



# COACHING FUNDAMENTALS

Ana Karakusevic



**1**



**LISTENING**

Are you a good listener? Do you get constant feedback how you always offer a sympathetic ear and a compassionate presence? Do your friends and acquaintances come to you with their problems and moans, safe in the knowledge that they will get a warm welcome, good hearing and no challenge?

If so, you are probably not ready to be a coach. If you equate listening with being silent, not disrupting the status quo, not interrupting another person's monologue, not challenging their view of the world... you're not ready to be a coach. If you always agree, accept what you're being told unquestioningly, unflinchingly, unequivocally... you're not ready to be a coach. If you present yourself as a blank slate to be filled with someone else's thoughts, ideas, and opinions... you're not ready to be a coach.

What is a coach then if not a good listener? Or – to put it more precisely – what kind of listening is useful in coaching? And how does it differ to what is colloquially described as “being a good listener”?

Listening in coaching is a powerful, dynamic and difficult act. It goes beyond being merely silent, and not interrupting with one's own ideas, suggestions and advice. It goes way beyond “being a mirror” – a cold, hard, unfeeling, unblinking surface that supposedly captures the reality of someone else's worldview.

It is powerful because, when done properly, it is the biggest gift we can give to another person: a gift of our full presence and attention of mind, body and spirit. It is dynamic because it does not rest in silence, acceptance and unconditional positive regard; rather, it starts there, but then it goes beyond into a dance, a dialogue, a co-creation of new insights, new thoughts, new worldviews. It is difficult because it takes practice – years of attentive painful mistake-laden practice – to find the place where we are fully present but not interfering.

How do we find that place? A good start would be to acknowledge that we are all occasionally a bit rubbish at listening; that our minds wander to our own more interesting ideas; that we make judgements about the other person, what they should or shouldn't do, should or shouldn't think or feel. That we even occasionally just want to shake them up and say: no, look at it this way, and all will be well!

It is in those moments that we have truly engaged our most potent listening capacities, because we have started to listen to ourselves fully, and pay attention to where our thoughts intervene. And it is only by listening to ourselves – and I define listening here as “being fully engaged and aware” – that we can offer the same courtesy to others. That we can understand where they end and we begin, and what happens in that space in between, where neither one of us have tread yet, the space of connection, possibility and innovation.

When this feels like a difficult but ultimately rewarding place to be, then you're ready to be a coach.



# Questions



## What makes a good question? Was this a good question? No.

Why not? Because it was too wide, too open, too unoriginal, just plain too boring, to provoke a meaningful answer. Yes, you can get answers to just about any question, but not every answer makes the question worth asking.

So then... what is a question worth asking in a coaching environment?

(And was this a good question? Better. Because it is more precise, which has a better chance of engendering original and meaningful thinking.)

A good coaching question is therefore precise. Precise in the sense that no words are wasted, superfluous or garrulous, filling out the space for effect, for obfuscation or decoration.

What else?

