



Fields of Learning

Module 3

Digging Deeper

Programme

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Introduction & Overview

Digging Deeper & Persistent blocks

Welcome to the third module of Coaching Mastery and going deeper into the next layer - your third phase of coaching. In this module we will cover more models and have time to develop your coaching skills with practice.

In the third phase of coaching you will have completed your chemistry and first few sessions; now you will be getting feedback and evidence of progress from your coachee. You will be uncovering the next layer of patterns – possibly unpicking the past in relation to specific events. You will be assessing impact and progress on the coachee. You will be reflecting on your input and the relationship between yourself and your coachee. Or you maybe having coaching conversations rather than more formal coaching sessions.

By the second and third sessions of a coaching engagement you may notice the appearance of some stalling in progress as the more immediate or quick win interventions have been achieved but perhaps things still don't feel on track for success. You may feel that there is something deeper to be explored, the uncovering of the deeper coding that might be limiting a coachee's experience. You might now be ready to explore the persistent blocks. Or you may not.

It is not unusual that the deeper and perhaps unconscious patterning seems almost like an invisible driver on the journey they are on.

One of your roles as a coach is to help them be aware of what might be happening below their surface structure behaviour. To invite them to think about how the feelings and interactions they are having now might be like other situations they have been in in the past. The use of timelines and personal histories might be useful at this point to help them, and you, explore where behavioural patterns might be coming from. Then the task is to help create new, more useful and resourceful choice points.

If you have taken some time to explore with them their personal history, together you may be able to see where this might come from and what new strategies they might need.

To create new choices, people need to learn, in order to learn well they will need a still reptilian brain, an engaged limbic system and the presence of myelin in their brain to help the new learning “stick” in their neo- cortex as they practice the new behaviour.

Much of this will be down to the relationship YOU establish with them. Your presence needs to act as a regulator to help them see that they can do things differently. You need to be able to give them a reference experience. For change to be sustained they must build a new neural pathway and, as coach, you can help them through a regulated attachment experience with you as they work to see that this is possible.



Together you need to bring together:

- Information
- Energy
- Relationship

By doing this you are working with the mind of the coachee. A mind that has good information; positive energy (startle, excitement, joy, love and trust); and the experience of an equal and secure relationship can enable the brain to work most effectively in building new neural pathways for more effective behaviours. So easy then!

In this module we will help you learn more about how you as coach can support your coachee.



Listening and Noticing as Core Coaching Skills

Core principles of NLP

The core principles/basics/pillars/legs of NLP are:

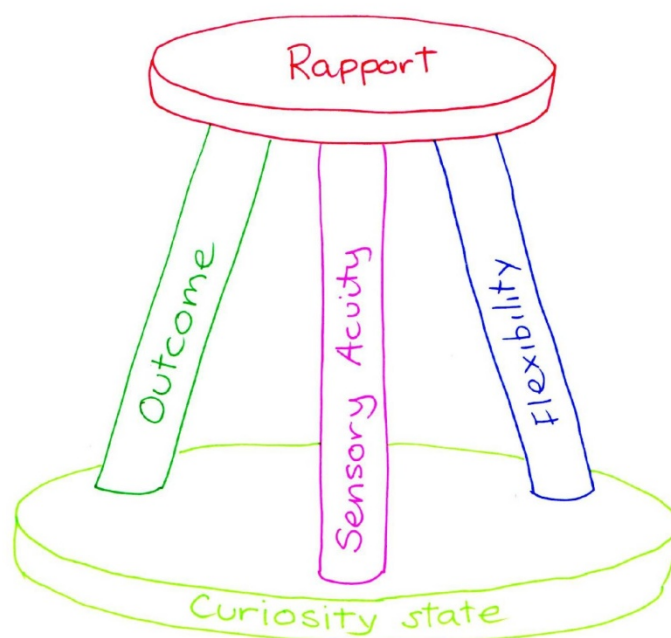
- Rapport
- Outcome thinking
- Sensory Acuity
- Flexibility

All underpinned by curiosity rather than judgement.

Why are they useful?

The foundations of NLP are the basis from which all of the other theories, tools and techniques hang! If you consider these principles whatever you are tackling – be it a coaching session with someone; a meeting you are going into; a job you want; – you will be utilising the core of NLP practice.

Model



The core principles of NLP

Outcome thinking – the first leg is to know what you want – that is to have a clear outcome. We often find it easier to say what we don't want or to ask what



the problem is. If we ask 'what do I/we want?' we can define what success means, rather than fix failure. Defining our outcomes in life gives a sense of energy and purpose to what we do that makes it easier to achieve them.

Sensory acuity - back to 'neuro' – this literally means using your senses – looking at, listening to and feeling what is actually happening – both within you and in connection with others and the environment. You need this leg of sensory information to navigate and know if you are reaching your goals. It will tell you whether you need to keep doing more of the same or whether an adjustment is necessary. Noticing this kind of information requires a state of curiosity that is essential to effective application of NLP....what is going on?

Flexibility – we have many choices at any point in time as to what to do next and the more choices we have open to us, the more likely we are to achieve success in our outcomes. It's just often we keep doing what we've done before because we don't see the choice. NLP advocates recognising your choices and changing what you do until you get what you want. And developing flexibility in your thinking and behaviours is the third leg.

Rapport – this is the over layering seat of NLP – relationship. Relationship with yourself and relationship with others. In relation to yourself, this is about congruence, having integrity i.e. the whole of you is in alignment. We know when someone doesn't seem congruent – for example they may have the external trappings of success and yet they may seem unhappy. A state of rapport with yourself means that you feel at ease with yourself, the different voices in your mind are in harmony and you are healthy and happy. Once you have this rapport then rapport with others is easier! And rapport with others is necessary to achieve what we want in the world – to relate to and influence others effectively is essential. It is about being able to create just the right connection and energy in order to achieve what is needed with buy in from others.

These need to rest upon a state of open **curiosity** rather than closed judgement in order to work well.

What if??

You used these principles to improve your relationships – with your colleagues, family, partner, friends?

Each time you are going into a situation you are uncomfortable with you checked your outcome and changed your state of mind to a more rapportful one?

You aimed to notice more about the specifics of someone else's behaviour the next time you met them, in order to then reflect on how you might influence them.

You looked at areas where you are 'stuck in a rut' and brainstormed all the



different ways in which you could act differently next time...and tried them!

I'm sure you can think of so many more.....

Sensory Acuity and Calibration

'The range of what we think, do and achieve is limited by what we fail to notice. And because we fail to notice what it is that we fail to notice, then there is little we can do to change.....until we notice how failing to notice shapes our thoughts and ideas.'

R.D. Laing the Scottish Psychiatrist

What is Sensory Acuity?

The notion of sensory acuity or sensory awareness originates from Milton Erickson who was able to notice the minutest change in a person's physiology. These external changes gave him a way of reading internal thinking and state changes.

Developing a rich awareness in each of our senses is a core part of coaching - fine tuning your awareness to notice more and more of how people change in the moment.

Calibration in this context is the art of comparison. To take a snapshot of someone's physiology at a given moment and notice how they change in relation to this. Something to measure by.

Why is being able to heighten sensory acuity and calibrate changes helpful?

Being able to calibrate these changes provides us with useful information with which to understand others, notice their reactions and measure change.

If we notice more whether what we are doing is eliciting the results that we expect/want, we increase our chances of then being able to do more of the same or something different and hence move towards our outcomes.

In ourselves, it is useful to help us understand and manage our own state and our impact on ourselves and others.



Sensory acuity....



What are we looking for???

With a good friend, if you ask them if they will go and see a particular film with you, you can tell before they've opened their mouth what the answer will be!

Sensory acuity used with calibration is the art of recognising external behaviours and reading their messages accurately. With experience you will be able to develop a keen awareness with others you don't know so well as to what their non-verbal behaviours mean.

