

Coaching demystified
**The low down as to what's going
on in, and what to expect from,
a coaching relationship**

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An opening gambit

This essay attempts to explain both what coaching is and how it works in supporting and empowering those individuals considering embracing coaching in search of personal growth and self-development. This paper has been written specifically to reach out to business professionals as a means of making coaching understandable, worthy and transparent.

As founder, director and owner manager of three small businesses, my natural empathy and learned business acumen mean I lean towards owner managers of other businesses as clients. Importantly, I am not a business coach and this document is written entirely from a personal coach's perspective; it is simply that my clients happen to own and run businesses and this is the community at which my practice is targeted. What I find most interesting is bringing together and creating congruency around each entrepreneur's personal and professional goals.

For them, their work is their life, and most love what they do. The challenge is most often that they want to do more, and that is partly why coaching works so well for them. A particularly useful exercise early on in a coaching relationship, and which generally works very well for my coachees, is the Wheel of Life. This simple tool works by visualising the different areas important to an individual (often relationship/love, career, family and friends, social life, leisure/fun/celebration, health, wealth, creativity, contribution, personal growth/spirituality, physical environment) and draws out areas for development and potential topics for coaching sessions.

Coaching defined

To those I meet, I describe coaching as “an important conversation, which differs from most in that this conversation is completely one-sided. This is all about you. In a coaching session I use advanced communication skills to help you find the clarity, momentum and direction that empower you to improve your situation and make changes. I simply ask better questions than the ones you’re used to asking of yourself”. My intention is to say not just what coaching is, but to hint at why it works and what to expect.

There are as many definitions of coaching as there are coaches. The textbook bibles dress coaching up as everything from “enabling people to create change through learning”ⁱ through “being there for the client when everyone else thinks they’re mad, bad or sad”ⁱⁱ to “a powerful process that supports people in releasing their true potential”ⁱⁱⁱ.

Personally, I prefer the styles more prevalent in self-help books, which make eloquent promises regarding what the reader will win by engaging in the coaching process. Lynette Allen writes of “the renewed energy you’re searching for, the self-confidence you crave and the ability to take on whatever... with a newfound sense of calm and control”.^{iv} Michael Heppell concisely describes coaching as “a different, more rewarding way to think and act”.^v

At its core, coaching is a talking therapy which utilises the conscious, unconscious and subconscious, just like counselling and psychotherapy, but which differs from them by focusing entirely on creating a better future. It hands responsibility to the coachee in the same way as most talking therapies, showing them they have power and influence over their life and recognising their own ability to overcome personal barriers and obstacles. In doing so, it often explores a person’s values, psyche and beliefs, but does not attempt to deal with historic and unresolved issues.

Counselling and psychotherapy do, trying to make people whole after past trauma.

I also identify with the honesty Fiona Harrold conveys in describing her role: “my job is to coax, cajole, persuade and sometimes push you to be the best that you can be”.^{vi} Importantly though, she is quick to affirm that she herself does not have the answers. Coaching is distinct from consultancy, training and mentoring in that advice is not given and it is non-directive, instead inviting the coachee to arrive at their own goals and develop their own way forward. Consultancy and training both involve an expert telling you what to do in an area in which they have specialist knowledge. Mentoring passes on knowledge gained in their own experience.

Personal experience tells me how important and valuable being non-directive is, in providing an open and positive space where coachees can grow and respond to themselves differently, finding solutions that are right for them. In a session with the owner of a small business, (I’ll call her) Penelope described having tried many times to improve her organisational skills to make her business more efficient. Penelope had attended courses, read books and paid consultants to change the way she worked. After just one coaching session addressing the topic and developing her own personal methodologies, Penelope described being “more committed than ever” and “feeling more energised and focused”. Six months later,

I was delighted to hear in another session that her new strategy was “working wonders” and that the tools she herself had developed were “miles ahead of anything the textbooks had ever taught her”.

