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The Coaching Psychologist

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Chair's Report

Siobhain O'Riordan

AT THE TIME OF WRITING it is a little over half way through 2007. In this, our third year, the SGCP Committee has remained dynamic and active with a strong 'future focus' providing further momentum. To ensure sustainability this has been set within the context of a period of consolidation to also take account of changes taking place within the British Psychological Society, which may impact on our work areas. We are now also in the final stages of producing a business plan for 2007–2008 to map out our current and planned future activities.

The SGCP is a very busy subsystem and I would like to thank all of the people who voluntarily give their time to support the many different areas of our work. In my last Chair's Report (*TCP*, Vol. 3, No. 1, April, 2007) I provided an update regarding the restructure of our sub-committees. I would now like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank members of the former Professional Practice and Research and Professional Development, Training & Event Management sub-committees, for their significant contributions on behalf of SGCP.

Being a member of the SGCP enables you to be part of a dynamic, multi-disciplinary network focussed around our common interest in coaching psychology. We continue to provide a number of member benefits that include our regular publications *The Coaching Psychologist (TCP)* and *The International Coaching Psychology Review (ICPR)*, membership delegate rates at SGCP events/conferences and being part of an online community of coaching psychologists via the SGCP E-mail Discussion List. I hope you agree that this offers good value in terms of the current £3.50 membership subscription rate.

As part of our overarching strategic aim, to promote the development of coaching psychology, we are currently focusing on a number of initiatives to further establish our existing links and develop new opportunities to work with other psychological professional bodies in Europe and beyond. Psychology professional bodies share similar aims and interests; therefore, it is timely for the SGCP to move forward with this strategy for the purpose of developing the coaching psychology brand and promoting coaching psychology.

As part of this initiative, representatives from different psychological bodies and associations across Europe were invited to attend the 1st International Coaching Psychology Conference, hosted by the SGCP. Additionally, an International News section has now been introduced to *TCP*. This year representatives from European psychology bodies are being invited to attend our 3rd National Coaching Psychology Conference in December. The SGCP view that strengthening these relationships will provide more opportunities to encourage, promote and support the research and study of coaching psychology and enable greater opportunities to promote the application of appropriate ethical standards and guidelines for the practice of coaching psychology.

Our leading international coaching psychology publication, *ICPR*, will be appearing three times this year. The *ICPR* is a testimony of what is possible through creating links with other psychological professional bodies, as it is a joint publication between the Australian Psychological Society's Interest Group in Coaching Psychology and the SGCP.

We are currently focused on our planning for the 3rd Annual National Conference, which will be held on 17th to 18th

December, 2007, at City University. We are pleased to announce that the keynote speakers are now confirmed. With Dr Tony Grant, Prof. Carol Kauffman, Prof. Ernesto Spinelli, Sir John Whitmore and Dr Alison Whybrow as our main speakers we are looking forward to a very good conference. Please do review the separate adverts in this issue of *TCP* for further information about the conference and details regarding the submission of abstracts if you would like to present your research or work as a coaching psychologist at the conference.

At the time of writing our first regional half-day event since 2005 will be held in Edinburgh, in July, titled 'Using Cognitive, Imaginal and Relaxation Techniques in Health Coaching: A Skills Based Workshop' and will be facilitated by Prof. Stephen Palmer. This follows a very successful event earlier in June, facilitated by Carey Glass on the topic of Solution Focused Coaching. Our next one-day event planned for this year will be held at the Society's London Office in September and further details are available on our website.

Where resources allow we are engaging with the branches of the Society. Dr Ho Law represented the SGCP and gave a well received overview of Coaching Psychology and the SGCP at the recent 'Life Coaching in the Workplace' event run in association with West Midlands Branch and UCE Business School. We are keen to engage in other appropriate opportunities to promote coaching psychology in line with our overarching strategic aim.

The question of accreditation is being very firmly pursued by the SGCP. The SGCP committee has recently asked the Society for advice, support and clarification in terms of the accreditation frameworks or options that are available now or likely to be available in the near future for coaching psychologists within the Society. You will see that we have provided the letter received in response to our request from Professor Pam Maras, Society President, for your information in this issue of *TCP*. An SGCP Accreditation Working Party has been formed, which with

our committee will now continue focusing on issues relating to an accreditation process for coaching psychologists. In terms of broader external developments, the SGCP has had no news from ENTO about when the consultation around the new unit on the psychological underpinnings of 'coaching and mentoring' will commence. This is an issue of growing concern that SGCP will follow-up in the coming months.

For more information about the activities undertaken by the SGCP and to check for news updates, please visit our website (www.sgcp.org.uk). If you would like to become involved in any aspect of SGCP activities I would like to encourage you to e-mail Helen Barnett at the Society's sub-systems office for an expression of interest form (Helen.Barnett@bps.org.uk).

On a practical note, the SGCP publications *TCP* and *ICPR* are available online on the SGCP website during the month shown for publication on their inside cover. However, due to matters relating to postage it may be the following month before hard copy versions are received. For the next issue of *TCP*, Dr Ho Law (SGCP Ethics Liaison Officer) will be writing an article to provide you with some further information about appropriate referencing and use of the Society and SGCP membership descriptions. In the meantime further information relating to the Society's Statute 31 is available on-line at:

http://www.bps.org.uk/the-society/ethics-rules-charter-code-of-conduct/ethics-rules-charter-code-of-conduct_home.cfm.

Finally, it is, of course, only ever possible to provide an overview of activity within the context of a short report but I hope that this has provided a flavour of progress and developments since my last update. If you do have any thoughts, comments or feedback about the SGCP I would welcome you getting in touch with me.

Siobhain O'Riordan

E-mail: sgcpchair@bps.org.uk



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THE SPECIAL GROUP IN COACHING PSYCHOLOGY

3rd National Coaching Psychology Conference 17th and 18th December 2007

To be held at City University, London, UK

Keynote Speakers will include:

Dr Tony Grant, Coaching Psychology Unit, Sydney
Dr Carol Kauffman, Harvard Medical School, Harvard
Prof Ernesto Spinelli, Regents College, London
Sir John Whitmore, UK
Dr Alison Whybrow, BPS SGCP Chair Elect 2006-7

Building on our previous successes, we are putting together an exciting and topical conference examining the latest theory and practice in Coaching Psychology with keynote papers, full-day masterclasses, research and case study presentations, skills-based sessions and round-table discussions.

The programme will be delivered by national and international leaders in the field.

Conference Themes and Call for Papers:

Capitalising on emerging research and practices relevant in today's context, our conference themes include:

- Transpersonal Coaching
- Multicultural Coaching
- Health Coaching
- The Coaching Relationship
- The Evidence base for Coaching Psychology
- Coaching Psychology and Return on Investment

For further information about the conference and information about submitting a paper or workshop, please see the 'News Page' of the SGCP website on: http://www.sgcp.org.uk/news/news_home.cfm or e-mail sgcpcom@bps.org.uk

The 2007 membership fee to join SGCP is £3.50. SGCP membership benefits include membership rates at our events and free copies of the 'International Coaching Psychology Review' and 'The Coaching Psychologist'. BPS members can join now and obtain the discounted conference fee.

Editorial

WELCOME TO THE Summer issue of *The Coaching Psychologist*.

For those of you who were unable to attend our 1st International Coaching Psychology Conference in December, 2006, we are delighted that some of the conference presenters accepted an invitation to submit their papers to *TCP*. So, the first three papers, by Sheila Panchal and Ellen Jackson, Angela Mansi, Fiona Beddoes Jones and Julia Miller respectively discussing coaching for clients in their early 30s, psychometrics and cognitive short-term coaching exemplify the expertise in theory and practise in the coaching psychology field. Please don't forget that our next conference is coming up on the 17th and 18th of December this year, so do take a look at the notice for the conference in this issue and the invitation to submit papers.

Our fourth paper, by Stephen Palmer, introduces the 'PRACTICE' model; a seven-step solution focused framework which can be used within various coaching contexts.

In the fifth paper Bruce Grimley responds to an article in the April issue of *TCP* by Linder-Pelz and Hall on the topic of NLP. In the next paper, the second in a series on coaching psychology and clinical disorders, I address the universal problem of anxiety and its impact on the client-coach relationship.

Following on from our introduction of a special 'International News' section in the last edition of *TCP*, Jens Boris Larsen, Tina R. Kilburn and Anders Myszak write about the growth and future plans of the Danish Society of Evidence-based Coaching.

The final paper, from the SGCP Committee addresses the issue of supervision. This is an important paper, so do take time to read it thoroughly and comment on it.

Lastly we also have two book reviews from Joanna Bawa and Conall Platts. If you are interested in writing book reviews please e-mail me directly at kasia.s@tinyonline.co.uk

Kasia Szymanska

Letter from the President

Dear Siobhain,

Thank you for your letter of 15 June in which you ask about the possibility of there being some kind of accreditation route for coaching psychologists within the Society.

As you know the Board of Trustees and the Representative Council have agreed that the Society should not encourage the development of additional subsystems at this time but I understand that the request for the development of an accreditation route does not mean that the SGCP is effectively seeking divisional status.

I understand that you have now been able to have some exploratory discussion with Tim Cornford and Helen Barnett and that two or three potential options for accreditation have been identified. It would seem sensible to explore these options in more detail before attempting to float any of them within the governance structure. I would, therefore, ask you and your colleagues in SGCP to engage further with relevant staff in the office and let me know in due course whether any of these options would meet the Group's aspirations.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Pam Maras, *President*.



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THE SPECIAL GROUP IN COACHING PSYCHOLOGY

3rd National Coaching Psychology Conference 17th and 18th December 2007

To be held at City University, London, UK

Invitation to submit a Paper, Poster or Symposium on Coaching Psychology

The SGCP 3rd National Conference will provide an engaging forum to explore, understand and discuss topics central to Coaching Psychology. We are keen to encourage the research and study of Coaching Psychology across personal, organisational and training contexts.

Your contribution is central to our conference. If you are conducting new or ongoing research, or have completed research in any area of Coaching Psychology theory or professional practice, we would welcome your submission of a Focused Paper, Poster, Skills-based session or Symposium.

Conference Themes:

Capitalising on emerging research and practices relevant in today's context, our emerging themes of the 3rd National Conference include:

- Transpersonal Coaching
- Health Coaching
- The Evidence Base for Coaching Psychology
- Multicultural Coaching
- The Coaching Relationship
- Coaching Psychology and Return on Investment

However, research submissions on any area in coaching psychology are welcome.

For further information about the conference please see the 'News Page' of the SGCP website on: http://www.sgcp.org.uk/news/news_home.cfm.

For an Abstract Submission Form and guidelines for submission, e-mail Tracy White on tracy@virtuallyorganised.com.

The 2007 membership fee to join SGCP is £3.50. SGCP membership benefits include membership rates at our events and free copies of the 'International Coaching Psychology Review' and 'The Coaching Psychologist'. BPS members can join now and obtain the discounted conference fee.

'Turning 30' transitions: Generation Y hits quarter-life

Sheila Panchal & Ellen Jackson

This paper was presented at the 1st International Coaching Psychology Conference, London, December, 2006.

This paper shares a research-based model of a significant life transition experienced by individuals in their late 20s and early 30s, termed a 'turning 30' transition. It reviews psychological and social drivers of this transition for today's generation (commonly known as Generation Y), and explores a range of emotional and behavioural outcomes. A coaching model is presented, which is designed to support coaches and therapists working with individuals in this age group. It is derived from positive and coaching psychology, and has been applied in individual and organisational contexts.

Keywords: Transitions, lifespan development, coaching, positive psychology, quarter-life, Generation Y.

Aims

The aim of this paper is to support coaches who may be working with clients in their late 20s and early 30s. We will do this by firstly sharing a research-based model of the life transition that individuals may experience around 30. This has been referenced as the 'quarter-life crisis' in popular literature, and we use the term 'turning 30' transition. Secondly, we share a coaching model to assist coaches in supporting clients through these transitions.

Those currently in their late 20s and early 30s fall into what is popularly known as Generation Y (e.g. Eisner, 2005). A review of the adult development literature found that many existing models were developed for the Baby Boomer generation (e.g. Levinson, 1986) so there is a need to expand understanding to account for generational influences. In addition, much existing research focuses on the teenage years or the mid-life crisis (e.g. Gething *et al.*, 1991), as such 'turning 30' merits attention.

Model of 'turning 30' transitions

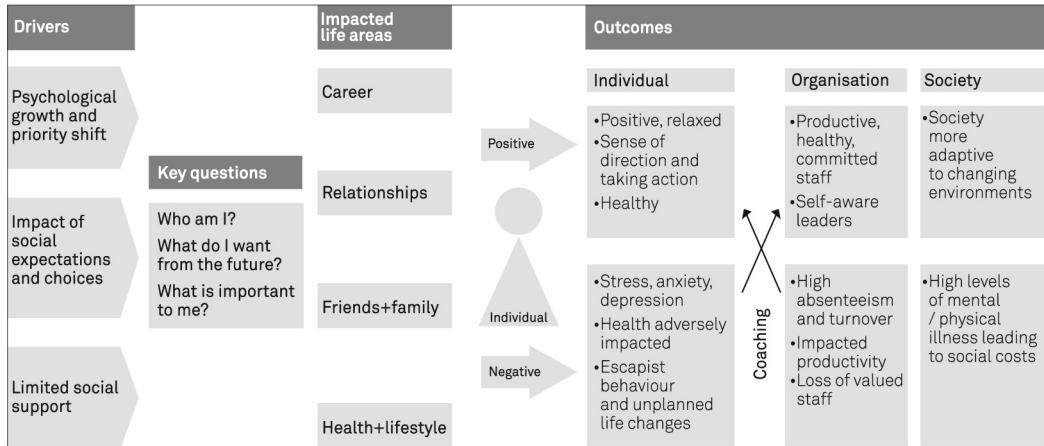
A model was developed based on data from the following source (see Figure 1):

- Self-report questionnaires completed by 40 individuals, aged 25 to 33.
- Qualitative data from coaching clients within the late 20s and early 30s age group.
- Literature review (adult development, coaching psychology, positive psychology).

'Turning 30' as a developmental transition

The established adult development literature points to a transition point around the age of 30 (e.g. Levinson, 1978; Sheehy, 1976). Levinson indicates that adulthood consists of alternating periods of stability and transition. Stability represents consolidation (focusing on daily needs and working towards goals) and transition is a time of re-examination and assessment. The early 20s are described as an initial stable phase when an individual establishes their first adult 'life structure'. Individuals start to work, develop relationships and find their feet as adults. As 30 approaches, transition begins. Life

Figure 1: ‘Turning 30’ transitions.



choices made to date are re-evaluated in the light of the future. Decisions made in the early 20s may not fit anymore. It is a time when questions about personal identity lead to a deeper sense of self. Changes are made in preparation for the second adult ‘life structure’ in the early 30s where deeper commitments to work and relationships tend to be made, and there is a greater self-understanding and value. Our data suggests that during the ‘turning 30’ transition some individuals focus on the future for the first time in their lives. There can be a sense of being ‘in limbo’ between a familiar past and an uncertain future, which can feel unsettling.

‘In my early 20s I didn’t feel any pressure to settle down to a career and a steady home life. I loved my life and happily travelled. Now, in my late 20s, I’m a bit anxious about getting older, without savings, a decent job and not much consideration for my future.’

Gould (1978) states that between 28 and 34 individuals ‘open up to what’s inside’. They face up to the false assumption that life is simple and controllable. People start to think about what they do, and why. There is a need to find a sense of purpose, to under-

stand values, to be confident and to trust one’s own judgement. There is a search for a sense of self.

‘I feel like I got lost in my 20s. I spent all my time running away from the pressure of expectation, chasing a hedonistic lifestyle of drinking and socialising. I guess I realised that it can’t go on forever. I needed to face up to my personal responsibilities and this meant I had to get to know myself again, to establish a sense of myself as an adult. Am I the same person as I was when I left university? Do I want the same things? I don’t know yet. They’re tough questions.’

Social pressures

Our research implies that the ‘turning 30’ transition is even more pronounced in the current generation. Social changes have contributed to this, leading to more choice, higher expectations and less social support than in the past.

More choice

Today’s 20-something’s are commonly referred to as Generation Y. They have far greater life choices than previous generations with the advent of world travel, the

*Italicised quotes are qualitative data, from questionnaires or coaching clients.

internet and far greater social mobility than ever before. A positive outcome of greater choice is greater opportunity. However, choice can bring pressure. Schwartz (2003) states that choice overload can lead to questioning of decisions even before they are made, create unrealistically high expectations, and promote self-blame for any failures. So when making decisions about their place in society during the 'turning 30' transition, people can become paralysed by the challenge of finding the right and best answer amongst endless options.

I guess I'm going through some strange time where something doesn't feel right - I can't quite put my finger on it. I try and think about what I can do and it almost makes it worse - I could become a scuba diving instructor in Thailand, I could take up sculpting full time, I could open up a tea-shop in the Lake District. The options really are endless and there's nothing stopping me from doing any of those things. It's driving me crazy just thinking about it and I'm not getting anywhere.'

