

The Interdisciplinary Art and Science of Professional Coaching: Perspectives from a Life Richly Lived

Agnes Mura, MCC

[I had the wonderful opportunity to interview my dear friend and colleague, Agnes Mura, via Zoom. We have provided a link to this interview and have also asked Agnes to provide a brief written narrative regarding her life richly lived. Agnes also provided some lovely pictures from her scrapbook. We are thankful for all of these offerings. William Bergquist, Co-Editor]

<https://zoom.us/recording/share/Qb2uiKLR8BYiIxGE25R7ayPbb1AE4mtwoVOK0HpIXIewIumekTziMw>

A Brief Life Narrative

What premier coaches have in common is a broad and deeply rich well of experience and study. Multi-lingual executive coach Agnes Mura, MA, MCC, recounts her early (dangerously) bookish years behind the Iron Curtain, why she chose to study philosophy and how her formal as well as lived education (in academia and business) impacts her leadership work with clients today. You will hear an invitation to continue deliberately “changing your mind”.

A life’s journey. Having completed two years of university in Bucharest, Agnes felt a need to defect from Communist Romania, alone, in order to pursue English studies in the UK.



Her mother, Dusi Mura, a renowned piano professor, dropped her daughter off at a train station, unsure of whether or when she might see her again. A photo shows her rehearsing with a student, under a picture of Stalin on the wall.

Agnes made her way to Edinburgh University, where faculty and alumni helped the first ever Romanian student be accepted into second year English and German studies, with minors in philosophy and art history. Something about

the loneliness of the refugee, the amazed big-city girl, as well as the deep search for new horizons is palpable in the photo of Agnes on the open Scottish highlands.



In Germany, Agnes completed her MA at the rigorous universities of Stuttgart and Cologne, having continued to focus on linguistics and philosophy, disciplines that she taught ... until deciding to come to Los Angeles and work in international relations for the 1984 Olympics. By that time, her mother had established her studio in Santa Barbara and LA, teaching piano and chamber music master classes that ignited a broad artistic understanding in professionals and music lovers alike.

Given the opportunity of leaving academics and learning about the practical world of business, Agnes accepted a post in international banking and swiftly moved to a Vice President position. Communicating fluently and sensitively in six languages was at the core of her success, along with a well-honed attention to cultures (national, professional or departmental) and how to best help them flourish.

In the mid-1990s, while still a banker, Agnes started studying the nascent profession of executive coaching, that she saw as an opportunity to “integrate head, heart and hands”; theory and practice; humanities and business; the art of relating and a framework for action.

Becoming a professional Master Certified Coach, minted in 1998, Agnes expanded into designing and delivering leadership programs – seen here teaching a Novartis leadership program with leadership author Kevin Cashman in Montreux, Switzerland.



Agnes believed that building the credibility of executive coaching took communities of learning and experimentation, like the Professional Coaches and Mentors Association she co-founded in Southern California, earning a Builder's Award.

Of equal importance became her collaboration with Dr. Bill Bergquist, which resulted - among others in their co-authorship

of two books on coaching. (Their [coachbook](#) is being used as a text book in university coaching courses.)





Today, Agnes helps companies “develop talent at the speed of business”, and serves as an independent director on the board of Aircastle LLC, a public, globally growing commercial aircraft leasing company.

Mindful of the need for undistracted reflection and time-space for reading and authentic conversations, she now lives and works from Santa Fe, NM, with husband John Heinritz, her partner and equally astute “executive whisperer”.

