Development of Coaches: IX. Summary Report for Phase One

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This report is the ninth in a series that convey and interpret results from two versions of a survey initially prepared by the Development of Coaches Research Collaborative in cooperation with the Collaborative Research Network of the Society for Psychotherapy Research. The current report provides a summarization of discussions regarding results from the two survey in the first eight reports. This summary report concludes the first phase of the Development of Coaches project.

Critique and Comment

Before moving directly into this summary report, I wish to honor, as I did in previous reports, a criticism regarding this series of Development of Coaches reports, offered by my colleague, Rey Carr. He made this comment after reviewing the fourth report (on gender):

> When it comes to surveys, particularly those conducted via the Internet, it makes little difference if the survey was completed "by a widely ranging group of coaches," or by organizations with "no stake in the outcomes," or distributed by "practitioners." What counts is the reliability and validity of the survey.

> The results of the survey are great for talking points or a place to start a dialogue about the issues raised, but they cannot and should not be understood as representative of coaches. These surveys are typically suspect when it comes to generalizing the results to the coaching industry or population. It doesn't mean you can draw conclusions, but the data should always be accompanied by a set of "limitations" or "cautions" in using the data.

I continue to agree with Rey regarding the credibility of Internet surveys. It is much better to gather opinions, perspectives and concerns from respondents through in-depth personal interviews, observation of performance (rather than just rhetoric), and phenomenological

single-person case studies. If the field and culture of professional coaching is to become "evidence-rich" and research-based, as Francine Campone and Deepa Awal noted in the first report based on this Development of Coaching project, then we need much more than Internet-based survey results. However, as Rey Carr himself has noted, the results from the current surveys can be of value as "talking points" and places to start the dialogue. By offering these provocative findings, we are providing an incentive for what in one of our previous reports we called creating a *culture of collaboration*. These survey results might even provide sufficient irritation to motivate someone or some organization with sufficient resources to conduct higher quality research. Results from the present analyses could prove to be particularly challenging (or at least intriguing). My highly speculative discussion of these results will hopefully provoke more refined research. I would fully welcome such an initiative.

Background

Completed in 2009 by 153 coaches from throughout the world, the first survey was followed by a second version that was distributed in 2015 (with only minor editing changes) by the Library of Professional Coaching in cooperation with ITLCInsights. Fifty-eight coaches provided responses to the second questionnaire -- yielding a total of 211 responses to the two surveys. The time interval between the two surveys was six years, enabling us to get a preliminary sense of possible changes in coaching attitudes over this period of time, as well as a sense of stability (low levels of difference in mean scores and variance) in the attitudes of professional coaches regarding their own development.

Unlike most coaching surveys, the two surveys conducted in 2009 and 2015 were directed toward those actually doing the coaching, rather than the users of coaching services. These surveys were completed by a widely ranging group of coaches – in terms of geography, schools of coaching, age and years of experience in providing coaching services. These two surveys are also distinctive in that they have been being conducted by organizations (the Library of Professional Coaching and ITLCInsights) that have no specific stake in the outcomes and are being distributed to practitioners at many levels of practice and status. These surveys are truly '"neutral" and "democratizing"—though, as Rey Carr has noted, the results obtained via Survey Monkey must be considered quite tentative and suggestive rather than definitive.

Methods

Both versions of the Development of Coaches questionnaire are based on one devised by the Collaborative Research Network of the Society for Psychotherapy Research in their international study of development among professional psychotherapists described by Orlinsky and Rønnestad in *How Psychotherapists Develop* (Orlinsky & Rønnestad, 005). Both of the coaching studies include questions that parallel those used in the Society's Development of Psychotherapists Common Core Questionnaire. This enables us not only to study varied aspects of coaches' development, but also compare responses of coaches to these made by psychotherapists. Many questions have been posed over the past twenty years concerning the similarities and differences between professional coaching and psychotherapy. The data being gathered in these two surveys will provide some of the first answers regarding this comparison.

Modification of Development of Psychotherapists Survey

In adapting the questionnaire, members of the Development of Coaches Research Collaborative drew on their own experiences as coaches to ask questions that they hoped would seem meaningful and relevant to those responding to the questionnaire. The majority of questions could be answered quickly by checking alternatives that most closely reflected the respondent's own experience.

Instructions to the Respondents

In the case of both surveys, respondents were asked to answer all the questions and were provided with the following framework:

> The complete set of responses provides us with a fuller understanding of your own work and the context in which you work. You may find these questions offer a useful opportunity to reflect on your own coaching career. If any seem difficult to answer exactly, give your best estimate and continue. To ensure confidentiality, the questionnaire is completed anonymously. Information you provide will be used only for research purposes.

Designers of the original survey proposed that the respondents would benefit in two ways. These two benefits made this truly a collaborative effort between those who designed the questionnaire and those who completing it. Following is a statement offered to those considering completion of the second survey:

> You can sign up to receive the report findings from this study when they become available… These reports will also be made available at no charge to the general coaching public through the Library of Professional Coaching. The reports will identify which modes of development have been found to be the most effective. . . . [Furthermore, results from this survey may] increase the credibility of the coaching profession. As Francine Campone, one of the creators and initiators of the original survey has indicated, a culture of research and evidence needs to be created in the field of professional coaching. The more we learn from one another about professional coaching practices, the more collectively knowledgeable we will become. The more knowledgeable we become, the greater the opportunity for building evidence-based coaching strategies and tools. The better the strategies and tools the more effective we will be as coaching professionals. The more effective we become as a profession, the greater the demand will be for our services.

Having set the stage for review of the results obtained from these two surveys, it is now time to begin reviewing and speculating on the implications of results obtained. I begin by reflecting on findings regarding general coaching tactics and strategies.

Coaching Tactics and Strategies

There was a high level of concurrence between the two studies. The means are often quite similar and the rank order of means for both studies is similar. Even the variance scores are similar with regard to both amount of variance in responses to a specific item and with regard to the rank order of the variance scores for each item. Both surveys seem to be replete with optimism and a positive attitude. Taking the absolute scores as "reality," there seems to be an "up" to almost every self-perception of the coach respondents. It is only the one negative item ("How much do you regard this [change] as a decline or impairment?") that gets a low rating -- actually a very low rating. The other items on question one were rated consistently high by respondents to both surveys:

How much do you regard this as progress or improvement?

How much have you succeeded in overcoming any part limitations in your coaching skill and knowledge?

How much have you realized your potential as a coach?

Change seems to be a good thing for our respondents -- even, in this instance, when related to changes occurring among the coaches themselves. They overcome limitations and have begun to realize their potential as a coach. In commenting on the qualitative responses of respondents to the first survey, Campone and Awal (2011, P. 11) note that "while most coach training and education experiences might be construed as positive, even disappointing experiences seemed to have a constructive impact."

Later in their article, Campone and Awal (2011, p. 13) offer an even broader conclusion concerning the positive attitude of the survey respondents: "coaches learn from both positive and disappointing experiences. Adverse personal experiences lead to the development of empathy." In many ways these findings can be expected, given that coaches are often encouraging their clients to embrace change or at least plan for ways in which to successfully engage the changes they are confronting in their life and/or work. The coaches become cheerleaders for their client's ongoing development and overcoming of limitations.

Culture of Optimism

We might introduce an even broader scope--the culture in which the coaches live. The positive attitude and optimism about change might be embedded in the social unconscious of the environment pervading the world in which the responding coaches live and work. Given that many coaches come from the United States or have been trained in programs that originated in the United States, we might find the traditional (and once sustained) optimism of America in the hearts and souls of the coaches. As noted in the title of a very American country song: "I'm just an old chunk of coal, but I'll be a diamond soon . . . " Change will be positive, we keep saying in the United States, despite the many political, health and environmental woes we are facing as a country and as a world.

It is also possible that the high ratings for virtually all of the items is in some way a distortion of reality that should not be considered definitive for most coaches (or even the coaches completing these two surveys). A social desirability factor might be at play. To what extent

would one expect the respondents to "air their dirty linen" in a survey we distributed -- even if it is anonymous. Perhaps, at an even more fundamental level, one wonders if someone who has a poor concept of themselves as a coach would even complete a survey such as this one or would remain a coach for very long if they felt like a failure or at least not clearly a success as a coach. It may be that many people who become coaches have already explored multiple careers in their life and are now trying out coaching. If they succeed then they stay around, if not then they move on.

If nothing else, we can reflect on the kind of people who fill out surveys like this--whether it is about coaching development or one's attitudes toward a new software product or new dishwashing detergent. Most of the respondents to surveys will tend to lean toward one extreme or the other in their responses. They often will fill out the survey only if they have strong opinions: "I hate this new software program. Why do they keep making it difficult for me!" or "I love this new dishwashing detergent and will recommend it to all of my friends."

Are the kind of people who fill out a survey about the development of coaches likely to be those who are committed to the field and want to homestead in this new-found territory and build a town? Are they perhaps even among those who preach or teach about the importance of coaching and the processes of personal change and development? In future studies, it will be critical to gain access to perspectives offered by all those who engage in professional coaching – perhaps even the perspectives of those founders who have since moved on to other frontiers.

The "Soft Side" of Coaching

Results from this first study are quite striking in terms of the respondents rating of specific items that relate to the quality of their interactions and relationships with their clients. The respondents conveyed very positive self-images with regard to interpersonal connections with clients. The following items on Question Two were all rated consistently high by respondents to both surveys:

> *How effective are you at co-creating the working partnership with clients?*
> *How authentically personal do you feel while working with clients?*
> *How empathetic are you in relating to clients with whom you have relatively little in common?*
> *How effective are you in communicating your understanding and concern to your clients?*

How effective are you at stimulating client insight?

Given these positive responses to many of the question two items, it is not surprising that the respondents were also inclined to rate their overall performance at the high end of the response continuum when considering the final question two item:

How confident do you feel in your role as a coach?

These findings produce a fundamental concern regarding the accuracy of self-perceptions. We must take seriously the respondents' sense of self-confidence, but is this self-confidence justified? Can these coaches objectively assess their own competence — and would their clients arrive at similar conclusions regarding the quality and success of their interpersonal relationship? While these two surveys can't provide answers to this challenging concern, the results we report in this study and will report in future studies regarding results from the Development of Coaches surveys certainly bring this concern to the fore and open the door for other studies that directly address the matter of coach/client congruence.