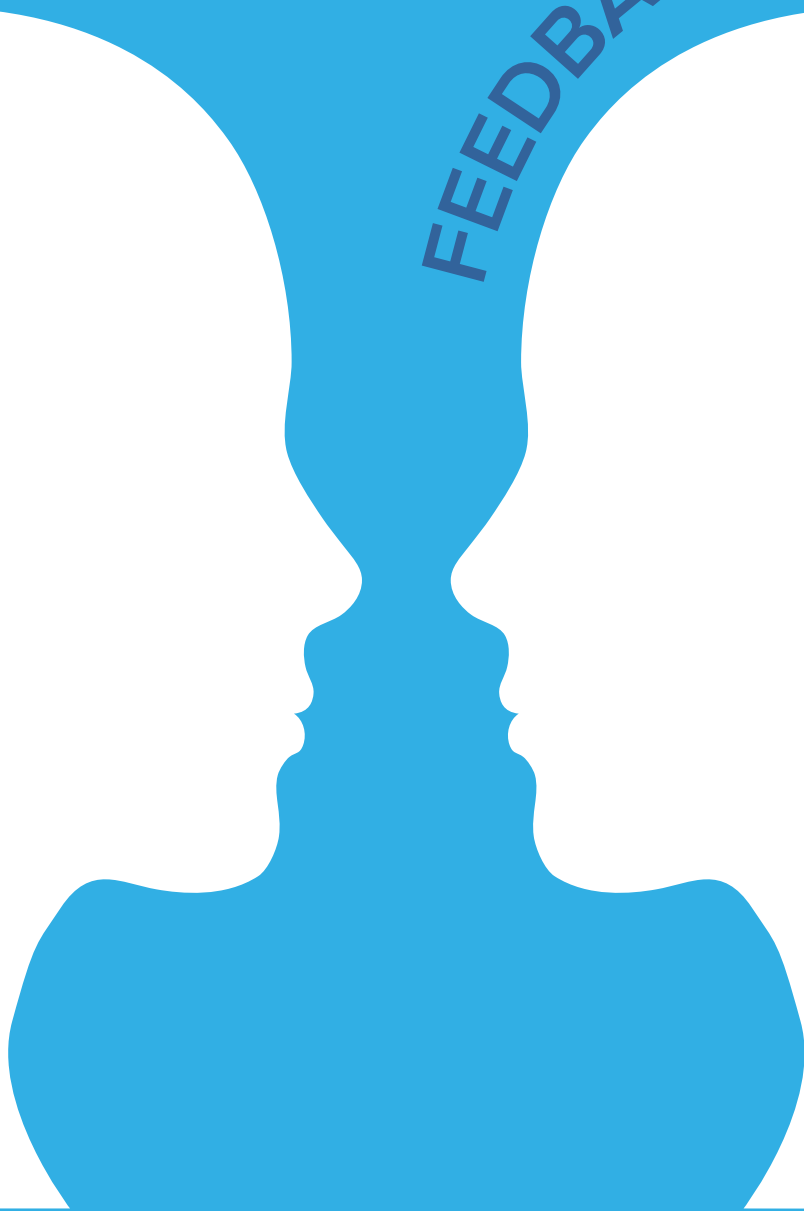
(Now there's a good coaching question: simple, precise, with no other possible meaning but to invite further thinking.)

What else makes a good coaching question? Unpreparedness. You know those "best coaching questions" that unscrupulous coach training providers sometimes post on Linked-in groups, or in airport books? Ignore them. Because there is no such thing as a "best coaching question" that could work in any situation, any dilemma, any coaching relationship. Worse still, if you use those, you risk being rumbled by your client very quickly, as a coach who's not present, who doesn't really listen, who's not interested in being a thinking partner, but goes through a pre-prepared checklist, ticking off items one by one. A great coaching question arises in the moment, and surprises the coach as much as the coachee. A truly great coaching question is asked even before the coach has fully had time to articulate it, to turn it round and look at it from all its sides. It is definitely not something that the coach has used before, a "killer question" that worked really well with that client you had five years ago.

What else makes a great coaching question? Intention. Unhelpful coaching intention is when you ask questions from your own curiosity rather than a desire to unlock something different in a client. So what did you do when she said that? And what is your boss's name again? And what's their relationship with their boss? All unhelpful. The client knows, and we (as coaches) don't need to know; the answers just cloud our judgement, make the situation seem deceptively complex, and cause the client to go off on tangents or follow oft-treaded paths of inquiry. Coaching isn't gossip (of the "he said/she said" variety), and it also isn't a research article, where we're trying to piece together as many sides to the argument as possible. Coaching is a relationship between two people, in the moment, where one of them spins meaning out of their life story, and the other holds – and occasionally adjusts – the spinning wheel, and notices the patterns emerging.

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FEEDBACK



If – to use the metaphor from Part Two of Coaching Fundamentals – “coaching is a relationship between two people, in the moment, where one of them spins meaning out of their life story, and the other holds – and occasionally adjusts – the spinning wheel, and notices the patterns emerging”, how do those patterns get shared? This is where feedback comes in.

