



COACHING SPACE  
INSTITUTE



**HEADWAY**  
COACHING GROUP



# COACHING CERTIFICATION MANUAL

CREATING THE SPACE FOR  
PROMOTING EXCELLENCE

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## Welcome to the course!

Welcome to the world of Coaching and personal excellence. It is a pleasure to join you in this journey.

Coaching is a very dynamic and proactive skill and we believe that, in order to be able to support others throughout their process of change or achieving their objectives, as coaches, we must first experience self-coaching.

By directly experiencing coaching interventions, students can better integrate the presented concepts which they will then apply with their clients.

Therefore, throughout this course we will use an inductive and experiential teaching style, which we will adapt to meet the learning strategies and requirements of our participants.

Learning is a process of internal transformation that facilitates a change in our way of thinking, feeling and behaving. It enables people to acquire new knowledge, skills and develop their abilities.

Inductive learning proposes the involvement of three fundamental elements:

- 1) Walk before learning how to walk: Experiencing before logically understanding the concepts.
- 2) Conclude: Reflection of what happened; selection-interpretation-conclusion.
- 3) Generalize: The transfer of a particular conclusion to a more generally applicable context.

Below we present our alliance proposal for this learning journey.

Run the show. Become the protagonist instead of a spectator.

- Feel comfortable in the unknown. Learning unfolds in the learner's attempt to restore balance after being conveniently led by a given experience to a zone of discomfort or adaptive dissonance.
- Stay open. Offering constructive feedback is one of the biggest gifts we can give to a mind that is learning. Being open, receiving and offering feedback, means integrating learning.
- Doing promotes learning. We encourage you to actively experiment with new concepts, by putting them into practice in every available occasion.
- Together is easier: During the days that we are going to spend together you will discover that one of the richest aspects of this course are your colleagues. Each of them has had different experiences and experience the world in a different way than you. Knowing their experiences will enrich even more your own. In this aspect we ask for maximum respect for your classmates: maintain confidentiality regarding everything we discuss in class and please respect their needs.

## Designing the group alliance:

Your learning strategy is important to us. We want you to learn in the most suitable way possible, therefore please take time to reflect these questions and share your answers:

- I learn best when \_\_\_\_\_
- What I need from my trainers is \_\_\_\_\_
- What I need from my colleagues is \_\_\_\_\_
- I know that I obtain my best results when \_\_\_\_\_
- What I like to do when I learn is \_\_\_\_\_

# 1. What is Coaching

Coaching has been defined in many ways, however despite the definition, key concepts can be observed and are consistent in most definitions.

Such concepts are:

- Coaching is the process of supporting people to achieve their objectives.
- Coaches accompany clients from a current state to a desired state, supporting them to overcome obstacles that may present themselves on this journey of discovery.
- Coaches listen and ask questions that invite clients to reflect and reconnect with their full potential.
- Coaching is results oriented.
- Clients are whole and full of resources.

The International Coach Federation (ICF) defines coaching as a *“partnering process with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential..”*

*AA more detailed definition of coaching that ICF provides was published in 2007:*

*“Professional coaches provide an ongoing partnership designed to help clients produce fulfilling results in their personal and professional lives. Coaches help people improve their performance and enhance the quality of their lives. Coaches are trained to listen, observe, and customize their approach to individual clients needs. They seek to elicit solutions and strategies from the client, and they believe that the client is naturally creative and resourceful. The coach's job is to provide support to enhance the skills, resources, and creativity that the client already has.” (International Coach Federation, 2007).*

At a personal development level, coaching is considered to be a powerful human relationship in which trained coaches assist people to design their future, rather than get over their past.

Throughout a typically long-term relationship, coaches support clients in creating visions and goals in all aspects of their lives, as well as multiple strategies to support achieving these goals.

Coaches are able to recognize the genius, the strengths and the abilities of their clients being actively engaged in a supportive process that enables clients to discover their own solution, to be accountable for taking action towards a broader vision of their life, whilst maintaining a positive outlook of life in general.

At a professional level, coaching is the process of supporting individuals and teams to perform at their best, whilst fully using all their abilities. It involves drawing out people's strengths, helping them to by-pass personal barriers and limits, in order to achieve professional excellence in their field.

Historically, coaching has been focused on improving a specific behavioral performance by close observation and feedback.

At any level, coaching focuses on producing change, concentrating on defining and achieving specific goals. Coaching interventions are outcome-oriented, rather than problem-oriented. In other words, they are future-oriented rather than past-oriented.

Coaching focuses on solutions, promoting the development of new ways of thinking and acting.

## 2. THE ORIGINS OF COACHING

The term "Coach" comes from the English word for a "wagon or carriage". A coach is, literally, a means of transport that carries people from a current location to a desired location.

We can use this metaphor to illustrate the purpose of a coach. A coach accompanies a person in this journey, from a current state or situation to a desired state or outcome.

In this journey clients may encounter interferences, but there are also opportunities. The purpose of a coach is to shift the clients' attention to the opportunities and reconnect the person with their internal resources, in order to achieve the desired outcome.

From its origin, coaching has always been an emerging and evolving field, complex and dynamic, integrating the substance of many fields and the innovative thinking of great pioneers.

The emergence of coaching was a very gradual and slow process. There are several theories which support the initiation of this methodology and the Grounded Theory of the Roots is one significant theory which commemorates the foundation of coaching. Strong roots of coaching have been noticed in several disciplines, such as psychology, social sciences, business and several others.

In the following pages we will divide the progress of coaching, over the years, in major and impactful stages of coaching development.

### **Prior to 1900**

During the end of the 18th century and towards the start of the 19th century, it was noticed that philosophy emerged as a separate branch of social sciences and thus exclusive studies were carried out to study the intricacies of the human society and the individual as such. Psychology emerged in its initial form during this period wherein which there were vague descriptions of mental functions and perceptions.

The contemporary branch of modern management certainly has its roots established in the 19th century. It was towards the middle of this era, that theories and structuring such as training, motivation, organizational structure, etc. were laid out and came to notice during the industrial revolution.

Personnel management also emerged during this period, along with consulting and it was in between the 1880s to 1950s that the first breed of management consultants came into the picture. There were not as many changes which occurred in other disciplines during this period such as sports, performing arts or also in the field of education.

## 1900s through 1920s

This was the period of technological advances and scientific progress was at a peak during this time. In fact, it can be argued that the root disciplines of coaching were founded. Industrialization took an advanced turn and the discovery of the theory of relativity in physics played an important role.

Freud, who had a strong interest in Psychology, became the first person to interpret psychotherapy. By the end of this century, there were five sub-disciplines of psychology: clinical psychology, cognitive psychology, behavioral psychology, developmental psychology and educational psychology.

From the 1900s, there was a marked difference in how managers utilized scientific theories in managerial functioning, which was to a greater degree, in response to the Industrial Revolution which certainly demanded work specialization, the unity of command, proper hierarchical structures and coordination of activities.

## 1930s through to the 1950s

Advances in technology continued during this period and modern production methods started invading our lives in all aspects, such as management, education, consulting, even the military model of control and command. This time period actually saw a difference of opinion in the field of psychology and in fact many of the Freudian theories began to be rejected or questioned.

The second branch of psychology, Behaviorism, also disputed the theories of Freud and actually offered an empirical approach through scientific methods. In fact, the emergence and establishment of behaviorism, during the 1910s to the 1950s, was as a reaction to Freudian theories.

It was in the 1950s that Maslow and Rogers came up with a humanistic approach, which is known as the third theory of psychology where personal and phenomenological aspects of the human experience were given precedence. During this time, Fritz Perls also popularized Gestalt therapy. Cognitive Psychology also began to develop.

## 1960s through 1970s

The humanistic movement took place in the 1960s and it advised employers that employees need to be treated well. During this period, there was also a predominant importance given to business coaching in business literature. In fact, references to coaching evolved from human resource journals and started appearing more in training and management journals.

In the period from 1960 to 1979, 15 of the 23 articles written on the topic of coaching were published in training journals. Coaching began to get primary importance and there were four management books which were published on coaching. The main subjects captured in the essence of these books were how managers can utilize coaching to improve performance.

Before the 1970s, the term 'Executive Coaching' was not in use, rather the term 'Counselling' was dominant in the business domain. Initially, companies used to recruit Counselling executives who were like psychologists, so that managers could have one-to-one sessions with them. The coaching approach was later introduced and was unanimously accepted in the business environment.

## The 1980s

It was in between the 1970s and 1980s when the United States understood the potential of the coaching process in the business sector and concluded that coaching is essential to support managers, so that they can attain their performance goals and also contribute directly towards the success of the business. It was emphasized that all forms of coaching necessarily include two main features which are one-on-one conversations and concentration on performance or topics related to performance.

In Britain, the subject of coaching received a fresh meaning and referred to the process whereby people could conduct direct discussions with their colleagues, in an attempt to solve problems and thereby complete the required tasks. Coaching and counselling were often used interchangeably.

The 1980s definitely saw the growth of coaching and its complete domination of business literature. Journals greatly accepted the success of coaching and published numerous articles. It was during this time, that coaching was associated heavily with leadership development training and the management practice of learning new skills and understanding. Even the collaborative model of consultancy was referred to having certain similarities to that of coaching.

## The 1980s

It is surprising to note how the concept of coaching progressively spread during the nineties. References to coaching were continuously mentioned in journals and the increase of such articles drastically increased.

The development of the coaching industry has been tremendous. It has reached a level of maturity, due to the growth in coaching experience, an increase in the number of coaching professionals in various areas and its application by management and human resource professionals.

Several coaching books hit the market at this time. Articles written on coaching started flooding the various publications and this number rose drastically in the early 2000s. 39 books on coaching were also published and contributed heavily towards the strong development of coaching. Whitmore in 1992 his book "Coaching for Performance" popularized the GROW model and made coaching more accessible in the workplace.

## **2004 - onward**

In recent years, the sphere of coaching has adapted several models, where the root disciplines of coaching can be employed in various business sectors. Theories in the psychological section have been exclusively utilized for the purpose. There were also influences of coaching from disciplines such as sociology, linguistics and anthropology. In addition, the coach-client relationship is being extensively studied and monitored as well.

Business coaching has become a must in the corporate world. Companies understand that they cannot progress in the correct direction without including coaching in their development. Organization psychology further strengthened coaching by offering numerous strategies and also supported developmental counselling for key management personnel.

### 3 ICF ( THE INTERNATIONAL COACH FEDERATION)

The International Coaching Federation (ICF) is the leading global organization dedicated to advancing the coaching profession by setting high standards, providing independent certification and building a worldwide network of trained coaching professionals.

As the world's largest organization of professionally trained coaches, ICF provides instant credibility to its members. ICF is also committed to connecting member coaches with the tools and resources they need to succeed in their careers.

ICF offers the only globally recognized, independent credentialing program for coaching practitioners. ICF Credentials are awarded to professional coaches who have met stringent educational and experiential requirements and have demonstrated a thorough understanding of the coaching competencies that set the standards of the profession. Achieving credentials through ICF represents a coach's commitment to integrity, understanding and mastery of coaching skills, and dedication to their clients.

ICF also accredits programs that deliver coach-specific training. ICF-accredited training programs must complete a rigorous review process and demonstrate that their curriculum aligns with the ICF Core Competencies and Code of Ethics.

Today, ICF is specifically recognized among coaching professionals worldwide for:

- Developing coaching core competencies
- Establishing a professional code of ethics and standards
- Creating an internationally recognized credentialing program
- Setting guidelines through accreditation for coach-specific training programs
- Providing continuous education through world-class events, Communities of Practice (CPs) and archived learning.

*Source - ICF website, <https://coachfederation.org/about>*

We are proud to be part of the ICF Organization and to be accredited coaches, adhering to the ICF Code of Ethics and Coaching Core Competencies, which we strictly follow throughout this course and present to you in order to achieve excellence in the field of coaching.

## HISTORY OF ICF

Professional Coach Thomas Leonard started the International Coach Federation (ICF) in 1995 as a non-profit organization for fellow coaches to support each other and grow the profession. The following year, a president was appointed and a board of directors established. The first ICF Chapter was established, and by May 1996, there were more than 60 ICF Chapters worldwide.

### Milestones

1995: Thomas Leonard, with the support of others, founds the International Coach Federation (ICF) in the United States for the purpose of having a space for all coaches to support one another and help grow the profession.

1996: A president is appointed and a board of directors is established. The first issue of ICF Coaching News is sent to more than 400 subscribers. The first ICF Chapter is established and by May there are more than 60 chapters worldwide.

1997: Discussions around credentialing begin and a Coach Referral Service (CRS) is promoted.

1998: ICF merges with the Professional and Personal Coaches Association (PPCA), founded by Laura Whitworth, to strengthen the voice and credibility of professional coaching. The first ICF Credentials are awarded at ICF's conference in Scottsdale, Arizona, USA, and membership fees are approved.

1999: ICF begins to accredit coach-training programs. The Association hires an executive director and selects a management company to run daily operations. Membership exceeds 2,100 and more than 200 coaches hold an ICF Credential.

2000: ICF grows an average of 130 new members per month, many of whom join from Australia, Asia and Europe. The 2000 Annual Conference is held in Canada, the first ICF event held outside of the United States.

2001: ICF hosts a 24-hour "Round-the-clock, Round-the-world" ICF Member conversation. The call is hosted by ICF Board Members.

2002: ICF coaches host conferences in Australasia and Europe. The ICF Regulatory Committee is appointed to protect and preserve the integrity of the coaching profession.

2003: ICF forms a Past Presidents' Advisory Council to support the advancement of the Association and its mission.

2004: The ICF Board goes through a strategic review with an outside consultant to evaluate practices and facilitate growth. Membership reaches 7,900-plus members.

2005: ICF revises membership levels and credential categories to raise professional standards. The Association presents the first International Prism Award, recognizing businesses and organizations with impactful coaching programs. ICF transitions to its present management company with staff offices head-quartered in Lexington, Kentucky, USA.

2006: The Board begins work on the ICF Strategic Plan to establish a solid strategic direction for several years. ICF sponsors a global summit in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

2007: ICF and PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP release results from the inaugural Global Coaching Study.

2008: Regional Service Centres open for Asia-Pacific and Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

2009: Results from the 2009 ICF Global Coaching Client Study are released. The Chapter Leader Pilot Program is launched, offering Chapter Leaders around the globe an opportunity to participate in a coaching and mentoring relationship.

2010: ICF celebrates its 15th anniversary with more than 17,000 members and 6,900 ICF Credential-holders.

2011: The Latin American Regional Service Centre opens and ICF's first-ever Brand Identity Manual is released to support the creation of a unified global voice for ICF and professional coaching.

2012: A Regional Service Centre opens for North America. ICF and PwC release results from the 2012 ICF Global Coaching Study. More than 900 coaching professionals convene in London, United Kingdom, for a sold-out ICF Global Conference—the first to be held outside North America.

2013: ICF exceeds 10,000 Credential-holders. The inaugural ICF Advance event is held in Washington, D.C., USA, delivering high-level, cutting-edge education around cultural competence to a presential and virtual audience.

2014: Regional Service Centres open in Kuala Lumpur and Russia. ICF exceeds 15,000 Credential-holders and 25,000 Members. The association adds a full-time staff position to support the growth of ICF Chapters worldwide. Coaches gather in Cleveland, Ohio, USA; Malmo, Sweden; and Rio de Janeiro for networking and education at three regionally hosted ICF Global Conferences.

2015: ICF celebrates 20 years of advancing professional coaching. The Association launches an enhanced Research Portal and a new online resource for prospective coaches. ICF Chapter Leaders from every Chapter worldwide gather for the first time ever for the 2015 ICF Global Leaders Forum in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

2016: ICF and PwC release results from the 2016 ICF Global Coaching Study. ICF launches a new regional support structure to better serve and remain connected to a growing global coaching community and the Association exceeds 20,000 Credential-holders.

2017: ICF hosts first-ever Converge event, drawing more than 1,600 attendees from 61 countries. The new coachfederation.org, unveiled in December, reaches 713,118 page views within the first month.

2018: ICF exceeds 25,000 credential-holders and 1,000 Master Certified Coaches. The Association celebrates inaugural classes of Young Leader Award winners and Circle of Distinction inductees.

2019: At the Global Leaders Forum in Dublin, Ireland, ICF's CEO and 2019 Global Board Chair announce plans for ICF's expansion. Coaches from 75 countries gather in Prague, Czech Republic, for ICF Converge 2019. After a rigorous job analysis process, ICF unveils a revised competency model. The 2019 Global Coaching Survey yields 22,457 responses from 161 countries.

2020: In its 25th anniversary year, ICF becomes the International Coaching Federation and transitions from a single organization to a federation of six family organizations: ICF Coaching in Organizations, ICF Coach Training, ICF Credentials and Standards, ICF Foundation, ICF Professional Coaches and ICF Thought Leadership.

## 4 COACHING TRENDS

Depending on the geographical region, we can notice the development of coaching with different approaches. However, no matter the approach, we can clearly see the philosophical and psychological influence in various schools.

Although coaching is a young profession in humanity, it has had a rapid evolution thanks to the influences of different disciplines, which is why it continues to grow, whether in the personal, professional and business fields, always with the aim of serving the needs that are arising at the speed that humanity advances.

It is important to mention that in the last 50 years humanity has achieved an evolution that had not been achieved in the last 1000 years, that is why, as a result of this evolution, disciplines such as Coaching are emerging, which focus on developing not only the "doing" but the "being" in order to offer a balanced life and well-being. We are social, linguistic and emotional beings and thus coaching started to "divide" its attention on these three main areas whilst maintaining focus on future vision and objectives achievement.

Although modern coaching has been influenced by existentialist philosophy, phenomenology, human psychology, it also has contributions from constructionism, Zen philosophy, sports, consulting, training and personal development, etc. All of them converging in some of the coaching trends that are currently known.

There are currently three known streams: **North American coaching, European coaching, and South American coaching.**

To understand each of these trends and the bases on which each of the schools has been created, it is important to identify the current that each one adopts.

### EUROPEAN COACHING

John Withmore is considered the founder of this trend, in his book *Coaching for performance* (2nd edition), he thanks Timothy Gallwey, the creator of "The Inner Game", for being the main influencer in European coaching. John Withmore takes Gallwey's concepts and puts them into practice.

Withmore notes that: *"Good coaching is a skill, perhaps an art, that requires a deep understanding and extensive practice if you want to extract all its amazing potential."*

In this trend, the objective of coaching is to accompany in order to unleash the hidden potential of people, so the coach must focus on seeing their clients from a "potential perspective". *"A coach does not see people as they are, but as they can become."*

European coaching emphasizes on the unlimited inner potential and the ability of the individual to choose a better life. The key concepts are: Awareness, Self-confidence (beliefs) and Responsibility.

## SOUTH AMERICAN COACHING (ONTOLOGICAL)

This trend or school of coaching is known throughout the world as “**ontological coaching**”.

Ontology is the philosophical study of being. More broadly, it studies concepts that directly relate to being, in particular becoming, existence, reality, as well as the basic categories of being and their relations.

The word ontology (“study of being”) is derived from the Greek meaning of “being; that which is” and -logia meaning “logical discourse”.

Some philosophers, notably in the traditions of the Platonic school, contend that all nouns (including abstract nouns) refer to existent entities. Other philosophers contend that nouns do not always name entities, but that some provide a kind of shorthand for reference to a collection either of objects or of events. In this latter view, mind, instead of referring to an entity, refers to a collection of mental events experienced by a person; society refers to a collection of people with some shared characteristics, and geometry refers to a collection of specific kinds of intellectual activities.

Ontological coaching therefore has its main focus on language.

Of Chilean origin, with Fernando Flores, Rafael Echeverria and Julio Olalla, we must also consider Humberto Maturana, who, from a deep philosophical analysis of language, lays the foundations for a new way of observing how people (also called “linguistic beings”) talk and how the way they talk has an impact on their well-being.

### **Language ontology establishes three postulates:**

- We interpret human beings as linguistic beings.
- We interpret language as generative.
- We interpret that human beings create themselves with and through language.

Language generates “a way of being” which in turn moves us into “action”,

## NORTH AMERICAN COACHING

This trend was founded by Thomas Leonard and focuses on 5 major themes in Coaching:

- What is Proficiency?
- A review of Language Patterns
- Proficiencies for Expanding Greatness
- Proficiencies for Expanding Trust
- Proficiencies for Expanding Credibility.

These 5 themes contain 15 Coaching Proficiencies that form the Coaching System under the following chapters:

- Proficiencies for Expanding Greatness
  - Engages in Provocative Conversations
  - Reveals the Client to Themselves
  - Elicits Greatness
  - Expands the Clients Best Efforts
  - Champions the Client

- Proficiencies for Expanding Trust
  - Enjoys the Client Immensely
  - Navigates Via Curiosity
  - Communicates Cleanly
  - Designs Supportive Environments
  - Respects the Clients Humanity

- Proficiencies for Expanding Credibility
  - Recognizes the Perfection In Every Situation
  - Hones In On What Is Most Important
  - Shares What Is There
  - Enters New Territories
  - Relishes Truth

These 15 proficiencies gave rise to the creation of the 11 Core Competencies of the international Coach Federation, which was founded by Thomas Leonard in 1996, this trend has contributed to the spread of coaching in an extraordinary way.

It is important to highlight that this style of coaching focuses on obtaining results, on the actions to be carried out in relationship with the expected results. This trend focuses on opportunities that clients have by boosting their self-esteem and motivation, whilst challenging clients to give the best of themselves. It is mainly focused on the "Being" of the client.

In the next chapter we will take you through the 11 ICF Core Competencies and the ICF Code of Ethics that are the main pillars upon which this course was developed. Throughout the course we will investigate each of these listed competencies and ethics.

## 5 THE ICF CORE COMPETENCIES

The ICF Core Competencies were developed to provide a greater understanding of the skills and approaches used within today's coaching profession as defined by ICF.

The ICF Global Board has approved a revised competency model that will go into effect in early 2021.

These competencies and the ICF definition of coaching were used as the foundation for the ICF Coach Knowledge Assessment (CKA).

The Core Competencies are grouped into four clusters according to those that fit together logically based on common ways of looking at the competencies in each group. The groupings and individual competencies are not weighted—they do not represent any kind of priority in that they are all core or critical for any competent coach to demonstrate.

### A. Setting the Foundation

**1. Meeting Ethical Guidelines and Professional Standards**—Understanding of coaching ethics and standards and the ability to apply them appropriately in all coaching situations.

1. Understands and exhibits in their own behaviors the ICF Code of Ethics (see Code, Part III of ICF Code of Ethics).
2. Understands and follows all ICF Ethical Guidelines.
3. Clearly communicates the distinctions between coaching, consulting, psychotherapy and other support professions.
4. Refers client to another support professional as needed, knowing when this is needed and the available resources.

**2. Establishing the Coaching Agreement**—Ability to understand what is required in the specific coaching interaction and to come to agreement with the prospective and new client about the coaching process and relationship.

1. Understands and effectively discusses with the client the guidelines and specific parameters of the coaching relationship (e.g., logistics, fees, scheduling, inclusion of others if appropriate).
2. Reaches agreement about what is appropriate in the relationship and what is not, what is and is not being offered, and about the client's and coach's responsibilities.
3. Determines whether there is an effective match between his/her coaching method and the needs of the prospective client.

## B. Co-Creating the Relationship

3. **Establishing Trust and Intimacy with the Client**—Ability to create a safe, supportive environment that produces ongoing mutual respect and trust.

1. Shows genuine concern for the client's welfare and future.
2. Continuously demonstrates personal integrity, honesty and sincerity.
3. Establishes clear agreements and keeps promises.
4. Demonstrates respect for client's perceptions, learning style, personal being.
5. Provides ongoing support for and champions new behaviors and actions, including those involving risk-taking and fear of failure.
6. Asks permission to coach client in sensitive, new areas.

4. **Coaching Presence**—Ability to be fully conscious and create spontaneous relationship with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible and confident.

1. Is present and flexible during the coaching process, dancing in the moment.
2. Accesses own intuition and trusts one's inner knowing—"goes with the gut."
3. Is open to not knowing and takes risks.
4. Sees many ways to work with the client and chooses in the moment what is most effective.
5. Uses humor effectively to create lightness and energy.
7. Confidently shifts perspectives and experiments with new possibilities for own action.
8. Demonstrates confidence in working with strong emotions and can self-manage and not be overpowered or enmeshed by client's emotions.

## B. Communicating Effectively

5. **Active Listening**—Ability to focus completely on what the client is saying and is not saying, to understand the meaning of what is said in the context of the client's desires, and to support client self-expression.

1. Attends to the client and the client's agenda and not to the coach's agenda for the client.
2. Hears the client's concerns, goals, values and beliefs about what is and is not possible.
3. Distinguishes between the words, the tone of voice, and the body language.
4. Summarizes, paraphrases, reiterates, and mirrors back what client has said to ensure clarity and understanding.
6. Encourages, accepts, explores and reinforces the client's expression of feelings, perceptions, concerns, beliefs, suggestions, etc.
7. Integrates and builds on client's ideas and suggestions.
9. "Bottom-lines" or understands the essence of the client's communication and helps the client get there rather than engaging in long, descriptive stories.
10. Allows the client to vent or "clear" the situation without judgment or attachment in order to move on to next steps.

**6. Powerful Questioning**—Ability to ask questions that reveal the information needed for maximum benefit to the coaching relationship and the client.

1. Asks questions that reflect active listening and an understanding of the client's perspective.
2. Asks questions that evoke discovery, insight, commitment or action (e.g., those that challenge the client's assumptions).
3. Asks open-ended questions that create greater clarity, possibility or new learning.
4. Asks questions that move the client toward what they desire, not questions that ask for the client to justify or look backward.

**7. Direct Communication**—Ability to communicate effectively during coaching sessions, and to use language that has the greatest positive impact on the client.

1. Is clear, articulate and direct in sharing and providing feedback.
2. Re-frames and articulates to help the client understand from another perspective what he/she wants or is uncertain about.
3. Clearly states coaching objectives, meeting agenda, and purpose of techniques or exercises.
4. Uses language appropriate and respectful to the client (e.g., non-sexist, non-racist, non-technical, non-jargon).
5. Uses metaphor and analogy to help to illustrate a point or paint a verbal picture.

#### D. Facilitating Learning and Results

**8. Creating Awareness**—Ability to integrate and accurately evaluate multiple sources of information and to make interpretations that help the client to gain awareness and thereby achieve agreed-upon results.

1. Goes beyond what is said in assessing client's concerns, not getting hooked by the client's description.
2. Invokes inquiry for greater understanding, awareness, and clarity.
3. Identifies for the client his/her underlying concerns; typical and fixed ways of perceiving himself/herself and the world; differences between the facts and the interpretation; and disparities between thoughts, feelings, and action.
4. Helps clients to discover for themselves the new thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, emotions, moods, etc. that strengthen their ability to take action and achieve what is important to them.
5. Communicates broader perspectives to clients and inspires commitment to shift their viewpoints and find new possibilities for action.
6. Helps clients to see the different, interrelated factors that affect them and their behaviors (e.g., thoughts, emotions, body, and background).
7. Expresses insights to clients in ways that are useful and meaningful for the client.
8. Identifies major strengths vs. major areas for learning and growth, and what is most important to address during coaching.
9. Asks the client to distinguish between trivial and significant issues, situational vs. recurring behaviours, when detecting a separation between what is being stated and what is being done.

**9. Designing Actions**—Ability to create with the client opportunities for ongoing learning, during coaching and in work/life situations, and for taking new actions that will most effectively lead to agreed-upon coaching results.

1. Brainstorms and assists the client to define actions that will enable the client to demonstrate, practice, and deepen new learning.
2. Helps the client to focus on and systematically explore specific concerns and opportunities that are central to agreed-upon coaching goals.
3. Engages the client to explore alternative ideas and solutions, to evaluate options, and to make related decisions.
4. Promotes active experimentation and self-discovery, where the client applies what has been discussed and learned during sessions immediately afterward in his/her work or life setting.
5. Celebrates client successes and capabilities for future growth.
6. Challenges client's assumptions and perspectives to provoke new ideas and find new possibilities for action.
7. Advocates or brings forward points of view that are aligned with client goals and, without attachment, engages the client to consider them.
8. Helps the client "Do It Now" during the coaching session, providing immediate support.
9. Encourages stretches and challenges but also a comfortable pace of learning.

**10. Planning and Goal Setting**—Ability to develop and maintain an effective coaching plan with the client.

1. Consolidates collected information and establishes a coaching plan and development goals with the client that address concerns and major areas for learning and development.
2. Creates a plan with results that are attainable, measurable, specific, and have target dates.
3. Makes plan adjustments as warranted by the coaching process and by changes in the situation.
4. Helps the client identify and access different resources for learning (e.g., books, other professionals).
5. Identifies and targets early successes that are important to the client.

**11. Managing Progress and Accountability**—Ability to hold attention on what is important for the client, and to leave responsibility with the client to take action.

1. Clearly requests of the client actions that will move the client toward his/her stated goals.
2. Demonstrates follow-through by asking the client about those actions that the client committed to during the previous session(s).
3. Acknowledges the client for what they have done, not done, learned or become aware of since the previous coaching session(s).
4. Effectively prepares, organizes, and reviews with client information obtained during sessions.
5. Keeps the client on track between sessions by holding attention on the coaching plan and outcomes, agreed-upon courses of action, and topics for future session(s).
6. Focuses on the coaching plan but is also open to adjusting behaviors and actions based on the coaching process and shifts in direction during sessions.

1. Is able to move back and forth between the big picture of where the client is heading, setting a context for what is being discussed and where the client wishes to go.
2. Promotes client's self-discipline and holds the client accountable for what they say they are going to do, for the results of an intended action, or for a specific plan with related time frames.
3. Develops the client's ability to make decisions, address key concerns, and develop himself/herself (to get feedback, to determine priorities and set the pace of learning, to reflect on and learn from experiences).
4. Positively confronts the client with the fact that he/she did not take agreed-upon actions.

## 6 THE ICF CODE OF ETHICS

The ICF Code of Ethics is composed of five main parts:

- Introduction
- Key Definitions
- ICF Core Values and Ethical Principles
- Ethical Standards
- Pledge

### 1. Introduction

The ICF Code of Ethics describes the core values of the International Coach Federation (ICF Core Values), they are the ethical principles and ethical standards of behavior for all ICF Professionals (see definitions). Meeting these ICF ethical standards of behavior is the first of the ICF core coaching competencies (ICF Core Competencies). That is the coach "Demonstrates ethical practice: understands and consistently applies coaching ethics and standards."

The ICF Code of Ethics serves to uphold the integrity of ICF and the global coaching profession by:

- Setting standards of conduct consistent with ICF core values and ethical principles.
- Guiding ethical reflection, education, and decision-making
- Adjudicating and preserving ICF coach standards through the ICF Ethical Conduct Review (ECR) process
- Providing the basis for ICF ethics training in ICF-accredited programs

The ICF Code of Ethics applies when ICF Professionals represent themselves as such, in any kind of coaching-related interaction. This is regardless of whether a coaching Relationship (see definitions) has been established. This Code articulates the ethical obligations of ICF Professionals who are acting in their different roles as coach, coach supervisor, mentor coach, trainer or student coach-in-training, or serving in an ICF Leadership role, as well as Support Personnel (see definitions).

Although the Ethical Conduct Review (ECR) process is only applicable to ICF Professionals, as is the Pledge, the ICF Staff are also committed to ethical conduct and the Core Values and Ethical Principles that underpin this ICF code of ethics.

The challenge of working ethically means that members will inevitably encounter situations that require responses to unexpected issues, resolution of dilemmas and solutions to problems. This Code of Ethics is intended to assist those persons subject to the Code by directing them to the variety of ethical factors that may need to be taken into consideration and helping to identify alternative ways of approaching ethical behavior.

ICF Professionals who accept the Code of Ethics strive to be ethical, even when doing so involves making difficult decisions or acting courageously.

## 2. Key Definitions

- “Client”—the individual or team/group being coached, the coach being mentored or supervised, or the coach or the student coach being trained.
- “Coaching”—partnering with Clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.
- “Coaching Relationship”—a relationship that is established by the ICF Professional and the Client(s)/Sponsor(s) under an agreement or a contract that defines the responsibilities and expectations of each party.
- “Code”—ICF Code of Ethics
- “Confidentiality”—protection of any information obtained around the coaching engagement unless consent to release is given.
- “Conflict of Interest”—a situation in which an ICF Professional is involved in multiple interests where serving one interest could work against or be in conflict with another. This could be financial, personal or otherwise.
- “Equality”—a situation in which all people experience inclusion, access to resources and opportunity, regardless of their race, ethnicity, national origin, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, immigration status, mental or physical disability, and other areas of human difference.
- “ICF Professional”—individuals who represent themselves as an ICF Member or ICF Credential-holder, in roles including but not limited to Coach, Coach Supervisor, Mentor Coach, Coach Trainer, and Student of Coaching
- “ICF Staff”— the ICF support personnel who are contracted by the managing company that provides professional management and administrative services on behalf of ICF.
- “Internal Coach”— an individual who is employed within an organization and coaches either part-time or full-time the employees of that organization.
- “Sponsor”—the entity (including its representatives) paying for and/or arranging or defining the coaching services to be provided.
- “Support Personnel”—the people who work for ICF Professionals in support of their Clients.
- “Systemic equality”—gender equality, race equality and other forms of equality that are institutionalized in the ethics, core values, policies, structures, and cultures of communities, organizations, nations and society.

### 3. ICF Core Values and Ethical Principles

The ICF Code of Ethics is based on the ICF Core Values and the actions that flow from them. All values are equally important and support one another. These values are aspirational and should be used as a way to understand and interpret the standards. All ICF Professionals are expected to showcase and propagate these Values in all their interactions.

### 4. Ethical Standards

The following ethical standards are applied to the professional activities of ICF Professionals:

#### Section I—Responsibility to Clients

As an ICF Professional, I:

1. Explain and ensure that, prior to or at the initial meeting, my coaching Client(s) and Sponsor(s) understand the nature and potential value of coaching, the nature and limits of confidentiality, financial arrangements, and any other terms of the coaching agreement.
2. Create an agreement/contract regarding the roles, responsibilities and rights of all parties involved with my Client(s) and Sponsor(s) prior to the commencement of services.
3. Maintain the strictest levels of confidentiality with all parties as agreed upon. I am aware of and agree to comply with all applicable laws that pertain to personal data and communications.
4. Have a clear understanding about how information is exchanged among all parties involved during all coaching interactions.
5. Have a clear understanding with both Clients and Sponsors or interested parties about the conditions under which information will not be kept confidential (e.g., illegal activity, if required by law, pursuant to valid court order or subpoena; imminent or likely risk of danger to self or to others; etc.). Where I reasonably believe one of the above circumstances is applicable, I may need to inform appropriate authorities.
6. When working as an Internal Coach, manage conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest with my coaching Clients and Sponsor(s) through coaching agreement(s) and ongoing dialogue. This should include addressing organizational roles, responsibilities, relationships, records, confidentiality and other reporting requirements.
7. Maintain, store and dispose of any records, including electronic files and communications, created during my professional interactions in a manner that promotes confidentiality, security and privacy and complies with any applicable laws and agreements. Furthermore, I seek to make proper use of emerging and growing technological developments that are being used in coaching services (technology-assisted coaching services) and be aware how various ethical standards apply to them.

8. Remain alert to indications that there might be a shift in the value received from the coaching relationship. If so, make a change in the relationship or encourage the Client(s)/Sponsor(s) to seek another coach, seek another professional or use a different resource.
9. Respect all parties' right to terminate the coaching relationship at any point for any reason during the coaching process subject to the provisions of the agreement.
10. Am sensitive to the implications of having multiple contracts and relationships with the same Client(s) and Sponsor(s) at the same time in order to avoid conflict of interest situations.
11. Am aware of and actively manage any power or status difference between the Client and me that may be caused by cultural, relational, psychological or contextual issues.
12. Disclose to my Clients the potential receipt of compensation, and other benefits I may receive for referring my Clients to third parties.
13. Assure consistent quality of coaching regardless of the amount or form of agreed compensation in any relationship.

