



Coaching Glossary

These are some of the terms that may be used in Coaching/Consultancy Conversations. These conversations are not the usual conversation with a back and forth exchange, they are much more direct and focused. Given the shortness of time and the importance of Deepening the Learning and Forwarding the Action the Coach/Consultant will be direct in questioning, in making observations and in challenging. All of which is done in service of the client's goals and growth.

Accountability: Being accountable is an important part of the coaching relationship and process. There is no judgment or blame about accountability and the results of accountability, just data. Asking the coach to hold the client accountable is a way for the client to use this as an extrinsic motivator to help them stay in action between sessions. Accountability is for an agreed to action, to be undertaken in an agreed upon way and to an agreed upon extent by an agreed upon date.

Balance: Finding balance is dynamic and is to be in motion. The client is either moving toward balance in their life or away from balance. The job of the coach is to facilitate moving toward Balance as much as possible. The areas to be balance in life generally include Career, Money, Relationships with Family and Friends, Romance, Personal Growth, Fun and Recreation, Health and Physical Surroundings. If one of more areas are receiving attention at the expense of the others, life will feel unbalanced and bumpy. If some areas of life are being completely ignored this may be to the detriment of the client's choices and well-being or resilience.

Blurting: The Coach may 'blurt' an image, impression, metaphor or sense of something. It could be wrong or right, or half right, but the desire to say something will have been suggested by something that is being said or not said, or something in the space of the coaching or consultancy session. Coaches and consultants are not attached to what they are saying and if it is wrong or wide of the mark, say so and then the coach/consultant can course correct. Blurting is useful because it may lead to something else or maybe spot on.

Bottom-Lining: This is the skill of brevity and succinctness on the part of both the coach and the client. Bottom-lining is about the client getting to the essence what they want to say rather than engaging in long descriptive stories. Bottom lining is a useful life skill, it is imperative in coaching/consultancy given the limitations of time.

Brainstorming: Here coach and client generate ideas, alternatives perspectives, and multiple solutions. Some of the suggestions may be outrageous and impractical. This is a creative exercise to expand the possibilities available to the client. There should be no self-censorship and no attachment on the part of coach or client to any of the suggestions. If there is it is worth noting what and why this may be so. Attachment may be suggestive of assumptions or patterns of thinking.

Captain and Crew: This is a very important element of helping the client to develop tools to help them stay on track, to be able to manage gremlins and self-sabotage and to be able to deal with situations that make them fearful or times of disappointment. The Captain and Crew are “inner voices”, inner wisdom and strength which can help a client. Crew members may have particular roles, for example, to appreciate what a client has achieved or what is good about a situation.

Clarifying: The coach can help the client clarify what is going on or what may be muddled or less clearly seen.

Clearing: When the client is preoccupied with a situation or a mental state that interferes with his or her ability to be present in the session or take action, the coach assists the client by being an active listener while he or she vents or complains. This active listening and bearing witness is important, it allows the client to temporarily clear the situation out of the way and refocus on the coaching/consultancy session. A much shorter time frame is given for this venting period than there would be in a regular conversation.

Challenging: Challenging involves requesting that a client stretch way beyond his or her self-imposed limits. Challenges are outrageous requests! Frequently, in the face of a challenge, clients will be blown away by the “hugeness” of the challenge. It will open them up to a grander possibility for their life. If they are unwilling to fully take on the challenge they frequently respond with a counteroffer that is greater than they initially would have allowed themselves to make.

Commitment: The big difference between a commitment and a goal is where the motivation lies. A goal is something external that is to be realized, maybe a goal will be imposed, for example, by a manager, or co-created or it may be the client’s own goal but it is something or some state to be achieved. Commitment is the internal fuel which will motivate the clients’ actions, it is the inner hunger and promptings which the client draws upon to create a goal. A goal not based on commitment is not worth having, indeed it is more likely to do damage than do good. As the lack of commitment to see the goal realized can carry with it multiple opportunities for the client to engage in judgments and self-reproach.

Confidentiality: All information that a client shares with a coach is held as confidential. This means that all information that a client confides in the coach is not shared with

anyone else without the client's express permission. Confidentiality, the hallmark of the coaching profession, creates safety and trust and is the basis of the powerful designed alliance between client and coach. See comments in the contract on confidentiality.

Counter Offer: In response to a challenge the client can counter-offer and decide what is a reasonable ask for an inquiry or an action for in-session work. The counter offer is not however an opportunity for the client to 'play it small'.

Curiosity: Curiosity is a place of non-judgment and no attachment it is a place of asking questions about something, for example, a response or a situation. Curiosity is a place where the client can make choices about perspectives, reactions and actions. Curiosity is a place where it is not possible to co-house doubts and fears along with curiosity. Shifting to curiosity is call to be more open and inquisitive and to not be beaten by a situation or running on assumptions and previous patterns.