Doing this hastily will involve guess work and interpretation – it is a skill that takes detailed practice and attention to gain accuracy and an ability to take your judgements out of the equation. Folded arms meaning defensiveness...for example is a large generalisation about body language interpretation, as might be seeing someone narrowing their eyes, frowning and pursing their lips – assuming that they are criticising us. It may be their representation of a state of concentration.

Since people's behaviour is remarkably consistent, we can, with careful observation over time recognise different states in others and be able to rely on that observation.



What do we need to notice to do this?

Sense	Signs	Calibration
Facial movements	Eyebrows Muscles Twitching Lips	Up/down/frowning Level of relaxation/contraction How much/where Thinning/tension/colour/movement
Skin tone	Colour Shininess Muscle tone	Pink, white, red, grey Shiny/matt Level of relaxation/contraction
Eye movements	Iris direction Pupil dilation	Up/down/sideways/left/right Wideness
Gestures	Hands, arms, legs, feet Fidgeting	Exaggerated/tiny Repetitive/one off Animated/still
Head	Angle	Sideways, forward, back, movements
Voice	Tone, pitch, pace	Loud/quiet Fast/slow High/Low
Breathing	Rate Depth Location	Fast/slow Chest/belly
Muscle Tension	Whole body	Tight/relaxed

In noticing we are noticing the specific detail of these signs. Examples of sensory grounded descriptions are:

- Her lips thinned and the muscles on her face tightened
- The tempo of his speech quickened and went up a tone
- He took a deep breath and blinked his eyes

Examples of interpreted descriptions are:

- There was a warm expression on her face
- She is pressurised by the responsibilities of her job
- It was obvious that he was relieved



How to use this?

Sit so that you can observe your partner's sensory clues really well.

Ask your partner first to think about a person that they really like. As they do this notice how their sensory signs change and make a note of them.

Next ask them to think of someone who they don't like or are ambivalent about. Notice now the changes in their sensory signs.

Now, help them to break state! (Ask them a question about something else..)

And then ask them to think about one or other of these people. As they do, notice how they change, decide which person it is they are thinking about and check it out with them. Test this a few times until you can truly see the small changes that make the difference.

Swap around and repeat. Then discuss the similarities and differences between your sensory signs and the calibration of them.

What if?

You took this further and now asked your partner to talk about each person in turn. Notice the changes in their voice patterns.

You start to notice these kinds of changes in those you work with – what are the 'states' they go into when they are asked to do different things or are talked to in a certain way? How can you use this information?

You got feedback from others on your sensory signals to help you to have the impact you wanting to have?



Listening as a Core Coaching Skill

Nancy Kline

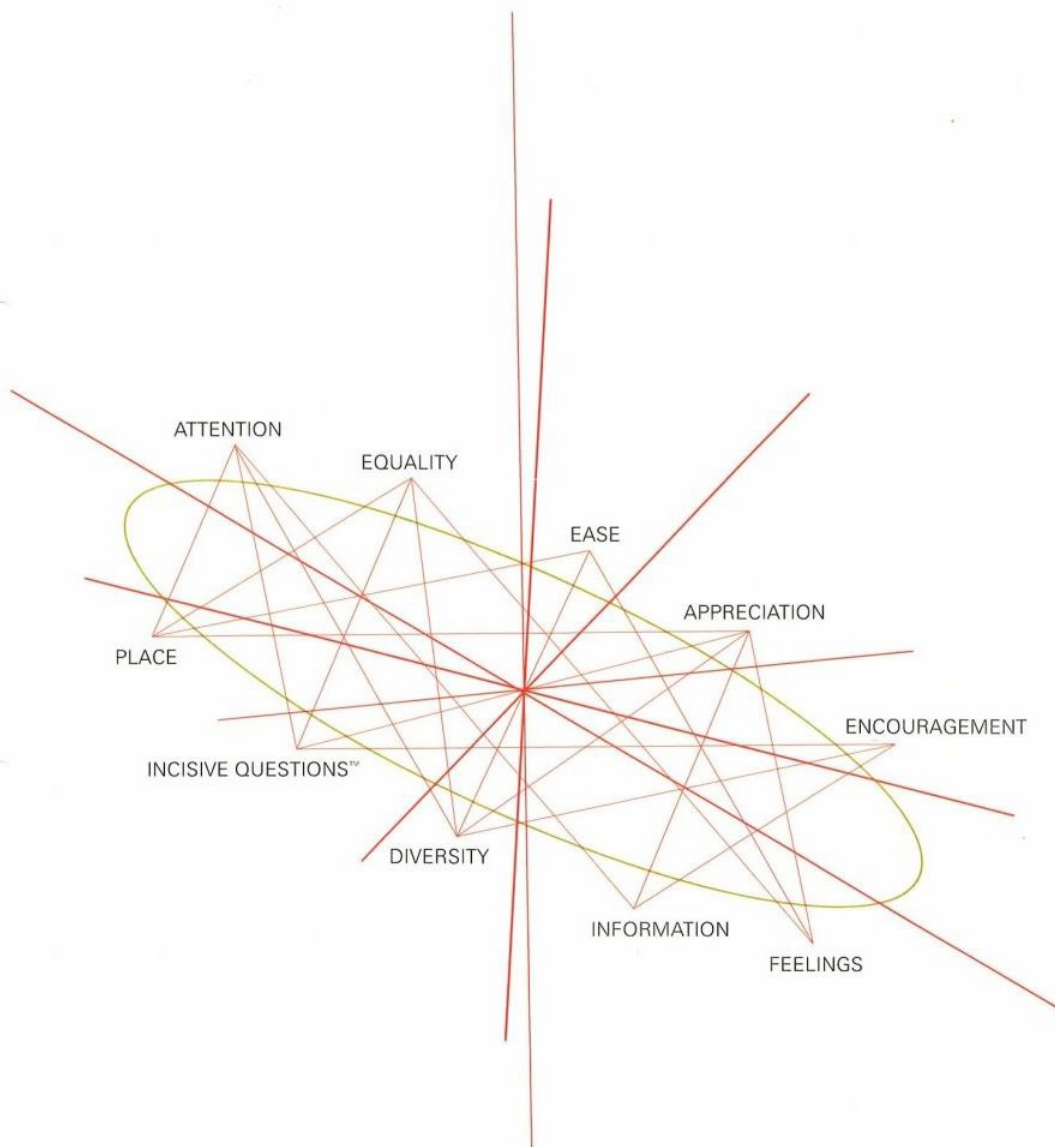
- Everything we do depends for its quality on the thinking we do first.
- Our thinking depends on the quality of our attention for each other.
- Thinking at its best is not just a cool act of cerebration. It is also a thing of the heart.
- A Thinking Environment is the set of ten conditions under which human beings can think for themselves – with rigour, imagination, courage and grace.
- Listening of this calibre ignites the human mind.
- Between you and a wellspring of good ideas is a limiting assumption. The assumption can be removed with an Incisive Question.
- Incisive Questions increase the functional intelligence of human beings.
- A Thinking Environment is natural, but rare. It has been squeezed out of our lives and organisations by inferior ways of treating each other.
- Organisations, families and relationships can become Thinking Environments again, where good ideas abound, actions follow and people flourish.

The Ten Components of a Thinking Environment

- **Attention** Listening with respect, interest and fascination
- **Incisive Questions** Removing assumptions that limit ideas
- **Equality.** Treating each other as thinking peers
 - Giving equal turns and attention
 - Keeping agreements and boundaries
- **Appreciation** Practising a five-to-one ratio of appreciation to criticism
- **Ease** Offering freedom from rush or urgency
- **Encouragement** Moving beyond competition
- **Feelings** Allowing sufficient emotional release to restore thinking
- **Information** Providing full and accurate information results in intellectual integrity
- **Place** Creating a physical environment that says back to people “You matter”
- **Difference** - Prioritising diversity of group identities and understanding their lived experience



DEVELOPING THE THINKING PARTNERSHIP® THE TEN COMPONENTS
OF A THINKING ENVIRONMENT®



Some examples of Incisive Questions

- If you were to become the chief executive, what problem would you solve first, and how would you do it?
- If you knew that you are vital to this organisation's success, how would you approach your work?
- If things could be exactly right for you in this situation, how would they have to change?
- If you were not to hold back in your life, what would you be doing?
- If you found out that someone you love very much is going to die tomorrow, what would you want to be sure to say to them today?