## **Section II—Responsibility to Practice and Performance**

As an ICF Professional, I:

14. Adhere to the ICF Code of Ethics in all my interactions. When I become aware of a possible breach of the Code by myself or I recognize unethical behaviour in another ICF Professional, I respectfully raise the matter with those involved. If this does not resolve the matter, I refer it to a formal authority (e.g., ICF Global) for resolution.
15. Require adherence to the ICF Code of Ethics by all Support Personnel.
16. Commit to excellence through continued personal, professional and ethical development.
17. Recognize my personal limitations or circumstances that may impair, conflict with or interfere with my coaching performance or my professional coaching relationships. I will reach out for support to determine the action to be taken and, if necessary, promptly seek relevant professional guidance. This may include suspending or terminating my coaching relationship(s).
18. Resolve any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest by working through the issue with relevant parties, seeking professional assistance, or suspending temporarily or ending the professional relationship.
19. Maintain the privacy of ICF Members and use the ICF Member contact information (email addresses, telephone numbers, and so on) only as authorized by ICF or the ICF Member.

### Section III—Responsibility to Professionalism

As an ICF Professional, I:

20. Identify accurately my coaching qualifications, my level of coaching competency, expertise, experience, training, certifications and ICF Credentials.
21. Make verbal and written statements that are true and accurate about what I offer as an ICF Professional, what is offered by ICF, the coaching profession, and the potential value of coaching.
22. Communicate and create awareness with those who need to be informed of the ethical responsibilities established by this Code.
23. Hold responsibility for being aware of and setting clear, appropriate and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern interactions, physical or otherwise.
24. Do not participate in any sexual or romantic engagement with Client(s) or Sponsor(s). I will be ever mindful of the level of intimacy appropriate for the relationship. I take the appropriate action to address the issue or cancel the coaching engagement.

### Section IV—Responsibility to Society

As an ICF Professional, I:

25. Avoid discrimination by maintaining fairness and equality in all activities and operations, while respecting local rules and cultural practices. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination on the basis of age, race, gender expression, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability or military status.
26. Recognize and honor the contributions and intellectual property of others, only claiming ownership of my own material. I understand that a breach of this standard may subject me to legal remedy by a third party.
27. Am honest and work within recognized scientific standards, applicable subject guidelines and boundaries of my competence when conducting and reporting research.
28. Am aware of my and my clients' impact on society. I adhere to the philosophy of "doing good," versus "avoiding bad."

### 5. The Pledge of Ethics of the ICF Professional

As an ICF Professional, in accordance with the Standards of the ICF Code of Ethics, I acknowledge and agree to fulfil my ethical and legal obligations to my coaching Client(s), Sponsor(s), colleagues and to the public at large.

If I breach any part of the ICF Code of Ethics, I agree that the ICF in its sole discretion may hold me accountable for so doing. I further agree that my accountability to the ICF for any breach may include sanctions, such as mandatory additional coach training or other education or loss of my ICF Membership and/or my ICF Credentials.

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## 7 COACHING AND DIFFERENT DISCIPLINES

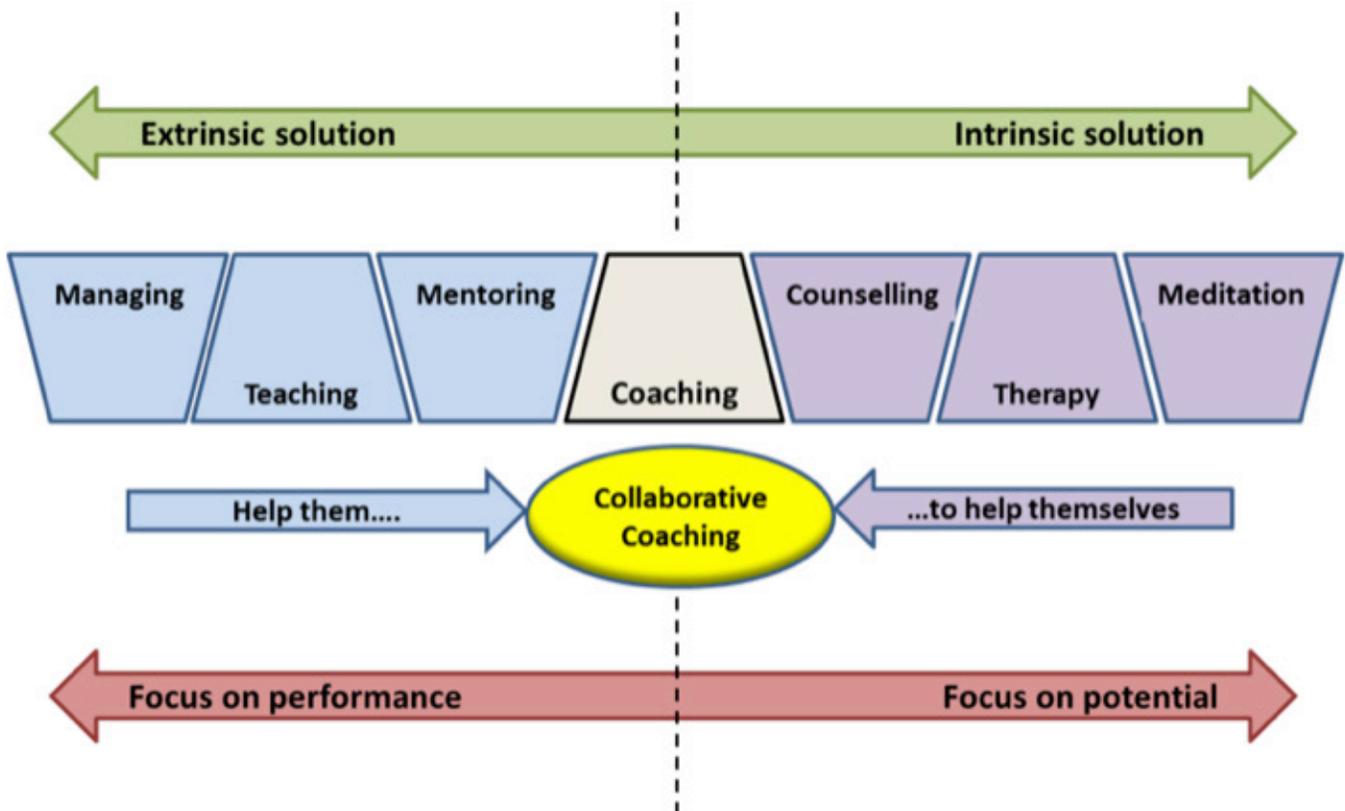
We have seen what coaching is so far. Let's have a look now at what Coaching is not.

Coaching is not therapy, consulting, training, sports development or "mentoring"; however, the differences can be so subtle that they can cause confusion in distinguishing one from the other. In addition, there is a chance that a consultant, mentor, educator, or therapist will offer coaching, which may be another reason why a client may find it difficult to have clarity between one profession and another.

Therefore, it is extremely important that the coach assumes the responsibility of offering clarity to the client when he is coaching versus other branches of knowledge to minimize confusion.

On the other hand, new coaches, at the beginning of their coaching career, are sometimes confused about how to correctly distinguish between the client's needs and correctly assess the adequate means of support. Being able to identify these aspects, is a central pillar of a successful coaching process.

Mick Cope (coach and author of various coaching books), in his book "The 7 Cs of Coaching" (2004) position coaching very clearly in the following diagram:



© Mick Cope, 2004

The diagram demonstrates two major areas of focus:

- **Extrinsic Solution:** focused on others, more experienced professionals or individuals that **help** a client reach a specific set of abilities that will enable them to reach a specific set of goals.
- **Intrinsic Solutions:** focused on disciplines that **help** people to help themselves by introspection and re-framing experiences, whilst tapping into their inner resources.

The diagram's author Mick Cope sees coaching as a collaborative process, whereby a coach **supports** the client to help themselves.

It's important to note that each of the support solutions within the spectrum offers a different approach to an individual engaging with an issue. The decision to use any one of them is going to be based on a number of factors. These include factors such as the individual client and their expectations and needs and the issue to be dealt with.

The below figure illustrates the differences between different means of helping people.

Coaching	Therapy	Mentoring	Consulting
Deals mostly with a person's present and seeks to guide them into a more desirable future.	Deals mostly with a person's past and trauma, and seeks healing	Deals mostly with succession training and seeks to help someone do what you do	Deals mostly with problems and seeks to provide information (expertise, strategy, structures, methodologies) to solve them
Does not put a diagnostic and neither treats corresponding aspects	Diagnoses and treats the corresponding aspects	Assess development needs	Evaluates needs and provide guidance.
Works with clients that have access to internal resources and that are able to initiate and maintain changes.	Works with clients that need medical assistance to maintain changes.	Works with clients that need to achieve a specific set of results and/oration, then tells you the objectives by enhancing performance	The consultant stands back, evaluates a situation and how to fix it
Relationship based on equal parts	Relationship based on therapist - patient	Mentors are considered to be a more experienced person	Expert-person with problem relationship (consultant has the answers)
Relationship set usually in a specific "time frame"	Relationship usually without a specific time frame.	Ongoing process especially in a business environment	Relationship usually framed in time.
Future oriented	Past oriented	Present and Future Orientation	Future orientation on achieving specific goals.
Focus on solutions and action plans	Focused on understanding and healing	Focuses on results by sharing own experience	Does not normally address or deal with emotions (informational only)

## 7 COACHING VS. THERAPY

Knowing when to refer a client to other professionals is an important part of any coach's professional practice.

Let's have a look at an article published by ICF as a coaching resources " Referring a client to therapy: a set of guidelines" in order to gain clarity upon this topic.

*"Coaching is one of many helping professions. Other modalities of support include mentoring, consulting and psychotherapy. Understanding the difference between coaching and psychotherapy, also referred to as therapy or counselling, is important to best serve the needs of the client. [...]"*

*The field of psychology frequently refers to working with the whole person; that is, interacting with the many components that make up an individual (the psychological, biological, emotional, social, and cultural). In this sense, a coach may encounter client issues that are outside of their expertise and scope—which is to be expected. Referring a client to therapy or another resource is part of the coaching process. Other resources include a support group, a mentor, a specialist coach, or a spiritual representative. Having a list of helping professionals on file as a reference offers a useful resource for you and your client.*

*The most important indicator to keep in mind when deciding whether or not to refer a client to a therapist is level of daily functioning. Ask yourself, "Is the client's issue interfering with their **daily functioning**?" Daily functioning refers to a wide range of activities for personal self-care, such as feeding, grooming, work, home-making, and leisure. If a client does not have the capacity (internal and external resources) to function in daily activities (professionally or personally), then it is likely time to make a referral. A mental health professional is equipped to diagnose and help the individual develop coping skills to manage deep emotions related to difficult situations. [...]"*

### **WHY REFER**

*The ICF Core Competencies and Code of Ethics both include imperatives for referring clients to other support professionals as needed. Additionally, research shows that early intervention through referral can positively impact clients' mental health outcomes.*

### **WHEN TO REFER**

#### **Coaching at Competency Level**

*Providing optimal services to a client means coaching within the scope of your coaching agreement, expertise, and competency level. If a client is facing a challenge that goes beyond your experience and expertise as a coach, or if you feel uncomfortable working with a client on a particular issue, you should consider other resources for them. Let the client know that you feel the issue is outside your area of expertise. Empower your client by co-creating options and identifying other resources to address the issue, including therapy if appropriate.*

*Self-reflection and self-awareness are important in recognizing when an issue is beyond your scope and competency as a coach.*

*If interactions with your client prompt concern or discomfort, or they interfere with your work, then your services might not be the best fit for the client. Consider consulting your coaching mentor or supervisor or trained mental health professional to help determine if a referral is appropriate if you feel any of the following:*

- *Responsible for your client*
- *Pressure to solve your client's problems*
- *Stressed out by your client's issues*
- *Like the problem is more than you can handle*
- *Anxious when your client approaches you*
- *Your client is too dependent or reliant on you*
- *Like you have failed your client*

### ***Interfering with Daily Functioning***

*Observe the level of your client's impairment. Impairment refers to an alteration in an individual's health status so as to interfere with activities of daily living, such as self-care. When the problem gets in the way of everyday functioning (professionally, personally, or socially), you should make a referral to a mental health professional.[...]*

### ***Not Making Progress***

*If the problem is interfering with the client's effective coaching progress and is not moving forward after a reasonable amount of time, then the client might have an underlying issue that could be worked out in therapy. [...]* " Such examples may be:

- Not making progress because of psychological issues.
- A past experience that still needs healing and continuously arise in the sessions getting in the way of the progress.
- Client wishing to continuously process a specific feeling during sessions.
- Self-defeating behaviour may still get in the way of attempts to change.
- Being stuck in a past incident and may not be able to get over it.

### ***"SIGNS FOR REFERRAL***

The descriptions of the mental health categories in this guide are not meant to help diagnose clients but to help coaches better understand and recognize problems that warrant referring a client to therapy. The mental health issues described are the most common problems that a coach is likely to encounter.

Common mental health issues include:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Eating disorders
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Substance abuse or addiction
- Suicidal ideation
- Thought disorders

### *Signs of Psychological Distress:*

- *Marked changes in mood such as irritability, anger, anxiety, or sadness.*
- *Decline in performance at work or school*
- *Withdrawal from social relationships and activities*
- *Changes in weight and appearance, including negligence of personal hygiene*
- *Disturbances in*

### **WHEN TO REFER**

- *Meet privately with your client. Choose a time and place where you will not be interrupted. Bring up the topic when you both have time, do not feel rushed, and are not preoccupied.*
- *Set a positive tone. A good way to start the conversation is by expressing your concern and care for your client's well-being. Set a positive, calm tone. Be hopeful, gentle, patient, supportive, direct, honest, and non-judgemental.*
- *Stay focused and be specific. Point out specific signs, behaviours, or changes that you have observed.*
- *Ask and listen. Ask open-ended questions that deal directly with the issue to help create awareness for the client. Actively listen to the client by recognizing, acknowledging, and validating what you heard.*
- *Allow for silence. Allow your client time to tell the story.*
- *Ask the client how they feel about your suggestion to go to therapy. Encourage the client to share their response to what you have said.*
- *Restate your concern and care for the client.*
- *Identify resources and referrals. Share information you have about the referral you are suggesting and the potential benefit to the client.*
- *Keep the lines of communication open. End the conversation in a way that allows you or the client to revisit the subject another time if they wish.*

### **AFTER THE REFERRAL**

*You have referred your client to other resources that might serve them better. Now what? You and your client may work together to identify whether or not to continue coaching. It is acceptable to follow up with the client to see how the therapy is going.*

*Following up and checking in on the client's decision is also part of the referral process, showing support and managing accountability. If the client is not open to the suggestion, remember that it is their decision whether or not to go. If the client raises the same issue blocking progress in the future, circle back to the original suggestion one more time. At that point you may need to decide whether or not you want to continue coaching. Refer back to your coaching agreement with the client to go over what is and what is not covered in coaching.*

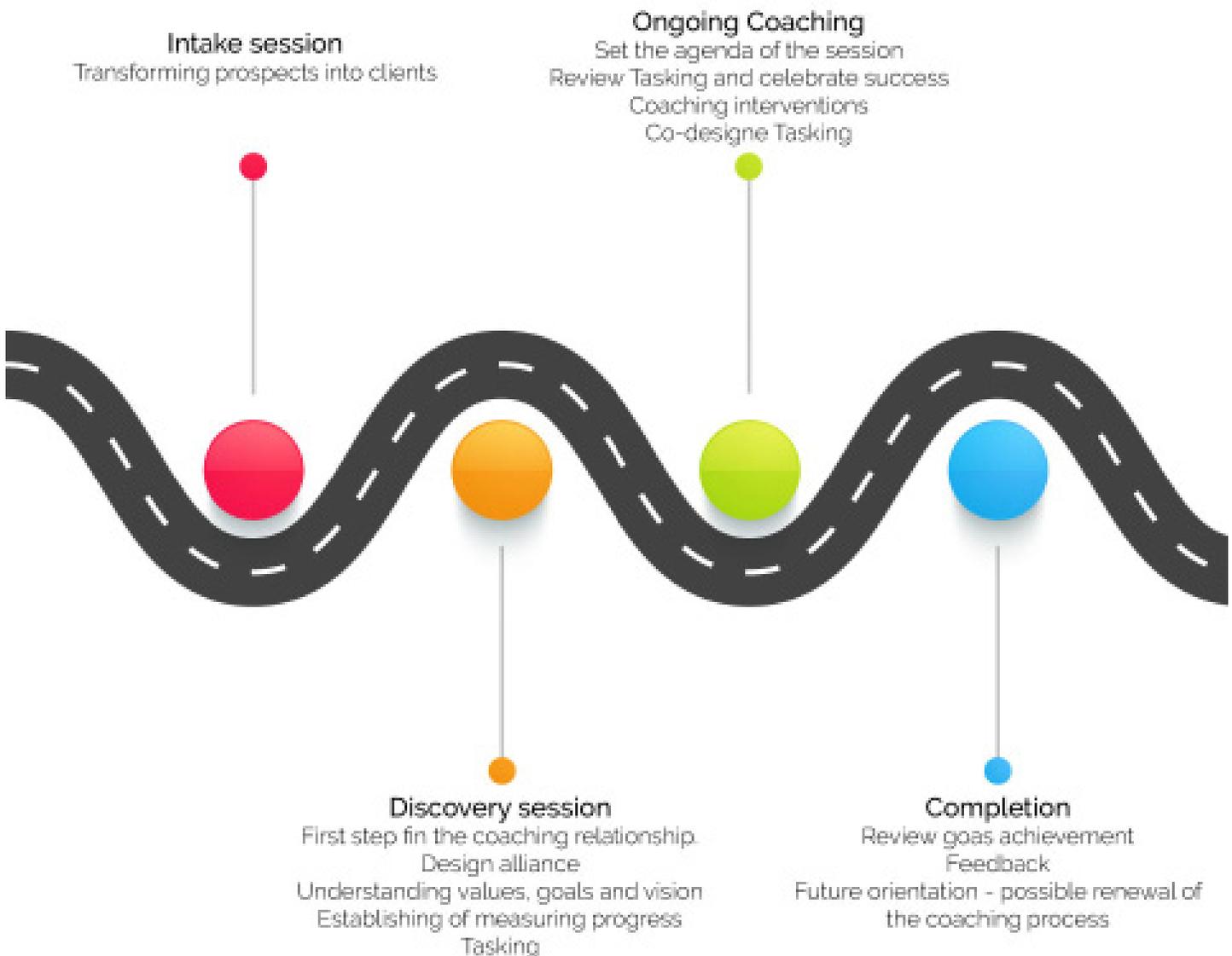
*If your client decides not to go to therapy, remember that it is their choice. Accept their decision. Make it clear to your client that you are willing to revisit the subject, whenever they wish. If eventually you decide that they cannot be coached effectively until they address the issue, then let your client know and suggest that you postpone coaching until they can take full benefit from it.*

## II. THE PROCESS OF COACHING

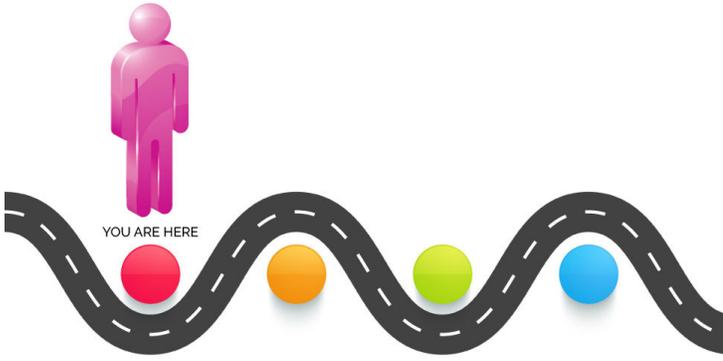
This chapter aims to provide you with an overview of the coaching process from beginning to end, so that you can have clarity and a structured approach to the coaching flow.

Terminology:

- **Coaching session:** a conversation that takes place within a formal frame either in a one to one or in a group format. A coaching session usually lasts for up-to 60 minutes.
- **Coaching process:** Is the series of ongoing coaching sessions in a pre-established formal format with the purpose of supporting clients to achieve a desired outcome.



# 1 THE INTAKE SESSION (LIVING BROCHURE)



Robert Alderman (1996) was one of the first people who used the term living brochure to describe a conversation between a coach and a potential client.

In the Coaching world, the “Living Brochure” is also known as the “enrolment conversation” or the “intake session”.

It was first labelled “living brochure” because the conversation takes the place of a printed

brochure the coach would hand to a prospective client. Coaching is essentially a language-based series of conversations and therefore clients hire their coach based more on who the coach is and how the client experiences the coach rather than on marketing materials.

When thinking about coaching, many coaches focus their whole attention on how to do their best in supporting their clients, which is undoubtedly a very important aspect. Even so, before we get to worry about our performance as coaches, we need to keep in mind a very important aspect: transforming a prospect into a coaching client.

When coaches first begin their business, they often feel a sense of urgency that can manifest in two ways:

- Time urgency: transforming prospects immediately into a paying engagement.
- Experience and competitive urgency: coaches often agree to coach anyone who comes along

Although this impulse is common and perhaps understandable, we believe that coaches and clients benefit when they are prepared and intentional about the initial call.

We strongly recommend coaches to design a structure for this initial interview, as clients and coaches ideally should be assessing the fit for the prospective alliance.

Setting up an initial 30 minutes or so call/meeting with the client is crucial, as it will enable clients and coaches to set the base for their future collaboration. Such interview sessions will enable:

- Coaches to discover whether the clients' aspirations and goals are ones that the coach can get behind and support and also if it falls under their niche.
- Clients can ask questions about the coach's style and understand if this relationship is the perfect fit from their perspective.
- The coach can understand what kind of partnership clients are looking for and what they need from coaches. If the relationship moves forwards, then this will be discussed even further in the intake session.

Other important topics to discuss, in order to assess if this is the perfect and comfortable fit, include:

- Payment capabilities
- Hours and timing

Agreement about the method and frequency of coaching sessions (online or on-site), etc.

The coach's intention is to discover the client's initial coaching goals, as well as other long-term possibilities and to enroll the client to work with the coach.

The coach's goal during the discovery conversation is to create a sense of synergistic partnership. If this type of alliance can be created during the conversation, the match is probably harmonious enough to build a successful coaching alliance.

Patrick Williams and Diane S. Mendez (one of the first 25 ICF MCC Coaches), in their book "Becoming a Professional Life Coach" suggest the following process for an Enrolment Conversation.

#### 1. Ice-Breaker: focus on your client.

People tend to like to talk about themselves and in fact that is the reason for why they contact coaches. Addressing open questions invite people to open up. You may ask something like *"Tell me, how did you decide at this point of your life to make this contact?"*

#### 2. Narrow the attention

We may ask something like *"What things would you like to change in your life within the following (weeks, months, year)?"* or *"What would you like to see happening in your life in the next..."*

#### 3. Wants-Needs-Values

Identifying boundaries it is also a very important aspect at this stage. Boundaries are determined by clients' needs that are in turn linked to important things in their life (values).

We may ask something like *"Is there something that comes in the way of what you wish to achieve or change?"* or *"What is important for you in achieving this?"*

#### 4. Identify Blind Spots

Blind spots are areas of the client's life that might not be directly related to the goal that they are putting on the table. Expanding client's view supports coaches to increase awareness of the client's need for coaching. We may ask something like: *"Which areas of your life do you feel that carry a heavy responsibility?"* or *"What other areas of your life do you see impacted/affected by the need of achieving this goal?"*

#### 5. Plant the Seed

It is a good moment now to link clients' needs with the solution. Planting the seed in the mind of the client, that achieving their goal is possible, is a crucial step. Doing something for oneself is a strong argument that reconnects people with their inner potential. We may ask something like *"What do you do for yourself when you have free time?"* or *"How do you create time for doing the things that inspire you, motivate you or excite you?"*

## 6. Mutual Commitment

It is important to actively engage clients in the process of change or achieving their goals. We may say something like *"When engaging in a coaching process, there is a mutual commitment that we both need to make. If this works out for us are you prepared to\_\_\_\_\_"* (For example: *"are you prepared to put aside thoughts like "I don't know if I can do it" or "Emotions of fear" in order to achieve X?"*)

## 7. Financial Aspects

We may link what we've explored so far with this step by saying something like *"Do you agree then, that it is valuable for you to attain this objective?" or "Do you find it useful to start a coaching process to support you achieve this outcome?"*

Fees depend upon the length of the sessions, the frequency of the sessions, availability of the coach between sessions and other factors.

## 8. Focus attention on Values

Maintain your client's attention on values. We may say something like *"If you knew success was guaranteed or failure was removed, how would you be living differently?" or "What significant opportunities are out there for you personally or in your business that you are not yet taking advantage of?" or "What hidden gift or talent might you have that deserves a more prominent place in your life?"*

These questions get to inherent values that may be outside the clients' awareness due to a belief that those options are impractical or impossible. These questions allow clients space to reflect on what they really value and what they really want.

## 9. Testing

This builds on Step 6, where the coach focuses on mutual commitment. In this step, the coach will have a sense of what the coach can ask of this person in the coaching relationship. Ask questions to check commitment more fully, such as: *"Would you be willing to try new options, even if they are unfamiliar and very different from how you now work and live every day?" or "Would you be willing to partner with me in discovering your habitual patterns, assessing whether they are beneficial or need realigning and seeing what new options you might create?"*

## 10. Process Check

If the coach has decided that the person would be a good fit, this step helps to discover whether the client is ready to go, or where the client is in the process of deciding about coaching. A good fit means that the client is aligned with the coach's desired client profile or niche and the coach can fully support the client and their intentions. Ask something like: *"At this point you seem like the kind of client I love to work with. I want to check in with you. Do you think that your intentions can be realized by working with me? Are you ready to get started?" "When you imagine the life you want, how do you see yourself starting your day?"*

Follow that up with a "barometer question" such as, *"Can you tell me how you are thinking about coaching and its value to you from our conversation so far?"* The coach might then ask whether the potential client has any questions, or whether there's anything the coach can clarify or expand on.

### 13. Educate About Coaching

Find out how much clients know about coaching. Many clients will have read articles about coaching and will have some understanding of it. Ask, *"Have you read articles about coaching?"* Determine whether you need to provide clients with articles or refer them to your Web site, or another Web site, to learn more about the profession of coaching and how it works.

### 14. Make a Declaration

Coaches often don't tell potential clients how much they'd like to work with them. It has been reported by many clients that even when they interview coaches, few ever say, *"I'd enjoy working with you. I'd love to be your coach."*

If this person is someone you want to coach, find a comfortable way to tell this to them. If your potential client says something like, *"I need more time"* or *"Let me think about it,"* you can ask, *"Are there any more questions you'd like to ask now to help you clarify your decision?"* or *"Would you prefer to contact me when you're ready?"*

This is the natural point in the conversation for your potential client to decide if this works. If your potential client is very hesitant, or a low risk taker, or if your potential client has financial considerations, you have many ways to work with these situations.

### 15. Wrap-up

This is a perfect time to check understanding, or if client needs more details about topics that might not have been covered at this stage. We may ask something like *"Do you have any questions for me at this moment?"*

### 16. Make an Offer

Suggest, in specific terms, the next steps. *"Our next step would be to schedule a first session (the discovery session) where we will review our welcome pack, the agreement and reaffirm and clarify your intentions and goals for the next 90 days. Can we begin that work on (the date of at \_ \_ \_ time?"* Or, *"My repeat client appointments are on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Is a morning or evening time better for you? With 24 hours' notice, there is no charge for rescheduling. After all, we both know life happens."*

### 16. Send a written Proposal of Collaboration

Many coaches prefer to send a Coaching Collaboration Proposal at this stage, so that clients can review the proposed collaboration terms and have the chance to discuss them in the Discovery Session.

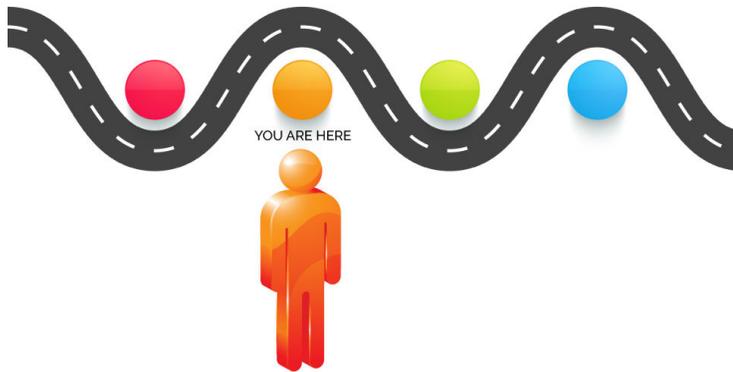
Other coaches prefer to present a Proposal of Collaboration within the Discovery session and discuss it on the spot. If this is your wish, we recommend you to book a 90 minutes Discovery session with your client, so that you allocate 30 minutes to this administrative conversation and focus on coaching for the rest of the time. This way you will make sure that you don't mix coaching with administrative topics.

You can find examples of Coaching Collaboration Proposals in your Additional Tools Book (pg. 3)

## 2 THE DISCOVERY SESSION

### 2.1 Definition

The discovery session is in fact the first appointment with your client. It is the first steps that you and your client will take together and it provides the background necessary to launch the coaching relationship.



It is the frame for all future sessions, the relationship and when the magic of coaching happens.

The discovery session is the foundation of our SPACE model, as the field that emerges between you and your client will be based on the pillars that you have both co-designed.

### 2.2 Purpose

Discovery creates a solid base upon which the coaching relationship is built. It is a key step that allows coaches and clients to focus their time and space to:

- Establish trust, confidence and credibility.
- Clarify any logistical details that might have been missed during the intake session.
- Co-Design the Alliance.
- Identify and establish the client's goal and means of measuring progress.
- Identify essential coaching elements such as Values, Vision, Life Purpose.
- Clarify your own coaching style and get to know each other better.

#### 2.2.3 Best Practice

Just as there is no singular "right" way to coach, there is no right or wrong way to go about structuring Discovery sessions. However, several practices are commonly observed during this stage of a coaching process and these are mainly related to the effective identification of the client's:

- Current state (The Wheel of Life)
- Desired state (Goal)
- Values and beliefs
- Resources and limitations. (SWOT)

We shall develop more on these practices in our first chapter of the Coaching Space Model: Setting the Stage.

## 3 THE FLOW OF COACHING

### FROM THE FIRST TO THE LAST SESSION

If during the Discovery Session you gained more understanding of your client's objective, for which they hired you as their coach and you gained more understanding of their values, areas of strengths and weakness, you are now in the moment of taking the first step into the journey of supporting clients to achieve that goal.

From one session to another, there are some fundamental steps that a coach performs, which we call START model:

#### a) **SETTING** the agenda of the session

Once a goal is established, we need to take little steps towards achieving it. These little steps are to be defined entirely by your client, whilst having your support. These steps we call the "Agenda of the session".

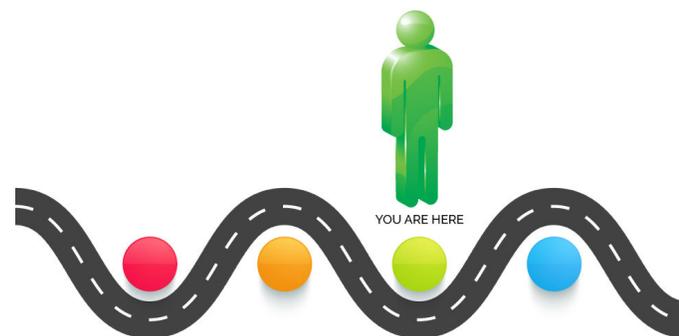
It is essential to understand that clients will choose the topic of conversation when opening the coaching session, or in other words, they will establish the frame of the coaching conversation.

Coaches facilitate a space within which the client can unfold whatever is bubbling on the surface for them in that moment, whatever is important for them to work on.

If, as coaches, we impose our own direction, valuable information may be lost and we risk imposing our own way of prioritising and doing things on our clients. We risk working on something that we "believe" to be important for the client, instead of "what really matters".

The benefits of establishing the agenda of the session:

- Allowing clients to frame the session will give structure for the ongoing conversation and it will also provide you valuable information about the direction in which our clients are moving.
- It supports the client to recognize a helpful topic to progress towards their objective.
- It helps clients reconfirm their outcome.



	What is it	Questions
<b>VISION</b>	<p>A vision is a general view of the overall professional or personal "what for" that a person might have.</p> <p>It is a sense of "What for" am I doing all of the things that I'm doing.</p> <p>It relies on a person's values and beliefs and many times it is an unconscious force that guides people.</p>	<p>Responds to questions such as:</p> <p>"What for do I want to achieve a specific goal?"</p> <p>"On who else might this achievement have an impact?"</p> <p>"What other benefits do I, or those around me, experience if I achieve this goal?", etc</p>
<b>GOALS</b>	<p>Are specific objectives that client's might have.</p> <p>They are conscious desires that clients wish to achieve.</p> <p>Goals support (sometimes) an unconscious vision, values and beliefs that a person holds.</p> <p>They are the reason for which people become coaching clients.</p>	<p>Respond to questions such as:</p> <p><i>"What do you want to achieve?"</i></p> <p><i>"What is your goal"</i></p> <p><i>"What is your objective?"</i></p> <p><i>"How may I support you as a coach?", etc</i></p>
<b>AGENDA</b>	<p>It is a small step taken during a coaching session towards achieving a desired goal.</p> <p>It is a way to narrow down the topics that need to be discussed during the time frame of the session.</p>	<p>Respond to questions such as:</p> <p><i>"What is important for you to talk about today?"</i></p> <p><i>"Where should we start?"</i></p> <p><i>"What would you like to talk about today?", etc</i></p>
<b>TASKING</b>	<p>Tasks are the finest detail of a coaching process. They are specific activities that are to be taken by the client and that are meant to move clients from "talking" to "doing" and implementing change.</p>	<p>Respond to questions such as:</p> <p><i>"What are you going to do knowing everything that you know now?"</i></p> <p><i>"What will you do in order to put into practice our conversation?", etc</i></p>

We can see that we are moving from a more general overview (Vision), to a more detailed one (tasking), which all together will support clients to get to where they desire to be.

We shall be talking in greater detail about each of these components along the course, but for the purpose of providing you with a general overview of the coaching process, let's look at this stage and how to establish the Agenda of the session.

Possible questions that you may address to establish the agenda:

- *"What would you like to get out of our session today?"*
- *As we talk about \_\_\_\_\_, what would be something you could take away from this session to make it helpful for you?*
- *"What would make our session a successful one?"*
- *"What is important for you to talk about today?"*
- *"What would be a good topic for you to talk about today?"*
- *"What would you like to have clarity on, by the end of the session?"*

## b) TRACKING MULTIPLE TOPICS

Clients sometimes come to a session venting out various concerns that they might have in that moment. As coaches, many times, we face situations where clients might have various topics in front of their eyes and they don't know which way to go first.

A possible threat might be to rush into trying to resolve all of the topics at the same time, even if sometimes those paths are going in the same direction.

In such situations, it is very useful to narrow down those multiple topics by asking something like:

*"I'm hearing x, y, z (naming their topics) with which one would you like to start today?"*

## c) ALIGNMENT:

Many times, clients stick to their overall coaching objective throughout the session, but many other times, they put on the table a new topic that might slightly deviate from the initial objective.

It is very important that when we set the agenda for a session, we understand, in which direction we are we moving. Therefore, when we hear topics that deviate from the overall objective we may ask something like:

*"How is this topic related to your objective of...?":*

*"How does this topic support you achieving? "*

As clients will always define the agenda of the session, we need to have the flexibility to adapt to their wants and needs. Deviating from the main objective is sometimes a situation that coaches have to face. This can happen either because, by starting to work on an objective we may realize how that achievement might have an impact on other objectives, or simply because there is change in the client's priorities or current situation.

change in client's priorities or current situation.

The most important thing is to support your clients in whatever is meaningful to them, whilst promoting clarity on the direction in which you are both moving.

Making explicit that the direction of the entire process might have changed, will enable clients to decide what is most relevant for them in that particular moment and will also give you a great opportunity to re-establish or to redefine a meaningful objective for the coaching process.

#### d) REVIEW

Reviewing refers to two very important aspects of a coaching session:

##### **Review the agenda within the session:**

Having a clear agenda of the session will enable coaches to review their achievement regarding that particular topic and to receive valuable feedback from their clients when closing the session.

It helps us check if the agenda was established and echoed correctly throughout the session. We may ask something like:

*"How did we do regarding the topic you wanted to discuss today?"*

*"How do you feel about the topic that you chose for our session today?"*

*"Do you feel that you have achieved what you wanted for today's session?"*

*"How well did we address your agenda today?"*

*"What did you learn today?"*

*"What will you take-away from today's session?"*

*"What's different for you now?"*

##### **Review the actions and celebrate the progress from one session to another:**

As we always say "what doesn't get measured, doesn't get done".

