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**Special Edition:
PSYCHOLOGICAL MODELS IN COACHING**

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SDR

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Aims, objectives and information for contributors

SDR aims to communicate new thinking and recent advances in the theory and practice of assessment, selection, and development. It encourages critical reviews of current issues and constructive debate on them in readers' letters.

SDR is strongly oriented to the practice of selection, assessment and development, and is particularly keen to publish articles in which rigorous research is presented in a way likely to inform and influence the work of practitioners. It also seeks articles from practitioners drawing on their experience to indicate how practice can be improved.

SDR is not intended to be an academic journal. Articles are reviewed by the editorial team for their relevance, rigour and intelligibility, but not all papers are referred to independent referees. The aim is to get new, practitioner-relevant data and ideas into print as quickly as possible. *SDR* is also open to book reviews in its area.

The Editorial Team aim to give a platform for a range of views that are not necessarily their own or those of the British Psychological Society. Articles (2000 words maximum) should be sent as an e-mail attachment, saved as a text or MS Word file, containing author contact details. References should follow the Society's *Style Guide* (available from the publications page of the Society's website: www.bps.org.uk).

Editorial

IN THIS SPECIAL EDITION of *SDR* we are exploring the application of psychological models in coaching. We have deliberately selected tools which may be less familiar to UK coaches, although some of these instruments and models are popular elsewhere in the English-speaking world, as we were conscious that *SDR* readers will have read reviews of the more popular tools such as Wave, OPQ32 and MBTI. The aim of this edition is to explore how psychological models can be applied in the workplace and within coaching conversations.

In the first piece I review the potential use of psychometrics in coaching. In the second piece Ken Nowack reviews the use of a wellness/stress tool. In the third piece Fiona Beddoes-Jones and Julia Miller discuss the application of their Thinking Styles® questionnaire to coaching. In the final piece Jeff Stagg and Thomas Hurley review the use of archetypes as a tool in coaching.

Elsewhere, I have argued that coaching at work can contribute in a number of ways to improved performance through raising self-awareness, developing new behaviours, increasing self-regard and enhancing motivation to act. I would argue that psychological models can help individuals to reflect on their behaviours and provide a springboard into conversations about alternative ways of seeing the world, thinking through dilemmas and problems, as well as of developing new ways of acting at work.

The skills for psychologists and for coaches is that we need to see the instrument as a tool which facilitates the conversation and offers potential for development and change, rather than a diagnostic instrument which labels, categorises and thus limits the individual. Some US writers have suggested that there has been a tendency, particularly from those with a background in therapy and counselling, to view the coachee as a 'client' in need of help and 'treatment' rather than as an equal. I strongly oppose that view, and this is part of the reason why I persist with use of the word coachee rather than client when writing on coaching. The second reason is that often the 'client' in workplace coaching is often the organisation and their views have often been neglected in coaching research.

We hope that you find the selection of articles interesting and a prompt to explore new tools as well as new ways to development your own coaching practice.

Jonathan Passmore

Using psychometrics and psychological tools in coaching

THE UK PSYCHOMETRICS MARKET has changed over the past decade. The burgeoning psychological testing industry has produced a myriad of measures enabling coaches to support coachees to better understand their behaviour, their preferences and their capabilities as they relate to work and life. Personality tests, aptitude tests, and questionnaires assessing values, interests, cognition, leadership and motivational needs represent some of the kinds of tests currently available on the market. Many of these psychological tests have made a positive contribution to coaching and have been rigorously tested to ensure their reliability and validity. In this paper I aim to briefly explore how coaches might use psychometric questionnaires and models in their coaching work, and also the criteria they should use to select the appropriate test to use.

Selecting the right questionnaire

It is the standardised administration and scoring of a psychological test that differentiates psychometrics from other kinds of assessments that coaches may use with coachees such as structured interviews, behavioural observations, checklists or questionnaires. A good psychological test is one that meets three criteria. First, it must be an accurate measure of the attribute of interest. Second, it should help the test user differentiate between those individuals who have more of the attribute of interest from those who have less of the attribute. Third, it needs to be a good predictor of an outcome of interest such as job performance or success in training.

A well-constructed, valid and reliable psychological test is one that has been subjected to a comprehensive and scientifically rigorous process of development. As best practice, publishers tend to make available to accredited users the test's technical manual that outlines the extent to which it reliably assesses the attributes of interest (*reliability*) and the normative data against which test takers can be compared.