Greater expectations

In addition there are greater expectations placed on today's generation than ever before. Media and celebrity culture demonstrate that fame and wealth is on offer and there is nothing stopping individuals having it all from a young age. Seligman (2003) talks about the 'hedonic treadmill' promoted by consumer culture, which means that people are continually striving for more. Our research suggests that expectations also come from parents who tend to measure their children by a life gauge appropriate to Baby Boomers as opposed to Generation Y. Therefore, they expect a steady job, marriage and children as 30 approaches. Added to this are expectations from peers, who have chosen particular routes in life and are seeking confirmation by encouraging others to follow.

Less social support

The breakdown of many traditional support networks, such as religion, community and

extended families can affect how people feel at this age. Information and communications technology have widened the communities to which we can be part of but reduced the depth of commitment that we feel towards or from those networks (Gergen, 1991). Those experiencing the 'turning 30' transition are often left to deal with their personal challenges without the emotional and practical support that they need. Our data showed that friendship groups can also become more fragmented at this age, as people travel and couple up. The collective lifestyle of college or the early 20s disperses and friends can be less accessible.

Emotional and behavioural responses

Research participants reported a range of feelings and behaviours during their 'turning 30' transitions. Some manage their transitions in a positive and adaptive way. Others can commonly feel 'out of control' or that 'things don't feel quite right'. The emotional experience can range from a mild sense of confusion to more serious anxiety or depression. The more serious emotional responses can be caused by excessive rumination either individually or with friends who share similar feelings.

Behavioural responses are focused on escape strategies such as unplanned, significant life change or avoidance behaviour. Individuals reported leaving jobs or relationships in an attempt to fulfil the need to make change in their lives. Travelling is another common response. Increased drug and alcohol use provide a way to escape from the difficult questions that individuals are beginning to ask themselves about their identity and future. Alternative behaviours include making significant life decisions and commitments due to perceived time pressures, such as marriage or career acceleration.

Specific challenges

Thematic analysis of our data highlighted that there are some common sources of pressure that arise during 'turning 30' transitions, as summarised below:

Career

- *Career change.* People tend to review their careers and decide that they need to settle on a path that they are happy with. This can be challenging if they have committed the last 10 years to one path and now want to switch.
- *Work-life balance.* People can find that they are devoting their lives to work as they climb the corporate ladder and struggle to juggle other priorities in their lives.
- *Career progress.* Individuals can find themselves 'stuck' at a certain level and keen to move forwards within their profession or organisation. A desire to raise status or earn more money can create a sense of urgency.

Relationships

- *Searching for a partner.* Those who are single may start focusing on finding a partner. Their single status can become a source of concern as others 'settle down'. This can be enhanced for women, who become increasingly aware of their biological clock.
- *Current relationships.* These are reviewed for long-term potential rather than right for now.
- *Break-ups.* Relationships may end as individuals take stock and decide that their current partner does not have a place in their future.
- *Preparing for commitment.* First time cohabitation, buying property as a couple and marriage are common life events. With them come questions about commitment as individuals grapple with the challenges of balancing intimacy with independence.

Friends and family

- *Changing relationship with parents.* Parents are getting older and there can be greater concern about their health and emphasis on taking care of them. It can be time to redefine relationships with parents, moving from parent-child to more equal friendships.

- *Parenthood.* Many become, or consider, parenthood, which signifies emotional and lifestyle changes.
- *Friends moving on.* For many there is a change in social structures, as friends take different directions with their lives or people move to different places. There can be a risk of social isolation.
- *Prioritising relationships.* Others can find themselves struggling with the demands of too many friendships and acquaintances that they have gathered during their 20s.
- *Fitting in with partner's friends.* Within serious relationships individuals face the challenges of combining their social structures with that of their partners.

Health and lifestyle

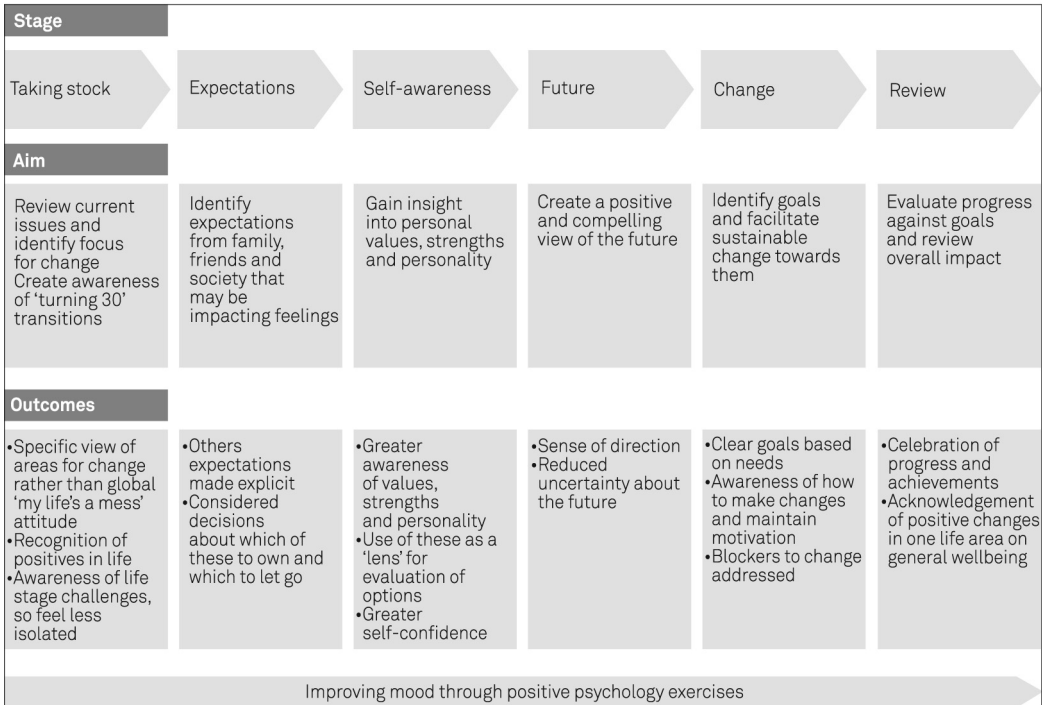
- *Leisure time.* Social and leisure patterns established in the early 20s may no longer be engaging.
- *Taking care of physical health.* Signs of ageing become evident for the first time and people start to take their health seriously.
- *Taking care of emotional health.* For some, the uncertainty of the 'turning 30' transition can lead to more serious emotional problems.

Our research demonstrated that, for many, the 'turning 30' transition is an opportunity for development and growth. It is a time to review the past and set the foundations for the future. It can be a smooth and positive transition. For others, it can be a challenging time with negative behavioural and emotional consequences.

Coaching model

Based on the above findings about the nature of 'turning 30' transitions, a coaching model was developed (see Figure 2). This drew from the solution-focused coaching approach (e.g. Grant & Greene, 2004) and perspectives from positive psychology (Seligman, 2003; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Although many elements of this

Figure 2: 'Turning 30' transitions: Coaching model.



coaching model would apply to all age groups, there are aspects that are more pertinent to those experiencing a 'turning 30' transition. The identification of various expectations coming from different sources is important, given the external pressures that contribute to this transition. Spending time creating a vision for the future is also of particular relevance, as 'future' can be a new concept for many, and one that provokes anxiety. Also, for today's generation, self-awareness is more necessary than ever before so they are able to make effective choices from the sea of options available to them in all areas of life.

The coaching model has been published as a self-coaching book (Panchal & Jackson, 2005), and utilised with clients in this age group, with positive outcomes. For coaches and therapists working with individuals in their 20s and 30s, it provides a framework for understanding their context, and suggestions for ways to work with them.

Organisations can benefit from considering how to support their Generation Y individuals. By considering the needs and values of younger workers they are creating a competitive advantage in the war for talent. Through educating their top talent about transitions, organisations can prevent potential derailment and encourage the retention of their future leaders. The coaching model has been applied in small group-coaching workshops with high potentials. These sessions encourage greater self-knowledge and a positive negotiation of the quarter-life crossroads.

Conclusion

The current study provides some initial conclusions about 'turning 30' transitions, and impetus for further research. It suggests that the late 20s and early 30s are a time of reflection and change. There is an opportunity for positive growth and development. However, there is also risk of psychological

ill-health. An understanding of 'turning 30' issues can assist psychologists working as coaches and therapists with this age group. In addition, organisations whose workforce falls into this age bracket could benefit from offering structured coaching support to their employees.

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THE SPECIAL GROUP IN COACHING PSYCHOLOGY

3rd National Coaching Psychology Conference 17th and 18th December 2007

To be held at City University, London, UK

Limited exhibition space and sponsorship opportunities are available on a first come, first served basis at this major event in the coaching calendar.

We would like to invite you to register as an exhibitor or sponsor if you:

- Publish coaching psychology books
- Publish tests targeted at the coaching psychology market
- Provide coaching skills development and training opportunities

Sponsorship opportunities include:

- The cheese and wine event
- The conference programme
- Delegate materials (pens, notepads, conference bags)
- Goodies that delegates are likely to enjoy

You can download an exhibitor / sponsor form from the 'News Page' of the SGCP website on http://www.sgcp.org.uk/news/news_home.cfm

Please contact for more information at: Tracy@virtuallyorganised.com

Note: All our exhibitors and sponsors (excluding book publishers) need to have a Chartered Psychologist or equivalent working at director level within the organisation.

Executive Coaching and Psychometrics: A case study evaluating the use of the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) and the Hogan Development Survey (HDS) in senior management coaching

Angela Mansi

This paper was presented at the 1st International Coaching Psychology Conference, London, December, 2006.

Individual personality differences can, at times of pressure, manifest as extreme traits so that attention to detail, for instance, can show as perfectionism. These personality differences, referred to here as 'the dark sides' of personality, can result in dysfunctional behaviour at work, and impact on individuals, teams and the organisation. This article will explain how two psychometric measurements: the Hogan Personality Inventory and the Hogan Development Survey were used to assess for potential dark side behaviours, and were incorporated into a developmental coaching programme for a senior manager.

Keywords: senior management coaching, selection and development, development programme, personality differences, dark side behaviours, derailment, dysfunctional behaviour, psychometric assessment.

COACHING PSYCHOLOGISTS are increasingly called upon when an individual's behaviour adversely affects their performance and relationships at work. Early learned defensive styles are often inappropriate as adults, and can often result in the manifestation of personality disorders and 'dark side' behaviours (Horney, 1937; Millon, 1987; Hogan & Hogan, 1997; Widiger, Costa & McCrae, 2001; Widiger *et al.*, 2002). Extreme scores on personality trait measures suggest personality disorders (Widiger, Costa & McCrae, 2001; Widiger *et al.*, 2002) which can have self-destructive consequences, (Millon, 1987; Babiak, 1995).

The manifestation of dark side behaviour is always detrimental to an individual's career and often disastrous for organisations (see Kets De Vries, 1989 ; Hogan, Curphy & Hogan, 1994; Hogan & Hogan, 1997, Furnham, 1998). If left unmanaged, these behaviours can result in management derail-

ment (Bentz, 1985) producing 'disastrous outcomes' not only for the individual and their team, but also for the organisation" (Conger, 1990 pp.44–45). One psychometric test used to assess for *potential* personality disorders is the Hogan Development Survey. Based on the DSM Axis II Personality Disorders, it has 11 scales measuring 'dark side' traits, which were devised specifically for use in selection, development and coaching.

This case study considers the problem of management derailment and 'dark side' behaviours that have potentially disastrous consequences for the individual and their organisation (Hogan & Hogan, 1997). The qualities that organisations seek in their senior executives are the very characteristics that can, when exaggerated, lead to their downfall resulting in 'management derailment', (Mansi, 2000). Some differential psychologists argue that most personality disorders are associated with low adjustment

and disagreeableness (Saulsman & Page, 2004; Furnham & Crump, 2005). Certainly a high level of disagreeableness would mean that there was an increased risk of dark side behaviours being displayed. Moreover, the higher up the organisation senior managers go, the *less* likely they are to be developed and managed. Many senior managers believe that they have got where they are because of their unique individual traits, not despite them, and often feel that coaching is irrelevant for them.

This study refers to a senior management development coaching programme. The coaching took place with a senior executive using a triangulation of methods: psychometric assessment, Egan person-centred counselling skills and cognitive behavioural techniques, over a period of eight months. An explanation of how the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) and the Hogan Development Survey (HDS) were used to assess for 'dark side' behaviours will be outlined and the value of using psychometric assessments in coaching will be discussed.

Client background

Client A was a senior manager working within an international organisation. He had upset several colleagues in the past, and although very successful in his role, was seen as extremely difficult to work with. His immediate direct reports said he was 'terrifying' when in a bad mood, his colleagues were very guarded with him, and his CEO was finding the constant rows and emotional outbursts too disruptive and time-consuming for him to deal with. The CEO was worried about the impact on other staff and not least, the effects on the organisation in terms of profit, effectiveness and reputation. He also found conflict very difficult to manage and wanted someone outside of the organisation to handle this. The client was a valuable member of the organisation and very effective in his current role and the organisation needed this individual to remain with them. What they could not allow to continue was his unsettling behaviour, and I was invited to

work with this manager as a coach as part of a professional development programme. The client's behaviours included explosive anger, verbal and non-verbal hostility, moodiness, inconsistency with instructions, bullying and a lack of sensitivity to others. The organisational briefing was to get him to be more aware of how these behaviours were affecting others at work, and to work with him in trying to manage his intense emotional reactions more constructively.

Two psychometric measurements were used as part of the initial coaching process: The Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) and the Hogan Development Survey (HDS). The HPI assesses for normative personality traits. It measures how we appear to others; how we are at work and is related to organisational function (Hogan & Hogan, 1986). The scales on the HPI are:

Adjustment: assesses confidence, self-esteem and emotional stability under pressure;

Ambition: assesses leadership potential, competitiveness and career initiative;

Sociability: assesses extraversion, need for social interaction and social warmth;

Agreeability: assesses for warmth, likeability and relationship maintenance;

Prudence: assesses for carefulness, responsibility, self-control and conscientiousness;

Intellectance: assesses for creativity curiosity, imagination, abstract thinking;

Scholarship: assesses for need for achievement, scholastic attainment and love of learning.

(Hogan & Hogan, 1986)

Dark Side Behaviours

The Hogan Development Survey (HDS) is a psychometrically designed personality questionnaire which measures 'dysfunctional interpersonal styles which interfere with the processes of leadership' (Hogan & Hogan, 1997). In other words, it measures potential 'dark sides' of personality which are '*...those aspects of our personality that we keep hidden from others...*' (Jung, 1951). Or, as another

psychologist states, it is *'too much of a good thing...the more of a trait people have, the more likely they are to show it'* (Furnham, 1998).

The 11 scales of the HDS assess at what point:

Enthusiastic	<i>becomes</i>	Volatile
Shrewd	<i>becomes</i>	Mistrustful
Careful	<i>becomes</i>	Cautious
Independent	<i>becomes</i>	Detached
Focussed	<i>becomes</i>	Passive- Aggressive
Confident	<i>becomes</i>	Arrogant
Charming	<i>becomes</i>	Manipulative
Vivacious	<i>becomes</i>	Dramatic
Imaginative	<i>becomes</i>	Eccentric
Diligent	<i>becomes</i>	Perfectionistic
Dutiful	<i>becomes</i>	Dependent

(Hogan & Hogan, 1997)

The very qualities that we seek in senior executives such as confidence, charm, independence, enthusiasm can, when there is too much of the quality, become almost a caricature of itself. Not surprisingly, most senior managers and top executives, including CEOs have several dark sides to their personality, which only means that they have the desirable traits of the HDS scales above. It is when these are coupled with very low emotional stability that problems occur as individuals have little emotional resilience with which to deal with any pressure.

The Adjustment scale of the HPI assesses for emotional stability and includes factors such as empathy, level of guilt, anxiety, calmness, trusting, attachment, somatic complaints and even-temperedness. Low Adjustment on the HPI is <35th percentile. Anything less than that is likely to significantly impact on other behaviours and influence potential dark side behaviours (above).

When emotional adjustment is low, (measured by the HPI), and there are high scores on the HDS, then there is cause for concern.

Client profile on HPI

On the HPI, scores of <35th percentile indicate potential problem areas for the individual (UK male norms HPI Manual 1997). The Adjustment scale is a measurement of neuroticism or negative affectivity (Hogan & Hogan, 1986), and individuals with scores below the 10th percentile may, according to Hogan and Hogan, be candidates for professional assistance.

The client in this case study had Adjustment scores <16th percentile. His raw scores indicated very low empathy, high levels of anxiety, some guilt (particularly after he had lost his temper) a lack of calm under pressure, an inability to manage his temper, and low attachment to others. Moreover, his levels of agreeableness on the Interpersonal Sensitivity scale were also extremely low – <11th percentile. Low scores on Agreeableness indicate someone who has a general dislike of others, refuses to conform, has high levels of hostility, low interpersonal sensitivity and far from avoiding conflict, seems to actively enjoy it. This would seem to support those differential psychologists who argue that personality dysfunction is associated with low levels of Adjustment and low levels of Agreeableness (Saulsman & Page, 2004; Furnham & Crump, 2005).