Reviewing if an established action was done by your client is equally as important as establishing one. Therefore, at the beginning of a new session, it is important to check your client's accomplishment. You may ask something like:

*"How did it go with doing x or y?"*

*"What was your experience in doing .... "*

If a client didn't put into practice the actions that he committed to do in the previous session, it is a good time to investigate the reasons why that happened by asking something like:

*"What came in the way of you doing\_\_\_\_\_?"*

This question will allow you to understand the blockers which might be:

- Internal ones: own limitations, lack of ecology, beliefs, etc.
- External ones: time, environment, etc.

If your client carried out the actions they committed to, this is a good time to celebrate this achievement. You may acknowledge your client's steps, in order to empower your client and re-enforce the progress or/and you may simply ask something like:

*"How will you celebrate this achievement?"*

*"Would you like to take a moment just to acknowledge this achievement?"*

## e) TASKING

We all know that talk without action will not lead to progress and/or change. Therefore, it is extremely important that we close our sessions with a commitment to action from our clients that will support the topic chosen for the session.

Remember that coaching is not giving advice or impose our own actions on people. We are there to promote a good and effective way of designing meaningful actions for our clients, that will support the progress towards achieving their objectives.

We may ask something like:

*"Knowing what you know now, what will you do?"*

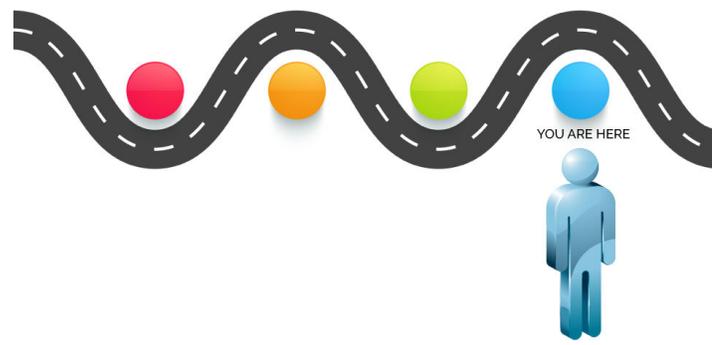
*"What will you do to make sure that this will happen as we have spoken?"*

*"What action can you take to...?"*

*"What needs to be done now...?"*

*"What will you do as your first step?"*

We will be talking in more detail about how to co-design actions in a future chapter, as this is a crucial step in our SPACE model.



## CLOSING A COACHING PROCESS

Coaching is a process that has a starting point and eventually, an end point.

The purpose of any coaching engagement is for our coaching client to become better, whether that is as a manager, a team member, a leader, a small business owner, or in pursuit of a new personal scenario, or a new business venture.

Often-times, the very act of having a coaching session is the greatest value of all, because we are providing a dedicated period of time for our coaching client to pause and reflect, providing a supportive, non-judgemental, confidential setting.

Some fundamental aspects are covered during the last session of your coaching collaboration process.

## DEBRIEF

Looking back at the overall progress and goal achievement will round up the coaching process and will support you to reconfirm if there are any pending areas of development towards the achievement of your client's goal.

You may focus on three questions within the frame of Past - Present - Future:

- WHAT: was done, if there is anything pending to be done now and what will they plan to do in the future?
- HOW: it was done, how does the client feel in this moment - how will they maintain their achievement in the future?
- WHO: was I - who am I - who do I want to be?

## FUTURE ORIENTATION

After working through the process, you now may want to make sure that your client will maintain a specific change that they have made.

You may ask your client about a general overview for the next 6 months for example.

## SUPPORT

Often clients find it very useful to have their coach support them after the process. This is a good time for you to establish how will your client find support when needed.

## CLOSING

Thanking your client and closing the process.

# III. THE PILLARS OF COACHING

So far, we spoke about Coaching as a process, however, it is equally important to look at the “equipment” that a Coach needs in order to provide a successful coaching process.

We look at a Professional Coach through a three-dimensional lens: Skills, Attitude and Tools which along this course we will be touching in greater details.

Professional coaches excel in the simultaneous use of these three dimensions and are constantly hungry to develop and master them. This constant interest in developing these areas, is the difference that makes the difference in the coaching field.

## 1. SKILLS

Skills are the activities/capabilities we are able to deliver and what we learnt and developed during our professional coaching training and practice.

The core coaching competencies were developed by ICF to *“support greater understanding about the skills and approaches used within today’s coaching profession.”*

In practice, they're the basis for evaluating coaches who want to get their ACC, PCC or MCC credential from ICF. Depending on the level, the coach is expected to have greater mastery of these coaching competencies.

A list of the most important required skills are:

- Coaching presence
- Use of powerful questions
- Active listening
- Direct Communication
- Creating Awareness for their clients
- Designing Actions
- Planning and Goal Settings
- Managing progress and accountability

## 2. ATTITUDE

If skills refer to WHAT we are capable of doing, attitude refers to HOW we make use of those skills within the frame of our mind set.

There has always been the question about which aspect is the most important? to have the necessary skills or the adequate attitude.

We believe that when skills and attitude work together, excellence occurs.

Attitude is the place wherefrom we deploy our skills. It is the container where we successfully develop our skills, interventions and where we support our clients.

The ICF Ethical Code is the foundation upon which we build our entire coaching mind-set.

Successful coaches respect a code of conduct, they act with integrity, honesty and sincerity. They keep their promises and they are able to create a space of trust and intimacy with their clients, acting from a place of genuine curiosity. They demonstrate empathy and above all, they look for ways to self-development, in order to best support their client's interests.

They have a positive outlook and they inspire their clients with positivity, hope and empowerment.

## 3. TOOLS

Tools are effective interventions, exercises and questions that a coach uses in order to support their clients to move forward and achieve their goals.

If Skills refer to "WHAT" we are can do, Attitude to "HOW" we make use of our skills, then Tools are the WAYS in which we support our clients.

In addition to this manual, you have an entire workbook with a variety of tools that you may use in your coaching sessions.

# IV. THE SPACE COACHING MODEL

We believe that Coaching is all about creating a space where clients can embark on a journey of self-discovery, of establishing links with their resources, in a safe yet challenging environment. A space where they can stretch their boundaries, in order to achieve their objectives and demonstrate excellence.

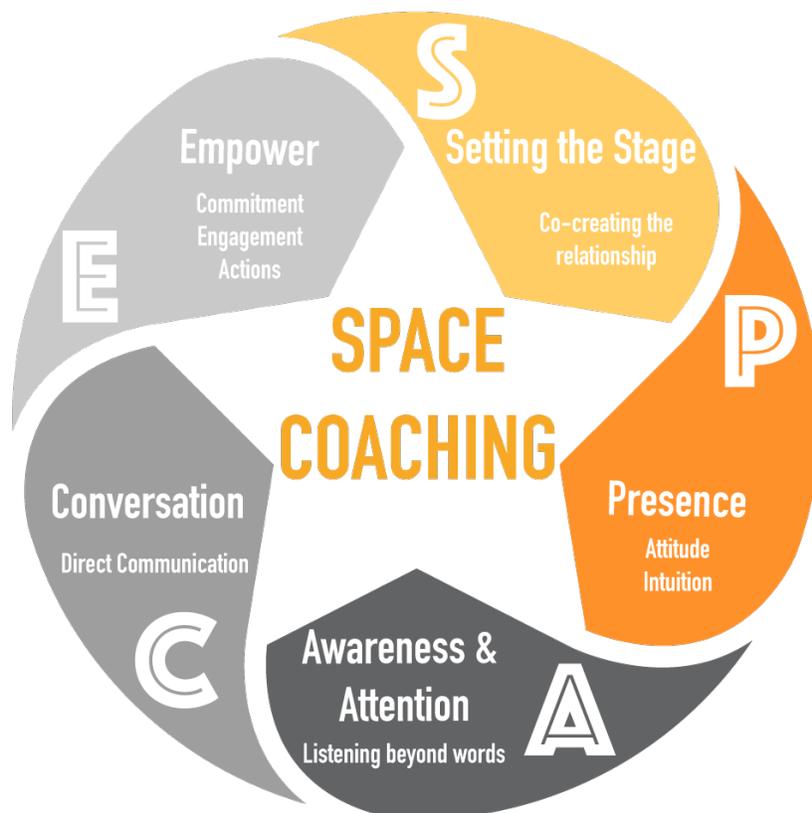
It is well known that the environment in which we live, can have an immense impact on our thoughts, mindset and emotional state, which in turn will lead us to a specific set of behaviors and results.

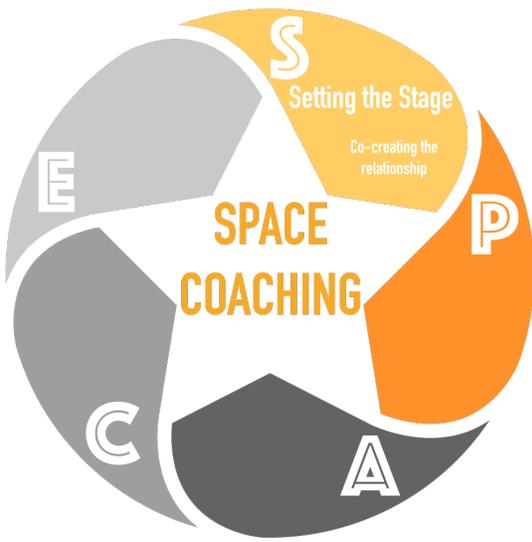
How many times in your life did you feel inspired and empowered in the presence of someone, whereas at other times, you felt hopeless or lacking focus, or maybe you just didn't feel exciting or motivated?

As coaches, we want to create a space where clients tap into the best version of themselves, where they reconnect with their internal force and inner strength, where they feel empowered to take the necessary steps towards their desired outcomes.

Therefore, the base upon which other coaching dimensions are built is a space of trust, intimacy and empowerment for our client.

That is why we build all the elements of coaching based on the five dimensions of the SPACE MODEL





## 1. RELATIONSHIP: CORE CONCEPTS

When coaches work with clients, they simultaneously manage three key aspects of coaching: the relationship with the client, the overall process of coaching (goals, framework, and expectations) and the coaching conversations that occur.

By creating the relationship, we build a container within which the coaching process and the coaching conversation takes place. It is the glue, that glues together, the client's experience, progress and achievements. This is why, even before we start coaching, we as coaches, should pay a lot of attention to how we build the foundation where everything will unfold. In other words: paying attention

to setting the stage that will facilitate positive change for our clients.

Robert Dilts defines a relationship under the following formula:  $1+1=3$  meaning the Coach, the Client and the Relationship in itself.



This space is a very dynamic field, as it is fueled by the intention that both Coach and Client bring into this space.

## 1.2. CREATING THE SPACE

The “**Intention**” is an unconscious process that it determines our behavior and attitude within the space that forms the relationship.

Both client and coach have their own intention when they engage in a coaching process.

A client's intention might be to seek support in achieving a goal, to successfully produce a change in their lives, to feel happier or to simply strive for excellence. In fact, these are the reasons why they make the decision to come to coaching.

As coaches, our intention should be to create a space that supports three main elements: trust, understanding and empowerment.

Amy Cuddy, a Harvard Social Psychologist, said that in the first seconds that a person meets you, they will unconsciously judge you based on two things: “*Can I trust you?*” and “*Do I respect you?*”.

### Trust

If respect is related more to the coach's ethics, trust relates to a need to feel safe. As coaches we need to create a safe place where clients can work on areas of their lives that may be sensitive and are of great importance to them.

Remember that during the coaching process, clients may face their internal saboteurs, their limitations and their dark corners that they need to face, in order to make progress and change. As a coach, you can't ensure clients that this space will be a comfortable one, but you can definitely ensure them that they will feel safe and accompanied.

We need to create a space where clients can feel comfortable, open up to a coaching conversation, where they feel safe to share information and explore new ways of thinking.

Two main attributes that build trust in a relationship are:

**a) Confidentiality:** Clients need to understand that the information they share with you is confidential and stays only with you in this coaching space. This fundamental ground rule of confidentiality needs to be present and promised at the beginning of the relationship (during the Discovery session as we've seen in our previous chapters). It is also key that the coach informs the client about the rare circumstances under which they would be compelled to break that confidentiality: If the coach believes that to withhold information might lead to harm to the client or to others, for example.

**b) Truth:** Telling the truth is another important attribute that fosters trust. Clients actually expect the coach to speak the truth and not hold back. Coaches use the truth as a means for growth.

On the contrary, faking it, stepping over issues, playing “nice” when sometimes it's time to tell the hard truth are not strategies that will serve the client in the long term.

## The three dimensions of confidence in Coaching:

**A) Trust in myself, as a coach:** A coach must trust their coaching skills, their potential, and their ability to support their clients.

**B) Trust in you, as a client:** A coach believes that the client is complete and full of resources. They trust in the fact that the client is not fragile and therefore they can hear the truth from their coach and that it supports them on their journey.

**C) Trust the coaching process itself:** A coach relies on the potential of coaching, self-discovery, and on the client's natural ability to find solutions. A coach flows in the moment with their client, without trying to lead the conversation in a predetermined direction. They feel comfortable with what comes up next during the session and meets the client where they are.

## Understanding

A space where clients feel heard without judgements and deeply understood. Just think for a second about how many times in your life you held back on saying something to someone just because you thought that they would not understand you or that they might judge you.

As coaches we listen with the intention to support the client move forward and not to judge their ways of being, thinking or acting. This attitude will enable clients to speak their truth, to vent their emotions and to challenge and explore new ways of thinking.

**Clients are creative and they know the answers to their questions**, that means that the **coach's job is to be curious and ask questions**. The questions coaches ask are provocative, open-ended, inviting. The questions invite clients to look in a certain direction, but the invitation has no preconceived conclusion or judgment attached to it. It is a question that comes from the intention of understanding genuinely and supporting the client. These are not leading questions and coaches are not at all attached to the answer they receive. If it is not a good place to look, clients will know and say so, or the coach will see that it was a dead-end and ask a different question. Therefore, coaches trust their clients and look for those clues.

Curiosity is the attribute that defines "understanding". Coaches are playful and often act from a place of wonder by asking questions like:

*"I wonder, what do really want?"*

*"I am curious, how would it be to...?"*

*"I wonder what your life would be like if you could design it to be any way you like?"*

*"I am curious, what you are deeply committed to?"*

*"I wonder what's holding you back?"*

## Holistic Approach

*In coaching we believe that the client is whole and full of resources.* We come into this space with the intention of reconnecting clients with their full potential, as equal partners in this journey. Therefore we do not "help" our clients "but we "support" them throughout this journey. "Helping" has a subtle meaning that we know more, or we can do more than our clients, whereas "supporting" expands the idea that we are equal partners, that we are there to shine light on our client's strengths, in order to promote progression.

*Clients are not broken, they know what they need and want.* It is just that somewhere along the way they have lost that connection with their full potential, and that is what our role, as coaches, is: to foster a space where clients can reconnect with their inner strengths, where they feel inspired and encouraged to move forward. This space must also be filled with courage: the client's courage to step boldly into their lives, even if sometimes they're not all that sure what it is they're stepping into. Coaches empower clients by believing (and transmitting that belief to their clients) that the client is capable, strong, and enough. The championing that the coach provides is like a light that lights up the path for their client.

It is interesting that, sometimes, it is the coach who expects more from the client than the client dares to expect of themselves, because the coach sees the brilliance and possibility and holds on to that, while the client sometimes is trapped in their own history and judgment.

Nevertheless, a coach also *accepts the client exactly where they are*, even when they are failing or playing small. It is a kind of paradox, however, it is the spaciousness of coaching.

### *We coach taking into account three dimensions: Being - Doing - System (or Meaning).*

When we coach at the level of "being" , we consider:

- Who the client is and who do they want to be.
- How they feel and how they would like to feel.
- What values and beliefs does the client have and what makes a goal meaningful to them.

When we coach at the level of "doing" , we consider:

- What the client is currently doing and what they have to do to move forward.
- What behavior and capabilities do they need to activate.
- What actions should they take in order to move forward.

When we coach at the level of "system/meaning", we consider:

- What for and for whom do they want to achieve a specific objective.
- What makes objectives meaningful for the client.
- The impact that the environment has on the client and the impact that the client has on their environment.
- The threats and opportunities that the client may have in a given context.

## 1.3. RAPPORT

Why do we click with someone instantly?

People seek to express responsiveness through symmetry. This means that unconsciously people like people who are like them or who have certain qualities that they might wish to have, or when they feel understood. In other words, people feel safe in a space where they "speak the same language".

When we are in a restaurant and we look around, we can easily observe physical body synchronizations, in a symmetrical way, between a couple or a group of friends. Creating a relationship based on trust is one of the pillars of Coaching.

We call rapport the quality of a relationship, that is based on mutual respect and openness. Rapport can be linked to empathy.

### **RAPPORT IS...**

Rapport is a state of unconscious responsiveness between people, when they feel safe to open up in a certain space or environment.

There are various degrees of rapport and actually rapport can be observed when one person creates a good relationship with another, so both are in tune, at the same frequency.

Therefore, Rapport is an essential skill that coaches need to enhance and use at the beginning of a coaching session. Remember: in order to create openness, you need to make that person feel understood and safe.

### **RAPPORT IS NOT...**

Rapport is not friendship. Although most of the time rapport is related to a nice feeling, you may get along with a person and still have rapport.

Rapport is not trust, but we can't build trust without rapport, as we don't generally trust something that we don't understand or when we feel miss-understood.

Rapport is not about agreement. Rapport does not necessarily emerge from being in agreement. You can agree with one person and yet not be in rapport. And vice versa: disagreement may be accompanied by rapport.

Rapport is not about manipulation. People who manipulate can simulate being in rapport, but if you are not willing to enter into a relationship of mutual influence, there is no rapport. Respect and mutual influence are essential in a relationship based on rapport.

## CREATING RAPPORT

Creating rapport is something that we do naturally. We do it all the time. We do not need to learn much about how to create it, but rather how to stop doing things that can prevent it.

We create rapport mainly through honesty and openly becoming interested in other people, in their world, in knowing who they are and how they think.

We created rapport especially when we are able to see the world through their perspective (through their eyes).

Rapport can be created and broken very quickly, as it is a process of symmetry as mentioned before. Just because we create rapport with our clients at the beginning of our first session, this won't guarantee that we have rapport along the entire coaching process. Rapport needs to be cultivated, it doesn't just re-establish it at the beginning of each session.

To create rapport and a good relationship, the first thing we need to do is to pace the person, that is, to enter their model of the world and understand it in their own terms from a non-judgemental and open mindset.

**PACING** can be compared to walking at the same rhythm. If we walk a little too quickly, we leave the person behind. If we walk too slowly, they either get ahead of us, or have to slow down to walk alongside us.

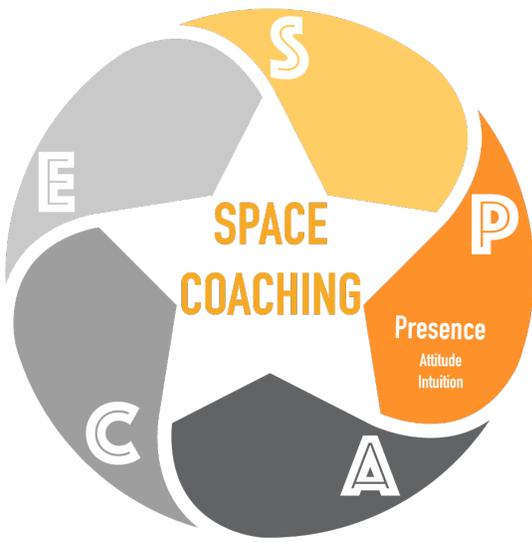
We can pace in two ways:

- **Non-verbally:** We do it through **mirroring**. Mirroring means that we become a mirror of the other person, or we complement one aspect of their behavior. It's not about copying, it's about being in tune. We actually show the other person that we understand their model of the world, we understand how they feel and their situation. If this is done correctly, the client receives the message intuitively and feels more comfortable with us.

We can mirror the client's body language, such as posture, significant gestures, facial expressions, blinking, breathing, etc.

- **Verbally:** Pacing at a verbal level means paraphrasing or reiterating key words or expressions that the client uses. In future chapters we will talk in more details about paraphrasing, as it is one of the key skills that coaches use in order to create rapport, clarify understanding and mirror back clients' statements in order to increase awareness.

A very simple and quick way to create rapport is nodding our head in a form of "*I follow you*", "*I see you*", "*I hear you*", "*I understand you*".



## 2 PRESENCE - COACH STATE

The Space Model is built on the premise that clients have the answers to their questions and that the coach's job is to hold the client's agenda.

A coach is virtually invisible and yet, completely present. It is a state of flow, where the coach demonstrates high self-management abilities. It means managing your own state in a variety of circumstances, whilst being flexible to act in lots of different ways, along the emotional curves that clients may face throughout the process.

### 2.1 Attitude

Some of the attributes that characterize the attitude of a coach are:

- Being totally present and flexible for the client.
- Minimum internal dialogue (diving in one's thoughts).
- Attention focused externally, but aware and connected with internal sensations and intuition.
- Highly aware of any shift in the emotional state of their client.
- High tolerance for ambiguity.
- Flexible and able to choose the best way to work, in that moment, with the client.

In addition to all of the above, we may add one very important mindset used when we do change work: the **'know nothing state'**.

#### KNOW-NOTHING STATE

From this place, coaches can observe the person, as a whole, and can understand much more than what is being said.

A know nothing state, is a mental state or mind set, where from all judgments and any pro-active search for a particular response from our clients are suspended.

It is a state of mind wherefrom coaches act from the curiosity of a child, that is, looking to understand and discover the world of their client through the lens of a positive outlook on the situation.

It means waiting for an answer instead of pre-empting and try to influence one.

Coaches that act from this state will often use questions that start with *"I'm curious.."* or they invite clients to explore more by saying *"That's interesting, can you tell me more about it?"*

It is a mind-set that relies on the belief that reality is subjective and that the way I see, hear and feel is unique to everyone. It means understanding that the problem is not the problem, but the meaning that we give to what unfolds in our reality is the key to solve the problem. It means a desire to understand without any preconceived ideas, beliefs or opinions the unique and particular meaning that our clients give to their challenges.

The "Know-nothing" state is the desire to empathise with our clients. In other words, to see, hear and feel through their own eyes in order to see beyond what is being said.

It means a high ability to self-regulate our own emotions and self-manage our state.

During a coaching session, our client's emotions may fluctuate, as they are in a process of discovery and the coach's ability to manage their state, to best support their clients, is key.

There are many hats that a coach can wear throughout the process, however, some of them either do not belong to the field of coaching, or simply don't let coaches perform at their best. Such examples are:

### a) The expert: holding back your advice and opinions.

There is a temptation to be the expert or the problem solver, especially when your client seems stuck or when they struggle. Sometimes clients even look at you to receive a solution to their problem. If we provide solutions, we are no longer in an equal partnership relationship, but a relationship where the coach, being perceived as an expert, helps the client by solving the problem for them.

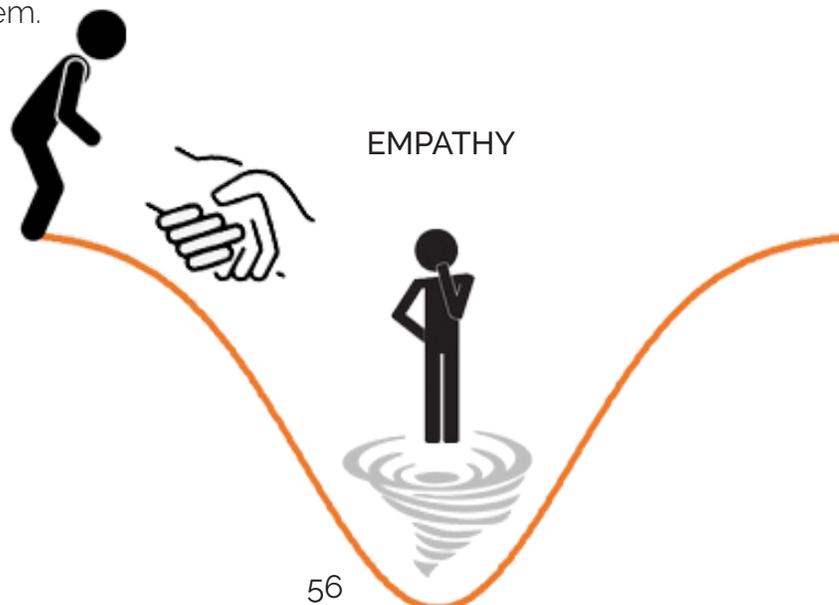
As coaches, we are not there to solve clients' problems or to walk their journey for them. As coaches, we have embarked on a journey to support and accompany them.

Giving advice or solving clients' problems is not our role as coaches, as it may also create dependency on you for their results, rather than learning how resourceful they can be to find solutions on their own. This means leaving out your personal experience and your own story of how you've dealt with similar issues.

It all starts with truly believing that *your clients do have their own answers. It's learning that they are creative and full of resources.*

### b) Sympathiser: "we will feel this together"

Empathy is the ability to understand how clients think, feel and why they act in a specific way in order to better support them.



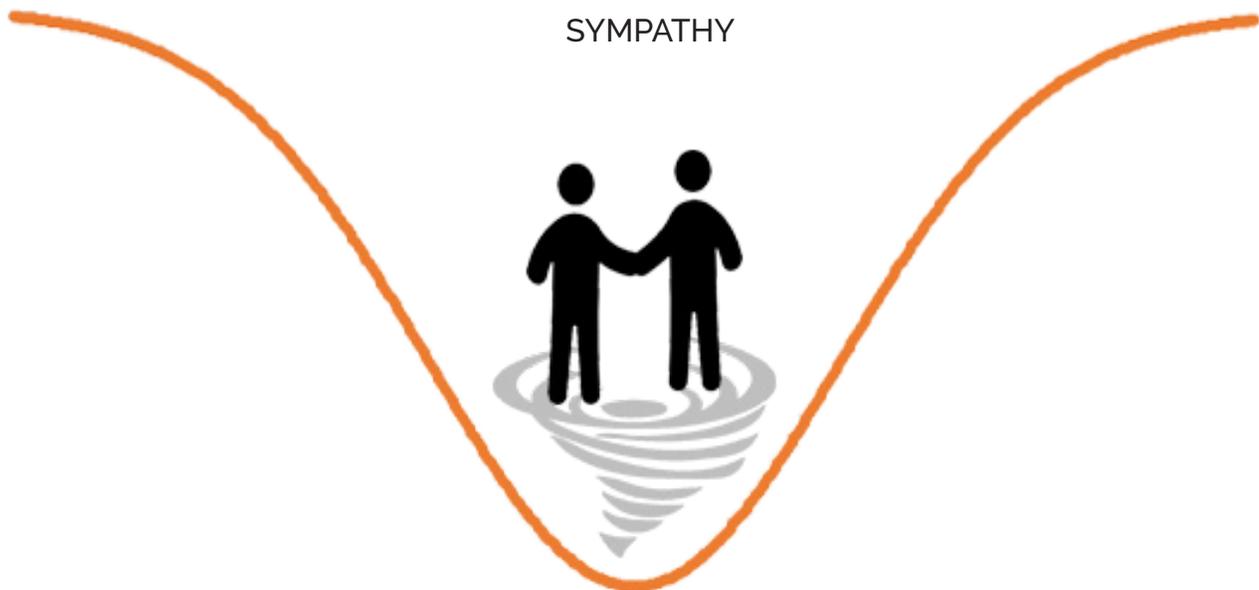
It is well known that emotions are contagious, both positive and negative. In our intention to accompany our client in their process, there is a risk of actually living the process with them, especially when a client's story is very close to a similar situation that we might have experienced.

A coach is there to understand how client's feel and empathise with what they hear and see, but not to feel what their clients is feeling. This would be classed as moving from empathy to sympathy.

Empathy is understanding, hearing and seeing in order to support. Sympathy involves a state transference, an emotion or a feeling that is transferred from client to coach.

When coaches sympathise instead of empathise, they are going along the curve with their clients, instead of remaining emotionally self-centered and solution focused. Their attention shifts to the problem and they are no longer supporting their clients, both coach and client are operating at the same level.

A coach that experiences empathy is there to empower their clients by giving them their hand so that clients can reconnect with their resources whereas a coach that sympathise will grab their client's hand and walk with them down the path.



## c) Internal Saboteur

Self-management also means managing your own thoughts, in order to stay fully present with your client.

It is proven that if a person is focusing their attention on their internal thoughts, they cannot pay full attention to what is being said, as their attention is shifted inwards. We will emphasize more on this topic when we will talk about active listening, but for the moment, remember that to be fully present with your clients means shifting your attention outwards.

We all have thoughts or conversations that we carry out internally. Those are called our Internal Dialogue. We may then say that we are talking inside our mind with different "characters" that in fact are variations of "I".

Each thought has its own characteristics, such as tone, the words that are used and sometimes, it may even be represented with a metaphor or a symbol.

You will very often hear clients saying "it's like someone is telling me "you are not good enough".

Each thought also has an intention for which it is present in that moment.

Different types of thoughts may be:

- **The Supporter.** It is the voice that most of the time focuses on progress, on achievements and on "doing". It may sound something like: *"You can do it", "You always find your way", etc.*
- **The Wise:** It may sound something like: *How did you solve it last time?", "What are all your possible options?, etc* Many times, this voice sounds like the voice of an inner coach, as it asks questions that are solution oriented and relies on past successes.
- **The Protector:** This is the voice of who's intention it is to keep us safe and it doesn't like to take unnecessary risks. It very often focuses on "should" and "must" and "don't". It may sound something like: *"Don't rush into making a decision", "Think it well before you take the step", "What if X will happen?", etc.*
- **The Inner Child:** This voice is the one that usually wants to experiment, to challenge the way things are and to do the things it wants, rather than the things that should be done. It may sound something like: *"I just want to...", "I wonder how would it be like to...", "I want to experience this and have fun...", etc.*

These are just some of the most frequently encountered voices, however each person is unique and therefore they may have totally different experiences. However, there is always a voice that is present within us. A voice that, when it is present, stops us from tapping into our full potential, it creates self-doubt or even criticism. It's like a part in us that is not tuned in with the rest of the system. It's like an internal saboteur that can even block us sometimes.

As with our clients, coaches also have to face their inner saboteur voice. This voice may come in statements like: *"That was a stupid question", "I'm totally lost here", "Whatever made me think I could do this", "What should I ask now?", "What should I say next?", "Oh, that also happened to me..",* and so on.

Unfortunately, while we are carrying on an internal conversation with our Saboteur, we are no longer in conversation with our client, therefore, self-management is about noticing the Saboteur and acting as quickly as possible to return fully to the client.

Mastering our own saboteurs will ground us as coaches, it will centre us in the space of coaching and will enable us to expand our understanding our clients similar experience better.

#### **d) Problem oriented instead of solution oriented**

Self management means maintaining focus on the future rather than digging into the past. In other words, maintaining a focus on "what needs to be done" instead of "what happened".

Client's often come to coaching focused on what has happened to them and on how this affects their present experience. As coaches, we may have to pace our client's problem, so that they feel heard, seen and understood. In this pacing process, we may sometimes get trapped in the problem together with the client, instead of focusing on what needs to be done and what are the possible available options to move forward.

Focusing on the problem and what happened can provoke clients to dramatize their situation even more, without shifting their perception. Focusing on the solution inspires a positive outlook over the situation. Just ask yourself "if our mind and thoughts are on what happened, did our mind learn anything new?" Therefore, it is very important that, as coaches, we maintain a positive attitude towards the situation, by seeing it through the lens of opportunities and our client's internal resources to overcome obstacles.

## 2.2 Using your Intuition

Our mind is the artefact of a lifetime of experiences and learnings. All perceived through our five senses and unconsciously stored in our long term memory "storage room" of our brain as memories.

We perceive the world through our five senses: we see, hear, taste, touch and smell in order to interact with the world and to form an internal and unique representation of that reality.

Our brain likes to give meaning to everything that happens in our reality and it likes coherence between what is happening "out there" and what it knows "inside here". When we perceive something relevant and important, in a specific moment, our body communicates with us through a sensation that has no words attached to it. It's like our mind uses our body to send us a message or a signal when it recognizes a certain pattern. We often call this sensation the "gut feeling". In other words, our intuition.

Many people feel intuition in their bodies. Sometimes it is literally a "gut" reaction. Some people don't feel intuition in their bodies at all, they simply have a sense that something is right or wrong. It's good practice to be aware of and pay attention to how your intuition communicates with you, so that you can take full advantage of a lifetime of experiences and learning.

In coaching, using and sharing our intuition can often lead to a deepening, or a shift in the coaching conversation.

The great gift of coaching is that we can freely share our intuition with our clients, as the relationship is one of partnership.

Often, how freely we share this, is one of the key differences between using our intuition in an effective way and imposing our own thoughts on the client.

Coaches share intuitions about possibilities and obstacles. Coaches share the truth about themselves, as well as their truth towards their clients. Since our coaching clients are not fragile, we do not need to withhold information from them.

Imposing our views without any proof or confirmation from our clients, that our sensations are correct, is called a Mind Read.

Intuition is different from mind reading clients. Intuition is a deep connection with an internal sensation that relies on our past unconsciously stored lifetime experiences, that support us to identify blind spots in our clients, or discover unspoken internal thought processes in our clients.

As coaches, we use our intuition together with our client's confirmation. This means that we always check our "gut feeling" with our clients through questions.

Example of a resourceful way of using our intuition:

*"I have a feeling that.... is that correct?"*

*"I have a sensation that....how do you find this?"*

*"Something tells me that there is much more than just....can you tell me more about this?"*

*"My intuition tells me that there is another place to look at.. Where would that place be?"*

We mind read when we project our own view of reality on our client's model of the world, without checking the accuracy of this information. As coaches, we are there to support our clients to discover new ways of thinking and new options, not to give a verdict on what happened or what is best for them. Therefore, it is essential that we avoid mind reading our clients.

Basically, mind reads are statements that are never checked with the client and where there is no evidence that things are really as we think for our clients. Some examples of mind read statements can be:

*"I know that this is important for you because something tells me that."*

*"I can see that you. "*

*"So, you want to do this"*

*"You are thinking that he's a bad person."*

## RESPECTING CLIENT'S BOUNDARIES

When coaches share their insight and intuition, they may reveal blind spots to their clients. They may tap into a well-kept personal space, with sensitive areas and emotions that even the client may not be ready to explore, or may not want to at that point.

As coaches, we need to be aware of our client's boundaries and we need to respectfully address coaching requests in these areas. Remember that the client knows what is relevant and important for them and that they are to decide their readiness to enter into a new space of discovery. Coaches can share their intuition and observations about something that they are seeing, however, when a coach is facilitating awareness, it is the client who decides if they are ready to dig deeper.

Therefore, one of the fundamental aspects of coaching is to respectfully ask for the permission of their client to explore their intuition on sensitive areas.

Coaches may ask something like:

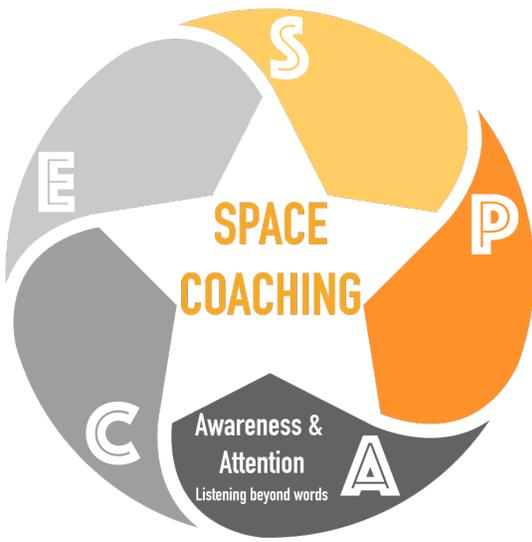
*"My intuition tells me that there is more here..."*

*Would you like to explore this today?*

*Would you like to take a closer look at this?*

*Is this a good time for you to talk about this right now?*

*Is this relevant for you to talk about this right now?, etc*



### 3 AWARENESS: ACTIVE LISTENING

Listening is the key activity of coaching.

The biggest gift we can give someone is to really listen to them and to make them feel heard. We were all taught from when we were little that we “need to listen” but in the majority of cases we were not trained or coaching in **how to listen**.