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Some test developers will also show how the test compares with other tests that purport to measure the same attribute or set of attributes (*construct validity*) and how effectively the test predicts an outcome of interest (*criterion-related validity*).

One of the key attributes which coaches should look for in making judgements about which tool to select is the inclusion of relevant norm groups. The norm group is that sample of people who participated in the development and validation of the test and whose test results provide the average distribution of scores against which future test takers can be compared. The norm or comparison group may be as general as working adults or as specific as oil field engineer graduates from a Kuwait.

All well-developed tests offer normative data and clearly state the demographics of the norm group. The norm group needs to be of an adequate size for the test user to be confident that it is sufficiently stable. Coaches should, as a rule of thumb, be very cautious of norm groups below 100 participants and ideally look for sample sizes in the hundreds.

Approaches to psychometrics in coaching

A psychological test can be used in two ways, namely, to predict a certain outcome (*a criterion-oriented approach*) or to measure an individual attribute or set of attributes in a person (*a profiling approach*). The two approaches are applied in different contexts depending on the nature of the coaching referral.

Criterion-oriented approach

Many coaches, particularly those engaged in work-related coaching commissioned by the coachee's employer, are required to consider not

only the individual coachee's profile but also the job and organisational context. These kinds of referrals may be for the purpose of assessing the employee's potential for career progression, their fit with their current role, or their development needs in the context of the capabilities required in their current or future roles. In these instances, there is a *criterion* against which the individual's assessment profile is compared. The criterion typically relates to actual or potential performance on particular aspects of a job, potential for training or job satisfaction.

Person-job and person-organisation fit are fundamental to the criterion-oriented approach. That is, the coach is not only interested in profiling the coachee, but is also concerned to understand how the coachee's profile relates or fits with a particular context. Coaches taking a criterion-related approach should build the skills of analysing jobs in terms of the demands they make on the incumbent's knowledge, skills and attributes (KSA) and ensure that they gather data relevant to the coachee's current or future jobs. Such data may be gathered through job descriptions, job analysis interviews with those who know the job, or through structured job analysis questionnaires. Brough and Smith (2003) provide a useful overview of job analysis techniques.

If job performance is the criterion of interest in the coaching relationship, those tests that best predict job performance, or aspects of it, should be selected. In order to select the appropriate tests, however, coaches need to be able to define the performance domain. There are some well-established models that coaches can draw on to guide their analysis of the performance domain. Campbell (1990), for example, identified eight dimensions of performance including job-specific task performance, non-job specific task performance, demonstrating effort, written and oral communication, maintaining personal discipline, supervision/leadership, and management/administration. Borman and Motowidlo (1993) subsequently narrowed the performance domain down to two dimensions: task performance (the core technical activities of the job) and contextual performance (helpful, constructive and co-operative behaviours that management values). More recently, researchers have expanded models of the performance domain to take account of the adaptive performance requirements of the changing work environment (Allworth & Hesketh, 1999; Pulakos *et al.*, 2000;

Griffin & Hesketh, 2003). Further references to job performance models for specific occupations can be found in Viswesvaran and Ones (2000).

By taking a criterion-oriented approach to assessment, coaches must also rely on a model of person-job or person-environment fit. For example, the Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) describes people and work environments in terms of the demands that they impose on each other and what each can offer, or supply to, the other. On the one hand, the work environment requires that certain tasks be performed and the individual brings skills to perform the tasks. In exchange, the individual requires the work environment to reward and satisfy his or her needs, interests and values. Both individuals and organisations adjust to meet each other's requirements. The outcome of work adjustment is tenure which results when the individual is satisfied with the rewards of the role and the organisation finds their performance satisfactory.

Profiling approach

In a profiling approach to psychological testing, the emphasis is on building awareness and understanding of the coachee's attributes such as their abilities, interests, and personality style compared with those of a relevant norm group. Here, the referral question may be 'How do the coachee's leadership skills compare with those of other managers?' or 'What kinds of occupations interest the coachee?'

Psychological testing can provide insights into a number of areas. First, a profiling approach to psychological testing can provide insights into the coachee's relative strengths and areas for development. For example, testing may show that the coachee's numerical skills are better developed than their verbal abilities and that they prefer creative work activities to those that are routine and procedural. Here, attributes are compared *within* the person, highlighting the individual's relative capabilities, preferences, personality attributes, or motivational needs.