Client profile on HDS

Scores on the HDS indicated very high levels of potential volatility. On the HDS, scores >70th percentile on any scale indicate a risk of that behaviour. Scores of >90th percentile show a very high risk. This client's scores were at 97th percentile on the Volatile scale, and indicated extreme levels of volatile behaviour including angry outbursts, hostile verbal and non-verbal communication, moodiness, lack of engagement with others and a tendency to anxiety and guilt. People with high (>90th percentile) scores on the Volatile scale tend to react in what Karen Horney called a 'moving away style' (Horney, 1937) where they detach from other people and seek a quiet corner in which to lick their wounds. Coupled with his low adjustment it

is not surprising that the client's behaviour had been so terrifying to his colleagues as there was little resource within him to moderate it.

The Coaching process

Coaching took place over eight months, with meetings occurring every four to six weeks. A triangulation of methods was used in the coaching process: the two psychometric assessments outlined above which were used for the initial coaching sessions; Egan person-centred counselling skills were utilised to draw out the perception the client had of himself, and to gauge his level of self-awareness, and cognitive techniques were applied when challenging his thinking style.

Giving feedback on the HDS in particular requires very careful handling. It is a measurement of potential dysfunctional personality traits and requires great sensitivity when giving feedback back to a client. Moreover, once feedback has been given, the coach needs to be skilled in challenging clients who may not accept their self-assessed personality profile. Therefore, the psychometric profiles, which are based on the self-reported scores on the client, can be very useful as a starting point from which to begin to discuss dysfunctional behaviours. In this instance, the client had a high need for evidence-based information and seemed more able to accept information from the two test reports, with his own self-scored results, than he would have from less tangible sources, or from person-centred coaching sessions alone.

The client's test results also forewarned of a particular reaction after a few sessions. High scores on the Enthusiastic-Volatile scale indicate someone who is initially very enthusiastic, almost obsessively keen, and vocal about how *wonderful* things are. This enthusiasm, however, is very short lived as they set their sights too high and find that as reality sets in, their initial expectations are not achieved. They become disillusioned very quickly with projects and people, and feel hurt that they have been 'let down'. To

paraphrase Oscar Wilde it is the triumph of hope over reality, and they often feel that other people do not live up to their original assessment of them. This client was, indeed, highly enthusiastic about the whole coaching process at the beginning, and was impatient to begin to change things in himself. Additionally, as well as high volatility, the client showed low emotional adjustment in terms of anxiety, attachment and guilt. His anxiety about performance, and his lack of interpersonal sensitivity, led to a build up of tension which "exploded" when he felt frustrated. As he had very low tolerance for frustration, this occurred quite regularly. He then felt extremely guilty, which affected his level of confidence and made him more anxious in his role.

Feedback on his profiles, including how his 'dark side' behaviours were affecting others, was received with an open mind at the beginning of the coaching process. Coupled with homework of keeping an anger diary, stress and time management awareness and an understanding of his different behaviours, he began to see how his emotional reactions affected his perceptual and cognitive processes, and began to alter his reactions at work. Comments from colleagues were positive and his new manner noted. There was, however, still some wariness from colleagues who were, understandably, guarded about how long his new management style would last.

During the coaching process, the client and I explored his unrealistic expectations and low tolerance to frustration which then manifested through his anger. Diary work helped him to see which incidents, both at work and in his personal life, triggered his anger and how he reacted. Over the course of a few months he began to see a pattern of reactions within particular scenarios and became much more aware of himself at such times. He also learned to recognise when he was feeling stressed and developed some effective techniques to deal with this. During coaching, we explored and analysed his use of language. His anxiety at being seen as

aggressive, and consequently upsetting his colleagues, led him to moderate his language to the point where the meaning of what he was saying was lost. This, consequently, resulted in mixed messages, unclear direction and lack of clarity in what he needed from others. In turn, he became more frustrated. By exploring the language he used, and constructing it in a more assertive manner, which was rehearsed together in coaching, he developed a calmer, clearer style of conveying instructions. In addition, coaching for some distorted thinking patterns all helped him to manage his emotional reactions in a more measured, less irritable manner.

Organisational feedback on his behaviour

Feedback from his colleagues, given both to him directly and to his CEO, was very positive. Comments such as 'He is noticeably calmer', 'He seems less angry', 'He is clearer in what he wants now' helped when making requests or dealing with interruptions. He was also seen as far less irritable, more thoughtful of how his behaviour affected others, much more assertive and, consequently, less hostile in meetings. Confidence that he could manage his temper in a more constructive manner helped him to feel more in control when engaging with others and this, in turn, helped with initial angry reactions to other people's views and plans.

The benefits and pit-falls of using psychometric measurements

Certainly the two measurements used here, the HPI and the HDS, were useful in assessing the dysfunctional behaviours which had been affecting the clients workplace relationships. Not only could the potential 'dark side' traits be measured, but also the level of emotional adjustment including the sub-scales of anxiety, attachment, guilt which were influencing his behaviour could be measured. For individuals who like a more evidence-based approach, a psychometric profile gives something for them to work with. Psychometric

assessments can be useful as a reference point for challenging a client, as they are self-scoring and measure how the client sees himself or herself. Their own scores can be used in discussion to see how far they think they have assessed themselves correctly, or why their scores might differ from their own perception. Using a person-centred approach in this instance was extremely useful to allow the client to see for himself why he had given himself the scores he had.

There are, of course, some pitfalls to using psychometric measurements of which coaches need to be aware. There may be a tendency to over-focus on the measured traits and concentrate solely on those areas which the coach thinks need addressing. With highly validated tests there may be the temptation to dismiss situational factors, and caution is urged to use the results as a spring-board for discussion, rather than as a picture of the whole person. Other variables may impact on test results; illness for instance, grief, environmental disturbances or having had any alcohol before taking the test. Certainly, my own experience of senior management coaching, and of using psychometric measurements, has found that many managers have had such little time they have admitted to 'hurrying the tests', rendering the results invalid and is something which needs to be explored during feedback.

Moreover, the culture of an organisation can affect what is perceived as 'dark side' behaviours. Research has shown that certain traits are not perceived as dysfunctional in some organisations. Anger, for instance, is perceived as a 'normal' response to stress in a more masculine, hierarchical organisation such as a fire service than it would be in a counselling unit (Mansi, 2000). What is measured as a *potential* dark side, may in fact be seen as an expected response in certain environments, and depends entirely on the culture and climate of the organisation (Mansi, 2000).

In conclusion, this case study has shown how two psychometric measurements were used during coaching, and considered the

value of this as part of a senior management developmental coaching programme. The two measurements used in this case study; the HPI and the HDS, were found to be useful and relevant to the coaching programme undertaken, and were a valuable addition to a process which included person-centred coaching and cognitive strategies. They were of particular use when challenging the client and his own perceptions of himself.

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Short-term cognitive coaching interventions: Worth the effort or a waste of time?

Fiona Beddoes-Jones & Julia Miller

This paper was presented at the 1st International Coaching Psychology Conference, London, December, 2006.

A small case study focusing on the development of metacognitive awareness and subsequent development of cognitive and behavioural strategies over a three month period designed to answer the following questions; Can a short-term cognitive behavioural coaching intervention, firstly, add 'significant' personal and professional value as measured by qualitative methods, and secondly, if so, are there subsequent statistically significant changes in people's self-reported scores on a measure of cognitive style preference?

Keywords: authenticity, authentic leadership, coaching, cognitive coaching, executive coaching, cognitive behavioural approach, metacognitive, metacognition, organisational psychology, coaching psychology, coaching research, thinking styles.

Design: Following the identification of occupationally focused coaching objectives, four one-hour telephone coaching sessions were conducted one month apart over a three-month period. The psychometric instrument Thinking Styles® was employed in a test retest design, at the beginning of month one and the end of month three.

Methods: An opportunity sample of eight working adults with managerial and leadership responsibilities participated in the study. Participants completed the Thinking Styles® questionnaire and received individual feedback reports. These were used as a framework to scaffold the cognitive behavioural coaching intervention together with a small number of questions designed to identify participant outcomes and objectives for the short-term coaching process.

Results: Qualitative feedback fully supported the first question. Statistical analysis partially supported the second question. Where participants had chosen to focus on specific thinking styles their self-reported scores did change, although sometimes by a reduction in their dis-preferences rather than an increase in their positive preference scores. All participants reported greater meta-cognitive awareness, increased confidence in their personal decision-making processes and feeling more 'authentic' and more 'themselves'.

Conclusions: This research suggests that short-term cognitive coaching interventions can be effective and can add 'significant' personal and professional value. Therefore, extended coaching interventions of more than three months duration may not be the only approach available to clients and executive coaches.

LBRI AND KEMP, (2006) have identified that, with the exception of Grant, (2002) there has been little published research into the value and usefulness of a cognitive approach within the applied context of executive coaching. This small case study was designed to add to the body of evidence in that regard.

As Einstein said, *'The world we have created is a product of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking.'* Taking a cognitive approach to coaching means understanding the relationship that a coachees' thinking has to the generation of their internal dialogue, motivational drivers and values. It also means understanding the role that thinking has in generating their subsequent behaviours. Therefore, within a cognitive behavioural approach, understanding an individual's thinking comes first. From a coaching perspective it is important to really understand an individual's cognitive style preferences and how they combine together to produce that individual's unique leadership and management style.

Within occupational psychology, the construct of cognitive style preference is well researched. Messick (1976) defines cognitive style preference as, *'Consistent individual differences in preferred ways of organising and processing information and experience.'* Witkin *et al.* (1977) define cognitive style preference as, *'Individual differences in how we perceive, think, solve problems, learn and relate to others'*, whilst 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.'*

Within the cognitive style literature there is considerable debate regarding the connection between cognitive style preference and ability. We consider that one of the best explanations is given by Sternberg, (1999) who says that, *'An ability refers to how well someone can do something. A style refers to how someone likes to do something. A style, therefore, is a preferred way of using the abilities one has.'*

Thinking Styles® is an occupational psychometric instrument which measures 26 independent dimensions of cognitive style. These dimensions are sub-divided into a sensory, people and task focus. (see Table 1). Thinking Styles® was selected for use within this research study for the following reasons. Firstly, as a cognitive instrument with UK managerial norms, it is ideally suited for use within a UK-based cognitive behavioural executive coaching intervention. Secondly, the scoring system identifies both cognitive preferences and cognitive dis-preferences for each dimension of cognitive style. Thirdly, the 39-page intelligent report provides both coach and coachee with a wealth of relevant cognitive and behavioural information which was used in part to scaffold the coaching process.

As the use of Thinking Styles® increases an individual's self awareness regarding their own cognitive style preferences, Thinking Styles can also be considered to be a 'metacognitive' tool. The term 'metacognition' is most closely associated with John Flavell who defined it as, *'Any knowledge or cognition ... that regulates any aspect of cognitive endeavour'* (Flavell, 1976). Metcalf and Shimamura, (1994) describe metacognition as, *'Our knowledge about how we perceive, remember, think and act – that is, what we know about what we know.'* Livingston, (1997) suggests that there is considerable debate surrounding the exact definition of metacognition and the phenomena it describes, as some terms are used synonymously within the literature, such as 'metacognition' and 'metacognitive awareness', 'executive control' and 'self-regulation'. Therefore, metacognition is often simplified by researchers such as Cooper, (2004) as, *'Thinking about thinking ... knowledge and regulation of one's thinking processes.'* Consequently, a metacognitive approach seems to suggest an approach that is predominantly concerned with increasing one's self awareness as regards *how* we think as opposed to what we think about.

Table 1: Thinking Styles® dimensions.

<p>The four Sensory focused dimensions explore the ways you prefer to receive information via your senses:</p>	
<p>Visual: the use of pictures, diagrams and visual imagery, both internally in your 'minds eye' and externally in the real world.</p>	<p><i>'The power of imagination created the illusion that my vision went much further than my naked eye could actually see.'</i> Nelson Mandela, First elected President of South Africa, 1918 –</p>
<p>Auditory: focusing on words and language, talking issues through with colleagues and the development of your active listening skills.</p>	<p><i>'Churchill mobilised the English language and sent it in to battle.'</i> Ed Murrow, US journalist and broadcaster, 1908–1965.</p>
<p>Kinaesthetic: feelings, emotions, physical activity and movement and past experience.</p>	<p><i>'What we have to learn to do, we learn by doing.'</i> Aristotle, Greek philosopher, 384–322 BC</p>
<p>Digital: focusing on facts and data and information, and often involves statistical analysis.</p>	<p><i>'Let's call a bed a bed – not a 'device or arrangement that may be used to let patients lie down when the need to do so is a consequence of the patient's condition, rather than the need for active intervention' as it was famously described.'</i> Frank Dobson, British politician, 1940 –</p>
<p>The eight People focused dimensions explore the ways you interact with people:</p>	
<p>Internally Referenced: involves the conviction that you are right, working to your own standards and a lack of reliance on any feedback or input from others.</p>	<p><i>'I care not what others think of what I do, but I care very much what I think of what I do. That is character!'</i> Theodore Roosevelt, 26th U.S. President, 1858–1919.</p>
<p>Externally Referenced: paying particular attention to feedback and input from others, using external reference points to aid decision making.</p>	<p><i>'Self confidence is important. Confidence in others is essential!'</i> William A. Schreyer, US businessman.</p>
<p>Self Referenced: involves focusing on your own needs and putting yourself first. (Note that 'your own needs' can also mean the needs of your family, team, department or organisation.)</p>	<p><i>'If I am not for myself who is for me?'</i> Hillel, Rabbi, c.60–c.90 BC</p>
<p>Altruistic: involves focusing on other people's needs and well-being and the willingness to help others.</p>	<p><i>'What we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal.'</i> Albert Pike, American poet, 1809–1891.</p>

Conforming: involves a tendency to agree, to fit in and adapt, and taking a non-confrontational approach.

'If you have learned how to disagree without being disagreeable, then you have discovered the secret of getting along.' Bernard Meltzer, American Professor of Law.

Challenging: involves a tendency to disagree and to challenge the rules as well as challenging in order to clarify and understand.

'The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable man persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man.' George Bernard Shaw, Irish dramatist, 1856–1950.

Collaborative: sharing information with others, a preference for working in a team and for collaborating at work.

'Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships.' Michael Johnson, American Athlete, 1967–

Competitive: a focus on winning and beating the opposition, striving to better your own performance and taking a competitive approach with others.

'You may have to fight a battle more than once to win it.' Margaret Thatcher, British Prime Minister, 1925 –

The 14 Task focused dimensions explore the ways you relate to tasks and activities at work and your approach to problem solving:

Detailed: involves a focus on detail and the generation of detailed work.

'Excellence is in the details. Give attention to details and excellence will come.' Perry Paxton.

Strategic: a future focus, a preference for summary information and linking things together over time such as ideas or plans.

'Without the development of an overall perspective, we become lost in our individual investigation.' Robert Ornstein, American Psychologist, 1977.

Creative: involves the tendency to make connections between things, to multi-task and to "think backwards" from the final result.

'Discovery consists of seeing what everybody has seen and thinking what nobody has thought.' Albert von Szent-Gyorgyi, US biochemist, 1893–1986.

Logical: involves a focus on a systematic approach, complemented by sequential and linear processing.

'It is best to do things systematically, since we are only human, and disorder is our worst enemy.' Hesiod, Greek poet, 8th Century BC

Options: a focus on choice, possibilities and an exploration of alternatives.

'When you have to make a choice and don't make it, that, in itself, is a choice.' William James, American Psychologist, 1842–1910.

Table 1: Thinking Styles® dimensions (continued).

<p>Procedures: a focus on the 'correct' way of doing something and of following procedures or precedents.</p>	<p><i>'Systems represent someone's attempt at solution to problems.'</i> Melvin Sykes, American Attorney, 1978.</p>
<p>Towards: focuses on the use of positive language and goals and targets.</p>	<p><i>'When the wind blows, some people build walls, others build windmills.'</i> Peter Hawkins.</p>
<p>Troubleshooting: involves a focus on problems and potential problems, a tendency to worry about things, being generally risk adverse, and the use of 'negative' language patterns. <i>NOTE: It is NOT about solving problems once they have occurred.</i></p>	<p><i>'Wisdom consists of the anticipation of consequences.'</i> Norman Cousins, American Editor and writer, 1915–1990.</p>
<p>Proactive: involves initiating action and a focus on taking action 'sooner rather than later'.</p>	<p><i>'I see myself as a doer. I'm sure that other people have had ideas that were similar to mine. The difference is that I have carried mine into action and they have not.'</i> Nolan Bushnell, Founder of Atari Computer Co., 1983.</p>
<p>Reactive: involves responding to situations and events, considering the likely consequences of any action before moving something forward and waiting for the time to be right to implement.</p>	<p><i>'The opposite of talking isn't listening. The opposite of talking is waiting.'</i> Fran Lebowitz, American Author, 1950 –</p>
<p>Simplicity: involves the perception that things are simple or easy and a preference for simplifying complex issues.</p>	<p><i>'Beauty of style and harmony and grace and good rhythm depend on simplicity.'</i> Plato, Greek Philosopher, c.427–c.347 BC</p>
<p>Complexity: involves the perception that things are complicated or difficult and enjoying the challenge of difficulty.</p>	<p><i>'Simplicity is an acquired taste. Mankind, left free, instinctively complicates life.'</i> Katherine Gerould.</p>
<p>Sameness: a focus on the familiar, a need for stability and a low tolerance for change.</p>	<p><i>'People are very open-minded about new things – as long as they're exactly like the old ones.'</i> Charles Kettering, US inventor, 1876–1958.</p>
<p>Difference: a preference for variety, a high tolerance for change and a desire to 'make a difference' in some way.</p>	<p><i>'You can become blind by seeing each day as a similar one. Each day is a different one, each day brings a miracle of its own.'</i> Paul Coelho, author, 1947 –</p>

However, such explicit self-knowledge only considers cognition from one perspective. Metacognitive awareness is also concerned with understanding other people's thinking processes and perceptions, which is why a meta-cognitive approach could also be considered to be a multi-perspective one. Flavell (1976) suggests that metacognition consists of metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive regulation where metacognitive knowledge refers to acquired information about cognitive processes and metacognitive regulation (also called 'executive control') is used to control and manage our cognitive processes. Flavell further sub-divided metacognitive knowledge into knowledge about people, knowledge about tasks and knowledge about strategies.