Coaching Tactics

We turn now to the so-called "hard" skills and knowledge of coaching. These competencies were highlighted in the report prepared by Campone and Awal (2011), based on the qualitative responses to the first Development of Coaches survey. Referencing the work of David Drake (2009, 2011) and Hawkins and Smith (2006), Campone and Awal noted that the survey results confirmed an emphasis placed by these other authors on the hard skills and knowledge of coaching. In concluding, their own report on the survey, Campone and Awal (2011, p. 13) suggested that: "formal coaching preparation which includes both theory and skills development can serve as the basis for informed decision-making by coaches and provides the ground for deepening professional reasoning and decision-making skills."

Our analysis of data from both the first and second survey is certainly aligned with the conclusions reached by Campone and Awal. The challenge seems to be how to make this happen and how to identify what should be taught and learned and how mentors and supervisors might assist in this learning. The survey results suggest that this is not a simple challenge. When it comes to the "harder" side of coaching, there is more uncertainty in the self-perceptions of coaches about their development and competence--though this uncertainty is in

relative terms--the coach respondents are still quite positive about their work as coaches and believe that the undergoing changes are all for the best.

At the immediate, moment-to-moment level, respondents indicate that they are competent as coaches, though their ratings on this item are among the lowest (8th and 9th) on both surveys for this second question (at the PRESENT time). Furthermore, this item yielded the highest variance on the second survey and 4th highest on the first survey. So, what does it mean when a coach is asked: "How well do you understand what happens moment by moment during coaching sessions?" We would propose that this item is calling for a self-assessment of tactical reasoning -- what sometimes is called "meta-cognition" (thinking about one's own thinking or reasoning about one's own reasoning).

This moment-to-moment processing might also relate to the concept of *fast thinking* that has been offered by the Nobel-prize winning economist Daniel Kahneman (2011). As one of the founders of the rapidly growing field known as behavioral economics, Kahneman suggests that much of the important thinking and reasoning we do every day is engaged in a manner that is very quick, deeply-embedded – and often biased. For Kahneman, it is important that we balance off our fast thinking with a process that he calls *slow thinking* (to which we turn frequently in this summary report). It might be critical for professional coaches to be aware of their own fast-thinking, in part because they are being asked to respond quickly and with insight to their client's own thinking and because they are often in the business of helping their clients uncover their own fast thinking patterns and biases.

Before passing too quick a judgement on the respondents' rating of this item, it is important to note that this item might yield high variance scores and relatively low means for several obvious reasons. First, it is hard to understand what is happening moment by moment. This requires that we "slow think" about our "fast thinking." Are any of us very good at doing this? Second, it might be quite difficult to make a self-assessment regarding something as subtle as moment-to-moment thinking. This item might be rated low and with little agreement because it is hard to grasp. Do any of us really know how to self-rate this item?

Given that the moment-to-moment item might indicate something important about coaching tactics, we must ask what that something important might be. Do the mean and variance scores indicate that coaches in training might not get enough training and/or supervision in the tactics

of coaching? Do these results indicate, instead, that these moment-to-moment tactics simply are less important than the softer interpersonal dimensions of coaching? Is it more important to be authentic and empathetic than to be tactical? A further inquiry into the relative importance of soft and hard skills in coaching is warranted.

Coaching Strategies

There are other items in both surveys that yield either low mean scores on both surveys or quite different mean scores on the first and second survey. Furthermore, they tend to yield variance scores that are comparatively high, indicating that respondents do not agree in their self-assessments. These items (from question two) have to do with coaching tools and strategies, and with the theoretical underpinnings of the coaching process: (1) How good is your general theoretical understanding of coaching? and (2) How much mastery do you feel you have of the techniques and strategies involved in the practice of coaching?

As in the case of the moment-to-moment item, these two items might simply be quite challenging for any respondent. "A general theoretical understanding" might readily be declared a large task: what does it mean to have a general understanding of anything? How wide are the boundaries? How deep must we delve into anything to gain an "understanding." "Mastery" is also a very challenging word. It presents us with a very high bar -- when can any of us declare that we are "masters" of anything?

Given these cautionary notes, we can still pursue the implications of these relatively low mean scores and high variance scores. As mentioned previously, the challenge of coaching might be represented in part by Kahneman's slow thinking. We begin to strategize about what we are doing and plan for the next set of steps to be taken and the nature of outcomes we are seeking to achieve. This slow thinking is frequently the primary task we are taking on with our clients. We are encouraging them (and helping them) to slow down and reflect on their values, options, assumptions, visions, plans, support systems, and so forth. Perhaps, as coaches we need to consider all these things with regard to our own work--and not just the work of our clients.

In order to do this slow thinking, do we need a strong theoretical base on which to base our reflections and reconsideration? Should we store a set of coaching strategies in our "hip pocket" that we can pull out when engaging in slow thinking? Must our tool bag of coaching techniques

be full, so that we don't have to always view our client's challenges from the perspective of the few coaching tools and techniques that we have in our bag. In other words, do we need to be cautious about treating everything as a "nail" because all we have is a "hammer"?

As we go about inviting our clients to rethink and re-envision, must we, as coaches, also rethink and re-envision? Are the coach training programs we now offer in our field a bit too narrow in scope? Should the criteria we use to certify coaches be reconsidered? Do we need a greater emphasis on the "hard" skills and knowledge of coaching---and perhaps less of an emphasis on the "soft" skills and knowledge?

Each of these questions arises from an assumption that results from these two surveys indicate some reviews and revisions are needed. At the very least, the high variance scores indicate that the presence and value of a theoretical foundation and coaching techniques and strategies is a bit controversial right now and perhaps can be a source of valuable dialogue within the coaching profession.

The Bridge: Subtle Coaching

We conclude this initial analysis by turning to one other item (from question two) that yielded relatively low mean scores and high variance: "How much precision, subtlety and finesse have you attained in your coaching work?" This is another of the items that might be very hard for any of us to answer. It is perhaps ironic that the answer any of us might give regarding the precision, subtlety and finesse required to be an effective coach will itself have to be precise, subtle and finessed. It would be hard to measure our own competence by clicking on a bullet point. Our answer might vary from one client to another, or even from one specific coaching episode to another. This is perhaps what makes effective coaching more of an art form than a scientific formula.

I would suggest that the finesse, subtlety and precision needed to be an effective coach requires a bridging between fast and slow thinking -- and a mastery of both the tactics and strategies of coaching, based on a strong foundation of coaching theory. All of this alongside the competencies that most of our respondents considered important: authenticity and empathy. Quite an itinerary for our successful journey as professional coaches!

Autonomy and Support

As in the case of results from the first study, results from our analysis of the first and third survey questions strongly suggest that those coaches who completed this survey are filled with optimism and a positive attitude about their work as coaches. The most surprising result might be the occasional respondent to these two questions who identified anything at all as a recurring coaching problem. Is this a case of remarkable candor on the part of a few coaches? Or does it repeatedly demonstrate that coaches (or at least those completing this survey) feel quite confident about their own work as coaches?

At the very least, high mean and low variance scores are hard to dismiss as nothing more than social desirability or acquiescence. There is something quite "real" about the positive attitudes manifest in these surveys. Would we find a similar positive attitude among those working in other human service professions? We will be able to provide a partial answer to this question during Phase Four of this project, when hopefully we can compare results from these surveys with those reported by David Orlinksi and his colleagues in their study of clinical psychologists.

In the first report I introduced an even broader scope regarding the profound optimism and positive attitudes expressed in both surveys. Specifically, I described a culture in which many coaches seem to live. I mentioned that a positive attitude and recurrent optimism might be embedded in the social unconscious of the environment that pervades the world of professional coaching. Results from this second study seem to further support the positive and optimistic attitude of those inhabiting the coaching town and embracing the coaching culture.

The Autonomous Professional

I propose that the coaching culture and frontier town contain yet another element and that all might not be perfect in this culture and town. The element I wish to introduce concerns professional autonomy and isolation. The theme of autonomy and isolation shows up in responses to the second question ("When in difficulty, how often do you"). Just as there is very little indication in responses to the first and third questions that coaches view themselves as in trouble with their clients, responses to the second question suggest that they tend to look to their own internal resources when they do experience difficulties with clients. The highest rated responses to Question Two were:

Try to see the problem from a different perspective

Review privately with yourself how the problem has arisen

See whether you and your client can deal together with the difficulty"

It is only when we turn to the fourth highest rated response ("Discuss the problem with a more experienced colleague") that we find the isolation broken—and even this item was quite controversial (high variance score).

To be totally fair in our analysis, we should note that many of the Question Two responses are oriented toward private and personal resolution of the difficulty. Nevertheless, those few responses associated with Question Two that do suggest breaking out of the isolation are consistently rated low:

Sign up for a conference or workshop that might bear on the problem.

Explore the possibility of referring the client to another coach.

Refer the client to some other noncoaching professional.

None of these results are definitive regarding either autonomy or isolation. However, they do point toward the prevalence of a specific coaching culture that Vikki Brock and I identified in a chapter we wrote several years ago in a book edited by Drake, Brennan and Gortz (Bergquist and Brock, 2008). Brock and I identified six cultures that exist in most human service professions.

One of these is the professional culture (the others being managerial, advocacy, alternative/developmental, advocacy, virtual and tangible). We proposed in this chapter that many coaches are aligned with the professional culture--a culture in which practitioners conceive of coaching as a "profession" and seek to build its credibility through establishing a code of ethics, professional organizations and publications. They promote research and scholarship regarding coaching and express an abiding concern about the credibility of coaching as a legitimate human service endeavor.

Brock and I noted that the motives behind this professional concern are laudable: concern for quality of service and for an adequate foundation of theory-based and evidential research to support coaching practices. However, underlying these legitimate motives is often an unacknowledged thirst for control of the field (with its potentially rich source of money and

capacity to influence personal and organizational lives). While those aligned with the professional culture support research on coaching, they are inclined to identify coaching as an "art" rather than a "science," and cringe at any efforts to quantify (and therefore constrain or trivialize) the specific outcomes of coaching.

Brock and I suggested in our broad analysis of the professional culture that those drawn to this culture tend to value autonomy and social status -- whether they be physicians, attorneys, veterinarians . . . or coaches. There is strong resistance to regulation (though a counter interest in certification and licensing). The engagement of professional practices are considered to be an art—an ineffable process that can't be captured in a textbook or power point training program. For those in the professional culture, there is a subsequent distain for quantifiable accountability of their work (though there is a reluctant turn in recent years toward "evidence-based" practices in many professional fields as a result of the managerial culture becoming dominant). I will return to this dynamic several times in this summary report.

