



Going Beyond – The Week That Was

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From the President's Desk

The Coaching Flywheel is picking Momentum!!

Together, we move forward on our journey "To create an inclusive coaching community, enabling transformation of stakeholders through awareness and action". A "Living Organisation" thriving in the spirit of Interdependence, Partnership, Diversity, Openness, Self-Organisation.

As we progress further towards creating Awareness and Immediacy about "Coaching as the Most Effective Methodology for People Development", we rededicate ourselves to Sharing...

- *Sharing Benefits of Coaching through 'Demystifying Coaching' sessions across organisations*
- *Sharing Experiences through Probono Coaching, Demo Sessions, Peer Coaching, Panel Discussions, Writeups/Articles*
- *Sharing Information through Learning Leap Opportunities for understanding Membership, Certification and Credentialing with ICF*

The International Coaching Week (ICW) was originally started in 1999 by ICF Member Jerri N. Udelson, MCC, with the intent to educate the public about the value of working with a professional coach and acknowledge the results and progress made through the coaching process. International Coach Federation is a proud sponsor of ICW.

We, at ICF Delhi NCR Chapter, celebrated ICW through a bouquet of initiatives with excellent participation by our members and partner organisations, Sharing Benefits, Experiences and Information. This issue captures the moments of Bonding, Energy and Learning in a kaleidoscope display!!

Sharing the Joy,



JP Singh
President – ICF Delhi NCR Chapter



International Coaching Week May 15th – 21st, 2017

Come join ICF DelhiNCR Chapter in the Annual Celebration of Coaching.

Coaching Contributes
 • Pro bono coaching (SOS, SSMI, Taplow, Sight Savers) • Peer Coaching • Group Coaching (CARE, Agrasar)

Demystifying Coaching : Presentations by Chapter Members

April 27: SOS
 May 5: NHRD
 May 11: Taplow
 May 13: Shemrock
 May 16: SSMI, CARE
 May 17: Tech Mahindra, International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases
 May 18: Aramex
 May 19: Sight Savers

Learning Leaps and Coach Connect

May 15: Webinar on Ethical Coaching
 May 17: Webinar on Benefits of ICF Credentials and Membership
 May 20: Special ICW Coach Connect (Perspectives : A Panel Discussion on Coaching, Peer Coaching : Learning and Experience Sharing, Questioning the Existing : A talk by Navin Gulia)




Celebrating and contributing our bit to the International Coaching Week (ICW), our member coaches went on to hold many sessions at various organizations to Demystify Coaching'. The sessions proved to be great opportunities for the audiences to understand and experience coaching.

SOS

In the ongoing association, many SOS (an NGO) team members have benefited through pro bono coaching by our member coaches. This session held as a run up to the ICW, was for the senior leaders at SOS. They wanted to understand and experience coaching, having

witnessed the benefits their team members were enjoying. They were convinced and even more coaching opportunities have been rolled out to member coaches. Steps to take it further are underway. *The session was facilitated by Uttara Pattanaik and JP Singh.*

NHRD

A session on enhancing coaching awareness for an audience of learning and HR professionals, was followed by a panel discussion on 'Demystifying Coaching'. It created curiosity and awareness about coaching. The panel comprised corporate leaders Antarpreet Singh, CEO-

myDigitalblocks, Amandeep Gupta, Director-OCL and Coaches Cindy Peace, Manbir Kaur, and Ranjan Chakravarty. The discussion on how coaching can be leveraged effectively as an organizational developmental tool and the role that HR can play, was moderated by Aditi Malhotra.



Taplow

Participants were eager to know about Coaching, shared their current understanding, learnt the differences among different learning tools and were excited to know the steps to build a coaching culture and GROW Model. Our observation certainly was that the concept of coaching was muddled with some bits of mentoring and guiding and our efforts went

to bring about the subtle differences. There was sharing around the fact that it's not easy to either coach as it requires time and patience, or get coached, as it's hard to let go of a pattern. A few demo sessions were also held for the participants. *The session was facilitated by Malvieka Joshi and Jayshree.*



Shemrock

A group of 18 mothers and 4 teachers participated in the session that introduced coaching, the difference between mentoring and training and the importance of coaching. There was also a group activity, where mothers and teachers discussed different topics like child bullying, good touch & bad touch, being an appreciative mother, being a vigilant

mother etc. They were also introduced to a series of questions related to how they could use them to coach their toddlers/young kids. As a closing activity, each mother picked one or two items from a 30-day mom challenge worksheet as a promise to self that they will practise one of the challenges daily. *The session was facilitated by Jayshree and Susmita Sen .*