Research questions

This study comprised two research questions; firstly, can a short-term cognitive behavioural coaching intervention add 'significant' personal and professional value as measured by qualitative methods, and secondly, if so, are there subsequent statistically significant changes in people's self-reported scores on a measure of cognitive style preference?

Research design

An opportunity sample of eight working adults participated in the study. The age range of participants varied from 25 to 55 and comprised five men and three women. All participants held positions of managerial and leadership responsibility with the male participants holding senior management responsibility whilst the female participants held more junior managerial roles. The industries of participants included banking, private sector consultancy, further education and public utilities.

Table 2 outlines the research design. Following the identification of an individual's professionally focused coaching objectives on Form A, four one-hour telephone coaching sessions were conducted

one month apart over a three-month period. The psychometric instrument Thinking Styles® was employed in a test retest design, used firstly at the beginning of month one and secondly at the end of month three. Form B comprised a number of questions regarding the relevance and value of the coaching process and was completed after the fourth and final coaching session.

Research methods

Immediately upon completing the online Thinking Styles® questionnaire participants received their personal feedback reports. These were used as a framework to scaffold the coaching intervention and were used in conjunction with the small number of questions on Form A which identified participant outcomes and objectives for the short-term coaching process.

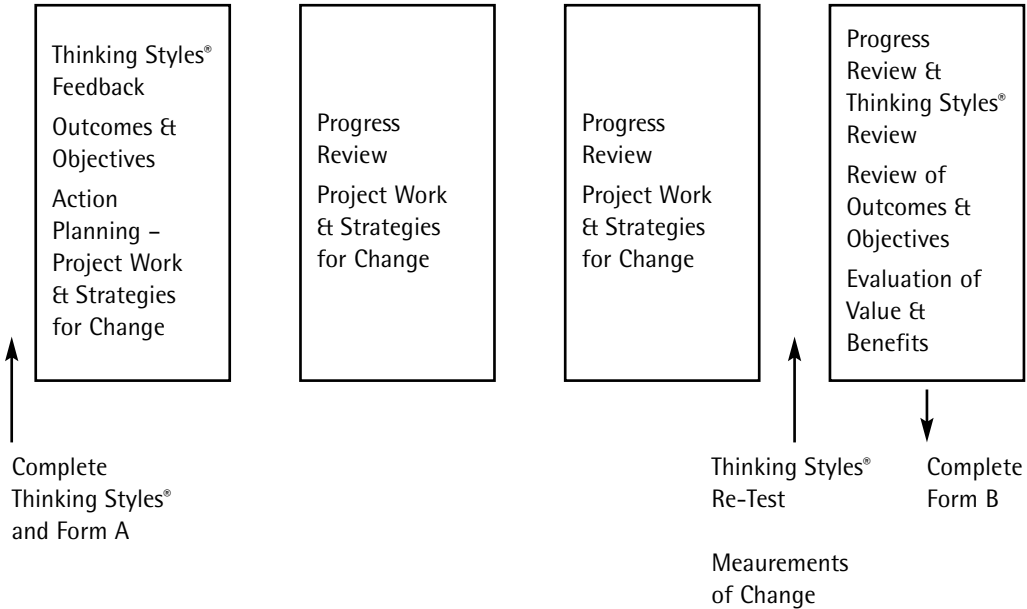
Research results

Table 3 provides a selection of the most significant quantitative results and are discussed later. All participants felt that they had made changes in certain areas and that these changes were 'significant' to them. All felt that they had achieved a greater understanding of themselves and others as part of the coaching process. All participants reported that they enjoyed the coaching process and agreed or strongly agreed to the following statements:

1. 'This short-term coaching has been valuable to me.'
2. 'My performance at work has improved because of this coaching.'
3. 'My colleagues have noticed a difference in the way I communicate and present myself.'

Qualitative feedback from participants regarding the value that they felt they gained from the short-term coaching intervention seemed to be focused mainly around the two areas of increased self-awareness and increased self-confidence, although self-regulation regarding stress management and changes in approach relating to communication style were also mentioned.

Table 2: Visual representation of the coaching process.



'One of my objectives was to improve my positive attitude. As I have a high Troubleshooter score, I have the ability to spot potential problems quickly and this can be seen as negativity. Through recognising my preferences and discussing how they impact on my working life, I am now able to communicate my concerns to colleagues without being seen as overly negative.' (KL)

'I seem to have become a much more relaxed individual ... I am happier in my work role and have more confidence to challenge.' (RS)

'I now know who I am and I feel more comfortable with myself. The coaching has helped me to make some difficult decisions more easily.....the profile has helped me make decisions about what's right for me and I feel more relaxed and self-confident as a result.' (IC)

'I'm a lot more aware of how I behave under stress ... my manager has noticed that I'm more confident and I feel more assertive.' (RS)

'I've become a lot more focused on what I want to achieve over the next few years – personally and professionally.' (MM)

'I now handle data in a more confident way and make decisions more quickly, before I gathered data to support a decision already made!' (DM)

'Feedback has led me to a softening of approach which has been reflected in a tempering of extremes on my preference scores.' (CW)

'I have been able to develop strategies for communicating with people who have radically different Thinking Styles® profiles to me by recognising the differences between us and the problems that this can cause ... Previously if I didn't understand something I would assume that it was beyond me. Now I know that it's just not being presented to me in the right way. Asking for a diagram solves no end of problems!' (KL)

'I've achieved a greater degree of self-understanding, combined with an increase in my confidence to articulate and champion my resultant perception of myself.' (DK)

'Seeing my profile has helped me to understand those situations and environments I find difficult.' (IC)

Table 3: Statistical data.

Dimension	Raw score time 1	Raw score time 2	% spread time 1	% spread time 2
Auditory	15	12	0 to 62	0 to 76
Strategic	16	15	-6 to 67	0 to 71
External	15	13	-20 to 33	-10 to 47
Complexity	21	11	-14 to 33	-7 to 29
Sameness	26	24	-67 to 0	-50 to 6
Auditory	14	18	0 to 67	-14 to 48
Digital	11	14	0 to 60	-10 to 40
External	15	20	-20 to 33	-50 to 7
Towards	16	12	-8 to 44	0 to 67
Complexity	16	22	0 to 57	-7 to 29
Kinaesthetic	20	15	-6 to 50	-6 to 71
Internal	12	9	-20 to 60	-20 to 80
Collaborative	15	10	-8 to 50	0 to 78
Detail	17	24	-6 to 70	-17 to 48
Strategic	25	13	-19 to 33	0 to 79
Self	19	14	0 to 54	0 to 75
Competitive	15	13	-20 to 33	0 to 47
Sameness	18	21	-8 to 33	-25 to 17
External	17	15	-30 to 20	-20 to 33

* significant at the 5% level

** significant at the 1% level

'I now understand why I multi-task and see it as a benefit not a lack of concentration.' (IC)

You may have noticed the references to 'problems' in the two quotes from KL. This is consistent with their high Troubleshooting score and is an indication of the associative connection between cognitive style preference and the use of conversational linguistics.

Table 3 shows the most significant quantitative movements in the statistical data by Thinking Style dimension and any associated statistical levels of significance.

Discussion

One of the major results of the study seems to be related to the value of increased metacognitive awareness in terms of increasing participant's self-awareness and subsequent increases in self-confidence over the three-month period. In at least one individual, (KL), increased metacognitive awareness also led to a change in their beliefs, namely that certain things were not 'beyond' them, just explained in less appropriate ways for their own thinking styles preferences.

Based on our experience of using Thinking Styles® within executive coaching, it is our assertion that it is the combinations of cognitive style preference (high, moderate and low) which drive an individual's cognitive and behavioural strategies

at work. Through using a metacognitive instrument such as Thinking Styles® to scaffold to the coaching process, these strategies were able to be reviewed and revised by participants in the light of their greater understanding about themselves.

In the fourth coaching session, qualitatively, all participants felt that the changes that had occurred in their scores were 'significant' and 'important' to them, even though quantitatively, these changes may not have been statistically significant. Interestingly, in a small number of cases, rather than an increase in cognitive style preference (shown most clearly by the positive changes in the % spread scores), 'significant' changes were sometimes shown by a reduction in dispreference. To take an exemplar of Detailed thinking, we would suggest that potentially, before it is possible to increase someone's preference for Detailed thinking, it may be important to *decrease* their dislike of it first. This initial change may be just as important, or even more so, than any subsequent increases in cognitive style preference. Evidently, more research in this area would be beneficial.

There seems to be a suggested link between cognitive style preference and the use of conversational linguistics (as evidenced by the KL quotes), although at this point in time, this is also an area that is far from being adequately researched within psychological literature.

Another model which encourages flexibility of thinking and of subsequent behaviours is that of Emotional Intelligence (EI). Because of its popularity, many models of EI now exist, the most well known being that of Daniel Goleman (1995). It is widely accepted that one of the key aspects of emotional intelligence is self-awareness, whilst another is the self-regulation of one's emotional state and subsequent behaviours, (Goleman, 1995). These clearly suggest a link between the concepts of emotional intelligence and metacognition which would warrant further future research efforts.

As a psychometric tool that explores how cognitive preferences relate to motivation, values and consequent behaviours, Thinking Styles® can offer executives unique insights into their cognitive and behavioural patterns which, in effect, make them who they are. The value of this can be neatly summed up by participant IC who said, *'I now know who I am and I feel more comfortable with myself. The coaching has helped me to make some difficult decisions more easily ... the profile has helped me make decisions about what's right for me and I feel more relaxed and self-confident as a result.'*

It would seem as if the concept of emotional intelligence, combined with this quote from IC links in some way to the idea of 'Authentic Leadership'. The term was originated by Bill George (2003 and 2007) who suggests that for leaders 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 leaders to become more congruent and consistent within their day-to-day lives.

Conclusions

Firstly, this research suggests that short-term cognitive coaching interventions can be effective and can add 'significant' personal and professional value. Therefore, extended coaching interventions of more than three months duration may not be the only approach available to clients and executive coaches.

Secondly, within the context of executive coaching, not all qualitatively 'significant' or 'important' results for individuals translate into statistically significant results. This does not decry the value of either method, but rather, suggests that within any research study both may be relevant even though they may not correlate directly.

Overall, we feel that this, albeit small scale study, is a valuable piece of research that builds on the work of Grant (2002) and Libri and Kemp (2006) in the area of executive coaching and cognitive behavioural interventions at work.

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PRACTICE: A model suitable for coaching, counselling, psychotherapy and stress management

Stephen Palmer

This paper introduces 'PRACTICE', a convenient acronym which represents an established seven-step model that has been used in coaching, counselling, psychotherapy and stress management. Using PRACTICE, the practitioner can help the client to assess issues or problems, understand their concerns, develop a range of possible solutions and implement strategies.

Keywords: PRACTICE, coaching, health coaching, problem-solving, solution-seeking, enhancing performance, counselling, stress management.

A WIDE RANGE OF coaching models, frameworks and approaches have been developed. Probably the most well known of these is the GROW model which is a framework to hold a conversation (see Whitmore, 1996). **GROW** is the acronym for **GOAL**, **REALITY**, **OPTIONS**, **WILL** (or **WRAP-UP**). A development from the GROW model was the **ACHIEVE** model (see Dembkowski & Elridge, 2003). **ACHIEVE** represents: **A**ssess current situation; **C**reative brainstorming of alternative to current situation; **H**one goals; **I**nitiate options; **E**valuative options; **V**alid action programme design; **E**ncourage momentum. The **POSITIVE** model (Libri, 2004) developed from the GROW and **ACHIEVE** models. **POSITIVE** represents **P**urpose, **O**bservations, **S**trategy, **I**nsight, **T**eam, **I**nitiate, **V**alue and **E**ncourage. Solution focused coaching often uses the **OSKAR** model (see Jackson & McKergow, 2007). **OSKAR** represents **O**utcome, **S**caling, **K**now-how and resources, **A**ffirm and action, **R**eview.

Cognitive behavioural models of coaching developed from the field of cognitive and rational emotive behaviour therapy emphasise the important of cognitions, beliefs and the perceptions a client may hold although behaviours, imagery, interpersonal

responses, and emotions are also seen as relevant. Models include Albert Ellis' well known **ABCDE** model (see Ellis *et al.*, 1997; Palmer, 2002) which stands for **A**ctivating event or situation, **B**eliefs, **C**onsequences, **D**isputation of the beliefs, **E**ffective and new approach. More recently **SPACE** has been developed (see Edgerton & Palmer, 2005), which represents **S**ocial context, **P**hysiological, **A**ction, **C**ognitions and **E**motions. Cognitive behavioural and multimodal approaches to coaching integrate problem-solving models (e.g. Wasik, 1984) within the cognitive behavioural framework (see Palmer *et al.*, 2003; Neenan & Dryden, 2002; Palmer & Szymanska, in press). This integration highlights the double-headed or dual systems nature of the approach ie the practical and the psychological aspects of dealing with issues or problems (Neenan & Palmer, 2000). Thus the emotional aspects a client may be experiencing are often addressed before dealing with the practical aspects of a problem.

From problem-solving models to PRACTICE: A solution seeking model

Edgerton and Palmer (2006) lightly criticised the seven-step problem-solving sequence developed by Wasik (1984) as it did not have a useful acronym as an *aide*

mémoire. This becomes more important when clients are expected to quickly recall, more than a four or five solution-seeking steps.

Steps (Wasik, 1984):

1. Problem identification.
2. Goal selection.
3. Generation of alternatives.
4. Consideration of consequences.
5. Decision making.
6. Implementation.
7. Evaluation.

There are other problem-solving models worth considering. For example, D’Zurilla (1986) described an in-depth problem solving approach for group work. Key techniques used included a Socratic approach for encouraging clients to formulate their own conclusions; coaching which focused on prompting, instructions, questions and suggestions; modelling; rehearsal including assignments, problem-solving exercises; and performance feedback including positive reinforcement, e.g. praise.

One of the problem-solving processes is detailed below (D’Zurilla, 1986, p.97):

1. Problem orientation: problem perception; problem attribution; problem appraisal; problem control; time/effort commitment.
2. Problem definition and formulation: gathering relevant; factual information; understanding the problems; setting a realistic problem-solving goal; re-appraising the problem.
3. Generation of alternative solutions: quantity principle; deferment-of-judgment principle; variety principle.
4. Decision making: anticipating solution outcomes; evaluating (judging and comparing) solution outcomes; preparing a solution plan.
5. Solution implementation and verification: carrying out the solution plan; self-monitoring; self-evaluation; self-reinforcement; troubleshooting and recycling.

D’Zurilla and others developed a number of slightly different problem-solving versions (also see D’Zurilla & Nezu, 1999).

An alternative framework is **PRACTICE** (Palmer, 2007) which is an adaptation of Wasik’s (1984) original seven-step sequence which has been widely used in cognitive and rational emotive behavioural coaching and counselling (see Neenan & Palmer, 2001 a,b). It can be used as an approach for different types of coaching such as performance, business, executive, health and life/personal, in addition to being used within counselling/psychotherapy and stress management. The steps are described in Table 1.

Neenan and Palmer (adapted, 2001b, pp.36–39) describe a coaching case study using the seven step framework.

Step 1: Problem identification

Brian (not his real name) was anxious about giving an important paper at a conference in a few weeks’ time. The ‘it’ needed to be explored in order to make the problem clear and precise:

Coach: What exactly is the ‘it’: presenting the paper or something else?

Brian: It’s the shaking. The audience will see my hands shaking and think I’m a nervous wreck. I won’t be able to control the shaking.

Coach: You state the problem as if there is nothing you can do about the shaking. How could you restate the problem in ways that suggest change is possible?

Brian: Presently, I find it difficult to control my shaking when speaking to audiences.

Step 2: Realistic, relevant goals developed

Coach: What would you like to achieve with regard to your shaking?

Brian: To control it so my hands shake less or not at all.

Coach: And if neither of those goals could be achieved by the time of the conference?

Brian: To accept the shaking without getting too worried about it.

Table 1.

Steps	Questions/actions
1. Problem identification	What's the problem or issue or concern? What would you like to change? Any exceptions when it is not a problem? How will we know if the situation has improved? Any distortions or can the problem or issue be viewed differently?
2. Realistic, relevant goals developed (e.g. SMART goals)	What do you want to achieve?
3. Alternative solutions generated	What are your options? Let's note them down.
4. Consideration of consequences	What could happen? How useful is each possible solution? Rating scale: 0–10
5. Target most feasible solution(s)	What is the most feasible solution(s)?
6. Implementation of Chosen solution(s)	Go and do it. (Develop manageable steps)
7. Evaluation	How successful was it? Rating scale 0 to 10 What can be learnt? Can we finish coaching now?