Usually when people listen, they are just waiting their turn to speak, and once they do, they state their own views, issues and agenda on top of what they've just heard.

They might talk about something related to what they heard, but from their own perspective, or about something that is totally unrelated in their desire to share their own experience, thoughts, and opinions, or give advice.

Just take a minute to recall:

- How you felt the last time someone “listened” to you in this way?
- How you felt when you were the center of attention for the person that listened to you.

In this chapter we will discuss this essential ability that coaches must have: listening.

#### 3.1 What active listening really is

Listening as a coach is very different from normal, everyday listening. Even when done extraordinarily well, common conversational listening lacks the **intentional focus** the coach brings to the coaching conversation. As we've seen in our previous chapters, **intention will determine our interest and it holds our attention**.

Listening is a skill that requires concentration and practice. We can start practicing by become aware of our own intention and attention by asking ourselves:

- “What for am I listening to this person?” - Intention
- “Where is my attention when I listen?” - Attention

If our intention is to really understand what is going on in the world of our clients and to be curious to discover whatever unfolds, then our attention will be fully dedicated to the person that is in front of us. Whereas, if our intention is to “do a good coaching session” or to “demonstrate our coaching ability” then our attention will go inside our own mind to our internal dialogue.

The coach listens with a very different quality of attention that is purely to be of service to our client, (without having an agenda aside from listening carefully for what “wants” to happen).

As Carl Rogers demonstrated, active listening, accompanied by unconditional positive regard, supports clients in making tremendous positive changes.

The coach's ability to be fully present with the client, patiently listening, communicates fundamental acceptance of the client.

This quality of listening and acceptance allows the client to open up and not to be scared of being vulnerable in sessions. That is why coaching can feel "therapeutic" for our clients, even though coaching is definitely not therapy. It feels this way, as clients feel the space in which they can experience the impact of being heard, understood and supported without any judgement, thus feeling inspired and empowered.

In their book, "Becoming a professional life coach", Patrick Williams and Diane Menendez describe the clues that indicate a disconnection from active listening.

**"Lapses in being present and patiently listening can take these forms:**

- **Interrupting clients or speaking as soon as clients finish a sentence;** allowing no space for clients to hear themselves, to feel the impact of what they have said.
- **Beginning to speak while clients finish the last few words of a sentence-**this doesn't allow clients the choice to continue and elaborate.
- **Attending superficially,** missing signals provided by the clients' tone of voice or body language.
- **Breaking eye contact** or doodling during a face-to-face session.
- **Multitasking,** with sounds clients hear during phone coaching.
- **Random or fidgety movements** unrelated to clients' statements that grow out of the coaches' interior thoughts or feelings."

**Skills that demonstrate active listening are:**

- **Reflecting/mirroring:** Saying someone's exact words back to them.
- **Paraphrasing:** Using slightly different word(s) which do not change the substance or meaning of what the other person said.
- **Summarizing:** Repeating back what has been said, but more briefly, without changing the substance or meaning.
- **Clarifying:** Expressing succinctly the essence/core of what has been said. Adding something valuable picked up intuitively from emotions or discrepancies in words, facial expressions or body language. This will generate insight and clarity for the speaker and check that you understood: *"It sounds like ... What would you say about that?"*
- **Encouraging self-expression:** Noticing hesitation in your client or a sense of "I don't know if this is appropriate to mention" and encourage the client to open up in a safe and intimate space. This skills demonstrates active listening to non-verbal cues.
- **Suspending judgement, criticism and attachment:** A coach understands that each person has a unique and different way of experiencing reality. Coaches may sometimes find themselves in situations where their own values and beliefs are in conflict with those of their clients, however, they must abandon any attachment to their own, in order to be able to listen with **genuine curiosity and in a non-judgemental way.**
- **Listening for potential:** Coaches focus on the client's strengths and opportunities.
- **Listening with your heart:** Listening to non-verbal messages such as tone of voice, phrasing, facial expression and body language. Listen attentively at the level of feeling and meaning (the intent) to hear the core/essence of what is being conveyed.

## 3.2 Levels of Listening

In the SPACE coaching model we make a clear distinction between how we listen when we listen. We call these distinctions "levels".

### Level 1 - Internal listening

When a person listens at this level, they are actually listening to the sound of their own inner voice. They are hearing the client whilst listening to their internal dialogue. Their attention is shifted inwards. They may hear what the client is saying but they are primarily aware of their own feelings, needs and worries. They may be nodding and accompany the person by saying "aha, I understand" but they are actually empowering the high jacking of their own thoughts.

It is proven that we cannot give our full attention and listening to someone if we are clouded in our own mind.

Example of thoughts that trap us in Level 1 listening:

*"This happened to me as well."*

*"What should I say now?"*

*"What should I ask next?"*

*"I have a good question for him once he finishes what he has to say."*

*"I'm hungry, when was the last time I ate?"*

*"I'm worried that if I'll say this I might look..."*

### Level 2 - Listening the "What"

At level 2 we listen to what is being said. Our focus shifts totally towards our client and there is less internal dialogue or none.

At this level we listen to **what is being said** and there is a sharper focus on the content that the client is providing.

We demonstrate that we listen by mirroring back, by paraphrasing and by summarising what is being said, in order to increase awareness in our clients.

Laura Whitworth describes this level in the following statement: "The coach listens for clients' vision, values, commitment, and purpose in their words and demeanor" (Whitworth, Kinsey-House, & Sandahl, 1998, p. 257).

At this level we listen with increased consciousness and purpose, that is, in line with what we have initially designed with the client during our discovery session when we also established the alliance.

The alliance includes the client's goals and desires, what many coaches refer to as "the client's agenda." The coach listens to forward the client's agenda, not the coach's agenda.

## Level 3 - Listening from within

This is the level of listening that contains everything; you are listening to "What" is being said whilst listening to "What is not being said".

At this level we listen to link the client's goal with a larger vision, we listen to fit what we hear within a bigger picture.

If for example a client's objective is to live in a different place, we are listening to their values and what really is meaningful for that person, which may be to live a more fulfilled and aligned life in general. We listen for the richer possibilities available, beyond just the obvious improvements.

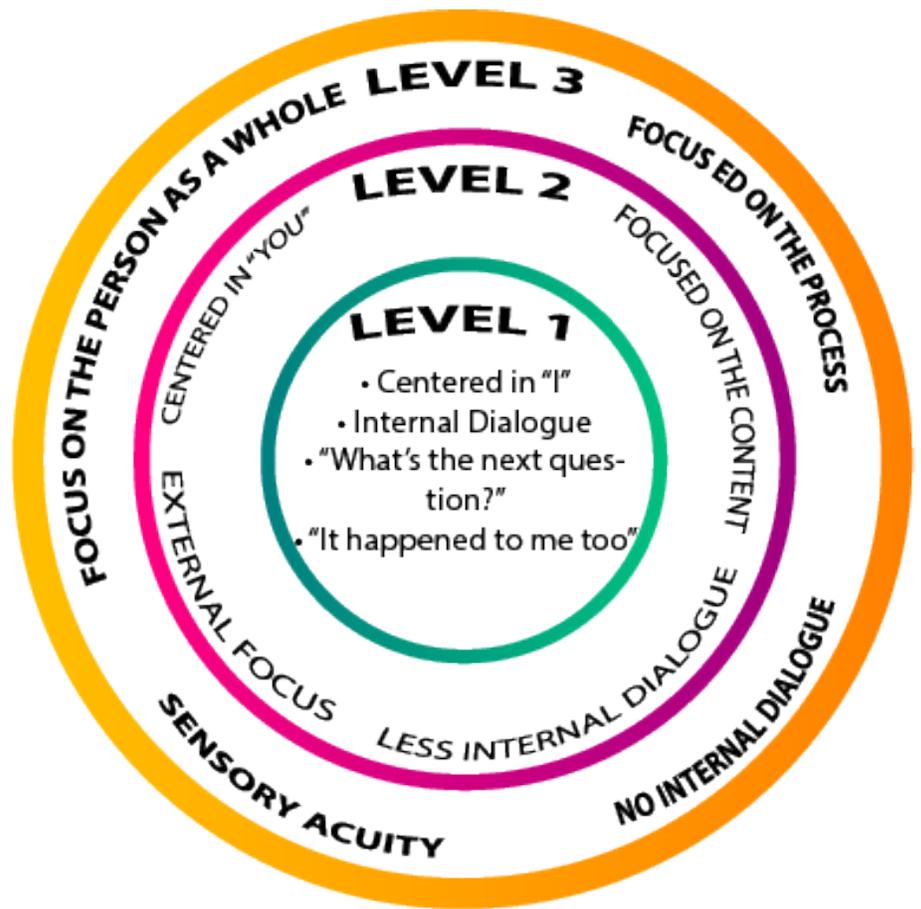
When we say that we listen from within we listen with all our sense.

- We hear the "What for" behind "What" is being said. We hear the client's values, beliefs, unspoken worries, but also powerful thoughts.
- We see the opportunities that lie ahead, the non-verbal cues that clients are transmitting and any incongruency between what is being said and what is being thought.
- We feel the energy in the coaching space and we are deeply aware of any change in our client's energy or emotions. We are aware of whatever emerges in this environment, such as the underlying mood of our clients and the impact that our conversation has for them in every moment. We are totally in tune with our clients whilst staying connected with our intuition.

At this level we:

- Hear and use our client's metaphors.
- We feel comfortable in the unknown of not knowing what's coming next and we are in a flow state, with no internal dialogue.
- We listen more to the meaning that the client is giving to what happened and the relationship between everything that the client is expressing.
- We see the bigger impact on the client's life of something specific that has been said.

We are completely in tune with our clients being able to scan or calibrate everything that is being said or shown to us.



### Listening to the Being. The coach:

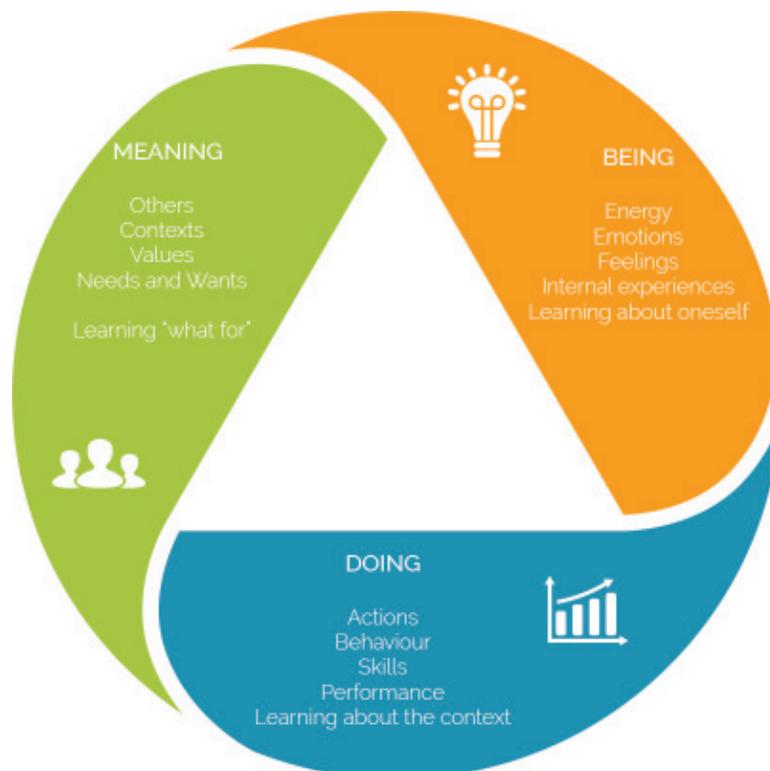
- Notices shifts in the client's energy such as tone of voice, change in posture and gestures, etc.
- Hears the emotions and feelings that the client's words carry.
- Promotes learning about oneself.
  - "What did you learn about yourself?"*
  - "What just happened?"*
  - "I can see that what you've just said makes you feel...is that so?"*

### Listening the Doing. The coach:

- Hears what the client is doing in a specific context and supports the client to identify new ways of acting and taking action towards their objective.
- Listens to the behavior that the client has and supports the client to identify new ways of behaving.
- Listens to the skills that the client has and increases the client's awareness of those skills.
- Promotes learning about the situation or gathers learning from the session.
  - "What do you do in this situation?" - "What do you need to do?"*
  - "What skills did you demonstrate by doing this?"*
  - "What did you learn from what happened?"*
  - "What did you learn from our session today?"*

### Listening to the Meaning. The coach:

- Links the client's objective to a more meaningful purpose: other people and contexts.
- Hears the meaning (values and beliefs) and the boundaries that clients have.
- Hears the needs and wants behind what is being said.
- Promotes learning about "what for?" an objective is meaningful to the client.
  - "What makes this objective meaningful to you?"*
  - "How will the achievement of this objective impact your relationship with others/your results in other situations?"*
  - "What did you learn about your objective in terms of why it is meaningful and important to you?"*



## 3.3 Beyond words

As we have already seen with the Levels of Listening, coaches not only listen to what is being said but they go beyond that. They use all their senses with precision in order to understand what happens in the world of their client and how the coaching conversation lands for their clients.

They have the ability to detect any subtle change in their client's mood, emotions and energy. Basically, they are listening beyond words.

Listening beyond words is also known as calibration and it is a fundamental skill of a coach.

Calibration is a natural process. We all have the ability to recognise people's state to a certain extent. In fact, sometimes, even before the person gives us their answer, we sometimes know if it will be a yes or a no.

Coaches take this innate talent to an extreme, by increase their sensory acuity, in the benefit of their client.

Paul Watzlawick (25 July 1921-31 March 2007) was an Austrian theorist and psychologist, one of the main authors in the field of human communication and an important reference in the field of Family Therapy, Systemic Therapy and, in general in Psychotherapy.

In his work, "The theory of human communication" (1981) P. Watzlawick presented his theory in 5 axioms. The most important idea that he proposed is that "**It is impossible not to communicate**".

Every behavior and every reaction is a form of communication, as communication can be both **digital** (verbal) and **analogue** (non-verbal).

Communication does not simply involve spoken words (digital communication: what is said); but also non-verbal communication (or analogue communication: how it is said), which is reflected in the physiology that we use when communicating (the signs we make, the look we use, etc.)

Verbal communication is associated to a more logical, rational and conscious process, whereas, non-verbal cues are associated more to unconscious processes, that happen in parallel with the spoken words.

Therefore, we start from the premise that you will always receive an answer to what you are asking or saying, even if that answer is a non-verbal one.

Think for a second, how many times did you not see and hear someone saying that they were well, but for some reason you knew that it wasn't true? Or how many times you knew that someone didn't like your news, even if they tried to pretend otherwise?

You knew that something was missing from what was being said as unconsciously you picked up on non-verbal, unconscious cues that were showing the contrary.

Many times, this process of calibrating non-verbal cues is associated with intuition

Calibration is not intuition, however, they work hand in hand, as our brain unconsciously perceives all clues that it can pick up, it contrasts it with all our past experiences and we develop what we call our intuition.

At a visual level we can identify various changes or unconscious "messages" that may indicate a need for further exploration, a change in clients mood, approval or disapproval of something, etc. Examples:

- Changes in face colour.
- Tension in the muscles of the face, shoulders, or body
- Spontaneous fidgeting movements
- Blinking rapidly
- Shaking of the head whilst saying "yes"
- Dried mouth
- Avoiding eye contact
- Breathing pattern, etc.

At an auditive level, indication for further exploration can be:

- Change in the tone of voice
- The speed in which they talk
- The pitch that they are using
- Analogical markers: which word of the sentence they emphasize, etc.

## 3.4 Silence: feeling comfortable in the SPACE

*"The fact that a person has stopped speaking does not mean that they have stopped thinking"*  
Nancy Kline

Silences are necessary to allow the client time to think and for the coach to actively listen. Silence, is in fact a powerful coaching skill that takes time to master, as our natural reaction to silence is to fill it, thinking we're putting the client at ease, like we do in everyday conversation.

Silence breaks a pattern. We are usually accustomed to a reaction to what we are saying. When coaches use silence after a client makes a statement, they very often get puzzled. This is mainly because it breaks the pattern of expectation and clients learn new ways of expressing themselves and communicating. Therefore, silence is considered to be a very useful tool for learning and growth.

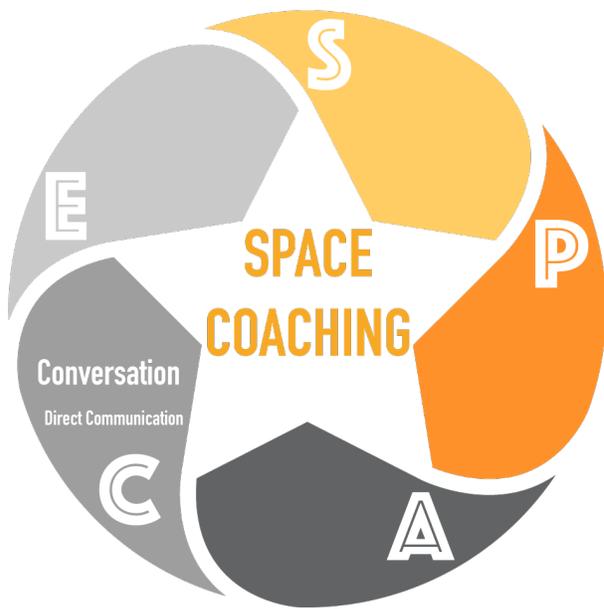
We often hear the 80-20 rule. This is applicable in coaching, the client talks for 80% of the time and the coach listens for 20% of the time. In fact, we say that an indicator of a successful coaching session is when a client talks more than the coach.

In coaching silence really is golden for various reasons:

- **It promotes active listening** and clients do really feel heard. For you as a coach, pauses in the dialogue can really help you to listen to the client and pick up on their emotions, feelings and mood.
- **It transmits empathy.** Silence allows the coach to just stand by their client and be totally present in that space, without knowing, or needing to know, where the process will lead.
- **It invites reflection.** Sometimes people look through things. What they really do is look within themselves. Let the person explore the moment and simply calibrate. Do not ask questions at that point, as we risk interrupting the process.
- **Reconsideration of an answer.** You may also want to allow silence after your client has responded to a question. This allows them to think through their answer more fully, to consider what answer they have already given, or to explore further options or responses.
- **It lets clients vent out their experience.** How many times have you heard people say "I just want you to listen or I just needed someone to talk to?". Venting out trapped emotions, unspoken words or experiences is fundamental within a coaching process. Venting also has the benefit that clients can clear their mind in the process of "taking off their chest" things that are trapped inside them.
- **It helps clients feel listened to and not just heard.** When we don't feel listened to and understood, we may be trapped in repeating the same things over and over. Silence will transmit a message of deeply understanding the person, so that they can move forward from that topic.

Sometimes the most powerful questions lead to a long silence, and we may feel the need to jump in with another question if there is a long pause. We propose that you trust your client's creativity and resources and, overall, trust the fact that if they don't understand a question, they will ask you to clarify it. Therefore, no follow up questions are needed, even in situations when you might have a thought such as "I think I could have asked this in a better way".

Silence is not only good for clients, but also for the coach in moments when the internal saboteur kicks in. Practicing internal silence is key in staying present with your clients and operating from the third level of listening.



## 4. CONVERSATION - Direct Communication -

Coaching is all about conversation.

When coaches work with clients, they simultaneously manage three aspects of coaching: building and maintaining the relationship with the client, the overall process of coaching (goals, framework, and expectations) and the coaching conversations that occur.

The coaching conversations are the net that supports everything that happens during the coaching process.

What makes the coaching conversation different from a nice chat with a friend is its structured approach: is that it has a beginning, a middle, and an end.

**The beginning** actually refers to the points that we've covered in this course:

- We create rapport with our clients in order to enter the coaching SPACE.
- We establish the agenda of the session. Coaching sessions usually start with a minute or two of small talk and check-in and then the coach begins the session.
- We reiterate if necessary the designed alliance.

**The middle** of the conversation is what we will cover along this chapter and its aim is to move the client towards noticing opportunities, internal resources and alternative ways of doing and thinking. Conversations are focused around clients goals, visions, wants and desires. We will be talking about the most important elements of a successful coaching conversation, such as:

- Powerful questions
- Assertiveness
- Providing feedback through direct communication
- Re-framing
- Metaphors

**The end** of the coaching conversation aims to engage clients in commitment and action of some kind. We will see this topic in more details in our next chapter: Empower.

Another aspect that makes coaching conversations different than any other, is that clients grant coaches permission to challenge and support them, in order to provoke a change. In the coaching conversation, the dialogue between coaches and clients is designed to promote the client's growth and learning.

It is a creative conversation where coaches dance with their clients in the moment, intuitively following their pace and style, while at the same time, being flexible to adapt to whatever the moment brings.

The magic of coaching conversations is that they are conversations that would not take place within the clients' everyday lives. They are conversations that break the pattern of their "normal routine"

conversations, by enabling clients to think what they've never thought of before, to question their own way of thinking, to stretch their creativity beyond what they believe to be possible and dream the dreams they have never dared to dream.

In this chapter we will direct our attention towards how we can create intentional conversations focused on the client's agenda.

## 4.1 The Levels of Powerful Conversations

Coaching conversation has such an impact on clients because it considers all aspects of a person, thus, having a holistic approach. By that we mean taking into consideration the **inner world** of the client, their values, beliefs and internal experiences and the **outer world** with everything that happens in the client's life.

Timothy Gallwey (2000), in his great book, used the metaphor of the inner game to reflect the internal world of clients.

He described three critical conversations that need to occur for clients to be successful in making a change which take place at three different levels (pp. 188-189): **a conversation for awareness, a conversation for choice and a conversation for trust.**

### 4.1.1 A CONVERSATION FOR AWARENESS

*Getting the clearest possible picture of current reality.*

At this stage it is very important to **Listen to your clients'** needs, concerns and wants **and to Clarify** anything that you feel that is missing from the radar for both you and your client.

We have the following premises:

- Increasing clients' awareness means creating choice, therefore coaching focuses attention on the three WHAT's: What is out there? What is true? and What is available to them?
- Having choice means acting in a creative way. When people have choice, they have the power to create new journeys, instead of simply reacting to their reality. Our habitual response is to react to what happens in our world, however, the word in itself says it all: "RE-act" which means repeating the same pattern over and over. It is the main purpose of our brain: survival. Therefore, under the smallest challenges or uncertainties, our brain is designed to respond with an emotion which, by default, is fear and which sends us into the 3F's response: fight-flight-freeze. In fact, the entire purpose of emotions is to provoke a reaction. Under these three reactions, the brain thinks that there is no time for creative thoughts, but only to respond with an adequate reaction for survival.

## INCREASING AWARENESS EXERCISE

### A. STORIES AND FACTS

We all create our own stories, or internal representations, about what happens in our reality. We know that the way we create our stories is subjective, as reality is seen through the lens of our past experiences, beliefs, values and role models, that we unconsciously chose and inherit their reaction patterns to external events.

Stories are not facts. They are opinions, explanations, arguments, conclusions and interpretations of reality.

Facts are evidence based examples of reality.

Bill O'Hanlon (O'Hanlon & Hudson, 1995) - a well-known speaker and author in the field of solution-oriented therapy - made a clear distinction between stories and facts

*"Each of us has our own point of view about things that happen [in our lives]. We call these explanations stories, to emphasize the fact that, our points of view are not The Truth. Facts are different from stories. Facts are things we can all agree upon, what we can all verify with our senses. Stories involve opinions, interpretations, theories and explanations. **Facts are the "what"; stories are the "why."** Most of us are caught up in the stories we believe about ourselves, other people, our relationships; we have forgotten that these stories are stories and that we made them up. We are convinced that our stories contain The Truth."*

As we engage in coaching conversations, we will work with both stories and facts that clients bring into the coaching SPACE. Our role is to uncloud their mind and to support them to **distinguish between subjective perception and facts.**

We may start asking the person:

- What do they want from this coaching session. - Setting the agenda.
  
- What is their current state in relation to their goal - Understanding the story.
  - *Where are you right now in regard to this goal?*
  - *How is the situation right now?*
  - *Tell me more about your current situation.*
  
- Identifying the evidence - Facts
  - *What do you know to be absolutely true about all of this?*
  - *How do you know that this is like that?*
  - *What is possible to not be absolutely true about this?*
  - *Do you have an example of...\_\_?*
  - *Do you have any evidence of...\_\_\_\_\_?*

## B. SHIFTING PERCEPTION

Sometimes clients find it difficult to perceive and connect with their inner strengths and notice the outer opportunities, even after we have addressed the questions mentioned in this chapter.

In order for the client to deeply be able to connect and visualize a specific goal, they need to believe that this is possible for them. They need to have a feeling that, even if it might get difficult, it may be achieved. They need to become aware of their inner strengths and the outer opportunities, in order to, fully and creatively dream about their desired outcome.

They sometimes don't see these options, as they are stuck in living their story in a too associated manner. It's like they can't see the forest for the trees.

How many times in your life, have you not seen opportunities for others, that they themselves couldn't see? That happened because you were looking at their story from a different angle, in a more detached manner and from a more resourceful state of emotions and awareness.

In coaching, sometimes we want our clients to be able to detach from the problem, in order to see the solution, as we believe that the problem is never solved from the same level wherefrom the problem was created.

Professional coaches are skillful in changing their client's perception, by using the SPACE to design a new landscape for their clients' world.

## C. DESIGNING A NEW LANDSCAPE

So far, we have focused on increasing awareness for our clients, by seeing, hearing and feeling their story and perceiving their outer and inner world through their own eyes. They were completely associated to their reality.

Now, it is the moment for them to get distance themselves from the context where the problem occurs. To use a metaphor, is like being in a helicopter and watching the entire scenery, including their own reactions, behavior, emotions and experiences from above the context.

Detachment from the context provides a more global view of the place where their story occurs. It amplifies their experience, their conclusions, thus, their beliefs may also change. They may see, hear or feel differently than when they had their mind totally immersed in the problem. They will see the entire landscape of their context and not just a piece.

The Coaches creativity in using metaphors at this stage, will facilitate a smooth and clear transition, that will enable clients to increase awareness of their full potential.

Examples of such metaphors can be:

- Viewing the entire story by visualizing it on a TV screen.
- A helicopter view.
- Placing themselves in the shoes of a neutral person that notices what happens in that context.
- Becoming the coach by asking them "If you were to be the coach and I were to be you, what do you see from there?"
- Drawing or using objects to illustrate the entire landscape, etc.

It is very important to notice the client's change in physiology, language patterns and shift in their emotional state during this step.

If nothing changes for the client, it might be that the client is still engaged in the story instead of perceiving it from the outside. The client should pay attention to using distance in language, in order to emphasize the dissociation from the problem. Examples of questions that use dissociation in language can be:

- *"As you are now here, what do you see OVER THERE?"*
- *"As you look at that context THERE, what opportunities do you notice for X (say client's name)?"*
- *"What are X's (client's name) strengths?"*
- *"What would you tell X (client's name) to pay attention to/or do?", etc.*

### 4.1.2 A CONVERSATION FOR CHOICE

*Getting the clearest possible picture of the desired future outcome.*

One of the fundamental principles of coaching, is to have a clear understanding of where the client wants to get to before starting on the coaching journey, hence the requirement for effective goal setting.

A well-formed outcome provides clients with energy and focus and keeps them motivated to achieve what they may not have thought possible. It is said that it takes six weeks to break an old habit and a further six to ingrain a new one.

Clients usually hire coaches because they want to achieve something or enhance something in their lives, either at a personal or professional level. The results they want generally covers three areas:

- **Goals for performance.** Either if they want to achieve a particular result or to improve those that they are already achieving, these goals are easier to measure by simply using a comparison chart of the current performance and the one achieved at the end of the coaching process.
- **Goals for learning.** These goals involve the acquirement of new skills, abilities, and knowledge. They refer more to "HOW" to improve or acquire what they want. For example: how to be a better parent, how to be a good public speaker, how to better lead teams, etc. The evaluation of these goals are subject to the client's own feedback and/or the feedback received from those relevant and impacted by the client's change.
- **Goals for fulfilment.** These are broader goals and they typically include the word "balance" when setting the goal for the coaching process. Such goals can be: life-work balance, family-friends balance. Another words that characterizes these types of goals is "vision" or "WHAT FOR". These are commonly used for establishing leadership vision or to give meaning to what people are doing. In other words, they incorporate a sense of "what for am I doing this" or "In what direction am I heading?". Progress on these goals relies totally on the client's inner sense of fulfilment, of congruency and wholeness.

In the next chapter we will focus our attention on how to support our clients design meaningful goals, that are in line with their greater purpose.

An effective goal is helped by the brain's own pattern matching system: to search for relevant and important cues whilst filtering or deleting irrelevant information in a specific moment.

The principles of successfully formulating and achieving goals are:

#### **Know your destination**

If we don't know what our final destination is, it is very hard to get there. The more general the destination is, the less probable we will have a clear route to get there. Imagine setting your GPS to take you to Europe and not to a specific place. Or imagine that someone tells you "You will have a response soon" instead of telling you when. The more precise we are, the easier it is not only to get there, but also to track our progress.

## **Operate from a resourceful state**

We know that our emotional background and mind-set have a huge impact on our motivation and enthusiasm towards achieving our goals. It is proven that people achieve their goals quicker and more effectively when they are hopeful and trust in themselves.

Imagine how it would be to tell yourself "I hope that I will get there" or "I'm not sure if I am good enough to achieve this goal."

Doubtful thoughts come from a disconnection with inner and outer resources. That is why it is so important to build conversations that promote trust and reconnect clients with their inner resources and outer options.

## **Actions**

Coaches know that if there is no action, just talk, nothing gets done. That is why it is so important to transform common sense and awareness into common practice and actions.

## **Creativity and flexibility**

The more flexible we are in adjusting our actions and strategies, by creatively engaging our clients in looking for options, the easier it is to achieve our goals.

Think about that GPS: if you miss the exit, the GPS won't get angry or abandon its destination. It will find alternative ways to get you to where you wanted.

## EXPLORING YOUR GOAL

In coaching, it's about engaging the client to find self-insight and awareness. There are several models that are often deployed and used in coaching.

### 1. GROW MODEL

The GROW coaching model is one of the most well know models in coaching, as it is a simple four steps process that stands for Goal – Reality – Options – Will. To put it metaphorically, the GROW coaching model is what you need to plan a journey. Let's see each of these steps one by one.



## GOAL -This step refers to defining the goal in itself.

When defining goals, we need to consider few aspects:

### 1.1 Moving towards

Almost all of us and probably without realizing how we did it, have divided our lives between what we like and what we don't like, what we want and what we don't want, what we need and what we don't need and so on. What we don't want, comes with a sensation of **moving away** from something, whereas, what we want, comes from a sensation of **moving towards**.

In the same way that we have things that we want and things that we don't want in our lives, we also have things that "we don't like and have" and some that "we'd like to have but don't have".

Clients often state their goals from an "away from" mindset. They may say something like:

*"I don't want to lose my job"*

*"I don't want to live my life like this"*

*"I am tired of repeatedly doing the same things over and over again"*

*"I don't want to feel worried about...", etc*

In these examples, we can sense a need to move away from something, whether that is a situation, a feeling or a person. Our entire energy goes towards where we focus our mind, therefore, if we work on "away from" objectives, it is less likely that we will engage our clients in a positive outlook of the future and we might keep looping in the past-current problem. Therefore, we need goals that are positive and that have a future orientation. If we hear these statements, we may ask something like:

*"And if you don't want this, what is it that you want to achieve?"*

*"What would you like to happen?"*

*"What do you want to achieve by the end of our coaching process?"*

*"What would you like to see/hear or feel by the end of our coaching collaboration?", etc*

For a better understanding of the concept, we may take a piece of paper and make four columns as shown below:

WHAT I WANT AND HAVE	WHAT I WANT AND DO NOT HAVE	WHAT I DON'T WANT AND I HAVE	WHAT I DON'T WANT AND I DON'T HAVE

Write what you can think of in each list, while thinking about the Objective or the Environment in which it can manifest.

Now analyse this list:

- Which list is the longest and which is the shortest? Which has been the easiest to make? Which one was the most difficult?
- When reviewing the lists, compare the topics and analyse if they are of the same importance
- Now ask yourself, which one comes to your attention the most?
- After making this analysis, think about what you learnt from this exercise.

An interesting work that you can do with the list "WHAT I DON'T WANT AND I HAVE" is to transform the phrases you wrote, enunciating them in another phrase that means the same to you but expressed in positive, as those mentioned in the list "WHAT I DON'T HAVE AND I WANT".

By doing this work you might be able to identify objectives that are sometimes out of your consciousness.

## 1.2 Ownership

Change will occur only from the inside and not because someone else tells the person that they have to change. The decision to change, or to have a specific goal, has to be initiated by oneself.

We may ask something like:

*"What made you decide on this goal?"*

*"Tell me more about how you came to set this objective?"*

*"What is needed for you to achieve this goal?"*

## 1.3 Inner congruency

We are all living within a bigger system, which formed by members of our family, friends, work colleagues and many other important people in our lives.

Any changes that we make, will have an impact on those important people surrounding us, whether that impact is a positive or a negative one.

When we establish goals, it is important that they are congruent with our values, but also, congruent with what we value in others. It is important for various reasons. Firstly, because when we become aware of the side- positive impact that the achievement of our goals has, we increase our motivation for success. Secondly, because if the impact is negative, we may risk not maintaining the change that we achieved, as the goal was not ecological for our environment.

We can link goals to values by asking something like:

*"What for do you want to achieve this goal?"*

*"What will it enable you to gain by achieving this goal?"*

*"What would it do for you, if you achieve this goal?"*

*"What bigger purpose do you honor by achieving this goal?", etc*

Essential questions to identify if a goal is congruent with the environment of our clients are:

*"By achieving this goal, how will the results impact other relevant people in your life?"*

*"By achieving this goal what will happen for you or for other important people in your life?"*

*"By achieving this goal, what will not happen for you or for other people in your life?"*

*"By not achieving this goal, what will not happen for you or for other people in your life?"*

*"By not achieving this goal, what will happen for you or for other people in your life?", etc.*

## REALITY CHECKING -This step refers to understanding the current reality of the client (stories and facts)

This is an important step. Too often, people try to solve a problem or reach a goal without fully considering their starting point, and often they're missing some information that they need in order to reach their goal effectively.

We may ask:

*"What is happening now (what, who, when, and how often)? What is the effect/result of this?"*  
*"Have you already taken any steps towards your goal?", etc*

## OPTIONS

The more options we have, the better, as we increase our chances of reaching our objectives. Having only one option, you will always do the same thing. Having two options you might have doubts about which one to choose. Having three options or more gives you flexibility and thus the freedom to choose. Engaging clients in discovering new options and seeing new perspectives increases the chances of success.

We may ask something like:

*"What are all possible ways of achieving this goal?"*  
*"What other options are there?"*  
*"Do you know anyone that achieved a similar goal differently?"*  
*"What else could you do?"*  
*"What if this or that constraint was removed? Would that change things?"*  
*"What factors or considerations will you use to weigh the options?"*  
*"What are the advantages and disadvantages of each option?"*  
*"What do you need to stop doing in order to achieve this goal?"*  
*"What obstacles stand in your way?", etc*

## WILL

The last step of this process is move people into action, as we know that if there's no action, it will all be just a matter of an inspiring and enjoyable conversation. Actions will lead to progress and progress will boost motivation to keep moving forwards.

It focuses on "What will you do in order to make this happen?"

It's about actions and the client's engagement. We will discuss this in more details in our next chapter, Empowerment.

## 2. SMART MODEL

Another model that used in coaching is the SMART model that focuses it's central pillars on having objectives that are specific and measurable. The SMART model stands for:

**“WHAT DOESN'T GET MEASURED,  
DOESN'T GET DONE”**



### 3. OSCAR MODEL

The OSCAR Coaching Model is a popular tool in workplace coaching. Its name is also an acronym, which stands for Outcome, Situation, Choices, Actions, and Review. It was formulated in 2002 by British coaches and trainers Andrew Gilbert and Karen Whittleworth.



### 4.1.3 A CONVERSATION FOR TRUST

*In which the client gains greater access to internal and external resources in order to move from their current reality to their desired future.*

Our role as coaches is to support clients to see that there is always an alternative, that they have options, that they can trust themselves to step out of their habitual "comfort zone" and challenge the way things are done. This step is all about increasing trust in ourselves by connecting with our full potential.