Virtually everyone can benefit from coaching, and only those with debilitating issues of alcohol or drug dependency, severe depression, an eating disorder, traumatic stress, sexual abuse or illegal activities should be referred elsewhere. Having said that, some people simply do not respond well to coaching; not really wanting to change, constantly putting up barriers or refusing to accept responsibility for their own lives.

i Julie Starr, *The Coaching Manual*, 2008, pg2

ii Curly Martin. *The Life Coaching Handbook*, 2001, pg 15

iii Pam Richardson, *The Life Coach*, 2004, pg 7

iv Lynette Allen, *Behind with the Mortgage and Living off Plastic*, 2005, pg 3

v Michael Heppell, *Flip It*, 2009, pg ix

vi Fiona Harrold, *The 10-Minute Life Coach*, 2002, pg 4

Section one Advanced communication skills

So what are the 'advanced communication skills' that brought about Penelope's breakthrough? The key skills every coach must learn and perfect are: questioning, listening, using silence, and what I call 'paying attention'. After all, in a commercial sense, these skills are what every coach sells. The tools and techniques, the coaching process and the supportive relationship are simply by-products.

Unlike many skills, which a learned expert holds tight to their chest, be they acupuncture or IT provision, in coaching a coach is able to pass on their skills, showing a path for growth and development rather than 'doing it to their client'. Importantly for me, this enables the recipient to learn and to go on to self-coach.

That's not to say that there is a finite amount of coaching in which an individual should partake; it simply means that finding a way to improve how we think and feel, and asking better questions of ourselves, is within us all.

Asking better questions

The powerful questions we ask are:

- Open how's, what's and when's, rather than confrontational why's and closed questions which elicit a one-word answer
- Positive
- Driven by a clear purpose
- Simple, transparent and forthright
- Set in the present and future
- Ethical and responsible

In asking better questions, a coach aims to (though not exclusively):

- Invite the coachee to 'speak their story'; simply verbalising thoughts is often powerful and transformational
- Get to grips with what is meaningful and important
- Encompass a problem and assume a solution
- Invoke self-awareness and awareness of others
- Explore thinking, attitudes, beliefs and values
- Paint a clearer picture or better perspective
- Influence without being controlling

- Overcome barriers and objections
- Bring about conclusion and action

Let me give an example: (I'll call him) Gerald presented a typical case of 'always doing the same thing and getting the same result'. By prompting him with open questions like "what's really important to you" (invoking self-awareness), "what would you like to do differently" (thought-provoking), "what will make you jump out of bed in the morning" (gathering information) and "who or what really inspires you" (influencing but not controlling), Gerald developed greater clarity of what he wanted in his professional life.

Tired of competing for ever-diminishing editorial roles in the UK, Gerald has now moved to Cyprus as editor of the national newspaper. In a follow on session over skype, Gerald told me the move hadn't been without its challenges, but he felt alive again for the first time in years.

Deeper listening

In coaching, listening is vitally important and becomes “an active process”ⁱ where the coach uses their ears, eyes and body, seeking solely to understand and serve the coachee. When a coach listens deeply, they are using more than their auditory sense to confirm that what they are hearing, seeing and feeling are congruent. What is left unsaid, or conveyed non-verbally, is often as profound as what is heard, and the way in which something is spoken may contradict what is being said.

Eckhart Tolle writes “When listening to another person, don’t just listen with your mind, listen with your whole body. That takes attention away from thinking and creates a still space that enables you to truly listen without the mind interfering. You are giving the other person space – space to be”ⁱⁱ.

This awareness and insight comes with deep listening rather than with normal levels of listening (cosmetic, conversational and active) where the listener’s engagement varies from ‘making all the right noises’ but distracted by their own unconnected thoughts, to attentive listening with half a brain while the other half is busy thinking up the next contribution.

In *The Coaching Manual*, Julie Starr justifiably and excellently devotes 14 pages to listening skills, showing how important it is for a coach to listen deeply, putting their own self to one side completely in order to “get a sense of who they (the coachee) are, as well as what they’re saying”ⁱⁱⁱ.

There’s a lesson here for coachees, as well as coaches. A question I’ve made a habit of asking myself when self-coaching is “is it true?. It’s human nature to distort the truth. Fiona Harrold writes “Whatever we decide to be right about, we go out of our way to prove. We adopt positions, take up opinions... and even fight to the death for them”^{iv}. She invites us to choose what to be right about, to be open to possibility, to confirm what we believe others’ opinions to be, and to question ourselves when at risk of being assumptive.

Business owner (I’ll call him) Nigel had come for coaching with a dream of writing a novel, but was worried what his staff would think if his working week went down to four days. Nigel had convinced himself they would think him lazy and uncommitted, but in uncovering what was really true it became clear he was

projecting ^v onto his staff a belief system which was actually his own. We carefully explored his own belief system, which originated in the relationship he had had with his father. In recognising it, he was able to move forward, and when writing a testimonial for me, Nigel said “you have the canny knack of getting me to talk about things I would rather not, but without which I would never be sitting here writing chapter three and making my dream a reality”.