Step 3: Alternative solutions generated

Brian was encouraged to come up with as many solutions as possible to his problem even if they sounded stupid (i.e. thought showers – see Weisskopf-Joelson & Eliseo, [1961] for effectiveness). The coach can suggest some solutions if the person has difficulty generating them. Often clients do need assistance if this is the first time they have attempted to develop creative solution-seeking ideas especially if their usual template is to focus on the problem. The solutions proposed by Brian were:

- a. 'Keep my hands in my pocket the whole time if possible.'
- b. 'Not present the paper. Pretend I'm ill.'
- c. 'Mention my nervousness to the audience to justify the shaking just before I give my paper. Get it out of the way.'
- d. 'Take tranquillisers.'

- e. 'Accept that my hands shake. So what?'
- f. 'Make a joke every time my hands shake.'
- g. 'Give the paper and see what happens rather than automatically assuming the conference will turn out badly for me.'

Step 4: Consideration of consequences

Step 4 involved Brian considering the pros and cons of each solution previously developed. Scaling was used to rate the plausibility of each possible solution on a 0–10 scale (0 = least plausible to 10 = most plausible).

- a. 'I would look pretty stiff and awkward if I did that. I can't avoid using my hands while presenting the paper.' 2
- b. 'That sounds good initially but that would be running away and make it much harder to go before an audience at a later date. A non-starter.' 0

- c. 'That might release some tension but it might also suggest I'm asking for their sympathy. A double-edged sword.' 3
- d. 'I don't want the chemical way out. I might come across as somewhat dulled.' 4
- e. 'I like the sound of this one very much and can see the benefits I would reap.' 9
- f. 'This might bring too much unwanted attention to my shaking.' 3
- g. 'This is a reasonable way to approach the conference.' 7

Step 5: Target most feasible solution(s)

Brian chose steps e and g. However, if these steps were unsuccessful he would consider the tranquillisers option (step d). How, he enquired, was he supposed to learn to accept the fact that his hands shook when he usually demanded 'they must not shake'? (a Performance Interfering Thought [PIT]).

Coach: What happens when you say that to yourself?

Brian: It just continually reminds me that I can't control the shaking, I get worried and then my hands shake even more.

Coach: So in order to gain control over your shaking, what do you need to give up?

Brian: Stop demanding that my hands must not shake. Just let it happen and don't get alarmed about it.

Coach: Exactly. What happens when you try to hide it from others?

Brian: I feel awkward and self-conscious. So try and be natural around others. My shaking is part of me, that sort of thing. But what happens if people smirk at me or think I'm a nervous wreck? How do I control that?

Coach: Well, what can you control and what can you not?

Brian: I can't control their smirking or what they might think about me but I can control or choose how I respond to it and how I think about myself.

Coach: That's it in a nutshell.

Brian: Let's get going then.

Step 6: Implementation of chosen solution(s)

During the next couple of weeks, Brian reported that he stopped hiding or controlling his hands shaking and shared to others that he got nervous in front of audiences both large and small. He started to accept the problem and himself for having it. He wanted to have a 'rehearsal' before the actual conference so the coach arranged with his colleagues for Brian to present a paper to them. The session was videoed so Brian could evaluate his presentation skills and skills deficits. Brian also received constructive feedback regarding his performance such as not gripping the lectern too tightly and having more sips of water to avoid his voice cracking. Overall Brian concluded that he was 'Not as bad as I thought.'

Step 7: Evaluation

Brian said that the strategies of 'giving up demands for control in order to gain control and striving for self-acceptance had worked a treat.' There had been no need to use tranquillisers. Although he had remained nervous and his hands did shake at times, his coping strategy of focusing on giving the paper rather than focusing on his own symptoms of anxiety helped. In the heat of the moment clients often are so anxious that they can forget their previously prepared and rehearsed coping statement. To overcome this problem Brian placed a written note on the lectern which reminded him of his new attitude: 'If I shake, so what?'

Forms can be used to assist the coaching, counselling or stress management process (see Appendix 1). In addition coachees or clients can use the forms outside of the sessions to remind themselves of the PRACTICE structure. D'Zurilla (1986) developed the Problem-Solving Self-Monitoring Form for clients dealing with significant problems. The Problem Solving Inventory (see Heppner & Petersen, 1982) was later adapted by D'Zurilla (1986) and is designed to find out how clients generally react to

events and problems on a day-to-day basis. (Also see D’Zurilla & Nezu, 1990; D’Zurilla, *et al.*, 1996.)

Neenan and Palmer (2001 a,b) recommend that clients who are experienced at using the seven-step model can use shorter four or three step models to speed-up the solution-seeking process although the outcome may be less satisfactory. For example, **STIR**: Select problem; Target a solution; Implement a solution; Review outcome. **PIE**: Problem definition; Implement a solution; Evaluate outcome.

Applications

The problem-solving approach has been applied to a large range of issues in coaching, training and clinical settings. Its simplicity, when applied appropriately, makes it a powerful tool and over a 35-year period the basic problem-solving approach has been extensively written about and researched (see Aberson *et al.*, 2007; Biggam, 2002; Falloon, Boyd & McGill, 1984, Grant *et al.*, 2002; Hawton & Kirk, 1989; D’Zurilla, 1986; D’Zurilla & Goldfried, 1971; D’Zurilla & Nezu, 1982; D’Zurilla & Nezu, 1990; D’Zurilla, Maydeu-Olivares & Kant, 1998; Felgoise, 2002; McLeavey *et al.*, 1994; Milner & Palmer, 1998; Nezu, Nezu & Perri, 1989; Nezu *et al.*, 1997; Nezu *et al.*, 1999; Palmer 1997 a,b). Key areas of research and/or practice include ADHD, career coaching and counselling, study problems, anxiety, performance anxiety, decision making, stress management, threatened loss, actual loss, work difficulties, conflicts in which a person is faced by a major choice, partner/marital/family and other relationship problems, community problems, phobias, depression, coping with boredom, treatment of self-poisoning patients, incarcerated young offenders, improve the well-being of family caregivers, helping cancer patients cope, difficulties concerning child care, dealing

with disabilities resulting from either physical or psychiatric illness/mental health, family care of schizophrenia, weight control, substance abuse, and budgeting. The PRACTICE model attempts to focus more on solution-seeking than some of the earlier more traditional problem-solving models. These models are also appropriate for use within health coaching.

Conclusion

This article introduced PRACTICE, a model based on earlier frameworks that have been used successfully within coaching, counselling, psychotherapy and stress management. PRACTICE can also be used within a cognitive behavioural framework to focus of both practical and psychological blocks to change and enhanced performance as part of the dual systems approach. Palmer (1997 a,b) described the integration of the cognitive behavioural and rational emotive behavioural ABCDE model and the problem solving model as ‘an intrinsically brief integrative approach’ which is suitable for coaching and brief counselling settings.

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Appendix 1: Seven Steps to Solutions Form (© Stephen Palmer, 2007).

Step 1: Problem identification

What is the problem? What is the issue? What would you like to change?
Are there exceptions when it is not a problem?

.....

Step 2: Realistic relevant goals developed

Select specific, realistic, substantial and verifiable goal(s)

.....

Step 3: Alternative solutions generated

What are your options? Write down possible ways of reaching your goals.

.....

Step 4: Consider of the consequences

What could happen? How useful is each possible solution? Weigh up the pros and cons.
Use a rating scale 1 to 10

.....

Step 5: Target most feasible solutions

Choose the most feasible solution(s).

.....

Step 6: Implementation of

Chosen solutions

Go and do it. (Note down manageable steps)

.....

Step 7: Evaluation

How successful was it? Use a rating scale 1 to 10. Focus on your achievement.
What can be learnt? Can we finish coaching now? Review and revise plan as necessary.

.....

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Time for NLP to get positive: A response to Linder-Pelz and Hall

Bruce Grimley

Linder-Pelz and Hall argue they have taken a step forward in evaluating NLP in an informed way (The Coaching Psychologist, Vol. 3, No. 1, p.15). This article responds by suggesting they have provided only one of many differing opinions. NLP, despite being with us since the 1970s, is not even in a position to be evaluated as it is too loosely constructed with little rigour or substance, in either form or content. NLP remains an exciting adventure which has yet to come of age ... if it ever does.

Keywords: Modelling, Whispering in the Wind, John Grinder, NLP.

NLP IS: the study of the structure of subjective experience or an attitude with a methodology which leaves behind a trail of techniques.

Neither of these traditional definitions of NLP seem to resemble the NLP definition of Linder-Pelz and Hall (2007): 'NLP is a communication model.' With everyone and their dog having an NLP certificate somewhere in their CV, NLP can be whatever we choose it to be, it is that loose, it is that diverse. This article will argue if we are going to tighten the construct of NLP we should do so in a way which reflects its methodology and epistemology. In Linder-Pelz and Hall keywords such as modelling, anchoring, representational system, sub-modality, meta-program do not exist. There is little to disagree with what Susie and Michael have written, however, this article argues it is not 'a step towards evaluating NLP in an informed way' but rather just one of the myriad of opinions as to what NLP is all about, written through the lens of a 'sameness' filter and with a cognitive and theoretical bias. One of the reasons Grinder and Bandler used a vocabulary different to psychology, e.g. anchoring rather than conditioning was to **differentiate** it from the psychological luggage that was associated with psychological labels. He accentuates this in *Whispering in the Wind* (p.273), and to now suggest how similar NLP is to

psychology is to fundamentally misunderstand the adventure which is NLP. If the founders of NLP adopted an **atheoretical** orientation in creating and maintaining NLP to then evaluate their work using a theoretical perspective, seems most strange and possibly misses the whole point of what NLP is about.

Starting point

When talking to Wyatt Woodsmall about NLP during this year's ANLP annual conference at Regents College he told me he despaired at the state of NLP at present. He pointed out Hall and Cameron-Bandler focus on the affective side of NLP, Dilts focuses more on the cognitive side, Bandler is into sub-modalities, while Grinder will not even recognise Meta Programs taking a more behaviourist approach with physiology as the main leverage point. With this in mind this article will discuss how we can tighten the construct of NLP more effectively by taking as a starting point the last writings of one of the originators of the discipline; John Grinder. The reference is his last book on NLP, co-written with Carmen Bostic St. Clair, *Whispering in the Wind* (2001).

If one wanted to know what the Sermon on the Mount meant and Jesus was in the living room and St. Paul in the kitchen that person would probably talk to Jesus, even though what St. Paul had to say might be

very interesting. One thing we forget when we talk about NLP is the people who created it are still alive, and seem to be saying very different things about their creation from the rest of us.

The foundations of NLP

The first model: The Meta model

It seems quite clear this is the first model that came out of NLP. Richard Bandler wanted John Grinder to help him build a description of what he did when he engaged in Gestalt therapy for the purpose of being able to then pass this description on to other people in a training context. The model consists of a collection of 13 syntactic patterns in human speech along with the appropriate challenges. One uses the model by initially noticing the linguistic pattern, and then when a sentence is not 'well formed' challenging it using the appropriate question. Many NLP practitioners believe this to be the most elegant and useful coaching tool to come out of NLP. When used effectively it has the effect of re-connecting the coachee with their reference experience. This in turn will always have the effect of providing them with a far greater range of choices, or assisting them understand they really do not know what they are talking about, both useful first steps.

The second model: Representational systems

According to the authors of *Whispering in the Wind* it is equally clear the second NLP model was representational systems. The benefit of noticing sensory predicates according to this model is that it facilitates rapport and communication if when talking as coaches we match our client's ongoing representations. What Grinder regards as one of the few **original** patterns to come out of NLP, is that of eye accessing cues. This means an NLP coach can match ongoing representational systems simply by observing eye movements.

The third model: The Milton model

The third model has come to be known as the inverse of the first model. Just as the meta model encourages precision listening and questioning the Milton model encourages artfully vague communication in coaching. The idea is to match the client's model of the world, distract and overload their conscious mind through linguistic ambiguity, and then gain access to the unconscious mind and facilitate change at that level. As Grinder provocatively says; 'Anyone purporting to be a coach who fails to develop precise tools for the explicit participation of unconscious processes is not a coach but a clown' (www.johngrinder.com). This third model resulted historically in the creation of NLP according to John Grinder (Bostic St. Clair & Grinder, 2001, p.184) However, in Linder-Pelz and Hall's evaluation of NLP the Meta model, representational systems, or the Milton model, are not mentioned once.

One final pattern: The six-step reframe

Bostic St. Clair and Grinder call this pattern the breakthrough pattern because it bridged the cavern between Classic Code NLP and New Code NLP. Essentially the six steps engaged the unconscious mind much more than did Classic Code NLP. Bostic St. Clair and Grinder make quite clear the advantage of New Code is that it identifies the frame within which change will occur and it makes use of the unconscious mind when assigning important responsibilities, for example selection of the desired state, the resources to be used, and the new behaviour. The specific stages of the six-step reframe are:

- Identify the behaviour(s) to be changed.
- Establish a reliable involuntary signal system with the unconscious.
- Confirm the positive intention and separate it from the behaviour.
- Generate a set of alternatives which satisfy the positive intention.
- Arrange for the unconscious to accept responsibility for implementation.
- Ecology check.

Epistemology and methodology

NLP is clearly anti-positivist and this is exemplified by the core activity of NLP which is modelling. The idea of modelling is to explicate the tacit knowledge and skill of someone who is excellent compared with those who are merely adequate ... the difference that makes a difference. John Grinder throws down the gauntlet to psychologists: 'It is an interesting question to us how in the field of psychology came historically to be such a complete and exclusive focus on average group behaviour and patently not the exploration of the extreme of human performance (e.g. geniuses)' (p.83). On the same page Grinder is more explicit, 'Tossing the description of the patterning of behaviour of a genius into a group of descriptions of patterns of other performers and averaging across them in order to attempt to validate a pattern is antithetical to the purpose of NLP modelling projects, as well as a guaranteed way for modelers to fail to detect the differences that are the essential focus of such studies.'

This emphasis on modelling is again noticeable in the NLP framework of the NLPtCA where around a central tenet of experiential constructivism there is a quadratic reciprocity between modelling, systemic approach, outcome focus and cognitive linguistics. More specifically in one-to-one work James Lawley and Penny Tompkins (2006) talk about *modelling-in-the-moment*. The NLP practitioner models the client in order to assist them understand their map of the world more effectively so as to change it, making sure the client owns the outcome and the NLP practitioner does not acquire the states and limiting beliefs of the prohibitive map from which the client moves forward.

Modelling, therefore, is a central tenet to NLP and yet neither in the keywords nor anywhere in the text of Linder-Pelz and Hall is this word mentioned? If what we do is going to be regarded as NLP in any way it really does need to address the practice of modelling at some point. An activity which calls itself NLP, yet does not address modelling is just not NLP. To make these distinctions more clear

the following self-evident formats have been suggested by Bostic St. Clair and Grinder: NLP^{modelling}; NLP^{application}; NLP^{training}. Much of what passes as NLP today is the variant application and training of basic NLP formats under a different name or trade mark.

NLP and psychology

Bostic St. Clair and Grinder align NLP^{application} most closely with behaviourism (p.207). The main difference being that NLP^{application} can account for different responses by individuals to the same manipulation of environmental variables working from an anti-positivist stance. In reading Linder-Pelz and Hall there appears to be a distinct cognitive bias which is exactly what NLP is moving away from ... the replication of maps using a linear code toward using physiology and state in a holistic way as levers to create new possibilities for our clients.

Linder-Pelz and Hall provide a psychological variant of NLP which deletes, distorts and generalises according to the map which psychologists traditionally use. However Bostic St. Clair and Grinder have much to say about this map, which they regard as totally inappropriate to the endeavour of NLP. Some of their comments have already been alluded to above concerning the anti-positivist nature of NLP.

Another interesting aspect of NLP which is often not spoken about is who is most attracted to NLP and what are the characteristics of those who do well in the adventure. Bostic St. Clair and Grinder enumerate the characteristics which prepared Grinder and Bandler to create NLP. They were:

1. A hypnotic fascination with competency/excellence.
2. A clean behavioural distinction between form and substance, process and content.
3. A positive affinity for what others call risk taking.
4. A recognition of the value of formalisation and explicit representations.
5. A positive response to ambiguity and vagueness.
6. A sharpened alertness for unusual events.

Another interesting list is that of the characteristics Bandler and Grinder had in common.

Arrogant.

Curious.

Unimpressed by authority or tradition.

Strong personal boundaries – well defined sense of personal responsibility for their own experiences and an insistence that others do likewise.

Willingness to try nearly anything rather than be bored, (or boring).

Utterly lacking in self doubt – egotistical. Playful.

Full capability as players in the Acting As if game.

Full behavioural appreciation of difference between form and content.

It is indeed feasible this interesting list of characteristics would favour and be attractive to some psychologists and not others.

