have to be redefined. Finally the coach can move the conversation into the wrap-up stage and start to help the client detail specific action steps. Bearing this process in mind the GROW model might be more accurately represented as GRGROGROOGROWOGORW!

Of course, it is never obvious at the start of any coaching session how the session will actually evolve, and coaches need to work with an emergent, iterative process. Indeed, for experienced coaches the uncertainty of the session and the unexpected discoveries made along the way are a large part of the joy of coaching. For the novice however, this uncertainty is often a source of anxiety and frustration and

Figure 1: Dimensions of session structure.



novice coaches tend to react to these feelings by to clinging too tightly to the model.

Ideas to help teach the use of session structure

A key point to get across is that models such as GROW provide a simple map to help guide the coaching session – the map here is most definitely not the territory (Korzybski, 1933) – and clinging tightly to the map will not aid the journey. A useful teaching technique during skills-based coaching session practice is to randomly ask the student whereabouts in the coaching session model they are at any point in time (i.e. the student then states if they are in the goal setting, reality exploration, option generation phase, etc.), and also states which phase they were previously in, and where they are taking the conversation to next. These kind of in-the-

moment reflective techniques can really help the student engage in double and triple loop learning (Argyris, 2002) and help them develop more sophisticated meta-cognitive skills in relation to the coaching process.

Teachers and trainers can also help beginners make the novice-expert shift in the use of session structures by helping students set realistic expectations for themselves. Doing so requires that they can benchmark their level of existing expertise and thus set appropriate learning goals. David Peterson (2011) presents an adaptation of Dreyfus and Dreyfus's (1986) work on the novice-expert shift in developing coaching skills, and this can provide a valuable framework for helping student coaches gauge their existing level of expertise. Table 2 presents this typology.

Table 2: Novice to expert delineations as applied to the use of coaching session structures.

<i>Level of Expertise</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>
Novices	Focus on immediate tasks. Need to follow clear rules and can't deal with complex coaching issues that arise in the coaching situation. Rigidly follows session model step-by-step.
Advanced beginners	Tends to use rules as guidelines rather than prescriptions, but still finds it hard to handle exceptions to 'normal' coaching practice issues. Relies on model, but not always rigidly. Reverts to basic rules when feels under pressure in a coaching session.
Competent performers	Are at the stage where they can begin to create their own conceptual models of what they do, and can handle more complex situations. More flexible in use of session models. Able to move from one model to another to suit different coaching issues that arise within one coaching session.
Proficient performers	Have experienced wide range of coaching situations, are able to see the big picture, and can interpret underlying principles and adjust their behaviours to suit relatively novel coaching situations. Very flexible use of models. Can develop own conceptually coherent and meaningful models to suit novel situations. Enjoys the challenge of coaching difficult issues.
Experts	Have significant face-to-face coaching experience. Their high level of experience allows them to identify and solve problems with little explicit analysis. Can extrapolate solutions from principles even in very complex or highly novel situations.

For further reading see: Peterson, D.B. (2011). Good to great coaching. In G. Hernez-Broome & L. A. Boyce (Eds.), *Advancing executive coaching: Setting the course of successful leadership coaching* (pp.83–102). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

From GROW to RE-GROW!

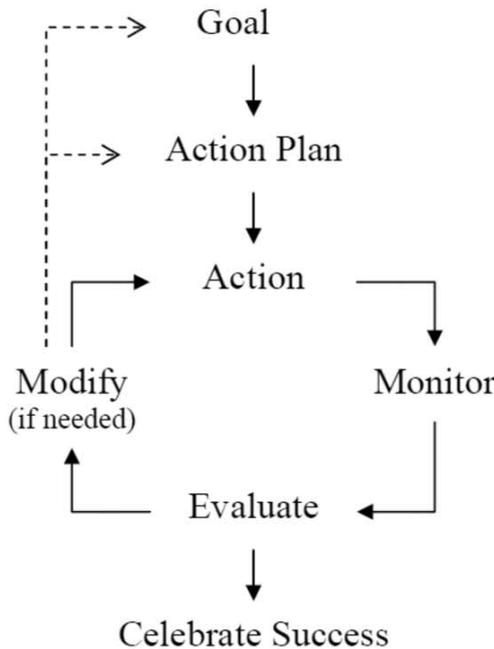
The kind of goal-directed self-regulation that sits at the heart of the coaching process is a series of processes in which an individual sets a goal, develops a plan of action, begins action, monitors his or her performance, evaluates his or her performance by comparison to a standard, and based on this evaluation changes his or her actions to better reach his or her goals. The coach’s role is to facilitate the coachee’s movement through the self-regulatory cycle (see Figure 2). This process requires that each coaching session takes stock of the outcomes of the previous session, and a coaching engagement is thus typically an iterative process in which the action steps from one session provide information and learning points for the following session (Kemp, 2008).

Without a clear and explicit link from one session to the next, the coaching engagement runs the risk of becoming a

series of disjointed conversations. Yet most coaching session structures focus on structuring a single coaching session. We need coaching session models that recognise the iterative nature of the coaching engagement and explicitly provide a framework for incorporating the learning from the prior session into the current session.

The RE-GROW model is one way that this can be achieved (Greene & Grant, 2003). The initial stages of this model are Review and Evaluate. Thus each coaching session should start with a process of reviewing and evaluating the learnings and actions completed since the last session (see Figure 3). The trap here for the novice is to spend too much time in the review and evaluate process – with the possibility of de-railing the main coaching session. Thus it is important to make sure that only a short amount of time is spent in the review and evaluate section (approximately five to 10 minutes).

Figure 2: Generic model of self-regulation. Adapted from Grant (2003).



Personal experience and anecdotal evidence indicates that the use of RE-GROW can help maintain focus on the goals of coaching over the course of a coaching engagement, but more scholarship is needed in this area.

Wrap-up and way forward

In wrapping-up this article, as in a coaching session, it might be useful to think about the next steps and the way forward. It is clear that coaching session structures are here to stay and are an integral part of coaching practice, and hence coaching-related teaching and training. But there has been little scholarship in this area of coaching practice on which to base our teaching and training. Research and scholarship into this area has the potential to further develop the

evidence-base for coaching and also inform the broader psychological enterprise, particularly in relation to the further development of psychological theories of self-regulation and goal attainment. In order to keep the evidence-based coaching endeavour moving forward we need to pay attention to the this issue – we need to revitalise our approach to session structures. Maybe it is indeed time to re-grow the GROW model.

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Figure 3: The RE-GROW Model.



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Can Coaching Psychology help develop Authentic Leaders? Part Two

Tony Fusco, Stephen Palmer & Siobhain O’Riordan

Part One of this article introduced the emerging field of Authentic Leadership and asked if Coaching Psychology can play a part in Authentic Leadership development. As authenticity is often encapsulated by the phrase ‘to thine own self be true’ Part One briefly chartered the historical study of the Self before moving on to look at the conceptual basis of authenticity itself. This second instalment focuses on Self-Awareness coaching specific to Authentic Leadership development. As self-awareness is one of the key constructs underlying authenticity, we propose three coaching models and place each of these techniques within the GIVE model used in Authentic Leadership research, which relate to; Goals, Identity, Values and Emotions.

Keywords: *Authentic Leadership; Goal-Theory; Leadership Coaching; Leadership Development; Psychosynthesis Coaching; Rational Emotive Behaviour Coaching; Sub-Personalities.*

IN PART ONE of this article, we introduced an emerging model of Authentic Leadership made up of the constructs; *Self-Awareness, Relational Transparency, Balanced Processing* and *Moral Perspective* and offered a definition of Authentic Leadership as ‘*a process whereby leaders become self-aware of their values, beliefs, identity, motives and goals*’ (Gardener et al., 2005; Gardener, Avolio & Walumbwa, 2007). In this second article we offer leadership coaches an overview of three approaches that can be used in authentic leadership coaching, particularly in developing the first construct of *Self-Awareness*. First let us briefly consider what we mean by self-awareness in the specific context of authentic leadership development.

It is said that the capacity for self-reflection lies at the heart of Self (Leary, Price & Tangney, 2005) and indeed that reflexivity is the very hallmark of Selfhood (Stets & Burke, 2005). Self-Awareness in relation to Authentic Leadership is defined by Gardener et al. (2005) as the process by which a person comes to reflect on their own unique values, identity, emotions, goals and motives and by Luthans and Avolio (2003) as the way individuals develop an understanding of their core values and purpose. Hughes (2005) goes on to suggest that open disclosure of each of these elements, are impor-

tant to achieve the second of the key constructs of Authentic Leadership, namely *Relational Transparency*, and offers the acronym GIVE to guide us through these elements; Goals, Identity, Values and Emotions. However, we suggest that an individual can only relate consciously what they know consciously and, therefore, self-knowledge must precede Relational Transparency. On that basis, we propose in this article the use of the GIVE model as a framework to help leadership coaches deepen their client’s self-knowledge and self-awareness, moving them further towards a fuller and more authentic sense of themselves and their leadership. Let’s now turn to the first area of focus within the GIVE model, that of Goals.

Goals

In 1933 Alfred Adler wrote ‘*We cannot think, feel or act without the perception of some goal.*’ More recently Moskowitz and Grant (2009) added ‘*Through our goals, all of our everyday-world of thoughts, beliefs, desires and fears are translated into action.*’ If goals then are so ubiquitous, which indeed they seem to be within most coaching, the more we understand their structure and purpose the more we can begin to understand our coachees. In Authentic Leadership coaching in partic-

ular, the more we can help our clients understand why they choose the goals they do, the more they can use these insights to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their motivations. As goal-setting is such a fundamental part of the leadership of any business a lot of goal-theory has developed within the field of organisational and leadership psychology over the decades and much of it potentially relevant to coaching. For a thorough overview of Goal Psychology, see Moskowitz and Grant (2009). Here though, we include two particular goal-theories that we consider of particular relevance to authentic leadership coaching as it can offer insight into an individual's fundamental self-system including their self-defining beliefs and values, these are *Performance Goals vs. Learning Goals* and *Promotion Goals vs. Prevention Goals*.

Some researchers go as far as to suggest that goals actually lay at the heart of the entire self-system. In their research, Dweck, Higgins and Grant-Pillow (2005) propose there are two main types of goals; *Performance Goals* and *Learning Goals*, and it is an individual's belief about themselves that orientate them to one or the other of them. For example, people who consider themselves fixed entities, with fixed skills and traits, tend to pursue performance-goals because that enables them to demonstrate and validate these qualities. On the other hand, people who consider themselves as potential to be developed will on the whole pursue learning-goals that enable them to develop the attributes they consider important. This of course has implications for an individual's leadership style and is a useful consideration when trying to raise self-awareness of goal choice – although they will inevitably engage in both, is their primary orientation in goal pursuit designed to validate themselves or to develop themselves? Allied to this is Higgins' Self-Discrepancy Theory (1987) which also suggests that an individual's self-beliefs can come to life through goals in the form of *Promotion-focused* and *Prevention-focussed* goals. It highlights two different forms of self-

conceptualisation that influence preferred goal choice. That is, when an individual's formative socialisation is focused on being what they 'could be' they develop an ideal-self-guide which leads to goals involving aspiration, advancement and accomplishment. By contrast, when the prevailing early developmental message is what the individual 'should be' they develop an ought-self-guide leading to goals involving duty, obligation and responsibility.

Useful in their own right, these insights become even more potent when considered alongside the Values and Emotions element of the GIVE model that we will come on to after looking at Identity.

Identity

A useful aid to leadership coaching under this category is the concept of sub-identities, more commonly known as Sub-Personalities. The idea posits there are several aspects of our personality that go to make up our whole personality or identity. The coachees may identify strongly with their identity as an organisational leader, but they will most likely also be a parent, child and sibling. They will have facets of their personality they use both often and simultaneously in their role as leader. These might include archetypes such as; Saviour, Hero, Intellect, Protector or Pioneer. They may also include sub-personalities that can confuse or conflict when operating together; the Loner, the Doubter, the Pleaser, the Perfectionist or the Critic. The list in effect is endless, Firman and Gila (2002) and Rowan (1993). The concept of multiple selves is nothing new, but one strategy we propose for working with them in Authentic Leadership Development is based on Roberto Assagioli's Psychosynthesis (1965).