“May I give you some feedback?” A question often followed by a judgement, an accusation, emotional outburst, unsolicited advice, unwarranted comment, or unsubstantiated evidence. If ever there was a question guaranteed to put up shutters and create defensiveness in even the most well-adjusted people, surely this is it. Which is why so many of us refrain from giving or receiving feedback, allowing instead conversations to remain unspoken, disagreements unresolved, behaviours unchanged, new insights uncreated.

Which is a shame in human relationships, and a crime in coaching.

What might be a helpful way of offering feedback in coaching? The clue is in the word “offering”. There is a visceral difference between the act of giving (with its implications of forcing the other person to hold on to the gift that has been passed on), and the act of offering – which invites the other person to meet us half-way, to hold out and take the baton on, and choose what they want to do with it. Which could include dropping it, running away with it, examining it, smashing it to smithereens, or throwing it back to us.

The art of offering feedback includes the skills of lightness, non-righteousness, and exploration. Lightness in the act of offering, while at the same time fully owning our observations, and all the thoughts, feelings, insights and stories that have influenced us. Non-righteousness because this is not the only truth, and may indeed be not truthful at all for the other person. Which is where exploration comes in: exploration in conversation, seeing where this piece of feedback lands with the other person, how does it fit in with their reality, and what – if any – role it has in creating a new reality for them.

The other side of offering feedback is, of course, how it is received. And this is also where a coach can play a part in role-modelling a gracious, accepting and curious stance. A stance which has its foundations in the fact that any feedback is only a snapshot in time, a result of a particular interaction, observed through one’s own lenses of experience, wisdom and judgement. And like any snapshot taken by another person, it enables us to see a side of ourselves that we may not often see, and which exists, whether we like it or not. We can then choose what we want to do with this side: cover it up so that no-one sees it ever again, display it loud, out and proud, or integrate it within a greater patchwork of behaviours available to us.

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**MULTIPLICITY**



One of the biggest transformations in my coaching practice came when I attended a Transpersonal coaching workshop with Sir John Whitmore (widely regarded as the founder of coaching in the UK) some ten years ago.

The first words he wrote on the flipchart before even addressing us were: This is not the truth. Coming from the author of the GROW model (which by then I had found to be too simplistic, too literal and too restrictive), and seeing how lightly he took even his own wisdom, was the moment when I decided that coaching was a lifelong practice for me.

Beyond this personal story, why is multiplicity so important in coaching? We've already explored feedback as a way of offering different perspectives: not right, not wrong, not fixed, just different. Acknowledging, and using, multiple perspectives is the next step in a developing coaching practice.

What does multiplicity mean in practical terms? It simply means that there are many sides to each story, many lenses in each kaleidoscope, many ways of looking, seeing, interpreting and judging reality. Acknowledging this takes away the need – felt by many – to try and disprove the other point of view as a way of making one's own view relevant. It also takes away the need to keep fruitlessly looking for “the right way”, “the right tool”, “the right insight”. They are all right. And they are all equally wrong.

Acknowledging multiplicity also means we can identify different voices in our heads: the voice of the critical teacher (or parent, or spouse, or boss); the voice of the indulgent child (“oh go on then...”); the voice of our own cheerleader (“come on, you can do it!”); the voice of despondency and doubt (“you are rubbish and you'll be found out”). Both the coach and the client can choose to adopt – or listen to – any of these (and many more) voices. But they are not the only choice.

One of the most important roles that a coach can play is reminding the client of this. Reminding them to refrain from identifying with any one single voice, to refrain from believing it as it was the truth and nothing but the truth. Reminding them that hearing – and acknowledging – those different voices in our head does not mean that we are mad. Rather, that we are sane and wise for knowing that we cannot be wholly defined by any single one of those voices.

If a client is struggling to release a particular voice or world-view, one of the ways I have helped them was to ask them to describe that voice – and the person it belongs to – in full detail. Their size, colour, shape, name, pitch, markings... Often the more critical or unhelpful the voice, the more comical it became once we investigated it thoroughly. It transformed into an angry little demon, or a shrill-pitched school-mistress, or a needy child, who was only shouting for attention because it wasn't getting any. Once seen this way, most clients are able to make considered choices about whether they want to integrate, change, or discard that part of themselves.