Using silence

Silence, pauses and reflection are important in the coaching process, as they offer the coachee space to think deeply, respond to their thoughts and reflect. In my experience, transformational ideas, paradigm-shifting surprises and lightbulb moments most frequently come out of silence.

(I’ll call her) Jemima had come for coaching because after sixteen months without a consulting contract she seriously doubted her employability. Her self-esteem had waned to an all-time low and she worried that the job market was passing her by. During her second coaching session, while quietly reflecting on her response to a question, Jemima made a comment about the language she was using with herself. It was wonderful to hear her make this observation unprompted (we had touched on the subject in her first session but not since), and showed that her negative thinking was already turning around. Instead of saying “I’m unemployable” she managed to alter the way she thought about the non-work-related opportunities that had come her way during the year and the valuable lessons she had learnt. After our fourth session, Jemima called to thank me for supporting her through her behavioural shift, which had helped to land a lucrative ten month contract.

^v A definition of Projection, taken from the online Psychology Glossary: Projection is one of the defence mechanisms identified by Freud. According to Freud, projection is when someone is threatened by or afraid of their own impulses so they attribute these impulses to someone else

ⁱ Curly Martin, *The Life Coaching Handbook*, 2001, pg 34

ⁱⁱ Eckhart Tolle, *The Power of Now*, 2005, pg 105

ⁱⁱⁱ Julie Starr, *The Coaching Manual*, 2008, pgs 82-96

^{iv} Fiona Harrold, *The 10-Minute Life Coach*, 2002, pg 71

Clarifying, summing up, feeding back and giving feedback

At no point should a coach give the impression that they 'know it all'. Clarification, summing up, feeding back and giving feedback are all important and distinctive skills that every coach should master. It is wrong to make assumptions about a coachee's verbal or non-verbal responses, and much better to check-in regularly, rising to the challenge of neither deleting nor distorting valuable content.

Clarification simply asks the coachee to confirm that the coach has heard something correctly. Summing up is useful for keeping the conversation on track. Feeding back repeats what the coachee has verbalised, if for no greater reason than to reassure them that they are being listened to. Giving feedback is a more complex interpretation of what the coach has heard but may not have been said, e.g. "what I seem to be hearing is...", or "I've noticed you use the word 'angry' four times today...".

Giving feedback is more complicated than clarification, and much has been written about how to give good feedback. The fundamental rules that coaches follow are that feedback is:

- Constructive, beneficial and given with a positive intention
- A balance of difficult messages with positive statements
- Evidence-based, whether positive or negative (not "you should work in accounts" but "I think you're a natural at numbers because you quickly picked up that complex spreadsheet")
- The responsibility of the giver
- Non-judgemental ("I notice..." or "I think..." rather than "You are...")
- Non-critical
- A two-way conversation, giving the recipient a chance to question and clarify
- Supported with non-verbal signals
- Linked to goals
- Gentle on vocabulary, using terms which diminish emphasis ("tricky" rather than "really challenging")

Paying Attention

Communication is far more than the words you use. I've already demonstrated how Jemima's attitude changed completely once she chose a different way of thinking about and defining her lack of paid employment.

As the owner of a creative communications agency, I know what a delicate balance effective communication demands. But in just the same way that a graphic designer has a toolkit of text, images, layout, typography and colours, a coach has tools at their disposal for building rapport and managing constructive conversations: vocabulary, body language (including facial expressions, eye contact, physiological position), and mirroring and matching to make the coachee feel at home.

Skilled coaches use all of the tools below in their work, helping to facilitate a conversation and to put a coachee at ease.

- Quality of voice - tone, pace, pitch and timbre account for 38% of the message being conveyed
- Cultural differences - e.g. prolonged eye contact is sometimes seen as confrontational
- Physical gestures - I'm a particularly touchy feely person, but my clients are often not
- Using positive language - e.g. "do remember" rather than "don't forget"
- Using powerful terms - "will you/would you" rather than "can you/could you"
- Fixing commitment - listening for "yes" rather than "I'll try" and pushing with "when, how and what"
- Avoiding suggestions - the old cliché "whatever you do, don't think about a white rabbit" springs to mind
- Inviting personal reflection - there are four levels of reflection but they're not all healthyⁱ

ⁱ A presentation by Professor Michael Carroll that I attended at The Critical Coaching Conference (Bristol University, Oct 2009) identified five levels of reflection: zero reflection is where the subject finds it difficult to look at any wider picture and blames the behaviour of other people; empathetic reflection is where the subject still believes the problem is not their own, but can begin to acknowledge another's feelings and a wider perspective; systemic reflection means the subject can take a position of collective responsibility and share an issue; self-reflection takes on complete personal responsibility, which has the potential of becoming a dangerous psychological pattern if over-reflective.