The reason for suggesting this particular method for working with sub-personalities is its focus on health, growth and integration. Often the aspects of our personalities that prove unhelpful are also considered unhealthy. They are often treated as a pathology that needs to be contained,

controlled and eventually cured. This denial strategy though often leads to tension and confusion within an individual that can manifest itself in ways that can undermine strong and clear leadership. For example, consider a pioneering leader who is excited by the prospect of both new product development and new market development. Their natural bent is towards exploration and pushing boundaries. Imagine that this same person, however, has an extremely strong inner Critic that when left unchecked, constantly undermines every move that doesn't bring immediate and tangible progress. Now imagine this leader making a few false starts in their business exploration efforts (as is the way with innovation!) and having to face a shareholder meeting of similar critics demanding consistent and risk-free returns. Conflict will inevitably ensue. Now add a Doubter and a Pleaser for good measure and we can see how this scenario is likely to play out, perhaps leading to a stagnant company and a very dissatisfied and de-motivated leader. It is here the leadership coach can assist in the exploration and integration of these varying facets of an individual's identity.

When we have an aspect of ourselves that proves troublesome the strategy is often one of exclusion, our tendency is to; control, manage, ignore, repress, reduce, isolate, eliminate. The Psychosynthesis approach is one of healthy integration that enables us to become more fully and authentically what we are by including all of our sub-personalities. Each of these aspects of our personality need something from us and has something to contribute in return, but we only learn what this is through exploration. Sub-Personality coaching work can help coachees towards a healthy understanding and utilisation of each of these aspects of their personality through the stages of; Recognition, Acceptance and Integration. For a more detailed account of Psychosynthesis see Whitmore (2004).

Values and emotions

A key part of authentic leadership development is helping coachees understand both their values and their emotions and here we propose Rational Emotive Behavioural Coaching as a way of bringing these two areas together to increase a client's awareness and understanding of both.

As it sounds, Rational Emotive Behavioural Coaching (REBC) is a way of helping individual's understand the connection between their beliefs, emotions and associated behaviours. It was originally developed by Albert Ellis (1961) for clinical applications but because of its practical effectiveness, in recent years it is being increasingly applied to Executive, Management and Organisational Development (see Anderson, 2002; Grieger, 2007; Kirby, 1993; Lange & Grieger, 1993; Miller & Yeager, 1993; Palmer, 2009; Palmer & Gyllensten, 2008; Palmer & Szymanska, 2008; and Sherin & Caiger, 2004).

At the heart of REBC lay three categories of beliefs we all have relating to; ourselves, others and life, beliefs that are invariably logical, reasonable, helpful and healthy. Where we can sometimes encounter difficulty is when these beliefs become more extreme and rigid and we choose to hold onto them even when they are clearly creating us problems. They may start as reasonable wishes or desires but taken to their extreme they can become demands, often given away by the associated language of; *shoulds*, *musts* and *oughts*. For example, during the course of leadership coaching the client may present beliefs along the lines of – 'my colleagues *should* treat me more respectfully', 'my team *should* be more motivated' or 'this organisation *should* be less bureaucratic'. Sometimes clients will hold onto these unconditional demands even in light of evidence to the contrary, i.e. the colleagues *are* disrespectful, the team *are* de-motivated and the organisation *is* bureaucratic. Although the detailed process of REBC is outside the scope of this article, the point we want to make here is that it can be

these strong beliefs that give us some insight into the individual's values. In this example; individual respect, work ethic and efficiency. In addition to some clarity on the individual's value system the REBC model can also offer some insight into their emotional make-up. When these beliefs or values are transgressed the coachee may react emotionally. They may become annoyed with their colleagues who show no respect, become irritated by their un-motivated team and become frustrated by the slow-moving organisation. They may say it is their colleague, team, or organisation that make them react the way they do, but it is actually their belief about these various things that cause their strong reaction. In this respect, we could consider their emotional reactions as the royal road to their value system, a full understanding of which is absolutely necessary if they are indeed to know themselves and lead more authentically.

Summary

Chan (2005) proposes four levels at which the emerging field of Authentic Leadership should concern itself: The Intrapersonal level; The Developmental level; The Interpersonal level; and the Pragmatic level. Although the third and fourth levels are arguably covered in a lot of traditional coaching interventions, there currently exists nothing in the Authentic Leadership literature offering ideas or guidance on how to coach at the *Intrapersonal* and *Developmental Levels* for increased authenticity. To address this gap, this article has considered three coaching approaches for the development of Self-Awareness which is the first of the four constructs shown to underpin Authentic Leadership. We used the GIVE model as a framework for these coaching approaches and although a detailed methodology of each is outside the scope of this article, we nonetheless believe it to be an important first step in demonstrating exactly how coaching psychology can contribute to Authentic Leadership Development.

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Innovation in Coaching Psychology: Interviews with speakers from the 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference

Stephen Palmer & Siobhain O’Riordan

THE 3rd European Coaching Psychology conference will be hosted by the British Psychological Society’s Special Group in Coaching Psychology (BPS SGCP). This year the event will be held at City University London, on 13 and 14 December 2011. Further information and registration details are available on the conference pages of the BPS SGCP website: <http://sgcp-conference.bps.org.uk>

This year we have interviewed keynote speakers and our European invited speakers via email for *The Coaching Psychologist* to find out more about them, seek their views on a range of different coaching psychology topics and also to learn more about their forthcoming speeches.

PROFESSOR STEPHEN PALMER

We are pleased to be welcoming you as a keynote speaker at the 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference. What are your hopes and expectations for attending this event?

Stephen: I’m really looking forward to attending the 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference for a number of personal reasons. I like meeting and networking with colleagues and conferences are an ideal for this activity. I am interested to learn about their area of practice and research. And, of course, I hope I can gently persuade them to submit papers to one of the British Psychological Society Special Group in Coaching Psychology (BPS SGCP) publications, *The Coaching Psychologist* or the *International Coaching Psychology Review*.

However, conference attendance also has other benefits beyond just networking and Continuing Professional Development. I regularly receive queries from potential trainee coaching psychologists who want my input about possible course and career advice. Unless they are questions about the specific courses or doctorate programmes



I’m involved with, I refer them to the SGCP and International Society for Coaching Psychology websites as I don’t have the free time to enter into extended email dialogues about this type of issue. I may email them a

few articles on the topic too. Often I suggest that if they want an informal chat (it's not coaching) I leave time available at the conferences I attend to network and meet up with psychologists who want to discuss any relevant issue. Just to clarify as I am a coaching psychologist, I'm not suggesting that I would turn away potential coaches who want to pay for careers coaching!

What are some of the key issues you wish to convey in your keynote at the Conference?

Stephen: In a nutshell, the keynote will be about the development of coaching psychology as a profession and discipline. There has been continued interest in this field over the past decade which has seen the growth in membership of coaching psychology societies and interest groups internationally.

It will be a joint keynote with Dr Siobhain O'Riordan and Dr Alison Whybrow. They have both been closely involved with the BPS SGCP since its inception. In the past year I've been giving keynotes on the development at congresses around the world and it occurred to me if I give this paper in London it would be a good idea to get fresh input from SGCP colleagues who may have a different perspective from me.

You are also chairing a roundtable in technological innovation in coaching and coaching psychology. What is it about?

Stephen: I want us to discuss technological innovations in the practice, teaching and supervision of coaching psychology. For example, we have gone beyond just using the telephone for coaching, many of us use emails, Skype, texting, Moodle and so on. I want to hear about the difficulties that have been encountered and how they were overcome or managed. Delegates will also be able to ask questions from the floor.

Using technology to communicate has always been an interest of mine. I've been a 'radio ham' since I was a teenager although I wouldn't use Morse Code to work with clients! Joking aside, in 2001, I chaired a British Association for Counselling and

Psychotherapy committee on online practice and co-authored guidelines for online counselling and psychotherapy in an era when there was a fair amount of negative feelings towards online practice (see Goss et al., 2001). Later, I wrote a paper (Palmer, 2004) on comparing working with one client face-to-face and by using the telephone, emails and online 'chat room'. My client had returned to her own country and was unable to see a local Rational Emotive Behavioural practitioner so she continued to work with me. In the paper we both reported on the process concerned. She found the email conversation really useful as it allowed her time to think about some of the Socratic questions I asked her. It was constructive feedback for me too as it highlighted the benefits of asynchronous email sessions over face-to-face sessions (with me). It was really great that she was prepared to write up her experience for the paper. It convinced me that modern technology could be beneficial for our practice as psychologists.

You have been heavily involved in the development of coaching psychology. Do you have any reflections?

Stephen: As I reflect on the past decade, we have seen coaching psychology develop in three key areas. First, as a sub-discipline of psychology; second, as a professional area of practice; and third, as an international community of psychologists. Let me explain. If we go back a decade getting coaching-related articles published was not straightforward. Then the BPS SGCP and the Australian Psychological Society Interest Group in Coaching Psychology launched the *International Coaching Psychology Review*, a peer-reviewed journal abstracted in psycINFO and other databases too. This journal alone has greatly increased the number of academic papers being published in the field of coaching and coaching psychology. In addition, *The Coaching Psychologist* has been responsible for the publication of really useful and interesting shorter articles on a range of coaching psychology

related topics. This journal too is peer-reviewed and abstracted in psycINFO. Dr Alison Whybrow and I were keen to edit the *Handbook of Coaching Psychology* so the new profession would have a handbook for practitioners.

Unless I'm mistaken, in Australia coaching psychology is now an area of competence expected of organisational psychologists whilst in Switzerland the coaching psychologist designation is recognised too. In South Africa coaching psychology is likely to be recognised as a specialism too. If the BPS SGCP are given the go-ahead by the BPS to launch the Register of Coaching Psychologists we will see many more psychologists joining us in this area of practice.

Last, but not least, the International Congresses of Coaching Psychology have really captured the imagination and have become a real success story around the world. In the past 12 months I've attended the congress events in London, Dublin, Pretoria, Stockholm and Barcelona. These have been excellent and have achieved one of the key aims in bringing the coaching psychology community together. Congresses are being planned for 2012 in Australia and Scandinavia; and for 2013 in Italy and Brazil. Others may also take place too. It's always worth visiting the International Congress website to keep up-to-date with events, especially if you like travel.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Stephen: I've been interviewed a number of times for the SGCP Conference section in *The Coaching Psychologist*. This time I've intentionally provided a more personal response than usual.

On a more academic point, in recent years the field of coaching psychology has developed in parallel with positive psychology. I'm interested to see how this will play out. The BPS does not have a special group or section for positive psychology yet. Most of my positive psychology colleagues are SGCP members. I wonder if the setting up of the SGCP has provided the natural home for BPS members who are 'positive' psychologists or whether or not a new member network will be set up eventually.

Over the past decade I've enjoyed working with my SGCP and overseas colleagues in developing coaching psychology. It's a great community.

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Website:

International Congress of
Coaching Psychology:
www.coachingpsychologycongress.org

DR SIOBHAIN O'RIORDAN

We are pleased to welcome you again as a keynote speaker. What are your hopes and expectations for this year's event?