SSMI

Swami Sivananda Memorial Institute [SSMI] is a non-profit society committed to creating an inclusive society where women, youth and children are empowered to realize their potential with dignity. The agenda of the session was to bring awareness about ICF, coaching, and the benefits of a coaching culture. The audience comprised a committed and enthusiastic group of young women and men - teachers of the primary and secondary schools, and staff. It was highly affirming to see the openness and interest

of the team to explore something new that could potentially have a positive impact for them.

The group was highly participatory, with their questions and sharing of examples and stories from their personal and professional lives for collective learning. At the end of the presentation live coaching sessions were conducted to give the group an experience of coaching. *The session was facilitated by Major Avtar Singh and Priya Kapoor.*



CARE

Techniques on Feedback and Coaching were explained and work place implementation discussed. There was a high level of participation and involvement by the group. Each participant had 1-2 specific takeaways to

implement (and a few of them committed to sharing the knowledge with teams. That should give a good push around coaching culture). The session at this NGO was facilitated by *Rajeev Khanna and Nidhi Mota.*



Tech Mahindra

The coaching awareness session saw a lot of queries from participants, starting from slide one. The team shared information as well as relevant experiences. A 30-minute demonstration and a de-brief between the coach and the coachee, followed the

presentation. The session concluded with participants sharing their takeaways and expressing the desire to know more about ICF and Coaching. *The session was facilitated by Sumita Ummat, Nidhi Mota, Priya Kapoor and Amit Sood.*



International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases



10 of the senior leaders, directors attended the 'Demystifying Coaching' session. It was extremely interactive and a lot of clarity came about on queries around an organization's role

in implementation and effectiveness of coaching in people development. *The session was facilitated by Deepanshu Sharma and Sandra Colhando.*

Aramex

The session's aim was to raise awareness of coaching awareness among managers and leaders by clarifying what coaching is, since a lot of people use the term in the wrong context. Differences between training, mentoring, coaching, athletic coaching, consulting were shared. Discussions went on to 'how adopting a coaching style helps managers' effectiveness'. 20 second line managers attended the interactive session and a demo

session was also conducted. The audience had a great 'aha' when they saw the process working effectively in a demo by the coach and coachee from amongst themselves. Elements of trust, listening, willingness, when and when not to do coaching and when is coaching effective, were topics keenly discussed too. *The session was facilitated by Ajay Pasricha and JP Singh.*



Sight Savers

The session was attended by nine of the senior leaders at Sight Savers (an NGO). In addition to enhancing understanding of coaching, the session saw a lot of discussion and demos around application of coaching. The audience

was extremely positive and open. They walked away with a better understanding and an eagerness to implement and execute coaching conversations. *The session was facilitated by Aditi Malhotra and JP Singh.*



Learning Leap Events (webinars)

May 15 - Ethical Coaching with Rajat Garg



Coaches had a discussion on:

As a coach, how do I know that my coaching is on the right track, ethically?

Ethics are about interactions between two entities.

What are some of those entities that we as coaches interact with and what are the various aspects within those interactions?

How does ICF support me in my journey towards ethical coaching?

May 17-Benefits of ICF Membership and Credentials with José de Sousa



The Learning Leap webinar threw light on ICF credential levels, what ACC, PCC and MCC mean and how they benefit coaches and coachees, and the value of being an ICF member

ICW Special Coach Connect



Our May 2017 Coach Connect had something for everyone...inspiration, newer perspectives, learning and experience sharing. The panel discussion on coaching saw achievers, from all spheres, discuss perspectives on coaching. Our panel of experts comprised Mr. R N Mohanty CEO-Sightsavers, Mr. Vineet Singhal, Country Head-Shire India, Mr. Sushil Joshi, CHRO-Zee Corporate, Ms. Avani Parekh, Director of Empathy-SHEROES and Ms. Sunita Biddu, Speaker and Social Media Strategist. The discussion was moderated by Yoshita Swarup Sharma.

Learning and experiences were also shared by some of the participating coaches of the first round of peer coaching, initiated by ICF Delhi NCR Chapter.

Member coaches were further inspired by a talk 'Questioning the Existing', by Navin Gulia - A very motivating approach to life and to breaking patterns and unconstructive beliefs, it left the audience thoughtful and inspired.