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CHOICES

CHOICES

## Even though this is Part Five in our series of Coaching Fundamentals, in many ways it is the most fundamental of the fundamentals.

In the same way that having, making and being accountable for own choices is the cornerstone of being human, helping others access the choices they have is the basic tenet of coaching. Not advise, not prescribe, not rescue, but show: help the client see the broader vista around them, so that they can make a meaningful choice for them at this very moment.

Sometimes as coaches we won't agree with that choice: it isn't the one we would've taken in their shoes, or – more difficult still – we can see the real pitfalls further down the road, that at the moment aren't visible to the client. If so, I believe it is our responsibility as coaches to point alternative facts (or viewpoints) out, but still leave the final choice of action to the client. Including the choice of taking the “wrong” decision.

The fundamental principle of choice – painfully for some coaches – includes the choice of whether to engage in the coaching relationship with us, or at all. Whereas I have heard arguments that any experienced coach can work with any client, I am well aware that they don't hold true for many of our clients. That's why we offer them “chemistry meetings”, and – hard as it is not to take it personally when one is not chosen – it is the client's choice who to work with.

Even more fundamentally, it is also largely the client's choice of how deep and how far to work at all. Yes, we can do our utmost to offer valuable listening, feedback and questioning skills, to be a trusted thinking partner, to support and challenge, but if a client decides that all this is not worth their time, money or energy, we have to accept that choice. All of the coaches I've known have had examples of clients breaking off relationships early, either by direct or by indirect behaviours (such as cancelling sessions or being consistently late). It is a difficult choice to accept as a coach, but the alternative – of rescuing, or pushing, or cajoling – is even more difficult, and ultimately unrewarding for all.

Finally, the ultimate choice the client holds is whether to change at all: whether to do something about the less helpful aspects of their behaviour, or whether to continue acting the way they had done in the past. As coaches, the best we can do is be clear, clean and brave in pointing out some of the consequences of different choices, while holding a deep belief that the coachee will choose the right one for them in this moment, in this coaching relationship, in their life.

# IMAGERY



What does the word Imagery conjure up for you? Illustrations, art, colourful graphics? Using non-verbal tools, such as colouring pencils or symbol cards, with clients? While helpful, these are not quite the approaches I had in mind. I was thinking of something far more basic than that...

Something that, in other approaches, could be called “clean”, or even “person-centred”. In coaching, it is as simple as “staying in the client’s world-view” and operating from there. Listening to the metaphors and language they use to describe their world, and – without asking for explanation or correcting – staying in that frame of reference.

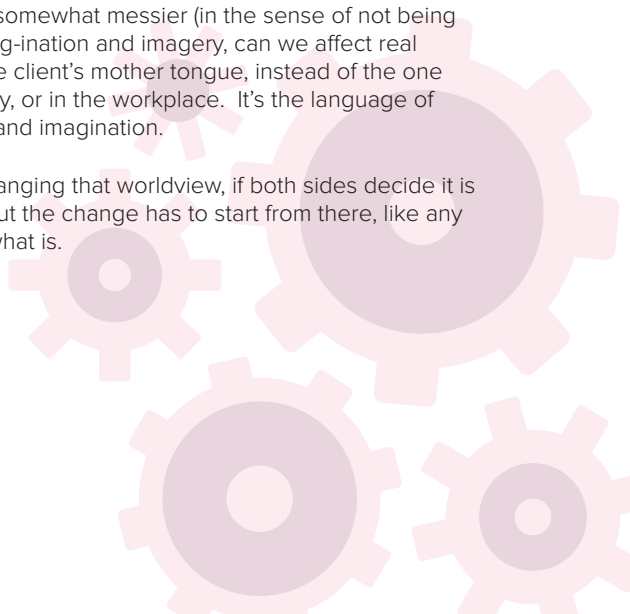
Some clients may see the world as a battle, or a tangled web, or a ship on stormy seas, a box, a set of folders, a jungle... the options are almost endless, and as varied as the clients’ embedded experience.