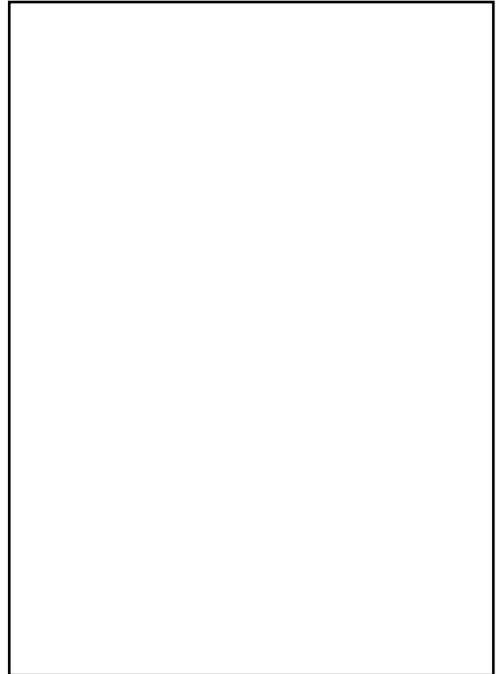
Siobhain: A key hope and expectation for me is that we will continue to build on the significant developments of the European and international coaching psychology community by coming together again to share our learning and developments.

*As the Editor of *The Coaching Psychologist* (TCP) how does your work link to the conference activities?*

Siobhain: Following on from each conference event we actively encourage speakers and presenters to write up their conference sessions and submit them for consideration for publication in *TCP*. As such we hope *TCP* can offer a forum to promote coaching psychology and offer some of the most current professional developments and research updates. For some years now we have also conducted interviews with conference speakers, which we hope provides some further insights and information in advance of each conference and encourages people to come along and join us.

What will be the important message you wish to convey in your keynote speech?

Siobhain: This year I am delighted to be sharing a keynote opportunity with Prof. Stephen Palmer and Dr Alison Whybrow,



who are both key figures in the international coaching psychology community. It is an exciting time for coaching psychology across the European landscape and we will be exploring key developments and achievements.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

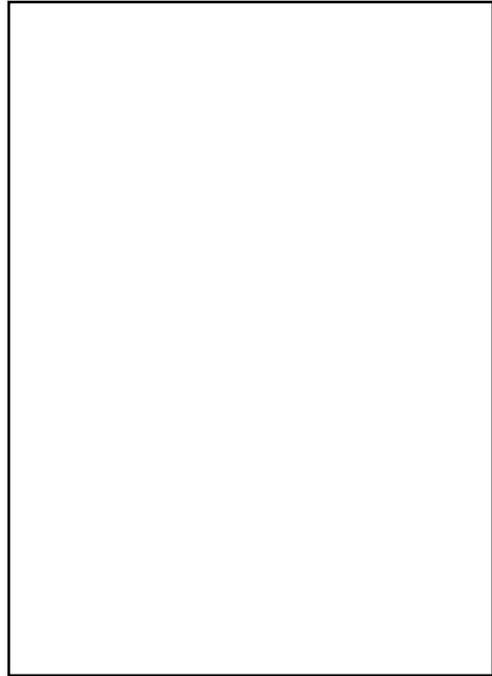
Siobhain: Yes, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the ongoing efforts of the SGCP conference team and thank them for all of their hard work and energy over the last year.

DR ALISON WHYBROW

You have delivered keynotes and facilitated master-classes at a number of our previous conferences. This year at our Special Group in Coaching Psychology (SGCP) 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference we are pleased to be welcoming you back to give another keynote speech. What are your hopes and expectations for attending the conference this year?

Alison: It is eight years now since the Coaching Psychology Forum (the precursor to the SGCP) started the movement in the UK to create a voice for psychology in the practice of coaching, and to recognise coaching psychology as an area of practice for psychologists. That initial focus and energy has been part of a significant shift in the landscape of psychological practice and the development of the coaching industry. The development of coaching psychology is reaching a tipping point globally where it is much more recognised and accepted. A lot of people have put a huge amount of time and energy into making that happen. This conference is a great opportunity to see the fruition of that hard work by many. I am really looking forward to seeing the emerging ideas and research that is happening, to engaging in sessions for my own professional development, to meet new people who are passionate about the field of coaching psychology and their own practice, and of course to reconnect with many old friends (have I said that before?). The SGCP Coaching Psychology Conference has always had a great energy, openness and friendliness to it and I am looking forward to being part of that. My hope? Well, it's a certainty that I will be freshly inspired.

In your previous interview as a keynote speaker for the 1st International Congress of Coaching Psychology Conference you shared that you were expecting to learn and have your thinking challenged, as well as establishing connections with old and new colleagues. Can you tell us more about ways in which this aspiration might have been realised over the last year?



Alison: Oddly enough, I had my thinking challenged in ways that I was not expecting. I was really pleased last year to be able to invite two organisations to share their stories about using coaching methods, principles and practices as a means of shifting the culture of their respective organisations. It was incredibly useful to hear how coaching and coaching psychology impacts in a very meaningful way both strategic and operational thinking in organisations as they work to balance, manage and deliver in an ever changing and challenging context. The challenge for me was just how do we sharpen our focus a little, clarify the messages we are delivering and 'up our game' to enable better, more effective delivery of all that we do: the research work, thinking and practice that we have to offer. I don't think we can be complacent, I don't think we are complacent, but perhaps we don't know what we don't know yet in this area. It would be interesting to find out as I think it would open up more options for us as a profession if we were better at (dare I say it), marketing ourselves.

Last year you also talked with us about your interest in exploring and sharing emerging research themes and research practices that might shed light on what we do and the shifting requirements of the clients and customers of coaching psychology research and practice. Can you tell us about any developments in this area?

Alison: In last year's keynote, I encouraged people to explore what they were doing a little more critically – certainly from a research perspective. Whilst that may or may not have landed, I notice that others have taken the theme of critiquing the research base and have written about it over the past year. Quite unintentionally, through word of mouth, I have become the 'go to' person for those who are crafting their research ideas for their Master's theses on the programme that I work on. One thing that I notice in the coaching psychology and coaching publications is that there is a much more confidence among writers and practitioners to critique rather than absorb accepted wisdoms. There seems a stronger appetite for inviting contributions from other academic and practice based disciplines in order to strengthen the rigour of our own field. I see these two developments as a shift in maturity as we develop

the confidence to exercise our critical muscles which will benefit the field. The one piece that I regret is that I have yet to write up the keynote I presented in 2010.

What are some of the key issues you wish to convey in your keynote speech at the Conference?

Alison: I have the pleasure of being part of a joint keynote address that will be the opening session for the 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference. For me the keynote is about exploring and articulating in the broadest sense the base of coaching psychology, drawing on new data from coaching psychologists who are practicing in the field and where feasible, looking across coaching psychology and coaching as professional areas of practice. Whilst the focus of the conference is European, there are also exciting global developments that I know yourself and Prof. Stephen Palmer will be able to share. I think that there will be some new challenges that we will want to pose to the conference.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Alison: No.

SIEGFRIED GREIF

At both our previous 1st and 2nd European conferences you delivered a keynote. This year at our Special Group in Coaching Psychology (SGCP) 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference we are pleased to be welcoming you back to give another keynote speech. What are your hopes and expectations for attending the conference this year?

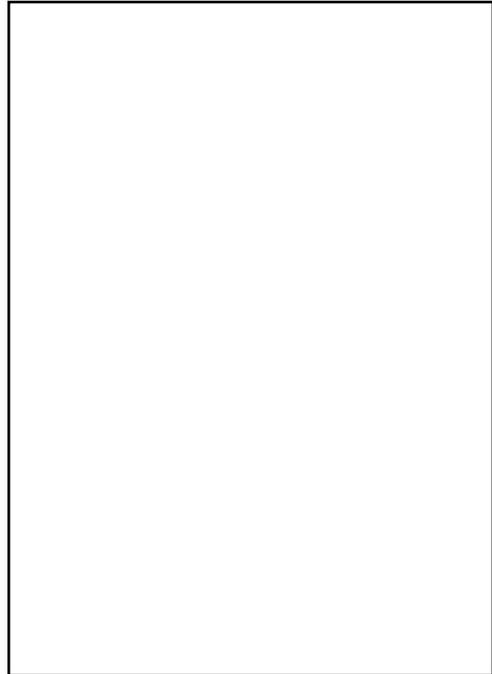
Siegfried: It is great to be back to participate at the European Coaching Psychology conference. I am convinced that the conference is the best event in Europe on the state of art of the coaching profession! This time a focus is on innovations. Therefore, I hope to be stimulated by many new and useful ideas, both for my practical and my scientific work.

In your previous interview as a keynote speaker for the 2nd European Coaching Psychology Conference you noted that you were looking forward to continuing your learning and deepening the networks. Can you tell us more about ways in which this aspiration might have been realised over the last couple of years?

Siegfried: Every time I attended, I have learned so much. To name just one example, inspired by the presentations and discussions on Positive Psychological Coaching, I focus more on strength coaching. However, after critical discussions with colleagues about a limitation of the approach, which I see in not allowing to analyse problems, I tried to clarify for myself, how it might be possible to design a strength-oriented problem analysis.

In relation to the deepening of my networks I can tell that I met colleagues from the UK, Sweden, Denmark and Australia on the conferences that I have attended until now. With one of them, we introduced coaching in an international Scandinavian-German research project on coping with stress at work.

Again, you have shared with us previously your research interests in change management, coaching and mentoring. What updates are you able to tell us about?



Siegfried: Together we presented concepts, methods and research on coaching in a complex changing world at the ICAP 2010 Conference in Melbourne and gave workshops in Australia for ICF and APS professionals in different cities.

A major field is the development and study of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods in the field of change management and coaching. Our preferred qualitative reflection and evaluation method is called 'Change Explorer'. It can be used by coaches for self-reflection and self-evaluation of individual coachings in the final session together with their coachees. We have started a follow-up study with professional coaches with our latest guidelines. Participants of a symposium at the ICAP 2010 Conference in Melbourne and workshops in different cities of Australia for ICF and APS professionals (with Michael Cavanagh, David Lane and Sunny Stout Rostron), where I presented it, encouraged me to test its application also in other countries.

Another field is stress-management coaching with bio- and neurofeedback. The work and methods of Stephen Palmer has

inspired me to come back to my earlier research in the field of stress at work and to integrate it into a further development of stress-management coaching. Together with the psychophysiological Wolfram Boucsein and Ralf Stürmer and their spin-off consultancy from the University, we started to test the approach. It will be presented at the conference.

What are some of the key issues you wish to convey in your keynote speech at the Conference?

Siegfried: Health and stress-management seem to face a technological evolution by bio- and neurofeedback devices. The techniques are not new, but similar as has been observed for other technological changes, if there is a demand and if the devices are miniaturised, user-friendly and affordable, we can expect that their use will spread like a virus epidemic. Today several biomedical firms have constructed or are about to

construct such an affordable technology for the growing wellness-market. However, if not applied responsibly, they can be easily misused, for example by those who use them uncritically as 'scientific instruments'. As professional coaches and researchers we should examine their potential risks and limitations. If we integrate them, based on our professional knowledge, into holistic concepts of health and stress-management coaching, their use intensifies the body awareness of the coachees and supports their self-calming-skills.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Siegfried: I will not mention names, but I see... and... and... at the conference. I hope that there is a nice pub around the corner. I am German who in good company (not only, but also) likes to drink English beer.

I look forward to the Conference!

REBECCA VINEY

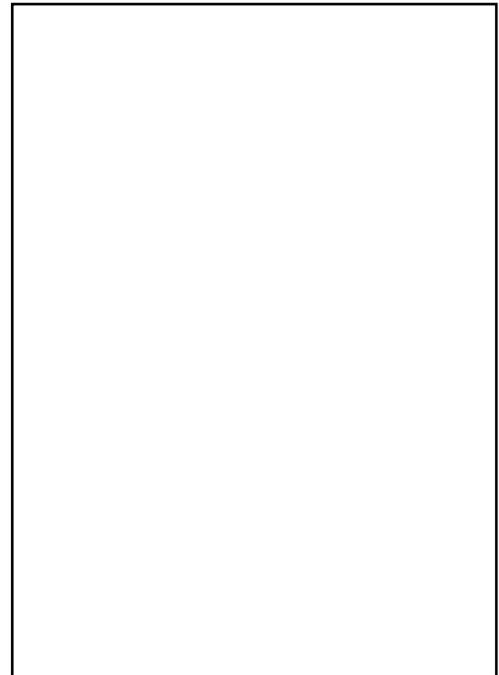
This is your first time contributing at a BPS SGCP conference and we are pleased to be welcoming you as a keynote speaker. What are your hopes and expectations for attending this event?