Learning Ladder

Building A Coaching Culture

Susmita Sen shares Leader hacks for the future

We are facing a fascinating future in emerging trends like smart computing, artificial intelligence, bio mimicry, augmented reality etc., along with the disruptive innovation metamorphosing the marketplace. The challenges for leaders are further amplified by the onslaughts of the Digital revolution, accelerated pace of change and dispersed workforces. Ask any CXO on their top most priority, and each is prompt to highlight Talent Attraction and Retention, as a key propeller in the knowledge economy and as being singularly responsible for their sleepless nights. Not only is the 'right fit' gradually fading into obsolescence, but leaders are also responsible for constantly juggling novel ways to retain the top performers. Stress, frustration, quitting, emotional breakdowns are therefore causing a visual diaspora of strong captains, who are required to steer the ship through 'choppy waters'. Hence, Leadership Development is the most hallowed concept today, with its esoteric undertones.

How do organizations build a strong pipeline of leaders who can take the organization to its next level of competitive edge? How can they ensure grooming leaders the right way to equip them so their astral aura is exemplary for the teams? What is that one magic potion that can teach leaders the tricks to handle all organizational imbroglio with 'élan'?

The answer, perhaps, lies in creating and nurturing a Coaching Culture in the organization. Eric Schmidt, Executive Chairman of Google, when asked what was the best advice he was ever given, has been reported to reply, "Hire a coach." He continued to add that his immediate reaction to this suggestion earlier, was not favorable. This happens to be the most common reaction to such suggestion, globally and more particularly in the Indian sub-continent. The phenomena of 'Coaching' is somewhat in a hazy, mythical space yet and more often misjudged for its puritan relevance and value, as organizations find themselves

struggling to open to the concept. 'I need a coach' is not a proclamation from the larks of the land. On the contrary, when an executive is recommended for a 'Coaching' session, the mind starts racing on the possibilities of being declared inadequate for the job at hand, as a remedial measure for something not working right, which is not in the least palatable to the cognitive mind, that thrives in the conundrum of validation from external perceptions and judgements. Hence, my attempt here is twofold; the first herculean task is to build the perspective on what the phenomena of 'Coaching' is all about and the second is to build an understanding on the 'Culture' aspect.

'It's not imperative to be sick, to need a physician'- is the first myth broken by the Coaching philosophy, to banish the stigma attached to it. And that's what makes Coaching so powerful. Coaching involves supporting individuals to gain self-insight into their own patterns of behavior, mental models and help them gain a heightened level of self-awareness, to equip them to make conscious choices. A few distinguishing characteristics that sets Coaching apart, from Consulting, Mentoring, Counselling are:

1. Coaching is that process which causes a 'Pattern Interrupt', as suggested by Peter J Reding in his exposition on the subject. It helps individuals practice the pause, from the daily pace, to question that natural unconscious flow. It's powerful when leaders become aware of how their own patterns are fueled by drivers, which have got them to where they are in their career, but the same patterns have the potency to also pose a hindrance in the way of change. This is not easy, as patterns are often deep seated. And the realization from a higher level of consciousness is a liberating experience for coaches.
2. Coaching is an 'Ongoing' process, with a regular rhythm associated. This gives

coachees the comfort of thought partnering, with a greater sense of continuity and conviction. It helps coachees break into their unconscious way of being, and make a small but continuous integration of new behaviors and learning.

3. Coaching is 'Goal Oriented'- like any other business deal, and this should do wonders to appeal to the germane business litany of the calculating mind (read ROI). What you focus on expands, is the doctrine to follow here and Coaching is that wonder drug, that helps coachees focus of goals and get clarity on ways to reach there.
4. Coaching helps raise 'Awareness' and thereby instills the sense of 'Accountability' in coachees. Coaches honor the fact that the client is self-responsible. Carl Rogers, an early pioneer, in his Rogerian theory in psychology, enunciates the theory of focusing on the client with 'Unconditional Positive Regard'. The client is positioned as the only 'source' of his own solutions, which is an immensely empowering experience for the client. This also promotes the client to be wholly committed to the cause and make the transformational journey successful.

