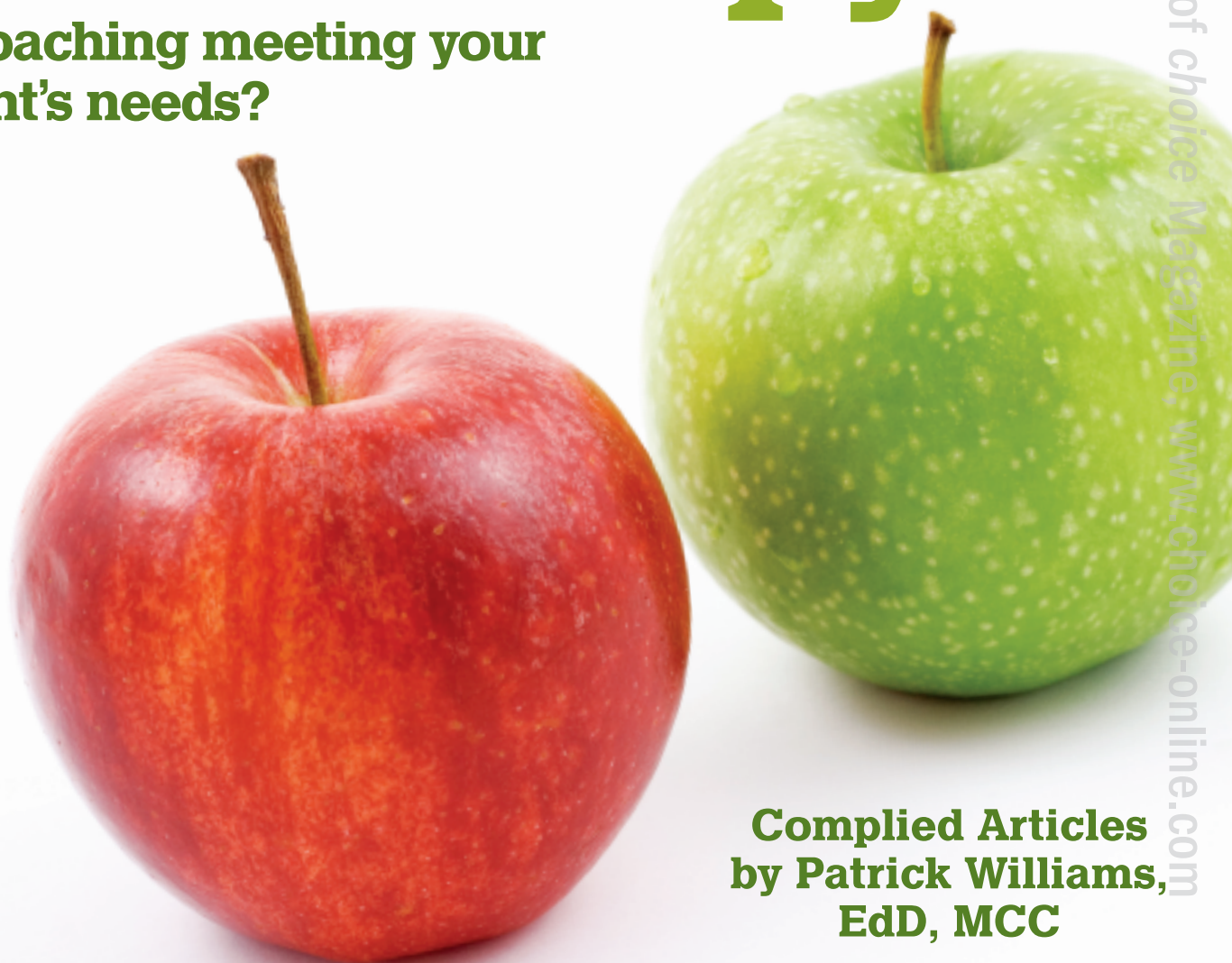


choice

the magazine of professional coaching

Coaching VS. Therapy

Is coaching meeting your
client's needs?



Complied Articles
by Patrick Williams,
EdD, MCC



We are pleased to publish our compilation of articles by Dr. Patrick Williams, Ed.D., MCC., as a special supplement issue of choice Magazine. Pat has been a contributor to *choice* from our very beginnings and the voice of our Therapy Alliance column.

Garry T. Schleifer, Publisher
choice Magazine

Dr. Patrick Williams, Ed.D., MCC

One of the early pioneers of coaching, Pat is often called the ambassador of life coaching. Pat has been a licensed psychologist since 1980 and began executive coaching in 1990 with Hewlett Packard, IBM, Kodak and other companies along the front range of Colorado. He is a member of PHI BETA KAPPA and CUM LAUDE graduate of Kansas University in 1972. He completed his masters in Humanistic Psychology in 1975 (University of West Georgia) and doctorate in Transpersonal Psychology in 1977 (University of Northern Colorado).

Pat joined Coach U in 1996, closed his therapy practice six months later and became a full time coach. Pat was a senior trainer with Coach U from 1997-1998. He then started his own coach training school, the Institute for Life Coach Training (ILCT) which specializes in training those with a human services orientation. ILCT has trained over 2,500 helping professionals and has opened offices in Korea, Turkey, Italy, China, and the UK.

Pat is department chair of the Coaching Psychology program at the International University of Professional Studies (www.iups.edu), and has taught graduate coaching classes at Colorado State University and Denver University, Fielding University, City University of London and many others. He was also a curriculum consultant for the Coaching Certificate program at Fielding International University.

Pat is a past board member of the International Coach Federation (ICF), and co-chaired the ICF regulatory committee. He is currently president of ACTO, the Association of Coach Training Organizations and an honorary VP of the Association of Coaching Psychology. Pat was also honored in 2008 as the educator of the year for the New England Educational Institute.

In May of 2006 Pat was awarded the first Global Visionary Fellowship by the Foundation of Coaching for his Coaching the Global Village (www.CoachingtheGlobalVillage.org) initiative to bring coaching methodologies to villages in developing countries and to leaders of non profits and nongovernmental organizations who serve them. He is passionate about coaching and dedicated to ensuring it remains a respected profession.

Pat has authored [multiple articles](#) and has co-authored the following books:

- [Therapist as Life Coach: Transforming Your Practice](#) (2nd Edition 2007)
- [Total Life Coaching: 50+ Life Lessons, Skills, and Techniques to Enhance your Practice and Your Life](#) (2005)
- [The Law and Ethics in Coaching: How to Solve and Avoid Difficult Problems in Your Practice](#) (2006)
- [Becoming a Professional Life Coach: Lessons from the Institute for Life Coach Training](#) (2007)

Most recently he is a contributor to [The Philosophy and Practice of Coaching](#) (Chapter 1, 2008)

As of 11/1/09, Pat sold ILCT to Life Options group and is now the executive VP of LifeOptions. ILCT continues as a subsidiary of LifeOptions and Pat continues to coach, train and lead in the ever evolving field of professional life and wellness coaching.

Border Line

Understanding the relationship
between therapy and coaching

By Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC



As the profession of life coaching evolves, it becomes more uniquely defined and described. Over the past decade, many coaches and psychologists have clarified its definition and role (Ellis, 2005; Williams and Davis, 2000; Stober and Grant, 2006; Williams and Menendez, 2007), and these distinctions continue to emerge. Increasingly, life coaching seems to be revealing itself as an evolutionary step beyond traditional therapy. Traditional therapy will not become extinct, but rather it will increasingly serve only those clients who need clinical services. On a continuum, the distinctions between the two fields might be represented as in the chart on the opposite page

As the helping professions continue to evolve, more clarity will emerge

regarding which helping professional is the *best fit* for a client's current concern.

The distinctions between traditional therapy and coaching can be considered in four broad categories.

1. Past vs. future: Perspectives on the process. Therapy frequently focuses on the past and generally assumes the client has a problem that needs solving; coaching focuses

on the future and assumes the client is whole and has the innate wisdom and tools to have a wonderful life.

2. Fix vs. create: Why clients come to see you. Clients generally seek a therapist as a resource to fix or eliminate their problem; clients seek a coach to assist them in getting more out of their lives or creating new possibilities in their lives.

3. Professional vs. collegial: Characteristics of the helper-client relationship. Therapy clients generally see the therapist as an expert who holds the answers and techniques to fix their problems; coaching clients see the coach as a partner to support their growth and efforts to create an even better life than they have now.

4. Limited vs. open: How you generate new clients. Therapists are limited in the ways they can generate clients and how readily they can approach others about their services; coaches can be free and open about seeking clients and discussing their services.

Let's take a deeper look at each of these distinctions.

1. Past versus Future:

Perspectives on the process

In general, therapy has historically dealt with the client's past and some pain or dysfunction. Traditional psychotherapy focuses on the root of the problem, the history, the family of origin, and other causal issues. The helper's role is to bring the client to an adequate present or reasonable level of functioning (taking the dysfunction into consideration).

Coaching, by contrast, works with an individual who is already adequately functioning and moves him to a higher level of functioning. From a theoretical perspective, coaching focuses on the future, barrier identification, goal setting, planning, and creative action. Coaching works actively with the conscious mind to facilitate the client to step into a preferred future while also living a fulfilling life in the present.

Now, some of you are reading this and thinking, "But I work in the future when I do therapy!" This may well be the case, particularly if you are trained and practice from a solution-focused perspective. However, if you are helping adequately functioning individuals move to higher levels of functioning by using coaching techniques, you probably aren't doing therapy, or at least not therapy as defined by most insurance

“It's important to keep miles between your coaching and therapy practices if you choose to have both.”

companies. There are definitely some coach-like therapists — in fact, they are usually the individuals most comfortable with the therapist-to-coach transition.

2. Fix versus Create:

Why clients come to see you

In most clinical practices, clients come with a presenting problem that they either want the therapist to solve or because someone else has sent them to get 'fixed.' Psychotherapists see many of the latter in marital therapy and child therapy.

Applying the traditional medical model of therapy, the therapist would likely undertake the follow-

ing strategies:

- Talk with the client about her personal and medical histories and previous mental health treatment.
- Explore the history and duration of the problem.
- Discuss why the client believes she might have this problem at this time in her life and continue to gather pertinent current and historical information.
- Consult the most recent DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) or the ICD (International Classifications of Diseases), give the client a diagnosis, and develop a treatment plan.

If the client has insurance, the diagnosis hopefully is one that the insurance company will accept. If not, the therapist faces the common dilemma of deciding whether to assign a DSM diagnosis that will enable the client to get insurance reimbursement. Many therapists will do this simply to enable the client to get reimbursement — not because the diagnosis is in any way helpful (with the exception of training in a clinical program

THERAPY/COACHING CONTINUUM

TRADITIONAL THERAPY (Old style)	TRANSITIONAL MODELS (Gray areas)	COACHING (A new option)
Psychoanalytic Paradigm of pathology Orientation Process Feelings Inner world History Asking "Why?" Therapist as expert Client as patient Medical model	Solution-focused brief Paradigm of solutions Language is primary tool Move away from pathology	Whole-life coaching Paradigm of possibility Orientation Outcome Action Inner to outer worlds Vision of future Asking "How?" Coach as co-creator Partnership of equals Freedom from managed care

DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THERAPY AND COACHING

THERAPY	MENTORING	CONSULTING	COACHING
Deals mostly with a person's past and trauma, and seeks healing	Deals mostly with succession training and seeks to help someone do what you do	Deals mostly with problems and seeks to provide information (expertise, strategy, structures, methodologies) to solve them	Deals mostly with a person's present and seeks to guide them into a more desirable future
Doctor-patient relationship (Therapist has the answers)	Older/Wiser — Younger/Less Experienced relationship (Mentor has the answers)	Expert-Person with Problem relationship (Consultant has the answers)	Co-creative equal partnership (Coach helps client discover their own answers)
Assumes emotions are a symptom of something wrong	Is limited to emotional response of the mentoring parameters (succession, etc.)	Does not normally address or deal with emotions (informational only)	Assumes emotions are natural and normalizes them
The Therapist diagnoses, and then provides professional expertise and guidelines to give you a path to healing	The Mentor allows you to observe his/her behavior, expertise, answers questions, provides guidance and wisdom for the stated purpose of the mentoring	The Consultant stands back, evaluates a situation, and then tells you the problem and how to fix it	The Coach stands with you, and helps YOU identify the challenges, then works with you to turn challenges into victories and holds you accountable to reach your desired goals

setting). This situation is the sad reality of managed care and the rigid application of the medical model to the helping professions, which is mostly the case in the United States.

Beyond this dilemma, the therapist must consider the client's perspective throughout this relationship. Clients assume that they will be *fixed* and will achieve emotional healing as a result of their relationship with a therapist; that is why they sought therapy in the first place.

Coaching clients, on the other hand, seek a coach for a myriad of reasons, most of which relate to their future. New clients usually do not come because they have a major problem — certainly not a major psychological one. They are not coming with a dysfunction and typically are not coming in pain. They might have a little general malaise because they want more out of life and don't know how to get it. Economists call this category of people

the *worried well*. They don't need, or usually even desire, a diagnostic label. They don't have something broken that needs an expert to *fix*. They just want more out of some aspect of their life and assume that by working with a coach, they will achieve greater success in planning, setting goals, and creating the life of their dreams.

If a client with a major psychological problem comes to see a life coach, the appropriate action is to refer that client to a qualified therapist. Coaches need to be proficient at recognizing appropriate and inappropriate coaching clients, as well as the ethical guidelines of maintaining both a therapy and a coaching practice. As a general rule, it's important to keep miles between your coaching and therapy practices if you choose to have both. Additionally, once a person has been your coaching client, it's unwise to take him or her into your therapy practice. The reverse is mostly

true as well, but a therapist may do coaching with a former therapy client as long as there is a ritual ending of the therapy relationship and the new coaching relationship is begun formally and clearly. Therapists who have added a coaching niche to their business also maintain a list of qualified therapists for referrals. Likewise, therapists sometimes refer clients to life coaches when they have resolved their therapeutic issues and are ready to move forward with their life design and plans.

3. Professional versus Collegial: Characteristics of the helper-client relationship

The coaching relationship is egalitarian, collegial, and balanced, and has the flavor of an active partnership. Life coaches assume that clients hold the necessary knowledge and the solutions; the coach simply helps unlock their wisdom. Consider this dialogic difference

between therapy and coaching clients.

Therapy client: “I just don’t know what’s the matter with me — I’m so depressed.”

Coaching client: “I’m not sure where to go next; I want to have more time with my family, but I’m just not sure how to make it work and keep this job.”

Coaching clients often know where they want to go; coaches help them clarify goals and see their way more clearly. There is not a power differential per se in coaching. Good coaches make a conscious effort to keep the relationship balanced.

If you were to observe a coaching session, you would see that it is typically very open — often friendly, casual, and light. Life coaches laugh with their clients and, when appropriate, may even joke or gently tease. With caution, life coaches may feel comfortable sharing personal experiences that are pertinent to what the client is experiencing. Clients and coaches feel as though they know each other on a deeper level than may be the case in many other professional relationships, and many coaching clients report that they appreciate that openness.

At the same time, coaches are professionals and should act accordingly. The International Coach Federation’s Code of Ethics delineates the high standards of professional behavior appropriate to the practice of life coaching. The collegial nature of the relationship between coach and client in no way lessens the importance of abiding by ethical and professional guidelines.

4. Limited versus Open:

How you generate new clients

Therapists who add coaching to their business quickly notice the lack of stigma attached to attracting new coaching clients. Most people don’t talk openly about the need to see a therapist, which

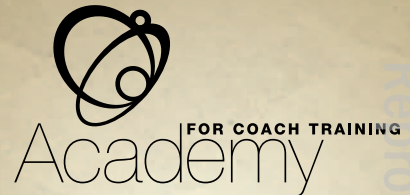
makes it harder to create marketing efforts that are visible and relational. Identifying yourself as a professional coach in a social situation is much easier than stating you are a therapist. In contrast, it is much easier to build visible and supportive relationships with other professionals for referral to your coaching business, and it is also much easier to speak publicly and without stigma about what you do.

Transitioning from therapist to coach

Now that we’ve covered the major differences between therapy and coaching, let’s examine some of the many transferable skills good therapists (and other trained helpers) bring to the life coaching relationship.

If you have been trained as a therapist or counselor, much of what you have learned will serve you well as a life coach. Listening skills, reframing, positive regard for the client, note taking, and process skills are just a few of the transferable skills. Additionally, you know how to conduct intake interviews and discuss difficult issues with clients, and have probably heard such a variety of stories in therapy that you won’t be surprised by the issues that clients bring to coaching. If you are trained in solution-focused therapy, which uses a group of questions to focus the client’s attention and awareness on what works rather than what is broken, you already have a valuable set of tools you can transfer to life coaching.

When Deb Davis, a colleague, teaches workshops, she describes changing therapeutic assumptions to the coaching perspective as analogous to resetting the default buttons on a computer. Therapists have been trained to function from a certain operating system. As you transition



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into the coaching perspective and operate from coaching assumptions, you'll need to reset the default buttons on your internal operating system so you can think and act like a coach rather than as a therapist. If you've ever traveled to a foreign country and had to adapt to driving on the other side of the road, you understand the necessary period of adjustment. You have all the basic skills but need to adjust the context in which you use them. With time, you acclimate to the new paradigm, and eventually it becomes second nature.

The coaching profession is evolving, and we are continually developing increasing awareness of the distinctions and similarities between therapy and coaching. Therapists are learning that

**“Listening skills
and reframing...
are just [two]
of the transfer-
able skills.”**

they have many transferable skills and appropriate preparation that serve them well as they transition from helping professionals to life coaches. However, the two relationships are also distinct in key ways, and some of the foundational assumptions that professionals have made as therapists are not appropriate in the life-coaching relationship. It is your obligation as a professional wanting to be a great life

coach to recognize and modify or eliminate the assumptions and practices that may stand in the way of success for your coaching clients.

In summary, it is critical that therapists who transition to life coaching understand the distinctions between the two professions. It is equally important for people enrolled in coach-specific training to learn about these distinctions so they can stay in the coach role and not delve into therapy territory. Your previous training and experiences will dictate the extent to which you'll need to alter your professional mindset in order to acquire the coaching perspective. •

Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC, is Chief Energizing Officer of the Institute for Life Coach Training.

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Coaching & Social Action

Giving of your coaching expertise to create positive change

By Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

When I think of what the process of coaching brings to others, the words that come to my mind are connection, collaboration and co-creation. I think these qualities are also what we need more of in the world. We are connected globally more than ever, mostly by electronics (cell phones, email, chat, texting, Twitter, Facebook and other social media), yet there is a robust hunger for true connection and meaningful relationships. The more “high-tech” our lives become, the more “high touch” we need in our lives.

Given the incredible results I have witnessed from coaching (as both the receiver and the coach), I had a vision in 2005 of finding a way to bring the power of coaching to the underserved and remote locations in the world.

That vision became a nonprofit corporation, Coaching the Global Village. In my work experiences in Africa, Turkey, Australia, Italy, Costa Rica, Mexico and many other cultures, I have gained as much from those I helped as they did from my efforts. I believe that coaching is the missing link to empowering people to carry on after receiving assistance from nonprofits and nongovernmental organizations.

At Coaching the Global Village, we started with a founding board of advisors, created a coaching curriculum, conducted three pilot studies and one paid training, collected research, and have now formed a new official governing board of directors. Our new board is multicultural, multilingual and international in scope. We are looking for ways to partner, collaborate, and connect with other nonprof-



“I believe we need the inhabitants of this planet to exhibit ideals and values and then to live in congruence with those ideals and values.”

its, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and communities around the globe. We have a newsletter, so if you want to be kept informed of what we are doing and discover your part, please sign up. Go to www.CoachingTheGlobalVillage.org

As this new venture indicates, coaching is an evolving profession, a methodology focused on empowerment that challenges many of us to seek positive change in the world. Changing the world is a tall order, and it may sound like an idealistic dream – but what is wrong with some idealism? I believe we need the inhabitants of this planet to exhibit ideals and values and then to live in congruence with those ideals and values. Coaching can help make that a reality one individual and/or one community at a time.

This is especially true in the nonprofit sector, where opportunities

abound and tremendous change is happening. There are studies, research initiatives and coaching programs aimed at leaders of nonprofit and social profit organizations in the United States as well as NGOs around the world.

The increasing visibility of coaching in the nonprofit sector is creating much momentum for change (see sidebar on next page). Check your local community listings and websites to see if there are efforts you can connect with where you live.