## THE KALEIDOSCOPE

- Identify outer obstacles and opportunities:
  - *What makes this difficult for you? - Obstacle*
  - *How do you know that this is a challenge? - Obstacle*
  - *What makes you think that this is not easy?"- Obstacle*
  
  - *What opportunities are here for you? - Opportunities*
  - *What (else) can be an advantage? - Opportunities*
  - *What could positively unfold for you here?- Opportunities*
  
- Listen to inner limitations and reconnect with resources:
  - *And how do you feel about all of this?- Listen to internal saboteurs*
  
  - *How do you need to think and feel for this goal to happen? - Listen for needed resources and then ask:*
  - *And what is your experience with feeling/thinking this way? or*
  - *Where else in your life do you feel/think this way?*
  - *How can you repeat that thinking/feeling in this situation?*
  - *What needs to happen for you to feel/think in this way?, etc*

**NOTE:** Sometimes this is a good moment to start working the A journey within exercise in order to enable the person to hear and recognize their internal saboteurs and the resources that they have.

## VISUALIZING

As we've seen before, our purpose as coaches is to engage our client's mind in the solution, instead of on the problem. We create a space where clients can dream fearlessly their desired future and they create clarity about what they want to achieve. Dreaming fearlessly, comes only when clients become aware of their full potential.

Once clients see both sides of the story, once they see "what's in there" and not only "what's missing", they are more open and motivated to dream their future goal. This is the moment, when, by connecting the person to the already achieved goal, we increase their choice and we motivate them to creatively find alternative ways of achieving what they want in their lives.

Setting specific objectives is very important and be able to see yourself already achieving them is key. Walt Disney said it many times "If you can dream it, you can achieve it".

When we visualize our achieved goals, we channel all our attention and energy to making them possible.

In coaching, we believe in focusing on and nurturing our inner states, rather than attempting to control or fix our environment. When people are able to see themselves, already achieving their goal, it boosts their moral, motivation and energy. We know that when we operate from an emotional state of positivity about our future, the rest of our actions will follow a winner's mindset.

An easy way to connect people with that winner feeling is by asking them questions related to the moment when they've achieved their goal. We may use a metaphor such as the time machine that allows you to go to the future and live and experience that sensation of achievement. We may ask:

"What will you see, hear and feel once all of this is achieved?"

"What will you be doing?"

"What new things can occur in your life?"

"What values do you honor by having achieved this goal?", etc

The more detailed the description the better. You may ask your client "And what else" questions to stimulate their creativity and to increase their choice. We may even ask the client to "draw for us their achievement".

Even if, through the 360 Lens we connected clients with their inner and outer resources, sometimes people discover new ways of thinking and doing when they have a change in mind set. We can therefore check if anything was left out by asking the following questions.

Gaining access to inner resources:

*"Now as you look back at all the steps that you took to get to where you are today, what did you do?"*

*"Looking back on this journey, what were the choices that you made, so that you could be here today? etc.*

*"Looking back at this experience, that led you to where you are now, what did you learn about yourself?"*

Gaining access to outer resources:

*"And looking back on the history of this journey, what were the opportunities that you took advantage of?"*

*"Who were the people that helped you most?"*

*"Who else was involved?"*

Where before their unconscious choice was probably to believe that "it is difficult" now they have a new choice: "to believe that it is possible".

## 4.2 Powerful Questions

As we've seen so far, coaching takes place in the space of a conversation, that unfolds your client's internal world, in order to gain more resources towards a desired goal.

Above all, questions are the intersection between language and learning.

The language of a coach sounds simple, yet it is not easy. The language of a coach encourages depth of thinking, introspection and challenges the clients ways of thinking. In order to facilitate these three aspects, a coach mainly asks questions. In the coaching field the questions that we ask are called "Powerful question".

### WHAT ARE POWERFUL QUESTIONS AND WHAT IS THEIR PURPOSE IN COACHING

We know that reality is personal and subjective, but, how do we get to have such a different and unique perspective upon a given event, thing, person than anyone else? How do we give meaning to events in our lives?

This happens for two reasons:

#### a) The limitation of our senses

Our brain perceives the external world through our five senses: smell, taste, sight, sound and touch. It is impossible to perceive everything that happens in our environment in a certain moment, as our senses are limited. For example, we don't see x-ray's, we can't hear in the same way that a bat hears, or we can't detect a very tiny difference in the weight of objects.

#### b) Relevance and importance

Unconsciously we pay attention to those things and events that are relevant and important to us in a given moment. If for example you are about to meet someone in a crowded place, you will focus your attention on a specific characteristic of that person (for e.g.. the colour of their hair) in order to quickly identify that person amongst tens of people. In this process of focusing your attention on one element, **we eliminate information** that, even if present and available to our eyes in that moment, we will park. It doesn't mean that we've never perceived that information, it just means that, for not being necessary and relevant in that specific moment, we unconsciously stored it and are not consciously aware of it.

With the intention of pre-empting the future, we store learning and experiences that will serve us when needed. When something undesired happened to us, we will unconsciously process and store that experience in the form of a "learned event" and we will generalize a specific response throughout our lives. Many of those learned responses might have been very useful in our past, but, are no longer valid for us, the best option. Therefore, clients often wish to "change the way they react" changing that pre-programmed learnt response to a similar current experience.

### c) Interpretation

Our brain also is designed to look for similarities or coherences, between what is happening out there and what we already know. If something doesn't make sense to us, we give our meaning to it, even by distorting or interpreting it based on our past experiences. We also distort something that is not predictable or ambiguous about the future, with the purpose of pre-empting and getting ready for that event. Therefore, when something is important to us, but elements are lacking clarity, we attach our interpretation to it, coming up with our own subjective conclusions.

### d) The limitation of our language

To this process of relevance and importance we add language. Our only way to represent internally the events that happen in our lives is by labelling them. In other words, by using either internal language or spoken words. For example, as you are reading this manual, most probably you are saying the words in your mind, or you've just said something about what you've just read.

Looking at these four principles, we can then agree that there is a difference between what happens out there and the interpreted representation that we have about what happened. There is a difference between what is being said and the full complete image of what happened.

When people come to coaching, they will unveil a series of events, wishes and worries based on these principles. They will take you through what happened and what they wish for them to happen. Nevertheless, what you are hearing is the conscious elicitation of a sequence of generalized and interpreted events, where parts of the entire message are missing. You are listening to the story that they are telling to themselves, which constitutes only the top of the iceberg. As coaches, we know that below the surface of the message, there is a much greater reality, hidden in the deep structure of their thoughts and that contains an immense storage of resources and experience.

Our purpose as coaches is to enable people access that full image, in order to expand their perception and gain access to their internal resource. That is, to increase their awareness.

The purpose questions is to enable clients to access a greater consciousness of their strengths and opportunities. The more a question facilitate that, the more powerful it is to enhance that awareness. Thus, in coaching, we call them Powerful Questions.

Powerful questions have the ability to focus the client's attention, change the way they feel and stimulate them to take new actions by becoming aware of what was outside their awareness.

**What coaches look for, is what they find and is where they direct the client's attention.**

We can then summarize that the purposes of the powerful questions is:

- To expand the client's awareness on a specific topic
- To focus the client's attention in a specific direction.
- To access the client's untapped or hidden potential.
- To provoke actions or respectfully challenge their way of thinking.
- To speak to the client's creative ability and resources to generate new options.

**NOTE:** Coaches sometimes tend to search for those questions that are powerful, putting themselves under unnecessary pressure. When the question is addressed with the intention of genuine curiosity, it is most probable that it will be a powerful question.

In fact, some of the more powerful questions that you can experience in your day to day life are those coming from children, that genuinely look to understand what happens in the world that surrounds them. Have you ever been challenged to review your well learnt reality, when you are asked by a child "Why do birds have wings and why do they need to fly?".

Just to offer you another example of a powerful question coming from the daughter of one of our best friends that was engaged in a conversation with her dad about what dreams are. The girl asked her dad "And how do we know if when we are awake it's actually not a dream and that reality is actually when we dream?".

Great questions will invite people to reflect upon the limitation of their thoughts, upon how do they know what they know and stimulates their creativity to imagine new possibilities.

As a coach, you will very often know when a question impacted your client as they may say something like:

*"That is a good question."*

*"I never thought about it.."*

*"Amm..let me think."*

Very often you will hear *silence*.

No matter what the response is, the best way is to just keep your silence, sit back and wait for your client's response, as we saw in the previous chapter.

## TYPES OF QUESTIONS

- **Internal:** Introspection, reflection. These are questions that we ask ourselves.
- **External:** The answer is expected from someone else.
- **Direct:** Curiosity, understanding. It seeks genuine understanding.
- **Manipulative:** Looking for a specific answer to reach a personal goal. They contain assumptions and we do not use them in coaching, as we believe that coaches know what is good for them, they are complete and full of resources.
- **Closed questions:** where the response is either yes or no. These types of questions do not invite reflection and therefore we do not generally use them in coaching. Yes/no answers are very limiting and they generally operate at a conscious level, meaning that the client is not learning anything new. However, we can use them to promote a positive recognition of the progress the client is making, reinforcing something new that they have learnt unconsciously eg. "It seems like something positive has just happened?" This type of question, although it provokes a yes/no response, if delivered correctly will provide space for the client to expand on their response and recognize new learning.
- **Open questions:** these are the core activity of a coach. They are questions that invite an elaborated response, where clients can freely unfold their story.

### 1. TYPES OF OPEN QUESTIONS

**WHAT:** Used particularly to obtain information about the content related to:

- What happened or needs to happen:
  - "Can you tell me more about what happened?"
  - "What needs to happen here?"
- Client's thoughts:
  - "What do you think about ..."
  - "What is your opinion about?"
- Challenges:
  - "What stands in the way?"
  - "What interferes with what you want?"
  - "What are the challenges that you see?"
- Opportunities (learnings) and options:
  - "What good can come out of this?"
  - "What are the options to achieve this?"
  - "What opportunities lie ahead for you?"
  - "What can you learn from this?"
  - "What new experience can you have by doing this?"
- Actions to be taken:
  - "What needs to be done?"
  - "What will you do?"
  - "What behavior/thoughts do you need to have so that you can...?"
- Objectives and agenda:
  - "What do you want to achieve?"
  - "What is your objective?"
  - "What would you like to talk about today?"
  - "What is important for you to discuss today?"

**HOW:** Used to obtain information about the process and underpin strategies related to:

- Identification of beliefs
  - "How do you know that it is so?"*
  - "How did you come to this conclusion?"*
  - "How is this an issue for you?"*
  - "How did you learn to have this emotional response to this?"*
  - "How do you talk to yourself when this happens?", etc*
- Values:
  - "How does (naming the action or statement) support your value of x (naming the value)?"*
- Commitment:
  - "How will you make sure that what you have decided to do will be done?"*
  - "How can you implement these actions/changes?"*
  - "How will you remember what we've spoken about when you will have the meeting?", etc*
- The client can track progress and measure results:
  - "How will you know that you have achieved this?"* "
  - How can make sure that you will stick to this plan?"*
- Alignment:
  - "How is what you are saying related to your objective of...?"*
  - "How is this related to what you were saying before?"*
  - "How is this relevant to your objective?"*

**WHO:** Used to obtain information about the person or other involved parties and are related to:

- Person view of oneself
  - "Who do you want to be once you've achieved this?"*
- External significant others:
  - "Who can support you with this?"*
  - "Who else can do X?"*
  - "Who else may benefit from .. ?"*
  - "Who is important for you here?", etc*
- Unblocking the "I don't know" response:
  - "Do you know anyone else who does it? What and how do they achieve this?"*

**WHAT FOR:** This type of question looks for meaning and to understand the values of the client.

- "What for do you want to achieve this?"*
- "What values do you honor by doing this?", etc*

**WHEN:** Used to obtain specific information focused on time and very often related to actions taken towards an objective.

- "When will you do it?"*
- "By when will you have done ... ?"*

**WHERE:** Used to obtain information about the environment and the context.

*"Where in your life can you apply what you've just realized? where else?"*

*"Where exactly did this happen? (People tend to generalize and we need to break that generalization, by focusing the client's attention on a specific context)*

*"Where is this (not) useful for you?"*

**WHY:** Used to obtain more information about the reasoning behind a behavior.

In coaching, we pay attention to how we use this question, as it also invites the client to justify the reasoning behind what they are saying, thus it can provoke a defensive response.

For example, "Why do you not do it?" this question may put the client in a position of defending their reasons. Therefore, we need to be very weary of our tone of voice and the intention that we have when we ask this question.

In coaching we usually replace "WHY" with "WHAT". For example *"What makes you not act?"* or *"What stays in the way?"*

## 2. TYPES OF QUESTIONS BASED ON THEIR UTILITY

### INQUIRY QUESTIONS

These are the questions that invite introspection and the re-evaluation of the client's own judgments and criteria. An inquiry is a powerful question that is so open-ended, it could take a week for the client to ponder their many answers. It is sometimes used as a form of powerful question, typically given to clients as a homework assignment.

They are questions that requires clients to reflect upon. Socrates made these questions popular through "The Socratic inquiry", as they invite the client to philosophize on principles well ingrained in our unconscious minds.

Examples of such questions can be:

*"When did you learn that this is difficult?"*

*"What are you tolerating in your life?"*

*"What's missing?"*

*"What is to be celebrated about this?"*

### OPENING QUESTIONS

Used mostly to establish the agenda and the direction of the coaching session.

*"What would you like to focus on today?"*

*"What is bubbling on the surface for your today?"*

*"What would you like to explore today?"*

*"What is an important thing for you to talk about today?"*

*"What would be a positive outcome for our session?"*

## OPENING NEW PERSPECTIVE QUESTIONS

These are questions that open up the client's imagination and creativity to see a specific context with new perspectives. Examples of such questions can be:

*"What if a miracle happens overnight and you wake up seeing your goal already achieved. What would be the first thing you would notice?" (Shazer & Lipchik, 1984)*

*"If you had free choice in the matter, what would you do?"*

*"If we can wipe out all the obstacles, how would this be for you?"*

*"What would you be able to do?"*

*"If you had a magic wand, what would you do?"*

## META-QUESTIONS

These types of questions invite clients to elegantly notice limiting beliefs or become even more aware of unconsciously stated values.

Example of such questions:

*"I'm curious, what do you think about what you've just said?"*

*"As you listen again to what you've just said, what comes into your mind hearing it back?"*

## LEARNING QUESTIONS

They are designed to wrap up important learning points from a told story during the coaching conversation or to conclude and integrate everything in one essential statement during a coaching session.

Example of such questions:

*"And what did you learn that was possible from this situation?"*

*"What important things do you need to learn from this?"*

*"What did you learn from our conversation today?"*

*"What do you know now, that you didn't know before we started our session today?"*

*"How would you explain this to yourself?"*

*"How can you tie all of this together?"*

*"What do you need to remember about this?"*

## ALTERNATIVES QUESTIONS

Searching for new options and possibilities.

*"What are all the possibilities?"*

*"What are all the options?"*

*"If you had your choice, what would you do?"*

*"What are possible solutions?"*

*"What happens if you do.....? and what happens if you don't?"*

## CONSIDERATION QUESTIONS

Looking for client's opinion and criteria:

*"What do you think about this?"*

*"What do you think is best?"*

*"How do you feel about this?"*

*"How does it land for you?"*

*"How does it sound to you?"*

## BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

Looking to understand what has been done so far:

*"How did you come to this today?"*

*"What has been done so far?"*

*"What led you to ... ?"*

## DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

These questions are intended to invite the client to develop more on the content of what happened.

*"This is interesting, can you tell me more?"*

*"What happened?"*

*"How was it like?" "And after that?"*

## EXPLORING VALUES QUESTIONS

These questions are meant to link what client is saying to the things that they value.

*"And by doing this, what values do you honor?"*

*"What is important for you in all of this?"*

*"What values are you respecting by ...?"*

## CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS

These questions clarify the meaning that the client is giving to a specific event and also invite clients to further development on that topic.

*"What do you mean by...?"*

*"What does it mean to...?"*

*"What seems to confuse you?"*

*"What makes you feel this way?"*

*"What provokes this reaction?"*

## BRAIN STORM QUESTIONS

Designed to support clients to brainstorm their ideas and see different perspectives.

*"Would you like to talk in more details about this?"*

*"From what are other angles can you look at this?"*

*"How do you think that someone else, that you respect, would look at this?"*

## EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

Intended to reduce the client's generalizations, to focus on a specific example or to look for resources:

*"Can you give me an example of what you are saying that generally happens?"*

*"What would be an example of this?"*

*"Such as...?" / "For instance?"(when there is a generalized statement)*

*"What is a good example of a solution?"*

*"Can you give me an example of when you did do it?"*

*"What examples of success (related to the topic in conversation) do you have in your past?"*

## EXTENSION QUESTIONS

Used mostly to stretch the client's mind beyond what they usually think.

*"What else is here/there?"*

*"What other thoughts come to mind?"*

*"What else do you notice?", etc.*

## "WHAT IF" QUESTIONS

Are meant to:

Prepare client for future actions and come up with a plan B:

*"What if this will does not work?"*

*"What if this will not happen, what will you do?"*

*"What if you don't remember to do this?"*

Shift the focus on a more positive mindset.

*"But what if it does work?"*

*"What if it will happen?"*

*"What if you are able to do it?"*

Re-analyze steps, anticipate and identify more options

*"What if you could turn back time....."*

*Would you do it any different?*

*What would you do differently?*

*How else would you have done it?*

*How else would you have handled it?*

*Who else would you have involved?*

*How else could a person handle it?"*

## EXPLORING VALUES QUESTIONS

These questions are meant to link what the client is saying to the things that they value.

*"And by doing this, what values do you honor?"*

*"What is important for you in all of this?"*

*"What values do you respect by ?"*

## ENERGIZING AND FUN QUESTIONS

These questions are meant to boost the client's motivation by engaging them in an enjoyable journey.

*"What is fun about doing this?"*

*"How can you make it fun?"*

*"And what was funny about this situation?"*

*"What did you enjoy most about this?"*

*"What can you do to make it enjoyable?"*

## FOCUSING QUESTIONS

Designed to support the client to brainstorm their ideas on a certain matter.

*"Would you like to talk in more details about this?"*

*"Would you like us to explore this deeper?"*

*"Would you like to have a closer look at this?"*

## IDENTIFICATION OF OBSTACLES QUESTIONS

Used mostly to identify what stands in the way for the client or what makes a situation become a problem.

- "What seems to be the problem here?"*
- "What do you perceive to be the obstacle?"*
- "What is stopping you from.."*
- "What concerns you most about this?"*
- "What thoughts do not let you....?"*

## IMPLEMENTATION QUESTIONS

Used mostly to move clients into action.

- "What will you do then?"*
- "What needs to be done here?"*
- "What support do you need to make this happen?"*
- "How can you do it?"*
- "What actions will take in order to..?"*

## DECISION MAKING QUESTIONS

Used mostly unstick clients from a decision making process in order to move forward.

- "What are you deciding?" Used mostly for when clients say "I need to make a decision, but it's hard" you may want to identify what they are deciding between.*
- "What are your choices?"*
- "What information do you need before you make your decision?" "What needs to happen for you to decide?"*
- "What do you need to know before you make up your mind?"*

## CLEARING QUESTIONS

Use mostly to let the client vent out emotions and thoughts that were trapped inside and that stop them for moving forward.

- "Is there anything you need to clear in order to move into today's session?"*
- "Is there anything left over from the meeting you just left?"*

## INVOLVEMENT QUESTIONS

Intended to include clients in the process, when they seem to externalize responsibilities to others

- "What was your part in this?"*
- "How do you fit in all of this?"*
- "What part of this were you responsible for?"*
- "What was your role in this?"*

To support them take ownership of their own achievements:

- "What was your contribution to this?"*
- "What was your role in this achievement?"*
- "How did you contribute to this?"*
- "Tell me more about your actions to support this to happen."*

## PERSPECTIVE QUESTIONS

Used to provide the client with a broader view of alternatives and to enrich their perspective on a specific matter.

- "What are other angles from where you can look at this?"*
- "How do you think that someone else, that you respect, would look at this?"*
- "When you are 90 years old, what do you want to say about your life?"*
- "What would you like to be doing five years from now?"*
- "What is your life purpose?"*
- "How would it be 5 years from now if nothing changes?"*
- "Looking from the top at your life purpose, how important is this to you?"*

## ECOLOGY QUESTIONS

Used mostly to bring to the client's awareness the possible impact that an action might have on relevant others or on various aspects of their lives.

- "If you do this, what would be the impact on \_\_\_\_\_?"*
- "What other aspects of your life may be impacted by you doing this?"*
- "Who else may be impacted by this?"*

## SUMMARY QUESTIONS

Used to narrow the conversation to the most relevant points.

- "How would you describe everything that you've mentioned in one sentence?"*
- "How would you explain this to someone else in just few words?"*
- "I can hear many important things from what you are saying, how would you summarize everything?"*
- "Out of everything that you've just mentioned, what would be an alternative way to describe it all in few words?"*

## FEEDBACK QUESTION

These questions allow coaches to re-confirm the progress that they are making with their clients on their goal and for clients to express if they feel that there is anything left out. They are generally used before closing the session, however, they can also be used at any moment during the coaching conversation.

- "How are we doing in terms of... (naming the objective)?"*
- "Is there anything I can support you with from today's session?"*
- "How do you feel that we are doing regarding your goal for today?"*
- "How did it work for you?"*

## 4.3 Offering Feedback

Feedback is an essential feature of learning and change.

The purpose of feedback is to support clients toward a desired goal or state, indicating their position with regard to their goal. Thus, the most effective feedback is that which helps the person identify:

1. What is their current position regarding the established goal. Here the coach is supported by their observations of previously established behavioral evidence.
2. What is the client doing to get closer to the goal.
3. What possible blinds-spots do they have, in terms of limiting and strength factors.

Coaching promotes learning, its intention is to totally support growth and not to judge the client's actions, ways of thinking or being.

Coaches are truth tellers, sharing the truth of the client's situation from their perspective. They use feedback to bring clarity to their clients, based on the coaches' discoveries and learnings. These can include opportunities, gaps, strengths and possibilities that clients don't see. Feedback is not the truth, but it is merely a statement of what they notice from where they stand.

The language of a coach is **clear and respectful, whilst maintaining a warm approach.**

**CLEAR:** By clear we mean that the message is direct and that it stays close to the client's language. Coaches do not impose their subjective opinion about HOW things should be done, but on WHAT they have noticed. They provide such a feedback through a **descriptive language** empowered by specific examples.

**RESPECTFUL:** By this we mean that the coach remains assertive, whilst asking for permission to dive into more detail on a topic, or simply, to share what they've noticed. Many times, they use questions to address their observation and to check them back with their clients.

### BEST PRACTICE OF OFFERING FEEDBACK

#### 1. SHARING INTUITION

Coaches do not make statements claiming that they know "the truth" or "HOW things should be done", but rather to share their own feelings about what they see and hear from their clients, in order to, mirror back valuable information to their clients. The sound of such feedback is:

*"I have a feeling that there might be more here, would you like to talk about it?"*

*"Something tells me that you feel\_\_\_\_\_, is that so?"*

*"I am noticing some tension in your voice...."*

#### 2. SHARING THEIR ASSESSMENT ON THE SITUATION

Coaches gather what is being said about the situation and share their observations.

*"It seems to me that what you are doing right now sounds more like a "should" rather than a want. Is that so?"*

### 3. SHARING THOUGHTS ABOUT BEHAVIOUR

Coaches sometime need to address what they see from their client's behavior. This feedback relates to what is being done, or, is to be done.

"I notice that what you are doing right now may not support you value of... Can you tell me more about your thoughts?"

"I notice that something more could be done in this aspect. What do you think this could be?"

### 4. SHARING THOUGHTS ABOUT SKILLS

Coaches also share their own opinion about opportunities for growth and learning.

"I can see that there is a great opportunity for you to improve some skills in this area. What do you think about this?"

"I have the impression that you are very resourceful, how can you take full advantage of these resources in this situation."

"Which of your strengths could you take more advantage of?"

### 4. SHARING THOUGHTS ABOUT EMOTIONS

Another powerful way to increase awareness in clients is to mirror back their own emotional experiences.

"What I sense from here is hesitance towards this. Is that correct?"

## ASSERTIVENESS AND FEEDBACK

We mentioned before that coaches provide their own view in a respectful way, whilst maintaining their assertiveness.

Assertiveness is our ability to state our own views in a non-offensive and non-judgemental way, respecting the boundaries of our clients. Assertiveness is very often associated with "win-win" situations. In coaching, win-win stands for both parties, as well as:

- On one hand, by providing feedback, the coach has the opportunity to clarify their assumptions and what they've noticed, followed by a question such as "Is that so?"
- On the other hand, the client can discover their blind-spots and get an in-depth view of their own experience.

Some basic principles of assertive language are:

- **"I" statements.**

We begin the sentence with "I" instead of "You" as we've seen in the above examples. We don't use "you" as it can transmit an unconscious message of "blaming" and it may trigger a defensive response.

- **Third person statements**

It is very useful, especially when providing constructive feedback. It is used to replace "you" statements, by a more neutral one. We may say: "I notice that it was not done" instead of "I noticed that you didn't do it."

- **Inclusion**

Including oneself in the conversation will transmit the message in a warmer manner. We may say "I notice this, how do you think that WE should move forward?"

## 4.4 Re-framing

Re-framing is a very powerful language pattern that many professional coaches are using in order to invite clients see things from a different perspective.

It is an advance intervention, as sometimes it requires a bit of practice on behalf of the coach, however, once integrated, it enables coaches to provide their clients with a powerful way to see the good part in everything, to notice the creative part in each problem and to see obstacles as stepping stones.

Re-framing is recognising the positive potential of anything unwanted that unfolds in our lives.

Clients come to coaching with their own view of what happens in their lives and they frame those events in their own unique way, thus looking at the situation framed from one single perspective.

The purpose of a coach is to change the frame or to re-frame what happens, so that clients can see the situation with different mind-set.

For example, the word "upset" is associated with an unwanted emotional way of being. If, however, we re-frame the same letters into "set-up" or "up-set" we can come with a totally different conclusion.

We can re-frame in three ways:

### 1) Context re-framing

This type of re-framing enables clients to rediscover the benefits of a specific behavior that apparently they see it as an unwanted one.

A behavior is a response to a trigger and every behavior has its own functions and benefits. Otherwise we wouldn't have learned that response in the first place.

Clients may state an unwanted behavior during the coaching session, looking to change it or eliminate it from their lives completely. It may be very useful to isolate a behavior to specific contexts, where that behavior is not needed and keep it in those situations where we may benefit from that response.

For example, a person may say that they are too introspective and that they don't talk a lot. They may perceive this behavior as being negative, as they would like to be more expressive. Often a behavior is linked to ways of being which may seem very difficult to change, as it is integrated in the personality of that person.

In this situation, we may think about contexts in which this behavior can be an advantage for our client. For instance, in coaching, we know that listening to our clients and talking less than they do, is key. Therefore, this behavior may be very adequate in these types of situations. We may re-frame by asking:

*"And I wonder where in your life would it be of help to listen more than you talk?"*

In this way we stop generalizing the impact of a specific behavior on the overall contexts of the client's life and we find one where this response can be useful. This way we support our clients to see that response with differently and to discover, that it is only a matter of choosing where it is best for them to use it.

### 1) Content re-framing

This type of re-framing looks to change the meaning of what happened, of a specific behavior or emotional response.

It is about taking a specific behavior and amplifying the dimension of the frame, whilst maintaining the same context.

If we take the same example of the person that wishes to be more talkative, we may reframe by asking something like:

"And I wonder, how is it for you not to be talkative, what could be the advantage of listening?"

### 1) "I am" re-framing

Sometimes clients talk about themselves in ways that the coach can clearly notice are not beneficial. Such statements have even a greater negative impact when they are used at the level of the person's identity, in other words, using "I am" statements.

As coaches, we should listen to how our clients talk about themselves and re-frame that statement in a way that has a less negative or even neutral impact.

For example, a client may say "I am too stubborn". The coach may re-frame that statement by using the verb "to do" instead of "I am" and they may say something like:

*"So, does this mean that you do not give up easily?"*

Another example can be when a client says, "I am so stupid for doing this" and we can re-frame by saying "So, I understand that you did something stupid in this situation, is that correct?"

We can clearly see that sentences that include statements such as "I am stupid" have a greater impact than those saying, "I did something stupid".

## 4.4 Metaphors

The origin of the word metaphor comes from the Greek word "metapherein" which means:

- Meta: outside or further
- Pherein: to move, to transfer

Therefore, it means to move the meaning of a word or sentence to another. The metaphor refers to the action of moving the meaning, not the words themselves.

We hear metaphors in our day-to-day life:

- At work: "we're fighting here", "we need to put out this fire", etc.
- In financial areas: "black money", "it crashes".
- In relationships in general: "he kills me", "She broke my heart" etc.

When using metaphors, it is important to take into account the following aspects:

- Never reveal the meaning of a metaphor or ask for its meaning to the client. Metaphors are the domain of the unconscious, whereas, logical arguments can take that person away from that realm. With metaphors we help clients connect with their unconscious and thus with their internal re- sources
- The unconscious mind responds to metaphors by looking for similar examples and solutions that fit the requirements of the experience. Therefore, metaphors are a great resource to connect clients with their inner strengths.

### TYPES OF METAPHORS

#### 1. Isomorphism

The basic principle of creating metaphors is called isomorphism. Isomorphism is an unconscious comparison, mapping one element from the real situation with another element of the realm of plants, animals, natural phenomena, characters, inanimate objects, planets etc.

Isomorphism is normally formed with the statement "is like.." For example: one may say:

"This situation is like a heavy cloud."

"She is like a rose..very beautiful but can prick"

"He's like a small dog..barks a lot but doesn't bite."

"In this meeting it rains with good ideas."

"This employee is like the night sky, you know that there are a lot of shining stars, but you can't see them all."

In coaching we say that metaphors are the biggest gift a client can give the coach. Metaphors are poems of the soul and they hold internal vivid unconscious experiences. The unconscious is the realm where everything is possible.

If a client talks in metaphors, they talk directly from their unconscious and thus from their creative mind. As coaches we want to stay close to our client's metaphors and use them back, in order to keep the conversation where our client is.

Below there is an example of such a conversation:

Client: "This company is a dinosaur"

Coach: "And how is that dinosaur?" - Using client's metaphor

Client (smiling and showing with his body the movements): "It is big, because it is a multinational, it has power, but it moves sooo slow. It doesn't evolve."

Coach: "And what needs to happen to that dinosaur to move faster?"

Client (laughing): "To become a tyrannosaurus"

Coach: "And what does it need for that transformation to happen?"

Client: "It need people to demonstrate to the dinosaur that it is easier and better if it has wings to fly"

Coach: "What could you do to support the rest in explaining that to the dinosaur?"

## 2. Living metaphors

Another type of metaphors can also be stories, anecdotes, poems, quotes or examples of one own experience. They are in fact analogies related to real life situation.

Clients may sometimes say "What we are talking about now, just reminded me of Star Wars..it looks like we are in a battle for power in this company."

When coaches hear these types of metaphors they will run with it, in order to meet their clients where they are, trusting their unconscious creative mind.

They may say something like

"And who are the parties involved in the battle?"

"What needs to happen for you to win this battle?"

"What needs to happen for this battle to end?"

"Who (which character) are you in this battle?"

"How is that character?" What can it do? What are their strengths and opportunities?", etc

## THE PURPOSE OF METAPHORS

### 1. Be in the moment

As we can see so far, coaches listen, capture and use client's metaphors to enhance their client's creativity and to connect them with their internal resources.

### 2. Facilitate learning and stimulate creativity

There are, however, times when clients may get stuck in their old stories and their rational, well learned, way of seeing things. Coaches may sometimes use metaphors themselves, in order to facilitate the process.

When coaches use their own metaphors, they do it elegantly, without imposing their own view and meaning over that of their client. They make statements such as *"What you are telling me seems like a roller-coaster"* and then they go back to silence and wait to see how that landed for their client.

The client may confirm the metaphor and then the coach continues with questions related to that metaphor:

*"And how do you feel in this roller-coaster?"*

*"What needs to be done to stop it?"*

*"What would happen if it goes faster?"*

*"What can you do to slow down the speed?", etc*

Or the client may provide feedback that the metaphor wasn't the right one. They may say something like *"Well..it's not really that bad.."*

In this case, coaches may inquire for a new, more suitable metaphor by asking *"Then what is it like?"*. This will enable clients to come up with their own analogy, whilst staying connected with their internal unconscious world. They may say something like *"It's actually more like a go-cart race"*.

Whatever the journey the world of metaphors can present, one thing is for sure: metaphors are a great playground where new options, sometimes never noticed before by the client, can emerge and that will provide great insight and learning. Therefore, many times coaches use metaphors to emphasise new learnings by asking *"And what do you learn from this race?"*. Or *"What new things did you learn from this journey?"*, etc.

Professional coaches understand the power of metaphors and master their skills in using them throughout their coaching processes.

## 4.5 Clean Communication

The closer we stay to the client's language the more we create a space of "speaking the same language", of understanding and rapport.

Imagine it like a conversation in two different language that are similar but they are not the same: the client may say hello in Spanish and you may respond with a hello but in Italian. Although the understanding is conserved it still isn't a conversation that has a relaxed, intuitive flow.

In coaching we want our clients to feel heard, understood and followed, therefore it is so important to stay in the territory of our clients to ensure the effectiveness of our conversations, in the SPACE where coaching occurs.

Clean communication happens generally when coaches:

### 1) Stay on the message

This involves following from where you client left their answer. Meaning, using their words to continue with the next question. For example:

Client: "I would like to be able to write a new story for my life"

Coach: "And what would you like to write it about?" or "And what would that story sound like?"

### 2) Make it a two-way conversation

Try to really hear and understand where others are coming from. What are they trying to say? What messages are they trying to get across to you? Pay special attention, not just to what they are saying, but to what isn't being said. Clarifying understanding is key to avoiding mind-reading client's experiences. Often coaches ask:

*"So, what I understand is this and that. Is that correct?"*

*"What I heard is that you'd like to write a new story, is that so?"*

### 3) Pace the client at a non-verbal level

Yes, non-verbal communication is equally as important as what is being said. Making small nodding gestures with your head or simply saying something like "I understand", "I can see that" will send the message to the client that they are followed, seen, heard and that there is an interest in what they are saying. Keep your body posture relaxed, open, welcoming.

### 4) Stick to the first question or statement

Professional coaches address questions and make questions, without the need of going back and explaining themselves. They make a question and go back to silence, providing the SPACE for the client to think and respond.

### 5) Uses client's metaphor

As we've seen in the previous chapter, coaches use the client's metaphors and take their session forward based on that analogy. They know that staying in the realm of metaphors will reveal the hidden depths of their client's thought processes

## 6) Descriptive messages

Professional coaches keep their own opinions and advice to themselves. They will provide feedback to their client in a descriptive way, meaning that they will state what they saw and not the interpretation of what they saw.

Descriptive messages are usually followed by a question to seek confirmation from the client or one that will invite the client to reflect even deeper.

For example *"I can tell that you don't like this job" or "I can tell it makes you nervous" or "I think you should quit your job"* - these are definitely statements that demonstrate the subjective interpretation of the coach of external cues that the client is giving. It is also demonstrating giving advice on what the coach believes is best for the client, but, according to their own values, beliefs and experiences.

In coaching we do not give advice, purely because not everything that is good and congruent for the coach will be for the client considering their context and emotional experiences.

Example of descriptive communication:

"I can see you are frowning as you are saying this. What are you experiencing about this right now?"

"I can hear some tension in your voice, is there more here that you want to talk about today?"

"I can see that you've closed yourself by crossing your arms. Would you like to explore this more?"

## 7) Listen to understand

Coaches will listen to understand and then they will ask more to understand even better. For example, they may ask *"So what you said is that this is important to you. What makes it important?"*

## 8) Stick to the most important point

Often in coaching, clients are putting on the table various topics at the same time. Professional coaches know that the more they pin down the most important topic, the more effective a session will be for their client and they can also serve them in a better, more structured way.