Staying with their imagery and asking questions or offering feedback from that place is one of those things I have only learnt from practice, rather than from books and coaching models. No coach training quite prepares you for the depth of disconnect that you get when you use a slightly wrong metaphor with a client; the sensation that you have just brought them back to earth with a thud, when they reconnect with purely their logical side, full of well-practised verbal arguments.

And this is not the side where change happens... This is the side of debate, monologue, a question and answer session, perfectly reasonable, perfectly polite, perfectly ineffective.

Only when we connect with the somewhat messier (in the sense of not being so easily predictable) side of imag-ination and imagery, can we affect real change. It is akin to speaking the client’s mother tongue, instead of the one they’ve learnt at school, in society, or in the workplace. It’s the language of stories and dreams, exploration and imagination.

It is also the starting place for changing that worldview, if both sides decide it is being outmoded or unhelpful. But the change has to start from there, like any effective change, by accepting what is.



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TRUST



## Why is Trust only Number Seven on the Coaching Fundamentals list? Surely it should be up there with listening (Part One)... Because it takes so long to build. Seven weeks, seven sessions, seven months, years even.

Sure, we all rattle off the usual elements of contracting right at the very beginning: confidentiality, openness, trust, non-directive attitude, unconditional positive regard... But do clients really believe us? Would you? Or do they think: Fine to say that, but my organisation is paying for this coaching, and I am sure the HR department and my line manager will want to know what's been discussed.

And you know what: they're right. Yes, the HR department and the line manager do want to know, and it's a brave – and experienced – coach who quotes back confidentiality at them.

But there is also a deeper meaning of trust, that – like all best coaching interventions – starts with self-awareness. Trust in oneself as a coach. Trust that one will come up with the right tool, right silence, right question, at the right time; the one that will unlock something in the client and effect lasting change.

And this trust is even harder to come by. In all honesty, I don't think it even comes to all coaches, no matter how long they've been practising. And, judging by the number of manuals and coaching approaches that are mushrooming across our bookshelves, digital media and coach training schools, there's a market out there for filling out this void of trust with more tools and approaches. "If only I follow this process, and ask this question at the right time, and then remember to say and what do you think, surely the client – and the person who's paying for their coaching – will have an effective experience." Except they won't. Or at least the client won't.

It will be easy to fill out the evaluation sheets, and to use the same approach for your next coaching assignment, or pitch, or chemistry meeting, when you're asked "and what coaching methodology do you use?". Because there's a clean and neat answer, an answer that's easy to write down, explain and share. An answer that shows a basic lack of trust in our own readiness to choose the right tool at exactly the right moment, to build a new tool, or even to down tools altogether.

And if we as coaches don't trust ourselves, why should our clients?



**HUNCHES**



Playing a hunch. Where were you when you first heard that phrase? I remember my first time... from the lips of someone far more glamorous, far more experienced, far more knowledgeable than I was at the time. What did she mean?! Surely that's tantamount to giving advice, or unsolicited feedback, putting your own spin on things... Surely as coaches we would never do that!

Or would we? When is a hunch not a suggestion? Or advice? Or interpretation?

Only when it stays firmly within the client's frame of reference (see Part Six: Images). When it doesn't interrupt their worldview and move on to ours, or tries to overlay their experience with ours.

Also, when it is offered lightly... playfully even. Offered not from the position of expert, but fellow player. Fellow fallible human learner, who has just happened to look from a different perspective, and observe something different, something shaping up or emerging.