Become the Change

“There is no way to peace. Peace is the way.” These immortal words spoken by Gandhi are the only truth about peace that will lead to its ever being realized in our world (I recommend reading *Peace is the Way* by Deepak Chopra). You and I must

Where to Start

Here is a guidemap to help you make the connection between coaching and social action:

- Familiarize yourself with the collection of unique nonprofit coaching initiatives including *Coaching Global Village* at **www.CoachesCare.org** – an idea created by a leading coaching business solution provider, Practice Pay Solutions, as a way to make more visible the work of these organizations and individuals involved in service work throughout the coaching world.
- Check out *The Gift of Coaching*, a new website and service funded by the Harnisch Foundation that seeks to find a way to link people who need coaching with qualified coaches who want to ‘gift’ the service in meaningful ways at **www.thegiftofcoaching.org**.
- Explore *The Coach Initiative* at **www.coachinitiative.org**, where professional coaches can volunteer their experience and expertise “in support of global projects that focus on the betterment of the human condition and uplifting the human spirit.”

strive toward peaceful living in our homes, with our families, our communities, and our world. We must be purposeful and conscious in our actions and communications every day. And when we find ourselves not at peace, act! Do something peaceful, or “peace-creating.” Be anonymously kind to someone, or be of service to a stranger. Give a gift for no reason other than that of love.

We all can be less apathetic and more responsible (response-able).

“Coaching offers powerful tools to create change. We can take these tools into our communities, into our wider culture, and into the world.”

What daily actions are you taking for peace? What self-limiting beliefs about the world and about other cultures are you not challenging? Anger and violence seem to be dominating human attitudes today and yet I know that there are millions of quiet peacemakers. Maybe it is time to be more vocal, more actionable, and more authentic. How can we find

ways to mobilize our “global warming” between human beings that we need so much more of in the world?

In *Speak Peace in a World of Conflict* by Marshall Rosenberg, he teaches us to create peace by connecting to life at three levels:

- Creating peace within ourselves.
- Creating peaceful connections with others.
- Transforming the structures we have created – corporate, judicial, governmental, etc. – that don’t sup-

port peaceful, life-enriching connections between us.

In *The Anatomy of Peace*, by the Arbinger Institute, the character of Yusuf says, “lasting solutions to our outward conflicts are possible only to the extent we find real solutions to our inner ones.”

Peace is the way, and the path begins within us. Only then can we

journey toward peace with others in our community and hopefully spread the peace beyond ourselves.

Make It Happen

What passion inspired you to become a coach? Are you still feeling that passion, or have you given yourself over into the daily grind of work? If we wish to become the peace we want to see in the world, to initiate change and growth, and to lead others through the same process, that passion is essential.

Coaching offers powerful tools to create change. We can take these tools into our communities, into our wider culture, and into the world. How you accomplish this does not need to be as big as the Coaching the Global Village project, but you still have the power to generate change. If there is not an organization in your community, join together with other coaches to create a unified effort. Give pro bono coaching to a leader of a nonprofit. Participate in one of the organizations at **www.CoachesCare.org**. We are stronger in groups than we can ever be as individuals. To quote a saying I learned in Tanzania, “I am because we are.”

How can you help? What will you do differently? Reach out to someone you know in your community where coaching could impact their life in positive ways. Ask if they would like to be coached. Send your ideas and thoughts to me at ideas@coachingtheglobalvillage.org and I will highlight the best ideas in a future column. •

Patrick Williams has been a licensed psychologist since 1980 and began executive coaching in 1990 with Hewlett Packard, IBM, Kodak and other companies, becoming a full-time coach in 1996. Pat has co-authored four books, including the latest, Becoming a Professional Coach: Lessons from the Institute for Life Coach Training (2007). www.lifecoachtraining.com

Online Coaching

The next step in technology and client service

By Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

Do you tweet? Do you use Google Talk? Do you have a profile on Facebook? LinkedIn? Do you instant message? Do you Skype?

Each of these social media platforms offers coaches new ways to communicate with our clients in the rapidly evolving online world. As the ways in which we can communicate online become more common and available, so do the ways in which we can offer our services to and connect with our clients. The new technology might also give coaches access to younger clients, for whom online life is a given. Without this new technology, we might not otherwise be able to connect with client populations who can benefit from our services.

Back in 1996, I became excited about the prospect of coaching by phone, which allowed me to live where and how I wanted, and to have paying clients who lived somewhere else. I had been coaching executives since 1990 in their offices as part of my psychology/consulting business. But the convenience of telephone coaching was exciting and was a service I could not ethically provide to therapy clients in my psychology practice (at least that is what I thought). Since then, the various ethical bodies (American Counseling Association, American Psychological Association, and so on) have recognized phone-based therapy and online therapy as new service methods for many therapists and clients. However, there are still some debates occurring as to how to do it and remain ethical.



“Given the cutting-edge growth of online therapy and counseling, online coaching is also a growing reality.”

The reality of online coaching is even more exciting than the jump to telephone coaching. Given the cutting-edge growth of online therapy and counseling, online coaching is also a growing reality. Most coaches, of course, communicate with clients via email between sessions, but not as the primary method of delivering coaching. Yet our younger clients are used to chatting, Twitter, text messaging, so online coaching can be quite helpful and strategic. Online counselors charge either a monthly retainer and include an upper limit of message responses, or they charge by the transaction. Could this evolve as a strategy in delivering coaching as well?

Counseling and therapy are delivered online both synchronously (in real time) and asynchronously. Examples of synchronous methods are phone, video conferencing, Skype and live chat. Examples of asynchronous methods include email, forums, bulletin boards or posted questions on a web-based medium. If you have spent any time at all on Twitter, you will have noticed that a lot of therapists, life coaches and business coaches are using the medium to promote their services. Even Tony Robbins, one of the most well-known coaches

in America, is on Twitter (twitter.com/tonyrobbins).

Coaches and therapists, like marketers and personal trainers, have been among the early adopters of new technology as a way to generate business and connect with clients. While Twitter poses very specific limits on communication (140 characters, including spaces and punctuation, per message), other media are less restricting and offer more direct communication. With Skype (and Google Talk for those who use Gmail), we can even communicate face-to-face to anywhere in the world via free video phone service. Be aware, though, that while Skype is confidential, social networking tools like Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn are not – they are viewable by others and are on the World Wide Web forever!

Ethics of Online Coaching

With new technology comes new risks. We have all heard about various banks and retailers who have had their computers hacked, thereby compromising the privacy of their customers. We need ethical standards and practice standards for how we conduct ourselves in the online environment. The International Coach Fed-

“For quick check-ins between phone sessions, Twitter, Facebook and other online platforms offer us new ways to connect with clients in real time.”

eration has ethical standards all coaches should follow, and this is no different for online coaches. In fact, we also need ethical standards around the use of technology.

Please check out the Online Therapy Institute (www.onlinetherapyinstitute.com) created by my friend and colleague DeeAnna Nagel for a complete code of ethical standards that apply to online therapy, and are equally important to online coaching. The following list of considerations we need to take into account for the use of online technology in coaching is accessed from the Online Therapy Institute site.

Technology basics are required for practitioners who choose to deliver therapeutic services via technology. Practitioners will possess a basic understanding of technology as the technology relates to delivery of services:

Encryption: Practitioners understand how to access encrypted services to store records and deliver communi-

cation. Records storage can be hosted on a secure server with a third-party, stored on the practitioner's hard drive utilizing encrypted folders or stored on an external drive that is safely stored.

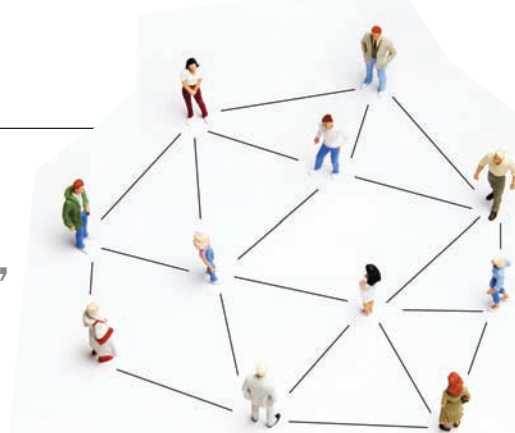
Backup Systems: Records and data that are stored on the practitioner's hard drive are backed up either to an external drive or remotely via the Internet.

Password Protection: Practitioners take further steps to ensure confidentiality of therapeutic communication and other materials by password protecting the computer, drives and stored files or communication websites.

Firewalls: Practitioners utilize firewall protection externally or through web-based programs.

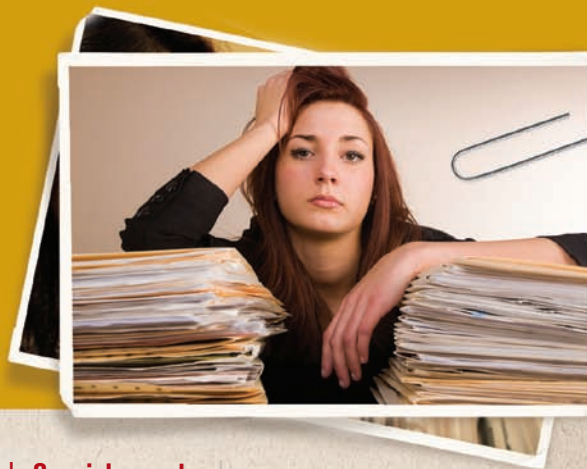
Virus Protection: Practitioners protect work computers from viruses that can be received from or transmitted to others, including clients.

Hardware: Practitioners understand the basic running



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platform of the work computer and know whether or not a client's hardware/platform is compatible with any communication programs the practitioner uses.

Software: Practitioners know how to download and operate software and assist clients with the same when necessary to the delivery of services.

Third-party services: Practitioners utilize third-party services that offer an address and phone number so that contact is possible via means other than email. This offers a modicum of trust in the third-party utilized for such services as backup, storage, virus protection and communication.

As you can see, there is a lot of technology information we need to take into account if we want to make use of online coaching. If all this is too complicated, we can always hire an information technology consultant to make sure we are compliant with these guidelines. Above all else, the privacy and safety of our clients' information must be a priority, so these guidelines are not to be taken lightly.

Conclusions

The internet has become ubiquitous since I started full-time coaching, and the use of Skype – as well as social networking protocols like Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn – make it possible to have both synchronous and asyn-

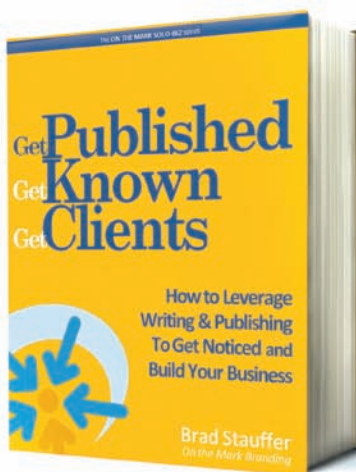
chronous "conversations" with coaching clients. However, only Skype is confidential and private. There are also web platforms that have been developed within large companies where coaching and counseling (depending on what the client wants and needs) can be web-based.

Ideally, we will want to utilize more long-form media, such as phone sessions or face-to-face conversations on Skype or Google Talk, which allow us to work more in-depth with clients. However, for those clients who prefer more abbreviated work, or who want quick check-ins between phone sessions, Twitter, Facebook and other online platforms offer us new ways to connect with clients in real time as well as through asynchronous messaging. The more ways we can connect with clients, the greater the benefits they can obtain from our services. Above all, we have a responsibility to fully understand the benefits and risks that come with new web-based technology so we can best serve the needs and interests of our clients. I recommend the book *Therapy Online: A Practical Guide* by Kate Anthony and DeeAnna Merz Nagel.

What do you think? Do you provide online coaching? Have you increased your presence with clients through distance coaching? I look forward to your comments (I will also post this on my blog at www.lifecoachingblog.com). •

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Brad Stauffer, President

Strength in Numbers



Creating high-performance teams means focusing on shared goals

By Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

Teams are the most common business unit for high performance. Although the word “team” gets used loosely and not always appropriately, there is universal acceptance that teams create opportunities for high-performance results. As coaches, we can be highly instrumental in team-building and defining a team’s direction.

True teamwork represents a set of values that promote individual and collective performance. Effective teams value listening and communicating, sharing work responsibilities, providing support – and they can even make work more social and enjoyable.

Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith (*The Wisdom of Teams, Teams at the Top*) provide the clearest definition of teams:

A team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and an approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.

The essence of a team is common commitment. Without it, work groups are just collections of individuals working together but separately. A

coach’s goal is to help facilitate teamwork and to generate a common goal among team members.

Work & Social Needs

Working together towards a shared goal can create social ties and enjoyment – important factors that contribute to high achievement. The Hawthorne Studies in the 1930s revealed that people work better together when they are allowed to socially interact with one another and are given supportive attention.

The Hawthorne Studies have importance for executives interested in increasing results without command and control tactics:

- Pay attention to people and their teams;

Focused Feedback & Follow-up

The need to build effective teams is increasing and the available time to do so is decreasing. How do you increase team effectiveness in a climate of rapid change with limited resources? Here is an excellent team-building exercise developed by Marshall Goldsmith (Goldsmith, 1998).

This exercise requires team members to courageously:

- ask for feedback,
- be disciplined in developing a behavioral change strategy,
- follow up, and
- “stick with it.”

To implement this process, the coach directs the team leader to facilitate rather than be the boss. Members should develop their own behavioral changes, rather than have them imposed upon them.

1. Begin by asking each member of the team to confidentially answer two questions:

- a)** On a scale of 1 to 10, how well are we working together as a team?
- b)** On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do we need to be working together as a team?

2. Ask the team, “If every team member could change two key behaviors which would help us close the gap between where we are and where we want to be, which two behaviors should we try to change?” Prioritize the behaviors and determine the two most important behaviors to change for all team members.

3. Ask team members to also choose two behaviors for personal change that will help close the gap. Then request that they ask for brief progress reports from each other monthly.

Progress can be charted. Results have clearly shown that if team members have regularly followed up with their colleagues, they will invariably be seen as increasing their effectiveness in their selected individual “areas for improvement.” The process works because it encourages team members to primarily focus on changing their own behaviors.

- Express genuine interest in them;
- Give them opportunities for social interaction;
- Provide frequent feedback; then
- Stand back and let them perform.

This is not to say that management should leave teams alone. Teams left on their own can become confused. Management is responsible for clarifying the challenge for the team, and for being flexible enough to leave the team to develop commitment to purpose, sets of specific goals, timing, and work approach.

Meaning & Emotional Energy

The best teams invest considerable effort in exploring, shaping, and agreeing on a purpose that belongs to them both individually and collectively. Coaches can assist teams in developing a common purpose that supports both individual effort and team results.

The best teams also take their common purpose and translate it into specific performance goals. These goals relate to the common purpose and build on each other, moving the team forward towards achievement and creating powerfully motivating steps to success. The achievement of goals along the way builds momentum, fosters trust among members, and helps maintain continued commitment.

Specific performance goals may be different for each group, but the importance of helping a team define its goals is immense. Transforming broad directives into

specific goals is a process that provides first steps for forming the identity and purpose of the team. As the team progresses with small wins, they reaffirm their shared commitment.

Clarity & Focus

The combination of purpose and specific goals is essential to performance. Each depends on the other. While the clarity of goals helps keep a team on track and focused for accountability, the broader, overlying aspirations of a team's purpose can provide meaning and emotional energy.

When people are working together toward a common objective, trust and commitment follow. Members hold themselves responsible both as individuals and as a team for the team's performance. People who par-

“Coaches can assist teams in developing a common purpose.”

ticipate in effective teams find the experience energizing and motivating in ways that their usual jobs could never match.

Groups that are established as a “team” but that do not have a clear common purpose rarely become effective teams. Only when appropriate performance goals are set does the process of discussing the goals and the approaches to them give team members a clear choice: they can disagree with a goal and opt out, or they can pitch in and become accountable with and to their teammates.

“True teamwork represents a set of values that promote individual and collective performance.”



Mutual Accountability

Though it may seem trivial, establishing mutual accountability can lead to astonishing results. Team members must do more than just listen, respond constructively, and provide support to one another. In addition to sharing these team-building values, they must share an essential discipline.

Katzenbach and Smith highlight five essential disciplines of effective teams:

1. A meaningful common purpose that the team has helped shape.
2. Specific performance goals that flow from the common purpose.

3. A mix of complementary skills.
4. A strong commitment to how the work gets done.
5. Mutual accountability.

I would add to these essential disciplines: A relentless focus on performance. This is another area where coaches can help define the mission of the team and assist in the establishment of guidelines for performance.

Eight Keys To Performance

Here are eight key approaches for building team performance that Katzenbach

and Smith found in their research of high performing teams. These are specific goals to be achieved for a coach who is working with a team.

1. Establish urgency, demanding performance standards and direction.
2. Select members for skill and skill potential, not personality.
3. Pay particular attention to first meetings and actions.
4. Set some clear rules of behaviors.
5. Set and seize upon a few immediate performance-oriented tasks and goals.
6. Challenge the group regularly with fresh facts and information.
7. Spend lots of time together.
8. Exploit the power of positive feedback, recognition and reward.

We should always strive to make teams self-reliant and internally supportive. Because so many of these ideas are new to business, coaches can be an essential part of team building, defining commitment, and generating performance goals.

The real key is coaching for sustainable results either with an internal coach within the company or an external coach hired to coach the team to be accountable to the changes they want to create. I actually got my start in executive coaching with a firm that did executive

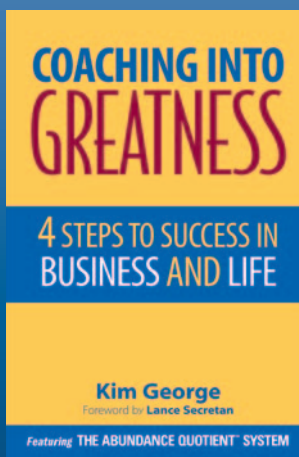
“When people are working together toward a common objective, trust and commitment follow.”

boot camps to create self-directed work teams. It became clear that unless the team leader or the highest level executive in charge of this team was coached to support the changes, they rarely were implemented. Hence the real value of coaching for creating sustainable results *over time*. •

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Coaching Evolution

From psychological theory to applied behavioral change

by Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

Coaching is seen as a relatively new phenomenon, but as a field it borrows from and builds on theories and research from related fields such as psychology and philosophy. As such, coaching is a multidisciplinary, multi-theory synthesis and application of applied behavioral change. As coaching evolved in the public arena, it began to incorporate accepted theories of behavioral change as the evidence base for this new helping relationship. However, in recent years, more and more research has been done and evidence-based theories developed to begin creating a body of knowledge and evidence that coaching can call its own (Stober & Grant, 2006).

Possessing some understanding of the origins of coaching can offer prospective and current life and leadership coaches the framework needed to understand their profession. This framework also helps coaches orient themselves in the larger context of a profession still developing its identity, as well as providing insights into possible future opportunities. Life coaches will feel more grounded in the present

– and be better prepared for the future as coaching expands in the 21st century – if we are gazing across the diverse lineages upon which our work is based. Understanding the evolution of coaching can also assist therapists and counselors (and others from the helping professions) to make the transition to life coaching by laying out the similarities and differences between life coaching and other professions (Hart, Blattner & Leipsic, 2001).

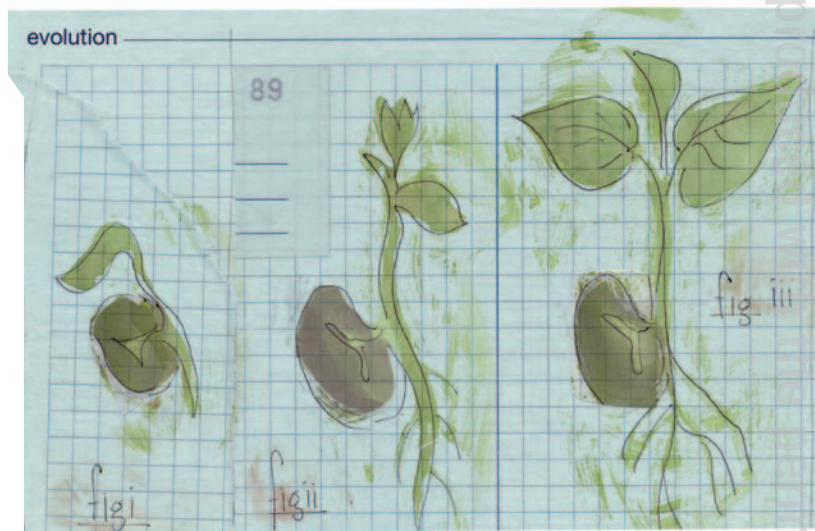
In The Beginning

Coaching has its foundations in psychology, and knowing this history is essential to appreciating the model as it exists today. There have been four major forces in psychological theory since the emergence of psychology in 1879 as a social science. These four psychological models are Freudian, behavioral, humanistic and transpersonal. Both the Freudian and behavioral models grew out of biology and were focused on pathology and how to “cure” it. The humanistic approaches of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow were a response to the pathological model; they attempted to make space

in psychology for those elements of being human that create health and happiness. Coaching seeks to build on this tradition of seeking what is healthy and productive in people as a foundation for creating a meaningful life.

In a similar vein, the transpersonal psychology movement arose in the late '60s as a further attempt to include more of what allows human beings to function at their best. Its focus was on mind, body and spirit, and included studies and experiences of states of consciousness, transcendence, and what Eastern traditions and practices had to teach Western theorists and practitioners. As coaches, we can benefit from incorporating the spiritual beliefs of our clients within a more expansive vision that seeks to understand human development and our desire to evolve mentally, physically, spiritually and socially.