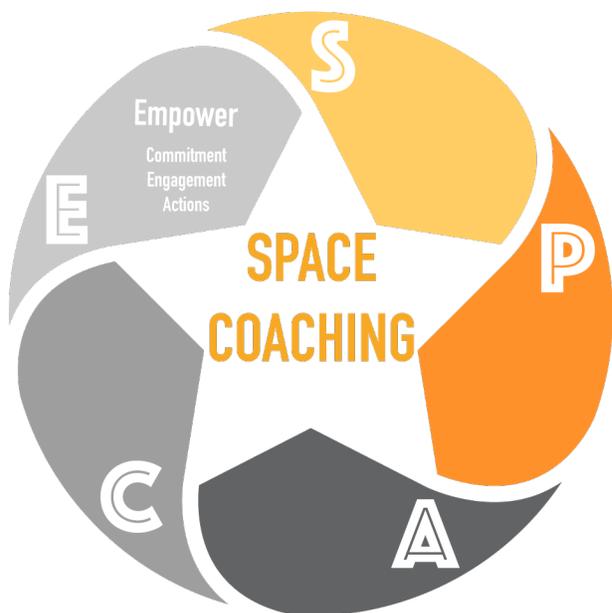
When the client is revealing many topics at the same time, coaches will narrow down everything that is being said for a more direct and effective communication flow:

*"So I am hearing that there is a topic related to your wish of having more time for yourself and that is also very important for you to improve your relationship with your manager. It seems to me that we have two very interesting topics to talk about. With which one would you like to start today?"*

## 8) Summarize

Sometimes clients, in they desire to "take off their chest" their stories, they may seem to provide many details on that specific topic. In these situations, coaches may risk losing track of the most important areas of the presented topic, therefore, they know that summarizing everything that was said is key to keeping the conversation on track: "So what you are saying is x and y ? Did I understand correctly?"

They may even ask the client to summarize it: *"So if you have to put everything that you've just said into a sentence of 3 to 5 words how would that sound like?"*



## 5. EMPOWER

Coaching is all about bringing to light the power that rests within the client. It's about making them see opportunities that they've never seen before and supporting them to feel complete and full of resources.

It's about taking fearless steps towards achieving their desired dreams.

In fact, when we think about empowering clients, we are referring to reconnecting them with their inner strengths and full potential, as the power already lies within them.

Coaches focus on empowering clients when:

- A client ignores, or simply doesn't see, a resource or a skill that they have.
- There is an obstacle that comes along and the client loses their motivation or gets discouraged.
- The client feels blocked in how to achieve a specific objective.
- The client is disconnected from their vision and values.
- The client's inner voice is mainly the one of the saboteur.

### SKILLS FOR EMPOWERING

#### a) Focus on the strengths

As a coach, you want your clients to recognize, articulate, and fully embrace their strengths, whether they be attitudes, skills, or behaviors.

In our day to day lives, we live in environments where the focus is on comparisons: "Do more of this", "do better", "do less of". This is not a problem and in fact progression means moving forward from where we are, comparing our current state with a previous one. The issue is that, often, we hear more about our weakness that need improving and less of our strengths that need to be maintained and/or enhanced.

Clients come to coaching stating both their strengths and weakness. As coaches we want to check how much these two areas are in balance. When clients are aware of their strengths and channel them correctly, they can follow the path of their goals from a higher level of motivation and with different energy.

As coaches, you can facilitate success by shining a light on those strengths:

- Identify them and bring them to light in your client's awareness.
- Explore areas where they can be used.
- Facilitate learning for your clients in how to best use them in these areas.
- Use them to balance the areas of "weakness", in order to have a more balanced conception of themselves.

## **b) Acknowledge**

When we acknowledge someone's behavior, attitude or skills we strengthen the awareness of our client in these areas.

Often, we are unconsciously aware of our internal resources and power. We do things on automatic pilot and we are not even aware of what we can do or be. When we acknowledge, bring those resources to the client's awareness, we are facilitating learning about themselves.

When coaches state what they see in their clients, they can receive various feedback reactions which will tell them even more about where their client stands. Such reactions may be:

- **Confirmation:** Client is grateful for the acknowledgement, recognizing unconsciously that powerful resource.
- **Silence:** Very often there is silence after acknowledgement. Silence may indicate a conscious process of something that they were holding unconsciously. It is the surprising moment of "being noticed" as many times, we may know our inner strengths, but we are not sure if they are recognized by others. When coaches recognize them, they also motivate their clients to repeat and act more from that strength, as they feel seen and heard.
- **Questioning:** When being acknowledged, clients may sometimes express their own doubts about what was noticed, by asking the coach "Do you think?" or by saying something like "I don't know about that." This is a valuable feedback that coaches can receive from their clients, as it says a lot about their level of awareness and balance over their strengths and weakness. Coaches may even explore further when they receive this type of response by asking "What do YOU think about what I've just noticed?"

## **c) Debriefing**

Debriefing is different from story-telling, it is more about highlighting actions. When clients debrief, they make a short list of what has been achieved from the last session. Seeing a list of actions accomplished boosts our motivation and it empowers us to move even further.

Debriefing is a powerful way to empower clients, as it is what keeps them going, a sense of progression. In fact, many people will make it a routine to track their actions and encouraging clients to do so is an empowering experience.

## **d) Re- framing**

Re-framing is the coaches' ability to highlight the good side of whatever happens in the life of their clients, as we've seen in our last chapter. Re-framing is an empowering experience for our clients.

## 5.1 The change and implementation process

Change in general is not easy, as it involves challenging ways of thinking, doing and feeling. It involves moving outside the SPACE of what we know.

We know that change is possible only when there is an intrinsic motivation for change. In coaching, we do not want people to change because we believe that this is good for them, but we wait for our clients to decide that a change is for their own benefit.

Coaches do not impose the change for their clients, but definitely support their client throughout this process of change.

A well know anecdote in the world of coaching can support this chapter: "How many engineers do you need to change a light bulb?" The answer is, one, but the light bulb needs to want to change.

### THE STAGES OF CHANGE

James O. Prochaska is a professor of psychology and director of the Cancer Prevention Research Center at the University of Rhode Island. He is the lead developer of the Transtheoretical Model of Behavioral Change. He is the author of over 400 publications, including four books, Changing to Thrive, Changing for Good, Systems of Psychotherapy, and The Transtheoretical Approach and he is internationally recognized for his work as a developer of the stage model of behavioral change.

He proposed 6 levels of change that clients can go through, not always in a linear way.

It is important for coaches to understand and recognize in which stage the client is, so they can support this transition in the most effective way.



## PRE-CONTEMPLATION

In this stage, clients do not intend to take action in the foreseeable future (for example within the next 6 months). Clients are unaware of the need for change, or even unaware of their current patterns or behavior.

If coaches see that clients seem to be at the pre-contemplation stage, the client is not ready to make big changes. Clients are often unaware that their behavior can produce negative consequences and they sometimes underestimate the benefits of changing behavior and place too much emphasis on the consequences of changing it.

When coaching clients at this stage, the initial exploration and assessment phases of coaching can be critical and they should have an emphasis on increasing the client's awareness.

## CONTEMPLATION

Clients in this stage are considering making a change, they are open to it and they now recognize that their behavior may interfere with their desired outcomes.

At this stage, they have a more thoughtful and practical consideration of the pros and cons of changing the behavior, with equal emphasis placed on both. Very often clients may find themselves in the situation of not knowing how to make the change.

They can endlessly weigh the pros and cons, but not actually decide to move into action. Our role as coaches, is to support them through this decisive process so that they can move to the next stage.

## PREPARATION

In this stage, clients are ready to take action within the next 30 days. People start to take small steps for changing the behaviour, gathering information, compiling resources, checking out possibilities, etc.

At this stage, coaches focus on accountability, whilst supporting the client to discover resources, identify their needs and reconnect with their full potential, inspiring a positive outlook on their goal.

## ACTION

This is the classic stage where clients actually take action, practice new behaviors and explore new options. They are actively engaged in the process of change and they take actions towards a successful implementation.

The coach's role is to ensure that the client's actions are congruent with who they are, with their values and their higher vision.

## MAINTENANCE

In this stage, clients have sustained their change for a while (defined as more than 6 months) and intend to maintain the behavior going forward.

The Coaches role here is to work together with the client on how to prevent a relapse to earlier stages. Coaching, at this time, continues to acknowledge progression and to praise the great work of the client. Often clients may have not been successful at maintaining change in the past, however, through the coaching process they finally achieved their desired outcome. It is a great time to celebrate success and find strategies to maintain this change in the future, until it becomes completely integrated and transformed into an automatic habit. This stage, in fact, is all about being constant.

## TERMINATION

In this stage, clients have no desire to return to their unhealthy behaviors and are sure they will not relapse.

The behavior is integrated into their day to day life and it is transformed into an automatic habit.

This stage may not mean an end of the coaching process, rather new objectives and change in direction. Sometimes one change will trigger another and a new objective, hence, a new coaching process.

At this stage, coaches support clients to decide if there is a complete termination of the coaching process, ongoing maintenance of what was achieved or a new goal for a new process.

It is important to note that these stages are not linear, they are spiral. It is important to keep in mind that change is a process, not an event. In any desired change the client may cycle through these stages in a non-linear fashion. Sometimes, clients' relapse in the last stage of the change process and recycle through previous steps, gathering learning and collecting self-feedback, in order to go back and reset the process until it's successful completion.

We have seen from all these stages of change, that the role of a coach is to empower clients and to facilitate this process, by supporting clients with whatever is needed. Nevertheless, the responsibility of taking actions and identify the best way to move forward is all in the hands of the client.

Taking action is not suggested or pushed in any way by the coach or by the coach's advice. The actions have resulted from the co-created relationship between client and coach in the SPACE where the coaching process unfolds.

## 5.2 Future orientation: co-designing actions and commitment

Coaching is all about learning and actions to supporting higher goals, performance or overall well-being. We learn best through direct experience and actions create the real experience for the client. Actions are where a great part of the learning happens. As coaches, we want to make sure that our clients don't just reach a goal, but that they maintain it. We want them to be able to self-maintain the change and correct when something goes off track.

Knowledge is power and it is facilitated through learning. In coaching we stimulate new insight by asking questions that enable clients to see things differently. When clients change their perception, they generate options.

Insight is the first step, as it increases awareness, but that is not enough to provoke change. Transforming understanding into action is what will give a sense of progression towards a desired outcome. In coaching, our purpose is to create awareness and then move that into specific steps that will take clients to their desired destination. Our purpose is to provide the client a future positive orientation.

### FROM GREAT CONVERSATIONS TO EFFECTIVE ACTIONS

As we've seen so far, coaches do not leave powerful conversations and insights in the air. They move their clients into co-designing small steps towards their goals. We can describe this process in the following stages:

- 1. Insight:** Coaches increase awareness and channel their client's attention to their inner power and ability to achieve their dreams.
- 2. Options:** Create a SPACE where clients can fearlessly see a given situation from different angles, in order to generate new ways and possibilities of moving forward.
- 3. Choice:** Having one option keeps clients in the same pattern of doing things, having two options might create a process of deciding between which option they should choose, but having three or more options will free the client. It will increase their power of choice.

Far too often, clients believe that they don't have the power of choice and they "blame" the circumstances of their life for controlling the outcome. When we do this, it often feels like we are powerless to choose differently or to change. Our vision is narrowed and narrowed, until we are so driven by the circumstances that we no longer see what is possible.

The truth is, there is no such thing as "have to". There is only choice. There is a line between believing that we should and a sense of impossibility and trusting that we can. We are not victims of our circumstances, our history or judgments of ourselves. We can always choose the view- point/per- spective about any circumstance in our lives.

For example, what is the difference between a client saying: *"I can't choose my own boss" or "I am strong enough to face the challenges that lay ahead of me and powerful enough to make a decision."*

Choosing seems a conscious and natural process, and yet it is so necessary. In order to have the life they want clients must choose and must know what they have chosen. It's about living life consciously. Choice involves action— at least an internal form of action. That internal action is a conscious awareness of how we make our choices. Coaches facilitate a SPACE where choices are intentional and proactive, rather than habitual or reactive. They connect objectives with life purpose and higher vision, in order to enable conscious and meaningful choices that resonates with the client as a whole.

Resonant and meaningful choices might not always feel good, even when they are based on honoring values and are aligned with a greater life vision. Sometimes, they are quite difficult. The Coach's role is to support client's make meaningful decisions, even when those decisions appear difficult.

**4. Co-designing the strategy:** Every goal needs a plan. A plan is like a roadmap that enables clients to have clarity about what is necessary to be done in order to achieve their goals. Coaches are there to narrow the path which their client choose to take. They will not design the roadmap for their client, but they will support them to identify the best congruent route to follow, considering the client's values, skills and life purpose. Coaches are there to create the SPACE in which the actions they take are not just habitual, reactive responses, but creative, meaningful and exciting.

## 6. Actions

If commitment happens within the SPACE of coaching, actions happen in the real world of the client. The real actions of coaching happen in between the coaching sessions, in the client's life.

Experienced coaches end each session with a summary of clearly stated actions that will forward the client's learning and growth, often described as fieldwork. Coaching conversations are not complete until the client has identified actions that lead to accountability for change.

Fieldwork may include actions that clients agree on and have committed to in previous steps in the process, it can also include requests made by the coach that hold the client on course. It is important to mention that any decided actions are generated through collaborative discussions with the client and not by the coach. Coaches may make a request for an action, in order to stretch their client's habitual way of doing things, but, it is the client who agrees and commits to implement it.

Clients are 100% responsible for their lives, they are 100% responsible for their actions and they best know what they need to do in order to move forward.

## PRINCIPLES OF ESTABLISHING ACTIONS

### a) Specific

Actions need to be very specific and should not leave room for ambiguity or interpretation. We may ask:

"What will you do in order to make this

"When will you do it?"

"Where will you do this?,"etc

### **b) Chunked down**

Actions are little specific steps that the client can carry out between sessions. If actions are too big, they may not be accomplished within this timespan and we risk demotivating the client by not seeing progress towards their goals.

### **c) Challenging**

Actions need to be challenging, but motivating and exciting at the same time. They encourage experimentation of new ways of doing and thinking.

If actions are not challenging, they are just habitual ways of doing things. Coaches challenge, but always in a respectful way and looking for the client's commitment.

A way coaches may challenge is by "Do it now" statements and go back to listening for their client's reaction. They create a SPACE for negotiation, where actions are ambitious, exciting, but possible for the client to implement. If the client doesn't take the challenge a coach may ask for a counteroffer:

*"What about a counteroffer? When will it be possible for you to do it?"*

### **c) Result oriented**

Actions that clients choose should be in line with their objective and their intention is to move clients into a SPACE of progress where they achieve positive results.

### **d) Co-designed**

Nevertheless, actions are to be co-designed by the client, with the support of the coach, in the SPACE of coaching. As we've mentioned before: coaches can challenge client's established actions in terms of time frame.

For example, they may say *"What if you start doing it now?"*

Coaches empower the client to take the actions that they've defined, but they will not define the actions for their clients. For example, they may ask:

*"How can you make use of this skill or that ability that you have, to do what you've just mentioned?"*

Coaches may set higher standards for those actions, but it is the client who named the action. For example, they may say:

*"I wonder, how would it be for you to do 40 minutes of exercise instead of 30?"*

Often, clients may see the necessity of taking a specific step, nevertheless they feel unprepared or they don't know how to proceed. Coaches support their clients to find ways of taking those steps.

They may ask something like:

*"Who do you know that does it?"*

*"How do they do it?"*

*"What does it look like when others around you manage their state very well?" and*

*"How can you do it also, in a way that's coherent with who you are?"*

When clients name the actions, there is a sense of responsibility that comes along with it. That is the power of facilitating the client a SPACE where they feel free, empowered and supported to define their own actions.

## COMMITMENT

The act of committing moves everything to a deeper, more motivated level.

One thing is stating what the options are and another is to commit to those options. To step into commitment is to cross a threshold. A threshold between good ideas, plans and aspirations, to the mindset of making them real.

Unconsciously, clients know how committed they are. As coaches we bring to their consciousness that fact. We only have to ask

*"How committed are you from a scale of 1 to 10?"*

*"How can you bring that commitment to a 10?"*

If the client says "10" we can stretch their commitment to more. We may ask "What would bring your commitment level to 15?" for example.

Crossing the border between what is wanted and making that happening is a very powerful exercise. Sometimes we may even ask clients a YES/NO question. For example

*"What are you ready and committed to say NO to in your life?"*

*"What are you ready and committed to say YES to in your life?"*

## ACCOUNTABILITY

If tracking progress can be done by both coach and client, accountability is more of an activity of the client. It is a way to make them accountable and aware of the progress that they're making from one session to another. It is a useful way to keep the client commitment between sessions.

Coaches may add value to the established activities by keeping their clients responsible for what they have committed to. For example, they may ask something like:

*"How can you measure your progress?"*

*"What will keep you accountable for doing this?"*

*"Looking at your schedule and your current commitments, when can you realistically devote the time you need to complete this?"*

*"What have you already committed to, that you need to be mindful of, which could get in the way of meeting this deadline?"*

*"How do you want me to approach you if you don't follow through with the commitments you make? What would be a good way to bring this up?"*

*How would you like me to hold you accountable for your goals in a way that will sound supportive rather than negative?"*

*"How do you like to be managed? What type of management style do you respond best to?"*

*"How will you demonstrate ownership of this?"*

*"What do you feel you are responsible for? What do you feel is outside of your control?"*

## TRACKING PROGRESS

We have spoken earlier about the importance of debriefing actions. We have mentioned how important this activity is in tracking the progress that clients make.

It is said that what keeps us motivated is a feeling of progression, a feeling of advancing towards achieving a goal.

Tracking and measuring progress is another key activity of a coach. It provides accountability and structure to our sessions, maintains the clarity in the direction in which we are going and gathers valuable learning. It is, therefore, very important that coaches start the next session by making a debrief of what was done from what was established as a homework activity by our clients.

We may start the coaching session by asking something like:

"How did you do in terms of the actions that you said you would take?"

"How did it go?"

"What did you learn from these activities?"

"What important things did you notice by doing this?" "How did things change for you by doing this?"

"How comfortable did you find yourself in doing it? And how can you make it an even more enjoyable process?", etc

# V. ADVANCED COACHING SKILLS

## 1. WORKING WITH OBSTACLES AT ANY LEVEL

Coaching is all about being flexible and dancing with the client in the moment, whatever unfolds. In the SPACE of coaching, clients can bring different wishes or desires and as coaches we need to use our flexibility and creativity in order to best accompany our clients in their journey.

The obstacles that clients are facing in their lives can occur at various level and at different levels of difficulty. For example, it is not the same thing when a client is saying *"I want to change how I am, as I don't really like myself very much"* as when they say *"I don't like the way I react when I feel under pressure with short deadlines."*

We can definitely notice that when a client is looking to change a way of being, they wish to make a change at a more profound level than when they want to change a specific reaction that they have in specific contexts.

Our flexibility to understand the depth of a topic that our clients bring in the coaching SPACE will enable us to facilitate awareness, learning and support at any level.

In this chapter, we will focus on how to identify the level at which an obstacle occurs and how to effectively and elegantly approach that challenge with our clients.

## 1.1 Facilitating learning

Coaching is all about discovery and experiencing new ways of doing and thinking, outside the radar of the “known territory” of the client. Through questions, clients get powerful insights, which in turn, means that they bring to their awareness new perspectives.

By taking actions to support that awareness, clients have a direct experience of how it feels to operate from a new mind-set and new behaviors. Both discovery and experience facilitate clients to acquire a new level of knowledge about themselves, others and their environment. They get to learn how to tap into their full potential and how to act from a different place. As we have seen so far, coaching is all about creating this SPACE where clients can start a journey of learning and change.

Gregory Bateson (9 May 1904 – 4 July 1980), an English anthropologist famous for his interest in social and behavioral sciences, is the author of the famous books *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (1972) and *Mind and Nature* (1979) which inspired many works in the field of human development.

In his book, “Steps to an Ecology of mind”, Bateson references Bertrand Russell and his theory of Logical Types for how human beings learn and organise experiences. Bateson said that learning takes place on different logical levels, i.e. learning, learning to learn, learning how you learned to learn. For example, I can learn to do addition, subtraction and multiplication without understanding how they work. On the next level up, I learn to do my own calculations and work out how to do division.

On the next level I learn how I learned the process for the calculations, and immediately move up another level, opening many more learning opportunities in the sets below. Bertrand Russell states that the name is not the named thing i.e. there is set of sensations in your circuitry that you label happiness, but the name is not the sensation, it is in a different set.

Gregory Bateson pointed out that in the process of learning, change and communication, there are several natural hierarchies of classification. The function of each level is to organise the information on the level below, and the rules for changing something on one level are different from changing a lower level.

Changing something on a lower level could, but does not necessarily, affect the upper levels; but changing something on the upper levels does change things in the lower levels, in order to support the higher level change. Bateson noticed that the confusion of logical levels often created problems.

Bateson also noted that people's problems often based on the confusion of logical levels.

## THE LOGICAL LEVELS OF LEARNING

Bateson defined the following levels that form the ongoing process of learning.

### Learning level 0 - Environment

At this level there is no learning. A person is just responding automatically to an internal (thoughts) or external stimuli.

It involves repetitive behaviors in which the individual, group or organization is stuck in an automatic habit within a specific environment or context.

When clients are at this level they generally come to coaching as they desire a change. They are trapped in a habitual way of thinking and doing. They sometimes don't even know the root cause of what triggers them into feeling in a specific way, or they might not fully see the opportunities that lie in their environment.

At this level, our job as coaches is to increase their awareness of the unconscious processes that lead them to the unwanted results, as well as shining a light on their internal resources and external opportunities.

We can do this by using the Journey within yourself Exercise or by connecting them with their values and the Life Purpose Exercise. We can also use the Psychogeography exercise to bring to light a complete picture of a specific context.

### Learning level 1 - Behaviour

Learning at this level is gradual, incremental change. It involves making corrections and adaptations through behavioral flexibility and stretching. While these modifications may help to extend the capabilities of the individual, group or organization, they are still "within the box" of that context. For example, learning at this level would be how to better manage emotions within the same context or how to be a better public speaker.

This level refers to learning and acquiring new behaviors and skills. Coaches may support their clients in different ways at this level:

- By addressing questions that explores differences ( "how else" .. *For example "how else can you do it?"*
- By finding others as a reference. Coaches may ask the client if they know someone else that does it and support the client to identify key cues that support them in moving forward.
  - "How do they do it?"*
  - "What do they do?"*
  - "What is their strategy"*
  - "Is this congruent with you?"*
  - "What do you need to do now knowing all of this?", etc*

- By recommending extra-materials such as reading, books, videos, etc

Note: Coaches do not impose clients to carry out these activities. These suggestions may come in a respectful and supportive way. We may say something like *"Have you heard of this book? It might be some- thing that you could find interesting."*

- By encouraging active experimentation of the new behavior. Coaches at this level may invite the person to think about putting into practice the new desired behavior. They may even challenge the person by suggesting an on the spot role play. For example, they may say *"Would you like to practice this now?"* or *"What if I were to be that person, how would you express your disagreement in this new way?"*

### **Learning level 2 - Values and beliefs**

Learning at this level is instantaneous. It involves a shift in values, ways of seeing things and priorities. It is a moment when the client has a deep realization of why they want to achieve a specific goal or why they are behaving in a specific way.

At this level a coach facilitates awareness of what really matters for their client and how everything that they are doing can be aligned with those values and beliefs. At this level clients learn about the reason, behind the scenes, that moves them into a specific action and ways of thinking.

To support clients to discover and connect with their values and reasons for why they are doing what they are doing, coaches may use the Yes/No exercise or Beliefs and Meaning exercise.

### **Learning level 3 - Identity**

Learning at this level involves an evolutionary change. It is characterized by significant changes related to the identity of the client, the group or the organization.

It involves a deep awareness of "Who I am" and "Who I want to be".

The Coach's role at this level is to facilitate awareness and learning that connects behaviors and goals to the desired image that the clients want to have about themselves. To facilitate this, coaches may use Visualization or they may simply ask:

*"What would this objective say about yourself?"*

*"Who are you in this situation?" and "Who do you want to be?"*

*"What is the image that you want to let other people see of you?"*

*"What would you like to say about who you were in X years from now?", etc*

### **Learning level 4 - Life Purpose**

Learning at this level involves a revolutionary change. It is linked to a greater vision or purpose than the goal in itself.

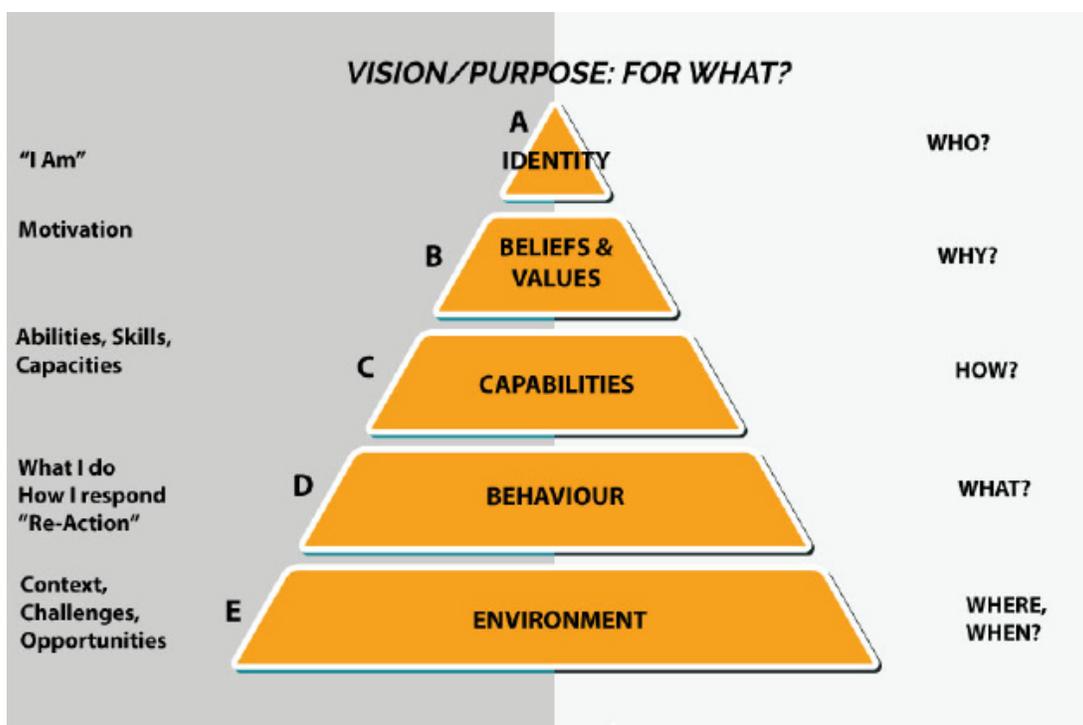
Clients very often come to coaching with a specific goal that they want to achieve, but very few link that desire with a greater purpose. At this level of learning, coaches facilitate awareness related to "What for" clients want to achieve a certain goal and what is the impact on a higher scale. Coaches may facilitate this process by using the Life Purpose exercise.

## 1.2 Neurological levels of change

Robert Dilts, an American author, trainer and coach in the field of Neuro Linguistic Programming and also a student of Gregory Bateson at the University of Santa Cruz, California, built his Neurological Levels theory upon Bateson's logical levels of change and learning. In an article published in the NLP University by Robert Dilts himself, he explains the Neurological levels in the following manner:

*"In 1988 I encoded the concept as the model of "NeuroLogical Levels," which relates Bateson's levels of processing to the nervous system. Bateson himself (Steps to an Ecology of Mind pp, 249-250) contended that the hierarchy formed by the various levels of learning would correspond to "hierarchies of circuit structure which we may- indeed, must- expect to find in the telencephalized brain," claiming that "we should look forward to a classification or hierarchy of neurophysiological structures which will be isomorphic with [the various levels of learning]." The concept of "NeuroLogical Levels" proposes that different "logical levels" are a function of different types of neurological organization, and mobilize successively deeper commitments of neurological "circuitry."*

*The level of neurology that is mobilized when a person is challenged at the level of mission and identity, for instance, is much deeper than the level of neurology that is required to move his or her hand. To experience the environment, a person can passively adjust his or her sense organs. To take action in a particular environment, a person needs to mobilize more of his or her nervous system. In order to coordinate those actions in a complex sequence, such as dancing or driving an automobile, a person has to utilize even more of the nervous system. Forming and manifesting beliefs and values about capabilities, behaviours and the environment, requires an even deeper commitment of neurology (including those related to the "heart" and "guts"). A sense of self arises from a total mobilization of the nervous system at all of the other levels. In general, then, higher levels of process mobilize a deeper commitment of the nervous system."*



## ENVIRONMENT

A particular environment is made up of factors such as the type of external setting, weather conditions, food, noise level, etc., that surround an individual or group. Neurologically, our perceptions of the environment relate to information coming from our sense organs and peripheral nervous system. To perceive a particular environment, for instance, an individual views it with his or her eyes to see any relevant objects, listens with his or her ears to hear significant sounds, smells, odours through his or her nose, and feels the temperature of the air on his or her skin. The person also makes many subtle and unconscious adjustments to maintain balance, respond to changes in the intensity of light and sound, acclimate to temperature changes, etc. Thus, the peripheral nervous system essentially relays information related to the environment to and from the brain. It is responsible for producing sensations and purely reflex reactions.

Environment refers to the context where a specific action occurs, the challenges and the opportunities that the client has in this environment.

In coaching the environment of the client can be the family, the team, the company, friends etc. It is the stage where things happen and on which they perceive threats and opportunities.

There is, however, a difference between perception and reality and our role as coaches is to bring to the client's awareness the unseen possibilities and options that are in their environment, which sometimes may be clouded by their own mind or focus.

For example, a client may say: *"In this company it is very difficult to get a promotion."*

## BEHAVIOUR

This level relates to the specific physical actions and reactions through which we interact with the people and the environment around us. Neurologically, our external behaviour is a result of activity in our motor systems (the pyramidal system and cerebellum). Non-reflexive behaviors involve the psycho-motor system, a deeper level of neurology than the sense organs. The psycho-motor system coordinates our physical actions and conscious movements.

This level is about "doing" and "reacting"

- "Doing" - a specific type of response both at a verbal and non-verbal level. For example, a client may say: *"In this company it is very difficult to get a promotion, so I don't push myself too hard, I just do my job and what's necessary."*
- "Reacting" - These are integrated behaviors that sometimes we are not even aware of. In other words: habits.

To continue with the above example, a client may say what they are aware of from what they are doing ("just doing my job") but they might not be aware of some of the emotional responses that they have to what happens in their environment. Coaches will bring awareness of those aspects and the impact that it has on them or on others. For example, a coach may ask

"And how does it look like to just do your job?"

"How else can you react that it is more beneficial to you?"

"If there was a chance of promotion, would you be happy with this behavior?", etc.

## CAPABILITIES

This level has to do with the mental strategies that we develop unconsciously and that drive specific behaviors. While some behaviors are simply reflexive responses to environmental stimuli, the way we think about things is not.

This is a level of experience that goes beyond our perceptions of the immediate environment. It is how we think about what happens in our environment and that leads us to do what we do. Thus, "capability" involves mastery of our behavior- i.e., knowing how to do something within a variety of conditions. Neurologically, developing cognitive capabilities is a function of higher level processing in the cortex of the brain. It is in the cortex (or grey matter) of the brain where sensory information is represented in the form of mental maps, associated with other mental representations, or pieced together through imagination.

If behavior relates more to WHAT we do, capabilities relate more to:

a) "HOW" we think about our own strengths and weakness. For example:

*"There is a very low chance of getting a promotion in this company and I think that I might not be good enough to highlight all my experience to demonstrate that I would be really good for this project."*

*"I don't know how to gain more visibility"*

*"I think others are better than me", etc.*

b) "HOW" do they self-evaluate their necessary skills to do what they need to do in order to achieve a specific result. This is about the necessary abilities to successfully meet a specific objective. Coaches may support clients identify those skills, or bring them to light by asking:

*"What skills or capabilities are needed for you to be able to achieve this?"*

## VALUES AND BELIEFS

This level relates to fundamental judgments and evaluations about ourselves, others and the world around us. They determine how events are given meaning and are at the core of motivation. It is what moves us into actions. Our beliefs and values provide the reinforcement (motivation) that supports or inhibits particular capabilities and behaviors. Beliefs and values relate to the question, "Why?" - *"Why do I do what I do"*

Neurologically, beliefs are associated with the limbic system and the hypothalamus in the mid-brain. The limbic system has been linked to both emotions and long-term memory. Whilst the limbic system is a more "primitive" structure than the cortex of the brain, in many ways, it serves to integrate information from the cortex and to regulate the autonomic nervous system (which controls basic body functions such as heart rate, body temperature, pupil dilation, etc.). Because they are created by deeper structures of the brain, beliefs produce changes in the fundamental physiological functions of the body that are responsible for many of our unconscious responses.

In coaching we tend to avoid the question "Why" as we've seen in the previous chapter, therefore we identify values and beliefs by asking "WHAT".

For example:

*"What is it important about you doing this?" "*

*What makes this objective important to you?"*

*"What are the thoughts that run through your mind when you say that?", etc*

## IDENTITY

This level relates to our sense of who we are. It is our perception of our identity that organizes our beliefs, capabilities and behaviors into a single system. Our sense of identity also relates to our perception of ourselves in relation to the larger system, of which we are a part, determining our sense of "role," "purpose" and "mission."

They are statements related to "I am..." For example: *"I am a good parent", "I am John", "I am not the best performer", etc.*

In our neurology, our identity can be associated with our nervous system as a whole, and probably involves deep brain structures, such as, the reticular formation. The reticular formation is a large group of cells deep within the brain stem. Fibers from this area project via thalamic nuclei to large associate areas in the cortex. The reticular formation is a regulator of the state of alertness; its destruction at the mid-brain level results in a state of coma. (In contrast, large areas of the cortex may be destroyed without a loss of consciousness.)

Identity is also physiologically related to the immune system, endocrine system, and other deep life sustaining functions. Thus, change or transformation of identity can have a tremendous and almost instantaneous effect on one's physiology. For example, if we ask a client to act as if they had confidence, coaches can clearly see a change in their body posture, the gestures that are making, tone of voice and even the way they talk.

Coaches listen to how people talk about themselves and use re-framing techniques to give different and more resourceful perspective to their clients.

For example:

Client: "I am impulsive"

Coach: "So what does this mean that you do?"

Client: "I am too empathetic with others"

Coach: "What you are saying is that you care for others?"

Client: "I am not confident in my own abilities"

Coach: "So you mean that you may not take enough time to notice your full potential?"

Changes at this level will have a direct impact on the levels below. For example, changing the statement "I am good enough to deserve a promotion"

- Will change the beliefs and values that I have *"I believe that it might be difficult to get the promotion, but not impossible." and "For me, what is important is progress."*

-> Which in turn will change how I think about my own capabilities *"I think that I have enough experience to be successful in a new role."*

-> And that affects behavior *"And I can add value to the company by doing X and Y"*

-> And finally, the environment *"So I just need to understand what and where are the opportunities that I can take advantage of."*

## VISION OR LIFE PURPOSE

This level gives a sense of meaning to all the levels mentioned before. It is the "WHAT FOR?" :

- Am I in this context or I wish to be in that situation?
- Do I do what I do?
- Do I want to have a specific capability?
- Do I believe and value this?
- Do I want to be that kind person?

This level usually involves a sense of contributing to the well-being of others whether that is the family, organization, team, community, etc.

Coaches support clients to set meaningful and aligned objectives towards their greater vision.

## 1.3. Congruency and alignment

Truly our transformational change occurs best when all levels of our experience are congruent and aligned. All levels working together to support a desired objective or change. That this to say, *"where and when clients are doing what they are doing, how they are doing it, why they are doing it, who are they when they are doing what they are doing and for who or what else"*

In a business environment the actions of people have to be in line with the norms, procedures and values of that organization, its goals and mission.

**Congruency** references to how our actions are in line with our values, beliefs and the image that we have about ourselves.

**Alignment** is the process that leads us to obtain the desired congruency for our clients, in order to establish meaningful goals, actions and dreams. When alignment occurs, congruency is a default result.

The sensations that clients describe when they have all these levels aligned is one of peace of mind, self-motivation, clarity of their "wants" and "needs" and a deep understanding of the meaning behind everything that they are doing.

### Experiencing alignment exercise:

Try for a minute to think and take some notes for the following questions:

*Where and when would you like to be using coaching?*

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What would you like to do in this place of "where and when?" or "What kind of new behaviors will you be demonstrating in those contexts?"