Rebecca: I hope to inspire more coaching psychologists to become involved in coaching patients to health. It empowers and enables people, therefore, promoting self-care and change.

Can you tell us about where you work and your professional background?

Rebecca: I studied fine art painting in London and Brussels for six years; in my last year I attended a Further Education College in King's Cross to gain another A-level, and then studied medicine at St Bartholomew's Hospital. I worked to support myself throughout my studies, had my first child in year three.

I have been an Associate Director at the London Deanery for the last 10 years, and for the last three years I have led the coach-



ing and mentoring service for London doctors and dentists. We have had over 1000 mentee applicants since we started. Helping

doctors and dentists to release and fulfil their potential is my aim.

How did you first become interested in the field of coaching and coaching psychology?

Rebecca: One of my sons was taught coaching and mentoring conversations at his inner-city secondary school as part of the anti-bullying strategy. A friend who trained as a coach used me as a guinea pig and I was astonished at how a little leverage, challenge and motivation transformed my life.

In your opinion, what distinguishes coaching psychology from coaching, if anything?

Rebecca: But coaching for health was more complex than I realised, and this is the psychology aspect, I am sure.

What are some of the key issues you wish to convey in your keynote speech at the Conference?

Rebecca: That psychologists are perfectly placed to help roll out patient coaching and change the culture of patient care. To tackle the future health needs of our ageing population we will together need to coach patients to health. Advice is rarely effective in lifestyle change, but coaching works.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Rebecca: I first learned about the power of coaching patients to health at the Coaching for Leadership in Medicine annual conference at Harvard University, and from the Minnesota health coaching programme 2008, and have been greatly impressed by the recent published work on positive psychology by Seligman and Fredrickson.

These are challenging times – never has it been more important to grow people’s resilience using coaching psychology.

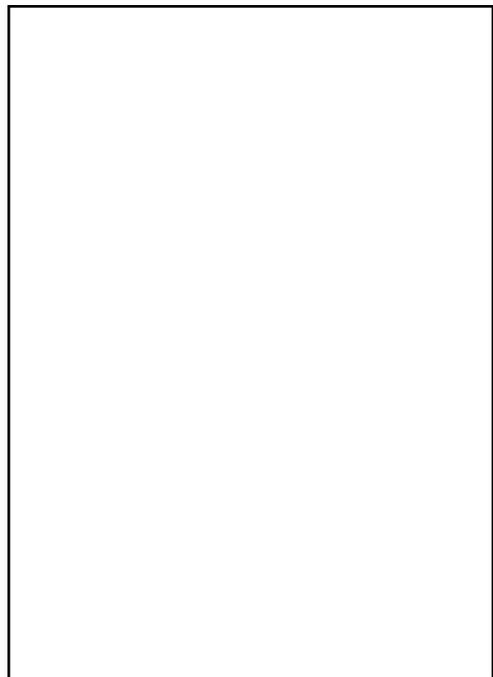
PASCALE REINHART

We are pleased to be welcoming you as an invited speaker at the 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference. What are your hopes and expectations for attending this event?

Pascale: Hearing and meeting international colleagues; I wish to strengthen my view on psychology as applied to the specific modality professional coaching is, as opposed to the so often seen ‘translation’ of psychology theories by non-specialists.

Can you tell us about where you work and your professional background?

Pascale: I live in Paris, France, and work in most European countries. Speciality is international/intercultural team coaching and negotiation. My background is as an investment banker for 12 years in the US, Australia, PRC, Hong Kong and Switzerland. I have completed a MBA in Finances, and a PhD in Art History. Then I went back to studying (at age 37) in psychology and now practice professional coaching. I have been



vice-president and president of Société Française de Coaching for four years, until recently.

How did you first become interested in the field of coaching and coaching psychology?

Pascale: A natural link after going back to school at 37 and understanding that my former experience in the business could cross this new field of interest for me. Truthfully, back in the early 2000s, not too many people spoke about coaching, and the first exposure I had to it has been a conference by John Whitmore, whose teaching I then followed.

In your opinion, what distinguishes coaching psychology from coaching, if anything?

Pascale: Sound experience in psychology, and not 'just' light training. Better understanding by practitioner of potential mental issues (while maintaining strong boundaries and ethics and not going into non-requested psychological sessions).

What are some of the key issues you wish to convey in your invited speech at the Conference?

Pascale: Supervision even for senior practitioners is a must. Various issues covered such as the hygiene of the coach.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Pascale: Thank you for inviting me. However short my stay in London can be in December, I'll be glad to make the best of it!

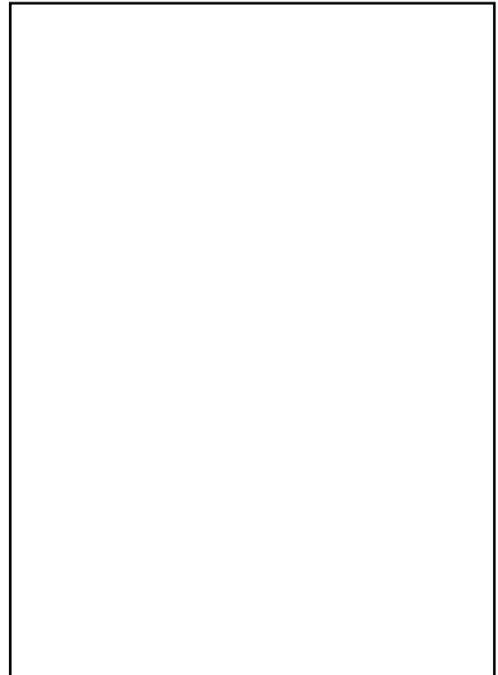
OLE MICHAEL SPATEN

We are pleased to be welcoming you as an invited speaker at the 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference. What are your hopes and expectations for attending this event?

Ole: Thanks for the invitation; I guess that the Conference will be full of people enjoying the varied programme with challenging lectures and motivating workshops. I am sure it will be two days of learning and also get together with professionals from Europe. No doubt there will be a lot of new research presentations as well.

Can you tell us about where you work and your professional background?

Ole: I am both an academic and a practitioner. At the University I work as a director of the Coaching Psychology Research Unit at the Department of Communication and Psychology and I have recently been promoted to Head of Studies. At the graduate level I train the students during their 18-months' coaching modules and lecture clinical skills and I belong to a small university group of associate professors with double



education: qualified by being both licensed psychologists and PhD.

In my private practice I have been doing counselling, teambuilding and coaching for 20 years at private companies and at the

clinic in Copenhagen. I have always found this combination very vivid and nourishing.

How did you first become interested in the field of coaching and coaching psychology?

Ole: When I was a young university student I was engaged in therapeutic work besides an experienced psychologist and she continued to be my mentor for years to come. She led the groups and I became co-leader, both observant and acting close to the encounters and team-building exercises. I was impressed to witness how her few interventions, for example, her carefully formulated questions in a soothing, empathetic atmosphere, resulted in human insight and growth. Questions posed with great awareness are at the cornerstone in excellent coaching and counselling. Later during one of my first extended commitment to a leadership programme we missed some kind of educational follow-up regarding the leadership improvement. We tried to envision how we could direct and support the manager's individual and group development? Our answer to that question was coaching done by psychologists. Most large companies in Denmark today use some kind of coaching during programmes for executives and middle managers, so my interest hasn't waned for two decades.

In your opinion, what distinguishes coaching psychology from coaching, if anything?

Ole: I think there is a huge difference between coaching psychology and just coaching. Coaching psychology is done by psychologists and grounded in scientific psychological theories and evidence-based-practice. In spite of the fact that we cannot demonstrate that psychologists do better coaching (see, for example, Linley or Passmore) I think that psychologists are far better equipped to do coaching. Not only, but also when it comes to coaching in the

grey zone where the coach had to ask himself/herself if the client suffers from anxiety or if the client is edgy, nervous or irritated. A coaching psychologist must – as an ethical duty – be able to assess if this client should be referred to a colleague if you identify depression or stress instead of the appearance of being sad, tired or rushed.

What are some of the key issues you wish to convey in your invited speech at the Conference?

Ole: The invited paper is entitled: Middle managers challenging and successful experiences with coaching and a skills evaluation – a mixed methods approach. We do not find much research investigating the relationship between coach and coachee and assessment of the quality of business coaching. How do both actually evaluate the coaching sessions? As it is mixed methods research I will present findings from interviews with the coaches as well as results from surveys where the coaching skills are evaluated. A special section of the presentation includes issues of power and relationship prominent between manager and employee.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Ole: While I have been attending coaching conferences I reckon that the knowledge base of coaching psychology develops very fast, and every year new remarkable research and practice appears. So I am really looking forward to another interesting and inspiring coaching psychology conference in December later this year.

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ANNA SYREK-KOSOWSKA

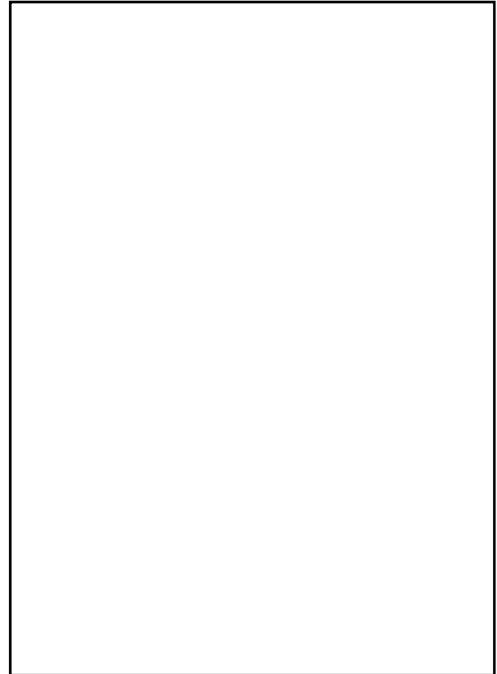
We are pleased to be welcoming you as an invited speaker at the 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference. What are your hopes and expectations for attending this event?

Anna: I expect to meet a number of experts from all over the world. I would like to learn about new ideas in coaching and especially in coaching psychology. I would like to share my experience related to the development of coaching in Poland. I hope that this conference will be a very inspiring event and that it will give me a lot of energy for my further activity as a coach.

Can you tell us about where you work and your professional background?

Anna: I have over 13 years' experience in running business projects related to the implementation of developmental projects for employees of all levels of management as a trainer and manager of projects. I have many years experience in providing therapy and supporting people in personal development as a psychologist. As a coach I provide the coaching process for managers in international corporations and I have created a model of postgraduate study in coaching as a director and supervisor of a one-year postgraduate course called the Academy of Professional Coaching at the University of Business in Dabrowa Górnicza in Poland. I have founded a community for coaches at the Coaches' Club of csipb.pl and the University of Business in Dabrowa Górnicza. This is the place where coaches can develop their knowledge, skills and share practical experience with other coaches as well as receive supervision. As a member and co-founder of the Coaching Chamber, the first Polish organisation implementing working standards for coaches, I am also the co-creator of supervision standards. I am the author of many publications in the field of HR and I promote coaching as the way to help people to achieve their goals and the life satisfaction.

For 12 years I have been a partner at the Business Psychology and Training Centre



dealing with consulting, trainings and coaching. I have the pleasure to be Honorary VP of the International Society for Coaching Psychology in Poland.

How did you first become interested in the field of coaching and coaching psychology?