In recent years, several other psychological approaches have arisen as adaptations of one or more of the original four and have been taken up by many coaches. Cognitive-behavioral psychology grew from a mix of the behavioral and humanistic schools. I



My Personal Story

In 1995 I was a burned out psychologist due to the restraints and constraints of mental health insurance, increased documentation, decreased payments, and increased lack of patient confidentiality due to legal pressures. I was ready for something new, exciting and creative, which would also allow me to be flexible in where I lived and traveled (both of my daughters were in college and charting their own life course).

I bought a property owner's manual and tourism business guide for the Caribbean islands and was excited about this possible adventure, planning on opening a scuba dive shop in my chosen paradise. I hired a personal coach recommended to me, who lived on her sailboat in the British Virgin Islands and coached by phone from the marina. That sounded like the best of both worlds so I began to wonder about how to become a coach.

Then, in 1996, I read the article in *Newsweek* about Thomas Leonard and personal coaching; read about Cheryl Richardson and life coaching in *East-West Journal*. Soon thereafter I enrolled in Coach U, hired a new mentor coach and began to make a rapid transition. I closed my psychotherapy practice in six months, moved to Florida and had 18 clients who just needed my new phone number. Wow, this was a great profession.

In 1998 I started the Institute for Life Coach Training, specializing in teaching coaching to therapists and other helping professionals who could add coaching to their business and someday make the transition I did, if they chose to. What could be better than having high functioning and relatively healthy clients who paid you a monthly retainer – and you could live wherever you wanted? The rest is history.

say this because much of cognitive psychology embodied wisdom and learnings from behaviorism and even operant conditioning. But when the humanistic aspect was included, it became a way to use those techniques and theories of change to increase choice for the individual.

Coach As Guide

In coaching, then, we can utilize what we know about our client's shifting mindset and behaviors by using a process of inquiry and powerful questions that guide the client toward understanding their ability to respond rather than react to their personal situations. Reacting relies on pro-

grammed behaviors that often were learned in childhood and may not be adaptive to an adult perspective. Responding, however, comes from viewing the multiple choices available in cognition and behavior rather than just reacting habitually, and feels more expansive and personally validating than a knee-jerk reaction.

Positive psychology builds on two key principles from humanistic psychology: a non-mechanistic perspective and a view of possibility as opposed to pathology as the essential approach to the client. Humanistic psychology arose to promote the emphasis on personal growth and the importance of beingness and the phenomenology of the human experience. Along with each revolution in psychology, a changing image of human nature has evolved along with greater insights into how to effectively work with people. Coaching has especially benefited from the focus on what makes a person healthy rather than that which we judge as pathology.

Coaching has grown as a profession, I believe, because of the shortage of real listening in our society today and due to the lack of true connection that many people experience. All of these factors arise from the socioeconomic conditions of rapid change, technology advances, and the instant availability of information. Carl Rogers said counseling was like buying a friend; hiring a coach is similar. But, of course, it is much more than that. A coach is a partner who is hired to assist the client in going for greatness in any and all domains of their life. People may not always need a coach, but I believe they do *deserve* a coach.

Bringing It All Together

It is very important for those progressing as professional coaches today to understand how much of this theoretical foundation of coaching has become part of their “ground of being” rather than a technique they pull out of their pocket to use with a specific client, particularly those who transition into coaching from psychology or other helping professions. Some of this theoretical foundation has become infused in our culture as a whole, further deepening this ground of being. At the same time, the contributions of certain theorists (particularly more recent ones, for example the positive psychology of Martin Seligman) offer a unique new lens through which to understand human behavior and sometimes even help to shape an entirely new paradigm.

We have come to see that each element of the coaching relationship is related to other areas of the client's life, and

psychology alliance

as such is influenced by the coaching conversation. For example, if a client is concerned about making a career transition, the conversation will naturally touch on interpersonal relationships, personal wellness, or even his/her emotions around the idea of making changes. All of these issues are relevant in a whole-person approach. As coaches, we need to be willing to expand the conversation through asking questions that may seem off topic, but relate in a systemic manner.

The hallmarks of coaching are its synthesis of tools from other fields and its proclivity for innovation. With all the research going on today, coaching is developing its own evidence-based theories. It has borrowed from what has gone before, much as psychologists borrowed from philosophers. As coaching grows as a profession, it will develop its own research base of effective strategies and tools within the unique relationship that is the coaching alliance. What we are finally seeing now is the arrival of a tipping point in society – people know about life coaching, know when coaches can be helpful, know how to find a coach, and are beginning to know the difference between receiving psychotherapy to

heal old wounds and partnering with a coach to achieve optimal living and expressing their magnificence. •

Patrick Williams has been a licensed psychologist since 1980 and began executive coaching in 1990 with Hewlett Packard, IBM, Kodak and other companies, becoming a full-time coach in 1996. Pat has co-authored the following books: Therapist as Life Coach: Transforming Your Practice (2nd Edition 2007); Total Life Coaching: 50+ Life Lessons, Skills, and Techniques to Enhance Your Practice and Your Life. (2005); Law and Ethics of Coaching: How to Solve and Avoid Difficult Problems in Your Practice. (2006); and Becoming a Professional Coach: Lessons from the Institute for Life Coach Training. (2007).

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Coaching Cultural Awareness

Appreciating differences and valuing diversity

By Lloyd Thomas, PhD and Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

P psychology has much to offer the field of coaching when it comes to the subject of diversity. The current estimated U.S. population is 271 million – 196 million whites, 33 million blacks, two million American Indians, 10 million Asians, and 30 million Hispanics. People of color currently comprise about 28 percent of the total U.S. population. (from www.apa.org/monitor/dec98/pubint.html)

Coaching is an international profession, but one which worldwide needs to attract more diversity in its membership of coaches and the clientele coaching can serve.

The following lessons and applications for coaching may help to increase your diversity IQ.

Framework for Coaching Your Clients

With the complete mapping of the human genome, we now know that genetically speaking, human beings are 99.97 per cent the same. Genetically, human differences are minuscule

compared to human similarities. On the genetic level, we are alike. Yet on the social and cultural level, we are not. If we were, human evolution would stop, and our interpersonal relationships would be boring at best and constricted at worst. Shared individual differences are essential for expanding our “humanness.” Without diverse individuals in relationship to one another, human life would be little more than biological stagnation.

Any human culture, whether it’s familial, organizational, societal, national or planetary, consists of “webs” of people bound to one another through trust, mutual need and compatible aspirations. Culture is based upon shared individual differences in knowledge, experience, skills, history, talents and dreams. Culture develops and grows when membership within it benefits *everyone* who lives or works within it, inevitably dissolves when those involved no longer benefit from being part of it, and crumbles when even a few powerful members no longer value human differences or appreciate diversity.

As a life coach, you need to value and

Coaching Questions to Ask Yourself and Your Clients

“What person who I don’t really know will I contact within this next week? Why?”

“What ethnic cultural activity (such as Hanukkah, Swedish Dance of Lights, Kwanza, Cinco de Mayo) will I engage in within the next month?”

“Will I read a book about the history of a foreign country?”

“Where might I travel to learn firsthand about another culture?”

“What are the culturally unique qualities, strengths and skills of the individuals with whom I work?”

appreciate the human differences in your clients. Develop a coaching culture in your social networks, and the results will be synergistic. We have often said, “As life coaches, we learn more from our clients than we ever do from books or even our formal education.” Imagine how boring coaching would be if all your clients were the same. Imagine how predictable your life would be if all your friends and colleagues were exactly like you. Imagine how restricted your knowledge would be, if everyone else knew only what you

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top
of your game

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to **staying there**
And you want to
enjoy the rewards

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to work for you!

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Diversity Checklist

Share this checklist with clients who want to enrich their lives by learning about and integrating the uniqueness of others into their own lives.

- ☐ I have an attitude of genuine curiosity about how others differ from me.
- ☐ Without fear or anxiety, I interact with people who are different from me.
- ☐ I make a point to meet with acquaintances from other cultures and ethnic backgrounds.
- ☐ I encourage my friends and acquaintances to share their different opinions, thoughts, feelings, and judgments about any project or endeavor.
- ☐ I ask for assistance or counsel from people whom I know hold mind-sets different from my own.
- ☐ I establish a good working relationship with at least one or two key members of the varied cultures to which I belong (such as family, clubs, organizations, social networks, my workplace, special interest groups).
- ☐ I identify relationships outside my own perceptual paradigms that expand my awareness and aid in my achievement of goals and desires for my life.
- ☐ I seek out people who can give me useful information, unique perspectives, identify resources, and offer support or critiques.
- ☐ I participate in cultural traditions and events different from those within which I grew up.
- ☐ I attend professional, international conferences and make contacts with key people living in other countries.
- ☐ I am open to, approach, and invite others to share their unique ideas, even if they have little relevance to my life.
- ☐ I champion diversity efforts in my workplace, in my social network and within the organizations to which I belong (such as ecumenical activities in my church, synagogue or mosque).
- ☐ I learn a different language when many of my contacts speak it.
- ☐ I view every person as a source of new knowledge. I can learn something from everyone I meet.

knew. Now imagine how rich your life experience would become if you were affected and influenced by the unique personalities of many people from divergent backgrounds. Imagine how satisfying your coaching practice might be if your clients called you from different countries, spoke different languages, and shared with you all of their unique differences.

This valuable life lesson, which we call Life Lesson #50, contains the following messages:

1. Genetically, all human beings are essentially the same.
2. Socially and culturally, all human

beings are different.

3. Human differences are to be highlighted and incorporated to enhance your life.

4. When integrated, human diversity results in broadening and deepening individual success and happiness.

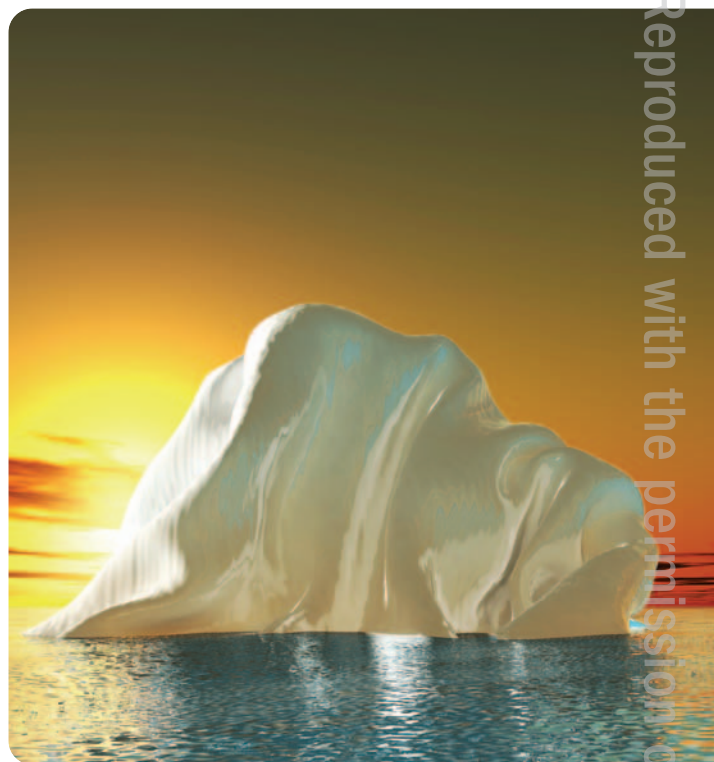
The bottom line: Appreciating differences and valuing diversity broaden your humanity and enrich your relationships and your life. •

Lloyd Thomas is a certified life coach and a licensed psychologist. Patrick Williams is Chief Energizing Officer of the Institute for Life Coach Training.

Adapted from *Total Life Coaching: 50+ Life Lessons, Skills, and Techniques to Enhance your Practice and your Life*, by Lloyd Thomas and Patrick Williams, Norton Publishers, 2005

Global Warming of the Human Kind

Emotional climate change is needed now more than ever



By Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

The world needs global warming – not the environmental kind, the relational kind! Throughout the news media, we see the quickening of global warming and its disastrous effects on the environment. What we are also beginning to see is a quickening of global warming in the way individuals, families, communities and countries relate to one another.

That this could grow so fast is a surprise to all the experts. What if the walls that separate us from truly cherishing and honoring each other came crashing down, just as the icebergs are doing in Antarctica? What if the measurement of warmth in all relationships began to rise? I have had the good fortune to travel to many countries around the globe in the last 10 years in my role as an ambassador of

life coaching, both for the Institute for Life Coach Training and for the profession at large. I have always noticed how people everywhere respond well to human friendliness despite the politics of individual countries. If you act friendly, you are treated as a friend, and if you are courteous, you are treated with courtesy. If you ask people about themselves with non-judgmental curiosity and really want to know, they respond with openness and glee.

My graduate training in psychology in the 1970s was in Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology. I pursued those fields of study because I believed in the possibility of learning and applying wisdom and tools that allowed people to pursue happiness and overcome life stressors that lead to the antithesis of peace. Yes, of course, I was an idealist of the Love

Relationships are all there is. Everything in the universe only exists because it is in relationship to everything else. Nothing exists in isolation. We have to stop pretending we are individuals who can go it alone. I believe we can change the world if we start listening to one another again. Simple, honest, human conversation. Not mediation, negotiation, problem solving, debate, or public meetings. Simple, truthful conversations where we each have a chance to speak, we each feel heard, and we each listen well.

Margaret J. Wheatley

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Generation, but what's wrong with idealism? Ideals are what we need to pursue more often, but through a sense of global connection and people-to-people experiences – not the disconnection that seems so pervasive in our governments and political leadership.

The new EQ age

Given the research today in the areas of Positive Psychology and Emotional Intelligence (EQ), we have evidence of techniques and outcomes that improve relation-

this new century will come to understand and build those factors that allow individuals, communities, and societies to flourish."

I would add that the timing could not be more crucial. Global warming of the human kind needs to erupt in surprising and multiple places on Earth. Didn't it surprise most experts when the Berlin wall came down? What metaphorical walls could come down if there were a mass movement of people-to-people and village-to-village peaceful actions with purpose? That is

“It is time for another peace movement, this time armed with the coach approach and the science of Positive Psychology.”

ships, embrace diversity, strengthen our ability to be open-minded and less judgmental, and improve the honest, clear communication that is necessary to foster good relationships. Shouldn't this research be applied to global relations and community challenges so that we can bypass the typical political efforts among the leaders of countries?

Martin Seligman, in his introduction to the *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (Snyder, C.R. and Lopez, S. editors, 2002) states, "I believe that a psychology of positive human functioning will arise that achieves a scientific understanding and effective interventions to build thriving individuals, families and communities. You may think this is pure fantasy that psychology will never look beyond the victim, the underdog, and the remedial. But I want to suggest that the time is finally right." He goes on to say, "I predict that Positive Psychology in

how all movements begin. It is time for another peace movement, this time armed with the coach approach and the science of Positive Psychology.

Starting a global conversation

For 18 years, I was a member of Rotary International (I travel too much now to be a member locally). As a member, I had the great experience of volunteering with projects in Mexico several times and also housed six exchange students in our house for three to six months each time. Both of these experiences created in me great warmth toward a culture I was unfamiliar with and expanded my view of diversity and the importance of being curious and open-minded rather than judgmental and close-minded. Many other organizations sponsor similar cultural exchange programs. How might professional coaches begin to sponsor or encourage experiences with the *coach approach* included?

I have enormous confidence in the positive impact that the spread of authentic coaching conversa-

Get more Online

Pat has created a nonprofit company to bring the power of the coach approach to leaders of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and citizens of developing countries, with the hope that assisting with hunger, health and education will lead to more opportunities for peace. Go to www.CoachingTheGlobalVillage.org

tions could have on the world. What would it take to start a coaching conversation movement? Like the woman in Africa who is planting millions of trees, or the young teenagers who started Cell Phones for Soldiers as a way for men and women in the armed services around the globe to communicate affordably with their families, or any of the other great movements that have started with just "a good idea shared with friends"? What would it take to make *coaching conversations* a buzzword on YouTube, MySpace, Facebook, Google, Yahoo, and blogs everywhere?

I believe that people really want to feel more connected with others and are curious about other cultures. Let's end prejudice that prevents openness to learning. Let me know how we can start a *Global Warming in People's Hearts* message and spread this message around the globe. Send your ideas to: ideas@lifecoachtraining.com. Let's get together and do something big to create an increase in global warming within the human family. •

Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC, is Chief Energizing Officer of the Institute for Life Coach Training.

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ENDS SOON

Coaches as Wise Elders

Lessons from Africa in mentoring and influencing youth

By Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

Children are our future. Can the coaching approach help? Let's look at how coaching can be a more vital part of the development of adolescents and young adults into productive, responsible, and positive global citizens.

For coaching to be powerfully effective with youth, we have to offer something new and different. We must model vital aging and the attributes of wise elders. Youth are the modern-day mine canary, capable of telling (in most cases) when something from adults is inauthentic. We have to show up as open, curious, and willing to engage in honest dialogue. I believe we can learn a great deal about this process from how other cultures create elders who can then guide youth into their eventual role as elders.

Acting as elders

In March of 2006, I traveled to Tanzania with ten other men, led by Richard Leider (author of *The Power of Purpose* and *Claiming Your Place at the Fire*). For the past 25 years, Richard has led small groups on 'inventures' — journeys of personal transformation to the land where human life began. Participants travel side by side with Hadza and Maasai tribal leaders to observe their grace and connection to the earth. They also learn a great deal about how these two tribal societies mentor their youth and revere and honor their elders.

One central theme of our invention was to learn from these tribal peoples about their age-old traditions of youth becoming warriors and then young elders. We had opportunities to learn and observe the role of full elders (wise elders) in the development of the younger men. We witnessed the reverence of these full elders for the land, their family and their history.

Honoring and seeking the wisdom of elders is emphasized and remains a value. This is a distinctly different way of respecting elders than we see in the West, where elders are relegated to nursing homes or simply seen as having nothing to offer the younger generations. Although Western culture changes much faster than other cultures around the world, life wisdom is a constant that does not change as quickly. As coaches, we can empower our elders to take a larger role in the maturation of young people.

But this is only half of the process. We, too, must act as elders to our younger clients. In our fast-paced, detached, and disconnected media-driven modern society, what role can we coaches play in guiding our youth and modeling for our clients and for youth the value of wise elders?

Living and sharing

Coaches can become more visible as wise elders in many ways. Experienced coaches understand that we

often gain as much from our coaching relationships as do our clients. In fact, engaging in this kind of work has often been described by coaches to be rewarding, fulfilling, gratifying, and inspirational. As much as we get from coaching, however, we are giving much more to our younger clients.

In a recent book by Steven Post and Jill Neimark entitled *Why Good Things Happen to Good People*, the authors summarize much scientific data suggesting life-enhancing benefits that are the result of compassion, kindness, and caring relationships. When we give of ourselves, the authors say, "Everything from life satisfaction to self-realization to physical health is affected." This was well demonstrated in the short yet powerful book by Mitch Albom, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, a beautiful story of a professor who later became a mentor for Albom on how to live life with zest, optimism, and possibility, and even face death in the eye. As a younger man, Albom received a powerful new perspective on living a meaningful life through his time with Morrie.

Just as Morrie did with Albom, coaching youth will be a combination of assisting young people in designing and cre-

Coaching for Students

The State of Georgia has created a High School Graduation Coach Initiative that allows each of the state's high schools to employ a coach. The coach's primary responsibility is to identify at-risk students and provide the resources to help them succeed in school. Coaches, for example, recruit adults to act as mentors as well as students to act as peer mentors, while the Georgia Department of Education provides training, support, and technical assistance.

(From Coaching News, ISSN 1708-9026, September 20, 2007. www.peer.ca/thecoachingnews.html.)

ating a vision and plan for the life they want to live, as well as in discerning their inherent purpose as it unfolds over the course of their development. This is a crucial point. Too many young people choose a path in life based on exterior

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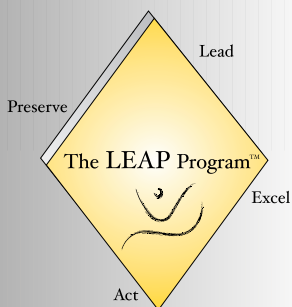
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factors such as income, prestige, or location. But a meaningful life comes from following interior motivations — one's bliss, as Joseph Campbell was fond of saying.

Richard Leider says that becoming a wise elder does not happen just because we have lived a long time or have had many experiences. Becoming a true elder requires that we pursue and involve ourselves in the growth opportunities of elderhood. It is a process of what I call 'eldering, not oldering.' Leider says that "first we must embrace elderhood as a stage of development." Second, we must do "the personal work necessary to growing whole. Becoming an elder involves growing, loving, learning, and giving in the second half of life." (From the handout *Claiming Your Place at the Fire: The Four Flames of Vital Aging*, copyright Richard Leider, 2006.)

Leider is passionate about vital aging and purposeful living. This vitality of elders will be impressive to youth and will model for them that life is indeed a journey — and it may be a very long one, so having guides can be helpful.

Few things are as powerful as leading by example. Coaches

should be willing to share their own journeys when appropriate. This is one of the many lessons we can learn from cultures such as the Hadza and Maasai. Becoming wise elders requires that we, as coaches, live and share wise lives.