Now let us shift our focus to the 'Culture' aspect. Why does 'Culture' get so much press? Because it is critically important, often misunderstood and influences employee engagement. While being amorphous, 'Culture' is what defines the DNA of an organization by creating a continuum of discipline, regularity and commitment that permeates all aspects of the organization. The best strategic concept will fail to deliver, when practiced in isolation, without a strong 'Culture' thrust to champion the cause. As poignantly stated by Peter Drucker, 'Culture eats Strategy for breakfast'. A latent comprehension of the vision and values, internalized by the leaders and espoused to all employees is the advocacy of 'Culture'.

With the multitude of benefits of 'Coaching', this can hence be built into the 'Culture' of the organization. Creating a 'Coaching' culture is bound to be a long-drawn complex process, evolving over time, with sponsorship from the leadership. To answer the question 'Why a Coaching Culture?' the stakeholders need to start with the end in mind and know how creating a coaching culture will serve the core strategy of the business. Leaders will need to explore ways for culmination of 'Coaching' with the Culture, for creating sustainable advantage, for themselves, for organizations and for teams who work for them.



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Ethics in Coaching

Sandra Colhando shares insights based on her journey and experience

Sponsor versus Coachee

This is one of my live coaching transcripts with a corporate client:

Coach: "On a scale of 0-10 how passionate are you about the goal you and your supervisor just set for yourself?"

Client: "3"

Coach: "How involved were you in creating this goal for yourself?"

Client: "I don't feel passionate when I am at work; it used to be great a

few years ago, now I don't feel like working here."

Coach: "What are you passionate about?"

Client: "I feel if I set up something new, start a new company, it will excite me!"

The conversation goes on about how my client is keen to quit and start a company, however may not have the risk appetite to do so. He feels he is 'settling' for a safe option and does not want to discuss this openly with his organization.

As a professional coach, I signed up with the organization to coach their leaders on a few pre-determined goals, support them in empowering their leaders to grow and make it a great place to work. As a Life coach, I signed up with myself to be true to the spirit of coaching and always have the client welfare paramount. I was at a dilemma here! Should the organization know that the leader they are investing heavily in has no / little plans to continue? Or should I continue coaching and support him in following his passion? What is ethical?

The International Coach Federation (ICF) has an exhaustive list under its 'Code of Ethics' that indicates the do's and don'ts in a coaching

engagement right from the confidentiality level to conflict of interest. In all this the essence is to stay focused on the person you are coaching. Honor the client as the expert in his/her work and believe that every client is creative, resourceful and whole. Standing on this foundation, it's clear the coach's responsibility is to stay aligned to what the client wants to achieve.

The coaching transcript continues:

Coach: "Now that you have made a decision that this is not the right time to take the plunge, i.e. quit and open your company, what options do you have in front of you to make your time here (in the company) more enriching?"

Client: (Thinks for a while) "I need to find ways to get my passion back at work?"

Coach: "Excellent! When was the time you were really excited to go to work? What were you doing?"

Client: "I was working on implementing a new product the organization was planning to launch."

Coach: "Wonderful! What part of that can you create now for yourself in the current setup?"

Juggling roles with a coachee

As I learn about more coaching ethics another situation that's close to me is coaching your team member. It took me some time to start doing this, I was not sure if I would be able to detach myself from the supervisor in me and 'be there' for my coachee. During my 6-month advanced coach certification, I attempted to take this up, it's all about stepping up, doing things you've never done...realize your potential!

I started this engagement differently; I asked my coachee (also my team member) what was his expectation from me as his coach. Not

surprisingly, he mentioned I would need you not to wear your stakeholder hat during these sessions. I acknowledged and committed to him and to myself that my role here is only to facilitate growth and whatever my coachee wants to work on in these sessions.

My first and most immediate focus was to create a safe space for him to open up completely without the fear of judgment, bias and conflict of interest. I took the stance of innocence when I heard him and re-iterated this theme throughout our engagement. The foundation session, which facilitates self-discovery, was a major key to unlocking potential. It allowed us to flow naturally in our

discussions and create a space for my coachee to discuss really personal issues and come up with powerful and creative realizations.

As I internalize these guidelines and practice them, one realization that has come to stay is that if you as a coach follow your natural instincts, be authentic and joyful in the process of coaching, have your coachee as the absolute center of attention, the result is always a client who has discovered themselves, feels more confident about their decisions and enjoys the 'being' versus the 'doing' aspect of life.