Anna: Because I have been a psychotherapist and trainer in business organisations for many years, coaching was a natural step on the path of my professional development. Thanks to my contact with the International Society for Coaching Psychology and meeting with Professor Stephen Palmer I had the opportunity to extend my knowledge and skills in the area of coaching psychology.

In your opinion, what distinguishes coaching psychology from coaching, if anything?

Anna: In my opinion, coaching psychology is based on scientific track record, positive psychology and evidence-based approach. This gives coaches an opportunity to use reliable tools and methods for the clients to benefit from. In comparison with other types of coaching, clients choose a coach and a psychologist in one and they can be sure that

they work with a competent and professional person with wide knowledge and skills.

What are some of the key issues you wish to convey in your invited speech at the Conference?

Anna: In my presentation I would like to share with the audience the information about the Polish coaching market and key challenges for coaching psychology. Also, I want to show my own model of a postgraduate programme in coaching at the University of Business in Dabrowa Górnicza in Poland.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Anna: I really look forward to meeting the coaching psychology community at the conference soon.

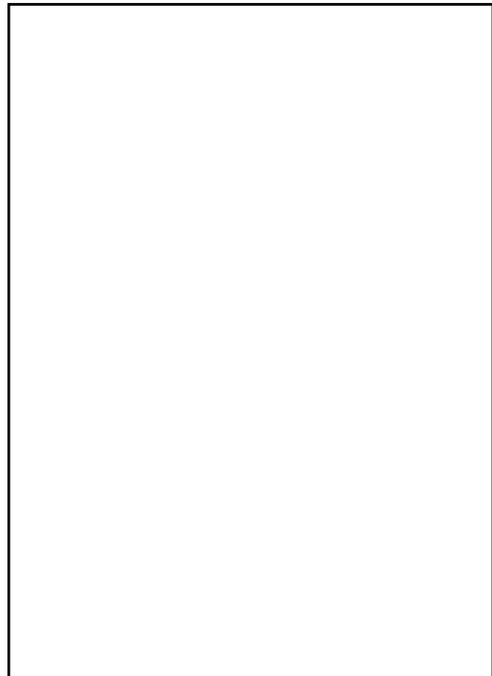
IDA SIROLI

We are pleased to be welcoming you as an invited speaker at the 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference. What are your hopes and expectations for attending this event?

Ida: I will be attending the event together with a delegation of Italian coaching psychologists and we look forward to connecting and networking with our colleagues coming from different parts of the world. Since coaching psychology has only very recently been introduced in Italy, it is important to learn and gain support from more experienced coaching psychologists. Secondly, we are eagerly looking forward to listening to how coaching psychology has recently developed, been applied and researched internationally. Thirdly, we will be presenting the outcomes of our first research on Coaching Competencies and Values (‘Coaching Competencies and Values: How Italian coaches – psychologists and non-psychologists – face present and future challenges’) and hope to stimulate discussions and debates on this topic.

Can you tell us about where you work and your professional background?

Ida: I currently work for the HR department of a major Italian telecommunications company. I am also co-founder and Secretary of the Society for Coaching Psychology Italy (www.scpitaly.it), the first association to



address coaching psychology in Italy. I have worked at length in the HR department of different companies, mainly managing projects related to recruiting, training and development, talent management, performance management, internal communication. I have also managed different coaching projects within organisations, from design to deployment. I am both an Organisational and Clinical Registered Psychologist and have worked as a counsellor and psychotherapist for a short period of time. My continuous

development programme is at the moment focused on evidence-based coaching.

How did you first become interested in the field of coaching and coaching psychology?

Ida: Together with Silvana Dini, Grazia Paolino Geiger and Alessandra Rosicarelli, I co-wrote the *Guidelines for the Work and Organisational Psychologist in the Practice of Organisational Coaching* which were published in April 2010 by a branch of the National Italian Psychological Society. During our study and research prior to writing the guidelines, we discovered coaching psychology and realised it was just what was missing from the coaching scene in Italy and, above all, that the goals and activities of this new discipline strongly matched with the spirit that inspired the guidelines.

In your opinion, what distinguishes coaching psychology from coaching, if anything?

Ida: First of all, coaching psychology values and spells out psychological competencies often used in coaching but never really explicit and, therefore, frequently applied superficially and with little awareness on coaches' behalf. Secondly, it allows a long tradition of different psychological theories and paradigms to be applied to coaching, strengthening its effectiveness and applicability to different contexts such as educational and health, other than mainstream organisa-

tional coaching. Thirdly, coaching psychology's research and evidence-based approach are an important contribution to the development of coaching as a profession.

What are some of the key issues you wish to convey in your invited speech at the Conference?

Ida: The keynote speech will illustrate the profile of Italian coaches (both psychologists and non-psychologists), which are the main competencies coaches use and believe are most effective in their practice, which competencies they believe will be necessary for the future, which values inspire them, which are the main areas they feel they need to develop and through which channels they wish to do so. Our research team (I. Sirolli, S. Dini, G. Pappalepore, A. Chirumbolo, A. Di Rienzo and A. Rosicarelli) were inspired by two main studies (Bono et al., 2009; Whybrow & Palmer, 2006).

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Ida: I wish everyone a great Conference and I'm looking forward to meeting you there!

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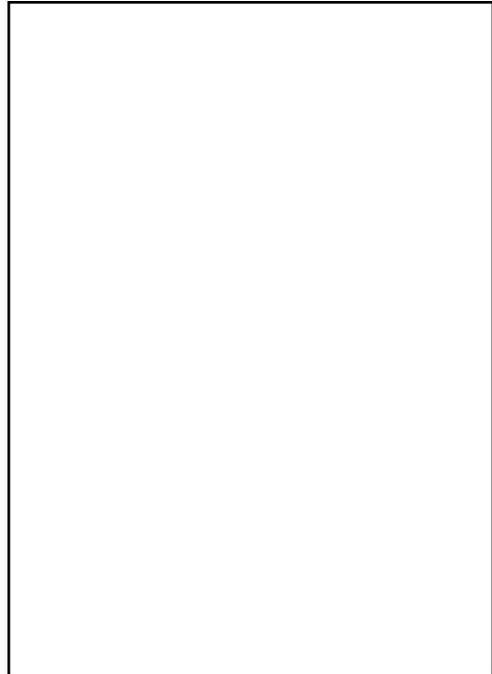
RICHTA IJNTEMA

We are pleased to be welcoming you as an invited speaker at the 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference. What are your hopes and expectations for attending this event?

Richta: Two years ago I attended the 2nd European Coaching Psychology Conference in London. I remember this event very well. It was my first coaching psychology conference and I was surprised by the warm welcome I got as one of the first Dutch participants. Since more European countries have joined the international coaching psychology network, my first hope for this conference is that all new participants will feel as welcome as I did several years ago. Second, as the founder of the Dutch interest group in coaching psychology, I hope to meet many more fellow-country (wo)men!

The theme of the conference for this year is 'Innovation in Coaching Psychology'. This title really appeals to me, because it covers what I think is a necessary step in the development of our profession. Let me explain this. Coaching is first and foremost an industry and as scientists we are running behind. That makes me wonder: To what extent is the science of coaching affected by the (increasing) demands of the industry? And to what extent does the present speed of responsiveness prevent us from being explorative and reflective? I also wonder: How are we as a young discipline affected by (established) disciplines like clinical, sport and positive psychology? What is actually our own point of view as coaching psychologists?

In the same way we offer our clients a reflective space in coaching, we – as scientists and practitioners – need a reflective space to grasp and rethink the content and future of our profession. (Re)considering the essence of our profession and moving from there is exactly what the conference theme 'innovation' means to me. This conference offers a space to reflect on these important issues. I expect we grab this opportunity and take position as coaching psychologists!



Can you tell us about where you work and your professional background?

Richta: For more than 10 years I have been working as a lecturer at the department of Work and Organisational Psychology at Utrecht University. I combine my work at the university with running my own coaching practice. I am a registered psychologist and trainer (Dutch Association of Psychologists) and a coaching psychologist MISCP Accred.

I have an educational background in clinical and health psychology. After graduating I was fed up with the clinical focus on abnormal human behaviour. I longed to learn more about 'normal' human processes and switched my focus to social and organisational psychology. Through the years I specialised in skills training, career coaching, developmental coaching and consultancy. Since 2009 I can add research to my curriculum, when I took the initiative to do PhD research on workplace coaching efficacy. What fascinates me is the coach as a person and what the influence of his/her attributes is on the coaching relationship and coaching outcomes. In short this is the topic of my PhD project. I hope to present interesting results to you in the future.

How did you first become interested in the field of coaching and coaching psychology?

Richta: My curiosity started in 2002, when we developed our first course in coaching (now coaching psychology) at the Department of Work and Organisational Psychology at Utrecht University. Whilst reading about and lecturing on coaching I witnessed the rise of coaching psychology as an applied science in psychology and it inspired me to want to make my own contribution.

But, there is another way of answering your question and that is by telling you what really drives me in my work as a practitioner, lecturer and researcher. I derive this from two experiences: My first experience is that a lot of people forget to take a proper look in the 'mirror' and are too quick to want to change. They overlook the potential that is already there. Second, I notice that people tend to problematise feelings and behaviours that we know are part of normal human functioning. I consider these two things to be the dark side of the 'change' culture we live in. It makes me wonder whether change is always necessary and whether we make enough time for change. As a consequence I am eager to learn what it means to be human, our strengths and shortcomings and the processes we are subject to. In psychology I have found a lot of answers to my questions. In coaching, teaching and writing I have found a platform to share my knowledge and insights and help people live up to their potential and accept (their) limitations at a human pace.

In your opinion, what distinguishes coaching psychology from coaching, if anything?

Richta: The risk of making this distinction is that we drive a wedge between psychologist and non-psychologist coaches and may even come to believe that the one is better than the other. I do not believe that to be true. However, psychology is one of the underlying disciplines of coaching, which means

that every coach can benefit from psychological knowledge. The only benefit from drawing a distinction between coaching and coaching psychology is because it makes us (psychologists) more aware of our responsibility to share our (accumulating) knowledge with the interdisciplinary field of coaching.

What are some of the key issues you wish to convey in your invited speech at the Conference?

Richta: I would like to take you on a journey to my country. Inspired by similar research in the UK, we have studied the practices of coaching psychologists in the Netherlands: What do they do? How do they do it? Who do they coach? And how do they develop professionally? In my opinion these are important questions. In the fast growing field of coaching the desire for evidence based practices instigates the temptation for researchers to miss out on answering these questions and directly start studying the effectiveness of coaching. As a consequence an important question will remain unanswered: Does your research reflect current coaching practice? In order to answer this question myself, I started my PhD research by first studying the practices of coaching psychologists. At this conference I will present the results of this study to you and I hope to discuss the following topics: Are the Netherlands ready for coaching psychology? How do Dutch coaching psychologist compare to coaching psychologists in other countries? Is there anything typical about the Dutch? I believe the results will be interesting for researchers as well as for practitioners.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Richta: A lot of hard work has to be done to make an event like this happen. I would like to thank the conference team in advance for their effort in creating this opportunity to meet one another, exchange ideas and learn together. It is greatly appreciated!

REGULA STAMMBACK

We are pleased to be welcoming you as an invited speaker at the 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference. What are your hopes and expectations for attending this event?

Regula: I look very forward to the 3rd European Coaching Psychology Conference. It is enriching to meet other professionals and learn about their experiences and research.