It is ironic that professional coaches often work with clients who are organizational leaders (and are aligned with the managerial culture) or are seeking to find new purpose and meaning in their life (and are aligned with the alternative/developmental culture). While working with clients aligned with these other cultures, coaches often tend to remain aligned with the professional culture and embrace the resistance in this culture to the other five cultures.

The Role of Supervision and Training

What does all of this mean in terms of the life and future of professional coaching? Does the role played by being an autonomous "professional" hold any implications for what coaches now do or could do? Part of the answer to this question resides in results we obtained from analysis of one response to Question Three: "How capable do you feel to guide the development of other coaches." The mean score for this item was relatively high; however, the variance scores were either the highest (survey two) or third highest (survey one) of any Question Three item.

While survey respondents consistently agreed that their own development is very important ("How important to you is your further development as a coach?"), many of the respondents were less confident that they could be of assistance to other coaches in their development. This

is a major and perhaps disturbing finding. Yes, we are committed to our own development as coaches, but we are not so sure about our guiding of development among other coaches.

A dialogue regarding these results is warranted -- especially given the recent emphasis on mentoring and supervision in the field of professional coaching. [see Issue Six of *The Future of Coaching* locating in this library: *the Library of Professional Coaching*] Who does the mentoring and supervision? Do we need to re-examine the reasons why some coaches agree to work with other coaches on their development? What are the reasons that some coaches want to remain independent and autonomous in their work? If coaches feel confident in their own work, finding little difficulty in working with clients, and do not need much assistance from other professionals, then why is there any concern about and interest in either mentoring or supervision?

The Bridge: Collaborative Coaching Inquiry

I concluded the first report by turning to one item that yielded relatively low mean scores and high variance: "How much precision, subtlety and finesse have you attained in your coaching work?" This is an item that might be very hard for any of us to answer. The same might be the case regarding one's own confidence as a guide for other coaches: "who am I to tell anyone how to be an effective coach?" It might be particularly challenging to be a guide if professional coaching is indeed an art form requiring precision, subtlety and finesse. At the very least, the challenge of developing oneself continually as a coach with precision, subtlety and finesse involves collaboration and dialogue.

As Francine Campone noted in her request for participation in the first Survey, the field of coaching should build a culture of research and evidence. I would add a further recommendation to this proposal: this culture should move coaching beyond isolation and autonomy. It should move the field to a *culture of collaboration*, in which thoughtful dialogue is accompanied by evidence-based information, reflective practice and a desire to advance the inter-discipline of professional coaching through critical inquiry. Hopefully, this set of reports on results from the Development of Coaches surveys, is contributing in a small way to building such a culture.

Influence and Learning

As I found when reporting on results in our first two studies, there is often a high level of concurrence in the means scores for the two studies. Not only are the mean scores quite similar, the rank order of means for all three studies are similar. Even the variance scores are similar regarding both amount of variance in responses to a specific item and the rank order of the variance scores for each item.

Some of the most startling findings in this third study are generated by results from two questions. These findings concern the often-negative responses and wide divergence in responses to items in both questions regarding the workplace conditions in which coaches work. While many of the survey respondents are quite positive about their work environment, other respondents to both questions are not very positive in their rating of the influence which workplace conditions have on their ongoing and current development as coaches. In some cases, the respondents actually rate the influence as quite negative.

The Working Environment

The results are a bit difficult to interpret, since we don't know if the respondents are focusing on their own personal workplace or on the workplace in which their client's work. In other words, is their own coaching agency or organization inclined to be toxic? If they are in private practice as a professional coach, is this working environment unpleasant and counter to their development as a coach? Conversely, are they focusing on the challenging environment in which their clients work. Do they find the place toxic in which their clients tend to operate? Is that one of the reasons why they were called in to do some coaching? We don't know which is the case, but this certainly is an important distinction to be made between one's home environment and the environment of one's clients.

Regardless of the distinction to be drawn, there is an important implication to be drawn from these survey results: some coaches are facing major challenges regarding their own care and feeding. If the source of their discontent is the environment in which their clients operate, then what is the lingering impact on the coaches? Are they "infected" by the environment of their clients? Do they need to take care of themselves, while taking care of their clients? Why are some coaches quite positive about the environment in which their clients work, while others are quite negative? Will our demographic analyses yield any insights?

What if the toxicity is to be found in their own coaching home? How do some of the coaches who responded to our survey avoid burnout if they face challenges in their own professional practice setting? We may be getting some beginning idea about why professional coaches (as I noted in the second report) often work in isolation and operate, as "autonomous professionals." It might have something to do with the environment in which they are working. This could be their "home" environment (the office or organization in which they work) or the working environment of their clients. We can't tell from this set of data.

Influence of Direct and Indirect Experience

Professional coaching has often been described as an "in the moment" and "here-and-now" experience. Some of this emphasis on direct, immediate experience can be attributed to the origin of many coaching schools and perspectives in the environment of personal growth training and workshops (originating in the 1960s) and in the environment of organization development consultation with its emphasis on feedback, disclosure and experientially-based team building. Whatever the origins of this emphasis, we see it alive and flourishing among the coaches who responded to these two surveys.

The first item in both questions--concerning the "experiences in coaching clients"--ranking highest and was least likely to be controversial. Everyone seems to agree that the direct experience of working with coaching clients trumps every other source of influence. Training, the reading of books and observation of other coaches at work can't compare with the influence of actually doing the coaching and learning from this practice of coaching. The spirit of John Dewey and Kurt Lewin lives on with their advocacy of action research and the learning that occurs when actively engaging the world (learning-by-doing).

We also see this emphasis represented in the high rating of an item in question one concerning the influence of experiences in one's personal life--though it is interesting to note that this item rates lower when respondents are considering the influence of personal life experiences in their current coaching practices. We might hypothesize that these experiences have had a greater impact in the earlier years of one's life as a coach than in one's current practices.

Would we find a similar emphasis on direct experience among those working in other human service professions? Does the influence of personal life experiences tend to diminish over time

among those working as clinical psychologists? Are they more likely to keep their personal lives isolated from their professional life? We will be able to provide a partial answer to this question in Phase Four when comparing results from these surveys with those reported by David Orlinsky and his colleagues in their study of clinical psychologists.

Results from both surveys suggest that it's not all about the influence of direct work with clients or one's own personal life. There are many ways in which coaches are influenced by less immediate sources. For example, quite high mean scores and rankings are to be found in both questions with regard to "taking coaching specific courses, seminars or workshops." This item yielded very little disagreement among the respondents to the second question (current development), but somewhat higher disagreement among respondents to the first question (overall development). Reading also was influential in terms of current development, whereas getting coached and collaborating with other coaches was considered influential in the overall development of coaches. Are these latter influences more likely to be strong in the early career of a professional coach?

Hard and Soft Learning

Let's try to put the last two sets of findings together. There seems to be a certain kind of influence (and I would reframe influence as learning) that is "soft" in character. I don't mean "soft" in terms of being easy; rather, I mean "soft" in terms of being subtle and often elusive. The direct experiences with clients are "soft" in this regard, as are the ways in which we learn from our personal experiences and somehow translate these lessons learned into our coaching practice. These are the "here-and-now" experiences that slip in and out of our life and work--experiences that we glimpse, but often don't fully appreciate or understand until much later when we reflect on them and identify repeated patterns embedded in these experiences. These forms of slow thinking are often referred to as reflective practice (Schon, 2008) and lead to an outcome called "second-order" or collective (organizational) learning (Argyris and Schon,1978).

By contrast, I would identify the learning as "hard" that occurs through indirect experiences via books, teaching sessions and supervision. It is "hard" in the sense that the source of this learning is often definitive, well-structured and presented in an "objective" manner (as evidence-based "reality"). While personal experiences in our own life and our work with clients

tends to be "subjective" and not easily captured in words, the lessons we are "taught" from coaching books, instructors and supervisors are typically conveyed via words.

There is an intermediate form of influence and learning -- somewhere between soft and hard. This occurs in our interactions with other people. The "reality" being created in this interaction is produced by the two of us together (what some contemporary psychotherapists describe as "intersubjectivity"). It is hard in the sense of occurring "out there" in the world, rather than within our head and heart. It is soft in that this moment of "reality" is often fleeting and not easily replicated. We can prepare a transcript of the conversation that occurs, but somehow this doesn't capture the real essence of what has occurred in this moment of shared collegial insight and "truth."

Putting all of this together, I would suggest that findings from the Development of Coaches Survey point to "soft' learning as being of greatest important (influence) for many coaches, whereas "hard" learning is less important. This ordering of priorities seems to align with findings from the first two reports indicating that coaches tend to be most comfortable with the "soft" processes of coaching (building rapport with clients, being good listeners, etc.) and least comfortable with the "hard" processes (tactical and strategic thinking).

I noted previously that Daniel Kahneman's fast thinking seems to align with the "soft" coaching processes, while his slow thinking aligns with the "hard" processes. I would now add the dimension of influence and learning, suggesting that "soft" learning is interwoven with "soft" coaching processes and "fast" thinking. As coaches, we are most likely to learn about the "soft" processes of learning from our interaction with clients--rather than from books, training or supervision. These "hard" sources of learning are more closely associated with "hard" coaching processes and "Slow" thinking.

We are not as comfortable with these more challenging aspects of our work as coaches, though we might find that "hard" coaching, "hard" learning and "slow" thinking are prevalent during our early years of coaching, whereas "soft" coaching, "soft" learning and "fast" thinking more commonly operate when we gain further experience as coaches. Much as we must use our expository brain when first learning any skilled actions (such as driving a car or playing tennis), we rely more on our procedural brain when these actions have been performed repeatedly.

On the one hand, this shift to the procedural brain is good news, because we can be thinking about the bigger picture (such as the actions of other drivers on the highway, or the strategy being used by our tennis opponent). On the other hand, this shift can lead to deeply engrained habits that are hard to break and are not easily modified as conditions in our world change. As coaches, we might too often rely on our habitual patterns of interaction with clients, rather than thinking more slowly, engaging the "hard" process of strategizing as a coach, and retreating to the books, attending a relevant coaching seminar, or even seeking out supervision.