As coaching becomes more vital and effective with youth, we have to present ourselves as both mentors and models. It is no longer sufficient to simply use the traditional tools of coaching without also modeling the attributes of wise elders. Young people are extremely perceptive and will not tolerate or accept superficial answers to complex problems. Coaches must be authentic, honest, open-minded, and willing to engage in challenging dialogue and to honestly deal with tough issues when asked. We also must be willing to ask the powerful questions that are not usually asked of young adults — and hang around long enough to listen to all the answers and other questions that arise in response. •

Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC, is Chief Energizing Officer of the Institute for Life Coach Training.

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Coaching from the Inside Out

The power of purpose

By Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

Life Purpose...the elusive answer to the musical question, "What's it all about?" (from the movie *Alfie*). As a clinical psychologist, the clients who came to see me rarely brought up the subject of life purpose. As psychotherapy clients, they were seeking to make their lives more satisfactory, more functional. Coaching clients, who presumably are mostly healthy individuals wanting to make some life changes, are more apt to respond to questions and conversations about life purpose, calling or meaning.

Psychological theorists Williams James, Carl Jung, Roberto Assagioli, Abraham Maslow, Alfred Adler, Viktor Frankl and others did write about life purpose and did cite many examples of the topic in their work with patients. Carl Jung is probably best known for his theories of ages and stages of life, noting that midlife and beyond (after age 40) most humans begin to search for spiritual meaning, and heed callings for some shift in discovering and then living their life purpose.

I have found that much of my coaching soon gets into the life purpose discussion, and clients who get more clarity about their purpose and unique calling for their life, then make decisions and choices that fit with that new understanding.

Since I started using the phrase *Inside Out* in 1998, it has become much more common in the personal and

professional development arena. But the concept remains valid, if not unique. This work in the human arena demands that the coach have experience in learning, growing, and living from the *Inside Out*. As a rule, people are taught instead to live from the *Outside In*. They are *not* taught how to examine their own lives through the lens of fulfillment.

Coaches need to be *models* for their clients. It increases coaches' authenticity, which is key to life coaching. Coaches ask clients to probe deeply into

**“Tell me, what is it you plan
to do with your one wild and
precious life?”**

—*The Summer Day*, by Mary Oliver

their lives — their values, priorities, goals, and obstacles to fulfillment. Coaches must have done — and continue to do — the same work themselves.

Great coaches know that coaching is as much an art as it is a skill. They have committed themselves to fully mastering the *way of being* that they coach their clients to attain. They are models of what it means to fully learn, to be fully effective, and to create a fulfilling life.



As a coach, you are committed to modeling how it is to either be living a fulfilling life or be on the path to creating that for yourself. Your *way of being* is as critical to the way you coach as are your skills. This is the responsibility you carry — to model what you coach others to do and to be. Living this commitment will stretch you, which is why coaching is *inter-developmental*. It develops and grows both you and the client.

What is life purpose?

Each of us looks for fulfillment and authentic happiness in our own way. Sometimes the yearning for fulfillment becomes a call so loud and so intense at midlife that we cannot help but step off the path we are on and devote ourselves to the search for fulfillment. As many midlife questers discover, fulfillment often means returning to deep sources of satisfaction that we may have had glimpses of many years ago. At that earlier time, we may have lacked the courage to follow the call, or we may have allowed life's stresses

Zondervan 2002) has become the biggest selling self-help book of all time.

The importance of knowing life purpose

In industrialized countries, 21st-century culture has become obsessed with accumulating just for the sake of accumulating: information, goods, material objects, and more.

The paradoxes of our time have been summed up well by His Holiness the Dalai Lama:

- “We have more conveniences, but less time. We have more degrees, but less sense...more knowledge but less judgment. More experts, but more problems. More medicines, but less healthiness.
- We have been all the way to the moon and back but have trouble crossing the street to meet the new neighbor.
- We build more computers to hold more information that produce more copies than ever before, but have less communication.
- We have become long on quantity, but short on quality.
- These are the times of fast foods but weak digestion.
- It is a time when there is much in the window but nothing in the room.”

As we live with these paradoxes, we have lost sight of the importance of *being* in life. Many people in the United States and throughout the industrialized nations misguidedly believe that the only way to have what we want is to work hard and long.

There is an alternative: *Be* who you are first. When you focus on being first, this lets you *do* what you want to do, which lets you *have* what you need. We need to allow ourselves to *be* first; the rest will follow. Discovering our life purpose focuses our attention on the essence of who we are — our *be-ing*. As some wise person said, if we were designed to be human *do-ings*, we would have been called that. •

This essay is adapted from Pat's newest book, co-authored with Diane Menendez, Becoming a Professional Life Coach: Lessons from the Institute for Life Coach Training. Norton Professional Books, 2007.

Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC, is Chief Energizing Officer of the Institute for Life Coach Training.

“Most of us get to our graves with our music still within us.”

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

and serious pursuits to cover up the glimmer of what we knew to be true.

This pattern takes place in the lives of so many people because each of us has a life purpose that has, we believe, been with us since we were very young. At moments when we experienced a profound sense of being in the flow — being in the right place, at the right time, using our gifts — we are likely to be living out our life purpose. Life purpose *calls us forth*. It may be a calling we answer, something larger than our small selves, that deeply connects us with others, with what is larger than ourselves.

Gregg Levoy in his book *Callings* (Three Rivers Press 1998), eloquently illustrates how discovering one's life purpose often begins with a sense of experiencing a calling. Bookstore shelves are filled with information about our contemporary search for meaning. We know that life purpose has become an important focus for many people; *The Purpose Driven Life* (New York:

Synergistic Relationships

Moving towards positive coach/client communication

By Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

Coaching at best is a co-creative, interdependent relationship. You as the coach should focus your attention on the client's stated goals and all the interconnections from other areas of their life. But you are also part of the conversation, and communication is not always received the way it was intended. The coaching relationship is synergistic and uniquely intimate and because of this, conflict or miscommunication can occur. The following article, adapted from *Total Life Coaching*, Chapter 19, offers some guidance and tips to enhance the quali-

2. To learn what synergy is.
3. To become comfortable with all three types of personal relationships: cooperative, collaborative and synergistic.
4. To learn how to create the kind of coach/client relationship that works best for your clients.

Framework needed for coaching your clients

A recent TV commercial tells us, "When companies compete, the consumer benefits." Indeed, competition between enterprises and businesses form the basis

"LIFE LESSON 19: Competition is primitive; cooperation is better; collaboration is best; and a synergistic relationship is superior."

ty of your communication in coaching and to alert you to possible communication breakdowns.

LIFE LESSON 19: *Competition is primitive; cooperation is better; collaboration is best; and a synergistic relationship is superior.*

Objectives

1. To understand the distinctions between competition, cooperation, collaboration and synergy.

of the entire American economy. In fact, winning a competitive relationship generally determines how successful we are in business.

All sports are based upon competition, either with yourself or with another player or team. Winning in a competitive game is fundamental to success in organized sports. Competition is everywhere—but there is a personal cost. Many times competition is destructive. It is always divisive and separating.

What happens if you don't want to compete? The

difficulty with competition is that except for the single winner, everybody loses! When you are afraid of losing, you rarely compete. And when you do compete and lose, you feel lousy. In the National Football League, every team save one ends the season with a loss. At the end of the football season, every team feels lousy except the winner of the Super Bowl. In a competitive society, the vast majority of people feel lousy because the 'winners' are so few.

In a coaching relationship, competing with your clients is always destructive. It sets up a win/lose relationship. And when your clients lose, the coach/client relationship loses, and the coach loses as well. A competitive relationship with your clients is never beneficial to the clients. Authentic coaches always keep their clients' best interests in the forefront of their minds. As such, creating a competitive relationship with clients is 'off limits' for life coaches. In fact, it is not coaching. If you engage in competitive relationships, you will probably not be hired as a coach.

By the time we are in Kindergarten, we begin to learn about the benefits of cooperation. But cooperation on a test is called 'cheating.' So we usually don't understand what the 'benefits' of cooperation really are.

Messages Within LIFE LESSON 19

1. Life coaches do not compete with their clients.
2. A competitive coach/client relationship is the poorest kind.
3. A collaborative one is better.
4. A synergistic relationship is the ideal one between client and life coach.

After we learn to compete and cooperate, we need to learn how to collaborate. Collaboration differs from cooperation in that it results in a brand new relationship. You can cooperate with someone and never change, but when you collaborate with someone you are *always* changed! You grow!

Collaboration means you and your clients function as a team, as a single unit. You can cooperate and still function as an individual, but when you collaborate, you become someone bigger than you were before. Collaborative teamwork is by far the most productive of relationships. It defines the most effective and

“You can cooperate with someone and never change, but when you collaborate with someone you are always changed! You grow!”

As beneficial as competition is in some situations, you cannot be competitive unless you first learn to cooperate. In business, cooperation between employees and employers is crucial. In team sports, cooperation is essential to winning. Cooperation with the rules of the game is critical to playing. What would happen to a basketball team if there were no cooperation among the team players, or no cooperation with the rules of basketball? Would such a team be successful? Without cooperation, there would never be competition. In any setting, the fiercest competitors need to cooperate within an agreed-upon framework. Otherwise competition does not occur. The key for coaches is to create a cooperative relationship while avoiding a competitive one—but this is not an easy task!

authentic coach/client relationship.

A cathedral is something much more than a pile of rocks stacked on one another. When the result is greater than the sum of its component parts, we call this a 'synergistic' outcome. When a life coach and a client form a synergistic relationship, the outcome is greater than the contribution made by each person involved in the relationship. Working alongside others is less creative than working synergistically with others. When you work synergistically with another, the outcome is never quite known until that outcome is created.

The most creative and beneficial outcomes of human endeavors have been those in which synergy has been involved. When you combine your coaching contribution with the client's contribution, the out-

come is greater than either party's contribution. That is synergy in action!

If you want to leave a great coaching legacy with each of your clients, always strive for synergistic relationships with them. Not only is it important that you become the best you can be, it is even more critical that your relationships are the best they can be. Without quality relationships, your individuality shrivels and you never realize your potential as a human being. Develop superior relationships with others and you will grow into the person you were born to be...truly great in 'who' you are!

A coaching exercise to share with your clients

Following are several tips for developing collaborative and synergistic relationships. Competition exists and is useful at times, and cooperation is a useful human strategy, but we believe that within collaborative and synergistic relationships your clients will move to greater purposeful living, and toward the efficient creation of their desired outcomes. We are not meant to go through life alone! That is a myth brought to our culture by Alexis de Toqueville when he wrote of America's 'rugged individualism' and praised us for the 'pioneer spirit' that birthed our country. Yet, rugged individualism is also what

3. Create special opportunities for creating synergy. Invite your clients to become spontaneous in their conversations. Ask them to spend time in a place that is sacred to them and invite others to join them. Ask your clients to form what Napoleon Hill calls 'a master-mind group' that is devoted to deep thinking, creative conversation, and soulful listening.

4. Realize that synergy is best developed when seemingly contradictory or outrageous ideas are blended and shaped into a final creation that mystifies all participants involved in the process. A synergistic outcome emerges from multiple causes—synthesizing the energy of all participants, their common dialogue, their various thoughts and visions, and then combining them in the crucible of creativity that allows it all to be synthesized...that is synergy!

Tips for creating a synergistic coaching conversation

1. **Prepare yourself for the contact.** View the coaching conversation as an opportunity to co-create with your clients a synergistic outcome. Get ready for the contact by reviewing your notes from previous conversations, recalling what outcomes your clients want

“The most creative and beneficial outcomes of human endeavors have been those in which synergy has been involved.”

often separates us from one another. This myth idealizing 'doing everything alone' seems to have spread beyond the borders of America to most industrialized nations.

When coaching your clients (or using this lesson for your own personal evolution), we suggest you help your clients to:

1. Look for opportunities to involve others in their goals, creative ideas, and big visions. Great events in the world have always begun within conversations with others.

2. Become willing to let go of their favorite method for accomplishment to explore a new means for the blossoming of their ideas. As a coach, you might be the *seed planter*, but what eventually blooms within your clients may surprise even you.

from coaching, becoming aware of your own mental and emotional state, and remaining open to and focused upon listening, understanding, clarifying, and apprehending the entire conversation.

2. Have your clients tell you:

“How They Are Today...This Moment.”

- How are you feeling about yourself (good and bad)?
- How are you looking at your relationships, your life?
- How are you feeling about others?

“What Has Happened Since Our Last Contact?”

- What has occurred to you since the last call?
- What breakthroughs and insights have you had?
- Have you made any new choices or decisions?
- Is there any relevant personal news you can share?



“...communication is the bridge to co-creating a positive relationship with your clients...”

“What Are You Working On?”

- What progress have you made on your coaching goals, projects and new habits?
- What have you done that you are proud of?
- What you are coming up against?
- What ways are there to move over, under, around or through perceived obstacles?

“As Your Life Coach, How I Can Best Assist You?”

- Where are you stuck?
- Where are you wondering about something?
- What is your plan of action?
- Do you need information, a strategy, to brainstorm, or advice?
- How can I best coach you?

“What’s Next?”

- What is the next action, clarification, choice, or decision that will move you closer to your desired outcome?
- What do you want next for yourself?
- What new key habit do you want to strengthen?
- What do you want next for your relationships?

3. Always seek to fully comprehend your client before sharing your own thoughts, ideas, feelings, opinions or knowledge.

4. As you speak, listen at least twice as long as you speak.

5. Speak with clarity and appreciation for your client’s position and power.

6. Regarding your contributions to the coaching conversation, remember that *your* timing is critical.

**Sample coaching conversation for
LIFE LESSON 19**

(This dialogue is really for the coach to see how to create coaching relationships that are synergistic. We believe that is the power of authentic life coaching.)

Coach: (after debriefing the client’s week) So, what would you like from our coaching today? (This is a great way to imply that the client is part of the equation...the coach did not ask, “What do you want from me today?”)

Client: I need help with my sense of overwhelm. I am not accomplishing what I want. So I need you to tell me ways to combat that.

Coach: I am sure you would like me to tell you, but I find it more powerful if we come up with possible solutions together. My answers may not work for you. So let’s work together on some ideas now, okay?

Client: Darn. You mean you are not just going to tell me the secrets? Somehow I knew that (client chuckles).

Coach: Tell me first what is overwhelming you and then we will do some possibility thinking together, okay?

Client: Well, I have all these projects, and obligations, such as...

(This models the key to collaborative and synergistic coaching. Often times brilliant ideas come out of the coach’s mouth or the client’s mouth. But they surfaced because of the nature of the coaching conversation.)

In the coaching relationship, communication is the bridge to co-creating a positive relationship with your clients in order to model the best communication and to avoid conflict. But when conflict or breakdowns do occur, you can use communication to move back to positive and purposeful conversations that propel the client to their desired outcome. •

This excerpt is from Total Life Coaching: 50+ Life Lessons, Skills and Techniques to Enhance your Practice and your Life by Patrick Williams and Lloyd Thomas, WW Norton Books, 2005, New York, NY.

Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC, is Chief Energizing Officer of the Institute for Life Coach Training.

From “Me” to “We”

The relationship perspective

By Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

Those of us in the profession of coaching perform most of our coaching one-on-one with individual clients, and sometimes with teams or small groups. As a psychologist (until I switched to coaching full-time), my therapy clients always brought their whole family to the therapy room, *even if they weren't present*. I believe that as coaches, we need to take a strategic and systemic view of our clients' significant personal and professional relationships when we coach them. We humans, after all, are relationship beings.

In my graduate studies in psychology and in my professional continuing education, I learned from systemic theory. Simply stated, we are all connected and intertwined within the systems (families, work teams, and

“We humans are really relationship beings.”

community) we are part of. All human systems are interlocked. They affect and are affected by one another.

The important news for coaches is that we also are in various relationships, which may affect, for better or for worse, the quality of our coaching. Are you getting coaching or some other assistance (such as therapy or

personal growth training) so that the relationships in your life are the best they can be?

A shortage of listening

Coaching has evolved in a fast-paced culture where people often feel disconnected and where listening is in short supply. A recent article in the Washington Post (by Shankar Vedantam, Friday, June 23, 2006) stated the following: “Americans are far more socially isolated today than they were two decades ago, and a sharply growing number of people say they have no one in whom they can confide, according to a comprehensive new evaluation of the decline of social ties in the United States. A quarter of Americans say they have no one with whom they can discuss personal troubles, more than double the number who were similarly isolated in 1985.”

This comprehensive new study paints a sobering picture of an increasingly fragmented America, where intimate social ties — once seen as an integral part of daily life and associated with a host of psychological and civic benefits — are shrinking or nonexistent.

Whereas nearly three-quarters of people in 1985 reported they had a friend in whom they could



confide, only half in 2004 said they could count on such support. The number of people who said they counted a neighbor as a confidant dropped by more than half, from about 19 percent to about 8 percent.

This is bad news for society, but good news for coaching. Coaching has become, for many, a significant opportunity for meaningful conversation that does not exist elsewhere to any large degree. One of our jobs as coaches, then, can be to coach our clients on creating and nurturing new and existing relationships throughout their life. According to the research cited above, we live today in a kind of *crowded loneliness*.

If we take the perspective of viewing our clients' lives as a nexus of all the relationships they have, we greatly enlarge the scope of our coaching. Margaret Wheatley in *Turning to One Another* (Berrett-Koehler, Berkeley, 2002) says that, "Relationships are all there is. Everything in the universe only exists because it is in relationship to everything else. Nothing exists in isolation. We have to stop pretending we are individuals who can go it alone."

We humans are really relationship beings. As difficult as it sometimes is, we truly want to be in positive

Relational-Cultural Theory by Judith V. Jordan and Linda M. Hartling at <http://www.wellesley.edu/JBMTI/>).

Outcomes of a growth-fostering relationship

Miller has also posited her theory that key relationships need five good things. According to Miller, "Growth-fostering relationships empower all people in them. They are characterized by:

1. A sense of zest or well-being that comes from connecting with another person or other persons.
2. The ability and motivation to take action in the relationship as well as in other situations.
3. Increased knowledge of oneself and the other person(s).
4. An increased sense of worth.
5. A desire for more connections beyond the particular one."

As coaches, we co-create conversations with our clients about fulfillment, meaning, purpose, passion, and excellence. These conversations comprise all we aspire to as humans and all that catalyzes us to exist in relationship with others — our political and social structures, our environment, and our global village. These conversations also support us to utilize and benefit from our collective potential. Coaching that ignores the relationship between the individual and everything else will be contributing to problems created by isolation and individualism instead of assisting in the power of connections and purposeful growth-fostering relationships.

Whether we as coaches provide the primary authentic relationship a client has in his or her life, or whether we're one of many, we have an opportunity to model, create, and support a level of consciousness in relationship that's increasingly rare in our world. Being committed to continually expanding our own consciousness will allow us to pass on the benefit of that growth and wisdom to our clients. •

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“Coaching has evolved in a fast-paced culture where people often feel disconnected and where listening is in short supply.”

relationships. We only isolate ourselves when we feel hurt or fearful, but being alone is not our natural state. We may live in an undesirable state, keeping many relationships superficial or conflictual, even though that is not what we really want.

In Relational-Cultural Theory, as taught by recently deceased Jean Baker Miller, M.D. and her staff at Wellesley College, "the central tenet ... is that people develop through and toward relationship, which occurs within and is influenced by cultural context. Above all, RCT asserts that people need to be in connection in order to change, to open up, to shift, to transform, to heal, and to grow" (quoted from *The Development of*

The Coaching Profession Grows Up

Why ethical standards matter

By Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

To become a recognized profession, coaching, like other professions, must have standards, definitions, ethical guidelines, ongoing research and credentialing. Beginning in the early 1990s, the coaching phenomenon intensified with the creation of several coach training schools and two major professional associations. In 1996, the Professional Coaches and Mentors Association (PCMA) merged with the International Coaching Federation (ICF), and the ICF led the way as the most recognized international association representing the coaching profession. Standards of practice, credentialing, and ethical guidelines were soon established.

In 2004, the ICF's regulatory committee wrote the following self-governance model:

The standards and structures built by the ICF over the past decade, which support the emergence of coaching as a valued profession, also provide a solid foundation for the self-governance of our profession. In addition, our rigorous adherence as professionals to these standards and practices provides the necessary assurance that the public is protected from potential harm. ICF's self-governance foundation is comprised of and depends upon each of the following standards and practices, supported by the efforts of the ICF Board, committees, global representatives, credentialed and member coaches.

Core Competencies that define the required skill set of a professional coach and establish the foundation for the professional credentialing examination and accreditation for coach training programs.

A Code of Ethics to which ICF Members and ICF Credentialed Coaches pledge commitment and accountability to standards of professional conduct.

Professional Oversight through an Ethical Conduct Review process for ICF Members and ICF Credentialed Coaches, which allows the public to report concerns and to be confident of objective investigation, follow-up, and disciplinary action.