As an NLP coach this last characteristic, (form and content) is one of the ethical essentials of NLP coaching. Bostic St. Clair and Grinder (p.307) show how, in their opinion, one of the original exemplars of NLP; Virginia Satir, imposes her personal presupposition (content) on a client. Once this presupposition is accepted the client behaves as though it were true, in the same manner a hypnotic subject in a show would momentarily accept it were true that he was a chicken whilst on stage. For the NLP coach, content is left entirely up to the client, whilst the coach ‘shamelessly’ works at the level of process. Virginia Satir according to Bostic St. Clair and Grinder and from an NLP perspective was effective in facilitating change, however did so in an unethical manner.

The way forward?

To my knowledge *Whispering in the Wind* was John Grinder’s last publication concerning NLP and in it he and Bostic St. Clair say, ‘It is regrettable that creating variations on such themes seem to be the principle focus of much activity in NLP as opposed to modelling of new patterns itself.’

The ‘themes’ they refer to are the hundreds of variations of the five basic NLP patterns, all of which have as their basic outcome ‘nothing more than the manipulation of *our client’s* representations’ (italics my addition p.198) For those of you who do not have a copy of *Whispering in the Wind* these five patterns are:

1. The Meta model. Designed to verbally challenge the mapping (f²) between first access to the outside world through our senses, (representational systems), (f¹) and our linguistically mediated mental maps.
2. Operations defined over representational systems and their sub-modalities, for example the Swish technique.
3. Reframing patterns where representations are placed in a different cognitive structure.
4. Anchoring, where undifferentiated groupings of representations are brought together for purposes of integration.
5. The Milton model where representations at f¹ are shifted by using f² patterning without the need to map those representations into the client’s conscious understanding.

It is understandable that the keyword Meta States is mentioned in Linder-Pelz and Hall as this is a direction Michael Hall has taken in his personal NLP journey. However, if Jesus and St. Paul disagree in order to move forward do we not need consensus? If consensus is not forthcoming we then need two differing religions. John Grinder specifically challenges Michael: ‘Michael Hall gives the impression that he finds great value in a riotous proliferation of ever ‘higher’ levels of meta states although we find it difficult to imagine what advantages might accrue from such activities. We invite Michael Hall to make explicit the answer to the simple meta model challenge; ‘meta states are states about other states ... about, how specifically?’ (p.288). Robert Dilts finds himself in the firing line too concerning ‘logical levels’. Bostic St. Clair and Grinder ask Robert to make explicit the ordering principle

whereby he arrived at this model. They go on to say his answer will determine whether it is a legitimate formal pattern or a content model, possibly useful but clearly not within the domain of NLP (p.305).

Bostic St. Clair and Grinder say: 'We know of no patterns proposed by NLP researchers that are unordered listings of operations to carry out' (p.281). Is it not possible the time has come for NLP to grow up, and subject these ordered listings of operations to randomised controlled research and settle the score once and for all? However, anti-positivist NLP may be at the end of the day a key characteristic of a good and elegant NLP model is how effectively it can be transferred and **effectively** used by other people. This is something that can be validated using a statistical and positivist approach. At present NLP is much of everything and something of nothing. Reiterating as at the beginning of this article, there is little to disagree with what Susie and Michael say, and that is the problem. NLP is still too diverse for anyone other than it's creators to tighten it up and create a legacy, or allow it to remain in the realms of pop psychology for ever.

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Anxiety and the coaching relationship: How to recognise the signs and what to do next

Kasia Szymanska

This paper addresses how to recognise and manage symptoms of anxiety in the coaching relationship.

Keywords: anxiety, symptoms, strategies, panic, specific phobia, social phobia and Generalised Anxiety Disorder.

THE SECOND in the series on coaching psychology and mental health issues, this paper focuses on anxiety. From a clinical perspective, anxiety is a generic term which encompasses a number of related disorders as formalised in the DSM-IV-TR. These include panic disorder, specific phobia, social phobia, Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD), Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), Acute Stress Disorder (AST) and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and health anxiety.

This paper will address the symptoms of the first four disorders, panic, specific phobia, social phobia and GAD and focuses on a selection of strategies coaching psychologists can adopt to support clients in managing their symptoms.

It is the first in a series of three papers on anxiety, the second will focus on the remainder of the disorders and the third will provide a more detailed overview of the techniques coaching psychologists can implement in their work with clients who experience anxiety disorders.

Anxiety is a familiar component of the coaching relationship. Clients can present with milder forms of anxiety contextualised within their presenting issues such as increased levels of worrying, concern or

physiological symptoms e.g. tension, or anxiety can be so debilitating, such as social phobia that it impacts not only on the individual but also their ability to function in the work environment, in social settings and on their general quality of life. Figures derived from The Office for National Statistics Psychiatric Morbidity Report (2000) suggest that anxiety and depression are some of the common disorders in UK and that some nine per cent of adults experienced symptoms of anxiety in 2000, while 20 per cent reported increased levels of worrying.

Panic disorder

A&E is frequently the first port of call for individuals with symptoms of panic, (Katern-dahl, 2002). Often, the 'diagnosis' of panic can engender a sense of relief and together with the use of medication, e.g. propranolol and/or the use of avoidance as a 'coping' strategy serves to reduce the frequency of symptoms.

In the coaching arena clients often present with symptoms embedded within specific scenarios associated with the workplace such as giving presentations, participating in meetings and transportation, e.g. planes and car journeys.

Some of the more common symptoms of panic include:

1. Physiological symptoms such as an increased heart rate, tightness in the chest, dizziness, sweating, shaking and fainting. Often clients are more likely to have fear of having the latter two symptoms rather than experiencing them.
2. Variations of the following negative cognitions, such as 'I'm going to have a heart attack', 'This is terrible', 'Everyone is looking at me', 'I'm so weak', 'I'm so stupid' and 'I'm going to make a fool of myself.'

For some clients panic attacks occur in conjunction with agoraphobia.

Specific phobias

The DSM-IV-TR defines a phobia as 'marked and persistent fear that is excessive or unreasonable.' It can affect up to 1.9 per cent of the population (The Office for National Statistics, 2000) and can be applied to objects, situations or specific issues such as planes, animals, lifts, blood, heights, airplanes, thunder storms and fear of choking or vomiting.

It is characterised by complete or partial avoidance and often pre-empted by anticipatory anxiety which can include physiological symptoms and negative cognitions, e.g. 'I know I'll panic if the lift stops.'

Social phobia

Social phobia which often begins in adolescence is characterised by a fear of behaving in embarrassing or humiliating way and the fear of being scrutinised by others. It is often accompanied by shyness and can lead to symptoms of panic either in situ or as part of the anticipatory fear.

A central theme which dominates social phobia is an increase in self-consciousness leading to unhelpful spiral of sensation awareness and negative interpretation of symptoms and emotions. For example, a client walking into a networking meeting on their own may think about the fact they are

walking into a room full of people they don't know, this can lead to 'butterflies' or a feeling of anxiety, which in turn can be interpreted as weak by the person leading to a series of further physiological and cognitive symptoms such as blushing and heart racing.

GAD

The DSM-IV-TR defines GAD as, 'Excessive anxiety and worry (apprehension expectation) occurring more days than not for at least six months, about a number of events or activities (such as work or school performance).'

Some of the components of GAD include:

- High levels of worrying;
- Poor concentration;
- Difficulties in sleeping;
- Muscle tension and restlessness;
- Irritability.

The key feature of GAD is increased worrying about most things, which Leahy (2006) describes as the 'what if disease'. Clients can often worry about worrying which can in turn lead to heightened anxiety and episodes of depression.

As with depression (Szymanska, 2006), the decision to work with clients who experience any of the above disorders depends on a number of factors, the severity of the client's problems, the impact of anxiety on the coaching process, the coaching psychologist's skills and confidence in using the strategies and your client's motivation to work on these issues.

Counselling/clinical psychologists work *with* the disorders while coaching psychologists may work with *aspects* of the disorders, presented as part of the ongoing case formulation.

Clients with longstanding patterns of thinking/behaviour underpinned by anxiety or severe symptoms of anxiety which can impact on the coaching process may benefit from seeing a counselling/clinical psychologist before they start coaching. For example, I once saw a client for coaching who presented with low levels of motivation.

He had being offered a senior role within the company which he was reticent about accepting. The position involved a substantial amount of travel and taking clients out for dinner. After careful questioning it transpired that while the client was under a considerable amount of stress and was concerned about achieving the 'perfect' life/work balance, which could be addressed in coaching, one of the main causes of his stress was a fear of choking when eating with others. The client had choked four times in the last two years when eating with colleagues and now was anticipating choking and making 'a fool' of himself. In addition it seemed that the fear of choking could be traced back to his mother who before her death was unable to eat or drink without choking. Wearing my coaching psychologist's hat at the time, I referred the client for cognitive therapy to manage his fears and then saw him to focus on strategies to manage pressure.

Therapeutic strategies which can be adapted to support clients with panic, specific phobias and social phobias.

Psycho-education/self-help materials: primarily psycho-education has a powerful impact as a normalising tool. For many clients it is a relief to see 'their' symptoms in black and white and for clients who believe that the manifestation of symptoms is the first step towards madness, knowing that others experience similar symptoms can serve to reduce their conviction in the idea of 'I'm going mad.'

Breathing re-training: The onset of physiological symptoms, such as tightness in the chest and a rapid heart beat, can induce catastrophic misinterpretation, e.g. 'I'm having a stroke'.

Clients with physiological symptoms should be seen by a doctor to rule out organic reasons for their symptoms, if there are none, clients may benefit from breathing re-training as a strategy to manage their symptoms. Hyperventilation or over breathing can lead

to an imbalance of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the blood leading to symptoms such as chest pains or tingling. Consistent application of breathing strategies can help clients reduce sensations and recognise that they are harmless (Taylor, 2000).

Confronting fears on a step-by-step basis: applicable in the main to symptoms of panic, specific phobias and social phobia, confronting fears using small steps has the impact of increasing self-efficacy and a sense of self-control. Clients have a choice, to continue to feel fear/anxiety which tends to involve avoiding situations or take control and address the issue, short term pain for long term gain! A written assignment focusing on the costs and benefits of avoiding dealing with their current situation versus the costs and benefits of step-by-step confrontation can be beneficial as an initial step towards change. The second step is to draw up a list of situations the client avoids, starting with the easiest first before encouraging your client to face the next scenario and so on, whilst closely monitoring outcomes. To facilitate positive results clients should be encouraged to stay in each situation until their fear has reduced, leading to habituation.

Positive self-talk/cognitive restructuring: negative self-talk is a dominant component of psychological problems. For example, a fear of panicking/fainting on the tube (anticipatory anxiety) can lead to an increase in physiological symptoms, expectations of failure, and avoidance of the issue (both cognitive and behavioural). To increase the chances of success client negative self-talk needs to be identified and restructured, initially during sessions and then practised by the client whilst undertaking tasks.

To restructure negative self-talk the following Socratic questions can be implemented:

Where is the evidence that ...?

What would you say to a friend/colleague in the same situation?

How likely is it that the worst will happen?
What are the costs/benefits of thinking this way?
What is a better way of thinking about this situation?
If my thoughts were presented as evidence in court would they stand up for scrutiny by the judge?

Reduction in safety behaviours: safety behaviours are employed to manage difficult situations, e.g. sitting by the door in a meeting to be near an escape route, avoiding eye contact with colleagues to reduce the chances of being asked questions and sitting down to avoid dizziness and fainting. Clients often describe these strategies as essential coping mechanisms; however, they only serve to reinforce anxiety and fear.

Self-monitoring and discussion during sessions can heighten awareness of safety behaviours. While focusing on the negative consequences of specific behaviours is a precursor for relinquishing their gradual application. So when discussing avoiding eye contact with colleagues in meetings with a client who tended to avoid large groups of colleagues for fear of saying the 'wrong thing', we focused on the negative consequences of her behaviour, such as, that means that people are less likely to speak to you, they may even find you unapproachable, or think you are uninterested in working for the company and it only intensifies your lack of confidence. We then went onto practise communication skills and cognitive restructuring in the session before she went on to use the strategies in the workplace.

Worry management: in addition to being a predominant feature of GAD, worrying is a common human trait! It tends to become problematic when it is unremitting, seen as beneficial (e.g. as a problem solving strategy) and when clients start to worry about worry! In his book on handling worrying Leahy (2006) describes the worst strategies clients can use to manage worries, such as trying to use thought stopping, being more positive, checking and ruminating.

A number of strategies can be used to help clients manage worries: identifying worries in writing can loosen a client's belief in their validity; focusing on the costs and benefits of worrying or specific worries can have the same impact; setting aside a short time each day to focus on worries and their solutions (Borkovec *et al.*, 1983b); and writing down a list of reasons as to why worrying is *not* helpful.

Conclusion

Being such a ubiquitous condition, the body of evidence based strategies developed to manage anxiety is firmly in place, so for clients who do not want to seek psychotherapy or have low grade symptoms embedded within coaching specific contexts, adapting strategies used in the therapeutic arena can break the cycle of anxiety, increase self-efficacy and motivation. To reduce the chances of relapse, clients need to be encouraged to use these strategies regularly and with vigour.

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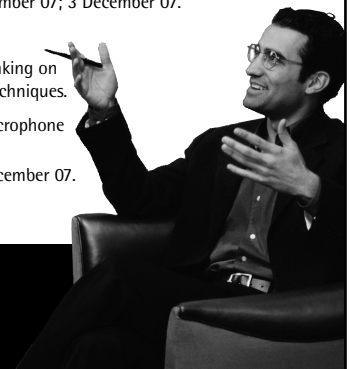
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International News

Developing evidence-based coaching practices in Denmark

Jens Boris Larsen, Tina R. Kilburn & Anders Myszak

In this article we describe a recent and important development within the Danish Psychological Association with the creation of the Society of Evidence-based Coaching, the first society in Danish psychological history to deal specifically with coaching and psychology as a distinct profession. Being three of the founding psychologists and elected members of the board of the Society, we present some of the reasons for having a society of this kind, the attitude changes within the Danish psychological profession that are needed if coaching is to develop as a profession amongst psychologists, how we wish to conduct a 'dialogue of inclusion' with other professions and players in the field, the need and wish for international relations and our hopes for the future development and the positive impact of the society and evidence-based coaching.

Keywords: Evidence-based coaching, society, continuation development, international relations.

IN MARCH, 2007, a group of Danish psychologists formed a Society of Evidence-based Coaching within the auspices of the Danish Psychological Association.

As of the beginning of July, 2007, The Society has 40 members who are psychologists and about 25 associated members with other academic and non-academic backgrounds. Our membership database is growing with new applications for membership coming in on a daily basis and we expect to cross the 100 member mark in the near future.

In the Danish Psychological Association, professional development is taking place within various societies. Thus, the Society of Organizational Psychology is aimed at development of business psychology, industrial psychology and organizational change, whereas other societies deal with various areas of clinical psychology. The Society of Evidence-based Coaching is the first society to directly address issues and challenges within coaching as profession in its own right.

In current psychological practice in Denmark there is an increasing need for practitioners to provide evidence for the effectiveness of their interventions. This is

creating a trend where evidence-based psychological practice is in demand from both service recipients and service providers. It is a trend that is not restricted to the coaching field but one that applies across a much wider range of psychological services and practices. The need to provide evidence for coaching interventions is thus an example of a much larger trend that seems to touch every aspect of the psychological profession. Being part of a larger change in society, this presents many challenges for psychologists and the coaching profession in general as it adapts to these changing circumstances. The Society of Evidence-based Coaching is a response from members of the Danish Psychological Association to secure that we meet these challenges with appropriate professional standards and practices as well as taking care of the need to develop coaching as an artful intervention even further.

The Society is based on the beliefs that understanding and knowledge of psychological theory that underpins coaching will allow coaching and coaching psychology to develop further, and that Danish psycho-

logists have important roles to play in that respect. In this regard it is important that a scientific approach not only takes biomedical models of evidence-based theory and practice into account, but also integrates perspectives that are better equipped to harness the full spectrum of human behaviour and of the human mind. This is especially important as many coaching interventions are not aimed at phenomena that are clinical or pre-clinical. Psychologists of all areas should get involved as this clearly provides a route for the development of psychological interventions that benefit both clinical and non-clinical populations. Hence, this is a model opportunity to extend the premises of scientific psychology that we hope that the Society can contribute to.

As coaching is a complex field, and as the development of evidence-based coaching practices will have to take the current status of the field into account, the aims of the Society thus become manifold in order to mirror this complexity.

Developing adequate scientific models is one such aim. Another aim is to pass on these models to practitioners in the field. As a society within the Danish Psychological Association, the primary task is to promote the development of evidence-based coaching practices among psychologists in Denmark and to provide the necessary ethical perspectives so that practitioners can use the knowledge in the best possible way. It is our hope that, in the future, psychologists that engage in coaching relationships with their clients can be guided by and make informed decisions to best serve their clients based on the best available research in coaching.

One aspect here of particular importance is the delimitation of various coaching practices with respect to the qualifications of the practitioner, the delimitation between coaching and psychotherapy probably being one of the more obvious ones. What might not be so obvious yet to most Danish psychologists is that evidence-based continuation training is necessary if the psychologist is to develop sound professional qualifications in

the field of coaching. Knowing one's limitations is, of course, central to any ethically sound practice.