Second, a profiling approach can enable insights into how an individual's personal attributes compare with those of others in a particular reference or norm group. For example, the testing may show that the coachee is more numerate, outgoing and energetic than most other managers, but less organised and task-focused. These are *between*-person differences may be expressed in ranges (above average,

average or below average) or as a standardised score (such as a percentile ranking that shows the proportion of the population that scores higher or lower).

The profiling approach can be valuable in clarifying the coachee's development needs, future personal and career goals, or simply understanding why they think and behave in the way they do. The profiling approach is most commonly applied with those coachees who are looking for a new direction or to resolve a particular issue that is impacting on their performance or their career.

Ethical guidelines for coaching

Finding a good test that has been well developed and shows the technical capabilities that are required to justify and support its use is just one part of the challenge for the coach. What criteria should the coach use to guide their ethical decisions in selecting a question. We have highlighted six key questions which may be used to guide the coach's way (Ainsworth & Passmore, 2008).

Key ethical questions for selecting a instrument to use in coaching

1. Is the questionnaire evidence-based?
2. Does the questionnaire address the question asked by the person making the coaching referral?
3. Does the questionnaire have adequate psychometric properties?
4. Am I trained and licensed to use the questionnaire and able to provide adequate feedback?
5. Can I ensure the data which I collect will only be shared with the coachee (and with the organisation if this is agreed in advance)?

Summary

Good psychological tests used appropriately can be useful tools for coaches to support their coachees in building awareness through self-exploration and understanding, and can form part of a wider integrated approach used by the coach (Passmore, 2007). In assuming a 'test user' role, coaches need, therefore, to be very aware of the theoretical and psychometric background to the test which they select and adhere to ethical practice in both the administration aspects and the development feedback. While the inappropriate and unskilled application of psychological testing can have damaging effects on individuals, used wisely, ethically and with the required knowledge and accreditation, the benefits to coaches and coachees can be substantial in coaching relationships.

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Using wellness coaching as a talent management tool

IT'S COMMON IN coaching engagements to hear perceptions of work/family balance challenges and stressors. Perceptions of stress are often quite high with 40 per cent to 60 per cent of all coachees reporting very high levels caused by both family challenges (Nowack, 2006).

It can be argued that helping employees deal more effectively with work and life balance, coping with stress, and facilitating psychological well-being can be a major focus across executive, life, career or health coaching (McCunney, 2001). Improving the total health of the workforce through formal wellness programmes including coaching would appear to be important strategies for increasing productivity and cost savings (e.g. Musich *et al.*, 2006).

Wellness coaching using StressScan and Talent Accelerator

A personal stress and health risk appraisal called StressScan was designed to be an assessment in a coach's 'tool box' to promote wellness (Figure 1). Together with an integrated online developmental planning and reminder system called Talent Accelerator, the coach can help facilitate health promoting behaviours that result in increased productivity and well-being.

The goal of StressScan is to facilitate coachee awareness of lifestyle risks and resources whereas the goal of Talent Accelerator is to enable successful behaviour change. The design of Talent Accelerator is based on applied theories of individual behaviour change including the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), self-efficacy and social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977), the Health Belief Model (Becker, 1974), and the Transtheoretical Model of Change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982).

The development of StressScan

The development of StressScan began in the early 1990s and has been described in detail in several previous publications (Nowack, 1990, 1999). The questionnaire consists of 123-items

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and aims to measure important psychosocial factors based on the cognitive-transactional model of stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), and results in a feedback report providing an overview of the 14 major scales and a summary of health risks/resources.

The tool has been associated with diverse health and productivity outcomes in cross-sectional and longitudinal in published studies including immune response, job burnout, depression, absenteeism, physical illness, anxiety, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and performance (c.f. Giesser *et al.*, 2005; Beasley *et al.*, 2003; Winefield *et al.*, 1999; Greene & Nowack, 1991, 1996; Nowack, 1994).

Using the Wellness Coaching Model with coachees

Wellness coaching can be conceptualised as a series of three related stages that help facilitate successful change integrated within current health promotion programmes or external to them. These three stages are consistent with the current movement of positive psychology that focus on individual strength and use personal setbacks as growth opportunities to enhance lifestyle behaviour change.

Stage 1: Enlighten

The 'What's in it for me' (WIFM) is a critical leverage point for coaches to be successful in lifestyle modification and wellness coaching. Helping clients to become more aware of areas of risk and resources can be useful to help increase readiness for behaviour change as well as being an important step in successfully setting specific goals.