Behavioral economists, such as Kahneman, write about something called "heuristics" which are these habitual, fast thinking-based rules that we apply (often indiscriminately) to addressing problems and making predictions in our everyday life. As coaches, we invite our clients to explore these heuristics. Perhaps, we should at the same time become aware of these distorting heuristics in our own daily life and coaching practice.

The Bridge: Collaborative Coaching Inquiry

What about the intermediate influence that occurs throughout interaction with colleagues? Is it valuable to blend the "hard" and "soft" learning that occurs when we turn to peers for dialogue and shared insight? We concluded our first report by addressing a theme that Francine Campone noted in her request for participation in the first Survey: the field of coaching should build a culture of research and evidence.

I added a further recommendation to this proposal in the second report: "this culture should move coaching beyond isolation and autonomy. It should move the field to a culture of collaboration, in which thoughtful dialogue occurs as a blending of soft and hard learning. This collaborative dialogue should be founded in Kahneman's slow thinking. It should be accompanied by evidence-based information, reflective practice and a desire to advance the inter-discipline of professional coaching through critical inquiry." Results from this third report seem to reinforce both themes.

The role to be played by collaborative dialogue might be particularly important if we take into account the rather disturbing finding in this third report regarding the environment in which professional coaches work. In a work environment that might be challenging for us as coaches,

we must engage in collaborative dialogue regarding how to live in this environment (if it is where our clients work) and how to improve this environment (if it is our own home base).

In a profession that values direct experience and the rich learning to be gained from active engagement in the practice of coaching, it is particularly important that we find ways to collectively reflect on what we have learned and how to apply what we have learned to our own ongoing personal and professional development. Hopefully, this set of reports, reporting on results from the Development of Coaches surveys, is contributing in a small way to building such a culture and opening the doors to further collaborative dialogue.

Does Gender Make A Difference?

Results regarding gender differences from the two Development of Coaches surveys seem to be compatible with a growing body of literature in many fields that suggest gender-based differences are becoming less important in modern Western societies. Sometime the lack of differences is ascribed to reduction in gender discrimination and at other times to the effects of "women's liberation" and the emergence of "feminist theory" during the second half of the 20th Century in most Western countries. At the very least, a distinction has been made with increasing frequency between biological sex and gender as a role. In recent years, terms such as the "social construction of gender" and "gender fluidity" have moved us even further into the realm of blended gender-based identities.

At the very least, the results generated from our two coaching surveys indicate that gender is not a major factor regarding professional coaching practices. Do these results (or non-results) suggest that men and women are likely to be influenced by factors other than gender when choosing to become a professional coach or when engaging in coaching with a client? Does the gender of the client make any difference or is everyone "treated equally"? Unfortunately, we don't have any data regarding the potential variations in coaching practices based on the gender of the client. Hopefully, future studies about coaching strategies and practices will provide some data regarding potential gender differences in coach/client interactions.

We will have to turn to other demographic factors to see if there are significant differences in responses to our two coaching surveys. It seems that the variance in survey responses is not attributed to gender. So, we can cross one suspect off our list.

Does Age Make A Difference?

There do not appear to be any significant differences regarding any of the Development of Coaching questions as a function of age. As in the case of our demographic analysis concerning gender, we must look elsewhere, apparently, when seeking to determine the source of variance in the responses of coaches to the two surveys. And we should be reminded of Rey Carr's cautionary note regarding Survey Monkey results.

There is another possible conclusion – or at least hypothesis—that we might pose regarding the results obtained. It might be that age differences are to be found at a different time of life. Perhaps we should have differentiated groups at an earlier age. Are there differences between coaches younger than 40 and those older, or between coaches under 30 and those who are now coaching at an older age? Are most of our attitudes about coaching pretty much frozen by the time we are in mid-life or a bit older?

While we might wish to test this hypothesis in our Phase Two analyses of the results obtained, this is not a high priority, given the age of most coaches we surveyed. There simply are not many professional coaches who enter this field prior to entering their mid-life years. Is this because they don't have much credibility until they have a little gray in the hair and fairly extensive life experiences? Or perhaps it is because most clients are themselves a bit older and are looking for coaches who are at least the same age. As we have noted in other reports about the future of professional coaching (e.g. Skibbins and Bergquist, 2016), the future might produce more coaching of younger men and women – and these younger clients might look to peers or slightly older colleagues to serve as their coaches. We will have to see what occurs in our field.

Meanwhile, the next few studies in this summary report focus not on demographics, but rather on the type and extent of training and education that professional coaches have obtained. Do these experiences have a lasting impact on the Development of Coaches? We are about to see if this the case. Meanwhile, we bid farewell to our brief exploration of two demographic variables: gender and age. These variables don't seem to make much of a difference in the world of professional coaching.

Does ICF Certification Make A Difference?

As we turn to other variables that might impact the education, training and performance of professional coaches, the first area on which we have focused is certification. Specifically, I have sorted our Survey respondents into two categories: those who have received certification from the International Coaching Federation (ICF) and those who haven't. This is admittedly a clumsy distinction, since some of those who have not obtained ICF certification have been certified by some other coaching organization or are licensed as practitioners in some other field (such as psychology or social work). However, in most cases the non-ICF respondents operate without any formal certification. I have placed a label on those respondents without certification. I h ave called them *renegades*. I apply this label not in criticism of their position in the coaching world, but rather with affection, because I am a member of this group.

Now on to the results. There were four areas of significance difference in the average (mean) responses of ICF certified coaches and non-ICF (renegade) coaches to the set of questions regarding overall influences on their development as coaches. Three of these areas relate to the influence of outside agencies of change and improvement. Overall (during their career as coaches) ICF certified coaches are significantly more likely to be influenced by specific coaching courses, seminars or workshops (including on-line courses) (.01 level of confidence). They are also significantly more likely than renegades to be influenced by formal supervision, mentoring or consultation (.01 level of confidence) and to be influenced by personal coaching (.05 level of confidence).

These significant results can alternatively be interpreted (because of the wording of specific items) as the respondent's rating of the extent to which they *make use* of these outside support services. The fourth item that yielded significant difference between the ICF certified and renegade coach responses concerned the overall influence of institutional conditions in which they have done coaching during their career. The ICF certified respondents are significantly more likely than the renegade respondents (.05 level of confidence) to indicate that they have been influenced by the institutional conditions.

What have we found? It seems that there are quite a few significant differences regarding responses to the Development of Coaching questions as a function of whether or not the respondent completed ICF certification. While most of the differences in mean scores as a result of gender and age were minimal, we find not only many differences as a function of

certification that are significant at the .05 and .01 level, but also many that come close to significance (hovering at the .10 level of significance).

Unlike in our demographic analyses concerning gender and age, we seem to have discovered at least one of the sources of variance in the responses of coaches to the two surveys—though we should be reminded of Rey Carr's cautionary note regarding Survey Monkey results. Furthermore, we need to be reminded that when many statistical calculations are being performed, the use of .05 and .01 confidence levels become suspect. Put simply, if one hundred calculations are performed, then five of them will be significant by chance. Technically, the levels of confidence should be adjusted—and the "bar" of significance raised when multiple t-test (or analyses of variance) are performed.

Given these cautions, it is important to note that the differences to be found among respondents who are ICF certified and those who are not certified (the "renegades") are quite striking and do not resemble in any way the minimal differences to be found as a function of age or gender. Furthermore, there are some specific differences that reached significance: our respondents seemed to be discerning in their rating of specific items. There is not some generalized "social desirability" or "acquiescence" biases that impacted on one of our two groups.

In sum, we do seem to have hit "the mother lode" regarding identification of at least one of the major factors contributing to variance in mean scores--and, this is with the division of respondents into two very rough categories (especially those in the "renegade" category). With finer differentiations in future studies, even greater differences might be found. Keeping these caveats and considerations in mind, we turn specifically to the significant differences we did discover and speculate on what these differences might mean.

Two Parallel Universes

To a certain extent, the results confirm the observation (and conclusion) made by our colleague, Rey Carr, about the world of ICF coaching certification and the world of coaching outside this certification. Rey suggested that these are "parallel universes." Through examining results from the Development of Coaches survey, we have found some expected differences: ICF certified coaches are more likely to have been influenced by their training as a coach, as well as the

supervision and personal coaching they received. These coaches are also more likely to indicate that they have changed as a coach and have overcome limitations in their coaching.

It is not surprising, in addition, that the ICF certified coaches are more likely than renegades to value further professional development. All of this is a large part of what the ICF certification process is about: training, supervision, being coached by a senior colleague or mentor—valuing their ongoing development as a professional and looking forward to further professional development in the future. In this regard, ICF-based coaching is closely aligned with many other human service professions – such as psychotherapy, clinical social work and even medicine. This is part of the professionalization of coaching (following in the tradition of these other human service professions) (Bledstein, 1976).

Something more complex, however, seems to be operating in these two universes. The ICF certified coaches perceive themselves as being more authentically personal in working with clients than do the renegades. Conversely, the renegades are more likely to acknowledge difficulty in working with some clients and find it sometimes difficult to reconcile obligations to client and equivalent obligations to other stakeholders. Are the ICF coaches just naïve or perhaps more blindly optimistic about their work, whereas the renegades are more experienced, realistic and perhaps more honest? Or do the ICF coaches simply do a better job in working with their clients – having received more training and having been tested extensively for their competence as coaches?

Three other findings make the picture even more complex. The ICF certified coaches indicate that they are more likely to be influenced by the institutional conditions in which they are operating. They are also more likely than are the renegades to consider terminating a coaching contract with difficult clients and are more likely to see the changes that have occurred in their coaching profession to be a decline (rather than an advance). Admittedly, the mean scores for all respondents on these last two items are quite low, and some of the significant differences in mean scores might be attributable in both instances to a few "outlier" responses by ICF respondents who are either very candid or truly in some trouble with regard to their coaching practices.

Each of these findings needs to be further verified and more carefully examined in future studies. There certainly are no results from these two surveys that can be taken as final (though

some of them yielded differences that are significant at the .01 level of confidence). There does seem to be a pattern, however, that can lead us to a theme that I believe might be worth further discussion within the profession of coaching. This theme concerns the so-called *locus of control* to be found among respondents to the Development of Coaches Survey.