Designing the Alliance: Clients design the alliance that will be most beneficial to them and most supportive for forwarding their actions toward their goals and vision. This is done through making requests of the coach, setting up the logistics of the coaching relationship, and discussing the best ways to facilitate their learning and action. When clients grant power to the coaching or consulting alliance, it becomes necessary for the client to take responsibility for their part of the alliance. The coach or consultant will check in with the client to see how the relationship is working and if anything else needs to be designed. Clients should however not wait to be asked, but take initiative to ask for what they need.

Failure: This is an interesting and a loaded word. Failure is the lack of achievement of a goal or activity to which the client committed themselves. Failing is a source of useful information. It may reveal that the intended action was not something the client wanted to actually do; it may be that the client has a tendency to overcommit and so cannot possibly complete all the actions. It may be an opportunity to see a gremlin at work.

Failure is commonly thought of as a negative judgment and an opportunity for self-blame. It is more helpful to use it as a learning opportunity, to gather data about a situation, a set of actions or the client and their motivation. It is an opportunity for reflection and corrections that can then forward actions toward success.

Goals: A goal is an outcome that the client would like to achieve. Goals are most helpful when they are measurable, specific, are owned by the client, have a date by which they will be accomplished, made public (in order to achieve support and accountability) and constitute a reasonable stretch for the client. In other words the goals are SMART. Goals, well-defined and actually reflecting what you want to do are motivational. They should however not be the complete picture.

Gremlin Or Saboteur: The Gremlin is a concept developed by Richard Carson. It is short-hand and somewhat playful as a way to become aware of and think about a group of thought processes and feelings that maintain us in the status quo in our lives. Often operating as a structure that would seem to protect us, Gremlins keep us from moving forward and identifying and getting what we truly want in life. Like our minds, the Gremlin will always be with us. It is neither good nor bad; it just is. The Gremlin loses its power over us when we can identify it for what it is, notice our options in the situation and then consciously choose what it is we do really want at that time.

Inquiries: Inquiries are suggested explorations for the client to undertake deepening the learning and provoke further reflection.

Intrude/Take Charge: On occasion, the coach may need to intrude, to interrupt or wake-up a client who is going on. Sometimes the intrusion is a hard truth such as “You are kidding yourself.” Sometimes the intrusion is simply stating what is going on, such as “You are skirting the issue.” Intrusion is considered rude in conversational situations but in coaching and consultancy it is essential. It is being direct with the client, allowing the client to honestly assess and immediately deal with situations.

Intuiting: Intuiting is the process of accessing and trusting one’s inner knowing. Intuition is direct knowing, unencumbered by our thinking mind. The process of intuiting is non-linear and non-rational. Most of us have turned down the dial on our intuition, imbibing the shoulds and oughts from society and communities around us. Dialing up intuition and learning to trust it is a useful

Life Purpose: Life Purpose is about why you are here on the planet. Who is it that you are moved to be and what is it that you are moved to create? It is an essence statement that serves as a reminder of who you are and the impact that you naturally create in the world. When you are living your purpose, life is experienced as fulfilling, effortless and satisfying. When you are disregarding your life purpose, life is often felt to be empty, anguished and unfulfilling.

Perspectives and perspective taking: One of the very powerful elements of the coaching process is being able to experiment with different perspectives on a situation or event. Being encouraged to see something from various points of view is very powerful as it allows a client to be at choice and to be in choice about how they want to view a situation and so the range of actions that are open to them.

Resonance/dissonance: Knowing if something which is said by the coach or which you say has resonance or dissonance is important. If you as a client are saying something which runs counter to your values there will be a feeling of dissonance, or if you are articulating your saboteur’s voice rather than your own you will be experiencing dissonance. If your coach offers a clarification, a metaphor or an inquiry which runs

counter to your values and your truth you will have feelings of dissonance. If a suggested challenge is supportive of your values and goals you will feel resonance. So being aware of these states is important. If you don't feel a burst of energy, enthusiasm, a "yeah" then it is likely that what is being said is dissonant. This may be something that you feel physically as well as well as something that you think about intellectually.

Requesting: One of the most potent coaching skills is that of making a request of the client. The request, based upon the client's agenda, is designed to forward the client's action. The request includes a specified action, conditions of satisfaction and a date or time by which it will be done. There are four possible responses to a request, 1) yes, 2) no, 3) a counter offer or, 4) agree to a future time that a response will be given.

Structures: This is something which you create or find that helps you to remember an overall goal, an action, a perspective etc.

The Bigger Game: This is a model of a 9 square game board; each square representing a quality of successful individuals and teams. The quality of the square helps the player to stay in action and to stay engaged with what they have determined as their game. For explanation see our website and the tab Workshops and Groups.

Topic: Coming to the coaching call with a topic or with something to focus on is important so coaching time is not wasted.

Values: Values represent who you are right now. They are principles that you hold to be of worth to you in your life. They are what is important that you cannot do without. Having a clear sense of your values is really helpful in knowing how to be more fulfilled in what you do, to be more at ease with decisions made etc. When you work against your values, step over them or accept that other people are not honoring your values you will be less than happy. People often confuse values with morals. Having a clear sense of values is knowing what are important foundation stones in the life you want to live and to build.