The use of a personal stress and health assessment can be invaluable at this step for coaches to

Figure 1: Wellness Coaching Model.



utilise to facilitate awareness and motivation to change behaviour. Such assessments help clarify lifestyle assets and risks that are associated with health, well-being and productivity. Emphasising the coachee's intrinsic reasons for changing and utilising motivational interviewing strategies to match their readiness to change are effective wellness coaching techniques.

Stage 2: Encourage

The coach's role in this stage is to ensure the lifestyle modification plan is realistic, specific, and measurable. This is the stage where coaches begin to actually help the client acquire new knowledge and practice new skills to initiate and maintain important lifestyle practices and behaviours. Asking the coachee to report their own behaviour and feelings through journaling and defining incentives around desired behaviour change are all sound strategies for enhancing efficacy and confidence to succeed. Identifying the deeper intrinsic motivations and values that underlie the motivation for change can become a long term focus of the wellness coaching effort.

Stage 3: Enable

This third stage is critical for long-term success of lifestyle modification programmes and is often overlooked by many coaches. The coach's role is to assist the client with re-evaluating the importance of the wellness goals and exploring some relapse prevention strategies to prepare the client for the inevitable lapses that accompany any behaviour change effort. Coaches should also plan with the coachee how to create a social support structure for the new behaviour change effort.

The coach and client should mutually define ways to track, monitor and evaluate progress on the specific lifestyle goals that were set. Ideally, continuous reminders can be sent to the client to highlight progress and successful performance towards his/her lifestyle modification plan. Finally, reassessment of biometric and psychological outcomes can help demonstrate success of the wellness coaching process.

Figure 2: Wellness Coaching using StressScan and Talent Accelerator.

StressScan Scales	Talent Accelerator Features
Stress	Behaviour Change Theory Based
Overall Lifestyle Habits	Developmental Planning System
● Physical Activity/Exercise	Automated Reminders
● Eating/Nutrition	Stress/Wellness Library
● Sleep/Rest	Structured Online Exercises
● Smoking	Participant Journal
● Preventive Habits	Coaching Website to Track Progress
● Substance Use	StressScan Health Alerts/Resources
Social Support Network	Electronic Copy of StressScan Report
Type A Behaviour	Regular Updates of the Library
Cognitive Hardiness	
Coping Style	
● Positive Appraisal	
● Negative Appraisal	
● Threat Minimisation	
● Problem Focused Coping	
Psychological Well-Being	
Response Distortion	
Health Alerts	
Health Resources	

Conclusion

A focus on wellness coaching can become a competitive advantage to organisations with an emphasis on reducing employee stress and focusing on optimising wellness in the workplace. Successful lifestyle modification can be facilitated by coaches using structured engagements to assist employees to increase awareness, set behavioural goals and develop effective stress and health management coping skills.

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'Putting the Psychology into Coaching'

Using the Thinking Styles[®] instrument in coaching

'The world we have created is a product of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking.'
Albert Einstein

COACHING IS A cognitively complex activity and the main focus of coaching is behavioural change. Understanding one's thinking strategies is a pre-requisite to change and is, therefore, the starting point for all cognitive coaching interventions and subsequent behavioural change.

It is our role as coaches to enable our coachees to develop the cognitive flexibility to enable a multi-perspective approach which we believe is one of the critical factors for self-management and efficacy within the workplace.

This article considers a cognitive approach to coaching through the use of the occupational psychometric; Thinking Styles. Using Thinking Styles will help coachees to understand the implications that their cognitive preferences have for themselves and for others and the instrument can also be used to measure how someone's thinking has changed over time.

Background to the Thinking Styles model

The concept for Thinking Styles originated from Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), which was originally developed as a behavioural model or 'system of thought', suggesting that we all organise, edit and construct our own individual models of the world from the information that we receive via our senses, (Jacobson, 1996). Understanding how we have encoded our subjective experience is fundamental to developing our self-awareness and is critical to the subsequent self-management of any change.

Thinking Styles measures some of the 'meta-programmes' of NLP; those preferences or filters that drive our mental processes, influencing the ways in which our experiences are sorted and represented internally. Leslie Cameron-Bandler (1985), suggests that the words we use are not randomly selected, but have specific meanings for us. Of course, initially

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as a coach we only have conjecture about these preferences, and the coach needs to explore their theories with their coachee in more detail. However, we have powerful linguistic clues and no good coach should ignore these clues.