Coaching and the Locus of Control

Substantial research has been done that suggests people differ regarding the extent to which they have adopted an "internal" or "external" locus of control. Those who hold a bias toward an internal locus of control tend to believe that they have considerable control over (and accountability for) the actions they have taken as well as the environment in which they live (and have helped to create). Conversely, those with a bias toward external locus of control tend to believe that they have very little control over (and hence minimal accountability for) the actions they have taken or the environment in which they live. For those with an external locus of control, life seems to be in the hands of other people (authority) or other forces in their world (fate). The men and women who tend to embrace an internal locus of control are inclined to take responsibility for everything in their life. They are always putting in extra time and devoting extensive energy to getting everything "right."

In examining the results obtained in this study, it seems that those with ICF certification are more inclined toward an external locus of control, while those who are renegades tend to be inclined toward an internal locus. The certified coaches look to outside resources when preparing to be a coach and seek external verification (through ICF) regarding their own professional competence. They also might be more sensitive to their environment and might consider themselves to be more interpersonally sensitive (personal authenticity) than are their more internally focused colleagues without certification. The renegades, on the other hand, might (as their name implies) be loners who are "guided by their own star", rather than relying on any external verification.

Questions to Be Addressed About ICF Certification

Is Rey Carr accurate in his identification of "parallel universes" – and is there room for both law-abiding citizens and rogues in the community being built by those of us who care about and serve as stewards of the coaching profession? Is there a place for both innovation and

credibility? Can we embrace both diversity and uniform standards in this field? Do we want professional coaching to become something more than a cutting-edge human service domain – or is that the primary appeal of this human service endeavor for many of us? I believe that these questions and alternatives are yet to be fully addressed.

Are There Any Differences between Personal and Organizational Coaches?

Results from the two Development of Coaching surveys suggest that those who are most often oriented toward personal coaching are slightly more likely to identify change in their coaching practices (from when they began working as a coach) as a decline, while organizational-oriented coaches are slightly more like to identify this change as an improvement in performance. With regard to both personal and organizational coaches, it should be noted that there is a substantial difference between the improvement and decline scores. Both see improvement from the time when they formally began working as a coach to be much greater than decline—it is only that decline is slightly more commonly found among those oriented toward personal coaching. Do the personal coaches have higher standards for themselves than the organizational coaches, or perhaps higher expectations regarding their performance? We will have to wait until other differences are revealed to offer any preliminary suggestions regarding the nature or etiology of these minor differences.

Other responses to this initial question yield results that continue to be suggestive of a difference between personally oriented and organizationally oriented coaches. The organizational coaches indicate that they are slightly more likely than personal coaches to have overcome past limitations in their coaching skills and knowledge and are more likely to have realized their potential as a coach. Once again, these individual items do not yield statistically significant differences (especially given the large number of statistical analyses being performed) – but they do suggest a pattern.

Those coaches who do much of their work in organizations (or provide coach training) seem to be slightly more positive about their work (over time) as a coach and their improvement (over time) as a coach than are those doing much of their work as personal coaches. Is it because the organizational coaches are more experienced than the personal coaches? Or are those oriented toward work in organizations more likely to over-estimate their abilities (or the personal

coaches to underestimate their abilities)? We will keep these possible conditions in mind while moving forward with our analysis of results from the remaining questions.

Mastery of Techniques and Strategies

When appraising themselves as coaches, those who are oriented toward personal coaching are significantly more likely than organizationally-oriented coaches to see themselves as having mastered the techniques and strategies involved in the practice of coaching, whereas organizationally-oriented coaches are significantly more likely than personally-oriented coaches to indicate that they are effective in stimulating client insight and (at a marginally significant level) to provide precision, subtlety and finesse in their work.

At one level, these two sets of results seem to be contradictory: personal coaches have mastered the techniques and strategies of coaching, while organizational coaches perceived themselves as inducting more insights in their clients and operating with more "subtle" expertise as a coach. This seeming contradiction might have to do with differences we noted in one of our previous studies between "fast thinking" and "slow thinking" (Kahneman, 2011). The personal coaches might be "better trained" in the use of specific coaching techniques and strategies that can be readily applied ("fast thinking") in their work with clients. Conversely, organizational coaches might be "more experienced" as coaches and/or might have to work with a much greater diversity of clients and address much more complex client problems, hence have to be more nuanced ("slow thinking") in their work. We will look for more evidence of these potential causative factors in the responses of personal and organizational coaches to the remaining set of questions.

The statistical analysis of differences between personal and organizational coaches on this specific question yielded the most significant results yet obtained in our seven studies. At the .001 level of significant (a t-score of 5.70) the personal coaches are more likely than organizational coaches to perceive a danger of losing control of a coaching conversation with their client. While neither the personal nor organizational coaches admit to frequent occurrence of this fear, the level of concern among personal coaches is quite a bit higher than it is among organizational coaches.

These results are even more striking, given the lack of difference between personal and organizational coaches on many of the other items associated with this question about current feelings regarding coaching. Is it possible that control is related to the finesse perceived by organizational coaches regarding their work with clients? In relying on coaching techniques and strategies that they have learned to apply quickly and effectively ("fast thinking"), are personal coaches more vulnerable to perceived loss of control brought about by unanticipated responses from their clients? Perhaps, instead, it is just the organizational coaches being less candid about their fears and concerns.

There are two other items that yield less dramatic findings—but are still of value in fostering a dialogue about personal and organizational coaching. These two items concern the role to be played by the coach's personal values and ethics, when working with clients. The organizational coaches are slightly more likely to be unease or troubled about these matters when working with their clients than are personal coaches. Is this because values and ethics issues are more prevalent or challenging in an organizational setting than they are in a personal setting? Or do these concerns on the part of organizational coaches relate to their use of subtle (and perhaps sometime elusive) practices, rather than the "tried and true" techniques and strategies that might be more frequently (and effectively) used by personal coaches?

Is part of the "Mastery" that personal coaches report more frequently than do organizational coaching related in some way to their clearer sense of personal values and ethical practices as related to their coaching work? Does the mastery of coaching techniques and strategies provide more structure for the personal coaches, allowing them to feel more comfortable than organizational coaches in negotiating the relationship between their work with clients and their own personal values and ethics? These are important questions that should be addressed in future coaching dialogues.

There doesn't seem to be much difference between personal coaches and organizational coaches in their responses to difficult coaching situations. They seem to handle these difficulties in a similar manner. Our analysis of ICG certified and non-ICF certified coaches similarly yielded very few differences (only a difference regarding the greater tendency for ICF certified coaches to terminate the coaching engagement). We will have to look elsewhere for potential differences in the way difficult situations are handled—or perhaps there are deeply-ingrained tendencies

for all coaches (or maybe most people in contemporary societies) to face difficulties in a similar manner.

Results from the items associated with this question about recent coaching experiences are interesting in that a comparable question (which we analyzed above) concerning the long-term perceptions of coaches ("Since you began formally coaching") yielded some interesting differences. By contrast, there were virtually no differences of any significance in the responses to items about recent experiences. The organizational coaches were a bit more positive than were the personal coaches, but the differences (if any) were minor. Organizational coaches perceive themselves to be a bit more skillful in practicing coaching than do the personal coaches who responded to this survey, and feel more like they have a growing sense of enthusiasm about engaging in the coaching enterprise than do their personal coaching colleagues.

Overall and Current Assessment of Coaching Performance

When respondents reflected back on their coaching ("since you began") we find that coaches who most often provide personal coaching are slightly more likely that those providing coaching in an organizational setting to identify change in their coaching practices as a decline—though the ratings for virtually all respondents are quite low when assessing potential decline. No one apparently sees much evidence of decline in their own practices, though personal-based coaches are a bit more inclined to admit to some decline.

On the other side of the ledger, we find that organization-based coaches are slightly more likely to identify change in their coaching practices ("since you began") as an improvement, and are slightly more likely to indicate that they have overcome limits and realized their potential. While these differences between the two coaching groups are not great, they represent a pattern of responses that suggest there might be some important differences among those doing personal coaching and those doing organizational coaching. Are these real differences, or are the personal coaches simply being a bit more candid in their responses?

In general, the differences between personal and organizational coaches disappear when we turn to their responses to similar items related to the coaches' current practices. While organizational coaches remain a bit more positive, the differences are minimal. On several

items, however, there are significant differences between personal and organizational coaching regarding their current practices.

First, as I have already noted, the mean score for personal coaches is significantly higher than it is for organizational coaches regarding mastery (at the present time) of coaching techniques and strategies. There is a second significance difference regarding current practices that heads in the opposite direction. Organizational coaches are more likely than personal coaches to indicate that they are effective at stimulating client insights. This difference is significant at the .05 level. At a more marginal (.10) level, organizational coaches are more likely than personal coaches to indicate that they have attained precision, subtlety and finesse in their work with clients.

How do we make sense of these seemingly contradictory (or at least confusing) results? We might speculate that any differences that exist when our respondents are beginning their work as coaches relate at least in part to the amount of experience when enter coaching. Those doing personal coaching might be newer to the field or have less prior experience in related human service fields. Many organizational coaches, for instance, have already done organizational consulting work or have conducted leadership development workshops. Once the two groups reflect on their current experiences (rather than their overall experiences), the differences disappear.

The personal coaches might have "caught up" with the organizational coaches in terms of the amount of experience they have had and their own personal judgement about their competency. Perhaps, personal coaches face fewer challenges in mastering coaching techniques and strategies than organizational coaches—there certainly are many more settings in which organizational coaching can take place than is the case with personal coaching. Organizational coaches might also require (and therefore have mastered) greater precision, subtlety and finesse in their work because they face more diverse settings in which their coaching takes place.

I recognize that these speculations might be missing the mark. We might find that many personal coaches also come to their coaching work with significant experience in an affiliated area (such as counselling or psychotherapy). The challenges faced by personal coaches and their clients might be just as complex as the challenges faced by coaches and clients in an organizational setting. And are some of the differences (as I have often noted) just a matter of

candor or self-insight? It is important that we explore these issues and concerns in our future analyses and that dialogue about these issues and concerns be engaged in other venues.

In coming phases of this ongoing research project, we will be looking at potential differences between personal and organizational coaches regarding amount and type of previous experience. We will also be examining potential differences in gender, age, education and training when comparisons are drawn between personal and organizational coaches. Each of these analyses will help us gain greater clarity regarding the source and nature of differences between those who work primarily in the domain of personal coaching and those who work primarily as coaches in organizational settings.