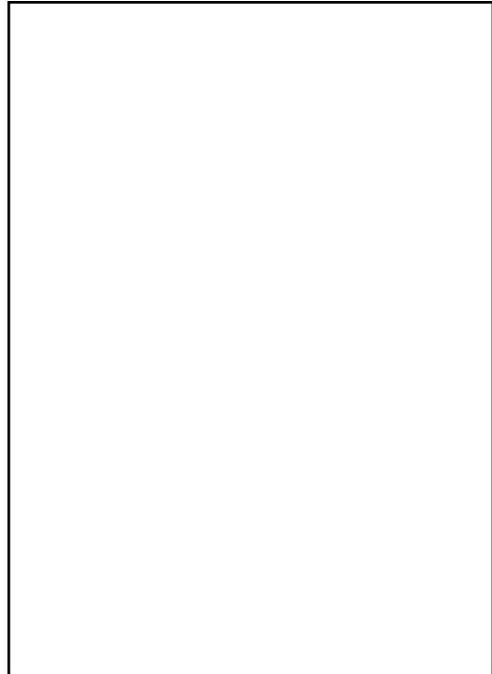
This is the third time that I will be attending and each time I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting old colleagues and being introduced to new ones. This conference is one of the highlights of the year for me: Inspiring, motivating and educational.

Can you tell us about where you work and your professional background?

Regula: My academic background is in sociolinguistics and psychology. My dissertation was on corporate identity. The approach I developed there is the conceptual platform for my work with clients. I have my own international management consultancy firm. We have offices in Zurich and Basel with operations out of Frankfurt as well. We are a dedicated Swiss boutique firm specialised in Leadership Assessment and Development with over 20 years' international experience.

How did you first become interested in the field of coaching and coaching psychology?

Regula: Besides clinical and social psychology I was trained in psychoanalysis and systemic therapy and worked with children. In 1988 I changed careers and began working for a large international American management consulting firm. Many mandates there had a dynamic that could best be understood by looking at the personal characteristics of the decision makers. That is what got me interested in coaching. At that time there was no conceptual framework in coaching psychology. I transferred concepts from psychodynamic and systemic theory to build my own set of tools.



At that time I was considered an oddball among my colleagues and psychologists in Switzerland. There was one senior executive I met early in my career who was very supportive in my coaching aspirations. He mentored me into what has now become a flourishing business.

In your opinion, what distinguishes coaching psychology from coaching, if anything?

Regula: Coaching psychology is a professional specialisation resting on psychology, an academic discipline with a long tradition. We believe that our success with our corporate clients is a direct consequence of rigourously applying psychological methodologies and theoretical concepts to coaching. Our clients very much appreciate our high quality approach and sophisticated toolbox. They know that by assigning us to a mandate they are buying into best practice and highly developed methodologies.

What are some of the key issues you wish to convey in your invited speech at the Conference?

Regula: Today in the management consulting business ‘relationships’ are more than ever considered of tremendous importance. Consulting is very much a people business. Between the client and the consultant there is a complex dynamic that can be best understood and managed by applying basic principles from coaching psychology.

Our executive clients are under a lot of pressure to perform and are often lonely. They sometimes view us as their only trusted person. We offer them a comfort zone and space from which to explore and create meaning in their work or even private life. To manage their high expectations our close attention needs to be on the coach-coachees dynamic. We do this by utilising ‘the relationship’ as a ‘tool’. Transference/counter-transference issues and planned systemic interventions guide our work with our clients.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Regula: I would like to thank the conference organisers, Professor Stephen Palmer and Dr Siobhain O’Riordan, for all the work they have done in building coaching psychology in the UK and internationally. It is of enormous help in our daily work with executives.

Knowing that there is a professional body of coaching psychologists worldwide gives our work a good standing in the market, a sense of belonging to a professional community and is an important pillar in my work.



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Coaching Psychology Techniques section

MI – Balance sheet techniques

Jonathan Passmore

This article is the second paper for the Coaching Psychology Techniques section drawing on the application of motivational interviewing within coaching. In the last issue of The Coaching Psychologist, I summarised briefly the principles of Motivational Interviewing (Passmore, 2011a) and offered one technique – reflective listening (Passmore, 2011b). In this paper I will briefly review a technique called decisional balance or ‘the balance sheet’.

Behaviour change

MAKING A CHANGE is hard for most of us. People often have views which both promote change and which get in their way. They see the potential advantages of changing, but also the advantages of their current behaviour. This type of thinking, arguing both sides of the argument for and against change, can lead to ambivalence. Ultimately this can lead to the coachee becoming stuck and being unable to make a change. This is natural, but for change to happen the coachee needs to overcome this log-jam of ambivalence and develop the motivation to make a change.

MI is a sophisticated approach to behaviour change which is suited to skilled practitioners such as coaching psychologists (Passmore & Whybrow, 2007). In using the approach the key task for the MI coach is to help their coachee explore and understand the coachee’s own ambivalence – reluctance to change. By talking things through coachees have the opportunity to hear their thought processes aloud and to explore these from multiple perspectives with the aid of a coach.

The technique explained

The balance sheet technique, also known as ‘decisional balance’ (Miller & Rollnick, 2002) helps people think through their ambivalence in an open and systematic way. It helps the coachee to deepen their self-understanding and reflect on their own

behaviour. As a result of the exercise the person’s perceived importance for changing (or confidence about changing) is likely to increase and alongside this their motivation and readiness to change may also increase.

For the coach, the technique provides another opportunity to demonstrate good quality non-judgemental listening and to use the OARS (open questions, active listening, reflection and summary) discussed in previous papers, to understand the coachee, to roll with resistance (as opposed to offering arguments for change) and to notice and elicit change talk which comes directly from the coachee (these concepts are further explored in Anstiss & Passmore, 2011).

The technique works best with a sheet of paper (I have also used a flip chart or wipe board when these have been available – but be aware of removing the results at the end of the session to prevent others from reading the notes you have left behind). Divide the sheet into two main columns and two sub-columns (see Figure 1).

Using the responses from the coachee recorded on the balance sheet, the coach can direct the focus of the coachee to start talking about the current benefits of the behaviour, which they may want to change, through an open question such as ‘Tell me a little more about how X can be exciting?’ Such behaviours are often maintained as the coachee derives some pleasure or positive affect from them. By starting with positives this reduces the chances of defensiveness

Figure 1: Coaching for change Balance Sheet.

Benefits of activity	Costs of activity	Benefits of change	Costs of change

(Adapted from Miller & Rollnick, 2002)

from the coachee and the perception that the coach has a fixed agenda to 'make the coachee change their behaviour. In most applications of MI in coaching, I would suggest the role is not to lead the coachee towards selecting a specific behaviour (although MI is often used in clinical settings in this way to address offending or serious drug misuse behaviours) (Passmore, 2007).

The coach may specifically target aspects to encourage the coachee to talk more about the positive aspects of the desired behaviour. The coach may do this through directing attention to this aspect through a further question or by asking the coachee to give an example. Alternatively the coach may ask the coachee to talk about the feelings they have when they have made progress towards this new behavioural goal or when engaging in the desired behaviour.

As the coachee talks about each point in turn, the coach should invite the coachee to summarise the point in three or four words on the decision balance sheet. I have found it works best when the coachee writes down the points rather than the coach doing this.

Depending on the individual and their state, some coachees jump from one point to another and start talking about 'disadvantages' when they were asked about advantages of making a change, or vice versa. This is not a reflection of the coach, but a reflection of the coachee giving voice to their ambivalence and is natural and common. The coach may reflect back to let them know they have been

heard and at the end of the point may direct attention back to the side of the equation which was the original focus of the question, by saying something like *'Well, we're going to talk about the disadvantages in a minute. But are there any other possible benefits to you?'*

As a result of these interventions change talk often emerges from the coachee. Coachees may say something like *'I'd really like to be home on time to put the children to bed'*, reflecting their desire to make a change to the time consuming nature of their role and the desire to break the pattern of behaviour.

The exercise can be completed more quickly, if time is a challenge. This can be done by just using two boxes as opposed to four columns. These two columns can be summarised under the heading: *'good things'* and *'less good things'*. By using a two as opposed to a four column approach repetition is avoided with items being repeated by the client in the disadvantages of one side of the balance sheet as well as the advantages of the other side of the other side. I have found however, that on occasions, coachees can miss items, when two rather than four columns are used.

At the end of the exercise the coachee has a sheet which they have completed which they can take away. The coach might ask them to spend some further time reflecting on this before the next session. Rather than leaving this free form, this works best when attention is directed towards the focus of change.

Conclusion

The decisional balance or balance sheet technique within MI can be used within other coaching models and is a simple but useful technique for coachees to explore the consequences of their behaviour, to more fully understand the impact on their self and others and take personal responsibility for the consequences based on an informed choice about their behaviour.

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The application of the responsibility pie technique in coaching

Garret O'Moore

This article focuses on the 'responsibility pie' technique which can help clients consider the degree to which they are personally responsible for a difficult situation or event and take appropriate action.

Keywords: *Responsibility pie; Dennis Greenberger; Christine Padesky; reattribution of responsibility.*

THE 'responsibility pie' (Greenberger & Padesky, 1995) was developed for use within CBT to enable clients who felt guilty and ashamed about a situation or event to learn to reattribute an appropriate amount of responsibility between themselves and other causal factors.

The effectiveness of the technique has resulted in it being used with a range of client presentations including people diagnosed with OCD (Westbrook, Kennerly & Kirk, 2007) in which a core feature is an overdeveloped sense of responsibility (Veale, 2007).

Although initially developed for use in therapy it can be integrated into a range of coaching approaches where a coach finds themselves working with clients who have a tendency to attribute a disproportionate amount of blame to themselves or to others.

The following example illustrates how Sarah, who felt distressed after assuming that a missed customer deadline was 100 per cent her fault constructed a responsibility pie to better attribute responsibility.

Sarah was encouraged by her coach to list all the people and factors that contributed to the missed deadline and when she was finished add her name to the end of the list. Although it took some prompting from her coach she came up with the following list:

1. My manager, who agreed an unrealistic deadline with our customers.
2. The fire at our supplier's factory that resulted in a shipment of key components arriving late.
3. The economic climate that has left us understaffed and our employees overworked.
4. My micro-managing that prevented me from seeing the bigger picture.

Although Sarah could see that there were a number of contributing factors she was asked to estimate out of 100 how much each item on her list contributed to the missed deadline and to convert it into a pie chart as shown in Figure 1.

After going through the list Sarah realised that she was only 20 per cent responsible for the missed deadline which helped alleviate some of her distress. As a secondary gain Sarah identified that in addition to reducing her micro-managing she could see the importance of taking action to contract with her manager about setting more achievable deadlines.

Conclusion

The responsibility pie is a useful technique that can be used to reattribute an appropriate amount of responsibility for a difficult situation or event and consequently enable a client to make a more informed decision about the most beneficial course of action to take.

Figure 1: Sarah's Responsibility pie.



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Revisiting the 'P' in the PRACTICE coaching model

Stephen Palmer

The PRACTICE model of coaching has been developing over time and adapted to the presenting issues arising during the initial stage of coaching. This paper will briefly highlight the options available.

Keywords: PRACTICE; problem-solving; cognitive-behavioural coaching; solution-focused coaching; Presenting issue; Purpose; Preferred outcome; Preferred option.

OVER THE past four decades various researchers and practitioners have developed problem-solving methods which have been applied to a wide range of issues such as decision making, stress and anxiety management, and settings such as coaching/coaching psychology, clinical, counselling, psychotherapy, training, human resources and management (see D'Zurilla & Goldfried, 1971; D'Zurilla, 1986; D'Zurilla & Nezu, 1999; Neenen & Palmer, 2001a, 2001b; Palmer & Burton, 1996; Palmer 1997a, 1997b; Palmer & Szymanska, 2007; Wasik, 1984). The steps in Wasik's (1984) seven-step problem-solving are: Problem identification; Goal selection; Generation of alternatives; Consideration of consequences; Decision making; Implementation; Evaluation.