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The What and Why of Coaching Supervision

Elizabeth Okada talks about the developing trend of coaching supervision

One of the developing trends in the growing field of coaching, is that of Coaching Supervision. In the UK and across Europe, coaching supervision is strongly recommended by the various coaching professional bodies (ICF U.K., EMCC and AoC). Increasingly experienced coaches are training as Coach Supervisors. As the coaching market around the world becomes more competitive and sophisticated, more and more purchasers of coaching are asking about the provision of supervision for coaches they are considering hiring.

What is coaching supervision? The ICF UK defines Coaching Supervision as: “the interaction that occurs when a coach periodically brings his or her coaching work experiences to a coaching supervisor in order to engage in reflective dialogue and collaborative learning for the development and benefit of the coach and his or her clients.”

Coaching Supervision has its origins in the helping professions, particularly in counselling and therapy and is part of an individual's on going professional development. Due to the nature of much coaching work, coaches can also feel “isolated”. New coaches may feel they need the support of someone more experienced as they develop themselves and their practices. Sometimes coaches need help exploring more complex areas. For example, if they have been helping clients manage and learn from difficult and emotional issues. For the coach this can sometimes be emotionally exhausting. Working with a trained supervisor provides an opportunity to discuss your thoughts and feelings and to gain support for the impact it may be having on you.

According to Hawkins and Smith (2006), supervision covers three principle functions: Qualitative, Developmental and Resourcing:

The *qualitative* function provides quality control in work with people and to have someone to look with us at our work.

The *developmental* function is about developing the skills, understanding and capacities of the supervisees. Through reflection of the supervisees' work with their clients.

The *resourcing* function is a way of responding to how any workers who are engaged in the intensity of working with clients are necessarily allowing themselves to be affected by the emotions of the client and how they need time to become aware of how this has affected them and to deal with any reactions.

Let me share a personal experience of supervision in practice to help illustrate why supervision is important and how it can support coaches. I was coaching a senior individual in an international organization, who I will call Charlie. About half way through the session, we were interrupted and Charlie was asked to take an urgent phone call. When he returned, I noticed Charlie was visibly shaken and upset. He had just learnt that a colleague had lost his life on the Malaysian Air flight that had been shot down over the Ukraine. Charlie now had to inform others in the organization of the loss of a trusted colleague and friend. He asked if we could use the rest of the session to prepare for this.

During my next on-going supervision session, I asked my supervisor to help me review the session. Agnes helped me explore the unique nature of that session, focusing on the qualitative and resourcing functions of supervision. I could come up with a follow up plan to contact Charlie about the next session plus a plan on how to start our next session.

What are some of the benefits of supervision? Why do the professional bodies recommend supervision? Although research into this area is still limited, it does suggest some of the following:

- Increased confidence
- Enabling coach maturity
- Honing reflective practice
- Learning coaching techniques
- Sharing resources amongst peer groups



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Source: Coaching Supervision: A Practical Guide for Supervisees. Clutterbuck, Lucas & Whittaker. (2016)

From my own experience, I would say all the above but would add that it has also made me more conscious of the contexts my coachees are working in and the impact those contexts may be having on them. It helps me to reflect on what interventions I have used and why. Finally, it allows me to explore the relationships and interactions between my coachees and myself.

How to Stop Being a Perfectionist

Anjana Motihar Chandra talks about overcoming perfectionism

If you have very high standards for yourself and others, and find that these standards are rarely met, you could be 'suffering' from perfectionism.

Perfectionists cannot tolerate mistakes and typically, want whatever they do to be flawless. They have a highly active inner critic who is constantly berating them for making mistakes, even the smallest one.

They are also intolerant of other's mistakes and may end up constantly nagging and criticizing the people they live and work with.

While it's good to have high standards, if these standards are unrealistic and never attained, you will be in a constant state of stress and negativity. This is certainly not good for your mental and physical health, nor is this good for your relationships which will suffer because of the constant criticism.

Why are perfectionists so hard on themselves and others?

Perfectionists behave the way they do for a variety of reasons such as:

- They have a fear of failure.
- They have a fear of rejection.
- They want to avoid being criticised and judged by others.
- They feel out of control in their lives and use perfectionism to feel in control.
- They lack confidence in themselves and have a high level of self-doubt.

At the heart of perfectionism is the deep-rooted desire, probably stemming from childhood, to be loved and accepted for who you are. Perfectionists fear that if they make mistakes or do something wrong,

they will not be loved and accepted. They will be rejected.