- Representational systems – is the coachee’s preferred vocabulary visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, olfactory or gustatory language? The same concept can be communicated according to their preferred vocabulary. For example, do they ‘get the picture’, ‘hear what you say’, ‘get a feel for something’, ‘smell the coffee’, or ‘get a taste for an idea’?
- Buzzwords - what may be everyday language for the coach may not be familiar to the coachee and can undermine trust and faith, but knowing and using a coachee’s own terminology can also be useful help to build rapport, e.g. when coaching my clients I too speak their ‘business-speak’, while another coach may need to constantly ask for explanation.

Attributes and attitudes

Though not technically communication skills, it is worth defining the attributes and attitudes most favourable in a coach. There are many specialisms and niches within coaching which demand specific skill sets, but it helps to outline the general characteristics to look for in any coach. Without certain traits, an individual simply isn't suited to the role.

The communication skills of questioning, listening, using silence, giving feedback and paying attention outlined earlier can be learned. Similarly, learning how to operate as a coach, adhere to professional boundaries and run a coaching practice can be learned. What cannot be learned are the personality traits that any coachee looks for in the person they choose to empower and inspire them, to help them grow and develop. Coaches don't need to be perfect or infallible, but I think they should strive to be if they are to earn trust. In my experience, as a trainee coach asking for a voluntary contribution of up to £20 I lost count of how many times people I already worked with implied 'I don't care what coaching is; if I can have a chunk of Clare for £20, I'm in'.

For them, respect was already deserved and professional success was proven. Yet these had been developed over a twenty year career, and are not intrinsic behaviours. What earns respect and brings success to a coaching relationship are not just trainable skills but also honed human qualities; qualities like confidence, self-awareness, self-belief, optimism, enthusiasm, curiosity, courage, assertiveness, integrity, authority, openness, resourcefulness, congruency, respect and empathy.

With reference to coaching, two other human qualities deserve to be expanded on: rapport and intuition.

Building rapport ⁱ

We don't need to be like our coachees, but we do need to understand them, like them and believe in them. In the opening paragraphs of *The 10-Minute Life Coach*, Fiona Harrold ⁱⁱtells the reader "You are my type of person". That doesn't mean they will necessarily like or be like Fiona, just that she likes them. In the same way, when building rapport with a client, we're not trying to be like them, but we are trying to find common ground that puts them at ease. Without doubt, it is a fine balancing act.

ⁱ In *Coaching with NLP*, O'Connor and Lages describe rapport as "a relationship of mutual respect and influence, which comes from an honest attempt to understand the other person in their terms". 2004, pg 47

ⁱⁱ Fiona Harrold, *The 10-Minute Life Coach*, 2002, pg 1

When you get rapport right the conversation flows seamlessly, but when it's wrong it is glaringly obvious, whether that's because of pregnant pauses (very different from reflective silence), awkward conversation, conspicuous mirroring or an uncomfortable power balance. I recently attended a workshop on Personology - The Science of Reading Faces. This isn't about a person's facial expressions, but the features we are born with, which are scientifically proven with 92% accuracy to represent certain traits, such as whether someone is a 'detail person' or a 'big picture person'. Natural salespeople may not have experience of personology, but they do have an innate ability to access the personality sitting before them and build rapport. Equally, the art of building rapport cannot be ignored by any coach, whether in a coaching or a selling capacity.

Lynette Allen opens *Behind with the Mortgage and Living off Plastic* with carefully crafted copy that puts her female readers very much at ease and brings them together in a big sisterly hug with words like "we women...", and "it's what every woman deserves". ⁱⁱⁱThe opening pages are an excellent example of rapport building and empathising.