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*What kind of skills and capabilities do you need to enable you to do demonstrate those behaviors in these contexts?*

-----

*What kind of values and beliefs do you need to be able to activate these skills and capabilities?*

-----

*Who will you be when you act from these values, beliefs and activate those specific capabilities?*

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*What larger vision will you be participating in and serving if you are this person, with these values and beliefs, capabilities, doing what you will be doing and in that context?*

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**NOTE:**

When we address these questions to our clients, we can notice that they experience each question at a different level of intensity. As they get closer to values, beliefs, identity and vision, the intensity of their experience increases. This intensity of experience empowers the clients by reconnecting with their authenticity and a vision that is greater than the objective that they've set.

Connecting clients with these higher neurological levels is a great tool that enables coaches to re-activate their client's motivation when things get difficult.

Now revisit all these questions from the last to the first and add anything that may be missing from what you had previously noted:

*Become aware, one more time, about what your bigger vision is?*

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*And whilst being aware of this vision, revisit who you are?*

-----

*And what kind of beliefs and values do you honor?*

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*And what are your skills and capabilities by being that person?*

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*And what are kind of activities will you be doing when you are that person, having these values and beliefs?*

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*How is this context now, having those values, beliefs, being who you are with that vision?*

-----

Goals refer to wanting something that is outside of what we currently have, they require additional effort, focus and determination to get to where we want. The steps we need to take and the obstacles that may come in the way, may sometimes feel discouraging and our role as coaches is to empower our clients by reconnecting them with the values and visions that clients have. In other words, to remind them of the meaning behind all the effort that they are doing and the deeper parts of themselves. When this occurs, coaches may say:

*"I understand that this is difficult, and let's remember for what purpose you have this objective."*

*"Let's recall for a second what core values you honor by doing everything that you are doing"*

## 2. BELIEFS AND VALUES

Beliefs and values are the key elements that can empower or limit us. Beliefs and values are at the same neurological level, as it is impossible to value something without having a reason for why we value that something. For instance, if having freedom is a value, we must have a set of judgement for why freedom is so important. The other way around, if we believe that we should be able to express our emotions and how we feel, then we must value freedom of expression.

Therefore, it is impossible to talk about beliefs without talking about values, or about values without taking into account our reasons for honoring them.

If values refer to the relevance and importance of a concept in our lives, beliefs are the unconscious reason, the judgments and considerations that we have that lead us to have those values.

We can summarize the importance of our beliefs just by thinking about Henry Ford's famous quote: "Whether you believe you can, or you think you can't, you're right".

In this chapter we will focus our attention on what beliefs are and how to support our clients to transform limiting beliefs into empowering ones. The theory presented in this chapter is inspired from the work of Robert Dilts, presented in his book "Sleight of Mouth".

### 1.1. Definition and principles

#### 1.1.1 Definition.

We can define beliefs in many ways, such as:

- They are considered one of the most fundamental levels of change and learning
- They are the key components that influence our experience of life in general.
- They determine how the events we experience are given meaning, and are at the base of our motivation and our culture. Our beliefs and values provide the reinforcement (motivation and permission) that supports or inhibits particular abilities and behaviors. Beliefs and values refer to the question "Why?" In the Neurological Levels.
- They are generalizations about the relationship between things and events that we perceive in our environment.
- They operate at a different level from concrete reality (they are our map) and serve to guide and interpret our perceptions of that reality.
- The most influential beliefs are often outside our conscious awareness, lodging deep within the unconscious. It is the reason why, without the proper tools, beliefs are very difficult to change through the typical rules of logic or rational thought.
- They have a very powerful influence in our behavior.
- Nevertheless, they are what we call our "limitations" which in coaching we want to support our clients to overcome.

## 1.1.2 Origins of beliefs

It is impossible not to have beliefs. The previous sentence just demonstrates that: for one to be able to say that it is impossible not to have beliefs, they might believe that it is impossible not to have them. In fact, nearly all statements hold beliefs. This is not the problem, the challenge is the quality of our beliefs and how did we get to have them in the first place. There are many ways in which we unconsciously integrate beliefs. Let's mention the most important ones:

- ENVIRONMENT: We unconsciously assimilate beliefs from the important people in our life: our parents, teachers, our formal education, media, etc which we considered as references of our normality.
- MODELS: The references we have from childhood serve us not only as models of behavior, but also models of judgements and priorities in our lives.
- EXPERIENCES: These are learned emotional responses to important events in our lives.
- KNOWLEDGE: This refers to our upbringing and education. They may also be cultural
- THE RESULTS obtained with previous strategies. They are like conclusions, for example "It doesn't work" or "I'm not good at maths, etc".
- MENTAL SIMULATIONS creative representation of future events as if they were reality in the present and based on past subjective experience. We come to conclusion based on how we believe that things will go in a specific context.

## 1.1.3 Types of beliefs

Beliefs can be about:

### a) The cause of something.

We come to conclusions based on the cause of a specific result. For example

*"I don't get the job because my boss doesn't like me"* (the cause being the dislike of the boss)

*"It's difficult to change because I've tried it before and it didn't work"* (the cause being a past unwanted result)

*"Everything that I do is not ok because my boss always tells me that there are things to improve"* (the cause is the interpretation of the given feedback)

### b) The conclusion or the meaning that we give to specific events.

After having a cause for something we unconsciously draw a conclusion, or we give meaning to what just happened.

For example:

- *"I don't get the job because my boss doesn't like me" -> results in the meaning: "Which means I'm not a likeable person" or "He's not a good boss."*
- *"It's difficult to change because I've tried it before and it didn't work" -> results in the meaning: "Which means that I don't have a good strategy for change." or "It means that people don't change" or "I can't do it by myself, so I need a coach to help me."*
- *"Everything that I do is not ok because my boss always tells me that there are things to improve" -> this may result in meanings such as: "It means that i have to work harder or extra hours to make sure that I do everything ok." or "It means that I'm not fit for this role." or "It means that he doesn't really like me".*

### c) Our own limitation of thoughts:

- These are statements of necessity and/or obligation. *"I need to", "I should/shouldn't", "I can't/can", "I mustn't /must", "I need to/don't need to".*
- The world that surrounds us: *"I know that there are many opportunities here. I just need to take advantage of them." or the opposite "In this company nothing is for free and they will always ask you for something in exchange."*
- Our abilities: *"I have great ideas and I can really make this work" or the opposite: "I'm not fit for this job", "I can't change at this age.",etc*
- Our identity: *"I'm a very capable person" or the opposite "I'm so flexible that everyone takes advantage of this."*

We can also differentiate beliefs between those that empower us and those that limit or potential:

#### a) Empowering beliefs

They are the ones that provide the necessary motivation and confidence to reach our desired states and results. In fact, "empowering beliefs" are an important factor in generating and achieving our goals.

#### a) Limiting beliefs

We know that beliefs have a great impact on our internal state of being and on our behavior, which influence our idea of possibility, capacity and merit of an action or its result. Likewise, limiting beliefs, taken to the extreme, can have important consequences and lead to hopelessness, impotence and worthlessness, issues that can have a great impact on a person's mental and physical health.

**NOTE:** *Remember that in coaching we do not work with mental problems and pathological issues of our clients. We should always reference our clients to a specialized party when necessary. These comments are only mentioned here solely for your reference and to understand the impact that our beliefs can have on our overall well-being.*

Limiting beliefs can cause emotions such as:

- **Blockage:** Believing that the desired goal is not achievable despite our capabilities. It happens when we believe that something we want is not possible:

*"Whatever I do, there will be no difference. What I want is not possible to achieve. It is out of my control."*

- **Impotence:** Believing that the desired goal is possible, but that we are not able to achieve it. It happens when we think that although the objective exists and is possible to achieve, we are not capable of achieving it. It produces a feeling of:

*"It is possible for others to achieve this goal, but not for me. I am not good enough or capable enough. "*

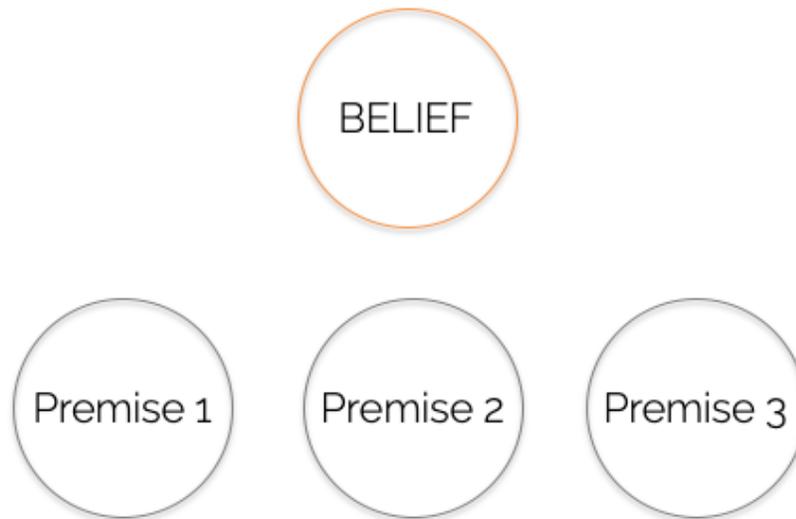
- **Worthiness:** Believing that we do not deserve the desired goal for the way we are or for something that we have done. It happens when we think that our objective is achievable and we also have the capacities to carry it out, but that we do not deserve to obtain what we want. It is often characterized by a feeling of:

*"I am a faker, as I know I'm not doing too much, but my boss sees me as excellent at what I'm doing "*

*"I received a salary increase for finishing this project on time but .. really i only did my job."*

## 1.1.4 The structure of beliefs

Beliefs are based on structures called SYLLOGISMS, where the end result (the belief) is nothing other than the CONCLUSION of previous PREMISES, without which, the belief would not be valid.



Examples of syllogism:

Belief: *"It's difficult to be a successful coach."*

Premise 1: *"There are very good psychologists on the market"*

Premise 2: *"There are also much more experienced coaches than me"*

Belief: *"Even if you know how to work on your personal branding, in this company they never promote you."*

Premise 1: *"I always expose my achievements during our meetings."*

Premise 2: *"I value relationships and I know how to maintain them."*

Premise 3: *"I know a colleague that does it really well and he still didn't get a promotion. They really don't want to promote us."*

Belief: *"I don't think that I can improve my public speaking skills effectively"*

Premise 1: *"I tried to improve some skills, but it didn't work."*

Premise 2: *"I changed the way I do it, but I don't see a major improve in the quality of the feedback I receive"*

Premise 3: *"It doesn't seem to me that participants understand the concepts quicker."*

## 1.2. Working with beliefs and values

Before we understand how we can approach limiting beliefs in the SPACE of coaching, we should be clear that, in coaching, we work with those beliefs and values that limit our clients to achieve their goals. We do not work with beliefs that are related to psychological or therapeutic interventions such as depression, worthiness about one's own existence, etc.

In coaching we can work with beliefs by emphasizing those that empower our clients, or we can work with beliefs by transforming them from limitations to empowerment.

We can approach beliefs in many ways, and throughout this chapter, we will focus on the main skills that will support a coach to best serve their client.

### 1.2.1 Re-framing

As we have seen before, working with beliefs means re-shaping our client's perception about a given event or thought. Re-framing is a very powerful tool to work with beliefs. A great way to do so is by using the Neurological Levels of Robert Dilts. We can re-frame in two ways:

#### a) Dropping limiting beliefs to a lower level.

- From Identity level downwards

Client: *"I am just a Customer Service Agent."*

Coach: *"And how important is what you do for this company?" (behavior and environment)*

- From Beliefs level downwards:

Client: *"I shouldn't always tell the truth"*

Coach: *"So in which context/situations, or when specifically, would like to be able to hold back on telling the truth?" and "In which contexts is it beneficial for you to tell the truth?"*

- From Capabilities level downwards:

Client: *"I can't see the solution to this."*

Coach: *"What clouds your view in this context?" - environment or "What needs to be done so that you can see the solution?" - behavior*

- From Behavior level downwards:

Client: *"I find it very difficult to say no."*

Coach: *"Can you give an example of specific contexts where you find it difficult?"*

### a) Lifting empowering beliefs to the highest levels.

Client: "This meeting was great" - Environment

Coach: "What did you do in that meeting?" - Identifying behaviors Client: "I structured the topics very well"- Behaviors stated

Coach: "So what were you able to demonstrate to yourself and others?" - Capabilities level

Client: "I proved to myself that I am capable of transmitting messages in a way that is very easy to follow by others"- Capabilities level

Coach: "And what is important for you about this?" or "And what values did you honor?"- Values

Coach: "*And what new thoughts or opinions are coming into your mind about your achievement?*"- New belief

Client "*I believe that I can do it and that I am good at it*" - New believe

Coach: "And what image do you have about yourself" or "What image do you project to others when you demonstrate these abilities and behaviour?" - Identity level question

Client: "Of a professional person, a skilled and flexible one" - Identity level

Coach may close this exercise by re-affirming the last statement and gathering learning: "*Yes, you are a highly skilled and flexible professional and what did you just learn?*"

## 1.2.2 Changing the cause and the meaning

As we've seen before, beliefs are about causes that have a certain impact to which clients give a meaning or come up with a conclusion. Changing the meaning or the impact of a cause means changing their perspective of things, thus changing a belief. Let's see an example of a conversation between a coach and a client:

Client: "My boss doesn't treat my emails with priority, even though they are important. I don't feel respected." - Cause is "boss not treating emails with priority". The effect is "I don't feel respected"

Coach: "I'm curious...Were there times in your life when you didn't treat someone's emails as a priority, but you still respected them?" - Reversing the cause and placing the client as a cause that has an impact on others.

Client: "*Yes..it's true, but I generally tend to treat them with priority if I know that they are important*"

Coach: "And what does it mean to you when you can't treat emails with priority" - identifying the meaning attached to that issue.

Client: "It means that one doesn't care enough about the work of others."

Coach: "And what other things can it mean?" -Expanding the frame of the meaning Client: "It may mean that the person is busy and that they may have other urgent things to do."

Coach: "Could this be the case of your boss as well?" - Changing the belief by giving a different meaning to what happened.

Client: "Yes..it could be an option.." - Reconsideration of own beliefs.

Coach: "So what else do you feel now about how this could be an option?" or "What else can you think about now, knowing that this is also a possibility?" - Developing new beliefs.

Often, clients mention their beliefs in the form of an affirmation. For example: "*I feel stuck*".

We know that it is impossible to feel in a specific way, unless there is a cause that provoked that emotional state of being. In coaching, we want to understand the cause that provoked that effect in people. Coaches may ask: "***What makes this happen?***" or "***What provokes this sensation in you?***"

Once we identify the cause, we can now identify the meaning by questioning HOW clients got to that meaning, the criteria or the result of that cause. We can ask "*How do you know that you are stuck?*" or "*How is feeling stuck is like?*"

### 1.2.3 Challenging the Premises of the Syllogisms

Challenging the syllogism is all about challenging HOW people know what they know and HOW they came to these conclusions. Let's take one of the examples mentioned before and see how challenging the syllogism may evolve into a coaching conversation.

Belief: "Even if you know how to work on your personal branding, in this company they never promote you."

Premise 1: *"I always expose my achievements during our meetings."*

Premise 2: *"I value relationships and I know how to maintain them."*

Premise 3: *"I know a colleague that does it really well and he still didn't get a promotion."*

#### Identifying and working with the first premise:

Coach: "I'm curious how do you know how likely like this?"

Client may offer premise 1: "Because I always expose my achievements during our meeting"

Coach: "And how does exposing your achievements lead to a promotion?"

*NOTE: Now we can start coaching on this premise and work on the meaning and the impact of this statement.*

#### Identifying and working with the second premise:

Coach: "And what else do you do in order to get a promotion?" Client "I value relationships and I know how to maintain them."

Coach: "And how do you do that?" , "Is there anything else you can do?", "And do you know anyone else that does it and it works?", etc

#### Identifying and working with the third premise:

Client: *"I know a colleague that does it really well and he still didn't get a promotion"*

Coach: *"If you were to decide if that person should be promoted, would you choose them?", "What is missing?", "What other things can be done?", "On what does it depend?", etc*

As see in this example, unfolding the premises gives us a deeper understanding of how a specific believe is formed. In other words, what hypothesis sustain that affirmation. The more clarity we have on these hypothesis', the better we can support our clients to change their perspective. In the next chapter we will see powerful questions that may unfold a belief and that support our way of transforming limitations into empowering thoughts.

## 1.2.4 Statements

This chapter was adapted from the book "Sleight of mouth" by Robert Dilts. In his book, R.Dilts presents various questions that can be addressed when working with beliefs depending on the objective of the question. We shall look at various questions that can be addressed when working with beliefs, that are a way of re-framing the client's perspective of a specific limiting thought.

We will take as an example the following statement that a client may address during coaching:

*"It is difficult to change the way I feel about my role in this company, because I've tried it before."*

**a) Intention:** Meant to link a belief to an intention that the client has.

*"I know you told me that you value flexibility. How is changing honoring this value?"*

**b) Redefinition:** Meant to redefine the meaning of the sentence.

*"I understand that sometimes it can be difficult to change our feelings. How determined are you to do so?"*

**c) Consequence:** Meant to highlight the consequence of not implementing the change

*"Recognizing the difficulty in something may be the first step towards a successful strategy for change. What do you think that a good strategy could be for you?"*

**d) General information:** Meant to link a belief with a more general or greater impact.

*"I suppose that changing the way we feel would make us more flexible. What would that mean for you, to be more flexible?"*

**e) Counter example:** Meant to link a limiting belief with strengths that the client has.

*"You told me that now you can better manage the way you feel about the relationship with your partner. How did you do that?"*

**f) Metaphors:** Meant to reframe a limiting belief by using a metaphor.

*"Do you know that birds find it very difficult to build their nest, but it's all worth it in the end?"*

**f) Self-application:** Meant to highlight the benefits for the client.

*"What are all the new things that you've learned and that can benefit you from all those times when you tried?"*

**f) Shifting the focus:** Meant to narrow client's attention on their values and vision.

*"What drives you to keep trying to change the way you feel?" or "What for do you try?" or "What motivated you to try this before?" or "What makes it important for you to change the way you feel?"*

**f) Criteria:** Meant to narrow the client's attention to a more empowering criteria.

*"Something tells me that changing the way you feel is more important than the effort of changing in itself. Can you share you view on this?"*

**f) Increasing the frame:** Meant to expand the frame of the context where something happens.  
*"Very often people that wish to change are powerful people. Would you like to tell me more about this desire of yours?"*

**f) Developing a belief about the initial belief:** Meant to expand clients' perspective.  
*"What do you think about this belief that makes it difficult to change how you are feeling?"*

**f) Understanding the system of beliefs:** Meant to understand other beliefs that drove to a specific conclusion.  
*"What do you think about changing the way we feel in general?" "Do you know anyone that can change their emotions easily?"*  
*"When was the last time you changed your mind about doing something? For example, going out for a walk?"*

### 3. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN COACHING

No human being is without feeling. From a baby's first cry to a person's last conscious breath, feeling forms the experience of the human experience. If people are to act intelligently in the social world, they need to pay attention to their emotions and give them equal status as thought and action.

There are many ways in which we can define Emotional Intelligence (IE), but one thing is for sure: no matter how we twist the words to define it, all roads lead to Rome in the sense that Emotional Intelligence involves two key aspects:

- The ability to tune in to our feelings and those of others, in order to use emotional information in an efficient way.
- The ability to create and maintain meaningful relationships, meaning enhancing our social abilities.

In the SPACE of coaching, there are not only conversations that unfold, but there is an invisible and dynamic field filled with the energy of both the clients' and coaches' emotions, that fuel those conversations.

Emotional Intelligence is so important in coaching mainly because behind every wish, dream or objective there is a deeper level of experience: the emotions. By harnessing the energy of a client's passions, a coach can develop practical applications for achieving specific goals and aspirations.

A coach is also in a unique position to notice patterns in a client's behavior and can share these perceptions in a thoughtful and non-judgemental way, enabling the client to become more self-aware and to "unstick" unproductive habits.

We can clearly see then, that Emotional Intelligence is important not just to bring out the best in our clients, but also in our own emotional self-management, during the coaching sessions. In fact, we believe that in coaching emotional intelligence is not just important, but that every coach is emotionally intelligent. That is to say, that they can recognize emotions in their client and they are able to manage their own.

The purpose of applying Emotional Intelligence in Coaching is to increase the client's emotional intelligence—that is, to enhance their ability to perceive, access, understand, regulate, and (when necessary) transform limiting emotions into a source of energy and power, that moves clients into actions that lead them to successful results.

In this chapter we will take a closer look at Emotional Intelligence and at how can we make the most out of it, for our clients and for ourselves.

### 3.1. The history of Emotional Intelligence

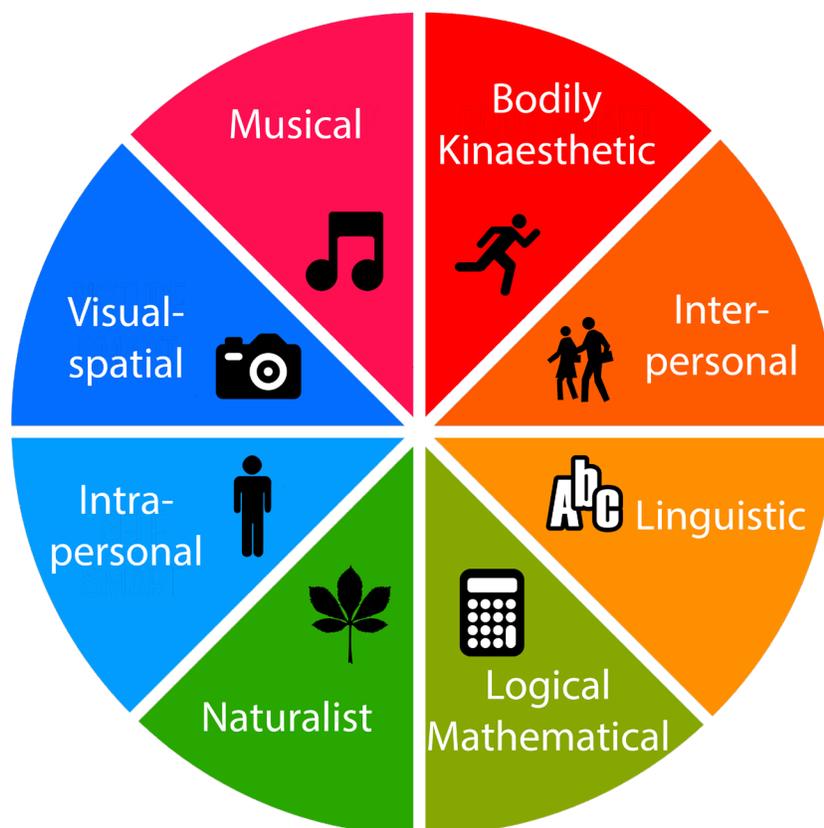
1930s - Edward Thorndike describes the concept of "social intelligence" as the ability to get along with other people.

1940s - David Wechsler suggests that affective components of intelligence may be essential to success in life.

1950s - Humanistic psychologists such as Abraham Maslow describe how people can build emotional strength.

1964 - The term "emotional intelligence" seems first to have appeared in a paper by Michael Bel-doch and in the 1966 paper by B. Leuner entitled Emotional intelligence and emancipation which appeared in the psychotherapeutic journal: Practice of child psychology and child psychiatry.

1975 - Howard Gardner publishes The Shattered Mind, which introduces the concept of multiple intelligences. In 1983, Howard Gardner's Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences introduced the idea that traditional types of intelligence, such as IQ, fail to fully explain cognitive ability. Howard Gardner outlined his 'multiple intelligences' which included "personal intelligence that explores intra-psychic capacities and interpersonal skills.", in other words: he included both interpersonal intelligence (the capacity to understand the intentions, motivations and desires of other people) and intra-personal intelligence (the capacity to understand oneself, to appreciate one's feelings, fears and motivations)



**1985** - Wayne Payne introduces the term emotional intelligence in his doctoral dissertation entitled "A study of emotion: developing emotional intelligence; self-integration; relating to fear, pain and desire (theory, structure of reality, problem-solving, contraction/expansion, tuning in/coming out/letting go)."

**1983** - At the same time, in 1983, Reuven Bar-On asked the question "Why do some individuals have better psychological well-being than others?" Why are some more able to succeed, regardless of their cognitive abilities? This is what led to the original EQ-i assessment, which came out in 1997. It was the first scientifically validated emotional intelligence assessment, which allowed people to compare themselves to the general population regarding their emotional intelligence. It was for the first time that the term EQ- Emotional Quotient was mentioned.

**1990** - Psychologists Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer publish their landmark article, "Emotional Intelligence," in the journal *Imagination, Cognition, and Personality* in which they coined the term 'Emotional Intelligence', describing it as "a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action".

Salovey and Mayer also initiated a research program intended to develop valid measures of emotional intelligence and to explore its significance. For instance, they found in one study that when a group of people saw an upsetting film, those who scored high on emotional clarity (which is the ability to identify and give a name to a mood that is being experienced) recovered more quickly. In another study, individuals who scored higher in the ability to perceive accurately, understand, and appraise others' emotions were better able to respond flexibly to changes in their social environments and build supportive social networks.

**1995** - Daniel Goleman wrote a book called "Emotional Intelligence: why it can matter more than IQ". This was the book that really brought the concept of emotional intelligence into the mainstream. He wrote it after stumbling upon an article written by John Mayer and Peter Salovey in 1990, where the term 'emotional intelligence' was first used. Even before Mayer and Salovey, however,

Goleman sustained that it was not cognitive intelligence that guaranteed business success but emotional intelligence. He described emotionally intelligent people as those with four characteristics:

- They were good at understanding their own emotions (self-awareness)
- They were good at managing their emotions (self-management)
- They were empathetic to the emotional drives of other people (social awareness)
- They were good at handling other people's emotions (social skills)

**2001** - Daniel Goleman and Richard Boyatzis, a professor in the Weatherhead School of Business at Case Western Reserve University, published their first book together called "Primal Leadership. Realizing the power of EI" in which they focus their attention on the application of EI in Leadership and the workplace environment. They have also developed, together with the researchers at the Mc- Clelland Institute at HayGroup in Boston, the Emotional and Social Competence Inventory, or ESCI,

**2011** - Multi Health Systems (MHS) released the EQ-i 2.0, a psychometric tool scientifically validated by the American Psychological Association, that evaluates Emotional Intelligence based on the initial Bar-On Model of EQ and that has greater focus on business-relevant items that could be applied to individuals all over the world.

## 3.2. What is EI (Emotional Intelligence)

As we've mentioned before, there are many ways to define Emotional Intelligence. Let's see some of the definitions:

P. Salovey and J.Mayer: "The ability to monitor one's own and other people's emotions, to discriminate between different emotions and label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior". This definition was later broken down and refined into four proposed abilities: perceiving, using, understanding, and managing emotions.

Daniel Goleman: "Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth."

The following information and model was published in June, 2011 as an ESCI user-guide by Hay Group and that illustrates the definition and the components of Emotional Intelligence according to D. Goleman:

### Self-awareness

Recognizing and understanding our own emotions, captured in this competency.

### Self-management

Effectively managing our own emotions:

- Emotional self-control
- Achievement orientation
- Positive outlook
- Adaptability

### Social awareness

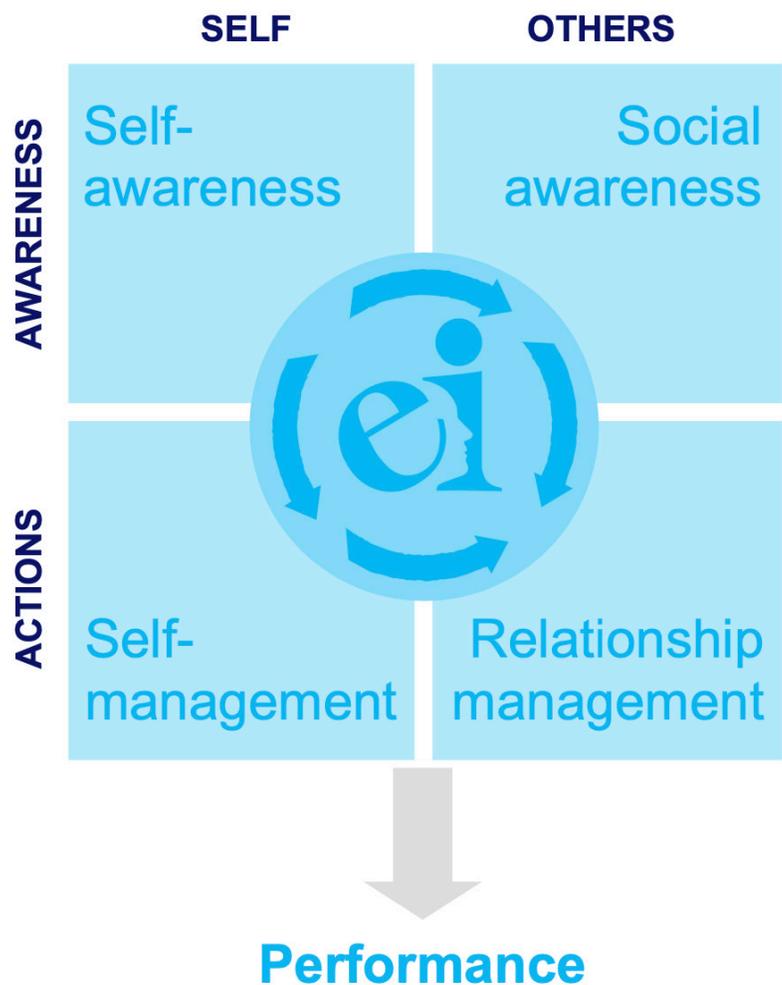
Recognizing and understanding the emotions of others:

- Empathy
- Organizational awareness

### Relationship management

Applying our emotional understanding in our dealings with others:

- Influence
- Coach and mentor
- Conflict management
- Inspirational leadership
- Teamwork



Multi Health Systems: "Emotional intelligence is a set of emotional and social skills that collectively establish how well we:

- Perceive and express ourselves
- Develop and maintain social relationships
- Cope with challenges
- Use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way

The definition of Emotional Intelligence is broken into 5 dimensions, as mentioned in the below image. We shall use this model to further develop on how Emotional Intelligence can be successfully used in coaching.



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Based on the original BarOn EQ-i authored by Reuven Bar-On, copyright 1997.

### 3.3. The neuroscience of emotions

Emotions are neurological responses to different stimuli (external or internal) that are part of our Autonomic Nervous System and therefore they are unconscious activities such as breathing, blinking, etc. Emotions are a type of neural impulse that motivates a being into action and last no longer than 6 seconds. The principle is automatic, it is "stimuli-response". Therefore, the statement: "Control your emotions" doesn't stand.

- Where can I have control? - In the way I choose to respond to those emotions.
- How do I do it? - By involving the rational (judging) part of the brain.

Emotions form part of all living beings. For example, a cat can be angry, sad or happy. They have the same emotional responses to stimuli as a human being. Further to various neurological and psychological studies, it was discovered that 6 emotions are present in all forms of living being: : **Fear, Anger, Disgust, Joy, Sadness, Surprise.**

Paul Eckman, later discovered throughout his various studies that a 7th emotion is present in human beings and that is represented or marked by facial expression: **Contempt.**

Why do people have emotions, and what should they do with them? They have them because emotions are crucial to survival, communication, and problem solving. They are natural instincts of our brain designed to maintain us safe and alive.

#### 1.4.1 EMOTIONS

- Are signals that tell us about our inner experience of the world around us such as danger, if our boundaries our crossed, when we feel safe, etc.
- Are messages telling us if things are going in the right direction and their function is to move us into action, or to adapt our behavior to whatever is unfolding.
- Another important and slightly different function of emotion is that emotions enhance learning. Emotion increases the rapidity of learning because it earmarks certain things with the stamp "not to be forgotten."

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EMOTIONS

Michael Lewis, a Distinguished University Professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry, and director of the Institute for the Study of Child Development at Rutgers Robert Wood, presented the early stages of emotional development.

### A) PRIMARY EMOTIONS

#### **"0-6 Months ("Primary Emotions")**

*These early emotions are present within the first 6 months or so of life. Following Bridges (1932), we assume that at birth the child shows a bipolar emotional life. On one hand, there is general distress marked by crying and irritability. On the other hand, there is pleasure marked by satiation, attention, and responsiveness to the environment. Attention to the environment and interest in it appears from the beginning of life and we can place this either in the positive pole or, if we choose, we then separate this; thus, we suggest a tripartite division with pleasure at one end, distress at the other, and interest as a separate dimension.*

#### **3 Months—Interest, Joy, Happiness, Sadness, Disgust**

*By 3 months, joy emerges. Infants start to smile and appear to show excitement/happiness when confronted with familiar events, such as faces of people they know or even unfamiliar faces. Very early smiling to people and sounds appear to be reflective in nature. For example, sighted and blind infants do not differ in their smiling behavior in the first 3 months of life*

*Also, by 3 months, **sadness** emerges, especially around the withdrawal or loss of desired objects or actions.*

***Disgust** also appears in its early form. Disgust is seen when infants spit out and try to get rid of unpleasant-tasting or -smelling objects placed in their mouths. This disgust face appears to be a defensive reflect designed to help get rid of food which does not smell or taste good to the infant. Given that there is little hand-mouth or grasping coordination, the infant's ability to spit out something unpleasant is an important adaptive response. As we will see, this early form of disgust becomes utilized later.*

#### **4-6 Months—Anger, Surprise**

***Anger** has been reported to emerge between 4 and 6 months (Stenberg, Campos & Emde, 1983). Anger is seen on the face when children are frustrated, in particular when their hands and arms are pinned down and they are prevented from moving.*

***Surprise** also appears in the first 6 months of life. Children show surprise when there are violations of expected events; for example, when infants see a small adult walking toward them, they are reported to show interest and surprise rather than fear or joy. Surprise can be seen when there is violation of what is expected or as a response to discovery as in an 'aha' experience.*

#### **7-8 Months—Fearfulness**

***Fearfulness** seems to emerge still later. Our best guess is that it is around 6-8 months, although it appears to reach its peak at 18 months, when measured as fearfulness at the approach of a stranger. Again, fearfulness reflects further cognitive development. For example, Schaffer (1974) has shown that in order for children to show fearfulness they have to be capable of comparing the event that causes it.*

E M O - T I O N	FEATURES	PURPOSE	EMOTIONAL CHARGE	LIMITING RESPONSE	RESOURCEFUL RESPONSE
FEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the “mother of emotions”</li> </ul>	That we need more resources for what is about to come.	PANIC	Fight Flight Freeze	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awakening</li> <li>• Looking for resources</li> <li>• Establish strategies</li> </ul>
SADNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's determined by the quality of our thoughts. Usually thoughts from the past.</li> <li>• It requires personal time and space to calm it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It invites introspection.</li> <li>• It is a need for change</li> </ul>	DEPRESSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loosing the meaning, purpose.</li> <li>• Losing motivation</li> <li>• Resistance to change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptance</li> <li>• Change of mind-set</li> <li>• Asking for help</li> <li>• Flexibility and adaptability to change.</li> </ul>
ANGER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a result of not achieving our objectives.</li> <li>• A feeling of losing power</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Someone crossed your limits.</li> <li>• The ego is under siege</li> </ul>	RAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of confidence</li> <li>• Submission</li> <li>• Criticism</li> <li>• Aggression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courage</li> <li>• Rebalance fear</li> </ul>
DISGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It steals your energy</li> <li>• It involves a sensation of rejection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It warns about the fact that our values were not respected</li> </ul>	I N T O L E R - ANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rejection</li> <li>• Taking things too personally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow some distance from the event.</li> <li>• Understanding own limits.</li> </ul>
SURPRISE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the shortest emotion (less than 1 second)</li> <li>• It's the easiest one to fake</li> <li>• It's a signal of something new entering our life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It warns us about something that we don't know.</li> </ul>	STUCK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go “blank”</li> <li>• Feel “stuck”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stimulates learning</li> <li>• Enhances creativity and discoveries.</li> </ul>
JOY	It is a sign of satisfaction and achievement	It tells us about a deep congruency with who we are.	EUPHORIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attachment to the result</li> <li>• Anticipated celebration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoy the achievement</li> <li>• Set new challenges and objectives</li> <li>• Maintain motivation</li> </ul>

## B) SELF-CONSCIOUS EMOTIONS

### *8-24 Months ("Self-Conscious Emotions") - 2 years old* *Embarrassment, Empathy, Envy*

*As we have tried to indicate, the development of the early or primary emotions requires some cognition. One cognition that children do not have in the first 6 months, but do acquire in the middle of the second year, is the cognition related to self or what we have called consciousness.*

*Once consciousness emerges, so do at least three new derivations of emotions: **empathy, jealousy, and embarrassment**. These emotions require, **at least, a sense of self**.*

*For example, **empathy**, by definition, involves the ability to put yourself in the role of another. So, for example, if I know that I am likely to feel unease in a strange social situation, I am able to utilize my own feeling to assume that you (another person) are also likely to, feel unease. In one of the only studies to look at the association between self-recognition and empathy, Bischof-Kohler (1991) found that only after infants gain the ability to recognize themselves in mirrors were they able to show empathy, both on their faces (as in a sad expression), as well as in their actions (such as tapping the back of someone they imagine is sad).*

*Likewise, for jealousy. We need to have consciousness for jealousy, since jealousy is the emotion associated with wanting for the self what someone else has. Without a self or consciousness, it would not be possible to have jealousy.*

*Finally, the emotion of **embarrassment** is dependent on consciousness. We will discuss two kinds of embarrassment; the first one we call **exposure embarrassment** and the second one **evaluative embarrassment**. We will leave the evaluative embarrassment until later since it requires cognitions that only appear after 2 years of age.*

### *30-36 Months ("Self-Conscious Evaluative Emotions") - 2-3 years old* *Pride, Shame, Guilt, Plus Others*

*The self-conscious evaluative emotions depend on the development of a number of cognitive skills. First, children have to have absorbed a set of standards, rules, and goals. Second, they have to have a sense of self. And finally, they have to be able to evaluate the self with regard to those standards, rules, and goals and then make a determination of success and failure.*

*As a first step in self-evaluation, a child has to decide whether a particular event is the result of his own action. If, for example, an object breaks while the child is using it, he might blame himself for breaking it, or he might decide the object was faulty to begin with. If he places the blame on himself, he is making an internal attribution. If he does not blame himself, he is making an external evaluation and is not likely to go on to the next step of evaluation. Whether a child is inclined to make an internal or an external attribution depends on the situation and on the child's own characteristics. Some people are likely to blame themselves no matter what happens.*

### **3-15 Years - Entrainment Pruning**

*During early adolescence, capacity for managing emotion and impulses, forward thinking, planning and decision-making, self-awareness and reflection, and understanding abstract concepts expands, as connections between brain structures involved in executive functioning and those involved in emotional processing grow stronger*

*During this time, young people build on existing knowledge and self-regulation skills, become more cognitively flexible, and grow in their ability to process more complex information, think critically, reflect, and problem solve.*

## **C) COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT**

### **15 Years and up**

#### **Structure Pre-frontal Cortex- Aging**

*As cognitive abilities develop, the potential for emotional reactivity also develops (Lewis, 1999). Adolescence heralds significant cognitive developments which impact greatly on emotional life as changes in children's ability to reason about the world also brings new abilities to reason about emotions. During this cognitive transformation children develop the ability to understand abstractions and symbolic logic. They are no longer restricted to the use of concrete representation of perceived data, but can now conceive of and reason with less tangible generalities not bounded by time and space. Adolescents can begin to know their world through imagined and deduced events and see essential similarities underlying superficial differences. Cause and effect relations are more readily recognized.*

*Cognitive development also influence the way adolescents understand what it means to know something. Very young children are context dependant. Their representational facts do not correspond to an understanding of one, immutable "real" world. Cognitive development allows for an understanding of the idea that there is a "single real world" and that all incoming information must be compared against the standard.*

## 1.4.2 THOUGHTS

Language plays an important role in determining our emotions. Children under two years old are "clean" to respond to various pictures that are shown to them. No judgment attached. This is the kind of attention we want to have when we are in a process of coaching.