Within occupational psychology, the concept of measurable cognitive filters called cognitive styles also exists. Messick (1976), defines cognitive style preference as, *'Differences in preferred ways of organising and processing information and experience.'* Beddoes-Jones (2003), defines cognitive style as, *'Differences and similarities in the ways people think, some of which are habitual preferences and some of which may be actively disliked.'* Thinking Styles is, therefore, a measure of cognitive style preference.

The Thinking Styles model

Thinking Styles was developed using the procedure for psychometric test development recommended by Kline (2000). It comprises 169-item statements and uses a six-point Likert scale ranging from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree' with a 'Sometimes Agree' option which we included to identify a cognitive flexibility response.

The 26 dimensions are sub-divided into a Sensory, People and Task focus. The Sensory focus identifies the ways individuals prefer to receive and process information via the senses. The People focus identifies how individuals tend to interact with other people while the Task focus dimensions relate to tasks and activities and how individuals approach problem solving.

Thinking Styles generates an 'intelligent report', i.e. its content is derived from someone's specific responses to the questionnaire.

Therefore, no two reports will ever be identical. Firstly, 'Personal Preferences' are identified. These measure the degree to which someone has identified that they like, or dislike, thinking in certain ways. Secondly, these personal preferences are compared against a normalised UK Managerial Sample. Thirdly, the personal preferences are listed in Rank Order with highest preferences first and lowest preferences at the bottom of the page.

Next there are 12 'Mini-Profiles' which really bring the implications of someone's Thinking Styles preferences to life. These are 'Thinking Styles in Action' and are listed in Table 1.

Using Thinking Styles with Coachees

With a behavioural approach, the coach will focus on the manifested behaviours and will ignore the thinking that has generated them. As we have already said, taking a cognitive approach to coaching is more integrative because of its connections to a coachee's underlying cognitive motivational drivers and their values. Therefore, a cognitive approach gives the coach more depth of understanding than simply taking a behavioural approach.

As Thinking Styles is a measure of 'preference', there are no right or wrong answers and, therefore, no profiles are inherently 'better' than any others. There are, however, implications and consequences of someone's Thinking Styles preferences. For example, a leader whose highest preferences are all task focused may come across as being quite emotionally cool and relatively unconcerned about the people aspects of their role. Therefore, one of the implications of a cognitive profile such as this could be that the leader may find it difficult to engage the hearts and minds of the people they lead. Because Thinking Styles lists people's personal preferences in rank order, a predominantly People or Task focus is quite easy to identify. Our experience of coaching leaders and senior executives is that very often they are completely unaware of the impact that their profile can have on their own people or their colleagues.

So how would we suggest that a coach uses the Thinking Styles questionnaire to make a cognitive coaching intervention? In preparation, the coach would start by reviewing the questionnaire noting any responses that they think are unusual or any questions the coachee have 'Disagreed' to as these could indicate a dislike of a particular mode of thinking. Where they have used the

'Sometimes' response, make a note to explore where they would engage in a particular type of thinking activity and where they wouldn't. If the coachee has been 'Unable to Answer' any questions it's useful to explore why this is.

Then, using the report, the coach will review the Personal Preference Scores noting any high and low preferences, particularly where any significant 'Dislike' scores are indicated. In our experience, people's highest preferences are often linked to the type of thinking and behaviour which they value most in the workplace. It's very important, therefore, to pay particular attention to your coachees' top ten preferences as this will indicate the type of person that they are at work and the face that they present to colleagues.

As none of the Thinking Styles operate in isolation coaches will find that coachees will link them together in many different ways to generate personal strategies for themselves. Some of these strategies will work well for them and others may not be so successful. By probing and asking the right kind of questions, you will be able to help them understand their current strategies and assist them to develop new, more appropriate strategies if they need to.

Next, have a look at their Comparative (STEN) Scores. As colleagues tend to notice our particular high and low preferences, it is likely that higher than average scores may be perceived as cognitive strengths and lower than average scores, therefore, may be perceived as potential 'weaknesses' of thinking.

Exploring your coachee's 12 Mini-Profiles which link the Thinking Styles together, can usefully identify some of the implications that your coachee's cognitive profile has in certain areas of their working lives. As each mini-profile only comprises a maximum of five bullet points, they are only designed to be 'starters for 10'. In other words, there will be many other implications for them of their profile that you can tease out of their responses. The bullet points just give you a useful basis for beginning your discussions.