An example from my personal experience demonstrates using rapport to do far more than simply put someone at ease. Unusually for my clients, (I'll call her) Sky wasn't a business owner, but was introduced to me by her owner-manager boss who was also a client. Sky is what many left brainers will refer to as 'fluffy'. The topic for our first session was the confusion she felt over signals given by authority figures, interpreting them as confrontational. Now there is no right or wrong way to approach any coaching topic, but I attempted to build rapport by stepping into her right-brained creative shoes as best I could, recognising that what she needed was not a conventional approach to building self-confidence but something more in line with how she sees the world. Before long an anchoring strategy evolved whereby each time authority looms menacingly over her shoulder and she feels the hairs on the back of her neck rise, Sky momentarily cups her right hand, looks into it and sees a translucent sphere of light. The bubble as defined by Sky is pale blue, smells of roses, is fluid, shiny, strong like glass, emits birdsong and glows. It is Sky's trigger for making the hairs lie back down. Why? Because alongside the physical features, Sky's bubble is calm, confident, composed and positive, and crucially it gives her the split second of space she needs to notice and take charge of her emotional response.

ⁱⁱⁱ Lynette Allen, *Behind with the Mortgage and Living off Plastic*, 2005, pgs 4-6

Attributes and attitudes

In total contrast, there are very scientific approaches to building rapport and relationships. For example, the study of meta-programs in Neuro-Linguistic Programming strives to uncover the complex differences in human preferences. This essay doesn't allow for in-depth analysis, but very briefly meta-programs explore whether an individual's preference is for sameness or difference, their desire is to move towards or away from, their tendency is to be global or specific or their likely response will be creative blue-sky options or defined procedures. ⁱ

What's important is that a coach is aware of their own meta-programs and seeks to serve their client by putting their own views to one side and operating according to their client's natural motivational tendency and prevailing beliefs and values. Then rapport should come easily.

ⁱ For further reading, try Curly Martin's Life Coaching Handbook, 2001, pgs 143-148

Trusting Intuition

I find the subject of intuition most fascinating. It's one of those curious things that until you trust in it, it'll never come into your life. But once you let it in, it becomes pervasive. Just an hour ago I picked up a reference book in search of a particular quotation. My thumbs flicked through 355 pages whilst I nattered to my husband. Yes, you've guessed it. My thumbs settled on the precise page I wanted. "Ask and ye shall receive" springs to mind. But truth is, I wasn't even asking. I wholeheartedly expected to spend five minutes scouring the text. Yet my sub-conscious mind (or intuition/gut instinct/sixth sense; call it what you may) had already gone to work for me.

Julie Starrⁱ even includes Using Intuition as one of the five skills every coach needs to perfect. Personally, I would argue whether it can be forcefully practised and developed. For me, intuition is quieter than that. The sensations are subtle and the messages non-verbal.

Many of the references which coachees make of their coach's seemingly telepathic ability to hit the nail on the head are actually a consequence of deep listening. Yet it could be fair to say that great intuition could distinguish an average coach from an exceptional coach.

Suffice to say, I don't coach desperately seeking 'signs', but neither will I ignore what my sub-conscious brings to the surface. I'm all for believing that humans use just 10% of their true mental capacity, and that there is serendipity in the world. By welcoming the other 90%, I constantly surprise myself and embrace the 'magic'.

Approved Behaviour

I've written about a coach's required qualities and skills in an attempt to highlight things to look out for in selecting the right coach. This section closes with how a coach should behave. A great coach must:

- Demonstrate belief in their coachee's ability to create solutions, and trust them to do so
- Encourage new ways of thinking and being
- Be challenging but supportive over self-deceptions
- Be diligent and absolute in not directing or controlling a conversation, but also know precisely when their own contribution might help, e.g. to dissolve frustration

- Honour a coachee's decision to not discuss a topic
- Curb their own enthusiasm and influence

They are also obliged to:

- Ask permission of the coachee to push and challenge
- Maintain confidentiality
- Respect diversity (e.g. religion, sexuality, age)
- Seek to learn and grow through a programme of continual personal development and supervision
- Act with integrity

Like any professional, coaches should be organised, disciplined, reliable and ethical; and operate within the boundaries of a professional code of conduct.ⁱⁱ Coaches are not infallible robots and a personal style is encouraged, but a coach should always notice and recognise any transgressions, have the courage to confront lapses in self-control, accept responsibility, and deal with any concerns up front, openly and honestly.

In concluding this section, there are many skills and attributes a great coach should display. If this all sounds too much to ask of one person, the highly successful coach Anthony Robbins, concisely describes a great coach as "a peak performance consultant who really cares and is committed, who challenges you to get results by using what you know/have"ⁱⁱⁱ. If you don't get a feel for this in a first session with a coach, my suggestion is to shop around.