Perfectionists are also unable to tolerate human errors and they see a mistake as a 'crime' or being 'bad' rather than an opportunity to grow and learn.

According to American author Brene Brown, "People who are walking around as perfectionists are ultimately afraid that the world is going to see them for who they really are and [that] they won't measure up."

Tips to overcome perfectionism

- Accept what is: Accept the reality of the situation you are in. And accept your own personal reality and the reality of those you are criticising. Once you accept what is, you will be able to lower your unrealistic standards and set realistic ones.
- Change your focus from the negative to the positive: Instead of focusing on what is not working in a situation, see what is working. For instance, if you have been critical about your performance on stage, turn your attention to what you did well. This will encourage you to learn from your mistakes and do better next time. You can use this same strategy for evaluating the behaviour of others.
- Adopt an attitude of forgiveness and compassion: When you forgive yourself and others for making a mistake, you allow yourself to look for solutions rather than staying stuck in negative feelings of guilt and failure.

- Stop taking life so seriously: Instead of taking life and yourself so seriously, laugh more and have some fun.
- Take constructive action: Instead of beating yourself up for making a mistake, act to move forward and achieve your goal.
- Pursue excellence instead of perfection: Set high standards for yourself but pursue excellence, not perfection. Perfection is negative and keeps you focused on what isn't working, excellence is positive and focuses on moving forward.
- Drop the 'shoulds' from your life: Ask yourself what you want to do rather than what you should do.

Brene Brown suggests doing a reality check when your inner critic is bombarding you for being a failure. She says you should ask yourself the following questions:

1. Are my thoughts factual, or are they my interpretations?
2. Am I jumping to negative conclusions?
3. Is this situation as bad as I'm making it out to be?
4. What's the worst thing that could happen?
5. Will this matter in five years?

The key to overcoming perfectionism, like with everything else, is to start with small steps and take these steps every day until you break your perfectionist habit and develop a more relaxed and tolerant way of thinking.



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Generative Conversation

Dr. Neena Verma, PhD, PCC details Appreciative Inquiry inspired Coaching Application that has been developed by her

“Treat people as if they were what they ought to be
And you help them become what they are capable of being.”
... **Goethe**

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a strengths-based, actionable approach for generative change and development, rooted in the premise that human beings have inherent strengths/wisdom/dreams, which when affirmed, enable transformation and growth. I have over years been embodying AI in my life and work, especially coaching, consulting and facilitation work. My rich experience with AI, has inspired me to create an ‘Appreciative Coaching’ (ACT-IDEA) model, and AI-inspired applications that facilitate deep transformation, of which ‘Generative Conversation’ is the focus of this article.

I understand ‘conversation’ to be a meaningful, co-active, dialogic communication, involving exchange of thoughts, feelings, views etc. The phenomenon of conversation offers an immense generative potential, more so in the coaching context, where it is the central process. Coaching conversation is lot more impactful when it fosters an element of generativity, facilitating discovery and nurturance of deep meaning, high purpose and concrete action.

Generative Conversation

A generative conversation is an authentic, creative inquiry in search of deep understanding, learning, and growth. I have developed a coaching application on this theme by combining **AI principles**, and the phenomenon of ‘**Appreciative Presence**’, as explained below.

AI Principles –

Let us understand the **essence of AI principles** in coaching conversation context.

- ◆ **Poetic Principle** (we can choose what we study) ... provides a simple and elegant way to help the client reframe problem as possibility and transform a search for solution into a quest for deep transformation.
- ◆ **Simultaneity Principle** (inquiry is intervention) ... helps ask questions that affirm and amplify the strengths, potential and possibility-focus.
- ◆ **Anticipatory Principle** (images inspire action) ... supports facilitation of client’s focus on their affirmative dreams and aspirations.
- ◆ **Constructionist Principle** (words create worlds) ... helps reflect to the client their self-empowering conversational content, modelling a way to self-intervene through mindful choice of words.

When a coach is facilitating the exploration with a ‘generative conversation’, the focus is on helping the client mindfully choose to focus of their exploration; reframe problem to possibility; and be inspired by the questions, images, and words of their inquiry.

‘Appreciative Presence’ –

A coach offers ‘appreciative presence’ to foster ‘generative conversation’. It emerges from simultaneous manifestation and an interplay of –

◆ **Empathic and Generative Listening**

Theory-U creator Otto Scharmer emphasizes the value of empathic (open heart) and generative (open will) listening, which help create emotional connect with emerging whole, and facilitate a deep shift in identity. A 'generative conversation' enables the coach to go beyond attentive listening, by bringing in willingness and ability to listen with open heart and will, thereby be able to see the emergent holistic meaning.