Professional Coach Credentialing, entailing a stringent examination and review process through which coaches must demonstrate their skills, proficiency, and documented experience in application of coaching core competencies. Credentialing includes Continuing Coach Education requirements for periodic renewal of coaching credentials, to ensure continued professional growth and development.

Professional Coach Training Accreditation by which coach training programs submit to review and continuing oversight to demonstrate their commitment to the highest standards for curricula aligned with defined core competencies, faculty, structure, proficiency, and ethics to support excellence in the training of coaches.

Ongoing Self-Regulatory Oversight initiatives to track the needs and concerns of individual and organizational clients on an international basis, and to demonstrate an active commitment to meaningful professional self-governance.⁽¹⁾





In addition to ethical guidelines, professional competencies, and certification, the coaching profession recently witnessed a tremendous surge of interest in academic research and graduate studies. This attention is a critical step in the further evolution of the profession, and such research and training are necessary for developing a field of knowledge, theoretical orientations and efficacy studies. Research on the effectiveness of and distinctions among skill sets, competencies, and standardization of education and training is tantamount to any profession finding its place of acceptance in the private and corporate culture.

The historical perspective reveals that professional coaching emerged from other major professions (e.g. psychology, counseling, consulting). These professions have written codes of ethics and professional standards. In addition, they typically are regulated by state licensing boards (at least in the United States) and other government mandates. These government regulations usually determine requirements for training, maintaining a license, and practice laws.

At this time, coaching is not regulated or monitored by a state agency or regulatory board. It is the current belief that the profession should monitor itself. However, some state mental-health regulatory boards think differently, as the following scenario demonstrates.

The Colorado case

In June 2001, the administrator of the Colorado Mental Health Board, Amos Martinez, wrote an opinion piece in

the board newsletter entitled “Coaching: Is This Psychotherapy?” In the article, Martinez contends that coaching, especially personal coaching, meets the very broad definition of psychotherapy in the state of Colorado. Because of that interpretation, word began to spread that coaches in Colorado had to register as unlicensed psychotherapists and follow the regulations in the state’s Mental Health Act that pertain to those individuals.

Immediately after reading that newsletter, Lloyd Thomas and I, both of us licensed psychologists and practicing coaches in Colorado, drove to Denver and met with Amos Martinez to discuss the work of professional coaching, the ICF, its standards of ethics, and so on. Although the meeting was cordial, nothing changed in the next several months. The rumor began to spread across the globe that Colorado was going after coaches, and that the profession was in danger of being lumped together with psychotherapy, a distinction most coaches were trying to clarify.

In 2003, a case against a Colorado coach brought this whole discussion and the legal issue to a head. An ICF master certified coach who lived and worked in Colorado (although all of her clients lived out of the state) was charged with practicing psychotherapy without a license by the Department of Regulatory Agencies in Colorado. Although the charge was dropped as frivolous, Colorado still demanded that the coach register as an unlicensed therapist, which she refused to do. She was forced to close her practice because she could not afford to hire an attorney to pursue the defense of her position.

That case led to a focused effort by the Colorado Coalition of Coaches to pursue changing the law, and the group hired a lobbyist to help with the effort. After 18 months of hard work by the Colorado Coalition, lobbyists, as well as grassroots support and donations by individual coaches, the International Coach Federation, the International Association of Coaches, the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches, and the Association of Coach Training Organizations, the legislature agreed and approved an amendment to the Mental Health Act that exempted coaching from the legislature’s oversight.

All this is not to say that the coaching profession devalues standards and guidelines for professional behavior. In fact, some coaching associations (e.g. the ICF) have worked hard to delineate professional norms through ethics codes. Such standards have been formu-

lated, amended, tested, and applied within many coaching organizations during the field's evolution.

The Colorado Mental Health Law was up for sunset review in 2004; the law would either stay the same, dissolve, or undergo revision. The Colorado Coalition of Coaches began work to propose legislation to revise the statute. In spring 2004, the governor of Colorado signed into law the bill that contains the legislation proposed by the coalition. Specifically, the new clause within Colorado's mental health statutes states *"The provisions of this article shall not apply to professional coaches who have had coach-specific training and who serve clients exclusively in the capacity of coaches."*

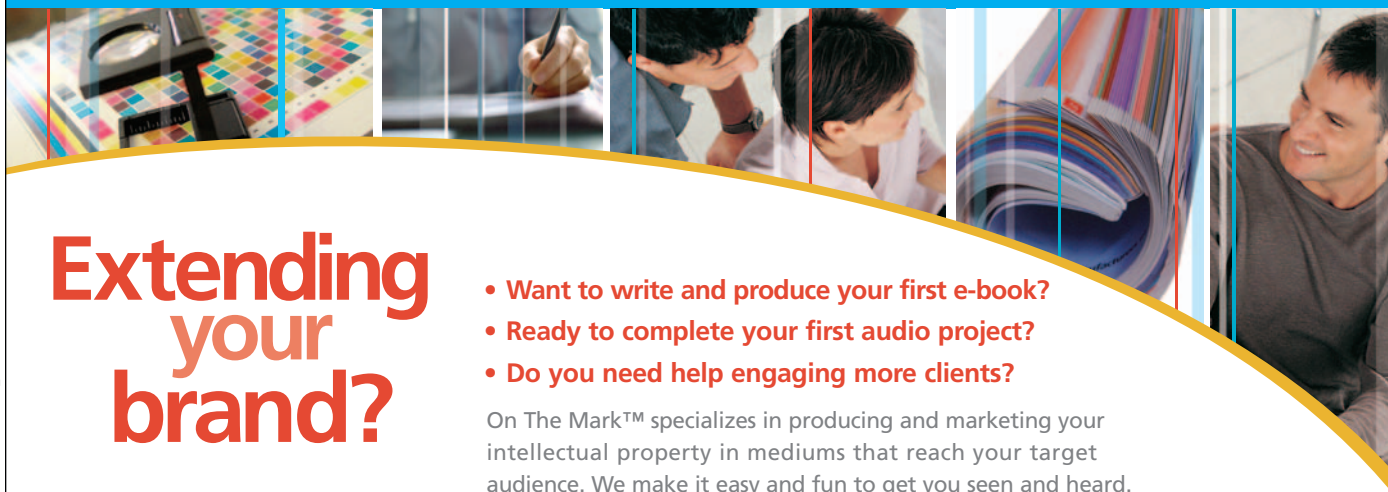
ICF regulatory history

The ICF Board of Directors chartered a regulatory committee in 2002 to research, monitor, evaluate and educate the coaching profession. During the committee's initial months, the ICF implemented an ethical conduct review process, a solid step in the process of self-regulation. In

addition, the ICF provided the opportunity for members to participate in a conference call with the ICF attorney as Colorado coaches encountered mixed messages about the coaching case and regulation in their state.

It was not the committee's intent to focus only on coaching versus counseling. However, that was the primary area of concern coaches faced in the key states investigated. In early 2004, these individuals continued the review of all of the United States and Canada. Currently, there are no requirements for coaches to register or be licensed in any state in the United States or in Canada. New mental-health/behavioral-health laws went into effect in New York, Arizona, and Minnesota in 2003 and 2004. The persons responsible for the implementation of these laws have stated that the intent is to tighten up regulation of those performing counseling and therapy services within the respective states. These laws were not intended to, nor should they, include coaches. However, if an individual practices counseling or therapy without meeting the proper state licensing require-

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ments and also engages in coaching, that individual would be in violation of the state requirement as well as the coaching profession's standards.

Distinctions between coaching and therapy or counseling are delineated on the ICF website (www.coachfederation.org) as well as information pertaining to ethics and regulatory issues. The ICF is committed to maintaining coaching as a distinct profession and to strengthening coaching's self-governance model.

Law and Ethics in Coaching: How to Solve and Avoid Difficult Problems In Your Practice, 2005, John Wiley and Sons, a new book by Sharon Anderson and myself along with eleven other contributing authors, is intended to increase awareness of legal and ethical issues in coaching, and to provide information specifically for those who are entering the coaching profession, or who are teaching about or offering consultations about coaching. The authors set forth various aspects of ethical and legal issues related to coaching. But keep in mind that this is a work in progress. While we can share certain rubrics

with other human service professions, the creation of case law, response to ethical complaints, and training in ethics for coaches will be paramount as the profession continues to evolve and create a knowledge base and best-practices mandates in the years to come. •

References:

Williams, P, and Anderson, S, (2005) *Law and Ethics in Coaching: How to Solve and Avoid Difficult Problems In Your Practice*, New Jersey, John Wiley and Sons

Coaching Professionalism, the ICF, and You, written by the 2004 Regulatory Committee of the ICF, co-chairs Diane Brennan and Patrick Williams. Copyright, 2005

⁽¹⁾ From *Coaching Professionalism, the ICF, and You*, written by the 2004 Regulatory Committee of the ICF, co-chairs Diane Brennan and Patrick Williams. Copyright, 2005

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THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF COACHING

You mean this stuff wasn't just made up?

By Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

Coaching is a new field that borrows from and builds upon theories and research from related fields that have come before it. It is a multidisciplinary, multi-theory synthesis and application of applied behavioral change.

Although coaching has a unique paradigm, much of what is useful in coaching goes back decades and even centuries. The attraction of pursuing personal development and exploring meaning, began with early Greek society. This is reflected in the famous quote by Socrates, "The unexamined life is not worth living." Since then we have developed many ways of examining our lives. What persists, however, is that people who are not in pursuit of basic human needs such as food and shelter do begin to pay attention to higher needs such as self-actualization, finding fulfillment, and spiritual connection. In ancient Greece, as now, an intense desire to explore and find personal meaning can be observed.

Contributions from psychology

There have been four major forces in psychological theory since the emergence of psychology in 1879 as a social science. These four forces are Freudian, Behavioral, Humanistic, and Transpersonal. In recent years there have been three other forces at work, which I

believe are really adaptations or evolutions of these four. Cognitive-Behavioral Psychology grew from a mix of the Behavioral and Humanistic schools. Positive Psychology utilizes Cognitive-Behavioral approaches and adds to the theories that Humanistic Psychology emphasizes: a non-mechanistic view, and a view of possibility as opposed to pathology as an essential approach to the client. And Ken Wilber's Integral approaches to psychology and life are, I believe, a new labeling of what was called Transpersonal. Along with each revolution in psychology, a changing image of human nature has also evolved.

Psychology began as the investigation of consciousness and mental functions such as sensation and perception. Much of the early influence on psychology came from the philosophical tradition, and early psychologists adopted the practice of introspection used by philosophers.

Introspectionists were an early force in psychology, with Wilhelm Wundt in Germany and Edward Titchener in America being two of the early defenders of introspection as a method of understanding the workings of the human mind. But they soon realized the inadequacies of introspection for the validation of the young science of psychology. Consciousness and mental functioning were difficult to study objectively. Psychology was experiencing growing pains then, much as coaching is today.



Key theorists

What follows is a quick tour of the growth of psychology and how its major thinkers set the stage for the coaching revolution.

William James was the father of American psychology. James preferred ideas to laboratory results and is best known for his view that humans can experience higher states of consciousness. He wrote on such diverse topics as functions of the brain, perception of space, psychic and paranormal faculties, religious ecstasy, will, attention, and habit. Because of his orientation, he gradually drifted away from psychology and in his later life emphasized philosophy. Nevertheless, William James had a tremendous influence on the growth of the psychology profession, and he is still widely read today. One of his most historic books, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, is a treatise that offers as much today as it did yesterday in the areas of spirituality and transpersonal consciousness.

Sigmund Freud influenced the first force in psychology. While psychology in the United States was struggling for an identity and striving for recognition by the scientific community, European psychology was being reshaped by the theories of Sigmund Freud. Freud cre-

ously, Shakespeare had commented, “What a piece of work is man?” The Behaviorists took this literally and looked upon humans in the early 20th century as *Homo mechanicus*, an object to be studied like any machine would be studied. *Homo mechanicus* was a machine whose mind was ignored.

In the 1950s, Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers initiated the third force in psychology, Humanistic Psychology. It focused on the personal, ontological, and phenomenological aspects of human experience, as opposed to the reductionist and mechanistic theories of Freudianism and Behaviorism.

Maslow eventually posited the fourth force, Transpersonal Psychology, which included mind, body, and spirit. It delved into altered states of consciousness as a way to explore the transpersonal realm. This research began to open up our knowledge of the human mind and expand our windows of perception and possibility.

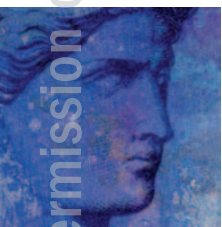
Other influences

A vast array of research into life-span developmental psychology has also created an understanding of developmental trajectories that can be very helpful to coaches. Daniel Levinson’s early work on the life development of Harvard graduates over their 50-year life span yielded great insight into men’s development within that age cohort (*Seasons of a Man’s Life*, 1978). Carol Gilligan’s work on girls and women created insight into the ways that women’s thinking and behavior differs from men’s over the life-span. Robert Kegan has created theories and methods for assessing the development of levels of consciousness in human life span development.

The hallmark of coaching is its synthesis of tools from other fields as well as its capacity for innovation. As the profession grows, it is developing a focused, research base of its own of what works within the unique paradigm that is coaching. •

For a brief historical review of scholarly theories, see www.choice-online.com for a continuation of this article by Patrick Williams.

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“Much of what is useful in coaching goes back decades and even centuries.”

ated quite a stir in the medical community with his ideas and theories, but he finally gained acceptance in psychiatry with the ‘talking cure’ breakthrough — psychoanalysis. Freud brought us such terms as unconscious, id, ego, and superego.

As Freudian thought was taking shape in Europe and the United States, William James and others began to focus on measurable behavior. Many American psychologists began to combat Freudian theories as another non-verifiable, subjective pseudo-science of the mind.

The time was ripe for the emergence of Behaviorism as the second major force in psychology, led by B. F. Skinner and John Watson. Hundreds of years previ-

A NEW TOOL FOR BUSINESS COACHING

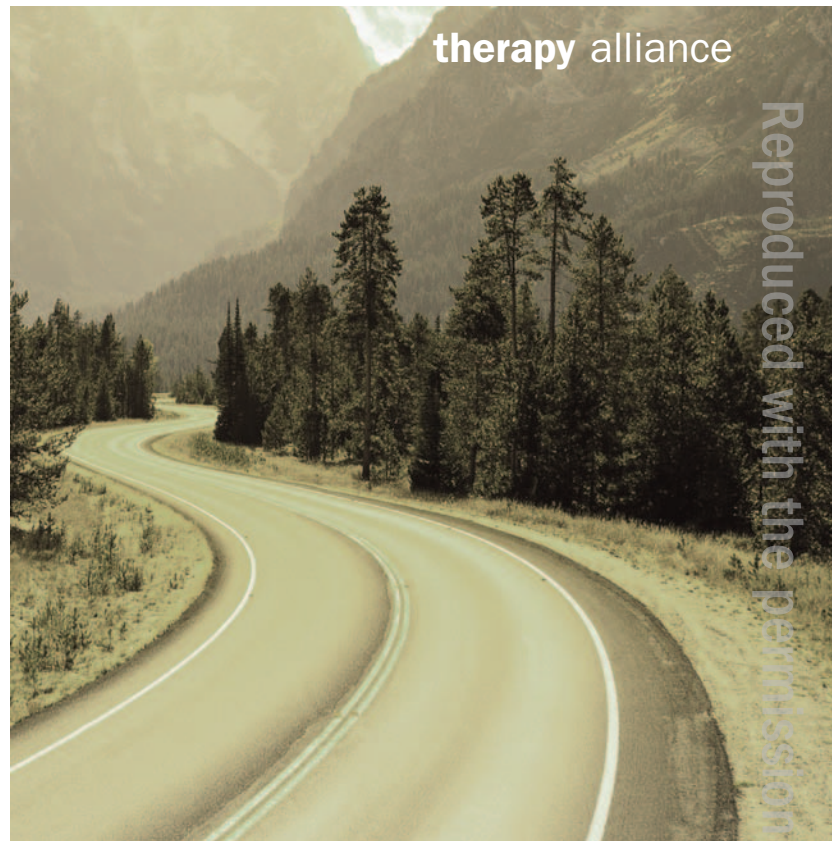
Helping managers and teams understand personality differences

By Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

As a psychologist who has fully transitioned into life coaching, I work with people who are more interested in designing a future rather than getting over a past. Clients who want to live their life more fully, both personally and professionally, value having a personal coach. Because of this, many coaches are hired by corporate clients, professionals, and entrepreneurial small business owners who want to be more purposeful in living their life in balance, and who want their job to reflect their values.

In the corporate or professional business life, there is always the need to improve upon communication with staff and customers. There is also a growing recognition that relationships within the workplace are important to the overall success of the company or business. The emphasis on 'emotional intelligence' (from Daniel Goleman) in the work environment shows how the bottom line of a company or business is improved if the employees communicate and function as a team that works well together and resolves conflict early.

A large part of working well together requires working with different personalities and styles within the work place. These different styles often lead to conflict rather than an appreciation of the unique gifts and skills that each personality might bring to a collaborative work environment. Psychologists and counselors have for



decades used various personality assessments to give them added information on the general tendencies and communication strategies of the clients they worked with. I have especially enjoyed utilizing the more positive and less clinical assessments such as the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation-Behavior™ (FIRO-B®), Meyers-Briggs, and the Personal DISCernment Inventory (DISC) behavioral assessment.

Why personality matters

Dr. Mike Lillibridge has developed an even more user friendly and powerful personality assessment in the Peoplemap™ Personality Type Program. The Peoplemap™ System of Training and Development is an integrated series of interpersonal effectiveness tools designed to develop people at every level of an organization. The personality tool is quick and easy to complete (only 14 questions!). For that reason alone, it offers less opportunity for confusion with jargon and labels than the aforementioned assessments.

This instrument allows the client to comprehend and recognize their general personality type and how it reveals itself in work, family, and social environments. Imagine how useful it would be to quickly assess your personality tendencies, and your 'Achilles heels' as well as gathering the same information for those you work and live with?

The tool lets you quickly understand yourself and others and how each personality style or tendency has its unique strengths and necessary attributes. When we become aware of both our strengths and areas of potential conflict, then we can be more sensitive to the ways that other people view and respond to the environment. And we can use the understanding of the different personality tendencies to create harmony and understanding with the people in our work and personal lives.

The Peoplemap™ is a very useful and powerful tool for helping individuals and companies understand the various personalities that comprise their company or business. It is also a fun way to understand your own strengths and areas for improvement, in both your professional and personal lives.

“An effective team is like a family and relationships can sometimes manifest personality conflicts.”

Helping teams succeed

Here is an example of how I used the Peoplemap™ with an executive coaching client. Carol came to me for coaching to improve in her role as vice president of a department with a major international bank. She was very happy with her work but was having difficulty with her team. Specifically she was getting word that they often saw her as a tyrant and that at times she appeared aloof. That was not her intention, so she wanted some coaching that would help her be a better manager.

I, of course, told her to be a better manager she would also need to learn to coach her employees more than supervise or manage them. A good manager brings out the best in the individual members so that the team works efficiently and smoothly. I suggested Carol try the Peoplemap™. She was very willing and had already completed the Myers-Briggs assessment recently as well as a 360-degree assessment with her staff. I sent her the questionnaire and she was amazed at the report generated from her data. Carol's profile showed her

general tendencies to be Leader-Task, the most common combination for managers. As we reviewed the strengths and the Achilles heels of her personality type, she was amazed at how accurate it was and how similar to her Myers-Briggs profile.

As a Leader-Task, Carol had many strengths that made her a great manager. However, to improve on her stated goals, she had to learn how to more effectively communicate with the other types on her team. She also had to learn to appreciate each of their unique contributions to the team as well as potential conflicts. As for her own style, she affirmed that she was results oriented and worked with an attitude of 'get the job done.' Because of this tendency, she sometimes could appear overly driven and resistant to change or unwilling to let go of control. She also learned that one of the weaknesses of a strong Leader-Task personality is that she might have difficulty relaxing and loosening up. This struck her as a core understanding and we began using our coaching in the weeks to come to focus on:

- Delegating more responsibility to her staff.
- Coaching her team rather than managing them.
- Finding opportunities for her to lighten up and be more fun while maintaining her vision on the results she wanted the team to achieve.

Carol had also recently taken some training on emotional intelligence in the workplace and she was beginning to believe that managers today do need to care about the humanity of their team. With the Peoplemap™ results she became aware that she tends to overlook the feelings of others. As a manager/coach, she could treat her staff as responsible adults who also have some emotional needs in the workplace. An effective team is like a family and relationships can sometimes manifest personality conflicts. The results can help her whole team understand everyone's unique strengths, Achilles heels, and how to communicate and interact with that understanding. Carol eventually gave the assessment to her whole team and we had two conference calls to go over the results. They all felt acknowledged and empowered to work more effectively as a team, and they all appreciated Carol for her openness and her willingness to change. •

Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC, is an ICF board member and CEO of the Institute for Life Coach Training.

the Whole Person

Other fields have tackled the question of what spirituality is and what it is not

By Patrick Williams, Ed.D., MCC

The spiritual dimension of the human experience is attracting much interest in coaching and in psychotherapy today. Many wonder how the two approaches can work together. I draw upon my own experience in psychology and philosophy to provide some context for the practicing life coach and executive coach.