ⁱ Julie Starr, *The Coaching Manual*, 2008, pgs 96-102

ⁱⁱ The Association for Coaching's Code of Ethics and Good Practice is replicated in Appendix A

ⁱⁱⁱ Anthony Robbins, *Awaken the Giant Within*, 1991, audio book, chapter 4

Section two The coaching process

Prior to a coaching assignment, the coach may ask the coachee to provide verbal or written background information as a means of getting to know the individual and/or an overview document to understand their motivations. This usually takes the form of a questionnaire, such as the one in Appendix B taken directly from Julie Starr's *The Coaching Manual*ⁱ.

Similarly, at the close of an assignment, many coaches use the final session/s to define an ongoing personal development plan, identifying area/s of development, clearly defined goals, actions to progress and behaviours to develop.

Neither of these tasks is mandatory, but what must be at the core of every relationship and every session is a proven coaching model, defined by the specific goals and options it sets out to facilitate.

Goal Setting

Why do we set ourselves such specific goals? My own reasoning is that it makes success tangible. Goal setting forces me to be clear about what it is that I want to have/change/be, focuses me, invites my unconscious to participate, and means achievement can be measured and celebrated.

Much has been written about goal setting. Here are just a few excerpts, from recognised authorities:

Fiona Harroldⁱⁱ: "I used to loathe planning. Goals were for wimps." "I know different now. Goals are for all of us who want an interesting life and are prepared to do something about getting it."

Gretchen Rubinⁱⁱⁱ: "People are more likely to make progress on goals that are broken down into concrete, measurable actions, with some kind of structured accountability and positive reinforcement." In setting out her happiness resolutions she "wanted to be specific, so I'd know exactly what I was expecting from myself".

Richard Parkes Cordock^{iv}: "It is almost like you need to hardwire your goals into your system so that they are running 24/7. It's about programming your subconscious so that the awareness of your goals, and what you have to do to achieve them, is a permanent programme that will

keep prompting you to take action. Trust me on this. If you don't pay real attention to your goals, nothing you want to achieve is ever going to happen."

Julie Starr^v: "From the first session, we need to begin agreeing specific goals." "Without this constant focus, coaching conversations can develop into cosy chats, with no real purpose or sense of direction." "Often, just discussing what a coachee actually wants and defining that with real clarity can be of tremendous benefit."

ⁱ Julie Starr, *The Coaching Manual*, 2008, pgs 337-339

ⁱⁱ Fiona Harrold, *The 10-Minute Life Coach*, 2002, chapter 17

ⁱⁱⁱ Gretchen Rubin, *The Happiness Project* 2009, ebook, chapter 1

^{iv} Richard Parkes Cordock, *Millionaire Upgrade*, 2006, chapter 4 pgs 51-62

^v Julie Starr, *The Coaching Manual*, 2008, pgs 231-238

The TGROW coaching model

The UK Coaching Partnership where I trained teaches the widely used TGROW coaching model.

It's a classic approach and proven to work universally. The mnemonic stands for:

- T What is the general TOPIC for the session?
- G Precisely, what GOAL does the coachee want for the session?
- R Develop an insight into the current REALITY
- O Explore the OPTIONS available
- W Exactly what WILL the coachee do (most likely an action plan or a commitment to behavioural change)

The TGROW process guides and controls each session, helping the coach to steer an outcome via a goal that is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attractive/Achievable/Agreed, Realistic/Resourced and Time phased).

In laying out a clearly defined and explored goal, other concepts must be taken into consideration. Is it positively stated (what you want, rather than what you don't want), motivational (aligned to the coachee's values and beliefs), immediate (you can take action now), balanced (ethical and ecological) and challenging?¹

There are other coaching models, such as Curly Martin's evolution of TGROW into I-CAN-DO ² and Anthony Robbins's Six Steps to Success. ³ Essentially, what every

i In Coaching for Performance (pg 62), John Whitmore uses two additional mnemonics: PURE (positively stated, understood, relevant, ethical) and CLEAR (challenging, legal, environmentally sound, appropriate, recorded).

ii Curly Martin, The Life Coaching Handbook, 2001, pg 60, where the mnemonic stands for: Investigate what is so important, what is the Current situation, what are the Aims in life, what are a Number of alternative ways of achieving the aims, by what Date will the aims be achieved, and what are the Outcome achievement indicators?

iii Anthony Robbins, Lessons in Mastery, 1998, (audio book, chapter 7) which identifies the six steps as
1) decide what you do want and what fears/beliefs are preventing you from getting it right now,
2) get leverage using pain to clarify what you're missing out on and pleasure to visualise what you will win,
3) interrupt the old pattern by introducing behaviour which changes your emotional state immediately,
4) create an empowering alternative pattern that gives you pleasure,
5) condition the brain with practice and clarity, and 6) test the new pattern in your imagination

coaching model has in common is a process of gaining clarification, exploring, taking action and seeking resolution.