- If you could trust that your children would be fine, what would you do with the rest of your life?
- If you knew that you are beautiful, just as you are, what would change for you?
- If you knew that you are as intelligent as your bosses, how would you present yourself to them?
- If a doctor told you that your life depended upon your changing the way you live, what would do first for yourself?
- If you trusted that your excellence would not put others in your shadow, what would your goals be?

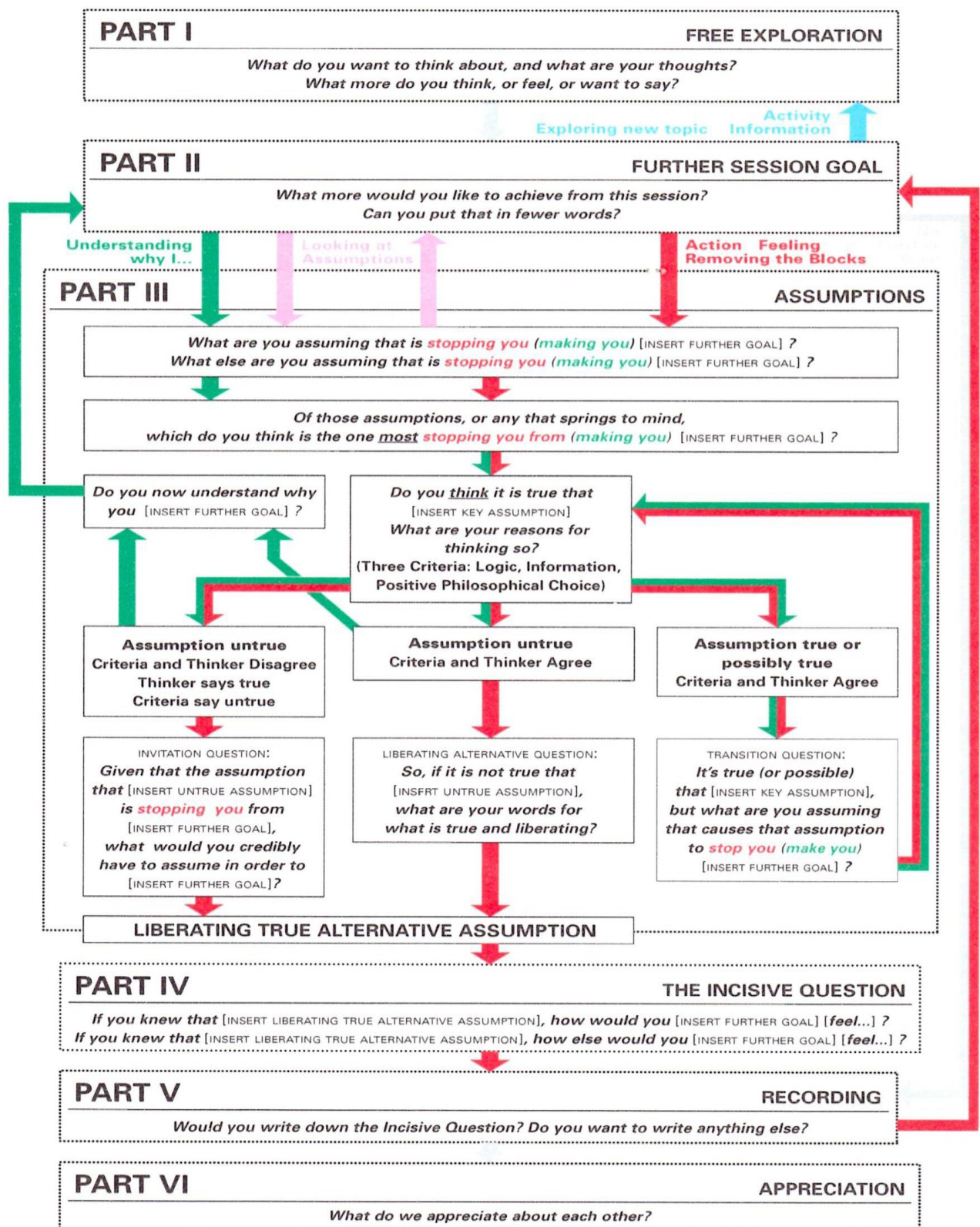
You can identify you own assumptions and create your own Incisive Questions to remove them in a second.

If you want to take action, but you are stuck; ask yourself, “**what am I assuming here that is stopping me?**” Listen to the answer, which might be “I am assuming that I don’t deserve success here.” Then remove it: “**If I knew that I do deserve success here, what would I do right now?**”

If you want to feel better, ask yourself, for example. “**What am I assuming that is making me feel down?**” Note the answer: “I am assuming that I have no choice here, that I am powerless. Then remove it: “**If I knew that I do have a choice here and am powerful in this situation, how would I feel?**”



DEVELOPING THE THINKING PARTNERSHIP® FLOW DIAGRAM OF THE THINKING PARTNERSHIP SESSION®



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Group Assumptions

If your team has run out of ideas, ask yourselves, “What might we be assuming here that is limiting our thinking on this issue?” And remember the answer which could be: “We are assuming that only the top people can think about this well enough” Then remove it: “If we knew that we can think about this as well as anybody, perhaps even better, what would our ideas be now?”

In other words, notice the problem, find the limiting assumption and replace it with a freeing one. Incisive Questions get your mind fired up again. They are simple. Don’t make them complicated. They work because they cut to the core.

Meeting this Way

Giving everyone a turn increases the intelligence of groups. Knowing they won’t be interrupted frees people to think faster and say less. Meetings are where the heart of an organisation beats. Organisational life flows from there. A meeting run as a Thinking Environment is different. It produces better ideas in less time, provides the participants with courage to act and leaves the group feeling good about itself.

Meeting guidelines based on Time To Think.

At the beginning.

- 1 Give everyone a turn to speak.
- 2 Ask everyone to say what is going well in their work, or in the groups work.

Throughout:

- 3 Give attention without interruption during open and even fiery discussion.
- 4 Ask Incisive Question to reveal and remove assumptions that are limiting ideas.
- 5 Divide in Thinking Partnerships when thinking stalls and give each person five minutes to think out loud without interruption.
- 6 Go around intermittently to give everyone a turn to say what they think
- 7 Permit also the sharing of truth and information.
- 8 Permit the expression of feeling.

At the end:

- 9 Ask everyone what they thought went well in the meeting and what they respect in each other.



Positive Philosophical choice

Underpinning all of the Time To Think work is a set of underlying enabling beliefs that Nancy Kline has referred to as the Positive Philosophical Choice.

DEVELOPING THE THINKING PARTNERSHIP® THE POSITIVE PHILOSOPHICAL CHOICE

The work of Thinking Partnerships is based on the chosen philosophical view that human beings by nature have choice, are intelligent, loving, powerful, multi-talented, emotional, assertive, imaginative, logical and are able to think through anything. Behaviour to the contrary is seen as the result of assumptions generated over a lifetime by events, conditions and attitudes in a person's life.

Human nature cannot be proven. So one must choose a philosophy of human nature. Some people and systems of thought choose to see human nature as flawed or even as fundamentally evil and in need of a lifetime of repair and repentance. Some see human nature as neutral, a blank sheet on which life will write its goods and bads.

A positive philosophy of human nature has become the basis of Thinking Partnership work for pragmatic reasons. We have observed that cogent, coherent, imaginative ideas flow more dependably from this philosophy of human nature than from a more neutral or cynical one. A positive philosophical choice has proven to be the best one from which to free the human mind to think independently, clearly, creatively and in the best real interests of people.