In 1977, I received my doctoral degree in transpersonal psychology, which was then a new field of study focusing on the whole person, including the spiritual dimension of human experience. Transpersonal psychology, considered the fourth force of psychology (preceded by Freudianism, behaviorism, and humanistic psychology), originated with Abraham Maslow, the father of humanistic psychology. Maslow predicted the growth of transpersonal psychology in his book *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (New York, Viking, 1971).

In addition to Maslow, two other notable theorists in the field of psychology helped to pave the way for the development of transpersonal psychology. These two men, Carl Jung and Roberto Assagioli, were contemporaries of Freud who broke away from his circle because of their interest in exploring the spiritual nature of humankind. Jung is noted for his study of tribal and ethnic cultures around the world to learn about their rituals, mythology, and spiritual practice and application. He expanded the concept of mental health into

the realm of spiritual health and the development of our spiritual nature (*Memories, Dreams, and Reflections* by C. G. Jung; New York, Vintage Books, 1965).

Assagioli, a colleague of Jung, developed the system of psychosynthesis in 1911, exploring different levels of consciousness, including the collective unconscious, a term coined by Jung (*Psychosynthesis* by R. Assagioli; New York, Viking, 1965).

Both of these men influenced the views of Maslow. In his later years, Maslow understood that the study of psychology and human development was incomplete if it did not encompass our spiritual nature. As philosopher Teilhard de Chardin said in *The Phenomenon of Man* (New York, Harper Books, 1955), "We are not physical beings having a spiritual experience. Rather, we are spiritual beings having a physical experience."

Coaching and the spiritual journey

Life coaching, I believe, has evolved out of a desire on the part of people to feel a greater sense of connection



to purpose and meaning in their life. Clients may initially seek a coach to work on job-related or other goals, but the lingering conversation is about living more purposefully. In the process of exploring that dimension, spiritual and existential questions arise.

Coaching the spiritual development of clients is one of the highest callings a coach can follow. Many coaches and clients, however, do not know how to engage in conversations about spirituality without confusing the topic with religion. Spirituality is often the elephant in the living room—everyone knows it is present but pretends not to see it. As a coach, your willingness to engage in conversations about spiritual beliefs, values, and practices may be of great service to your clients.

It is much easier to describe what spiritual is not than it is to define spirit and spirituality in direct terms. For example, spirituality is often confused with morality. Morality is concerned with issues of right and wrong. Morality, which has its roots in socially defined behavior, reflects social tradition and consensus. Morality varies from culture to culture, and is often used as a basis for judgments that separate one group from another. Spirituality, in contrast, is “profoundly non-judgmental and non-separative,” to quote Rachel Naomi Remen from her article, “Spirit: Resource for Healin” (*Noetic Sciences Review*, Autumn 1988).

Relating to a higher power

Spirituality is not synonymous with ethics, either. Ethics is a particular set of values and a code for translating socially defined morality into daily activity. Ethics usually addresses the right way to conduct ourselves in

“Religion is a bridge to the spiritual—but the spiritual lies beyond religion.”

social settings and relationships. Spirituality is much more concerned with the nature of one’s personal relationship with an external force or power—whether that force is identified as God, Life Force, Love, Higher Power, Collective Unconscious, Life Energy, or something else—and how that relationship contributes to

interpersonal relationships. Spirituality is not concerned with discovering or defining a right way to act.

Another common confusion is equating spirituality with being psychic or having paranormal abilities. All people have the ability to be psychic. Being psychic is akin to having direct knowledge of matters of human consciousness and awareness. It can be a means of experiencing the spiritual realm or transpersonal consciousness, but it is not synonymous with spirituality. Rather, psychic ability is simply another means by which humans gain information from the internal and external environments. Remen writes that psychic ability can be used “...to impress others, to accumulate personal power, to dominate or manipulate—in short to assert (our) separateness and (our) personal power. The spiritual, however, is not separative. A deep sense of the spiritual leads one to trust not one’s own lonely power, but the great flow or pattern manifested in all life, including our own. We become not manipulator, but witness.”

Spirituality versus religion

Finally, spirituality is different from religion. A religion includes a dogma, a set of beliefs about the spiritual and a subsequent set of practices or disciplines that are derived from those beliefs. Throughout history, religious belief has served as justification for exclusion and discrimination because each religion claims to know the exclusive “truth” about spirit. But spirituality is inclusive. It is the deepest sense of belonging, participation, and interconnectedness. It lets the great mystery remain the great mystery.

Remen writes, “Religion is a bridge to the spiritual—but the spiritual lies beyond religion. Unfortunately, in seeking the spiritual we may become attached to the bridge rather than crossing over it.”

There is an aspect of all people that seeks the spiritual. This yearning varies in strength from person to person, but to some degree it is a universal aspect of humanity. The mental health professions are beginning to recognize the need to include a client’s spiritual life in any treatment or therapy he or she receives. Until recently, the term spirit conjured up concepts such as ghosts, mental aberrations, religious beliefs, and cults. Now, however, science is beginning to

Coaching Exercises and Information to Share with Your Clients

Personal Benefits of a Spiritual Practice

Let your clients know that regardless of the religious or mystical paths they choose, the benefits they derive from pursuing a spiritual practice include:

- Developing compassion for self and others. This is based not on some ideal of perfection, but rather on the capacity to let go and to love.
- Strengthening our virtues. These include kindness, patience, self-awareness, and acceptance.
- The loss of fear. As our spiritual lives evolve, our fears diminish. Almost all common psychological problems are based on fear. Lose your fear and you become spiritually well.

Coaching Spiritual Principles and Practices

Introduce your clients to some of the following principles that can enhance their spiritual life.

1. You attract the people and events for which you are mentally and spiritually ready.
2. The universe is always sending us messages. If we don't hear these messages, they become lessons. If we don't learn the lessons, they become

recurring problems. If we don't resolve the problems, they become crises. If we ignore the crises, they become chaos.

3. We are all connected, yet distinct. We are not separate. On the level of energy, we are unified and are never destroyed, merely transformed.

4. Awareness of your true human nature as a spiritual being makes life more expansive, enriched, and easy.

5. All that you seek in life is also seeking you!

6. Awareness of the truth always sets you free. But first it may also make you miserable.

7. Your spirituality contributes immeasurably to a life of greater ease, simplicity, and fulfillment.

8. You are physically built to be happy and to experience life as pleasurable.

9. The human species and human civilization are developing and evolving. You are a powerful influence on both.

10. We already possess all we need to be happy.

Live by the above principles, and you and your clients will genuinely experience what Joseph Campbell calls "the rapture of being alive."

acknowledge the existence of personal energy fields and the ways in which psychological factors modify these fields.

In his book *Creating Affluence* (New York, Amber-Allen, 1993), Deepak Chopra, M.D., former president of the American College of Physicians and Surgeons, writes, "Even our human body is a field of infinite organizing power. There are six trillion reactions occurring in the human body every second, and every one of them is correlated with every single other reaction; every single other biochemical event knows what other biochemical event is occurring in the body."

Chopra goes on to say, "So, inherent in the field itself is infinite organizing power. To have experiential knowledge of that field as one's own nature is to embody the infinite organizing power of the field."

Almost any spiritual tradition contains certain truths and a set of methods for realizing them. In his

book *How to Know God* (New York, Harmony Books, 2000), Chopra describes four basic paths to learn about spirit. These paths have direct application to the field of coaching, and every life coach needs to be intimately familiar with them. These are (a) the path of love; (b) the path of spiritual discipline; (c) the path of action; and (d) the path of science.

Lawrence LeShan, clinical psychologist and author of *The Medium, The Mystic, and The Physicist* (New York, Allworth Press, 2003), wrote extensively on anecdotal research about all four of these paths. The most deeply spiritual and poetic quotations he included were often from the viewpoint of the physicist. Clearly, even the deep pursuit of science leads to understandings, knowledge, and intuitive beliefs about spirituality. •

Dr. Patrick Williams, MCC, is a ICF board member and CEO of Institute for Life Coach Training.

Advancing by Degrees

Options for credentials multiply as the world of higher education embraces coaching

By Patrick Williams, Ed.D., MCC

In my book, *Therapist as Life Coach: Transforming Your Practice in 2002* (Norton Books), I predicted graduate schools would soon offer degrees in coaching. It was only logical, given the profession's evolution and the proliferation of coach-training organizations.

Initially, just a handful of colleges offered such certificates or degrees. George Washington University became the first ICF-accredited coach training program after starting as a certificate program within the Organizational Development department. The University of Sydney (Australia), in an effort spearheaded by Dr. Anthony Grant, offered the first master's degree in Coaching Psychology in the late 1990s. These institutions were soon followed by other colleges offering classes in coaching or certification as part of a degree in a related field.

Universities adopt new paradigms

As of 2005, more than twenty-four colleges and universities offer either a certificate program or a full graduate degree in coaching. This trend repeats the earlier growth of clinical psychology within the academic realm. In 1949, the historical Colorado event called the "Boulder Conference" helped launch the field of clinical psychology and emerging Ph.D. programs that would apply the science-practitioner model



of academic studies. This model focused on both practical application of skills and the scientific rigor and knowledge of evidence-based research and research methodologies. A later conference in 1973 in Vail, Colorado offered an alternative for the student who did not want to focus on research but rather sought the specific applied skills needed to be a psychologist. This model, which became known as the scholar-professional model, created the momentum for the Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.). Today, more students are enrolled in Psy.D. programs, even though more Ph.D. programs exist by number.

A prestigious list of schools

In the current field of coaching, many of the graduate-level certificates are offered by recognizable institutions, such as Georgetown University, University of Texas, JFK University, Duke University, New York University, Villanova University, George Mason University, Fielding University, and others—all accredited and long-established institutions of higher learning.

Other institutions, such as Walden University and International University of Professional Studies (IUPS), allow "alternative education" and self-designed degree programs with an emphasis on self-directed learning, mentor relationships and distance-learning modalities.

Most of these graduate institutions are focused on

executive or corporate applications, but a few (such as the online classes at IUPS.edu) are focused on a more general education in Coaching and Human Development. And several institutions in the United Kingdom (including the University of Wolverhampton, Middlesex University, and Oxford Brookes) are offering degrees or certificates in professional coaching.

Credibility and options

I spoke with representatives of several universities offering graduate degrees in coaching. Coaching teachers from around the world, including the University of Sydney to Georgetown University in Washington, DC, expressed their interest in being on the cutting edge of an evolving profession. They all described ways that their programs aligned with an academic philosophy of coaching and evidence-based research. They were interested in documenting what really works and why.

Those working in the academic side of coaching believe that graduate education in this area adds to the credibility of the profession. It may also assist in the future of self-regulation, as the various governments look highly on graduate degrees.

ingly more educated and savvy about coaching. In many cases, they are requiring that the coaches they hire be ICF-certified. I am committed to raising the standards of coaching. In today's environment that means incorporating the newest thinking about coaching based on developmental theory, cognitive capacity, and linking ways to align coaching with any evidence that is developmentally available. This will only serve to strengthen the power of coaching in the world."

And Dr. Irv Katz, Chancellor of the innovative International University of Professional Studies, states, "Research in coaching is essential if the field is to gain the credibility it deserves. Step by step, gains through coaching must be documented. The leadership recognizes this. If coaches are going to do the research, IUPS stands ready to assist them in earning their doctorates."

Aiding global growth

The profession of coaching is growing in tandem with the academic theory, rigor, research, and application that comes with graduate education. As the profession of coaching continues to spread globally, the impact of

“Those working in the academic side of coaching believe that graduate education adds to the credibility of the profession.”

"This trend will encourage private coaching schools to raise the bar," says Anthony Grant of the University of Sydney. "I'm sure we all agree that this is good for the students, good for the coaching industry, and good for the schools."

According to Dr. Leni Wildflower of Fielding University, "There is room for both academic programs and coach-training organizations. For those who want grounding in a long-term academically rigorous program, the degree programs are the answer. For those who wish to focus on skills and training, perhaps using the coach approach as part of their job, or becoming an entrepreneurial private coach, high-quality coach training is an equally valid approach."

Chris Wahl, MA, MCC, of Georgetown University's coaching program, adds, "We have found over the past few years that the corporate consumers are increas-

academic credentialing will be an important trend to monitor. Does this mean that would-be coaches will soon need a graduate degree to work? I say that's doubtful. But graduate education does expand the knowledge base and challenges the status quo. It will raise the bar for training programs. Similarly, the standards of best practice as taught by the International Coach Federation and similar organizations should be endorsed and absorbed into college curricula. For our profession to be self-regulated and publicly recognized, it must have the partnership of academia and the coaching profession at large. This partnership bodes well for all of us who want to see our profession thrive. •

Dr. Patrick Williams, MCC, ICF board member, and CEO of the Institute for Life Coach Training, speaks worldwide and writes extensively on coaching.

Building on Trust

Relationship coaching sharpens understanding between all types of partnerships

By Dr. Patrick Williams, Ed.D., MCC

Dr. Williams: Relationship coaching has emerged as a unique specialization within the coaching profession. How do you define relationship coaching?

Lisa Kramer: Relationship coaching is an ongoing professional relationship that helps individuals and couples achieve results in their committed relationships. Through coaching, clients define their vision of a fulfilling, committed relationship and then develop a plan to create that vision. Coaching provides clients with the support, structure, and accountability to successfully reach their goals within the relationship. Coaching also assists clients in identifying the roadblocks that interfere with moving forward. Through the safety and trust of the coaching partnership, clients gain clarity and awareness to address those roadblocks and make conscious choices in creating the relationship of their dreams.

How is relationship coaching different than marriage or relationship counseling?

When couples are in need of counseling, they are experiencing a breakdown in the relationship that

Author's note: As part of my ongoing effort to write about the alliance between theories of psychotherapy and coaching, this month's article centers on the growing niche of "relationship coaching." I recently spoke with Lisa Kramer, MSW, PCC, founder and president of Living with Intention. She is a life coach, coach trainer, mentor coach, and writer based in Villanova,

Pennsylvania. Kramer is the author of *Coaching with Intention*, the first in her Coaching Mastery™ series. The forthcoming *Loving with Intention*, a relationship-coaching manual for coaches and therapists, will be available in July 2005. Kramer is on the faculty of the Institute for Life Coach Training, and she is a graduate of the Coaches Training Institute.

requires healing. The healing process requires that the couple gain a better understanding about what occurred in the past and how that impacts the relationship today. They must uncover patterns of communication that may be destructive to the relationship and explore emotions that surface for both partners.

Couples who are good candidates for relationship coaching have a solid foundation based on love, commitment, mutual respect, and trust. They want to move on to the next step, finding ways to enhance their relationship or particular aspects of their relationship, such as finances, communication, work/life



“Through coaching, couples create a shared blueprint of what they want for the relationship.”

balance. Through coaching, couples create a shared blueprint of what they want for the relationship and then work with their coach to achieve the vision. These couples are motivated to make changes needed to achieve the vision. Couples who are in need of counseling must first do the healing work to achieve the trust and readiness required for coaching.

Is there a theoretical framework that grounds relationship coaching?

Yes. The Conscious Relationship Coaching Model that I developed is based on Dr. Harville Hendrix's Imago Relationship Theory. Hendrix is the author of *Getting the Love You Want: A Guide for Couples*, and *Keeping the Love You Find: A Guide for Singles*. According to his Imago theory, a conscious relationship fosters

maximum psychological and spiritual growth for both partners based on a mutual image (imago) of their ideal relationship. To become conscious, couples move through different stages in their relationship that Hendrix labels romantic love, the power struggle and finally, mature love. Understanding these stages helps couples to normalize their experiences in relationship, particularly when conflict emerges. Couples in need of counseling are so embroiled in the power struggle that they have difficulty working proactively on their relationship. Couples who would find success with coaching may indeed be struggling in certain areas of the relationship. But they recognize and focus on what's working more often than on what's not working. By capitalizing on the strength of the rela-

tionship, couples can move forward to greater levels of connection and communication.

Would relationship coaching be effective with couples that do show commitment but have some ineffective responses to life stressors?

Absolutely! However, it's crucial that the coach determine at the outset if a couple is "coachable." Important questions to ask include:

- What life stressors are impacting their relationship at present?
- How long has the couple been experiencing these stressors? (It's important to know if the stressor is short-term or chronic. A chronic stressor may indicate that the couple needs therapy to address its long-term effects on the relationship.)
- Assess what attempts they may have made in the past to address these areas. Ask them what worked successfully and what did not.
- Ask them to identify the strengths in their relationship and in each other.
- Finally, get a sense from them of why they are pursuing coaching now? What issues are stirring enough to make them explore taking action?

What about couples who are in conflict or arguing in ineffective and potentially hurtful ways?

Fighting is a healthy aspect of any relationship. It's the way in which partners fight that's important. It is important for a coach to ask how couples fight with each other. Is there explosive anger? Does one

partner tend to withdraw for extended periods at a time? How open are they to learning and practicing new ways of communicating when they disagree with each other? Fighting, in itself, is not an indicator that a couple is not appropriate for coaching.

You talk about individuals and couples. Does that mean you can do effective relationship coaching with an individual? How does that work?

Well, relationship coaching is certainly more effective when both partners are involved. The process of moving towards mature love is the work of both partners, not just one. Both partners need to be engaged in coaching to create a conscious relationship.

On the other hand, it is possible for individuals to focus on their relationship without their partner. Coaching helps individuals gain greater clarity about their vision of a more fulfilling relationship and to understand the gap between their ideal and where the relationship actually is at present. An individual client can certainly take steps on his or her own to improve a relationship with some degree of success. However, I believe that ultimately it is the work of both partners to create a conscious relationship.

What are the typical goals or desires of relationship coaching?

Relationship coaching issues encompass all areas on the life wheel including parenting, communication and intimacy, finances, work/life balance, fun and recreation. For example, one couple I coached was experiencing difficulty in their relationship due

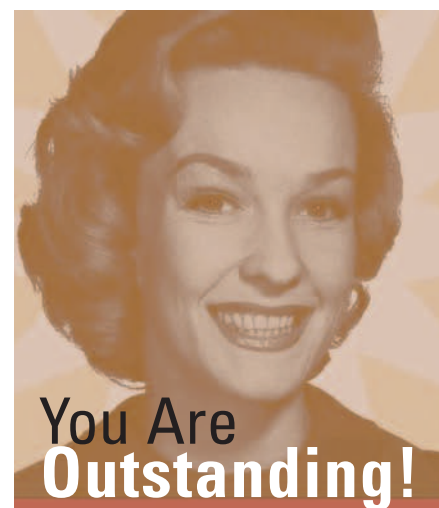
to finances. They had different views about spending and saving. Through coaching, they developed a financial vision that helped them each understand the other's perspective. They realized that neither was right or wrong—they were just different. By developing and implementing a plan, this couple was able to successfully move forward in this area of the relationship. That alone had a positive impact on other areas of their relationship.

Can relationship coaching be expanded to partnerships based not on love, but on, say, workplace needs?

The Conscious Relationship Coaching model is effective with life partners, business partners, work teams, and family businesses. Any relationship where there is a commitment to creating and working toward achieving a shared vision will benefit from this approach.

Could you give a brief example?

Imago theory and the Conscious Relationship Coaching principles apply to work-related partnerships or teams. I once coached a manager and a project leader who were at odds with each other and frustrated over their lack of progress. I applied the same principles I use with couples. I had them design their ideal working relationship and clarify their roles and responsibilities. By working out an agreement on their desired outcomes, they were able to transform how they worked together. Other team members noticed the difference. It is always about being purposeful and conscious and a willingness to communicate and compromise.



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Can relationship coaches be available as specialists for other coaches to refer to?

Certainly! Coaches working with individual clients can refer a client and his or her partner to a relationship coach to specifically address the relationship. I do not recommend that coaches work with couples if they have not been trained in relationship coaching. Relationship coaching is different because the coach must successfully design an alliance with the couple. Because the client is the couple, the coach must be effective in coaching both partners simultaneously.

What recommendations do you have for a coach who would like to expand into relationship coaching but has no formal training with couples?

I believe strongly in formal training. There are too many people calling themselves coaches who don't have training, and it has a negative impact on the credibility of the profession. Relationship coaching is different than individual coaching, and coaches need advanced training to do this work. In addition, new relationship coaches should hire a mentor coach to assist them in becoming proficient in this area. •

Dr. Patrick Williams, Master Certified Coach, ICF Board Member, and CEO of the Institute for Life Coach Training, speaks worldwide and writes extensively on coaching. He is the co-author of Therapist as Life Coach: Transforming Your Practice, and Total Life Coaching: 50+ Life Lessons, Skills, and Techniques to Enhance Your Practice and Your Life. His newest book on the law and ethics in coaching will be out fall, 2005.

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it's all in your Head

Changing your thoughts will
indeed change your behavior.



By Dr. Patrick Williams, Ed.D., MCC

Dr. Williams: Define Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for our readers and discuss a little of its origins.