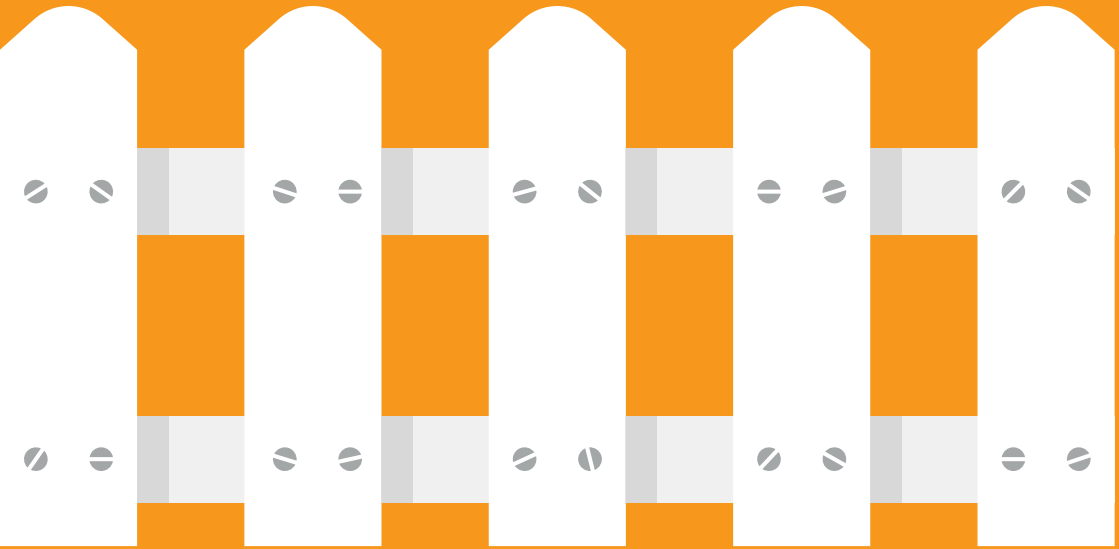
Finally, playing a hunch also needs to include the readiness to have it refuted. To have it batted back, or thrown out of the playing field, or be told even that you're not playing the same game! What usually follows, even in these instances, however, is a softening and an awareness that someone else is in the same field – even if they are playing a different game. And the client can choose to approach this other person – you – with curiosity and interest. Interest in your own point of view, your hunches, even – whisper it – your advice.

It is this kind of hunch, suggestion, advice, that can be helpful in a coaching relationship. The kind of advice that is asked for, rather than offered, the kind that helps rather than hinders, the kind that shows there were other people playing that game that you believe you play so clumsily... and they might have done or seen or tried things that would never occur to you. And that might – or might not – be helpful.

I have seen coaches withhold advice, or opinions, even when asked, and the effect is always of a punishing parent or teacher: yes, I am bigger than you, and yes I do know, but I will not share it with you, because I want you to suffer searching for it like I did. This is the so-called “coaching stance” that is usually so clumsily played out across many team meetings or leadership interventions. One that in its rigid understanding of what constitutes coaching behaviour misses the point.

Playing a hunch is the very opposite of that attitude: it is saying – look, we're in this boat together, and I have rowed before, and I shall do my bit, and then you do your bit, and if you decide to throw away my oars and use yours, or (better still) figure out how to use the onboard motor, then please do! But I am not going to sit here while waiting for you to figure out the instructions, all the while parroting and what do you think...

9



**BOUNDARIES**

**Boundaries.** One of the first words you hear in coach training, usually accompanied with an overlapping Venn diagram consisting of the practices of counselling, coaching and mentoring. Where does one stop and the other starts; how to avoid getting drawn into the client's history (that's counselling), or how never to give advice even if you know something the client doesn't (that's mentoring).

It doesn't take long, however, and clients start crying in front of you, or telling you about their sick child or cold and distant father, and that nicely chunkable goal that you'd been discussing just evaporates in a messy mist of emotions, stories and deeply held beliefs. And then what do you do? Try and bring them back to the objective you'd agreed you'd be working on, or follow them into their messy world? And what do you do then? What's the guarantee that you won't end up just being a shoulder to cry on, a foil for a whinge-fest, a silent ineffectual witness to their suffering? What happens then to objectives, goals and actions that you'd so carefully agreed?

What happens is that – with practice – you start discovering the secret doors in those Venn diagrams, the links and connections to different disciplines, and the boundaries suddenly start becoming porous, open to the exchange of energy and stories. What happens is that you gradually start trusting your hunches (see: Part Eight), and somehow know, almost imperceptibly, which boundaries are a two-way street, and which are brick walls. You start relaxing and being more fully present with the client, safe in the knowledge that both of you have all the resources you need to navigate whichever waters you end up in. You start accompanying them into their messy emotional mists, knowing that you alone have the skill and the knowledge to bring them out, and overlay – not cover, not conceal, not force – a level of practicality and rationality on to their emotions and memories.