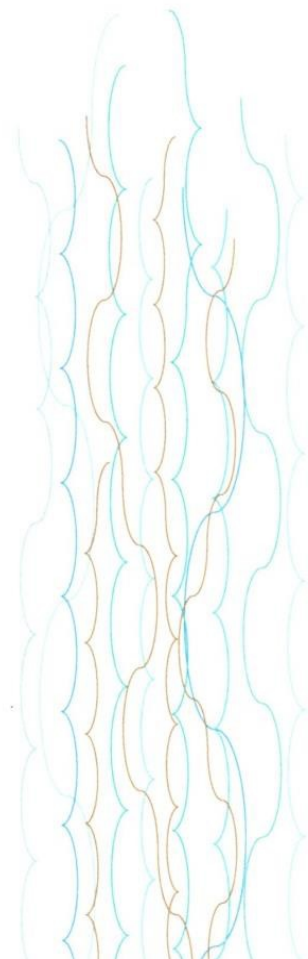


PARADOX IN A THINKING ENVIRONMENT

Paradox in a Thinking Environment

Paradox is at the core of life. It is at the core of a Thinking Environment.
When we are uncomfortable with paradox
we find the Thinking Environment challenging.
It is in inside paradox that we do our finest work.

- *You cannot know the end, because it is the beginning.*
- *Attention is an act of creation and it is creator it is sending of seed and, it is the soil.*
- *As the Thinking Partner you are both essential and irrelevant.*
- *You matter profoundly, because you do not matter at all.*
- *You are so present, you become invisible.*
- *You are still, in order to be productive.*
- *You question, in order to trust.*
- *You risk ,in order to be safe.*
- *Doing means not doing.*
- *The brain that contains the questions also contains the answer.*
- *In a hierarchy people are equals.*
- *Freedom requires boundaries.*
- *A Thinking Environment turns no time into more time.*
- *Expressing feelings is a rational act.*
- *The greater the diversity of thinking, the greater unity of decision.*
- *We want to be wrong in order to get closer to being right.*
- *Slowing down speeds things up.*
- *We keep 100% of our attention in three places at once.*
- *We regard each other as equals, in order to benefit from our diversity.*
- *To take time to think is to gain time to live.*



DEVELOPING THE THINKING PARTNERSHIP® MORE PRINCIPLES OF A THINKING ENVIRONMENT®

1. The quality of everything we do depends on the thinking we do first.
2. Our thinking depends on the way we treat each other while we are thinking.
3. In a Thinking Environment we think so well in the time we have that the time we have increases.
4. Thinking *for yourself* is still a radical act.
5. In order to know what we think about something, we usually have to talk about it first.
6. The first job of a leader is to create an environment in which people can think for themselves. Every subsequent act gains quality from there.
7. Giving everyone a turn to think and speak raises the quality of ideas in meetings.
8. There is no such thing as *just* listening. Listening is an act of creation.
9. To be interrupted is not good. To get lucky and not be interrupted is better. But to know you are not going to be interrupted allows you truly to think for yourself.
10. When you listen, your customers and clients think you are brilliant.
11. It doesn't matter if you already know what someone is about to say before they have finished saying it. What matters is what happens for them because they say it.
12. The fact that someone has stopped speaking does not mean they have stopped thinking. Listen comfortably in the silence.
13. Ease with a person's quiet assists them to think for themselves.
14. The human mind thinks best in the presence of reality. Reality is diverse. A Thinking Environment, therefore, consists of diverse groups, identities and ideas.
15. The very structure of a Thinking Environment ensures diversity.
16. A positive philosophical view of human nature unblocks the thinking process.
17. Untrue limiting assumptions are simple but deadly.
18. A question is *incisive* if it replaces an untrue limiting assumption with a true liberating one.



What are you listening for?

Process vs Content

"The webs that you can tie and untie are at your command if only you pay attention to what you already have (language) and the structure of the incarnations for growth...." Bandler and Grinder

What is it?

Notice where your attention is when listening to a coachee. When you are noticing the 'what' of an experience, the details, the story, this is the *content*.

Process, by way of contrast, refers to how something operates, to its structure and form; to any processes that are in operation.

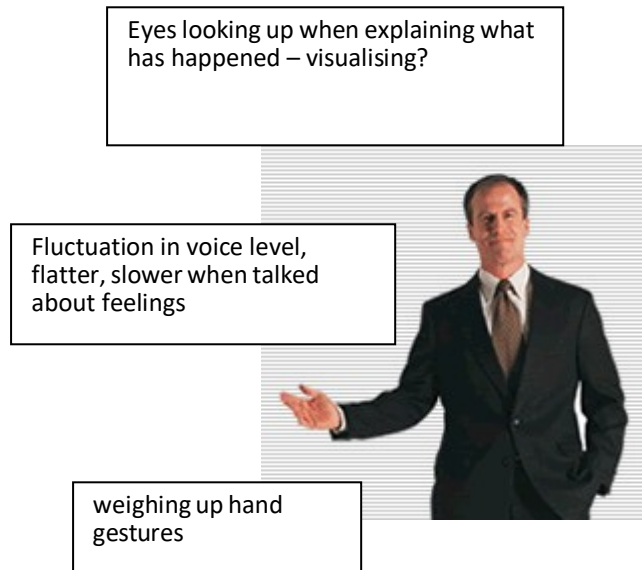
Why is it useful?

Being able to have a balance and a flexibility of what you notice can help the coach assist the coachee.

Content



Process



Detailed what

Have you ever been 'sucked in' to a story or had a soap story relayed to you? How captivating it can be! If this has ever been true for you, the chances are you were 'in' the content. Content refers to both the juicy details about what someone did, when, where, and with whom. It describes the data that can overwhelm and seduce us into the content.

Process by contrast is any process that is occurring, the process of an experience, how it works, the structural frames, and contexts. NLP models are



often processes, to work with people to bring about the change they want for themselves, with enough content for the person to relate to their own experience and outcomes.

There is no absolute right or wrong balance of process and content. The key, as a coach, is to resist the temptation to be seduced by the content as you may unwittingly collude with the coachee about how tough and difficult the situation is. Listening to some talk about their situation is enhanced by knowing what is content and what is process and where the leverage could be for that person to achieve their outcome.

How - exercise

Last year Catherine talked to us about a situation she was experiencing and here are some of the statements that she made and observations of her under content and process.

Content	Process
Fantastic, enormous opportunity	Visualising - eyes looking up
Organised this, people lined up	Arm movements - expand arms out wide to hands clasped together
Same position to the day last year	Weighing up hand gestures
They don't think what it is like for me	Fluctuation in voice level, flatter, slower
I believe it will happen	Away from language - I'm nervous
I don't know what to do now	Focus on others and responsibility - people lined up
Informal contact - Steven	Pattern repeat to same time last year
Not right, not fair	What worked and how did they respond
Is the stalling telling me something	Trusting instinct
Heard nothing	Belief it will happen
Followed up...	Anger displayed in closed body language
Empty diary	Top half body movement
Coachees what these dates	
2nd positioning the organisation	
Needing to have courageous conversation	
Opportunity to develop others	
Space, time, hope	

What if - challenge

Watch and listen to an interview on the TV or at a presentation, noticing the content or process. What was different?

Experiment with primarily staying in process when with a colleague or friend are talking about a situation, and reflect on what that gave you both.

When reflecting on a coaching conversation, identify the proportion of content and process for you. How does that compare with how you would like it to have been? What will you do next time? You may want to assist your reflected learning by asking a coachee if they mind you recording a coaching session.



Beliefs – Limiting and Enabling

"If you believe you can or believe you can't, you are probably right"
Henry Ford

What are they and what's the difference between beliefs and values?

Beliefs and values determine why you do something. Values are the things that are important to you. There are two types of values. Means values and end values. It is important to me to exercise regularly (means value) because I value my health (end value).

Beliefs are the generalizations you make about yourself and the world. Beliefs are what you take to be true at any moment. They guide you in perceiving and interpreting your reality. Beliefs may be strongly held and cause you to act "the only way to get fit is to exercise" or not "I'm too busy to exercise".