A dialogue of inclusion

The above considerations also apply to our associated members. As coaching today is practiced in a sound way in both formal and non-formal settings where many skills and forms of knowledge are put into play, very often as a tool to help solve problems in organisations and people's lives on a daily or project basis, it is not necessarily wise to restrict coaching and make it a sole property of psychologists.

Still, regardless of background, the Society is furthermore based on the belief that all professions can benefit from expanding their practice to include theories, models and tools from the evidence-based tradition. As a result of this, the Society is open to associated members, that is, coaches with relevant training that comes from other academic and non-academic fields (HR, economics, cultural studies, teachers and so on) who also have an interest in evidence-based coaching practice.

In this way, we hope that the field of evidence-based coaching can grow even further.

The first initiatives

To support these purposes, the Society has taken various initiatives, beginning with offering lectures and seminars in a variety of evidence-based coaching subjects with more projects to come as we go along.

One such important project, created by our chairman Ebbe Lavendt, is the establishment of a 'Dialogue Group' that is based on a dialogue between the major players in the field of coaching in Denmark (for instance, ICC and ICF) and major Danish companies that buy coaching services on a large scale. Subjects like shared ethical standards and criteria for evaluating credentials and coaching experience when buying coaching services are some of the themes discussed here.

The Society thus offers continuation training for coaches in all professions as well as promoting dialogue within the Society and outside to both the general public as well as major players in the field. The keywords here are communication, co-operation and open-ended dialogue with people and organisations interested in furthering the field of evidence-based coaching practice.

Where we are today

At present, most coach training programmes in Denmark are not evidence-based.

Only a few psychologists are offering continuation training for psychologists within specialised theoretical models (i.e. positive psychology, narrative, systemic, cognitive based). Most providers, regardless of background, however, do not. Furthermore, a complete training that is integrative in the sense, that coaches can learn how to operate within a much wider range of theoretical and practical perspectives, does not yet exist in Denmark. As a result of this, psychologists who would like to continue their training and develop and expand their coaching capabilities have had a hard time finding coaching training which adhere to appropriate high levels professional qualifications.

The Society of Evidence-based Coaching was created to live up to the challenge to provide psychologists with high level qualifications. To begin with, the training offered is either from one theoretical perspective (e.g. positive psychology coaching) or more integrative covering certain specialised areas of coaching such as goal-setting or transitions coaching. This list will expand in the future as we translate research findings into appropriate seminar structures.

Sadly, the attitude of some Danish psychologists seems to be that being a psychologist automatically qualifies you to provide coaching or to hold lectures on coaching despite having no practical coaching experience. We hope that the

Society can help raise the awareness among Danish psychologists of the many possibilities that exist if one wishes to develop qualifications within coaching as a profession.

International liaisons

The Society encourages the development of international relationships with organisations and bodies with a shared commitment to evidence-based practices.

In the beginning of the Society's existence, we will rely heavily on the experience and lessons learned from other countries, notably the Coaching Psychology Unit in Sydney University and the UK, but it is our aim that we, in time, will be able to generate original contributions that can help develop the field even further.

At this point, we are particularly interested in sponsoring training courses and visiting lecturers to work with leading figures in the field, in Denmark, contacts regarding this proposal are welcome.

In the long run, we hope to contribute to the development of inclusive scientific models of coaching so that the full spectrum of human challenges and possibilities can be adequately addressed by a scientifically informed coaching practice. We hope that international liaisons as well as collaborations within our own country can help us achieve this aim.

Hopes for the future

All in all, we hope that psychologists in Denmark will benefit from the rich wealth of evidence-based theories, models and tools that already exist, and that coaches regardless of their background will be able to do the same.

We envision a future where coaches can have a solid evidence-based set of services that they can provide for their clients.

It is our hope that Denmark will become an important member of the international community of evidence-based practices as a place where trainings and services at the highest possible levels are offered.

To this end, we hope to expand our international relationships to foster the sharing of ideas and perspectives to develop the coaching field even further.

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COACHING FOR COACHES ADDRESSING PERSONAL PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL DILEMMAS

As professional coaches we are occasionally caught up in difficult dilemmas. Some of these dilemmas might be personal, professional or organisational in nature. Not addressing these dilemmas could lead to difficulties in our coaching work and may also blind us as to the real nature of problems within the client system that we work with.

I offer individual tailor-made coaching service for professional coaches that specifically focuses on working with dilemmas. This is done by trying to understand what connects these dilemmas and what might they be saying about the real nature of the challenge within the client group. The effects of this understanding could be beneficial to the coach as well as to the client system.

This consultative approach differs from supervision and/or counselling and is based on systems-psychodynamic theory and practice as described in my recently edited book *Executive Coaching – Systems Psychodynamic Perspective*.

If you think that this approach might be of interest to you please call me on 020 8540 9609 or visit my website www.brunningonline.net/halina.

Halina Brunning

How a hundred perspectives can make a workplace bloom

RESearchers from the Coaching Psychology Unit at the University of Sydney are embarking on the world's first major study into the connection between managers' abilities to engage with multiple viewpoints and workplaces where staff are productive and flourish.

The \$3 million study was announced at the 3rd Australian Evidence Based Coaching Conference at Sydney University. The research will initially involve 180 leaders and managers from two industry partners – the Prince of Wales Hospital and law firm Blake Dawson Waldron.

'Attracting, engaging and retaining talented employees are major challenges facing Australian industry, and this is particularly true of legal and health-care professionals', says project leader Dr Michael Cavanagh.

'The quality of the relationships between managers and employees is a key issue in staff retention and workplace stress. Our study will look at how we can develop managers' abilities to navigate their way through complex situations and find solutions that really work.

'Managers ability to see things from multiple perspectives – the organisation, employees and the consumer, is critical in creating solutions that work for the business, while at the same time creating work environments that are conducive to employee well-being.

'The two workplaces we are looking at are at the cutting edge of leadership development and are highly committed to staff and clients. Blake Dawson and Waldron were voted Chambers Global 'Australian Law Firm of the Year'. Prince of Wales Hospital is one of Australia's leading teaching hospitals. Nevertheless, the high stress nature of their industries means that staff 'churn and burn' are important issues.'

Dr Cavanagh says that up until now few studies have paid attention to metacognitive abilities such as perspective taking, and the ability to be both aware of the present and solution focused. Yet these are important abilities through which managers understand the world, structure their experience and develop solutions to meet the challenges they face.

'Workplaces are becoming increasingly complex, and while our ability to view situations through multiple perspectives usually develops as we grow older, there are techniques that can speed up the process and hone those skills', he said.

A second key aspect of the study will look at the extent to which coaching is effective in helping managers' develop and transfer these skills from the workshop to the workplace.

The project is already attracting significant interest from industry groups in the US, the UK and South Africa, and a second stage of the study could involve participation from other Australian workplaces.

Guidelines on Supervision for Coaching Psychology

Special Group in Coaching Psychology

1. Background

1.1 Need for clear guidance Increasingly, psychologists offering coaching services are applying an integrative form of coaching psychology practice that draws on specialist knowledge from across the whole domain of psychology. As most psychologists are specialists in only one or two narrow domains of psychology it is increasingly important that clear guidance is provided for supervision of integrative coaching psychology services.

In 2006 the Professional Practice Board of the British Psychological Society initiated work on harmonising professional practice guidelines across the profession, and these guidelines will include more detailed guidance on practice supervision than is currently available to practitioners.

1.2 Consistency of guidelines across domains of practice To take this project forward a working party has been established and it is likely that this work will progress later in 2006 and into 2007. Early discussions within the context of both the Professional Practice Board and the harmonisation working party have suggested that a range of supervision issues are common to all psychologist practitioners irrespective of their domain of practice. As such, it is useful to ensure congruence in supervision practices across the Society subsystems. However, it is also considered to be likely that each subspecialism will benefit from contextualising the generic guidelines to their area of practice taking into account the specialist needs of specific client groups or work areas.

This general approach congruent with the way Subject Benchmarks for domains of practice relate to the core domain of practice and represented by the National Occupational Standards for Psychology. A discussion paper exploring Subject Benchmarks for Coaching Psychology has also been developed and SGCP members are encouraged to read and comment on both discussion papers.

1.3 The purpose of this supervision guidelines paper is to maintain dialogue with the members of the SGCP about supervision practices that apply to the professional practice of coaching psychology and psychological coaching and to provide interim guidelines for Chartered Psychologists¹ working as coaching psychologists and acting as supervisors.

1.4 Two aims of this paper This paper will support the SGCP in achieving of two specific aims. These are:

1. To invite discussion which will inform the development of a coaching psychology perspective that will be presented within the context of the harmonisation of professional practice guidelines working party².
2. To inform the further development of supervision guidelines which are contextualised for coaching psychology supervision.

¹ The guidelines do not provide a framework for non-Chartered psychologists to supervise others.

² This aim relates more specifically to the SGCP Discussion Paper on *Supervision for Coaching Psychology* (December, 2006).

2. Introduction

2.1 Implications of Growth and Demand

Growth and demand for professional services, which are focused on one-to-one development in work and life, has increased substantially over the past 10 years. Psychological theories and methods are being integrated into generic coach and mentor training programmes within both graduate and undergraduate programmes. And there are now plans to integrate a new unit on the psychological underpinnings of coaching and mentoring within the National Occupational Standards for Coaching and Mentoring in the Workplace to assist with boundary management between the domains of psychology and coaching practice at NVQ and S/NVQ levels 3 and 4.

This growth in the delivery of coaching training that includes explicit reference to psychology reflects an increase in the level of interest in using psychological approaches by non-psychologists also reflected throughout the broader coaching and mentoring community.

A key implication of these developments is that psychologically oriented approaches are increasingly being applied within coaching practice and coach training programmes by practitioners with little or no formal training in psychology as well as by experienced psychology practitioners.

2.2 Role for psychologists in providing supervision

Whilst it is desirable to see psychology applied broadly throughout the general community and society in general, this increase in the explicit application of psychology within coaching practice implies that a corresponding role for psychologists in providing supervision to support the use of psychology within broader coaching practice. At the same time coaching psychologists as a professional group have a responsibility to demonstrate best practice in terms of personal and professional development and demonstration of quality in the delivery of psychological services by adopting appropriate supervision practices themselves.

2.3 Supervisory needs of Group The following broad groups are represented in the membership structure of SGCP and the supervisory needs of each group are different. Supervisory needs reflect:

Chartered Psychologists

- Chartered Psychologists who are applying their professional expertise derived from one primary domain of psychology in relation to coaching process.
- Chartered Psychologists who are integrating professional practices from across two or more sub-domains of psychology and applying these within the coaching process.

Members with the Graduate Basis for Registration (GBR)

- GBR qualified members of the Society who are already practitioners in training in one (or more) of the Society Divisions.
- GBR members who have not selected a qualifications route from amongst existing options. Some GBR members have expressed the view that existing divisional routes do not support their career goals as coaching psychology practitioners.

Affiliates

- Coaching practitioners from a range of professions and backgrounds and who have no formal training in psychology or any related area of practice such as counselling, or psychotherapy.
- Coaching practitioners who are highly qualified in a related area of practice such as counselling and psychotherapy and who are applying knowledge and skills from these related domains of practice within their coaching practice.

Supervision requirements will differ for each of these membership groups of SGCP and the supervision requirements for affiliates and GBR members are not straight forward.

2.4 Affiliate/GBR limitations on the supervision For members who are either affiliates, or possess the Graduate Basis for Registration, it is important to note that within the Society there are limitations on the supervision of the professional practice of psychology. We advise that all members consult the Society's *Code of Conduct* and ensure that both the professional development services offered and supervision process engaged with is fit of purpose in supporting development needs. The code of conduct applies equally to all membership levels and types.

2.5 Implications of Charter As the Society is a professional Society with a Royal Charter, this has specific implications for our members. Only members whose expertise in psychology has been clearly demonstrated by thorough completion of the chartering process are recognised as professional practicing psychologists. Therefore, the supervision of psychological practice should be conducted by a Chartered Psychologist because no other form of practice qualification is recognised by the Society. Forms of supervision covered by this caveat include the supervision of psychologist Practitioners in Training (PIT's) who working towards chartered status (within any Division) or the professional practice of psychology in any area of psychological work.

2.6 Case for developing accreditation route It is important to note that Coaching Psychology is viewed by the Society to be a valid area of psychological work. However, there is currently disagreement about whether or not coaching psychology represents an area of practice, which has sufficient breadth and depth to warrant its own qualifications route leading Chartered Status. The findings of our Coaching Psychology Subject Benchmarks Project have clearly demonstrated that there is a good case for developing an accreditation route for Coaching Psychology that would lead to Chartered Status or equivalent.

Given that the term 'supervision' does have specific meanings and implications within the Society, it is advisable that for some of the professional development activities that hosted for members will use the term 'support', rather than supervision. For example, affiliates and GBR members could engage in 'professional support or development' groups within the context of the SGCP, however, they could not engage in 'peer supervision' for any aspect of psychological practice.

One of the key aims of this supervision guidelines paper is to invite all SGCP members to consider both the general principles and particular aspects of contextualising generic supervision guideless for the practice of coaching psychology. We would also like to explore the creation of supervision guidelines for the application of psychology by coaching practitioners who either have no psychology qualifications, or partial progress towards professional status within the Society.

2.7 Responsibility of Members The SGCP takes the position that all Society members who provide coaching psychology or psychological coaching services, whatever their background and status should receive regular supervision for their coaching activities. Whilst it is not mandatory it is expected that coaching psychologists will have some form of supervision that best supports their practice. There is no one prescriptive model and it is left to the supervisor and supervisee to negotiate an appropriate contract. It is, however, the responsibility of each individual member to ensure that they access an appropriately qualified supervisor and to ensure that all psychology practice conforms to guidelines prescribed within the Society's *Code of Conduct*. This paper addresses the gap between guidelines set out by the Society for Chartered Psychologists as part of CPD, the *Code of Ethics and Conduct* and Independent practitioner guidelines. This does have some specific implications where the 'professional practice of coaching psychology' is concerned which will be described in detail.

Existing Society generic guidelines for supervision can be found distributed through official documents published by the Society. The guidelines for independent practitioners state that all psychologists whether employed by an organisation or operating within an independent practice should access appropriate supervision.

These generic guidelines do not prescribe what specific types of supervision practices are appropriate for practitioners working integratively as coaching psychologists. So the development of individual supervision practices for integrative practitioners has been left to the good judgement practitioners and their supervisors. This does not imply that poor standards exist for coaching psychology supervision, however, it does mean is that different types and expressions of supervision practice are currently considered to be appropriate depending upon the nature and extent of coaching psychology practice employed by a coaching psychologist practitioner. Guidelines for integrative forms of psychological practice will be covered within the generic professional practice guidelines that are being produced by the Professional Practice Board (Generic Professional Practice Guidelines Working Party Documents).

A range of published supervision guidelines for other areas of psychological work do, however, exist and are contextualised for the specific needs of practitioners working other areas of psychology practice. Not all Divisions and Special Groups of the Society have published guidelines, however, it is often the case that coaching psychologist practitioners will at a minimum to adopt the guidelines endorsed by their main divisional affiliation (Division Professional Practice Guidelines – Division of Occupational Psychology to be provided as hard copy).

2.8 Type and level of supervision needed

Exercising judgement over determining what type and level of supervision is needed for any coaching activity must take into account the nature of the coaching process.

Some forms of coaching applied in work settings are described as being largely ‘performance based’ and aimed at achieving specific work-based goals that are pre-determined by a management performance appraisal. These activities may provide little scope for working directly with clients on deeper issues of personal motivation. However, even when services do not involve working with underlying issues, they can impact on clients at a very deep level or require that the practitioner has a sophisticated understanding of deep motivational drives to succeed in implementing the ‘surface’ level implementation.

So the SGCP takes the view that the coaching process generally holds substantial similarity to any psychological or psychotherapeutic service that is delivered on a one-to-one basis. It is a dynamic process that has potential to influence both the recipient well as the personal and organisational systems of which they are a part. The coach can influence the coaching process intentionally or unintentionally and supervision plays an important role in ensuring that the coach maintains an appropriate degree of awareness as well as due diligence with relation to the impact they have on the client at both the surface and ‘deep’ levels.

Access to feedback within some contexts is often limited, unsystematic and infrequent and these factors can represent significant risks to the interests of the client. Ensuring the professional development of the coaching psychologist in these circumstances generally indicates that supervision should be provided by an external, rather than an internal supervisor.

The following are examples of situations which emerge within the coaching process and which require close attention and discussion with experienced colleagues in possession of appropriate psychological competences:

- **Coaching contracts** generally imply that a practitioner whether a psychologist or a psychological coach does not work directly with underlying issues and

dysfunctions. When the coach or psychologist identifies that a client's 'blocks' to development would be better served by psychological intervention then it can be necessary to refrain from working on the deeper issues. This could be a difficult decision to make without a reflection process facilitated by a supervisor who understands the process of diagnosis and on-referral to appropriate sources of psychological support. Issues relating to the nature of the contract may either prevent or explicitly endorse interventions of either a deep or even 'clinical' nature within the context of the coaching process. However, these are factors that must be taken into account in addition to the simple competence of the coaching psychologist or coach to deliver the service.