◆ **Silence**

Silence is an experience, not activity. It involves slowing down and becoming present to emergent meaning. The challenge lies in – awkwardness that may come from staying silent (different from living silence); and coach's performance anxiety. Being aware of one's own state, allowing and attuning to emergent meaning, may help a coach live and offer silence in a meaningful way.

◆ **Being 'appreciation'**

Being 'appreciation' is about being willing and able to notice, allow, acknowledge and affirm things 'as-is'. Such unconditional affirmation does not necessarily mean having to be agreeable. It means to be mindful of things in the here & now space of exploration and recognize the emergent meaning without censoring or pre-judging. It involves adopting a heliotropic stance and redirecting client's focus on 'life-giving energy'.

In essence, 'generative conversation' is about mindful embodiment of AI principles, combines with offering 'appreciative presence' through empathic and generative listening, living silence and being 'appreciation'. Hope this brief article creates a meaningful opportunity to begin your 'generative conversation' journey. I invite you to contribute your views and help enrich the practice of 'generative conversation' in the larger realm of 'appreciative coaching'.

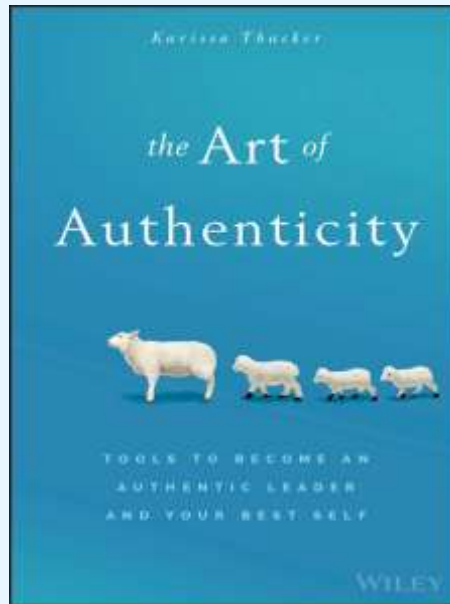
Important – This article on 'generative conversation' is part of forthcoming book on 'Appreciative Coaching' being authored by Dr. Neena Verma. Please restrain from copying the content, and be ethical to credit the author while using this in your practice.



Dr. Neena Verma, Ph.D. PCC Executive, Team & Systemic Coaching | Appreciative Inquiry, OD | Director & Mentor Coach - Transcendence Learning | Author, Editor

Book Review

The Art of Authenticity by Karissa Thacker



Rajat Tewari reviews the book

Karissa Thacker, who is a widely-respected management psychologist and consultant, has written on the strong need for Authenticity, in professional leadership roles, as individual contributors or in our personal lives. She has explained the four key elements of Authenticity and how we could develop them to bring an authentic approach to our engagements with people every day.

The challenges of the new world: As the world is evolving into a Knowledge economy, the world is seeing an unprecedented level of change, instability and paradigm shifts. Aply described as a “VUCA world” (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous), there is reducing job security, stability of income or linear growth in organizations. Earlier, workers were expected to follow the rules and the top down instructions and grow slowly within their organizations. Now that is not enough and workers need to bring intrinsic value built on knowledge and experience, to help shape the organization as it continually beats the new challenges of the changing economic landscape.

Today’s knowledge worker needs to ask the following questions so that she is able to bring ‘transforming’ quality to his work:

- a. What are my strengths?
- b. How do I work best?
- c. What are my values?
- d. Where do I belong?
- e. What can I contribute?

Thus, the new Knowledge economy is a combination of “Freedom and Fear”. The freedom comes from the access to knowledge, engage in work we are passionate about, choose the environment and contribute significantly. The fear comes from the instability, changing dynamics and need to be one step ahead.

The new and fast changing environment requires that to succeed, we learn to make a 'signature' impact in every interaction that we do. The question to ask here is 'what was my significant contribution in the engagement?' It could be something that someone else is also doing, but do we have a different style or impact? This would require that we celebrate our quirks, leverage weaknesses, experiment with new things and seek a higher purpose for our work. An authentic person is better equipped to bring positive impact to his engagements and relationships.