Beliefs are not cast in stone, they are like a little rule structure you have put in place and they suited you at the time you did that. They may still do so, in which case they may be enabling (check this is true across contexts) or they may be limiting.

Why is it useful to recognise the beliefs that are operating?

Enabling beliefs are powerful accelerators to performance and potential. By taking a moment to consider what you need to believe in order to be successful in any circumstance means you are operating from a higher logical level than if you just attended to your behaviours or environment. "I have something really interesting to tell the Board and I believe I have the ability to get the message across to them if I prepare well"

Limiting beliefs create unresourceful states of mind and body. Unresourceful states require energy to sustain them – energy that could be better applied to the external problem, not the internal dilemma happening in your neurology. "I bet I make a mess of this presentation, I am no good in front of groups I am always too nervous to get my message through"

Reframing a negative or limiting belief with a positive or enabling belief is a powerful way to change performance and outcomes. Understanding someone else's beliefs is a powerful way to build understanding, rapport and influence. Helping someone to reframe a limiting belief is a powerful coaching and leadership tool.

Taking on someone else's beliefs and *Acting as If* is a powerful and fast way to change a reality.

"They can because they think they can" Virail



Your enabling beliefs are those that allow you to do things. And they are the ideas, which for you are true. Beliefs are your operating principles for how you act. Beliefs are about the physical world or the laws of nature. We don't walk off the tops of buildings or test each day that fire burns. We have beliefs about people that are often less certain – that Joe is a 'lazy good for nothing' or 'a good worker'. When you believe something you act as if it is true thus it becomes a difficult filter to shift.

There are many experiments that demonstrate the effects of beliefs on people. In Israel, army conscripts were divided into two groups with equal capabilities for gunnery training. One group was told they were specially selected as excellent learners. The other group was told nothing. Both groups received identical training. There was a very large difference in final performance between the two groups. Similar experiments with the same differences in results have been completed in schools. One group was told they had a high IQ and they were expected to do better than another group. And they did perform much better.

The only difference between the two groups was the trainees' belief that they were in some way more capable than the other group. This type of self-fulfilling prophecy is known as the Pygmalion Effect.

Beliefs are the generalisations you have made about causality, meaning, others behaviours and identity. They are what you believe about the world

How to change a belief using Acting As If

You may also know people who believe things that hold them back in the particular circumstances that they find themselves in. For example, you may well recognise the difference in what can be achieved between one person who says they are "too old" to try something and someone of a similar age who holds that the belief that you are **never** "too old" to do something.

Consider too the sports leader who believes that a match can be won, when others believe that it is lost. One will play to win (and may) while the other will play for the final whistle without striving for victory. You will often only find what you are looking for.

Trying on a belief and pre-supposing it were true. Lets try some more of Churchill's belief statements on for size! In doing this you are just pre-supposing that these statements are true for the time that holding this presupposition or temporary belief is valuable to you.

"Don't be content with things as they are". Here Churchill's language implies that there is choice; that there are other ways of doing things, and that if you do something differently, you can change the situation and get a different outcome. Hold this belief and consider the things that are around you and imagine what it would be like if these things were, in your eyes, different to how



they are now.

Imagine that you could begin to change them, to have them be more the way they would need to be to achieve your objective. Now that you imagine them being different, what would be the things that you have done to change them? What do you hear yourself saying differently and how does it feel to know that they have been improved. Who would you be telling about the improvements that have been made and what would their reaction be? What is the beneficial impact this will have on your future and how does that future look with the change in place? What benefits would others need to see to have their experience of the changes be a good one, and how can you enable them to understand this?

As you have gone through this experience in your imagination as if it were real, your brain will have stored its own impression of doing it; it will have a memory of that imagination. Both real and imagined memories can have the same influence on your behaviour.

Exercise

Think of an admired other person.

List the beliefs they hold that serve them well in the kind of situation you are thinking about.

“Act as if” you, too, held these beliefs for the period of the project you wish to do. Now that you can presuppose these beliefs to be true, what can you see yourself doing, hear yourself saying, and what feelings do you get as a result of these changes?

Note how you are free to do things in a different way and the new choices that this gives you. Note what you are free from.

Doing this exercise allows you to give yourself more choice, and have access to more resources. You can then choose if you want to hold any of these beliefs for a longer period of time. You will notice, that to do this, you may now want to consider how this new belief fits in with other beliefs that you already hold. Beliefs are not static. You have the opportunity to fine tune and re-align your beliefs and how they impact on each other.

What if - challenge

You noted the beliefs that you hold that are limiting and replaced them with those that are enabling.

You were able to recognise the beliefs that other people have in play as a way of understanding and even predicting their reasons why they do or don't do things.

Remember beliefs are our guiding principles, the core maps that we use to make sense of the world. Some are shared by many – such as we do not need to prove to ourselves that walking off a tall building or sticking our hand in a fire is



not a good idea. And many more that we each hold are our own, developed through our own unique experience, upbringing and ways of thinking

Why are beliefs useful to us?

Beliefs provide us with a guide to the world that provides a platform of stability. If these beliefs are enabling, then they help us to live and perform in the world as we truly wish to. When they limit our behaviour then they stop us from being who we want to be, doing the things we want to do. Beliefs give us a good guide as to why someone's behaviour is as it is – ask yourself, what has to be true for someone to behave like that? And therefore often the key to helping someone change their internal structure of thinking to give them what that really want.

Beliefs....

When we believe something, we act as if it is true. Beliefs are a strong perceptual filter on the world and as such we tend to see exceptions to them proving the rule! This makes them into self-fulfilling prophecies. For example, the placebo effect is great example of this – giving ill patients some absolutely innocuous substance and telling them that it is a wonder drug will enable approximately 30 % of patients to be cured by taking the placebo.

Positive beliefs turn-on our capabilities. Negative beliefs switch them off. 'I can't....' predisposes our brain to thinking that current capability e.g. I can't swim is representative of future possibility, hence it can not happen whilst this belief is held. Hence the idea of the re-frame to 'act as if' you can shift people's perception to possibility and hence makes it possible for them to gain the capability.

Beliefs do change as we go through life. Many are set when we are young – virtually imprinted from the age of 0-7 as we have no way of testing them we just take them on. However, we do shift them as we start from 7-14 to model others' behaviours and then from 14 onwards when we start to test them more for ourselves (hence a lot of teenage and parental angst!!). They also shift if we shift culturally or socially and often through trauma at any age.

At any stage in our lives we have a choice to drop beliefs that inhibit us and build beliefs in that give us a more fulfilling life. The question to ask is how is believing this useful to me? What might be more useful?

Enabling beliefs

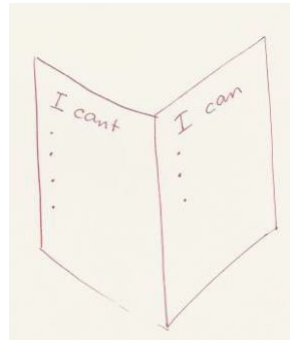
'You can do anything when you believe in it, that's why I need to go back'
Shackleton

When you are operating out of an enabling belief you can see that it IS possible to achieve something. Being able to access your own enabling beliefs can allow you to make progress, transform situations, and demonstrate the resultant



behaviours that lead to action. It is definitely the “can do” mentality or mindset.