The Bridge: Locus of Control

In the sixth report, I identified locus of control as a potential source of difference in the responses of coaches with ICF certification and those without ICF certification. A similar pattern can be found regarding the work done by personal and organizational coaches – at least as revealed in one highly significant (.001 level) difference. Personal coaches are much more likely than organizational coaches to indicate that currently they are "in danger of losing control of a coaching conversation to a client." While responses to this one item stands out amidst many other items where minimal differences were found between personal and organizational coaches, it is hard to ignore this one major difference. What seems to be going on?

This issue of control generates several important questions. Do personal coaches have a stronger need for control in their work with clients? Are personal coaches (like ICF certified coaches) more inclined toward an external locus of control—meaning that they are more sensitive to the control exerted by their clients. We all know that clients are supposed to be in charge of the coaching engagement—but there still might be legitimate concern about losing all control among some coaches.

If personal coaches are more reliant on and view themselves as being more skilled in the use of coaching strategies and techniques than is the case with organizational coaches, then are they likely to be more concerned (or even threatened) when control is lost? With the precision, subtlety and finesse that organizational coaches purport to possess, are they likely to be more

flexible in their work with clients—allowing these coaches to be less concerned about loss of control.

Are the organizational coaches, in other words, more included toward internal locus of control and less reliant on external cues from their clients? This doesn't mean that organizational coaches are in some manner more competent than their personal coaching colleagues: they might be insensitive to the needs of their clients or too unpredictable in their flexibility. When is it the right time for coaches to dance and when should they stay put and provide stable and reliable support to their clients? These are questions that should be broached in future sessions where coaching practices are being critically examined and best practices are identified. Locus of control might be a central theme to be explored in these sessions.

There is an even more general question to pose: are the organizational coaches simply more confident about their abilities than are the personal coaches? Can they more readily work in isolation from other coaches – or is it more the case that personal coaches are open to receiving support and insights from their colleagues? The differences are not great, so we must be cautious about offering even tentative conclusions or speculating on the causes of any differences that do exist. Clearly, the major finding in this study concerns the issue of control and, to a lesser extent, the differences occurring overall in the development of coaches (as compared to the recent experience of coaches). The world does not look profoundly different for those who primarily engage in personal coaching and those who do coaching primarily inside organizations – but the differences that do appear to exist are quite intriguing and provide the grist for future dialogues about the similarities and differences between these two orientations to coaching.

Are There Any Differences between Coaches from USA and from Other Countries?

Results from the two Development of Coaches surveys (combined) suggest that there are not major differences between the USA and non-USA respondents regarding their report of development as a coach since they begin working in this field. There are several near significant differences, however, that offer an intriguing view into the way these two populations view their work as coaches over time. The non-USA coaches, for instance, might be a bit more pessimistic (or at least modest) about shifts in their work as a coach over time—

indicating that they are slightly more likely to describe their own work as a coach to be in decline or subject to an impairment. They also are slightly more likely to believe that they have reached the peak in terms of their ongoing development as a coach. This is about as good as it is going to get – and there might be some decline in store for them.

Conversely, the USA-based coaches might be considered a bit more "brash" in their self-analysis and they might be somewhat more ambitious or at least optimistic: things will continue to improve. It can always get better. To quote Al Jolson, the famous American performer of the early 20th Century, "you ain't seen nothing yet!" Is this nothing more than the classic American bravado—contrasting with the more tempered perspective offered by those coaches who are operating outside the United States? And does this slight difference in perspective influence the character of coaching being done, the nature of the problems on which the coaches and clients focus, and the outcomes of the coaching engagement? These are important questions to consider when preparing a follow up to this preliminary study of professional coaching development and performance.

It is interesting to reflect on the results of this analysis when compared to the previous analysis of differences between those doing personal coaching and those doing organizational coaching. We found that those who are most often oriented toward personal coaching are slightly more likely to identify change in their coaching practices (from when they began working as a coach) as a decline, while organizational-oriented coaches are slightly more likely to identify this change as an improvement in performance. These results align with those in the present study, with non-USA population responding to the inventory in a manner similar to the personal coaches, and the USA population responding to the inventory in a manner similar to the organizational coaches.

In the previous study, I asked if the personal coaches have higher standards for themselves than the organizational coaches, or perhaps higher expectations regarding their performance? We could consider the same question regarding the non-USA and USA respondents. Those coaches who do much of their work in organizations and/or come from the Unites States seem to be slightly more positive about their work (over time) as a coach and their improvement (over time) as a coach than are those coming from outside the United States or doing much of their work as personal coaches.

Is it because the USA and organizational coaches are more experienced than the non-USA or personal coaches? Or are those from the United States and/or oriented toward work in organizations more likely to over-estimate their abilities? Alternatively, are the Non-USA and/or personal coaches more likely to underestimate their abilities? In future studies we will be doing more sophisticated analyses that begin to identify potential clustering of perspectives on coaching and the development of coaches, based on multiple coaching demographics.

Positive Regard for Coaching Clients

The results we found when comparing USA and non-USA coaches revealed an intriguing difference that might be revealing of the way coaches perceive and relate to their clients. If we first look back at our previous study, we find that the statistical analysis of differences between personal and organizational coaches responding to questions about problems with their clients yielded the most significant results yet obtained in this study. By contrast, there is only one significant difference to be found between USA and non-USA coaches – but it is an interesting difference and quite significant (.02 level). While most of the respondents to this inventory indicated that they rarely are "unable to find something to like or respect in a client", the mean score is higher for the non-USA coaches.

We might speculate that the USA coaches are embracing a classic American character of liking everyone they meet. Will Rogers, the famous American humorist and Hollywood cowboy, indicated that he never met anyone he didn't like. Another Rogers ("Mr. Rogers") offered a similar universal opinion about all human beings. There is even a third Rogers (the famous therapist, Carl Rogers) who preached (and practiced) "unconditional positive regard."

Are USA coaches, perhaps, permeated with this Rogerian positive regard—which might complement a more general sense of optimism and an action-orientation. If this is the case, then we might speculate about how this influences the nature of coaching being engaged. ICF emphasizes the placing of responsibility for problem-solving in the hands of the coaching client. Is this an American perspective that has been infused in ICF (as an organization founded in the USA)? We might also point to a comparable emphasis on being sure that the monkey (problem-ownership) remains on the client's shoulder (Bergquist and Mura, 2011). This seems very American. Perhaps, the appreciative perspective that is now common among American coaches (Bergquist and Mura, 2011) is also in alignment with the Rogerian positivism about coaching

clients. Future studies might focus in part on this fascinating and important difference—if it does exist—between USA coaches and coaches residing in other countries.

These cultural issues might be interwoven with issues regarding the coach's personal values and ethics when working with clients. Are there some inter-connections between these ethical issues and the unconditional acceptance of a client's worth and capacity to solve problems? Do we find that an appreciative (positive) perspective regarding our coaching clients is likely to be aligned with a more flexible ethical code? Is one of the costs of a strict code of ethics the tendency to be more judgmental not only about one's own coaching practices, but also about the level of respect for one's clients? We will be exploring this interplay in our future studies using the existing inventory data – and hopefully date from additional studies.

Referrals and Assistance

A considerable number of significant or near significant results were obtained when the scores of USA and non-USA respondents to questions about referral and assistance were compared. The most significant difference (at the .01 level) concerns the willingness of coaches to refer a client to some noncoaching professional if they are experiencing difficulties in working with their client. USA coaches are significantly more likely to refer than is the case with non-USA coaches. While we must be cautious about assigning too much credibility to these findings, given the small and distorted population being sampled and the large number of computations being made, these could be "real" results, both because of the significance level and other findings from the analysis of scores for this question (to which I will turn shortly).

The key point of inquiry is obvious: why the difference in willingness to refer? I would offer several possible reasons. First, there might be a greater number of credible resources available in the USA. For instance, mental health services are often more widely accepted and made available in the United States than in some other countries. We know in many countries that mental health issues are often either dismissed (or ignored) or redefined as a matter of poor health, spiritual crisis or (in education settings) the child's (not the family's) problem. When it comes to referring coaching clients to a therapist (because the underlying issues require deeper work), we might find that the referral is easier to make because there is not only a more positive attitude regarding these services, but also because there are many well-trained professionals in

the USA who are working in the field of psychotherapy (psychologists, social workers, counsellors, etc.)

I bring in a second near significant finding from the analysis of this question, in posing a second possible reason for the referral differences. The USA coaches indicated that they are more likely than non-USA coaches to refer a client to another coach when experiencing difficulties. While this difference only approaches near significance (p<.10), it is aligned with results regarding referrals to noncoaching professionals. Perhaps there is a broader reluctance of non-USA coaches to do any referring. This, in turn, might be attributable (at least in part) to the more recent establishment of professional coaching in countries other than the United States (as well as Canada and certain European countries). If a new profession is being established, then there is often reluctance to admit to difficulties. Referrals can easily be interpreted as a failure and acknowledgement that other professionals can do a better job than we can do.

There is a third possible reason. While all of the results obtained in these Development of Coaches Surveys must be cautiously received, there is a pattern related to the USA coaches being a bit more action and results oriented and more flexible in seeking to assist clients in finding solutions to their presenting problem(s). It might just be the case that the USA coaches are saying to their clients (in their words, actions or even nonverbal communication) that we (coach and client): ". . . should push forward and see what happens. If it isn't working, then I can help you find another resource that could be of greater use in helping you solve your problem(s). We can always pass on the baton if it isn't working! " This third possible reason might be closely related to the second that I offered. American pragmatism might be aided by a shared sense that professional coaching is established and here to stay: "there is no longer any reason to prove its worth. So, let's not be afraid to refer!"

A fourth possible reason can be offered that relates to the near significant difference (p<,10) found regarding the turning to other resources for assistance with a difficult client. Non-USA coaches report that they are more likely to "consult relevant articles or books" than is the case when USA coaches respond to this question. Could this be a greater tendency for non-USA coaches to turn to external authorities for assistance than is the case with USA coaches? Perhaps USA coaches are more "self-reliant" – looking to their own experiences rather than turning to another source. If it doesn't work out for the USA coaches, then they can simply refer

out to another professional: a quick, action-oriented, pragmatic solution. As an aside, I wonder if there is a cost associated with this quick referral (and self-reliance). There might be less personal learning on the part of the USA coach.