Palmer (2007a, 2007b) developed the **PRACTICE** model of coaching which is an adaptation of Wasik's (1984) seven-step sequence. The acronym, PRACTICE, represents the seven steps: **P**roblem identification; **R**ealistic, relevant goals developed; **A**lternative solutions generated; **C**onsideration of consequences; **T**arget most feasible solution(s); **I**mplementation of **C**hosen solution(s); **E**valuation. The PRACTICE model has been used for performance, business, career, executive, stress, health, life and personal coaching in addition to being used within counselling, psychotherapy and stress management. Initially the PRACTICE model/framework was seen as a solution

seeking, cognitive behavioural approach (see Palmer, 2007a, 2007b). However, PRACTICE has continued to evolve with a greater emphasis on the solution-focused approach to coaching (e.g. Palmer, 2008; Williams, Palmer & Wallace, 2011). Palmer (2008, p.4) highlighted a number of key items: *At the start of the first coaching meeting the coachee is given an opportunity to talk about him or herself without immediately focusing on their problem(s), issues or concerns thereby allowing the coach to learn more about them (O'Connell, 2003). During the coaching process the coach will draw attention to the coachee any relevant examples of their competence, strengths and qualities and also build on 'exceptions' when the presenting problem or issue is less of a problem. Throughout the whole process of the coaching meeting, scaling questions are used to monitor where the coachee currently is, if progress is being made and what the coachee would need to do to improve the rating.*

The revised PRACTICE sequence is described in Table 1 and highlights additional solution-focused methods during step one, in particular (Palmer, 2008, p.5).

In purely solution-focused coaching, problem-talk is usually avoided and it may be preferable that the 'P' in the PRACTICE model represents another aspect of the coaching process such as 'Presenting issues' instead of 'Problem identification'.

Sometimes coachees come to coaching with fuzzy problems and unclear goals. For example, this can occur when a coachee

Table 1: The revised PRACTICE sequence.

Steps	Possible questions, statements and actions
1. Problem identification	<p>What's the problem or issue or concern or topic you wish to discuss? What would you like to change? Any exceptions when it is not a problem, issue or concern? How will we know if the situation has improved? On a scale of 0 to 10 where '0' is nowhere and '10' is resolved, how near are you now today, to resolving the problem or issue? Any distortions or can the problem or issue be viewed differently? Can you imagine waking up tomorrow morning and this problem (or issue or concern) no longer existed, what would you notice that was different?</p>
2. Realistic, relevant goals developed (e.g. SMART goals)	<p>What do you want to achieve? Let's develop specific SMART goals.</p>
3. Alternative solutions generated	<p>What are your options? Let's note them down.</p>
4. Consideration of consequences	<p>What could happen? How useful is each possible solution? Let's use a rating 'usefulness' scale for each solution where '0' is <i>not useful at all</i>, and '10' is <i>extremely useful</i>.</p>
5. Target most feasible solution(s)	<p>Now we have considered the possible solutions, what is the most feasible or practical solution(s)?</p>
6. Implementation of Chosen solution(s)	<p>Let's implement the chosen solution by breaking it down into manageable steps. Now go and do it!</p>
7. Evaluation	<p>How successful was it? Rating 'success' scale 0 to 10. What can be learnt? Can we finish coaching now or do you want to address or discuss another issue or concern?</p>

is contemplating changing career but literally has no idea what direction to take. In this case 'P' can represent 'Purpose of coaching'. Usually more time is spent on exploration of the issues, concerns and strengths instead of overly focusing on developing coach-driven (and somewhat forced) goals prematurely. However, with other coachees it becomes clear in the first session that options and outcomes can be focused on. That is when the 'P' in PRACTICE can represent

'Preferred options' or 'Preferred Outcome' instead of 'Problem identification'.

For a fuller explanation of the solution-focused coaching approach, see Green and Grant (2003), Jackson and McKergow (2007), O'Connell and Palmer (2007), Palmer, Grant, and O'Connell (2007) and the cognitive behavioural approach, see Palmer and Burton (1996), Neenan and Dryden (2002), and Palmer and Szymanska (2007).

Conclusion

The PRACTICE model is continuing to develop often reflecting the needs of the coachee and sometimes the coaching orientation of the coach or coaching psychologist. More recently it has been adapted to different languages and cultures (e.g. Dias et al., 2011). In summary, the PRACTICE model is a solution-focused and cognitive behavioural approach depending upon how it is applied by the practitioner.

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The Ethics Column

Julie Allan

‘**T**HOUGH teaching and training in ethics is an important component of the psychology curriculum, it is not an easy task at all. Usually there is a theoretical emphasis which most of the time would not bring desired change in awareness and understanding of ethical issues.’ Associate Professor Yesim Korkut (Bahcesehir University) spoke to this abstract as part of his contribution as the convenor of the Ethics Track of the 12th European Congress of Psychology (Istanbul, July 2011).

The British Psychological Society Ethics Committee Chair Tony Wainwright (University of Exeter) was also an invited speaker, outlining the outcomes from surveys conducted with UK psychology departments and postgraduates concerning ethics teaching. Pointing out that teaching is not the same as learning, he referred to work by Illingworth and others from the Ethics project at the Higher Education Academy (University of Leeds, 2008) exploring the development/teaching of ethical competence in/to adults. He suggested that recent research on the psychology of moral behaviour could usefully be included in all courses, as well as discussions of ethical reasoning and professional Codes of Practice.

A common acknowledgement from most commentators such as these is that ethical thinking is aligned more with the equivalent of a post-conventional stage of moral development (to take Kohlberg as the theorist [as cited in Gibbs, 2009]; others are available). This doesn’t exclude a use for guidance and frameworks that are a bit more ‘rule-like’, but adds to this the need to develop capabil-

ities in judgement where situations are not clear or where simultaneous different perspectives may be equally valid. Frameworks for this purpose would support the development of reflexivity, enabling not just thinking about situations but carrying the thinking forward into action. Carroll (2009) and Passmore (2011) are among those who have offered such in recent years for, or including, coaches and coaching psychologists.

For Carroll, courage, transparency and accountability (for one’s own actions) are key in what he terms ethical maturity, and perhaps Aristotle’s adage applies: we don’t act ‘rightly’ because we are virtuous or excellent, but we develop these qualities through the practice of ‘right’ action. Of course, we can always choose to not bother, and it is for this reason that defined professions have disciplinary and redress systems to accompany the other hallmarks of a profession: entry standards, and support for standards via continuous development and ethical behaviour. However, it is this last category – the area encouraging a developmental approach beyond a regulatory one – that the Professional Association Research Network identified as of increasing importance (PARN 2010).

*‘Would you tell me, please, which way
I ought to go from here?’*

*‘That depends a good deal on where you want
to get to.’*

‘I don’t much care where –’

‘Then it doesn’t matter which way you go.’

Lewis Carroll (Alice in Wonderland)

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What would you do if...?

Here are some partial notes from a situation that a coach has brought to supervision. What went wrong? What are the main areas to enquire into, to help ensure a good outcome this time and prevent something similar on another occasion?

The background:

The coach has a long and happy association with a mid-size management services company. The coach traditionally provided training, team development and consultancy type services internally for this company, on a contract basis.

Then, an influential company director with whom the coach has a good relationship, proposed that each senior manager in his department receive five one-hour sessions from this coach. This was to be a trial period, based on the director knowing that the coach thought one-to-one coaching would add value and would be interested to provide it. The senior director has not been coached, nor has coaching been available in the company before. A price was agreed and the deal was done!

A specific situation within this:

Stuart is one of the senior managers. Introduced to the coach, he was overjoyed to be receiving some exclusive one-to-one coaching, something that he had been requesting for over a year since his promotion.

Session 1 – The coach understands that Stuart is clearly under a lot of pressure in terms of accountabilities and achieving his performance targets, something that is causing him real anxiety. However, the session goes well.

After the first session, the company director calls the coach in for an update. The coach gave a positive view, without going into detail. But the coach left wondering if there was perhaps some history about his coachee that was not being shared.

Session 2 – While the coach felt that the session with Stuart went well, he was again pulled in to give an account of progress. The director made clear his view that Stuart was failing consistently in achieving his targets and that if he was not ‘fixed’ he would be out of a job.

Session 3 – This session did not go well and was cut short.

This is the point at which the coach brought the issue to supervision.

Some considerations:

- At what point in this story did you spot a warning sign?
- What would you have done differently and why?
- Who are the clients in this story? Stepping in to their shoes, what has each ‘signed up’ to?
- Who has influence over who in this story? Of what type? What are the consequences?
- Who in this story knows what coaching might involve or lead to?
- What hasn’t been said that needs to be said? To who? From who?

Thanks to Derek Ross for this example. It is a provocation for reflective practice and does not constitute advice. Derek co-ordinates the peer practice groups and is actively involved in exploring how considering ethical dilemmas helps develop professional practice.

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Peer practice groups

[www.sgcp.org.uk/sgcp/in-practice/active-groups\\$.cfm](http://www.sgcp.org.uk/sgcp/in-practice/active-groups$.cfm)

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1st international Congress of Coaching Psychology – an update from the Swedish congress

Liv Hök

ON 16 September 2011, Sweden's Coaching Psychologists Network in collaboration with the Swedish Psychological Association had the honour of hosting the first conference of 'Coaching Psychology' as part of the 1st International Congress of Coaching Psychology. Hundreds of attendees filled Polhems Hall of the City Conference Centre, Stockholm, on this sunny early Autumn day. Coaching Psychologists' P.O. Eriksson and the Swedish Psychological Association's Lars Ahlin launched the days' events with Professor Stephen Palmer, representative of the 1st International Congress of Coaching Psychology. They all stressed the importance of taking an offensive stance for psychology's place in the world.

The first of six invited speakers was Professor Stephen Palmer, PhD, Honorary Professor of Psychology at City University and Director of the Coaching Psychology Unit, Co-Convenor of the International Steering Committee for the international congresses of coaching psychology events. Under the heading 'The Developing Field of Coaching Psychology in Europe and Internationally', he gave the audience an overview of how coaching has developed since Socrates' day. He also presented a summary of last year's international congresses stemming from an initial event held in the UK (London) in December 2010. Through the Coaching Psychologists network, Sweden establishes representation in the long list of countries with groups aiming to bring together the coaching psychology community. Other countries

include: South Africa, Ireland, Spain, Australia, Netherlands, Israel, New Zealand, Denmark, Italy and Switzerland. When asked what psychologists have to offer in respect to coaching, Stephen responded with 'understanding of the importance of theory'. Psychologists who apply their knowledge and experience to coaching can make a difference and contribute to their client's change in as little as two to three sessions. Greater international co-operation among psychologists is, therefore, called for.

After a morning coffee mingle, we were lucky to greet the arrival of Jens Boris Larsen, Chair of the Society of Evidence-based Practice, a society within the Danish Psychological Association. His presentation was entitled 'Playing Outside the Playbook: Advanced Strategies to Accentuate Hope in Simple and Complex Coaching Conversations'. He lit a candle on the stage and proceeded to talk about the importance of hope. As a coach based in positive psychology and behavioural and cognitive behavioural models with a focus on solutions, he meets clients in situations of overwhelming complexity. Jen's basic premise in addressing such cases is that we must be aware of context and work at that level if we are to achieve results. He concluded by quoting Peter Senge regarding how to continue 'leading from the future' by 'facing the facts' as we are coaching in complexity.

Dr Magnus Larsson, PhD, Psychologist and Senior Lecturer at the Institute for Organisation Copenhagen Business School, then expanded upon complexity during his

presentation. His specific title was 'Navigating the Complexity: A Systems Psychodynamic Perspective on Coaching'. Magnus spoke of a system's psychodynamic perspective where no client is isolated but always part of a system or an organisation. He gave a brief introduction to role analysis based upon psychoanalysis and system theory. The main task in this type of coaching is to identify the system, clarify its primary task, observe the boundaries and examine how roles are relating. One examines the experiences as person in role and looks at 'the organisation in the mind'. One also attends to feelings and regards them as information. This method's application leads to organisational skills, clarity and self-awareness, and the ability to structurally reflect upon one's own behaviour.