In addition to these models, other resources and skills which every coach should seek to attain include a good knowledge of:

- State change - creating an appropriate emotional state in order to facilitate change/action, e.g. a resourceful/confident/positive/caring state
- Anchors, triggers and conditioning - a neuro-linguistic programming term for the process by which responses become associated with (anchored to) some stimulus, in such a way that perception of the stimulus (the anchor) leads by reflex to the anchored response occurring
- The power of metaphors - using an analogy between two objects or ideas, from simple figures of speech to allegories and stories, to facilitate better understanding
- Reframing experiences - Anthony Robbins writes "if we change our frame of reference by looking at the same situation from a different point of view, we can change the way we respond in life"
- Emotional intelligence - self-awareness, self-management, awareness of others, relationship management
- Expanding comfort zones - encouraging a coachee to push their own invisible boundaries and operate beyond their 'comfortable' anxiety-neutral position
- Value systems - completing a Core Values exercise helps the coach and coachee to understand the coachee's personal map of the world, which determines their feelings and behaviour
- Limiting beliefs - the engrained and often unconscious beliefs, mostly set up in childhood, which stop us getting what is possible and what we are capable of, e.g. mine used to include "I'm crap at cooking"
- Negative and positive thinking patterns - demonstrating how a single negative/positive thought triggers a cyclical series of associative negative/positive actions/thoughts/beliefs
- Dealing with low self-esteem - by focusing on what a person is good at and using this as a foundation to build on

experience the feelings.

Appendix A

The association for coaching's code of ethics and good practice

The Association for Coaching is committed to maintaining good practice. This Code of Ethics and Good Practice sets out the essential elements of sound ethical practice. For the purposes of this code, the person receiving coaching is called the client.

All Clients should expect a high standard of practice from their Coach. To ensure that this is achieved coaches commit to operate in accordance with the Association's Code of Ethics and Good Practice for ethical, competent and effective practice.

1. Coaches are required to recognise both personal and professional limitations:

PERSONAL - with respect to maintaining their own good health and fitness to practice. Should this not be the case, Coaches are required to withdraw from their practice until such time as they are in good health and fit to resume. Clients should be offered appropriate, alternative support during any such period.

PROFESSIONAL - with respect to whether their experience is appropriate to meet the client's requirements. When this is not the case, clients should be referred to other appropriate services, e.g. more experienced coaches, counsellors, psychotherapists or other specialist services. In particular, Coaches are required to be sensitive to the possibility that some clients will require more psychological support than is normally available within the coaching remit. In these cases, referral should be made to an appropriate source of care, e.g. the client's GP, a counsellor or psychotherapist, psychological support services and/or agencies.

2. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that clients are fully informed of the coaching contract, terms and conditions, prior to or at the initial session. These matters include confidentiality, sessional costs, and frequency of sessions. All claims made by the Coach should be honest, accurate and consistent with maintaining the Coaching profession's good standing.
3. Coaches are required to be frank and willing to respond to their Client's requests for information about the methods, techniques and ways in which the coaching process will be conducted. This should be done both prior to contract agreement and during the full term of the contract.
4. Coaches must be sensitive to issues of culture, religion, gender and race.
5. Coaches must respect the Client's right to terminate coaching at any point during the coaching process.

6. Coaches are required to maintain appropriate records of their work with Clients, ensuring that any such records are accurate and that reasonable security precautions are taken to protect against third party disclosure. Attention must be given to the coachee's rights under any current legislation, e.g. data protection.
7. Coaches are required to monitor the quality of their work and to seek feedback wherever possible from Clients and other professionals as appropriate.
8. Coaches are expected to have regular consultative support for their work.
9. A coach should aim to undertake a minimum of 30 hours of continuing professional development in the theory and practice of coaching on an annual basis.
10. Coaches are required to keep themselves informed of any statutory or legal requirements that may affect their work.
11. Coaches are required to have current professional liability insurance.
12. Coaches are required to consider the impact of any dual relationships they may hold with regards to their clients and/or any sponsoring organisations.
13. Coaches must act in a manner that does not bring the profession of coaching into disrepute.