Powerful enabling beliefs drive behaviours towards your desired outcomes and goals. Nelson Mandela when in prison said “if you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy”



Limiting beliefs

‘The ideal is in thyself; the impediment, too, is in thyself’ Thomas Carlyle

These limiting beliefs are what hold us back, convince us that something we want is not possible and often cause us to be “stuck” Accessing these beliefs will cause you to move away from your goals, not make progress, limit possibility and demonstrate behaviours of evasion, retreat and withdrawal from opportunities. It is the internal language of “I can’t” mentality or mindset

If you accept that a belief is something that you have constructed for yourself and that those beliefs that do not serve you well can be reconstructed to be more useful, then you have a powerful tool to increase your effectiveness

Reframe Limiting Exercise to an enabling one

- You write down a limiting belief (assumption) Discuss:
- What is stopping your from doing / impacting on your performance
- What is the positive intent of that belief?
- Where/how might it have been formed?
- What would you rather believe?
- How is this a choice + better than the old belief?
- Write down a new belief (or liberating assumption) you would like to have in the present tense
- Hone it into a new enabling belief
- Share it with others to continue to hone this into an enabling belief that rings true for you



Feedback as a Core Coaching Skill

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal, It is our courage to continue that counts."

Sir Winston Churchill

What is it?

Feedback is essential to moving towards our outcome and learning! Feedback is available all the time from our environment, our own bodies and minds and from other peoples behaviours and reactions to us.

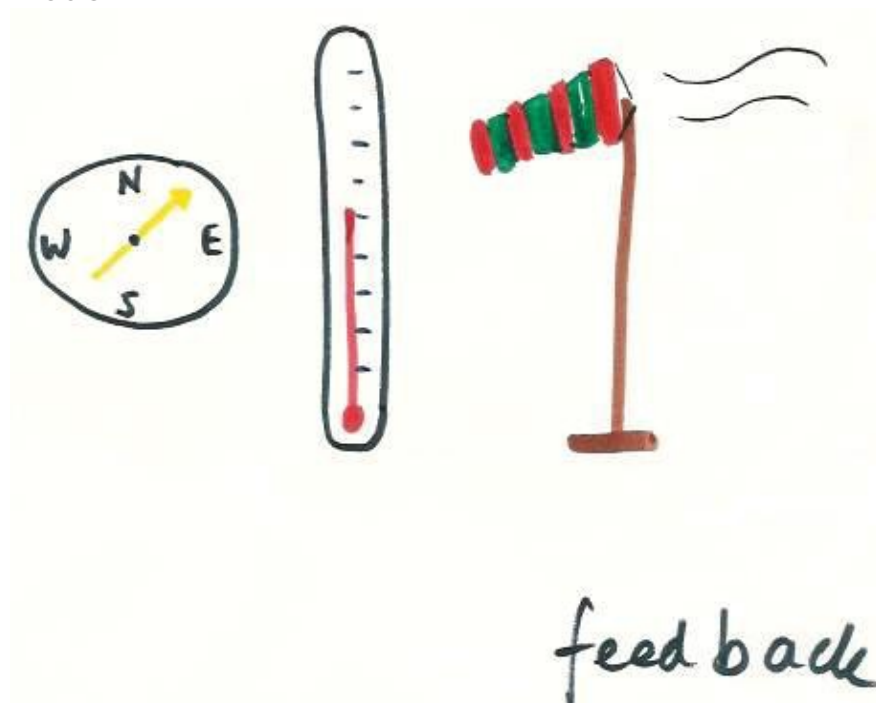
Giving and receiving high quality feedback in a work or personal situation is essential to achieving success.

Why it can be useful / when is it useful?

How useful would it be to have an ongoing 'monitor' of how on track or in tune we are?

Being aware of and indeed actively seeking feedback, enables us to gain more accurate information about how we are proceeding towards our outcomes. It gives us a chance to take stock of where we are and either keep doing what we are already doing effectively or maybe trying something different to be more effective. It is the ongoing monitor!

Model



What is high quality feedback?

High quality feedback is:

- verbal
- face-to-face
- individual (one-to-one in private)
- balanced and in context
- honest
- first hand ('I' think)
- about the behaviour, not the person
- detailed and specific (with one or two examples)
- timely to the behaviour (as soon as possible)
- about what is changeable (with alternatives available for suggestion)
- 2 + or – 1 things to change
- two-way (opportunity to respond)
- contains no 'buts' – just 'ands'

How to do it

When giving feedback:

- Maintain rapport with the receiver – recognise their map of the world and give it a way they are most likely to be able to hear it
- Ask 'Why am I giving this feedback?' the only valid answer is in order to help and develop the
- other person
- Ask if it's OK to give some feedback – permission will make it easier for the receiver to hear
- Give the receiver opportunity to seek clarification
- Acknowledge that it is always subjective and that 2-way communication is key

When receiving feedback:

- Have rapport with the giver
- Help the giver to be specific by asking Who? When? Where? How? Which? And ask for suggestions for alternative behaviours.
- Feedback that is requested is likely to be the most useful to the receiver – by asking questions of the giver you show you want the feedback
- Seek the learning – you don't need to explain, blame, justify, defend or placate!
- It's data! You choose how to take it on board or not...
- Remember to say 'Thank you'

Ideas about putting it into practice

- Ask a couple of colleagues to enter into a mutual feedback process with you around specific aspects at work
- Start to give positive feedback more often to your colleagues, boss, friends, family...see what happens!



- Ask for feedback about specific changes that you are making before you make them so that people know what feedback you specifically need
- Think about feedback you are about to give and check it against the list above...does it meet the criteria to make it high quality?



Feedback in Coaching – Jenny Rogers

'Is it true, is it necessary, is it kind?' Socrates

Extract from Jenny Rogers: 'Coaching Skills'

The real catalyst for change is the coaching relationship itself. What the coachee does with you, he or she will most likely be doing everywhere else. The most important data you have about that coachee is how he or she is in the moment with you. Does the coachee create feelings of fear in you? That is what they will be doing at work! Does the coachee lose you in rambling descriptions? Likely he or she will be a poor communicator with others. Is he or she over-deferential with you? Do they try to exert inappropriate control in the conversation with you? This is what others will probably experience too.

This data is every bit as important as what they tell you. Ignore it at your peril. Ask yourself 'how are they affecting you now in this moment'?

To use this data, you need to become expert in the art of giving feedback. This is probably the most striking way in which a coaching conversation differs from any other conversation our coachees are likely to have.

Coaching is one of the few occasions where anyone is permitted, even encouraged to comment on the immediate behaviour and impact of the other person. You may sometimes be the coachee's best hope of being told something of which they seem unaware, something that is holding them back, that everyone around them knows, but that no one is willing to raise. Some things may be intensely personal (dishevelled appearance, odour). You have to be willing to move past your own and the coachee's potential embarrassment.

But be clear, feedback is NOT a synonym for criticism which can be devastating. E.g. 'made me feel like a naughty child'. Criticism attacks the person by making generalised judgements. Criticism is an opinion. This brings out defensive and aggressive reactions because it contains hurtful generalisations. It triggers the amygdala and shuts down thinking processes.

Feedback can be positive or negative. It is to help a person learn and is given at a point when the coach judges the other person can hear it. Feedback is also about the things that can be changed.

In giving feedback:

1. Ask permission. 'May I give some feedback here?'
2. Stick to factual descriptions. What you have seen, heard. Use phrases like 'I noticed....', 'I saw....', 'I observed....', 'I heard....'
'I noticed when you were talking about X, you seemed really alive and animated'
'You leant forward and thumped your papers'
'I heard how you explained X to her and I noticed how her face relaxed immediately'



3. Don't interpret. Describe what you have seen without attributing a motive. Avoid saying things like:
'So I knew you were angry with X..'
'I saw that you wanted to leave the room straight away'.
4. Instead ask a question, using phrases like 'I'm curious about...' 'I wondered what was going on for you in that moment'. This asks the coachee about his or her motivation rather than you making a guess at it.
5. Describe the impact on you.
'When you leant forward like that, I was alarmed just for a second. I wondered if you were angry with me!'
'You touched your face a lot while you were talking and that had the effect on me of wondering whether you were really confident about what you were saying'.
6. Link to the coachee's goal. Use phrases like 'I'm wondering how this links with...'
7. Ask for the coachee's view on what you have said (often this can open a deeper reflection / create a new direction or shift)
8. Agree how to go forward. Agree how you will work on the material that this incident generates.
9. Look for feedback opportunities. Opportunities to offer more positive than negative feedback especially where a coachee can show you how vastly improved some skill or behaviour has become.