After a lunch break, Julie Allan, Psychologist, Organisational Consultant and Coach, introduced us to her subject 'Important but Uncertain Matters: Towards Coaching for Wisdom'. Julie is currently researching corporate wisdom and has a coaching and supervision practice. Expertise in the important but uncertain matters of life, said Julie, emerge as a result of our active attention to things such as life planning, life management and life review. Wisdom is a developmental process. What stops wisdom is a lack of reflection and what promotes it is integration of thoughts, feelings, motivation, respect and relationships. We can coach for wisdom by drawing on basic psychology of cognition, emotion, motivation and lifespan development and by attending to what is emerging in psychology and other systemic disciplines.

The next speaker was Professor Reinhard Stelter who holds a PhD in psychology and is Professor of Sport and Coaching Psychology at the University of Copenhagen. He is head of the Coaching Psychology Unit, Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences, and part-time senior lecturer at the Copenhagen Business School. 'Narrative Coaching Towards Human and Social Meaning-making and Collaborative Practice' was

about narrative, collaborative coaching based on societal challenges, new forms of knowledge production, and new challenges in leadership. Through dialogue, we think together and create new context from which new arguments might arise. Reinhard focused on values, meaning-making and the implicit dimension of the coachee to develop coaching as a reflective practice. He reminded us about the space necessary for the unfolding of narratives. A narrative, he argued, joins experiences together by telling a story. This is a way of organising episodes, actions and accounts of actions. This narrative in turn helps the client to shape the central concept in meaningful coaching.

Paul O. Olson is specialised in support and leadership for international and strategic change and problem solving. His focus is on executive and management team coaching, boardroom psychology and corporate governance. His subject was 'Leadership Coaching – State of the Art'. Looking at past and current leadership practices, Paul made the point that executive coaching has taken on a new form as coaching has become intellectual property separated from psychotherapy. Leaders mix their leadership styles to match new situations and so executive coaches must be aware of developments in management philosophy and business literature. 'The key focus is sometimes on individual productivity,' said Paul, 'but it is always about balancing and leveraging resources in typically complex systems and projects'. He pointed out contributions from positive psychology, social psychology and neuroscience.

In conclusion, the presenters were asked what will coaching psychology's next challenges most likely be. Stephen Palmer optimistically predicted new achievements through interest from the academic community. Magnus Larson stressed the continued importance of organisational theory. Julie Allan voiced her concern over the International Coach Federation (ICF) being limited to clients searching for certified coaches with business experience rather than valuing

coaches as psychologists. Paul O. Olsson said that we must relinquish psychotherapy. Stephen Palmer responded to this by strongly emphasising that coaching is not therapy. Magnus Larsson referred to David Armstrong who urges the coaching psychologist to examine, investigate and re-examine whether the client is an individual or an entire organisation. Jens Boris Larsen underscored once again the importance of context and meaning. Finally, Reinhard Stelter made the argument that psychologists need to learn how to sell themselves. This final conclusion brought us back full circle to Lars Ahlin's introductory words about psychology being more aggressive in its self-promotion. In short, we need to become coaching psychology entrepreneurs.

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Creating a Successful Coaching Practice: 'Online'

Are you a Coach with skills and expertise that could be delivered online via the internet?

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- Creating your content: written, audio and video.
- Marketing and advertising your product(s).
- Why most first-time visitors won't buy from you (and why this is ok!).
- How to demonstrate expertise through online articles, blogs and speaking events.
- Delivering the product; via a website, Amazon or other digital routes.
- Deciding your price point.
- Taking payment – using online shopping carts and managing credit/debit payments.
- Outsourcing the administration.
- Next Steps.

The workshop is facilitated by Dr Jen Nash, a Clinical Psychologist with diabetes who delivers a range of e-books and audio programmes to people with diabetes all over the world at www.PositiveDiabetes.com. Passionate about this way of working, Jen is seeking to inspire you to do the same in your own particular niche.

Workshops are held monthly – visit www.drjen.co.uk to find out more.

Book Review

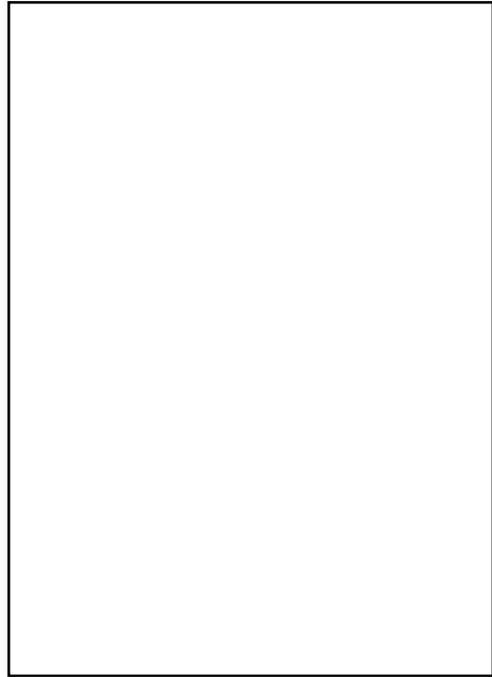
***The Routledge Companion to
International Business Coaching***

Michel Moral & Geoffrey Abbott (Eds.)
Routledge, 2008.
Hardback £119.00; Paperback £28.50.
ISBN: 978-0-415-66941-2.

Reviewed by Conall Platts, C.Psychol, AFBPsS

The *Companion* is an edited book, with a diverse range of chapters all put forward as being themed around the topic of international business coaching. Twenty-two chapters in total, sub-grouped into three broader sections; International Coaching Frameworks and Tools (Chapters 1 to 11), Organisational Challenges and Opportunities – Individual (Chapters 12 to 15) and Organisational Challenges and Opportunities – Collective (Chapters 16 to 22). The contributor's biographies suggest that they themselves represent a diverse range of cultural backgrounds and professional experiences. The editors' introductory chapter sets out a clear focus for the *Companion*, paraphrased as: *change is a constant in modern day global business, coaching is well placed to help global business leaders behave resourcefully and sustainably in facilitating on-going individual and organisational success.* The editors go on to suggest that the *Companion* 'provides practical approaches and ideas for coaches, consultants, leaders and managers to meet the challenges that are emerging.' Both the international business context and culture are positioned centrally in this introductory chapter. The reader is informed that each chapter will follow a standardised format; an overview of the proposition, a case study, coaching tools and a conclusion. In combination this held my attention and I started out with high hopes for the chapters ahead.

Some of the early chapters are indeed classical 'how to' coaching chapters, set in the context of international business coaching (*read* inter-culturally aware coaching),



although several of these could have been even more practical and detailed in their description of case study and methodological examples. Within the first cluster of Chapters (1 to 11) a number of interesting themes and topics are explored: systems thinking with respect to organisational design (Chapter 1), loyalty to cultural beliefs (Chapter 4), executive crisis survival (Chapter 9) and a systemic view on cultural appreciation (Chapter 11), to name a few of the more coherent and clearly presented chapters. This reviewer felt that Chapter 1 became too technical in its focus on organisational design and, therefore, remained underdeveloped around specific related coaching interventions and techniques. Chapter 4 puts forward a coherent, systemic view of how loyalty to cultural groups may play out in practice, most usefully in relation to the potential tension between inner and outer intercultural beliefs. Chapter 9's focus on 'crisis' survival was refreshingly novel,

however, this reviewer felt that the links with business realities and coaching interventions were somewhat tenuous in places and in fact only tangentially related to *real* crisis psychology. Chapter 11 provided perhaps the most coherent and well-developed chapter in the first section of the *Companion*. Again taking a systemic lens, the editors built on the simple adult proposition that insight leads to choices which in turn leads to effective intercultural working. The editors generously share several useful tools and techniques, the feedback matrix standing out amongst these. If anything, this reviewer felt that this chapter was left somewhat underdeveloped.

The remaining chapters in this first section are in the view of this reviewer somewhat inconsistent in the extent to which they relate to the central aims of the *Companion* or its intended readership, or are unclear/underdeveloped, whilst the remaining chapters are clearer and more coherent in their focus, yet more narrowly focused on a single construct, tool or product. In the case of the latter, Chapter 2's focus on 'outsight' (i.e. an awareness of other people and other systems), Chapter 6's focus on the Bar-on EQi and Chapter 10's focus on Rosinski's Cultural Orientations Framework (COF). Emotional Intelligence is no doubt of relevance in many coaching conversations, but to suggest that EQ be used as a sole diagnostic criteria, particularly to shed light on intercultural dimensions, is perhaps erroneous. 'Outsight', and indeed 'collective intelligence' as discussed in Chapters 2 and 7 respectively, are both interesting concepts albeit both perhaps overstated as panaceas in the context of international business coaching. Rosinski's COF is presented as a given in Chapter 10 and certainly latterly in the *Companion* several other authors make reference to it. However, from a personal perspective greater construct validity evidence would have enhanced the impact of this chapter. The remaining three chapters in the first section, Chapter 3 ('Coaching to Hidden Frames'), Chapter 5 ('Ontological Coaching') and Chapter 8 ('The Heart of Cross-

cultural Creation) were each interesting but somewhat unclear; neither the central concept nor its linkage to international business coaching was sufficiently clear.

The second and third sections of the *Companion* move away from the earlier 'how to' emphasis and shift focus to explore an interesting array of coaching applications, from coaching for expatriated couples (Chapter 12) to global virtual teams (Chapter 18), from nomadic leaders (Chapter 15) to corporate venturers (i.e. intrapreneurs) (Chapter 19). The risk within this section of the *Companion* is that what makes it interesting (to both the executive coach and to the commissioner of coaching services) is the very thing that gets in the way of effective coaching: expertise. Each of these chapters is rich and interesting in providing insights (e.g. into Western/Eastern cultural differences in Chapter 16), each written by credible and knowledgeable authors. Several of these chapters left me realising how little I knew on a particular topic (e.g. the mindset of corporate venturers) and this in turn then left me wondering if my current limited knowledge was a help or a hindrance in the context of me adding value as a coach. Having read each of the 11 Chapters covering sections 2 and 3, I came to the view that the benefits of these insights lay in not becoming an expert *per se*, but rather having some more holistic view of the broader topic area with a view to being able to ask intelligent, other-focussed questions. Individual chapters varied in their readiness and thoroughness, however, overall they were thought-provoking. Some were more immediately usable (e.g. Chapter 16's 'When East meets West') than others (e.g. Chapter 14's 'Coaching Women Managers in Multinational Companies'), whilst some others seemed designed to set up healthy and effective coaching relationships (Chapter 21, International Coaching) and coach pools (Chapter 22, Choosing Coaches for International Business Leaders?)

Reviewing this *Companion* proved quite a task. At many moments I found it difficult to

maintain momentum and make sense of the 'take-aways' from several of the chapters. In other places I found myself entertained and thoroughly enjoying the narrative, only then to find myself questioning the relevance of what I'd been reading given the original aims of the book. To conclude, therefore,

I would suggest that the *Companion* be re-titled 'a collection of thoughts, tools and forecasts around coaching in global business settings, with some sections more for buyers than for coaches and vice versa' and if this appeals then you will not be disappointed.

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The Honorary President of the International Society for Coaching Psychology (ISCP) is Professor Stephen Palmer MISCPAccred. Honorary Vice Presidents of the ISCP include other leading experts in psychology from around the world.

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Notes for Contributors

The Coaching Psychologist

Contributions on all aspects of research, theory, practice and case studies in the arena of coaching psychology are welcome. Manuscripts of approximately 3000 words excluding references, which may be extended with the permission of the Editor, should be typewritten and include the author's name, address and contact details. All submissions must include an abstract and keywords. Included should also be a statement stipulating that the paper is not under consideration elsewhere. Please note, contributors will be required to complete an assignment of copyright form. All submissions, including book reviews should be mailed to the Editor, siobhain.oriordan@btinternet.com.

- Authors of all submissions should follow the British Psychological Society's guidelines for the use of non-sexist language and all references must be presented in APA style (see the *Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines*, and the *Style Guide*, both available from the British Psychological Society).
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