Thinking Styles can be used a second time as a retest tool when you near the end of your coaching programme. Feedback from our own coachees suggests that they get just as much value from an opportunity to review their (often altered) profile as they did from the first in depth facilitated feedback session. In fact, because they have now been 'primed' to review

Table 1: Thinking Styles in action.

1. Your Cognitive Drivers	2. Your Cognitive Development Areas
3. Your Motivational Profile	4. Your Analysis and Decision Making Profile
5. Your Style as a Manager	6. How to Manage You
7. Your Communication Profile	8. Your Preferred Presentation Style
9. Your Leadership Profile	10. Your Contribution to a Team
11. How to Influence You	12. Your Change Management Profile

their own thinking, many report that the second time was even more valuable than the first as they are better able to bring their recent experiences to mind.

Let us consider one example. The ability to be flexible regarding Simplicity and Complexity thinking are very important within a leadership role. High Complexity thinkers, although often able to appreciate multi-perspectives, can over-complicate things making their strategies difficult to implement. High Simplicity thinkers, although easier to follow, may miss critical connections and run the danger of being labelled as naïve and simplistic thinkers by colleagues. It is your role as a coach to encourage and support your coachees in developing their abilities to use both types of thinking as and when each would be most appropriate, regardless of their initial personal preferences. This is, therefore, a good example of where the flexibility of thinking we mentioned earlier combines to create what we would describe as 'cognitive fitness' within a leader.

As a psychometric tool that explores how cognitive preferences relate to motivation, values and consequent behaviours, within a coaching context, Thinking Styles can offer leaders for example, unique insights into their cognitive and behavioural patterns which, in effect, make them who they are. This idea links directly to the concept of 'Authentic Leadership'. The term was originated by Bill George (2003, 2007), who suggests that for any individual to be truly effective they must be willing to work hard at developing themselves in order to acquire genuine self-awareness, an understanding which we would suggest allows people to become more congruent and consistent within their day-to-day lives.

Summary

The main focus of coaching is behavioural change. Understanding one's thinking strategies is a pre-requisite to changing them and is therefore the starting point for all cognitive coaching interventions and subsequent behavioural change.

Using Thinking Styles will help coachees to understand the implications that their cognitive preferences have for themselves and for others and the instrument can also be used to measure how someone's thinking has changed over time.

Developing a cognitively flexible approach and being able to take a multi-perspective approach is critical for effective leadership. Thinking Styles offers leaders unique insights into their cognitive and behavioural patterns and the impact that these have on those they are leading.

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NEW WAYS OF WORKING FOR APPLIED PSYCHOLOGISTS IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

This is to announce that the following reports can now be downloaded from the British Psychological Society website (www.bps.org.uk) and the New Ways of Working website (www.newwaysofworking.org.uk).

- New Ways of Working for Applied Psychologists in Health and Social Care: The End of the Beginning: Summary Report
- New Roles Project Group
- Training Models in Applied Psychology in Health and Social Care
- Career and Pathways Roles
- Leading, Managing and Organising Psychology services.
- Working Psychologically in Teams.
- Good Practice Guide on the Contribution of Applied Psychologists to Improving Access to Psychological Therapies.

Tony Lavender, Canterbury Christ Church University and **Roslyn Hope**, CSIP/NIMHE.
Joint Chairs of New Ways of Working for Applied Psychologists.

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Using archetypes in coaching

IN OUR EXPERIENCE, two fundamental shifts are involved in developing coaching mastery. One involves the shift from a focus on ‘doing’ and the application of skills to the cultivation of presence, trust in being; the second involves shifting attention from surface structure (or content) to deeper structures in the coaching relationship. The first shift applies to self, the second shift to working with the coachee – and both impact the coaching space. Active use of the Archetypal Practices Model (Hurley, 2003) facilitates both shifts. This article describes how to begin using the model, and the distinctions it offers, to support coaching mastery.

Background and model of archetypal practices

Archetypes represent deep organising principles that shape the structure of our inner and outer worlds. They are universal patterns or modes of experience that show up as fundamental human roles (such as Mother, Wise Elder, Warrior, or Lover) or natural phenomena that have profoundly shaped human experience (such as the Sun or Moon). For Carl Jung, the father of modern archetypal psychology, they are also manifest in the structure of the psyche (in forms such as the Self, the Shadow, and the Anima or Animus) and in regularly repeated patterns of action (Conforti, 1999). Ultimately unknowable

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in themselves, archetypes are universal in their essence yet unique in how they manifest in each individual, group, community, and culture (Jung *et al.*, 1981).