Here is another way to frame this potential reason. It might not be a matter of turning elsewhere for assistance. It might instead be a matter of the resource to which a coach is likely to turn. While USA coaches might be more inclined to turn to another professional (via referral), the non-USA coach might look not to another person, but instead to a nonhuman resource. If this is the case, then we might ask if the turning to an article or book is somehow related to the more "bookish" orientation of non-USA coaches. The USA coaches might be less bookish. Perhaps, these coaches are more likely to choose action rather than reflection when dealing with client difficulties. Conversely, among the non-USA coaches, action is stopped as the coach sits down to read an article or book. In the term used by Daniel Kahneman (2011), the bookism coach is engaging in slow thinking (rather than fast thinking) – and their clients might begin modeling this more reflective approach to their problem(s).

There is one other possible reason which always must be considered when cross-cultural or cross-national comparisons are being made. Are there some powerful societal norms that help to determine the actions to be taken? In the domain of human services, we might find that personal failings are stigmatized. These failings (and related fears and depressive thoughts) must be kept out of public view. They are to be confined as "secrets" that are held by family members (and perhaps some religious official who, in some form, can hear "confessions").

In these cultures, not only is professional coaching (and many other human services) not fully accepted—any "exposure" of a client receiving these services is unwelcomed. This push toward secrecy might even apply to asking another professional to do work with a difficult coaching client. Problems are hidden even if this means not receiving proper care. I would suggest that this problem of secrecy (and the fear of stigma associated with revealing any personal failing) is not confined to non-USA cultures. It to be found in the USA as well – it might just not be as great a problem in the USA (or as readily acknowledged).

Developmental Growth and Self-Reliance

In reviewing the results obtained, it should first be noted that nonsignificant differences were prevalent (as is the case with most of the analyses done regarding differences between USA and non-USA coaches). Nevertheless, there are two of the questions that yield near significant (<.10) results, which introduces several additional hypotheses for further testing. The first item is "Do you feel you are becoming more skillful in practicing coaching" The non-USA coaches scored slightly higher than the USA coaches on this item. Similarly, on a second question ("Do you feel a growing enthusiasm about doing coaching"), the non-USA respondents scored slightly higher (near significance at ,10 level). As always, we need to very cautious about arriving at conclusions regarding these marginal differences between the two respondent groups.

I would simply suggest that the more recent emergence of professional coaching as an established field of human service outside the USA might represent two important factors: (1) there is much still to learn among those working in a new field (hence it is not surprising that the non-USA respondents feel they are becoming more skillful), and (2) a newly emerging field is always a potential source of enthusiasm for those practicing in this field as well as for those touting its advantages. On the less positive side, there might also be a "topping off" of new learning and enthusiasm among those from the USA who are working in a field (professional coaching) that is already fairly well established.

We can take this analysis one step further in asking about the sources of professional growth for the non-USA coaches. We find that non-USA coaches are slightly (p<.10) more likely to be influenced by engagement in formal supervision and by conducting coach-related research, whereas the USA coaches are slightly (p,.10) more likely to be influenced by their own experiences as someone receiving personal coaching. Is a pattern detectable here? It does seem that coaches from outside the USA are more likely that those inside the USA to be influenced by the formal structures of the coaching profession: supervision and research. Conversely, the USA coaches are "carrying their own baggage" with them. They are influenced mostly by their own personal coaching experience. They are now on their own. Where are they looking for guidance? What is the professional coaching textbook to which they refer? The guidance and textbook are to be found in their own experiences which they themselves interpret (without the assistance of an outside supervisor).

These potential differences in perspective between USA and non-USA coaches hold some important implications regarding the future development of the professional coaching field. There is no need for research or evidence-based coaching practices if we are going to rely on our own internal guidance and acquired wisdom. We don't need to read books if we are our own "in-house" expert. In reflecting back on these results, I would suggest that the need for a culture of evidence and collaboration might be even more needed – especially in the United States. It might also be the case that a move to this culture of evidence and collaboration is not very closely aligned with the mentality of autonomy and self-referral found among at least some American coaches. We might anticipate considerable resistance – whether active or passive.

The Frontier Town

In bringing this summary report to a close, I turn to a metaphor that I have repeatedly introduced in my previous reports. It is the metaphor of professional coaching operating in a frontier town. The professional coaching community might be on the threshold of establishing a real "town" with law and order, a schoolhouse and some legitimate businesses. Perhaps the town is already well established. This being the case, we might be finding that the earlier occupants of this community find the town a bit too "tame" and no longer a site of radical entrepreneurship. They might be getting a bit bored and are making plans to move on to another newly discovered territory. Conversely, the new arrivals might be excited about the prospects of living and working in this wonderful new (for them) town.

At this point we must ask if this metaphor is appropriate. Like many metaphors it is compelling but might not very accurate? Is the frontier town metaphor appropriate in understanding potential difference between professional coaches who I have assigned to different categories? It might now be out-of-date, given the increasingly cosmopolitan nature of our professional coaching community—and it might never have been a valid portrayal of the complex history of professional coaching. I am obviously engaging a metaphor that is much too fanciful for any serious analysis of the marginal results obtained from this first study; however, even if it is fanciful, this metaphor might at least provoke conversations and further research. Furthermore, the dynamics operating in this metaphor do align with what has already been proposed regarding fads (Maher and Pomerantz, 2008) and what I have written about the diffusion of innovation (Bergquist, 2011).

The Diffusion of Innovation

I want to build on my 2011 publication by bringing in results from the present study. I suggested in 2011 that a diffusion of innovation analysis can be applied to a fuller understanding of insights to be gained from a metaphor of professional coaching being a frontier town. I described a town to which some people are attracted during the early years, while other people are attracted during the later years. This pattern is aligned with the widely accepted model of innovation diffusion first offered by Everett Rogers (yet another Rogers in this analysis!) (Rogers, 2003). Five stages of innovation diffusion were identified by Rogers. The populations associated with each stage were labeled: (1) innovators, (2) early adopters, (3) early majority, (4) late majority and (5) recalcitrants (non-adopters). Elsewhere, in addressing the diffusion of another innovative human service field (faculty development), I introduced parallels between these populations and those found in the creation of a frontier town (Bergquist, 2010). One year later I applied this metaphor to the field of professional coaching (Bergquist, 2011).

The *innovators* are explorers who set out to discover something new without quite knowing what they will discover or need to invent in order to survive in the new-found wilderness. *Early adopters* are the pioneers who have some ideas about where they are moving (based on information and maps provided by the explorers) but fully realize that this will be a new land in which there will be some minimal established structures or social norms. The third group (*early majority*) is made up of the early settlers who establish enterprises (farming, mining, etc.). Typically, they also help to build a town and bring a little law-and-order to this fledgling town.

The next group (*late majority*) only move to the town when it is established. Members of this group often bring the structures and social norms from their old town (or city) to the new one. These are the burghers, who soon become the town officials, teachers and certifiers. Finally, there are the *recalcitrants*. These are the folks who stay "back home." They don't want to take any risks and often resist those who have left home with their resources and expertise. They often declare: "Why do people have to change or move!" The members of this group tend to be guardians of the old traditions and established norms and standards. They don't fully understand or appreciate what is happening "way off" on the frontier.

Does this story of frontier town development ring true regarding the history of professional coaching as a new human service field? I would suggest that there is some alignment—especially as I review the remarkable history of coaching offered by my colleague, Vikki Brock (2012). There are the explorers (people like Galway, Erhard and Olalla) who were tinkering several decades ago with some new ideas about how best to serve other people. They often brought in ideas and practices from diverse fields and disciplines (such as transpersonal and cognitive behavioral therapy, analytic philosophy and neuroscience) as well as religious traditions (such as Buddhism). Pioneers can be found among the women and men (such as Thomas Leonard and Laura Whitworth) who established the first practices that could be called "coaching." They wrote many of the first books on professional coaching that had coaching in the title and established the first formal training programs (such as Coach U and the Coach Training Institute).

Early settlers (such as my colleagues, Agnes Mura and Jeannine Sandstrom) built the field's credibility and helped to found the first "trade" organizations (such as ICF, the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches and, for a short period of time, the International Consortium for Coaching in Organizations). More books were written, and professional coaching was often tied in with other domains of training and education (such as leadership development and mentoring). Late settlers include those who built ICF into a formidable international institution with extensive guidelines and levels of credentialing. In this group we also find those who are superstars in the field (such as Marshall Goldsmith) and those who have built and now run big organizations (such as WBECS) focusing on the mass marketing of coaching services. These settlers have also built complementary associations such as the Association of Coach Training Organizations and the Graduate School Association of Coaching. The professional coaching town appears to be well-established and here to stay. It is becoming a small cosmopolitan city.

The Town's Future

We might now ask an important question regarding the future of our frontier town and the future of the coaching profession. What about the explorers and pioneers? Are they going to hang around and become "citified" or will they move on to other ventures? Perhaps, some (or many) of them have already left. What role will (or should) they play if they do hang around? As I mentioned earlier, these early-arriving coaches will probably not be very effective as town

officers, judges or formal instructors. Perhaps their primary role is to provide what Talcott Parsons (1955) called the maintenance of latent patterns in this community. Ironically, this is the same role played by recalcitrants in the old established towns and cities "back home". In some important ways, innovation diffusion is cyclical rather than linear in nature.

There is an even more fundamental question to ask: what will be lost if this "pioneering spirit" is no longer present in the professional coaching field? This question is even relevant to recommendations I have made in previous reports and the present one. Is my push for a "culture of evidence" likely to hammer a nail in the coffin of this pioneering culture? Am I pushing for too much respectability and too restrictive an assessment of processes and outcomes? On the other hand, my advocating for a more global dialogue might serve as a counter-balancing plea.

If enacted this dialogue could help to keep the pioneering spirit alive. With the increasingly cosmopolitan makeup of the town and the digital expansion of boundaries in the field of coaching, we are likely to find some fresh air (perhaps a minor hurricane) blowing through the town. The source of this fresh air will be the diverse perspectives offered by new international arrivals to the town and from communication between the coaching town and other nearby towns that are being established (such as neurofeedback training, behavioral economics-based consultation and virus-induced digital education). This gentle (or not-so-gentle) breeze will convey new ideas, provoke dialogue, and point to a bit of town-rebuilding.