Dr. Wildflower: The term Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) was first coined by Arnold Beck in the mid-1970s. Beck theorized that our thoughts were the cause of our feelings and behaviors, rather than feelings, behaviors, and external circumstances being the source of our thoughts.

In other words, our thinking causes us to feel and act the way we do?

Yes. This concept, which has been validated by research over the past thirty years, directly contradicts most psychological theories that predate CBT. Prior to Beck and the cognitive therapists, researchers believed that our thoughts about ourselves and the world stemmed directly from circumstances, primarily

Author's note: Future Therapy Alliance columns will highlight the theories and techniques from the fields of psychology, psychotherapy, and related professions that are applicable to coaching. Many techniques from various schools of psychotherapy can be applied to the coaching paradigm as long as one is clear they are being utilized for coaching rather than for psychological treatment of mental disorders.

This month's column focuses on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), drawing upon the insights of Leni Wildflower, Ph.D., a faculty member in Organization Development/ Organizational Management, Fielding Graduate University, London. Dr. Wildflower teaches CBT and has participated in research regarding its application to the coaching profession.

ly in childhood, and the feelings and behaviors that resulted from them. The notion that thoughts directed feelings and behavior—and that changing thoughts could change behavior—was a revolutionary concept.


Can you speak to the acceptance of CBT in the academic and professional worlds?

In the years since Beck first published his insights, numerous studies have been conducted in the area of

cognitive therapy. CBT has gained stature among therapists, counselors, and psychiatrists as the preferred method of treatment for a number of psychological disorders, including depression, substance abuse, and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Which aspects of CBT do you see as applicable to coaching?

Several aspects of CBT fit particularly well in a coaching model. First, CBT, like most coaching models, is time limited. Second, CBT is designed as a collaborative effort between the therapist and the client. Like coaches, CBT therapists learn what their clients want out of life and then help them achieve those goals. The cognitive therapist's role is to listen, teach, and encourage. The client's role is to express



“ In other words, our thinking causes us to feel and act the way we do? ”

concerns, learn, and implement that learning. Third, CBT focuses on current behavior and thoughts; the client's past is not explored extensively. Fourth, like coaching, CBT is structured and directive. It helps clients achieve the goals they set. Fifth, CBT is based on the scientifically supported assumption that most emotional and behavioral reactions are learned. The emphasis in CBT, as in coaching, is on educating the client in new ways of thinking that will help promote new behaviors. And sixth, homework, which is often a feature of coaching models, is a central feature of CBT.

I can see a tremendous similarity in the methods, albeit for different goals in coaching. It sounds as if basic CBT theory would be powerful addition to coach training.

Absolutely. The coach just needs to be clear that the methods are not used as therapy, but rather as skill sets and techniques in coaching applications.

Which aspects of CBT aren't applicable to coaching?

For the most part, CBT techniques are directly applicable to coaching. The difference is that the overwhelming emphasis in CBT, in both research and practice, has been the treatment of low-functioning individuals. Coaches often work with people who function at a high level. So, for example, the idea of the behavioral experiment, used commonly in CBT, is applicable to coaching, but the experiments themselves might look very different due to the different levels of client functioning in each setting.

What techniques or strategies from CBT can coaches use even if they are not trained therapists?

Christine Padesky devised a system for creating behavioral changes in a relatively short period of time through the use of behavioral experiments. According to Padesky, a behavioral experiment might consist of any of the following:

- Observational experiments, such as watching a person who possesses the desired new behavior.
- Graded task assignments, often used with a Likert scale.
- Experiments to test the validity of one's assumptions.
- Interviewing others.
- Devising alternative behavior options.
- Reading to facilitate learning about a different way of behaving.
- Self-observation.

In my opinion, the above tasks might fit easily into a coaching model. They are excellent devices for shifting behavior, whether the client is a cocaine addict or a corporate executive.

How have you found your training in CBT useful in coaching?

As I moved from counseling as an occupation to business coaching, I noticed that I encountered individuals who, for one reason or another, needed to make changes in their behavior in a relatively short period of time. My familiarity with CBT techniques allowed me to design programs for managers that produced dramatic behavioral changes. For some managers, the prospect of promotion proved very motivating. Others embraced change because their current job was on the line.

I am a great believer in a saying I once heard from a member of Alcoholics Anonymous: “Act as if.” I told the managers I was coaching that they didn’t need to like their boss or their peers or their employees. They just needed to act as if they liked them. Professional behavior in a business situation demands this. It has been a very freeing concept for some individuals to realize they don’t need to change the essence of who they are.

Can you describe a specific example of your coaching work using CBT methods?

The director of training in a company I was doing some work for was assigned to me for coaching by the vice president of human resources. Her staff experienced her as abrasive and unfairly critical. It was not at all clear to me, nor to HR, that she was capable of self-

“It has been a very freeing concept for some individuals to realize they don’t need to change the essence of who they are.”

reflection. However, the consequence of her not changing her behavior would have been demotion or termination, so she knew she had to change.

When our coaching sessions began, I listened empathically while she told me all the reasons why she was frustrated—which included conflicts at work and at home—and what caused her to make frequent critical remarks to her staff. My role was not to explore the underlying causes of her behavior, but to help her achieve the goal of treating her staff less critically. I asked her to make a chart on which she could record, day by day, how many times she had criticized members of her staff. This would enable her to both quantify her behavior and record her progress toward her goal.

Meanwhile, we developed a list of behavioral experiments to help her to move herself up the scale. I suggested, for example, that she take a different staff member for coffee every few days, bring donuts to the

next staff meeting, walk around the block in the middle of each workday to relax, or e-mail me whenever she felt frustrated. Her homework each week was to put one or more of these experiments into practice.

I really see how this models the coaching skills taught at respected coach training organizations. You may give homework or experiments to the client, but you are not prescribing from an expert position. You are offering possibilities for the client to consider, right?

Exactly. I framed these experiments as part of a process of changing outward behavior, of staying calm and being less critical. I avoided putting her under any pressure to have more positive feelings about her staff, but kept validating her outward progress.

By the end of our coaching sessions, she had sig-



nificantly modified her behavior to the extent that her staff was happier, her managers felt more confident about her, and her status in the organization was more secure. This example illustrates that CBT methods can be very effective, particularly with individuals whose behavioral changes are unlikely to come from a process of self-reflection.

Thank you Leni, for your wisdom and keen understanding of how methods and theory from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy apply to coaching.

My pleasure. Thanks for the opportunity. •

*Dr. Patrick Williams is the CEO of Institute for Life Coach Training and is a licensed clinical psychologist and Master Certified Coach. He has co-authored *Therapist as Life Coach: Transforming Your Practice* (with Dr. Deb Davis) and *Total Life Coaching: 50+ Life Lessons, Skills, and Techniques to Enhance Your Practice and Your Life* (with Dr. Lloyd Thomas).*

Ethics and REGULATORY ISSUES

The importance of self-governance as we move into the future of coaching.

By Patrick Williams, Ed.D., MCC

What makes a profession a profession? As coaching has grown and evolved in the last several years, it is more often being called a new profession. But is it? And is there a “field” of coaching like there is a “field” of psychology. Perhaps we can all agree that coaching has melded theory and techniques from many other professions and blended them into a new paradigm of relating. We call this coaching. But in order to maintain its place in the academic and popular descriptions of the profession, coaching needs the following.

1. Professional standards and credentials (this has been created by the International Coach Federation and other organizations in the last few years)
2. Ethical guidelines and a review process for conduct that may be in question.

3. Academic research and courses of study at the college level.
4. Outcome research and efficacy studies of coaching in the private and corporate sector.
5. Best practices models and systems for coaches new to the field, and for those seeking continuing education for re-certification.

The following summary has been created by the International Coach Federation (ICF) Regulatory Committee for distribution to its members and to the public, and is a crucial piece for the future of coaching.

The mission of the International Coach Federation is to be the global forum for the art and science of coaching, where we inspire transformational conversations, advocate excellence, and

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expand awareness of the contribution coaching is to the future of humankind. The ICF's internationally recognized standards of excellence, professionalism and code of ethics establish a strong foundation for self-governance of the coaching profession.

However, only those coaches who are members of the ICF or credentialed by the ICF fall under this governance. This means those who are not ICF members or credentialed coaches, yet use the title of coach, are not subject to the same rigorous standards of professionalism.

Why is self-governance important?

During the past two years, we've seen increased questions by members and others about whether coaching is a profession that requires monitoring by a regulatory agency. For more detailed information on the regulatory history see www.coachfederation.org/abouticf/index.asp

As professionals we have a fundamental responsibility to ensure we are qualified to serve our clients. Professional responsibility extends beyond the choices we make for our individual practices and encompasses a responsibility to look beyond our personal preferences and biases to embrace what will best serve the coaching profession as a whole. Professional self-governance is the cornerstone of this professional responsibility.

The future we wish to design is clear: A world in which coaching is seen by all as a distinct profession with professional standards and competencies, a shared body of knowledge that represents the wisdom of the profession, training in that body of knowledge, credential standards, ethical guidelines and committed professionals participating in the process of continuing professional growth and development. Ignoring our professional responsibilities may leave coaching subject to the rules of others who do not fully understand our profession. It also diminishes the growth of coaching as a distinct, valued and enduring profession, by perpetuating the notion that anyone calling themselves a "coach," without benefit of training or credential, can deliver truly professional coaching services. For these reasons, ICF is taking a policy stand for professionalism and self-governance in coaching.

The ICF's self-governance model

The standards and structures built by the ICF over the past decade, which support the emergence of coaching as a valued profession, also provide a solid foundation for the self-governance of our profession. In addition, our rigorous adherence as professionals to these standards and practices provides the necessary assurance that the public is protected from potential harm. ICF's self-governance foundation is comprised of and depends upon each of the following standards and practices, supported by the efforts of the ICF Board, committees, global representatives, credentialed and member coaches.

- *Core Competencies that define the required skill set of a professional coach and establish the foundation for the professional credential examination and accreditation for coach training programs.*

- *A Code of Ethics to which ICF Members and ICF Credentialed Coaches pledge commitment and accountability to standards of professional conduct.*

- *Professional Oversight through an Ethical Conduct Review process for ICF Members and ICF Credentialed Coaches, which allows the public to report concerns and to be confident of objective investigation, follow-up and disciplinary action.*

- *Professional Coach credentialing entails a stringent examination and review process through which coaches must demonstrate their skills, proficiency and documented experi-*

ence in application of coaching core competencies. Credentials include Continuing Coach Education requirements for periodic renewal of coaching credentials, to ensure continued professional growth and development.

- Professional Coach Training Accreditation by which coach training programs submit to review and continuing oversight to demonstrate their commitment to the highest standards for curricula aligned with defined core competencies, faculty, structure, proficiency and ethics to support excellence in the training of coaches.

- Ongoing Self-Regulatory Oversight initiatives to track the needs and concerns of individual and organizational clients on an international basis, and to demonstrate an active commitment to meaningful professional self-governance.

What you can do

If you want to see coaching continue to develop as a respected and enduring profession, and desire to actively participate in that development, we recommend the following actions:

1. If you are not a member, join the ICF and participate locally and internationally.
2. If you are a member, review and ensure your compliance with the ICF Core Competencies and Code of Ethics. Stay informed—participate in your local ICF chapter or in one of the ICF Virtual Communities.
3. Take personal responsibility to make sure that you have the training and skills to do the high quality of work expected of true professionals.

of excellence, professionalism and self-governance, go to (www.coachfederation.org/brochure)

Increasingly consumers, corporations and government organizations are requiring ICF credentials as the standard for the profession:

4. If you are not an ICF credentialed coach, begin the process. You'll find the requirements and steps at <http://www.coachfederation.org/credential/index.asp>

5. If you are ICF credentialed, display your credential and promote it on your business card, brochure and website.

6. Be curious about your colleagues' backgrounds. Be willing to take a stand in support of coaches subscribing to the ICF standards. Actively encourage non-members to join the ICF and to commit themselves to the standards and ethics that preserve the integrity of the profession and protect coaching clients.

The ICF Regulatory Committee is committed to maintaining coaching as a distinct profession, and to strengthening our self-governance model. We welcome interested members to participate as ICF Chapter Regulatory Liaisons. Questions or comments may be sent via e-Mail to regulatory@coachfederation.org

The above will be immensely important to the future of coaching as a few states such as Colorado, New York, Minnesota and Arizona have taken a hands off response to coaching, once they discovered the ICF and high standards were in place. Colorado even

“As professionals we have a fundamental responsibility to ensure we are qualified to serve our clients.”

Add an ICF member or credentialed coach logo and the following language and link to your website to demonstrate to others your commitment to coaching professionalism:

The International Coach Federation (ICF) is the world's largest nonprofit professional association of coaches, with more than 7,500 members in more than 29 countries. Its purpose is to build, support and preserve the integrity of the coaching profession around the globe and ensure public confidence in the profession.

For more information about ICF members' and credentialed coaches' commitment to internationally recognized standards

passed an amended Mental Health Act which excluded professional coaching from the act so as no longer to be confused with mental health services. The future of our profession mandates that all coaches act professionally, ethically, and that they contribute to the body of knowledge and best practices models as we continue to move forward. •

Patrick Williams, Ed.D., MCC is an ICF Board Member (2002-2005) and Chief Executive Officer of the Institute for Life Coach Training.



When Coaching Clients Experience Tragedy: *Avoiding the Drama of Trauma*

“The role of a coach is to **acknowledge, empathize and seek to understand**”

- How do you deal with a client who has experienced a life-altering trauma and maintain your coaching role? **Patrick Williams**, Ed.D., MCC, shares his experience and the reasons why this is so important.

“Hi, Pat.”

“Hello, Carol. I got your email that said you had a tragedy in your life and really needed to talk to me today. How are you? What’s happened?”

“Well, Dr. Pat, it’s Brian, my son. He was killed yesterday in a car crash.”

Suddenly, career change doesn’t seem so important.

I had been coaching Carol for more than two years at that point. She was a great client, and we’d done some good work in the process of our coach/client relationship. But in that one moment on the phone, I knew that everything we’d worked on up to that point would need to take a back seat to what was happening now. Our whole relationship could turn on how I handled this challenge.

I’ve always said that life happens in between coaching calls. Well, now one of the worst possible things that could happen had just occurred in my client’s life. This is the very definition of an “acute traumatic occurrence.” As a man with children of my own, my heart broke for her, and as a coach, I knew this would test my mettle. How do I remain effective as a coach when a client experiences this type of acute trauma? The answer, as I discovered in working with Carol and other clients, and in talking with other coaches, is threefold:

1. Understand our role, and the role of coaching, in the lives of our clients during these kinds of crises.
2. Become aware of the effect of client crises on us, both as human beings and as coaches, and get support around that.
3. Continue to be good coaches and roll with what life throws our clients and us.

Understanding the role of a coach means remembering what coaching is and what it isn't. It is not ministry or therapy or healing. A minister's role is to provide spiritual guidance; a therapist's role is to explore, dissect, and work through emotions. It is not a coach's role to do any of these. Coaching doesn't focus on feelings; it doesn't delve into them to try to understand and explore them. It does, however, acknowledge emotions, especially in a crisis situation.

An effective coach focuses on normalizing and putting into context the feelings that a client experiences in response to traumatic life events. Feelings come up — we're human, it's natural. But the coach needs to first contextualize the feelings being experienced. This means helping the client view his or her reaction and feelings within the context of what

“Feelings can't be ignored — neither our client's nor ours”

has occurred. A person who loses a child or experiences divorce is going to be sad, grief stricken, angry, hurt, and so on. There is nothing pathological about that, just as feeling joy at winning the lottery or having a new baby is in no way “inappropriate.”

Normalizing those feelings means understanding that they are normal and reasonable, and not minimizing them. The role of a coach is to acknowledge the person's feelings, empathize with them, and seek to understand them.

Of course, we're human — we all have feelings. And it's likely that over the course of our relationship with our client, we've developed feelings for him or her. Probably one of the most important qualities of a good coach is to be empathic. When someone we know, care for, and have a lot invested in suffers trauma in his or her life, it's going to spill over into our life. This, too, is natural and normal, and it's something that we as coaches need to strengthen ourselves to face and handle well.

Feelings can't be ignored — neither our client's nor ours. As coaches, we need to be aware of our emotional reactions and how those reactions might be affecting a client. Are we getting hooked by something a client is going through? It might be that the trauma a client is experiencing is very close to one in our own life and we're having trouble distancing ourselves from it. Or it could simply be that we are emotionally invested in this client and his or her life, which triggers normal, natural sadness. But when that sadness overwhelms us or causes us to shut down and distance ourselves from the client, it must be addressed.

It is crucial that we be aware of our reactions and take the necessary steps to get the support and coaching we need in the context of this trauma. Both the client and we can best be served when we as the coach gain some perspective. As coaches, we are often in coaching relationships ourselves, or have trusted, experienced mentors or fellow coaches we can turn to for support. Getting support from a coach or a trusted colleague is an important and helpful strategy when a client's trauma triggers strong feelings in us. Those feelings are normal but not necessarily common, and we all can use a bit of perspective and support in dealing with them when they arise in the context of working with a client.

We may find that we are unable to deal with what's going on. In the odd situation when something that has happened to a client brings up a past trauma of our own that renders

Coaching in the Context of a Client's Trauma

Conceptualize and normalize.

The emotions the client is feeling are normal, reasonable, and appropriate, and it's important for our coaching to be guided by this fact. But our role is not to dissect or inspect emotional reactions, since we are not therapists or ministers. A coach focuses on the client's current needs and how the coach can be most helpful or can offer the greatest assistance.

Quarterback referrals. A coach should act as a quarterback for referrals, coaching the client on how to get the help he or she needs. If the client needs therapy, spiritual guidance, or just someone to do the laundry or take care of the children, the coach helps with identifying the need and strategizing about how to meet that need. This doesn't differ significantly from what we do in times of regular coaching. Through “powerful questioning,” we help our client to identify the outside help needed and how to ask for that help. Whether it's a career change or a life trauma, the method is the same: “What do you need, and where can you get it?”

Be aware. At a time of a client's highest stress and emotional reactions, we need to be aware both of what he or she is going through and what we're going through. It's up to us to anchor ourselves in good coaching practice and to provide true value for the client.

Normalize emotions. We need to keep in mind that strong emotional reactions to traumatic events are normal and natural. A client may need other services, but we can still be an effective coach. We are important in our clients' lives.

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us ineffective as a coach, it may be necessary to tell the client that we can't be as effective as we need to be because we're getting hooked. But we must remain a good coach even in that context and not abandon the client. We can explain to the client what's going on while at the same time staying true to our role as a professional. The client needs and deserves our support, and our appropriate role is to ask how best to coach the client in the moment.

In short, as coaches we need to be sufficiently self-aware to deal with the reactions we're going to have. In regular coaching, as well as in traumatic situations, we're going to have emotional reactions — we are going to get hooked from time to time. The best response is to have the support necessary to deal with it and remain effective. At the end of the day, the coach must remain a good coach. Priorities may change, and the goals the client is working toward may get pushed aside, but the coach must be able to roll with the punches. ●

Trauma, Drama or Just Plain Chaos?

In some situations, we're not actually dealing with trauma, but merely the "drama" that some people pull into their lives regularly. It's trauma if it's acute, recent, and immediate. Anything that is life altering and close to your client is trauma.

Some people create drama or chaos in their lives. We've known people like this in our lives and in our coaching practices. They create chaos and try to enroll others in reacting to it because it supports their view of themselves as victims or at least as helpless to change their lives. Here's how to deal with them:

Figure it out early. The longer you go on letting them enroll you, the harder it becomes to break the habit.

Watch your reactions. If you finish a call drained or frustrated, something is wrong. Check with your own coach — you may be dealing with a "drama queen or king."

Turn it back on them. Remind them of the ways in which coaching can be effective, and let them know that listening to dramatic stories is not one of those ways.

Ask them what they want out of coaching.

Have a courageous conversation. None of us wants to terminate a paying client, but in some cases that may be the only route.

Dr. Patrick Williams, Ed. D., MCC, is co-author, with Deborah C. Davis, of *Therapist as Life Coach: Transforming Your Practice* (W.W. Norton & Company).

● Patrick Williams, Ed. D., MCC, introduces the integration of coaching and the wellness industry as a viable consumer option.

Coaching and the Wellness Industry: A New Gateway for CONSUMER AWARENESS

Coaching has burst upon the scene internationally in the last ten years and has evolved from an emphasis on executive and corporate coaching for performance and leadership to an awareness that all coaching is life coaching. No matter what the specialization or coaching niche, there is a person and a life within the identified client. An interesting story behind the meaning of the word "coach" is that the origin comes from Northern Hungary in a village named Kocs, which manufactured carriages. They began to be called coaches and were a vehicle of conveyance to transport villagers from where they were to where they wanted to arrive. Coaching today can be seen as a vehicle of conveyance as well.

Coaching today is not presented as a modality for healing or for therapy, but as a vehicle for co-creating a desired outcome, plan, goal, or life design. The ongoing aspect of the coaching relationship uses the power of accountability as cement for the desired goals to stick. Humans are more likely to accomplish more with less struggle with the assistance of a coaching relationship.