The archetypal practices model describes 16 elemental patterns, organised in eight complementary pairs. Collectively they form a map of the transformative learning journey from inception to completion. These are practices, or capacities, that are integral to coaches' personal and professional development, to the coaching process, and to the learning journeys of our coachees. The Archetypal Practices are found in the Figure 1.

These practices are archetypal in that they are quintessentially human patterns of experience or behaviour that characterise individuals and groups exploring new territory, developing new capacities, or innovating. The processes of *Clarifying Intent* or *Engaging in Dialogue*, for example, are universal patterns of behaviour that, when undertaken consciously, lead us to presence. They are also archetypal in that working with them may evoke archetypal content (meaning-rich images, symbols, and ideas that arise from the personal and collective unconscious). They may also catalyse archetypal

Figure 1: Summary of Archetypal Practices.

The practice of ...	Complemented by ...
● Clarifying intent	● Inviting guidance
● Fearless engagement	● Respecting boundaries
● Being with all that arises	● Taking a stand
● Illuminating truth	● Engaging in dialogue
● Staying in the fire	● Surfing the wave
● Eating the dark and bitter rind	● Uplifting the treasure
● Surrendering to love	● Acting with power
● Sensing the rhythm	● Fulfilling our aims

dynamics – powerful energies, emotions, and tendencies that accompany particular elemental patterns of relationship. In the coaching space, these potent images, ideas, and interactions carry information, illuminate challenges, and reveal opportunities we may not have appreciated before.

Hence the importance of approaching these archetypes as practices, by which, in this context, we mean disciplined ways of working with consciousness to cultivate different capacities of being. Importantly, these particular practices do not require specialised training. Rather, they involve using and cultivating basic capacities of the mind, heart, and spirit ever more consciously.

Each archetypal practice exists in creative tension with its complementary practice, yet each practice also contains its complement in seed form. For example, *Fearless Engagement* leads naturally, if we are mindful of our actions, to

Respecting Boundaries. Taken to an extreme, or overdeveloped in relation to its sister practices, any of these forms of experience could result in blind spots or maladaptive ways of thinking, feeling, or perceiving.

The names of each practice evoke the essence of the archetypal structure to which each points. We have found just the names sufficient for beginning to work with the model since they represent universal experiences we can all call on. To explore the definitions of each archetype and the model in more depth, see *Archetypal Practices for Collective Wisdom* (Hurley, 2003) and for their application in coaching see *Psychometrics in Coaching* (Passmore, 2008).

Using Archetypal Practices with Coaches

We have found the archetypal practices model invaluable in training and developing coaches to move through two shifts related to coaching mastery.

Figure 2: The Archetypal Practices.



The first is a movement away from a reliance on skills and ‘doing’ to trust in presence and how it impacts the coaching space and coachee. The second is a shift in attention from the surface structure of content and behaviour to the deeper structures or processes that give rise to content.

This archetypal practices model provides a fine-grained set of distinctions having to do with how coaches and coachees relate to key dimensions of their experience. They involve *how* we are being more than what we are doing. Consequently, they enable us to cultivate presence and to refine our capacity for sensing the *fields* that emerge in the coaching space. Presence has to do with essential qualities of being and how we ‘show up’ within the coaching relationship. Our ability to be present, and how we are present, has a profound impact on the coaching space and the possibilities alive within it.

In using the archetypal practices with coaches we begin by inviting them to identify strengths and weaknesses in their patterns of engagement with coachees. We each have personal preferences, both generally and with specific coachees, and we tend to rely on our preferred modes of interacting. As a result, we all have strengths as well as flat spots in our coaching. Some of these patterns are conscious and some are not, as anyone who has had supervision can attest. Using the archetypes as a lens of inquiry can help make our patterns more visible, our strengths and weaknesses more conscious, and, therefore, open them to change.

Our first recommendation is to use the archetypal practices model to assess individual strengths and weaknesses as a coach. The first step is to familiarise yourself with each archetype. This will help ground you in the basic distinctions. Once you become familiar with each of the patterns, use the following questions as a starting point to explore your own patterns of engagement with coachees.