- **Management of Boundaries** The management of personal as well as professional boundaries is important within the coaching process and supervisors must be competent to ensure that any underlying personal issues that could affect the coaching process are managed effectively and appropriately.
- **Management of values conflicts and confidentiality issues** Coaching services are frequently applied within a complex system such as a family, social network or work organisation. These environments are unpredictable and complex. Successful management of values conflicts and confidentiality issues are highly dependent on effective and sensitive contracting. Participating in a supportive and critically reflective process of supervision can both prevent serious issues from occurring and ensure that issues that do emerge are managed well.

3. The nature and purpose of supervision

3.1 Primary purpose of coaching supervision

As in psychology supervision generally, the primary purpose of coaching supervision is to ensure that the needs of the client(s) are met in the most effective and appropriate manner. Within the context of generic coaching practice this may mean the application of psychological principles and also of expertise drawn from other professional domains such as health care or management science.

3.2 Defining coaching supervision

One possible way to define coaching supervision is: 'Coaching supervision is a formal process of professional support which ensures continuing development of the coach and effectiveness of his/her coaching practice through interactive reflection, interpretative evaluation and the sharing of expertise' (Bachkirova, Stevens & Willis, 2005). The key difference between coaching and coaching psychology supervision is that coaching psychology supervision explicitly addresses the psychological nature of the coaching relationship as well as the application of psychological theory and methods within the coaching process.

Coaching supervision is concerned with supporting the SGCP member in their coaching role; examining the coaching process which includes the relationship between coach and client. The purpose of supervision is to enhance the effectiveness of the service; ensuring that ethical standards are maintained throughout the coaching process. It also provides a formal structure for a coaching practitioner to reflect on the ways in which they are effectively meeting the needs of clients and how they need to continually develop their practice.

3.3 Main aims of supervision The main aims of supervision could be summarised as allowing the coaching psychologist or psychological coach to:

- Assess the extent to which they are meeting the needs of their clients;
- Reflect on their practice;
- Question their approach and practice in a supportive and challenging environment;
- Monitor their relationship with the client and the organisation;
- Develop new approaches and learning in order to be more effective with clients;
- Provide a structure for coaches to develop their practice and report on their progress, and;
- Ensure high standards of ethics in coaching process.

4. The management of supervision work

4.1 Formats of supervision

One-to-one supervision supervisor and supervisee

One-to-one supervision involves one member of SGCP being supervised by one coaching supervisor. For example, a coach with little experience may seek a supervisor who can provide a competent professional support and assist them in finding their own style of practice. Experienced psychologists who work as coaches may also like to choose this format of supervision if they are interested in a process that is entirely focussed on their own practice and have identified a supervisor, collaboration with whom they believe can significantly enrich it.

Co-supervision (peers)

Co-supervision involves two peers providing supervision to each other where one coaching psychologist takes the role of a supervisor for their peer and then they change roles. It is expected that the peers in this case are already experienced coaching psychologists and both are competent as coaching supervisors. Typically the time would be divided equally between them.

Group supervision with an identified supervisor

A group of practitioners in coaching meet with an identified appointed supervisor for

the purposes of supervision. In some groups the supervisor can lead the group in a fairly structured way, setting the time allotted to each practitioner and working with each one in a fairly focussed way. It is possible also for the group members to allocate supervision time equally and to use the supervisor as a technical resource. In group supervision there needs to be set criteria for membership and the way the group works together with the supervisor. This is best defined in a written document so that the membership is aware of the way group supervision in the particular group works.

Peer group supervision

Peer supervision in a group setting takes place where a group of experienced coaching psychologists meet and provide supervision to each other on a reciprocal basis. As with group supervision, there needs to be set criteria for membership and the way in which the peer group supervision is going to be managed. The criteria for membership need to be discussed and agreed before the group sets itself up and be reviewed periodically.

4.2 Which format of supervision is appropriate for whom?

In considering what supervision will work best for a SGCP member, and ultimately for the clients of the coaching practitioner, the following issues should be considered:

- What format of supervision most fits his/her development needs as a coaching practitioner in order to be effective with clients?
- Depending on the member's experience, what level, frequency and type of supervision are they looking for?
- Depending on the amount of coaching they are carrying out, how frequent does the supervision need to be?

For example, it is suggested that peer and group supervision formats without an assigned experienced supervisor are suitable only for those members of SGCP who are not only possess the full range of psychological

knowledge and practical skills relevant to the domain of coaching psychology but also have necessary competences (see 5.1.) and are in a position to act as coaching supervisors.

4.3 Coaching supervision climate and management

Coaching supervision is most effective where the climate:

- Is appropriately supportive;
- Is constructively challenging;
- Provides a safe environment for open disclosure and discussion;
- Is underpinned by the relevant psychological theories and;
- Provides a structure of agreed confidentiality and ethics.

4.4 Coaching Agreement Supervision should be arranged with a formal agreement that is discussed and established from the outset. This agreement should include, and should set out the:

- Frequency of the supervision;
- Nature of the supervision, location, length of sessions;
- Number of people, if this is a format of group supervision;
- The criteria for membership of the group;
- Fees charged (if applicable);
- Duration of agreement, and;
- Review points.

4.5 Frequency of supervision The frequency of supervision for a member of SGCP will depend mainly on two main factors: their experience in coaching and the amount of coaching work that he/she is undertaking. Coaching psychologists who have little experience will need more supervision in the early stages of their development and practice, and possibly more one-to-one supervision to focus specifically on their practice. In terms of the second factor, a coaching practitioner who is working extensively, and maybe exclusively, with coaching clients will require more frequent supervision than one who coaches clients from

time to time and coaching forms a small part of the work they undertake.

For example, the baseline for the amount of coaching supervision is suggested as one hour per month. It is considered to be an absolute minimum relevant only to the experienced, well-trained coaching psychologists engaged on a relatively light coaching load. Participation in group supervision should be counted proportionally to the frequency of sessions and a number of participants. With more than seven participants the attention to the individual cases and so effectiveness of individual supervision would be significantly diminished.

5. The issues of responsibility

5.1 Roles and Responsibilities With the respect to monitoring, maintaining and enhancing their effectiveness in addressing the needs of their clients: (a) coaching psychologists are responsible for their work with a client and for presenting and exploring as fully as possible this work with the coaching supervisor; and (b) supervisors are responsible for helping coaches to reflect upon that work.

- Supervisors and coaches must also take into consideration in any decision process their responsibility to other parties involved, for example, sponsors, managers, colleagues, and trainers.
- Supervisors should inform coaches about their own training, qualifications, philosophy and theoretical approach and the methods they use.
- Supervisors and coaches are responsible for effective contracting of their relationship which includes consideration of their respective legal liabilities to each other, the employing organisations and client.
- Supervisors and coaches are responsible for setting sufficiently clear boundaries between supervision, consultancy, training and coaching and being particularly sensitive and careful in the area of dual relationships.

- Supervisors and coaches must distinguish between supervising and coaching the coach. When the supervisor provides coaching to the coaching psychologist a clear contract must be negotiated to ensure that it is not done at the expense of supervision time.
- Supervisors are responsible for observation of the principles embodied in relevant codes of ethics and these regulations.
- Supervisors and coaches are responsible for regularly reviewing the effectiveness of the supervision arrangement and considering changing it when appropriate.

6. Competences of the supervisor

6.1 Coaching supervisors must ensure that they are sufficiently experienced, competent and appropriately trained to provide supervision.

6.2 Coaching supervisors need to be skilled in the following areas considered as particularly important and specific for effective supervision of coaching:

- Contracting;
- Assessment and evaluation of coaching process;
- Developing individuals in different contexts (e.g. organisational, community, individual, etc.);
- Nature, models and dynamics of one-to-one relationships;
- Models and theories of supervision;
- Issues of power in coaching and supervision;
- Supervision of complex coaching situations;
- Using resources of the group; working with group dynamics; prioritising needs of individuals and a group with supervision tasks (for group supervision models).

6.3 Supervisors must monitor their own supervision and be prepared to account for this when necessary.

6.4 Supervisors must monitor the limits of their competence and be open with the coach about the issues that they don't feel confident to deal with.

7. The issue of confidentiality

7.1 Rigorous respect for the confidentiality of their clients is fundamental to the ethical practice of coaching psychologists. This applies to coaching supervision as well as to coaching itself:

- Coaching psychologists will not reveal the identity of their clients when discussing their practice in supervision, unless it is necessary for the process of supervision;
- If a coaching psychologist does identify a client in supervision, the client should be informed of the supervision;
- Coaching supervisors, co-supervisors and participants in group supervision sessions will respect the confidentiality of any client information that is revealed in supervision.

7.2 There may be exceptional cases where it is appropriate for a coaching supervisor to break confidentiality. For example:

- Where he/she is obliged to do so for legal reasons;
- When it is clearly in the public interest to do so.

7.3 In cases where a supervisor wishes to use information about a supervisee's work for the purpose of research he/she should seek coach's permission and take measures to preserve his/her anonymity.

Book Reviews


Coaching for Change: Practical strategies for transforming performance

Kaye Thorne

London: Kogan Page, 2004.

144 pages. Paperback. £18.99.

ISBN: 978-0-7494-4168-2

 Reviewed by Joanna Bawa

Coaching for Change is many things, but here are some of the things it's not: it's not a coaching manual, it's not about how to become a coach and it's not about how to become a better coach if you're already one.

Rather, *Coaching for Change* is aimed squarely at that vast raft of individuals working in HR, general management, organisational consulting, training, facilitating and similar, who find themselves tasked with the unspecified 'transformation' (for which read 'improvement') of people performance within a challenging organisational environment. The book's aim is to provide ways to approach this task with an emphasis on coaching, whether 'coaching' appears in your job title or not. And although the book does discuss the coach-coachee relationship, the focus is consistently on the development of teams within organisations rather than the coaching of individuals through private 'life' issues.

Thorne writes from experience, which is evident in her move away from lengthy theoretical expositions in favour of short paragraphs, bullet points, lists and summaries. It's the sort of book a harassed manager won't feel threatened by and may actually read. The focus on practical considerations and approaches is extremely reassuring, taking the mystery out of coaching and allowing non-coaches to realise they possess many of the skills required to contribute to performance transformation. It also supports the reader in the identification of colleagues or associates who possess more

general coaching attributes (such as listening skills, non-judgemental and non-directive interaction style, goal-oriented



approach) as a way to begin creating a 'coaching landscape'.

When dealing with the vast topic of organisational change, Thorne is specific and relevant, providing only the most important information and expressing complex processes in simple steps. For example, the question 'So How do you Support Transforming Performance?' is answered in a five-step process: 1. Accurately assess readiness to change; 2. Clearly state the overall strategic direction; 3. Identify the key stages on the journey; 4. Gain commitment from others to the common goal; and 5. Establish a process to learn and grow. Each of these steps could be (and probably is) a book in itself, but Thorne deals with the entire issue in just seven pages. Her format of an overview paragraph plus a list of 'Questions that you may want to consider' for each step doesn't allow space for philosophy or subtlety – but this is a book for people who are actually doing it, and who need concrete guidance to get them started.

The risk of writing about coaching and the coaching process in such a concise manner is that it can lose its distinctiveness as a discipline and become just another nice management thing to do. Thorne avoids this by reiterating the specific attributes of coaches and the coaching approach and connecting these with organisational goals such as better talent management, clearer business strategy, and improved employee morale. Her discussion of dealing with setbacks, creating options and exploring alternatives will be familiar to every coach, and her regular use of 'questions to ask' and actions to check-off converts potentially

vague areas of difficulty into a realistic action plan. The secret to carrying change through against resistance, she reminds us, is 'Don't Give Up!' expressed here in the Don't Give Up! Action Plan – simple yet powerful advice to get individuals back on track and moving towards goals.

Thorne's section on coaching conversations is dotted with pithy quotations and examples from the work of other, well-established coaches. Almost the entire *raison d'être* of corporate coaching becomes clear from her citation of Daniel Goleman's citation of Marcus Buckingham's comment: 'People join companies and leave managers'; and her regular references to trust and respect reinforce the importance of good relationships to successful organisations.

The book concludes with a series of case studies which are honest enough to include a realistic appraisal of the challenges that organisational change creates; and the difficulty of quantifying the benefits of coaching – even where participants agree it's been a positive experience. It would have been nice to see more of a discussion of outcomes (desired and actual) and what organisations can realistically expect from coaching, but these are enormously diverse and possibly beyond the scope of the book.

A short, readable text, *Coaching for Change* may not be a comprehensive resource for those implementing performance transformation – but it's certainly an excellent place to start.

Joanna Bawa

The Psychology of Coaching, Mentoring and Learning

Ho Law, Sara Ireland & Zulfi Hussain

Chichester: John Wiley, 2007.

245 pages. Hardback. £34.99.

ISBN: 978-0-470-02844-5



Reviewed by Conal Platts

The Psychology of Coaching, Mentoring and Learning is a thorough and thought-provoking reference text. It provides an in-depth review of the science underpinning the practice of individual and organisational learning. In doing so, a 'Universal Integrated Framework' (UIF), applicable across cultural contexts, is described. This framework is the product of a three-year programme of research and practice undertaken by the authors.

The book is written with practitioners, academics and purchasers in mind. Its depth of inquiry and academic rigour suggests that the former two groups will be particularly provoked by its content.

The introductory chapter provides clear and useful signposting to help the reader pick and choose chapters of relevance. Each

chapter, or pair of chapters, stands independently in terms of content and focus. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 explore coaching and mentoring in the context of the psychology of learning; Chapter 5 discusses the learning organisation, with Chapter 6 focussing on exploration of the authors' UIF. Chapters 7 and 8 provide the experienced practitioner with a number of perspectives and practical tools to broaden technique, focus and impact, whilst Chapters 9 and 10 provide case study evidence exploring the UIF and broader issues of impact measurement. In Chapter 11, the text concludes with an overview of future priorities in the emerging evidence-base supporting the science of learning as applied to coaching and mentoring.

In combination, the book is much more than a thoroughly researched text on coaching and mentoring. At one level it tells the story of a journey made by three seasoned practitioners making sense of the evidence-base underpinning their practice. It is very evident to the reader that on this journey the authors have not been satisfied with pragmatic science, but instead, have taken a robust, academically-driven

approach to refining their skills and their clients' experience. Given the diversity of their experience, I would have valued learning more of their experiences applying these tools and frameworks, with particular focus on cross-cultural practitioner concerns.

Beyond the story, the text provides the reader with an in-depth synthesis of the research relating to both individual and systemic learning. In this respect the authors have been generous in sharing insights, conceptualisations and practical tools. Paradigms and coaching models are explored and linkages are repeatedly made with the UIF. The breadth of this review is vast; from Whitmore's GROW, to Gestalt principles to Narrative Psychodrama. As with earlier sections, given the authors' vast and eclectic experience, I would have personally valued a greater focus on this section, supported with a clearer linkage between paradigms (i.e. points of convergence and divergence) and a smoother flow in transitioning from section to section. The UIF features throughout the text, building in complexity as the story unfolds. Whilst I valued the conceptual purity of the model, I personally needed to read and re-read the supporting explanation to understand its full implications. A little more guidance on how to use and get the best from the model would have helped me personally.

The book contains a great many reminders, prompts and punchy research reminders. Having read the book from cover to cover I found myself dipping back in and out of sections and I am sure I will continue to do so. As a practitioner interested in the science underpinning the area of practice I would have appreciated even more discussion on some of the practical conundrums facing coaches; matching, contracting, rapport, scoping, structuring, action planning, etc. The exception to this relates to the powerful section on needs analysis and review. Here a powerful framework is proposed which will be of interest to academics, practitioners, and purchasers alike.

This book is a welcome addition to the coaching literature. Individual sections will appeal to different reader groups, but academics, practitioners and purchasers alike will be struck by the rigour and sophistication of the book.

Conall Platts

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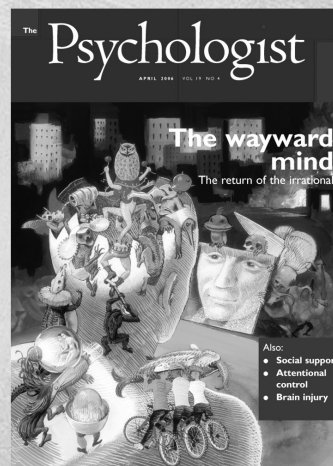
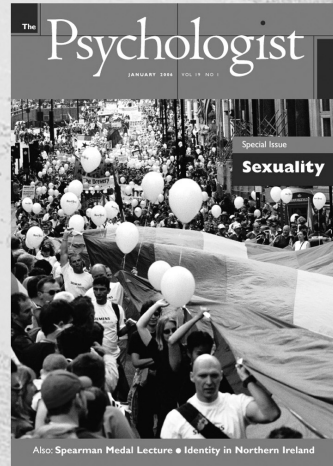
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Contributions on all aspects of research, theory, practice and case studies in the arena of coaching psychology are welcome. Manuscripts of approximately 3000 words excluding references, which may be extended with the permission of the Editor, should be typewritten and include the author's name, address and contact details. All submissions must include an abstract and keywords. Included should be a statement stipulating that the paper is not under consideration elsewhere. All submissions, including book reviews should be e-mailed to the Editor, Kasia.s@tinyonline.co.uk or to The Centre for Coaching, Broadway House, 3 High Street, Bromley BR1 1LF.

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