What happens to boundaries then? And are there any boundaries in coaching worth keeping? For me, so far, the only boundary worth protecting with a barbed wire – or, failing that, at least a barbed comment – is the boundary of confidentiality. The boundary that says: no, I will not discuss my coaching clients and their issues with anybody, whether they be a partner, a friend or the client's HR manager. I will not use the stories I hear to amuse or amaze, to impress or impart knowledge. I will not share this human story – or any of its elements – with anyone else. It is not my story, my life experience, my sense-making of the world. With any luck, I can be a midwife to the birth of a new story, new world-view, new decision, which is the client's to share, to live and to grow further



**PRESENCE**



**10**

Presence: one of those words that looks easy to use and difficult to define. On my library shelf, I have got two books of that name, both of which have been hugely influential in my development as a coach, counsellor and OD practitioner. But what does it mean to be fully present in life, one's work and with another human being? What does it mean to pay attention, without judgement, solution or conclusion? Without jumping to action, task or advice? And how easy is it?

When I first started training as a coach, literally the hardest thing I had to do was to shut up: externally, by listening; but even more importantly, internally, by stopping the clamour of ideas, suggestions and insights in my head. Surely some of them would really be useful to share with my client? Now... right now... regardless of the fact that they're still in the middle of their sentence, their experience, their thought process. Surely that constitutes presence: presence of mind?

Surely not. In the same way that our mind is only one – relatively small but hugely influential – part of our being, our mental presence forms only one – small but influential – part of our overall presence and being.

In order to give somebody our full presence, we need to firstly be fully present to our self. Fully aware of, accepting and attentive to, one's internal processes of thought, emotion and energy. Wherever and however we feel them in our body, not just above the shoulders. And then extend the same courtesy to our clients, by seeing them and accepting them as whole, and not just a vehicle for their words.

It is often said that a good coach offers a mirror to the client. But, in my experience, a mirror is a cold and reflective surface, which gives back a reflection of what the client thinks of themselves, and not of how they really come across. A true coach is not a mirror, but rather an equal partner, a partner who – by knowing and accepting what it is to truly be oneself – can offer the same potential to the client. A partner who will challenge, support, cheer-lead, annoy, question and ultimately facilitate the development of another human being into all they can truly be, beyond what they are now, or what their previous experiences or choices have led them to be.

True coaching presence starts with, but goes beyond, Rogers' unconditional positive regard... It accepts who the client is at any given moment, but also holds the potential of their further development and growth, growth that will often surprise both the coach and the client. True presence accepts the client and the coach as fallible human beings, beings who will both make mistakes, but ultimately stay connected and learning together. True presence acknowledges humility, complexity and a non-linear path to development and growth; a path that is strewn with false starts, blind alleys and experiments gone wrong. A path that may not end where we'd imagined we'd be, but always ends exactly where we need to be!



**ssh.**  
**SILENCE**

Holding the silence – like playing a hunch (see Part 8) – is one of those things that more experienced coaches talk about to coaches in training, making it sound like a commandment or a rung that needs to be climbed in the ascent to coaching mastery. And yes, it can be all that, but it goes far beyond just “not speaking”.

What is the purpose of silence in coaching, or in any human discourse? It allows a pause, a moment of uncertainty, of openness to whatever may come next. Even more importantly, it is a place of not knowing, a place of vulnerability, a place of being rather than doing, of waiting rather than pushing forward. It is particularly uncomfortable to those of us who – either as coaches or clients – are used to being rewarded for being “the cleverest person in the room”, the one with the quips, insights, solutions... to those of us who are used to moving things along, driving solutions and thinking two steps ahead... to those of us who are proud of being busy, in demand, and constantly active.

And it is exactly those – coaches and clients – who benefit most from silence. Silence from themselves (and their own well-practised chatter), but also silence in the presence of another: a silence that shows that we are not just acknowledged when we’re being clever, or insightful, or witty. That we are enough just in our selves, our imperfect but fully human selves.