The quality of our thoughts influence our emotions and the quality of our thoughts is determined by our focus of attention.

We think 60-70,000 thoughts a day, out of which 90% of those thoughts are the same thoughts as the day before. These thoughts are connected to your life, then the same thoughts always lead to the same choices, the same choices always lead to the same behaviors and the same behaviors create the same experiences and the same experiences produce the same emotions. Our role as coaches is to facilitate a SPACE where new resourceful thoughts can emerge.

It is even more important to create alternative thoughts for our clients, as those thoughts trigger more of the same emotions, which in turn promote even more of the same old behaviors. How we think and how we feel determines the client's attitude towards their desired goals.

As coaches, we want to support our clients to create a personal reality, a new life or achieve their dreams and we know that everything starting with the way we think about our own abilities and the opportunities that are in our environment.

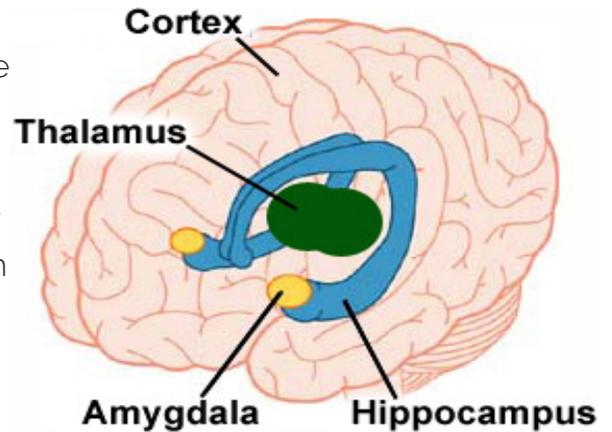
Successful coaches facilitate the SPACE where clients become aware of their own thoughts, where they pay attention to their automatic habits and behavior and empower them in a process of change where they can choose between the necessary emotions that would serve them in their future.

Clients engage in coaching processes because they are unconsciously wanting to learn information about creating a vision of the future and to be defined by this vision instead of their memories of the past and their habitual ways of doing things. Using emotional intelligence coaches not only support their clients learn new things about themselves, but they connect them with a bigger vision, instilling passion for the process of change.

The problem is that your brain doesn't make a clear distinction between an external event or internal thoughts and thus, it triggers the same chemicals into our body. So, when they remember something from their past, they trigger the same physiological response. When clients have a new experience, their brain looks for associations to something that they know or for a way to predict the response in that situation. The role of a coach is to link their client's attention to pleasant memories, so that people feel fearless in moving forwards and learn that it is possible to achieve their dreams, that they are capable and full of resources. The power of coaching comes precisely from narrowing the client's attention on their future potential reality which activates the creative part in their brain. The simple question "What would it be like...?" invites clients to explore new ways of finding solutions to achieve what they want. Every time clients connect with this vision, they are changing their mind-set from past to future. They create new neurological connections accompanied by a sensation of inspiration, passion and openness.

The **thalamus** (from Greek  $\mu$ , "chamber") is the large mass of grey matter in the dorsal part of the diencephalon of the brain with several functions such as relaying sensory and motor signals to the cerebral cortex, and the regulation of consciousness, sleep, and alertness.

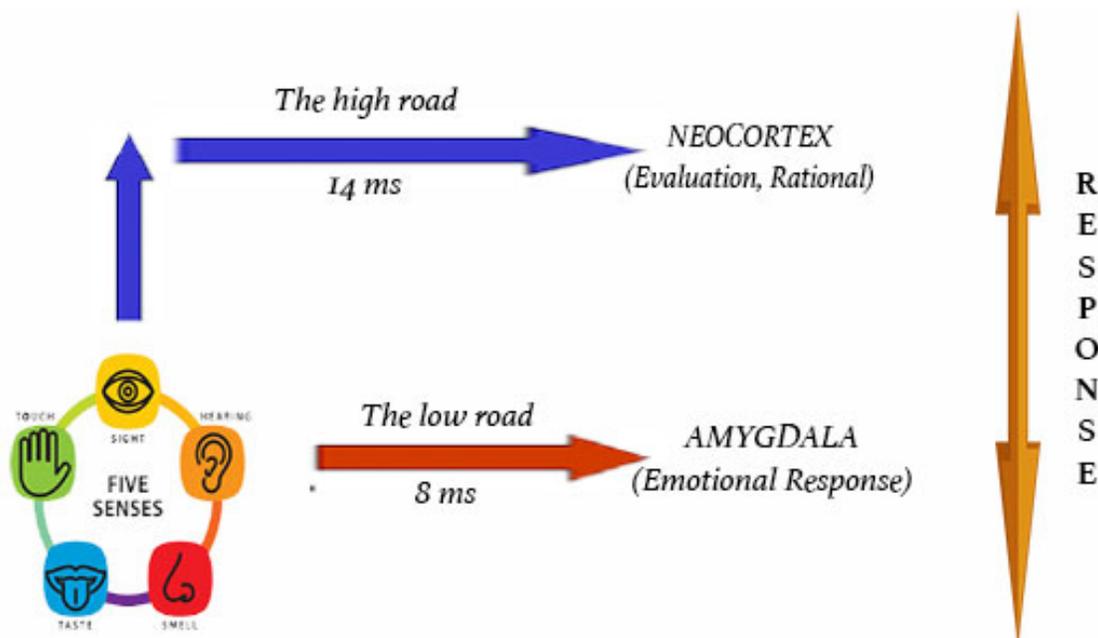
The thalamus has multiple functions. It may be thought of as a kind of hub of information. Every sensory system (with the exception of the olfactory system) includes a thalamic nucleus that receives sensory signals and sends them to the associated primary cortical area.



The **hippocampus** (named after its resemblance to the seahorse, from the Greek word) it is a major component of the brains of humans and other vertebrates. Humans and other mammals have two hippocampi, one in each side of the brain. The hippocampus belongs to the limbic system and plays important roles in the consolidation of information from short-term memory to long-term memory, and in spatial memory that enables navigation.

The **amygdala** (from Greek  $\alpha\mu$ , amygdalē, 'almond', 'tongue') is one of two almond-shaped groups of nuclei located deep and medially within the temporal lobes of the brain in complex vertebrates, including humans. Shown in research to perform a primary role in the **processing of memory, decision-making, and emotional reactions**, the amygdalae are considered part of the limbic system. In complex vertebrates, including humans, the amygdalae perform primary roles in the formation and storage of memories associated with emotional events. The amygdala is also involved in the modulation of **memory consolidation**. Following any learning event, the long-term memory for the event is not formed instantaneously.

The **prefrontal cortex** is the CEO of the brain. Is the executive part of the brain that is responsible for paying "attention", rationalizing and evaluating contexts and events.



In a state of alertness, the amygdala shoots and it engages the Pituitary Gland that is responsible for generating various types of hormones that are released in our bodies. In case of fear, the amygdala hijacks the brain and it releases the hormones of stress (neurotransmitters):

- Epinephrine (extremities: fingers, hands, arms)
- Norepinephrine (big muscles: legs)
- Cortisol

They are vasoconstrictors and in a normal state, they are useful due to their anti-inflammatory functions. Vasoconstrictors make our heart rate increase, blood flows quicker, our peripheral vision narrows (focus on what threatens us). Most of us have a peripheral vision between 180 and 270 degrees. When we are stressed, our focus is only 30 degrees with little or no peripheral vision (no creativity, no innovation, no aspirations...our bodies are focused on "Run", "Fight" or "Freeze". The same thing happens when you meet people: you see only 30 % of their full capacity.

This is the 3Fs: fight- flight - freeze

These hormones have two side effects when released suddenly:

- They turn off your immune system for 8-12 minutes. We are more predisposed to infections, diabetes, ulcers, sexual dis-functions, sleep problems, etc...
- They stop neurogenesis: the growth of new tissues in the brain. It was thought that we only develop, or regenerate brain cells to the age of 20, but neuroscience recently demonstrated that we actually continue to develop and transform our brains and have the ability of neuro-plasticity.

During this process we engage what we call our Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS).

In a state of relaxation, we engage our Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS), which is the opposite of the one we've just mentioned. It allows us to rebuild our bodies.

It still hits our amygdala, but the response is projected in a different cortical area (very often the orbital frontal cortex (involved in the cognitive processing of decision-making ) and it stimulates the vagus nerve ( It is the longest nerve of the autonomic nervous system in the human body and is connected to our heart). When activated, it releases two different sets of hormones:

- Oxytocin (primarily in women)
- Vassopresisin (primarily in men).

These are vasodilators and at this level of dosage they open our vessels and we breath slower, deeper, we feel warm, relaxed.

It is now when the body renews itself, we are at our best, we are creative, resourceful, we can do complex activities and we are open to learning and understanding.

As coaches, we are there to support our clients to calm their thoughts and thus, be at their best.

### 1.4.3 FEELINGS

Are the chemical manifestations in your body of emotions. Are the result of your thoughts and your emotions and determine your mood. They are the way we verbally express how we feel about our emotions.

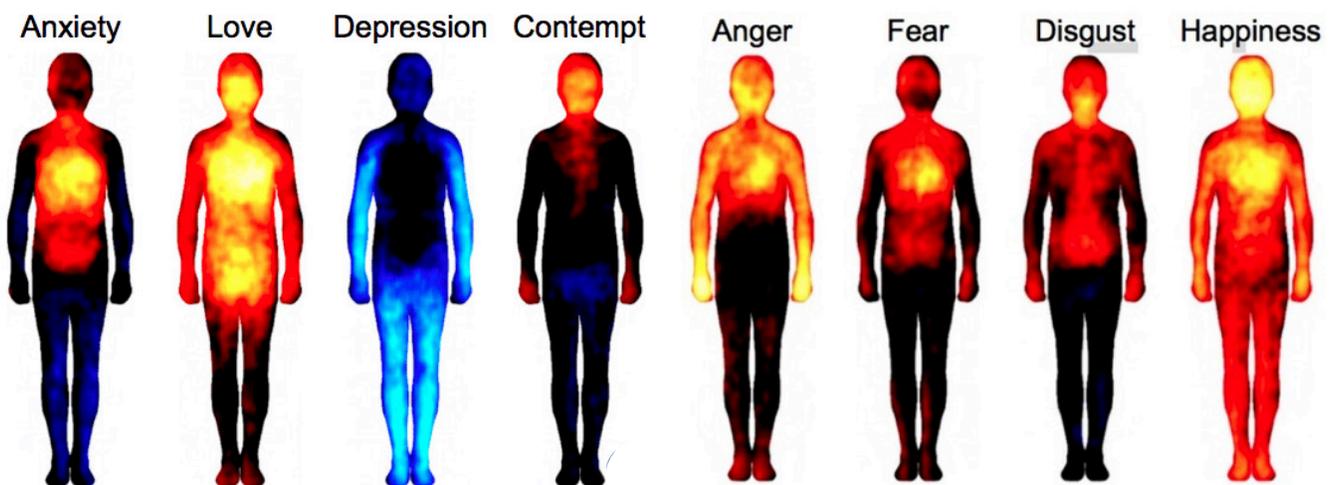
They determine also our client's performance. They are what many people call a "state of being".

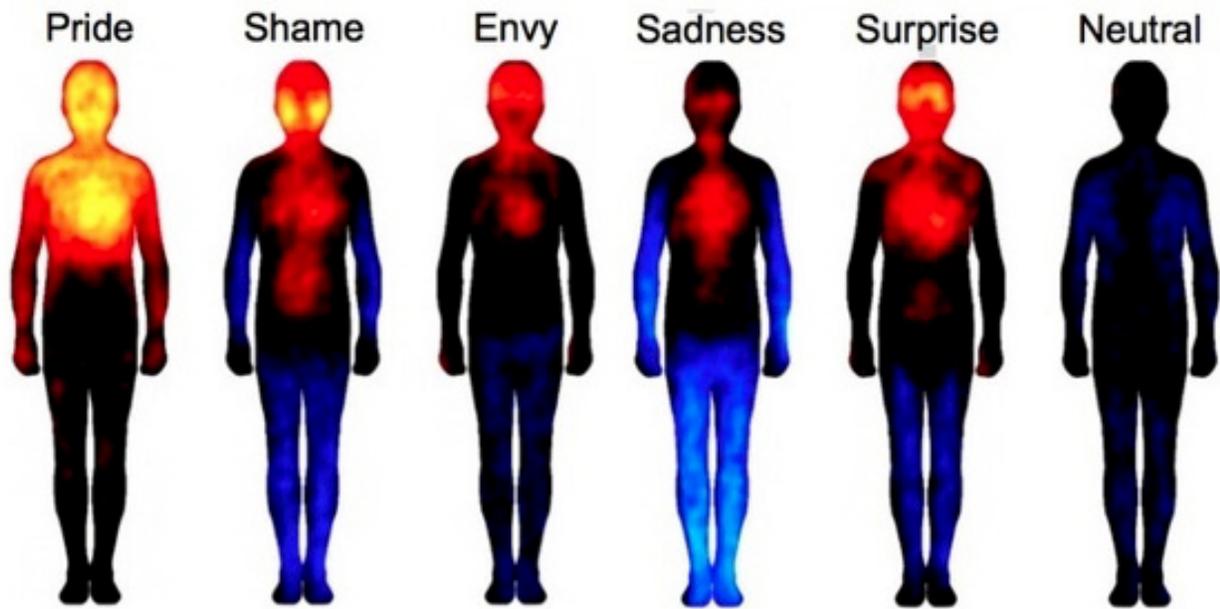
A new study by Finnish researchers published in the "Proceedings of the National Academies of Sciences", suggests that our emotions do indeed tend to influence our bodies in consistent ways.

Across five experiments, 701 participants "were shown two silhouettes of bodies alongside emotional words, stories, movies, or facial expressions. They were asked to colour the bodily regions where they felt emotional activity, both positive and negative, whilst viewing each stimulus."

The emotions were generated by having the subjects read short stories or watch movies. On a blank, computerized figurine, they were then asked to colour, in the areas of their body, where sensations became stronger (red and yellow) or weaker (blue and black) when they felt a certain way.

The mapping exercise produced what you might expect: an angry hot-head, a happy person lighting up all the way from their fingers to their toes, a depressed figurine that was literally blue (meaning they felt little sensation in their limbs). Almost all of the emotions generated changes in the head area, suggesting smiling, frowning, or skin temperature changes, while feelings like joy and anger saw upticks in the limbs—perhaps because you're ready to hug, or punch, your interlocutor. It is very useful not just to mention how we feel but to understand how those emotions physically manifest in our bodies as they can be very useful signals that we are triggered.





Detecting and understanding how that feels in our bodies, support us to pre-empt an unwanted behavioral response. Therefore, in coaching we very often look for client's unconscious gestures in their hands showing where they feel the energy of that emotion, even if not expressed verbally. We often even ask something like

*"What is moving there?"*

*"What are you feeling there?"*

*"Where does that feel in your body?"*

Our client's response can serve us as a living metaphor to connect the person with that sensation in their body and to find alternative responses. We may ask something like:

*"What is the message that this sensation is telling you?"*

*"What needs to be done here?"*

*"What are you learning from this?"*

*"How can you make this feel differently?", etc*

Another benefit of understanding client's descriptions of how they feel is that we can understand the underlying emotions that is moving them into action. The following image represents examples of feelings that correspond to one of our 6 primary emotions.



## 3.5. The five dimensions of Emotional Intelligence

In this chapter we will dive into the five most important components of Emotional Intelligence using the model that MHS (Multi Health Systems) proposes in their psychometric assessment. The tool is designed to measure and successfully develop key areas of emotional intelligence.

We want to give credit to MHS for the following presented information inspired from the EQ-Edge Book of Dr. Steven Stein (CEO of MHS) and adapted by ourselves to reflect our model of coaching.

### 3.5.1 EMOTIONAL SELF PERCEPTION

This dimension of EI reflects the awareness of clients over their strengths and weaknesses, the way they establish meaningful goals and their understanding of the impact that the emotions have on these aspects.

This part of EI reflects our "Communication" dimension of the SPACE coaching model with focus on "Conversations for awareness". Clients tend to come to coaching highlighting "what's missing" and have an awareness about "what is present as a strength". Our role as coaches is to increase their self regard, their self-actualization and their emotional awareness.

#### a) Self Regard

This is the part of EI that seeks to improve the way people regard themselves in terms of their capabilities and their abilities. It seeks to understand at how people think about themselves in these mentioned terms and the focus of their thoughts. For example, there are clients that think *"I'm not sure if I can deal with it all" whereas there are other clients that think "I'm a creative person, I just need to find a way to make it work."*

To support clients improve awareness of their strengths we may ask questions like:

*"What do you believe that your strengths are to solve this? Can you give me an example of when you used those strengths to your advantage?"*

*"What do you believe that needs to be developed?" and "What from your strengths can be used to develop this part?"*

*"What skills, behavior or abilities that you have may serve you to solve this?"*

*"What do you tell yourself when something doesn't go as planned? Does it serve you?" and*

*"What else do you think that you can tell yourself and that will serve you to solve this?"*

Many times, we unconsciously build an ideal image of ourselves and we are running every day to respect and become that image. That image contains values, shoulds and musts that we sets for t. It is their criteria of "who should they ideally be", "how should they ideally act" and "what should they ideally do" in order to regard themselves highly.

Often in life, people set very high expectations for themselves and that is something to be admired. The problem is that the desire to achieve those expectations is much more ambitious than their actual ability to achieve them in a specific timeframe. For example, a client may say "I want to be more assertive" but they want it to happen "now". They do not enable themselves the time to learn how to be more assertive, to implement specific new behaviors and abilities. Therefore they are unconsciously comparing who "they ideally should be and what they will do" with "who they are today and what they do today" being impatient and not understanding that they are going through a process of learning.

Coaches support clients to close this gap between the ideal self and the real self of their clients, by promoting active experimentation, gathering of valuable learning, developing new strategies and promoting regard and respect for oneself.

### Exercise:

**Step 1:** To bring awareness of the ideal self, coaches may ask the client to make a list of all the things that they believe that they should do in a specific context. They may ask:

*"How do you think that you should be in order for you to achieve this?"*

*"What do you think that you should ideally be able to do?"*

*"What abilities and skills should you demonstrate?"*

**Step 2:** The coach may ask the client to rate the importance of that aspect.

*"And how important from 1 to 10 is it for you to have or be able to demonstrate that?"*

Note: The coach may even ask the client to write a list of everything that is mentioned, in order to increase awareness in a more visual way.

**Step 2:** The coach may now ask the client to highlight the areas that they believe need improvement. They may ask:

*"As you look at this list, how satisfied are you in accomplishing those things that are most important to you?"*

*"Which are the areas where you think that you can do better?" or "That you would like to improve?"*

**Step 3:** Linking the ideal self with values and purpose.

*"What values do you honor by wanting to improve those areas?"*

*"What for do you want to improve them? or*

*"What would that do you for you once improved?"*

**Step 4:** Identify and connect the client with alternative resources that they have and that can be used to compensate the gap between ideal self and real self.

*"What inner resources that you have are needed here, in order for you to be able to improve this area?"*

*"Which of your abilities may serve you to improve this aspect?"*

*"Where do you need to allow yourself to learn and practice these skills?"; etc*

**Step 5:** *Gather learning and move into action.*

*"What did you learn about this exercise?"*

*"What will you do now, knowing all of this?" ( Co-designing actions as we've seen in previous chapters)*

*"How can you use this learning to move forward?", etc.*

## **b) Self Actualization**

This refers to the client's ability to establish meaningful goals, whilst keeping their motivation to learn and develop their own skills, abilities and behaviors.

This aspect of the EI is directly link to how we regard ourselves. If we are not aware of full our potential, we may sometimes set conservative objectives for ourselves and even the motivation to change or to improve may seem "impossible".

By doing the exercise mentioned in the "Self-Regard" section, clients may now see more opportunities, options and above all possibilities. We may ask the client:

*"Know that one of your strengths is X, what new activities or interests would you like to explore now?"*

*"By becoming aware of that fact that you can (name their strengths), how does that impact your objective?"*

## **b) Self Awareness**

This dimension of EI supports clients to:

- Correctly label how they feel.

Clients may sometimes say that they are not happy with a specific outcome or that they simply don't like a specific behavior.

Coaches may deepen their client's understanding of how they feel in order to be able to increase awareness of what provokes that emotional response and make it more predictable. We may ask:

*"What do you mean when you say that you do not feel happy with the outcome?"*

*"How does it feel for you not be happy with the outcome?"*

*"What other feelings are associated with not being happy?"*

The purpose of these questions is to facilitate the client to identify the triggers, as shown in the next point.

- Identify the root cause of how they feel and the impact that this has on their performance and results.

It refers to understanding what triggers clients into a specific emotional response. If clients understand what is it that makes them feel in a specific way, they can pre-empt those reactions.

We may ask the following questions:

**Step 1:** Identify the trigger of that emotion and its implications.

*"What makes this happen?" or "What provokes you to feel this way?"*

*"What is the result of you feeling in this way?"*

*"What is the impact of feeling this way on your behavior and abilities?"*

*"And on your results/performance?"*

**Step 2:** Find alternative desired ways of responding.

*"How else would you like to respond emotionally?"*

*"What would be a more beneficial emotional response for you?"*

**Step 3:** Identify actions and solutions.

*"What needs to be done, so that you can have this desired response?" (Co-defining actions)*

### 3.5.1 EMOTIONAL SELF EXPRESSION

This dimension of EI seeks to promote understanding of how emotions can play a key role in how we communicate, both at a verbal and non-verbal level.

We know for a fact, that many of the issues that our clients have, are due to a lack of communication or from not communicating in a congruent and effective way. Holding back on expressing our emotions can lead us to carry a weight on our shoulders, accumulate frustration and finally communicate in a way that doesn't really represent us, who we are.

As coaches, we want to empower our clients to freely express their emotions, opinions and set their boundaries in a constructive and coherent way, in line with their values and beliefs.

This part of EI refers mainly to assertiveness and independence regarding our judgments and thoughts. It acts as an extension to Self-Perception, if we can correctly label how we feel and if we understand the cause that provokes us to feel that way, we can express this in a non-intrusive and correct manner.

#### Assertiveness

Assertiveness refers to our ability to set our boundaries and defend our own point of view in a respectful manner, whilst recognizing and respecting the boundaries of others.

When clients hold back on their opinions, they may become passive and great ideas and insight

can be lost if not shared. Coaches support their clients to express their emotions and thoughts in an independent way and to have a clear understanding of their boundaries and how to defend them in an effective way.

### Step 1: Defining the boundaries

Boundaries are actually the values that we honor and when they are not respected we may be triggered into unwanted responses. We may ask:

*"What are the things that you most value?"*

*"What values define your limits or boundaries?"*

### Step 2: Understanding our level of tolerance.

We all have moments in our lives when we allow people to cross our boundaries, as well as, a limit up-to which we allow that to happen. It is habitual for people not to express how they feel the first time that their boundaries are crossed. We grant a "one-time pardon" to the person: *"In fact we can all cross someone's values once"* we might say. In this moment, we are not actually aware that the more we don't address our feelings in an assertive way, the more we unconsciously count the times that someone crosses our boundaries again. It's like building an invisible list: *"Oh, he did it again..."* or *"I'm sure he'll do it again"*.

It is proven that the most efficient way to communicate to others, when they have crossed our boundaries, is to do it before our tolerance reaches its peak. That is to say, to communicate this to them whilst we are in control of our emotional responses, thus acting from a very congruent way of being.

We may ask something like:

*"How many times does someone need to disrespect this value before you react?"*

*"How do you react?"* and *"Is there anything you would like to change about that reaction?"*

### Step 3: Connecting clients with a congruent reaction

*"How else would you like to react?"*

If the client said that their level of tolerance is 3, that is to say, that someone has to cross their values three times until they react, we may ask the client if it is possible for them to open up to express how they feel, in an assertive way, the second time or even from the first time.

*"When would it be a better time to address how you feel?"*

*"When can you still have control over your reaction?"*

### Step 4: Co-defining assertive ways of communication

*"How else could you respond?"*

*"What are other options of responding?"; etc*

be perceived as being aggressive and/or too radical. Coaches support their clients increase their awareness of how their actions and communication style may land for others. They can do that by increasing empathy in their clients to support an assertive type of communication.

The use of psycho-geography can support coaches to facilitate a SPACE of learning and discovery for their clients where they can find the most congruent way to express themselves. Very often we can ask the client to physically move between the representations of those lands. Using our body

### Step 1: "My Land" exercise

#### Defining "My land"

This is the client's territory, it is their way of seeing things and it represent what they value, the skills they have and the behaviors that they demonstrate.

- Identify the values and the boundaries:  
*"What values are honored in this land?"*  
*"What is important to be respected in this land?"*  
*"What do the inhabitants of this land respect and appreciate?" and "What do they believe in?"*
- Identify the skills and abilities needed or are already present in this land.  
*"What are the skills do the inhabitants of this land have?"*  
*"What skills need to be developed?", etc*
- Identify the behavior of the inhabitants of this land.  
*"What do the inhabitants of this land do?"*  
*"What do they like doing?"*  
*"Is there anything that can be further developed here?"*
- Identify needs  
*"What are the needs of these inhabitants?"*
- Identify objective and vision  
*"What objectives do these inhabitants have?"*  
*"What for, do they want to achieve this objective?"*

#### Understanding "Your land"

The Coach may now ask the same questions, as mentioned before, but addressed to the other person.

Your land is all about how the other person/other people feel in this context, what their values and boundaries are, what skills and behavior do they demonstrate, what are their needs, objectives and vision.

Coach may even invite the client to go physically and explore the land of the other person and may further ask:

*“What else do you notice by having visited this land? “Is there anything that hasn't yet been mentioned?”*

## **Step 2: Building “Our land”**

This step is all about assertiveness. Is all about taking into account my needs, their needs, my values and the values of others, my objective and the objective of others and overall my feelings and the feelings of others.

We may ask:

“How would a new land look like? Where the inhabitants from both lands, live together.

“What would they feel?”

“How can the needs of both parties be met?”

“How can the values of both parties can be respected?”

“How can the skills of both parties be used towards a greater achievement that would respect the goals of both parties?”

“How would they communicate?”

“What can you do to facilitate that communication?”

“How else can you communicate your needs, values and objectives now?”

## 3.5.2 INTERPERSONAL ABILITIES

This dimension of EI looks at how people create relationships and maintain them in a mutually respectful way. It basically completes the definition of Emotional Intelligence: Emotional and Social Intelligence. It promotes empathy and social responsibility, as key elements that build trustworthy and quality relationship with others.

Coaches understand that, sometimes, the successful achievement of a goal, that their clients have, may depend on external factors that are closely related to other significant people present in their lives. They also understand, that the changes that their clients implement in their lives, will very often have an impact on the relevant people that surround them. They basically understand that the clients live in a bigger system than themselves. They understand that any change in the system, may impact the client or that any change in the client may impact parts of their system. Therefore, coaches facilitate a SPACE where clients can find resources and ways of achieving their dreams in an ecological way, whilst remaining coherent with their inner values, beliefs and being.

### Empathy

In our previous chapters we spoke about the importance of empathy in coaching. This ability is equally important for our clients, especially when they say "I don't understand his point of view" or "I don't know why she doesn't see this?" or when clients defend their own point of view and seem unwilling to open to other people's experience of the context where the issue occurs.

The "Our Land" exercise is meant to improve our client's openness to different points of view.

Apart from this exercise coaches may also ask questions like:

*"Have you ever been in a situation where you had to do this and had no time?" (naming what the other person is required to do).*

*"How did you feel back then?"*

*"What did you need from the other person to solve it on time?", etc.*

### Social Responsibility

Social Responsibility means a willingness to contributing to society, to our social groups and generally to the welfare of others. It is directly linked with the questions "What for" and "Who for". Coaches, by essence, are socially responsible, as they are willing to support other people, they are motivated by the happiness of their clients and they want to contribute to their overall well-being.

Neuroscience demonstrated that helping and supporting people gives people a feeling of satisfaction, of feeling rewarded and proud of oneself. Linking client's objectives to a greater good, bigger than themselves, may boost the client's motivation and adds meaning to their goals.

Coaches may ask something like *"Who else may benefit from you achieving this objective? or "Who else is important for you that may benefit from your achievement?"*

### 3.5.3 DECISION MAKING

This facet of EI addresses the ways in which we use emotional information and it reveals how well we understand the impact emotions have on decision making. This includes the ability to resist or delay impulses and remain objective, in order to avoid rash behaviors and ineffective attempts at problem solving. It involves good reality testing of both threats and opportunities.

#### a) Reality Testing

Coaches may support their clients to do a "check-up" of the situation, by using a SWOT analysis:

S-trenghts

*"Which of your skills and abilities are needed in this situation?"*

*"What from, what you do and how you do it, can be beneficial in this context?"*

W-eakenesses

*"Which skills do you think that you need to further develop, in order to succesfully achieve your goal?:"*

*"How else can you do things?"*

*"Which behaviors would you like to develop that could benefit you in this context?"*

O - pportunities

*"What are the opportunities that you see in this context?"*

*"What new good things can emerge for you, from this context?"*

*"What skills will you be able to improve in this challenging circumstance?"*

*"What new behavior will you be using and practicing in this situation?"*

*"How can this situation help you learn new things?", etc*

T-hreats

*"What are the milestone that you see in this context?"*

*"What challenges are there?"*

*"What could go wrong?" and if so "What will you do?" or "What is your plan?"*

If "Strengths" and "Weakness" refer more to the internal resources of the client, "Opportunities" and "Threats" are most likely to be linked to external factors in a given context.

#### a) Problem Solving

This step of EI relies strongly on Reality Testing. Once clients have clarity about all the facets of their context, they can now implement a plan.

In coaching, this is linked to Co-designing actions and a future strategy to solve a specific challenge.

Problem solving usually involves a decision making process, as clients need to choose between different ways of approaching their challenges, whilst staying in contact with the identified inner strengths and external available opportunities.

Decision making involves an unconscious evaluation of the consequences of our actions. Clients often face a decision between their "gut feeling" and their "rational judgement", between "what they want" and "what they should do", between "what they wish to do" and "what needs to be done".

To support clients in a decision making process, we first need to increase our client's choices, needs and wants. Nobody knows better, what is best for our client, than the client. Coaches are there to facilitate awareness of various aspects involved in this process, but, it is the client who will always choose their route. Coaches may invite clients to:

- Create a SWOT of each of the options that the client mentions.
- Align the client with their values, by asking "Which value do you honor by doing X and which one by doing Y?"
- Enhance the client's creativity by creating even more options. Often, in life, things don't have to be one way or another, nevertheless, our mind gets hooked in the process of choosing between these options that we are aware of and that cloud our mind to seeing alternative ways. Coaches facilitate this process, by aligning those options towards common values and vision.

*"What values do you respect by choosing this option?", "And by choosing this one?"*

*"What for do you want to choose this option?",*

*"And, what for do you want this one?" "Is there a way that you can respect both values and vision(s)?"*

### 3.5.4 STRESS MANAGEMENT

This facet of EI addresses how well clients can cope with the emotions associated with change and unfamiliar or unpredictable circumstances, while remaining hopeful about the future and resilient in the face of setbacks and obstacles.

This facet is closely linked to the "Empowering" facet of our SPACE coaching model, where we seek to empower clients to overcome obstacles that may present themselves.

#### a) Flexibility

Flexibility is a client's ability to gather learning, to move forward and re-adapt their strategy in various circumstances. The more flexible clients are, the more resilient they become. Being stuck in the old pattern of thinking and doing will, almost always, lead to the same result. Coaches connect their clients with their creativity and their resources, in order to develop new perspectives, they support their clients to feel comfortable in the SPACE of learning and readjusting.

The most often questions that enhances clients flexibility are:

*"What did you learn that you should/shouldn't do?"*

*"What, how, who, where and when else can you.?"*

#### a) Optimism

Optimism is an indicator of one's positive attitude and outlook on life. It involves remaining hopeful and resilient, despite occasional setbacks. Optimism assumes a measure of hope in one's approach to life. It is a positive approach to daily living and a significant component of resilience and well-being.

Coaches very often use re-framing to shift clients' perceptions and support them in maintaining their motivation.

## *Source of the new!*

*There surely exists a deeper world.  
What's the telling sign you ask?  
The renewal of the moments, the passing of the old.  
A new day, a new night; new gardens, new life,  
every breath brings about fresh insights;  
newness is richness, joyfulness.  
Where does the new come from?  
Where does the old end up?  
See past the walls of perception...  
experience the boundlessness,  
the universe has no beginning, no end!  
Like a stream, the universe appears bounded,  
yet all flows by...the new arriving fresh...moment by moment,  
I wonder...where from?*

*Rumi  
(13th-century Persian poet)*

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THANK YOU FOR CREATING THE SPACE  
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