Authenticity can be a powerful tool for leading a fulfilling, productive and successful life and building enduring relationships.

The four pillars of Authentic behavior are:

Self-Awareness: I was talking to a successful leader a few days back, and in a moment of vulnerability, he frankly admitted to his inability to listen properly. He looked across at me and said "I don't know what to do to change this". It was a powerful moment for him, accepting a weakness, seeking advice and willing to change. The self-awareness means an understanding of how 'we would behave' or show up to others in different situations. The author is candid in clarifying that there is no 'one self' in us. We are different selves in varying situations or amongst different people. Also, we can change our behavior basis the external environment. The important thing here is to understand what are our different "faces" in different situations and circumstances, which we use to get work done. A senior leader could be a dominating personality at the work place, an easy going, fun loving guy with his children and a meek, submissive person with his wife or parents. He could be impatient at meetings, liking people who follow orders and dress well and are good listeners. Thus, his behavior would change as per the person or situation he faces.

Self-awareness is the first pillar of Authenticity as it helps the person to accept that his behavior is shaped by his perspective and could be shaped for more impact.

Unbiased processing: Abraham Lincoln, the President of United States surprised everyone when he chose two such persons as his key advisors who had a very different thinking approach. He truly understood the dangers of biased thinking, which is magnified in a team that thinks alike. Unbiased processing is the ability to incorporate a divergent view and bring up win-win solutions. This ability to process concepts, situations and decisions objectively stems from a high level of self-awareness. The question we need to ask are:

- a. Do I seek other's perspective on a specific issue or decision point?
- b. Do I collaborate that thinking with my own perspective?
- c. Do my conclusions or decisions show the difference?

Of course, unbiased processing is not required all the time. There are problems (need to change the light bulb or extinguish a fire) and there are dilemmas (should we increase the marketing budget?). Problems need immediate tactical action or resolutions. Dilemmas are complex issues which may require a multifaceted perspective to be resolved effectively and require unbiased processing.

Relational Transparency: The important word is 'relational' here. When we relate to people, teams, family or even oneself, how transparent we truly are? This has become more significant in the new world, where nothing is really hidden. The social network, ubiquitous cameras and ability to reach out to anyone in an instant makes our lives and actions much more transparent. Tim Cook's revelation in 2014 about being gay shows how important 'relational transparency' is for leaders today.

The important thing to understand is that there is no absolute (or abrupt) transparency. Everyone does not really need to know everything. It's more of a journey, where a leader or an individual engages with increasing transparency to build trust, authenticity and powerful relationships. This includes moments of vulnerability and accepting weaknesses. Also, relational transparency has to be managed so as to respect the environment, people and culture of the space in which we are interacting. A CEO who dislikes an employee and fires him in public is doing more harm with his 'spouting transparency'.

Internalized moral perspective: Last but not the least, Authenticity demands a core consistency in our behavior with people and situations. Our core values and moral perspective define us and show our true nature. When we are aligned to our values or relate to them at crucial moments, it shows up true authenticity. A senior leader had to let go a good employee due to mass lay-offs in his organization and this was inherently conflicting with his core values. He could not save his employee's job but he went out of the way to help the employee find a new job outside the organization. When he faced the employee, he laid the cards on the table, painstakingly explaining the reasons for the lay off and then detailed out the action he had planned for the exiting employee.

It's also critical to understand that values or beliefs are not cast in stone and there could be modifications in behavior as we change ourselves to manage the environment. We need to be aware of our values and relate to them as we navigate the turbulence of everyday work pressures, being flexible in our approach to optimize our decision making and actions.

Karissa has intentionally titled the book as "The Art of Authenticity", as she stresses throughout the book that Authenticity is less of a process and more of an art, where we incorporate the key elements (Self-awareness, Unbiased processing, Relational Transparency, Internalized moral perspective) and artfully enhance them while managing the realities of everyday life.

Dipping into her wealth of experience, Karissa brings impactful examples to support her thoughts and has tried to give a balanced perspective of the theory and its practical application.

The key point underlying the book is that there are clear 'go do' action points to enhance our authenticity but they must be artfully incorporated in to real life situations using pragmatism and respecting the environment. This continual journey will help us succeed to be truly authentic.



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This issue of Going Beyond has been edited for the ICF Delhi NCR Chapter by Aditi Malhotra, Director – Communication and Marketing, ICF Delhi NCR Chapter.