Appendix B Coaching overview document

1) What current goals do you have relating to...

a) Work

- personal performance/effectiveness
- career development/progression
- ability to lead/manage others
- motivation/fulfilment

b) Lifestyle

- work/life balance
- social life
- hobbies/interests

c) Relationship with others

- your partner
- your immediate family
- your friends
- extended family

d) Learning and development

- life experiences
- formal training/development

e) Contribution

- at work
- at home
- in your community

f) Health/well-being

- health
- nutrition
- fitness

2) Thinking about your current circumstances...

- what would you like to do less of
- what would you like to do more of

3) What one thing would you most like to change if you could?

4) What's going on for you right now, which you would like to build on?

5) In what ways do you currently obtain learning?

- by experience
- formal study (for a qualification)
- through observation
- reading/listening
- structured training
- mentoring/coaching

6) How much does this style of learning support your goals and objectives/

7) What thoughts are you having now?

Bibliography

Quoted Texts

- Starr, Julie The Coaching Manual: Pearson Education 2008
- Martin, Curly The Life Coaching Handbook: Crown House 2001
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- Allen, Lynette Behind with the Mortgage and Living off Plastic: Crown House 2005
- Heppell, Michael Flip It: Hadrian Holdings 2009
- Harrold, Fiona The 10-Minute Life Coach: Hodder and Stoughton 2003
- Robbins, Anthony Awaken the Giant Within: Simon & Schuster 1992
- Rubin, Gretchen The Happiness Project: Harper Collins 2009
- Parkes Cordock, Richard Millionaire Upgrade: Capstone 2006
- Robbins, Anthony Lessons in Mastery: Simon & Schuster 1998
- Robbins, Anthony Unlimited Power: Ballantine, 1987
- O'Connor, Joseph and Lages, Andrea Coaching with NLP: Harper Collins 2004
- Tolle, Eckhart The Power of Now: Hodder and Stoughton 2005
- Whitmore, John Coaching for Performance: Nicholas Brealey 1992

Case Studies

- Who Penelope
Topic Time management and organisation skills
- Who Gerald
Topic Career development
- Who Jemima
Topic Finding suitable employment
- Who Nigel
Topic Identifying and fulfilling dreams
- Who Sky
Topic Dealing with confrontation

Events

- Anthony Robbins, Unleash the Power Within, London 2007
- The Critical Coaching Conference, Bristol 2009
- Dan Bradbury Client Attraction Workshop, London 2010
- Speakers - Fiona Harrold, Judy May Murphy, Jamie Swift, Jairek Robbins, Dan Bradbury, Andy Harrington
- Personology Workshop – The Science of Reading Faces, Taunton 2010
- Rich Dad Poor Dad Seminar, Bristol 2010

Recommended reading from my personal library

- **The Business Coaching Handbook**
Curly Martin
- **Life Coaching: a Cognitive-Behavioural Approach**
Michael Neenan and Windy Dryden
- **Niche Marketing for Coaches**
Hannah McNamara
- **Giant Steps**
Anthony Robbins
- **The Mind Map Book**
Tony Buzan
- **The Road Less Travelled**
M Scott Peck
- **The Road Less Travelled and Beyond**
M Scott Peck
- **Further Along the Road Less Travelled**
M Scott Peck
- **Taming your Gremlin**
Rick Carson
- **7 Habits of Highly Effective People**
Steven Covey
- **Blink**
Malcolm Gladwell
- **The Tipping Point**
Malcolm Gladwell
- **What the Dog Saw**
Malcolm Gladwell
- **Outliers**
Malcolm Gladwell
- **The Secret**
Rhonda Byrne
- **How to Have Kick-Ass Ideas**
Chris Barez-Brown
- **Understanding NLP**
Frances Kay and Neilson Kite
- **What Makes People Tick and Why**
Naomi Tickle
- **Behind with the Laundry and Living off Chocolate**
Lynette Allen
- **Everything I've Ever Done That Worked**
Lesley Garner
- **The 7 Rules of Success**
Fiona Harrold
- **Be Your Own Life Coach**
Fiona Harrold