Remember to choose your words carefully. It is better to say something like 'I ended up feeling a bit alarmed about what you might do next' rather than 'you were intimidating'. There is a fine line between feeding back how the coachee has had an impact on you and seeming to have taken something personally. The whole point about feedback is that you are not taking it personally, even while you are describing the personal impact of the coachee on you.



Everything is Data.

To use this approach you have to look at everything; how the coachee greets you, how they come into the room, what they say in their first few moments, how they treat you, the language they use, the feelings they arouse in you during the session.

You also need to be able to discern how much of this data is being generated by you! You also need to know when NOT to give feedback. Ask yourself: *'Is this something the coachee can do something about', 'How prepared might they be to tackle it?'*

If the answer is no, then the issue is best ignored. If yes, then think of it as a duty of care.



Maps of the world – understanding other perspectives

“We don’t see the world as it is...we see the world as we are.” Anais Nin

Each of us has a unique and personal map of the world. For every piece of information we receive through our senses, it then passes through a number of filters such as:-

- Beliefs & values
- Past experiences
- Existing / past relationships
- Cultural upbringing

Resulting in our own perspective, and we will all perceive things in a unique and different way.

We bring our own map of the world to every situation. We bring us...which is what gives us the potential to become a great coach...and also means that our own glorious, unique and un-sorted world is at play!

Why do we need to look our map? Looking at our own ‘stuff’ is about being aware of what is going on for us on a certain day, a season or indeed those patterns that have and will live with us for our whole lives.

Then we have choice! We may need to ‘sort’ something in order for our health and wellbeing to be OK. We may need to be resourceful in order to ensure that our employees’ health and wellbeing are being looked after. We will want to ensure that the quality of our management is upheld and improved. We will want to be clear on our boundaries.

Looking at our own maps enables us to sometimes pre-empt and always to recognise interference from our own world.



Perceptual Positions

"When we understand the other fellow's viewpoint and he understands ours, then we can sit down and work out our differences" Harry S Truman

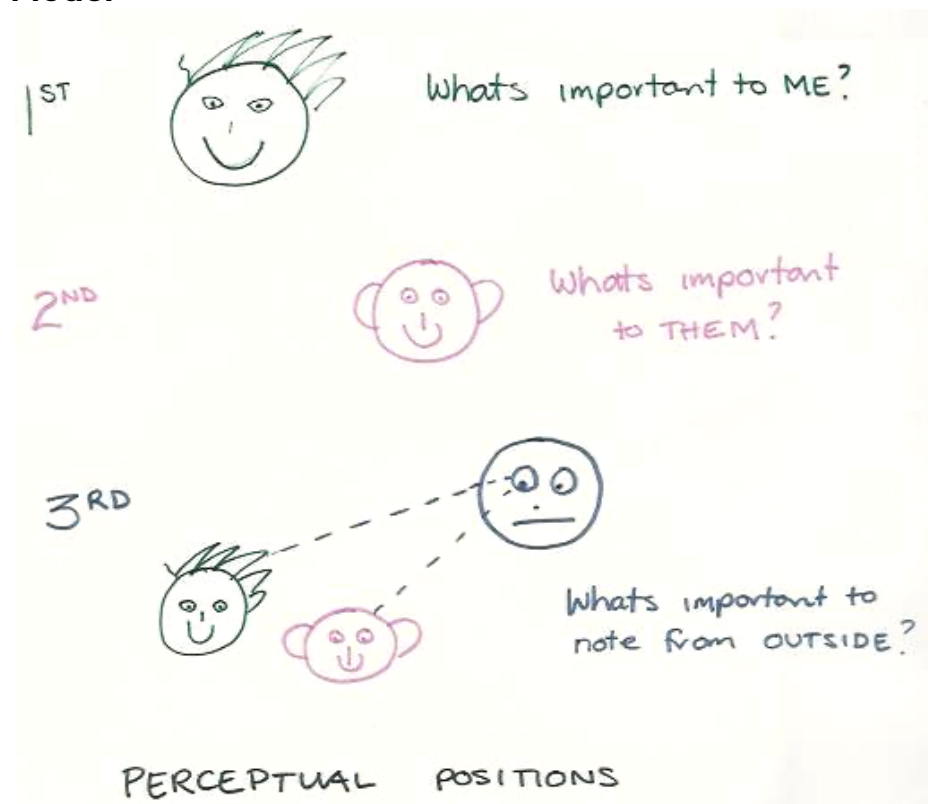
What are Perceptual Positions?

A model to allow you to gain insight from looking at things from 3 different perspectives and in different ways. They are also described as Life Positions as we tend to have a preferred place to view or experience the world.

- Your own (fully associating into what's important to you)
- Another person's (fully associating into what is important to the other person)
- From the outside (a disassociated analytical view of what patterns are running)
- Why is using different perceptual positions useful?

By understanding things from more than one perspective we can increase insight, options, flexibility and choices about future actions.

Model



Detailed description of what perceptual positions are:

First perceptual position (the I position): You see the world from your own point of view, and from your own reality within yourself. You simply think 'how does this issue or communication affect me?' You actually fully experience how you feel about this. The state you are in is known as being 'associated' into your experience.

To make sure you are in 'clean' first position ask 'How am I feeling in this position? What is my outcome / what do I want to happen from this position?

Second position (the you position): you process the experience from the position of the other person. You take into account how the experience would be from the other person's point of view. You see, hear, and feel the world from the other's position. You also imagine their beliefs, values and thinking. In this state you 'associate' with the other person's reality.

To make sure you are in 'clean' second position ask: As ... (name) how am I feeling?

As...(name) what is my outcome / what do I want to happen?

Third position (the they position): you move to an uninvolved position, as someone who is outside the situation. You are an independent observer. You ask yourself 'how would this event be experienced by someone totally uninvolved?' Perhaps as if they were watching a wide view movie filmed from high up. This is a way of analysing from a detached view what is happening. In this position you are 'disassociated'.

To make sure you are in third position ask yourself 'what am I noticing about the position of (your name) and (other person's name)'. 'What am I noticing about the relationship between them'? This is sometimes referred to as the "meta" position from the Greek above or beyond.

One way of understanding these perceptual positions is to think of the three roles in the story below:

- In first position – I am in a hole.
- In second position – someone comes and jumps in with you – and empathizes with your position.
- In third position – someone comes along, sees what is really happening and calmly finds a rope and pulls you out (and possibly the person in second position!)

If you become stuck in any one of the three positions as a life condition, the following may happen:

A person stuck:

In first position	becomes	egotistical
In second position	becomes	a rescuer, caretaker
In third position	becomes	cold and unfeeling



A person stuck in first position only perceives issues from their position. In second position, the person is constantly over-influenced by other peoples' views, and lets the state of others determine their state. They become co-dependent. They are not in control of their own state. In third position a person becomes detached and unfeeling. They may become the loners of the world, detached and able to analyse objectively.



Perceptual Positions Script

Set up two chairs for the coachee. They start as self in chair A then move to the empty chair B as the 'other' in 2nd position (B). (You sit to the side in a 3rd chair.)

First Position (the I position): Ask the coachee (person A) questions to get them to explain the situation as they see it from their own perspective.

- What is going on for you in the situation? (What do you experience)
- What are you seeing / hearing in this situation? How are you feeling in this situation?
- What is important to you in this situation?
- What is your outcome? / What do you want to have happen?
- What advice would you give to yourself to resolve this situation

Second Position (the YOU position): You ask the coachee to move to chair B to step into the shoes of the 'other' they have been describing. It is important to help them see, hear, and feel the world from the other's position and experience what is important to them – their beliefs, values and thinking.

- What is going on for you (NAME) here in this situation with (A)? What are you seeing / hearing / feeling?
- How do you (NAME) experience them? (A)
- What is important to you (NAME) here?
- What is your outcome you (NAME) want to happen?
- What advice would you give to (A) about resolving this situation?