Resistance to the New Field of Professional Coaching

What about those in the fifth diffusion group—the recalcitrants? Sadly, I must nominate some of my fellow psychologists who insist that professional coaching is nothing more than unregulated and undisciplined "psychotherapy-for-normals." In the early years of professional coaching, "consulting" psychologists were often (gently) making a claim of privilege: psychologists are to lead and regulate the field of professional coaching given their unique qualifications as coaches. It is the psychologist who is committed to conducting (or at least being guided by) research. It is the field of psychology that has built conceptual foundations regarding coaching practices (Kilburg, 1996,b). Furthermore, psychologists can point to their distinctive conceptual base in learning theory (Diedrich, 1996) and, in particular, clinical psychology (Kilburg, 1996a).

A prominent psychological consultant, Harry Levinson (1996, p. 115), noted the following example regarding the important insights available exclusively to psychologists (especially those embracing neo-analytic psychology): "a knowledge of psychological dynamics is particularly important when trying to understand the manager-subordinate relations in the context of adult development. . . The choice of a successor is fraught with conscious and unconscious conflicts and, once that person is in place, with the predictable ambivalence both parties experience."

Along with many other psychologists, Levinson suggests that this privileged knowledge extends far beyond succession planning. It enables psychologists to explore in-depth issues with their clients in a way that is unavailable to or inappropriately used by coaches without psychological education and training. Psychologists can stake out an even broader claim for privilege in the field of professional coaching. The practices of personal and life coaching are founded on psychological principles (Williams, 2008)

While these multiple points regarding the unique and invaluable perspectives brought to the coaching engagement by psychologists are valid, it is also important to acknowledge the unique and invaluable perspectives brought by those with a background in other fields such as business and education. There are also many valuable insights to be offered by coaches with expertise in the disciplines of economics, sociology, and philosophy, or extensive knowledge of diverse religious traditions (both western and eastern). Much of the value inherent in moving to a new frontier of knowledge is to be found in the intermingling of disciplines and perspectives. This is the "gold" to be discovered in the new frontier. To mix my metaphors, "all hands are on deck" when a new kind of human service is being invented. There is no place for disciplinary or theological privilege in a newly-discovered or newly-created wilderness such as professional coaching—so maybe it is better than some of the recalcitrant psychologists never leave home.

We might include other human service professionals in the fifth category. These recalcitrants view professional coaching as a threat to and intrusion on their own space. Some human service professionals are inclined to assert their own unique and indispensable privilege. We are likely to hear such comments as: "why do we need anything more than we already have in our existing human service fields." These recalcitrants are often among those calling for the licensing of all professional coaches by one or more of the established agencies and associations

in disciplines and fields (such as their own) that now license human service professionals. While on the surface, the calls for licensing are based on a legitimate concern for retention of high quality and ethical human services (consumer protection), these calls may lead to an underlying (and usually unacknowledged) restraint of trade.

There is another group of recalcitrant. They are found in countries where human services of any kind that smack of "psychology" and "psychotherapy" are considered unnecessary or even a source of malpractice. There is also the matter of professional coaching being considered sacrilegious by members of some conservative religious groups: "Don't do work of the devil by trying to address spiritual matters from a secular perspective." In sum, these diverse recalcitrant believe that matters of the human heart and spirit, as well as interpersonal relationships, can best be handled by physicians, teachers or religious leaders. The passionate advice they offer to professional coaches is: "go back from where you came and leave us to our own proven services and solutions!"

The eighth analysis regarding potential cultural differences might be capturing some of this recalcitrance across different cultures. Future cross-cultural studies are certainly warranted—especially given the highly tentative conclusions reached in the current study. This study, after all, is exploratory—and perhaps pioneering—in nature. More established studies must be conducted that help to build a culture of evidence in our field. Hopefully, this can be done without losing the pioneering spirit. If the results from this study and studies done in the near future help to foster a more global dialogue, then we should be able to retain this spirit.

Next Steps

With the completion of eight reports (and this summary report), I have brought this first phase of the Development of Coaches Study to a close. I have conducted basic descriptive statistical analyses to determine if there are any perspectives regarding coach development that are shared by most practitioners in the field. I have also performed simple t-tests to see if there are differences between various coaching populations in their perspectives regarding this development. A few important communalities and differences were found—though most of the analyses yielded insignificant results. The several communalities and differences that were found to be significant should be further explored.

Phase Two

It is now time to move on to the second phase of this study. I will be engaging more sophisticated statistical tools to determine if there are some discernable patterns of developmental factors and if there are certain factors that seem to contribute consistently to the development of coaches. For example, age is one of the demographic factors to receive attention during this second phase. It is important that we return to an investigation of potential differences as a function of age, because we can treat age as a continuous variable rather than as just two categories (below and above 50) as we have done in this first study. We will be able to conduct correlational analyses including responses to other survey items as related to age. We will also be exploring potential curvilinear relationships between age and responses to other survey items.

Most importantly, in the next phase we will further explore the role played by coaching certification—for it seems to have some impact on the development of coaches. We will be looking at how certification interplays with other factors such as education, country of origin, and number of years operating in the field. Are there clusters that yield several different coach development profiles? Might we even be able to determine which developmental factors lead to the perceived success of coaches? Clearly, further study is needed to better identify and discern the nature of developmental communalities and developmental differences that might not have been discovered in Phase One.

Phases Three and Four

It is important to note that the second phase will still not be adequate to the task of informing the professional coaching community about best ways in which to prepare future coaches and provide life-long learning opportunities for those already in the field. A third phase is being planned which will involve the design and implementation of a new, more focused study that solicits input from a much larger, more diverse and representative population of professional coaches. Even more advanced statistical procedures can be applied to access some of the deeper and more systematic interweaving of various developmental factors. A fourth phase is envisioned in which data from the original studies on the development of clinicians done by David Orlinsky and his colleagues (Orlinsky and Rønnestad, 2005) can be compared with data generated in the current study and Phase Three study. This comparison would be of great value

in addressing the widely voiced question regarding how the practice of professional coaching compares to that of clinical psychology and specifically psychotherapy.

The Road Ahead

I anticipate some important and exciting work to be done. Not only is there an opportunity to learn more about the field of professional coaching, there is also the opportunity to tangibly advance the movement to more evidence-based formulations of coaching theory and practice. These formulations could, in turn, build on a foundation of appreciative global dialogue among those providing professional coaching services, those receiving these services, and those benefiting from successful coaching engagements. Hopefully, the studies that we are conducting and that we are publishing in the Library of Professional Coaching can contribute to this dialogue.

The Scientist-Practitioner: Living in a Culture of Evidence

I wish to offer one final note. Over the past thirty years, I have often written about the world of complexity, uncertainty and turbulence in which we are now living (e.g. Bergquist, 1993). In many ways, this description aligns with the more commonly accepted description of our contemporary world as one filled with VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity). I have recently been exploring the ways in which our world might be even more challenging. I am suggesting that our world is also filled with Irony and contradiction. I am calling it VUCA+ (Bergquist, 2019). In such a world, it is tempting to fly blind as professional coaches. We can rely on our "instincts" to determine how to best work with our clients. We can turn to our own accumulated experiences in providing guidance to our clients as they navigate their own VUCA+ world. We can engage Daniel Kahneman's (2011) *fast thinking*, using convenient heuristics to navigate this new world—heuristics such as "we are in the business of offering informed and provocative questions" and "our client holds the answers".

I suggest instead that we all help to build the culture of evidence I have been advocating in this study. Such a culture would encourage what Donald Schon (2008) has called *reflective practice* and what I have been referencing as the *slow thinking* identified by Kahneman. It is important, I believe, that we are particularly mindful of the subtitle used by Schon in his book on reflective practice. The subtitle is:: "how professionals think in action." It is primarily in the daily

practices of any human service profession that the critical questions to be studied in depth are identified. The contemporary world of complex, unpredictable, turbulent (and perhaps contradictory) real-life issues is where research must be conducted. The "clean" laboratory will yield fewer useful answers regarding human behavior than will the "messy" and "dirty" world in which professionals actually practice.

All too often, researchers in a field act separately from those who are actually engaged in practice. This separation is often found in such fields as medicine, urban planning (Schon's own field), education – and psychology. Attempts have been made in many fields to correct this separation of research and practice. In the field of psychology, the term *scientist-practitioner* was coined during the late 1970s and early 1980s (actually re-activated from the 1940s and 50s). This term was used to suggest that those engaged in psychological practices (such as psychotherapy and psychodiagnostics assessment) should be considered applied researchers who are testing their own hypotheses about their practice on an ongoing basis (Barlow, Hayes and Nelson, 1984). The challenge was later framed by Lane and Corrie as "straddling the worlds of rigour and meaning" (Lane and Corrie, 2006, p. 23).

While the unfortunate split between research and practice has often been attributed to the inadequacy of practice-based research tools, I would suggest that the split has been primarily cultural and structural in nature. Specifically, research departments in prestigious universities have often been systematically isolated from the agencies both inside and outside the university where services are actually being provided. I know from my own work with a major university, doing pioneering work on AIDS during the 1990s, that many of the researchers studying this disease focused on areas that were considered of low priority by those physicians in this same university who were actually working with AIDS patients. At a cultural level, we see (even today) that researchers are assigned higher status than practitioners. The daily practices of professionals working in the field are rarely portrayed in an accurate manner. These practitioners might be celebrated as heroes and martyrs in their field, but their actual practices are rarely given much attention.

I propose that a similar split now exists in the field of professional coaching between the researchers and practitioners—though in this instance the researchers are few in number and their work is essentially invisible to the practitioners and general public (other than a few

highly-biased studies indicating that professional coaching is indeed successful). In our field, it is not so much a matter of researchers being of higher status; rather, they are mostly being ignored by those doing the coaching—as we have found preliminarily in the present study (at least among many of the coaches completing the survey). Furthermore, there is not just neglect of research that has been done, there simply is not much research evidence directly related to the field of professional coaching. We make use of research from other fields (such as the neurosciences, psychology and management) but don't do much regarding research in our own field.

Members of the professional coaching community can do something about this. We can begin to do our own practice-based research. We can become scientist practitioners who test our own working hypotheses about engaging our clients. We can build and support a culture of evidence in which studies are being conducted that are much more sophisticated than the one represented in the Phase One reports I have produced. Qualitative studies should be published alongside quantitative survey-based studies. These complementary qualitative studies might incorporate case studies and narrative studies (based on extensive interviewing data). They might make use of analytic tools such as Grounded Theory and Discourse Analysis, as well as Phenomenological Analyses. A culture of evidence coupled with a culture of global dialogue will enable those of us who are engaged in the practice of professional coaching to fly a little bit less blind in a VUCA+ world.

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