This silence is very different from the “pausing between breaths”, or “counting to ten” silence; it acknowledges the moment, the person and the insight that is being born. It draws on presence, listening, choice, but also on trust: trust in ourselves, the other person and the moment. Trust that the only way of being in the world is not purely by acting, or speaking, or moving the moment forward, but that sometimes in gaps between thoughts true creativity happens.

How to recognise this silence? And how to distinguish it from the awkward “just don’t know what to say” silence? There are probably several answers to this, and most of them come from practice rather than books (or blogs). The one that works for me goes back to noticing our own feelings as a coach: if there is discomfort and anxiety and counting the breaths until we can say something, it’s likely to be unhelpful, or at least clumsy. If, however, our silence is the silence that we experience in the comfort of old friends, or in awe of new vistas, then it is highly likely that this is a silence that produces new insights and new beginnings.

**LETTING**

**GO**

**12**



If this series of 12 coaching fundamentals has an ark, starting with the basic building blocks of coaching practice (listening, questions and feedback), going through the “messy” bits (multiplicity, imagery and choice), then through the “risky” bits (trust, hunches and boundaries), it seems only right to end with presence, silence and letting go... End not with a bang but a whimper. Except that I would argue that the definition of “whimper” here is a place full of potential not yet realised, a prelude to a roar, and a new beginning.

Letting go is, I believe, a rather logical follow-through from being fully present, and holding the silence; a place where we let go of certainties, of our own expertise, perhaps even of the process, and just trust that from that emptiness, something new and useful will be born. It is another way of moving beyond goal-focused coaching into the domain of personal transformation.

Arguably, not every coaching assignment needs to result in a personal transformation: sometimes clients just want a thinking partner, someone to listen, ask insightful questions and goad them on towards resolving a dilemma, or achieving a personal objective. That is coaching too, and hopefully I am not implying a value judgement that it is somehow the lesser end of the coaching spectrum.

My argument for “letting go” as a fundamental coaching skill (or rather, attitude) is that an element of it is needed even in goal-focused coaching. An element of letting go of one’s hypotheses, certainty, previous experience, insights, thoughts and feelings about a client’s situation. An element of holding the coaching process lightly and humbly, and not getting too attached to our own expertise or experience. An element of approaching each coaching assignment completely fresh and unjaded, even if it is the hundredth time we’re working with someone on time management, prioritisation or saying No!

If a key purpose of coaching – like all development – is change, no matter how big or small, there always comes a point where one is simply not sure that the change will indeed happen. In my experience, there is always a moment – usually the penultimate session – in a coaching assignment where the client just seems to revert back to their own worst habits and thoughts and behaviours... a dark night of the coaching soul that tests the limits of our patience, ability and confidence.

When that dark night of the coaching soul first happened to me, I was so convinced that if only I had followed the model better, or applied another model, or been more perfect myself, the client would have just sailed through the sessions without a hitch! By now, I almost expect it to happen and greet it with a wry internal smile, a shrug and a knowing that “letting go” is the best thing I can do. Letting go of persuading the client to work harder, think better or feel different, letting go of my attachment to the “right kind of change”, finally letting go of my certainty that I am good enough to effect change in another human being. And paradoxically that’s when something happens, when – by our non-attachment to a single outcome – we also give the client permission to guide their own change; not change to please us (or some internalised parent figure) but change to become the best self they can be at any given moment. And surely that is the true purpose of coaching

# About the Author



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Ana has over 15 years' experience working as a development professional, which follows a ten-year career in BBC editorial teams in 24-hour global news. As an L&D professional, Ana has worked as a facilitator, learning designer, head of several training functions, and an internal and external consultant. She is now the Programme Director for Roffey Park's PG Cert in Coaching Practice.

Ana has been coaching middle and senior managers for over 10 years. During that time, she was accredited by the ICF, and trained in a range of approaches, including Time to Think, Transpersonal and Co-active coaching, Gestalt, Polarities, Archetypes, and Mindfulness.

Ana holds an MSc in Advanced Learning Technology from Lancaster University, as well as BAs in Comparative Literature and Film Directing. She's currently studying for a PG Dip in Psychosynthesis Counselling, as a way of deepening her understanding of human development.

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