At the same time as coaching has gained momentum, the consumer appetite for products and services under the rubric of wellness is also growing. Coaching and wellness education intersect in the way the public (individual consumers and corporations with wellness programs) learns to access the myriad of information, products, and services available to a health conscious public desirous of concepts and strategies for living well. Paul Zane Pilzer writes in *The Wellness Revolution* (John Wiley, 2002,

page 16), "Wellness is the next natural step forward in our destiny and in the advancement of humankind. By extending your years of strength and wellness, you can accomplish those things you really want to accomplish."

Wellness began as a movement in the 1970s and crept into corporate America as a way to improve the health of the workforce while concentrating on fitness, exercise, and consulting to support healthy living such as smoking cessation, nutrition, etc. Many corporations today continue to have wellness programs. Life coaching or wellness coaching has revealed itself to be the missing ingredient in creating "lasting lifestyle change," a phrase I borrow from my colleague Dr. Michael Arloski, a longtime wellness advocate. Coaching helps results become sustainable over time. In other words, the accountability and the co-creative conversation that happens with a coach make it more likely that people will make lasting changes toward living well.

The intersection of wellness and coaching, I believe, will come together very shortly as consumers at large become more and more aware of the power of coaching, whether it be in a group or having their own private coach. I am involved with a group of 12 coaches and consultants from the spa industry which is being created to bring the entire spectrum of wellness and better living products and services to a wider audience through spa immersion experiences in people's homes. The goal of this concept is to train Life Style Consultants in basic coaching coupled with product knowledge and ability to create a home spa experience encompassing mind, body, and spirit in a three-hour "spa party." For

“Wellness coaching
will be in greater
demand in the
coming years”

those customers who get introduced to the plethora of products and services that are available today for healthy living, they will understand that it is much more than massage and yoga. And life coaching/wellness coaching will be on the menu as a recommended service to ensure lasting lifestyle change.

Wellness coaching and life coaching will be more in demand in the coming years as the public becomes increasingly aware of this new profession and the powerful impact it can have on extraordinary living. Who wouldn't want to have the experience of a spa without necessarily having to pay the price for a week at Mirabelle or Canyon Ranch? This type of consumer education brings the knowledge and application of all things spa to a wider audience in an affordable manner.

the coaching industry. Many are training to become coaches, but few are busy. The adoption of health professionals and others to the field of coaching has been ahead of public awareness. The intersection of coaching with the wellness industry will soon create a demand for the coaching approach to be available in a variety of delivery models...online informative coaching, tele-coaching with an individual coach, in person coaching, and group coaching for people with similar goals. Just as personal trainers, yoga instructors and classes in fitness and nutrition have become popular and accessible, so will coaching for living well and living extraordinarily in ALL areas of one's life.

Life and wellness coaching today are methodologies directed to the whole person, not just physical health, but to all the aspects of living well.

“Life and wellness coaching are methodologies directed to the whole person, not just physical health, but to all aspects of living well”

With total life coaching viewed as a vehicle for personal, professional and cultural change, we in the coaching professions can begin to see the incredible reach coaching can have by a pairing with the millions being spent in the wellness and healthy living arena.

Workplace promotion of wellness coaching and education for the tenets of living well, is one solution to skyrocketing health care costs, especially when coaching is available along with education and training.

Creating an increased awareness of the power of wellness coaching and life coaching to the consumer, also helps fulfill the implied promise of

And if I may be so bold, I also believe that as persons become increasingly aware of healthy choices, and live purposefully, then individual wellness will lead to wellness in families, wellness in relationships, communities and perhaps even lead toward wellness for our planet! It is all interconnected. Better coaching brings better living. ●

Dr. Patrick Williams, Ed. D., MGC, is co-author, with Deborah C. Davis, of *Therapist as Life Coach: Transforming Your Practice* (W.W. Norton & Company).

Photo by David Appleyard





● Even though they look similar, **Patrick Williams**, Ed.D., MCC, tells us how coaching and therapy differ.

COACHING VS. PSYCHOTHERAPY

The Great Debate

Everywhere you turn these days, the question arises: what are the distinctions between coaching and psychotherapy? The debate continues. My views, as a long time psychologist and coach are expressed in the following.

Coaching, for both life and corporate advancement, is the hottest trend to hit the self-improvement scene. As it racks up amazing success stories, coaching seems destined to stay, becoming one of the most powerful personal and professional tools for sustained success. Yet, despite all the hoopla and excitement generated by coaching triumphs, there rages behind the scenes a great debate that continues to plague both the coaching profession, and those who would benefit from coaching. Simply stated, the question lingers, is it coaching — or merely a new-fangled therapy in disguise?

Coaching can look, to the uninformed public, like therapy because of its commonalities. They both seek to support the individual. They both are delivered in much the same way, through regular “face-to-face” or phone sessions. They both work to take a person from the place they are now, to a place they want to be. But the similarities stop there. Unfortunately, however, many people (those who have not been coached!) base their opinion of coaching only on these shared touching points.

The proliferation of psychotherapy in the 1970s and 1980s seemed to spawn an entire generation of “victims” — people who had something “broken.” We began thinking of the entire human race as “pathologized,” having need of mending for something or other. This rush to the sanctity of the therapist’s office produced an unfortunate backlash — a stigma associated with psychotherapy. Many people, even people who genuinely needed competent therapy, would not see a therapist because of the fear of being labeled or judged by family, friends and even professional peers. Sadly, that stigma seems to have remained behind in the recesses of our minds, keeping many hurting people away from the help they need. Coaching has burst upon the scene as a new way to seek personal or professional assistance with no stigma attached — especially for those who do not need psychotherapy, but the services of a partner such as a life coach.

It is helpful to understand that both coaching and therapy have the same roots. Modern psychotherapy is the result of a hundred plus years of research and contributions by some of the greatest minds in history. Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow are antecedents to today’s therapy practice — and modern day coaching. Adler and Jung saw individuals as the creators and artists of their lives and frequently involved their clients in goal setting, life planning, and inventing their futures — all tenets and approaches in today’s coaching. In the mid twentieth century, Carl Rogers wrote his monumental book, *Client Centered Therapy*, which shifted counseling and therapy to a relationship in which the client was assumed to have the ability to change and grow. This shift in perspective was a significant precursor to the field of coaching.

“...is it **coaching** —
or merely a new-fangled
therapy in disguise?”

Abraham Maslow’s work *Toward a Psychology of Being* set the framework, which allowed coaching to fully emerge in the early 1990s. All of these pioneers in the psychotherapy world helped make today’s therapy practice vital and refined — and set the foundation for current coaching practices.

The humanistic psychology movement of the past 50 years has permeated society at every level. Through the application of many years of theory about human technology, what used to be privy to the therapist’s office is now used by golf instructors, teachers, and other self-improvement gurus. Coaching was born as a result of great advances in psychotherapy and counseling, then blended with consulting practices, and organizational and personal development training trends (such as EST, PSI Seminars, LifeSpring, LandMark Forum, Tony Robbins and others). Coaching takes the best of each of these areas has to offer and provides a now standardized and proven method for partnering with people for success.

While therapy and coaching may share a common background, their differences are vast. Therapy is vital for those with psychological problems — what we call pathology. Coaching is for those who are healthy and already self-motivated. Both fields have their place and should not be confused. For advanced therapy patients, coaching can be an additional benefit, but coaching assumes the healing and well-being of its clients as a given. A therapist may add coaching skills to his or her practice, but a coach never engages in therapy. A coach is trained to detect any need for therapy and there are guidelines for when to refer a coaching client to a therapist. The table below is a quick way to see at a glance the basic differences between coaching and therapy.

This listing of differences could be extended indefinitely, but these are a basic summation. Essentially, a therapist is the professional with the answers to pain and brokenness; a coach is a professional partner to assist

and professionally. The coaching relationship allows the client to explore blocks to great success and to unlock his or her biggest dreams and desires.

Many former therapists have become coaches, bringing their rich and valuable training to the coaching profession. But this transition is difficult at times, because therapy and coaching ARE different. I was in Australia recently where I rented a car. The steering wheel was on the right side, making driving a challenge for me. The same skills to drive this car were required, but it felt uncomfortable for a while as I got used to driving in a different lane. It is the same for therapists transitioning into coaching. The same skills are required, but the lane is different and the steering wheel is on the other side — the client's side.

The truth is, coaching and psychotherapy do often look and sound similar. That is because many of the techniques and principles discovered in years

“...therapy is about uncovering and recovering, while coaching is about discovering...”

in discovery and design for growth. The shift from seeing clients as “ill” or having pathology toward viewing them as “well and whole” and seeking a richer life is paramount to understanding the evolution of coaching.

I often say therapy is about uncovering and recovering, while coaching is about discovering.

A good way to view the foundational differences between therapy and coaching is to think of two cars driving along a sandy, wave washed shoreline. One car hits a log and breaks an axle, sinking deep into the sand. The other car swerves to keep from hitting the log, but in doing so also sinks in the sand. For the first car, the only hope is a tow truck and a week in the shop. It is broken and cannot go further. This is a therapy patient. The second car merely needs a push, a little traction under its wheels, and it continues its race across the sand. This is the coaching client.

Unlike therapy, little time is spent in the past with coaching, except for brief “visits” and then the focus is on developing the future. This philosophical shift has taken root in a generation that rejects the idea of sickness and seeks instead wellness, wholeness and purposeful living—both personally

of psychological research and application are useful in coaching. Masterful coaches do utilize skill sets from solution-oriented therapy approaches, cognitive and behavioral psychology and recent advances in positive psychology. But that does not make coaching the same as psychotherapy. A good golf instructor will use some of the same techniques and principles of motivation and learning.

As more people in the public sector begin to realize the great differences between therapy and coaching, and see more and more value in having a partner to promote self discovery and design for better living or better working, the shadow of the therapy stigma will disappear. Coaching will be seen in every organization and group, from the family unit to the largest conglomerates on the planet, establishing itself as the most powerful and effective tool for success in any area, and a springboard to purposeful living. ●

Dr. Patrick Williams, Ed.D., MCC, is co-author, with Deborah C. Davis, of *Therapist as Life Coach: Transforming Your Practice* (W.W. Norton & Company).

THERAPY	COACHING
• Deals with identifiable dysfunctions in a person	• Deals with a healthy client desiring a better situation
• Deals mostly with a person's past and trauma, and seeks healing	• Deals mostly with a person's present and seeks to help them design a more desirable future
• Helps patients resolve old pain	• Helps clients learn new skills and tools to build a more satisfying successful future
• Doctor-patient relationship (The therapist has the answers)	• Co-creative equal partnership (Coach helps the client discover own answers)
• Assumes emotions are a symptom of something wrong	• Assumes emotions are natural and normalizes them
• The Therapist diagnoses, then provides professional expertise and guidelines to provide a path to healing.	• The Coach stands with the client and helps him or her identify the challenges, then partners to turn challenges into victories, holding client accountable to reach desired goals.
• Progress is often slow and painful.	• Growth and progress are rapid and usually enjoyable.

● **Patrick Williams**, Ed.D, therapist and coach, presents an innovative, holistic approach to an old conundrum. He goes ...

Beyond the 12th Step: Life Coaching after Addiction Counseling

The focus of addiction counseling has always been to keep the client clean and sober, and restore some sense of functionality. It is about preventing relapse and providing a place of structure and safety to protect the person's sobriety. In this context, the 12-Step Program has literally saved countless thousands of lives. Its contribution to the therapy of addictive clients is immeasurable.

But what happens after the twelfth step? Is there life beyond merely a static place of sober functioning? I posit that life coaching can take the addictive personality beyond the twelfth step, into a future place of gratifying productiveness — the reality of achieved goals and successes that would ordinarily remain unmet.

Unachieved goals and unrealized potential are an unaddressed threat to the addictive client's sober future. They keep him or her locked into an endless cycle of running “no-destination laps” on the “need-to-stay-sober treadmill.” Life coaching can break this unproductive cycle and steer the client towards a place of realized dreams, where the focus is on the wonderful possible future, instead of the destructive past.

Take the story of a woman currently addicted to 12-Step Programs. For 20 years she has joined and rejoined twelve-step, self-help groups, always thinking of and keeping herself in a “broken” mode. For this kind of person, there is no “post-addiction” victory. Life becomes a broken record, caught endlessly in the loop of therapy and self-help programs, never realizing what lies beyond addiction. Life is consumed with the need merely to maintain, never to reach and achieve. The fear of

falling off the wagon sometimes keeps the wagon from going anywhere new, exciting and fulfilling or moving into the future of possibility — beyond the twelfth step.

As a therapist turned coach, I believe the therapist's work is critical for recovery. But this work focuses necessarily on relapse prevention — working through pain and past reasons for the addiction; holding the client accountable; anticipating and dealing with myriad problems that occur in every addictive person's recovery; charting and overseeing the desired course of treatment to ensure a functional life despite the addiction. Treated as a diagnosable illness with medical and clinical models, addiction looks at the past in order to gain some functioning present. Instead of replacing or modifying this kind of therapy, I suggest that it be complemented and completed through life coaching.

“Life coaching treats
the whole person.”

Psychotherapy generally deals with emotional and behavioral problems and disruptive situations — such as addictions — and seeks to bring the client to normal function by focusing on his dysfunction. This context can keep the person in constant recovery, which unconsciously imposes a limit on discovering and creating a fulfilling, purposeful life. In contrast, life coaching generally deals with functional

persons who want to move beyond addiction to achieve excellence while creating an extraordinary life. Coaching is a process similar to solution-focused techniques that many therapists use for less serious psycho-emotional problems and life stresses, yet goes beyond just problem solving by *creating* instead of *fixing*.

The basic philosophy behind life coaching is that humans have immeasurable resources of energy, wisdom, ability and genius waiting to be set in motion. Coaching can help us create the life we want more efficiently by tapping into our resources to facilitate change and realize our potential. Life coaching treats the whole person, not the dysfunction. It focuses on helping people who already have a “measure of success” in their lives — sobriety and a stabilized place of safety — but who want to bridge the gap between where they are and where they want to be in their professional and personal life. With coaching, this safe place becomes a place of expectation and amazing potential, instead of mere functioning.

A life coach is much like a trainer who helps an athlete win the “gold medal” instead of just being in the race. Life coaches help their clients design the life they want, bring out their clients’ own brilliance and resources so that they can achieve excellence and create purposeful, extraordinary lives.

We believe the most powerful therapy on earth is to empower a person by showing him his strengths instead of his weaknesses. This logical and most healing move beyond the twelfth step of addiction therapy can improve dramatically the addictive client’s overall mental health and life. Coaching answers the question “now what?” that every addictive client asks when reaching that twelfth step.

It is necessary for the addicted client to move along the 12-step path with the kind of care, guidance and accountability provided by a trained therapist. Each step is designed to realize another measure of success until, ultimately, sustained sobriety is achieved. Most often, this path to restored functionality takes years, and these clients are not the best candidates for life coaching; there is too much other work to do. But somewhere along this path the client must look beyond that twelfth step, and find a road to continued success and realized potential for the future. Eventually, the substance-free person can work with a coach to co-create the life he or she really wants — not just a fragilely balanced life.

Addictive therapy sessions explore the reasons behind addiction in order to understand what may have caused it. What holes were drugs or alcohol filling? While therapy can help the patient understand the reasons, it may not always help him find ways to move past the holes, or better yet, to fill them in.

Therapy focuses on the inner world of the addict, but does not necessarily translate into the outer dynamics and his future potential. Contrast therapy and coaching in this way: You are driving down the freeway;

looking in your rear-view mirror you see the stretch of road just negotiated filled with the boulders of disappointment and the potholes of missed opportunities. Looking ahead, you see the endless horizon of possibilities waiting to be explored. The backward glance is therapy: seeing clearly what has been experienced, analyzing the reasons and regaining a foothold. The forward view is coaching: working actively with the conscious mind to facilitate the client’s stepping into a preferred future, while living a fulfilling life in the present.

When is the addictive patient in therapy ready for the life-coaching step? Every patient presents unique and individual needs for a personalized therapy program, and every potential life-coaching client likewise is ready for this coaching step at different places along the path of therapy. The trained therapist is best able to determine the moment in recovery when life coaching can either supplement the 12-step process or move the patient beyond it. Understanding the major differences between therapy and coaching is helpful in determining which combination of these practices is suitable to particular clients. There are three broad categories that offer distinctions between therapy and coaching:

- Therapy focuses on the past; coaching looks to the future — perspectives on the process of healing.
- Therapy seeks to “fix” the patient, coaching aims to co-create with the client, which is why the person seeks it out in the first place.
- The therapist is the expert who holds the answers and can fix the problem. The coach partners with the client to support his growth and co-create a better life with him — a contrast between the professional and the collegial relationship.

Therapy deals with the patient’s past and how it applies to his present. The therapist works to bring the client to an adequate and reasonable level of functioning, given the addiction. In contrast, the coach works with an already adequately functioning individual — the addiction is under control, a state of sobriety prevails — to move him or her to a more satisfying level of functionality. Traditional psychotherapy focuses on the root of the problem, the history — the “everything” of origin; coaching focuses on barrier identification, goal setting, planning and creative action to achieve a healthy future.

“Coaching is **not about fixing**; it’s about creating.”

In the clinical therapy practice, the client presents a problem: in this case, an addiction. He or she has come to you to “fix” the problem. In your therapy model for this client, you undertake all the strategies you have been trained to use in the process of healing, including patient

diagnosis and treatment plans. All of these strategies are aimed at fixing the existing problem. The client's perspective in all of this is that you will fix him. Coaching, however, is not about fixing; it's about creating. There is no need for a diagnostic label or even a treatment plan. The assumption in life coaching, for both the client and the coach, is that by working together the client will have greater success in planning, setting goals, and creating a healthy lifestyle. The therapist facilitates the fixing, and the coach facilitates the progress to a fulfilling life beyond the addiction.

During the initial treatment stages of addiction therapy, the therapist is the professional — the expert who fixes the problem. This power differential is difficult to overcome in any coaching relationship, since the power, from the client's perspective, rests with the therapist. While therapy sessions may quite often be intense and sometimes even difficult, the coaching relationship is more on an equal footing. A life coach makes a conscious effort to keep the coaching relationship balanced — an active partnership.

Coaches recognize that their clients have the knowledge and the solutions; the coach simply helps unlock the clients' own brilliance. Coaching sessions are typically open, often friendly, casual and even light. At appropriate times, the coach may even feel comfortable sharing personal experiences that are pertinent to what the client is experiencing. Typically, clients and coaches come to feel they really know each other on a deeper level than is common in most other professional relationships.

Should the therapist also don the coaching hat? Often, the answer to this question is no! Generally, a therapist separates his or her therapy practice from any coaching practice. However, it is true that some therapists have been trained as coaches, and practice coaching techniques with many of their therapy clients. And many therapists have actually transitioned very successfully into full-time coaching.

For therapists who are also coaches and practice active therapy with their clients, it is possible to move into a coaching phase with the addictive client, as long as there is a ritual ending to the therapy relationship, and coaching is begun formally and clearly. It is still best, however, for therapists to refer clients to life coaches when they have resolved their therapeutic issues and are ready to move forward with their life plans.

“The therapist is the expert; the coach is your partner.”

Most therapists agree that to avoid a relapse, something must replace the addictive substance or situation. For those who have spent many years in and out of addictive situations, the addictions themselves create a lifestyle that is difficult to change. Often, a void is left in that person's life that needs filling. Life coaching can help the client breach this gap with productive alternatives that may quite possibly allow her or him to reach previously unattained potentials.

A transition occurs in the client's life when moving from therapy to coaching. Therapy is centered in psychoanalytic styles, pathology, process, history and the exploration of the inner world. It focuses on solutions for specific “problems.” As the client transitions to coaching, he begins to experience a broad focus on his whole person, not just the addiction. The orientation is on outcomes and action, moving from the inner world of therapy to the outer realities and possibilities of life.

In therapy, the vision is limited to a specific set of circumstances that have created something “bad” in the person's life. In coaching, an unlimited vision opens up, filled with promise — the opportunity and ability to achieve dreams, leaving behind the limitations of the past. The therapist asks “why?” The coach asks “how?” The post-addictive client moves from being patient to partner with the possibility of a bright and attainable future. The gap is breached! ●

What's Next?

The advent of coaching has changed the post-addiction outlook for those who have reached sobriety and are looking to create lives of fulfillment and promise beyond the plateau of maintenance. If you are a therapist, you have considerable options in exploring the possibilities of using life coaching for your patients. Some therapists have moved out of the therapy profession altogether into full-time life coaching. Their formal training and education as therapists make them coaches with unique skills and background, able to co-create productive lives with their clients, as well as experience fulfillment in supporting others to live their dreams.

For others, investigating the resources available in professional life coaching, and learning how to determine the appropriate time for the transition of their patients from therapy to coaching with another professional, can be an invaluable asset to their addictive patients. However you choose to incorporate life coaching into your therapy practice, this option is the logical next step for your addictive patients. It will take them beyond the twelfth step into a life of new and continuing successes.

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