Third position (the they position): You and the coachee move to an uninvolved position - both stand up and step back from the 2 empty chairs and look at them both. Encourage the coachee to observe what is happening between these two people from a neutral position, e.g. as if they were watching a wide view movie filmed from high up:

- What are 'you' (coachee) doing? What is 'the other' doing? How are they feeling?
- What patterns do you see running here? What are you noticing about the relationship between these two people?
- What's really important here?
- What advice would you now give 'yourself' (coachee A) from this neutral perspective?



Challenge as a Core Coaching Skill

Successful coaching means listening for the language that keeps coachees stuck in the same old place. When someone endlessly recycles a thinking pattern, it shows. There's a frustrating sense of 'going round the houses' and 'getting stuck in the mud'. One way to help a coachee change these annoying patterns is just to flag them up, bringing the blockage to light so you can explore it together. It's all part of the fine art of listening.

It's your job to listen carefully to the words that trap coachees into unhelpful patterns. Then you can work together to identify and experiment with different language, designed to shift the blockage. Doing so acts as a catalyst for different thinking, releasing new energy and moving the coachee forwards.

Our words really do count

Our life is framed by the way we talk about it. The language we use can benefit or hamper us, influencing how we see ourselves and how others interact with us. Our words usually flow automatically from deep-seated underlying assumptions. While life moves too fast for us to regulate our language all the time, coaching sessions are the perfect time to slow right down and watch what's going on.

Coaching gives coachees the chance to reflect on their communication style, accessing more of the language that drives positive solutions and improves resilience, framing what they say more efficiently and driving positive change.

Common language traps to listen for

The language of **good** and **bad**, **right** and **wrong**.

This kind of language indicates black and white, absolute thinking. The coachee is evaluating and judging the situation from a limited mindset, missing those essential shades of grey. Broadening their reference points can be enormously helpful, extending the lens through which they see cases. You can introduce new perspectives that help people change how they frame their experiences.

The language of **duty** and **obligation**

Shoulds, the **oughts** and **musts** are sure signs your coachee is driven by a strong sense of duty. They're compelled by feelings of obligation, fuelled by responsibility, reluctant to let others down. This can turn into over-accountability, taking on too much work. Think how you can release them from the trap of obligation and let them say 'no' more frequently and more efficiently, strengthen their resilience and become better at asking for help.

The language of **cause** and **effect**

This is where a coachee becomes obsessed with interpreting colleagues' behaviour, trying to read their minds. They have no real data but still, have a definite view that 'x' means 'y'. They are convinced that the cause they have identified has produced the effect, without considering the context, mitigating



circumstances or wider landscape. The challenge here is to ask for concrete evidence and widening the search for alternative viewpoints, the interventions that can break down direct cause and effect thinking and open up options.

The language of **either-or**

Either-or language limits someone's options to just two alternatives. The only time it has a positive impact is when the decision being made is value-based, something that by no means applies to all decisions. It creates a false dilemma because there are rarely just two possible outcomes. As a coach, you can help your coachee push themselves to think creatively to find more and better solutions.

The language of **non-ownership**

Plenty of people use language that distances them. It's particularly common in politics to use pronouns that de-personalise issues, making statements like: "It is felt that..." rather than "I feel that...", And often using the royal 'we'. People like this also use other people's opinions to express their own.

You can make great strides forward by suggesting that your coachee uses the pronoun "I", and stands their ground about what they think, taking active, personal ownership of their thoughts and feelings.

The language of **blaming** – either yourself and others.

Plenty of people habitually blame themselves or deflect blame to someone or something else. Some even flip-flop between the two.

Blaming yourself – beating yourself up – is harmful. It drives people to spend too much time and energy ruminating about the past, creating lengthy, unhelpful post-mortems about what they did or didn't do. Coaching sessions can become frustrating because they're not learning but reinforcing the pattern of blame, finding endless new arguments that confirm they messed up.

As a coach, you may experience a subtle, mysterious need to agree with them, and it can be unusually powerful. You can at this point become stuck in the mud of blame too. Being mindful that this is a possibility helps not to become lost in your coachee's story.

Coaching can help self-blammers be kinder themselves and develop greater self-compassion when things go wrong. You can raise the coachee's awareness of the way they use language and share the impact it has on you. You can highlight and challenge blaming language patterns to help your coachee unstick themselves. And once that happens you can explore the reasons behind it.

The language of **victim-hood**

This is the language of powerlessness, the idea that life happens and there's very little you can do about it, resulting in the 'poor me' syndrome. Coachees like this often discount their capabilities. They find it hard to say no, hard to stick up for themselves. They can become anxious and can fast become overwhelmed, reluctant to take risks or try new ideas without a lot of support.



We are back on the Drama Triangle.

Effective coaching helps your coachee appreciate their strengths, build more confidence and be more assertive. It encourages them to get in touch with their values and understand how they support them professionally, trust themselves and stand up for what they believe.

The language of **continuous problem solving**

Problem-solving is a useful skill, but not when it's taken too far. People start to see everything as a problem, an endless personal battle where all they do is focus on things that don't work. Even if progress is made people like this just raise the bar, attracted by the adrenaline rush they get from rising to a challenge.

Coaching can challenge your coachee's mindsets, creating room for enquiry skills, helping them identify strengths and acknowledge what's working. It can also be a key to showing them how using solutions focused language improves their communication skills and working relationships.

Faulty thinking, logic, and awareness.

There are times when a coachee's thinking appears irrational, illogical or incongruent with their lives or the world about them, when the ecology of a situation is not sound.

In these times, if they continue processing their thoughts like this, they are unlikely to get to a healthy, sustainable, or well formed outcome.

Why is it useful for a coach to keep an ear out for faulty reasoning or behaviour?

When your intuition is alerted that "something is not quite right here" it is an initial invitation to be curious and explore more what is meant by what the coachee is saying. See if you can see how this makes sense to them. Once you have done that exploration, re-check how you feel about the congruence and ecology of what they are now saying. It may be OK now.

On the other hand, if your antennae are genuinely telling you that "something is not right here" then it is time to challenge.

When to challenge?

One of the issues we face as coaches is knowing how and when to challenge. When a coachee wants to make a major change in their life it is inevitable that you will have to combine support with challenge - the key word being **combine**. If you encounter a coachee who's experiencing some difficult issues, there might be a temptation to err on the side of support and just listen, which can amount to collusion. You may be encouraging them to adopt the victim-frame mentality, in which frame everyone else is at fault and they are blameless. Where the coachee has performance issues, your role is to help them see what these are, and work with them on doing better.



Getting to the crux is all about forcing a coachee to name what is ultimately at stake in whatever the issue is. The relief of doing this may encourage the coachee to ramble and tell you the same thing in several different ways. It will often show up in a circular discussion particularly around difficult relationships. So you may intervene to say something like, “so the crux of it is you’re angry with his behaviour and want to do something about it” and this moves from the circle into action.

Interrupting

Another key skill is interrupting - this needs to be done with discretion, paying attention to the coachee’s need to fully expand a story; the skill lies in noticing that it is potentially a well worn story, which has probably been rehearsed with friends etc. Interrupting in coaching is quite different to our usual annoying social interactions as for us there is a real purpose (other than being fed up waiting to talk or needing to have a point aired), and we are being paid by the coachee or their organisation to make a difference. We interrupt in service of the coachee and the coaching relationship.

You may want to ask permission to interrupt, use obvious body language and once you have done so it helps to use a clarifying statement such as “I was getting lost there” or “I’m wondering if I need to know all the detail”.

Some examples of what types of faulty thinking might present.

Denial Deletion Delusion Deception Dismissive Dishonest and Deference

And that is just the ‘D’ bit of the alphabet.

How – exercise

Explore with your buddies examples of how these types of faulty thinking might present. Generate other examples that you either have experienced or imagine might come up.

What would you do to bring this into the open? Explore a full range of interventions on a continuum from subtle to provocative.