1. Which do you naturally gravitate towards? (These may represent your natural strengths?)
2. Which do you avoid or consider weaknesses?
3. Which evoke excitement for you? Why?
4. Which evoke anxiety for you? Why?
5. Which are you least familiar with?
6. How would mastery in this archetype impact your coaching presence? (Ask this of yourself for each of the archetypes.)

As coaches explore these questions they begin to discern and understand the patterns of their engagement with coachees. They can then develop practices based on the archetypes to bring more range and flexibility to their coaching.

With practice and increased discernment coaches will soon be able to recognise and utilise archetypal patterns when they arise within the space of the coaching relationship. Ultimately this is what we want to be able to do – use these distinctions in the service of those we serve.

The shift from surface to deep structure

In using the archetypal practices with coachees, the first step involves learning to listen at depth, sensing deeper structures and what is present or emerging before it has been explicitly stated (such as energies, emotions, openings, avoidance, or other subtle factors). As ‘handles’ the archetypes help us interpret and make sense of what is arising within the field of the coaching relationship and inform discernment of where we are and what is called for.

Because there is a wholeness to the set of archetypal practices, we can sense when the balance within the deep structure of the coaching space has shifted or changed. Absence or presence can both be felt. The integrity of the set also enables us to sense where we are in the process of coaching. For example, a sense of completion is present when we feel our coachee’s *aims have been fulfilled* and they have come full circle from *clarifying intent*.

Again, we use a simple set of questions to begin orienting coaches to qualities of the field and characteristics of the deeper structures within the field. They guide attention and help coaches develop their own set of distinctions, grounded in deep listening and subtle sensing, to inform their work with coachees.

The questions are:

- What is present or happening within the coaching space?
- What is missing within the coaching space?
- What is called for within the coaching space?
- What wants to emerge?
- Where do things want to go next?

Note that these questions do not ask about the coachee. Initially, we are focusing exclusively on the patterns and ‘relational intelligence’ within the space. In the beginning, this feels like a radical shift to some because both coaches and coachees are so used to relying on the content of a coachee’s words and on their macro behaviour.

Once aware of what is in the space, the archetypes can be used invisibly. The coach draws on distinctions in the model to illuminate areas for the coachee's attention without revealing the full model. For example, you might have a sense of the pattern we call, 'Circling Dallas.' This feels like you are flying in circles in a fog and going nowhere. Simply asking the coachee, 'What is your intent?' can provide an initial breakthrough.

We have also used the full set of archetypes more formally with coachees by showing them the model or even physically laying it out on the floor. In these cases, we give a brief explanation and then use the model to invite coachees to explore a situation or problem the coachee is facing in their life. The exploration usually starts by framing a question. This kind of exploration brings the coachee into direct, embodied relationship with what we are experiencing in the moment.

By working with the archetypal practices, we sensitise ourselves to the fields that influence our relationship with self, other, and the world. We learn to work more consciously with them, and in doing so come to discover and trust the deeper intelligence, wisdom, and creative capacity available to us.

Summary

The archetypal practices model is a powerful tool for supporting the development of mastery in coaches. Based on the identification of 16 elemental patterns of experience and behaviour that are universally present in learning and development, the model can be used both for the personal and professional development of coaches and in our work with coachees. We recommend that coaches first use the model to assess their own patterns of engagement in coaching. Secondly, the model can be applied to working within the deep structure of the coaching space, both as a tool for assessment and as a set of perspectives and practices.

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THE SPECIAL GROUP IN COACHING PSYCHOLOGY Presents

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- To become knowledgeable of imagery techniques that may be helpful at the start of coaching
- To practise a number of imagery techniques used for coaching interventions including imagery improvement exercises, goal focused imagery, motivation imagery, coping imagery, anger reducing imagery
- To use 5 column imagery worksheets to enhance the use of imagery techniques

Facilitator of the workshop:

Professor Stephen Palmer PhD is a Chartered Psychologist (Health and Counselling) and APECS Accredited Executive Coach and Supervisor. He has written or edited 35 books on coaching, stress management and counselling. His forthcoming book is the *Handbook of Coaching Psychology: A Guide for Practitioners* (with Whybrow). He is UK Co-ordinating Editor of the *International Coaching Psychology Review*, and Executive Editor of *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*. He is Director of the Coaching Psychology Unit at City University and Director of the Centre for Coaching, London. He was the first Chair of the BPS Special Group in Coaching Psychology and is currently Honorary President of the Association for Coaching.

For booking information, please contact Tracy White, Email: tracy@virtuallyorganised.com

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Space is limited to 25 delegates only.

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