



May 2008

Essential Coaching

Debra L. Denis

University of Pennsylvania, deb.denis1@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: http://repository.upenn.edu/od_theses_msod

Denis, Debra L., "Essential Coaching" (2008). *Master of Science in Organizational Dynamics Theses*. 14.
http://repository.upenn.edu/od_theses_msod/14

Submitted to the Program of Organizational Dynamics in the Graduate Division of the School of Arts and Sciences in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Organizational Dynamics at the University of Pennsylvania
Advisor: William Wilkinsky

This paper is posted at ScholarlyCommons. http://repository.upenn.edu/od_theses_msod/14
For more information, please contact libraryrepository@pobox.upenn.edu.

Essential Coaching

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to define the elements of a model I describe as Essential Coaching. The core principles that drive the model: authenticity, positivity, a focus on strengths, active listening and mindful questioning, are introduced individually then revisited throughout as they inform subsequent elements of the model. The framework is presented, illustrating the placement of coaching within the framework of a larger systems model; followed by the model for Essential Coaching, which outlines the basic elements of the interaction between coach and client within that larger system. The three layers of the Essential Coaching model are theory—predominantly client-centered and positive psychologies; methods--process and tools; and competency. A summary is presented, highlighting the next steps for Essential Coaching.

Comments

Submitted to the Program of Organizational Dynamics in the Graduate Division of the School of Arts and Sciences in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Organizational Dynamics at the University of Pennsylvania

Advisor: William Wilkinsky

ESSENTIAL COACHING

by

Deb Denis

Submitted to the Program of Organizational Dynamics
in the Graduate Division of the School of Arts and Sciences
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Organizational Dynamics at the
University of Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

2008

ESSENTIAL COACHING

Approved by:

Larry M. Starr, Ph.D., Program Director

William Wilkinsky, Ph.D., Advisor

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to define the elements of a model I describe as Essential Coaching. The core principles that drive the model: authenticity, positivity, a focus on strengths, active listening and mindful questioning, are introduced individually then revisited throughout as they inform subsequent elements of the model. The framework is presented, illustrating the placement of coaching within the framework of a larger systems model; followed by the model for Essential Coaching, which outlines the basic elements of the interaction between coach and client within that larger system. The three layers of the Essential Coaching model are theory—predominantly client-centered and positive psychologies; methods--process and tools; and competency. A summary is presented, highlighting the next steps for Essential Coaching.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my thanks to Dr. Larry Starr, Program Director, for setting high expectations and for guidance and encouragement to meet those expectations. To Dr. Bill Wilkinsky, my capstone advisor and master coach, my sincerest thanks for three very important things: for modeling what it means to be client-centered, for all of the opportunities to grow and learn and make a difference, and for your belief in me. Thank you, Dr. Charline Russo, for impactful lessons on authenticity. Special thanks to colleagues Linda DeLuca, Mary O'Connor, and Mindy Taylor for your partnership on special projects and for helping me to think differently about new things. I wish to thank my coaching partners Tonita Bell, Vanessa Kraus, and Ellen McMahon for wonderful experiences as coach and client, as well as colleagues Justin Flax, Russell Force, Gary Hammell, Linda Pennington and Kimberly Perry for sharing their passion and expertise which contributed to the creation of this capstone. To the A-Team and the Coaching Advisory Board: we are making a difference and it is an honor to be doing so with you. Cheerio, Merci beaucoup and 謝謝 to my Global Studies companions along with a big thank you to my fellow students and to the faculty and staff of the program office for their support and camaraderie. Thank you to my clients past, present and future who continue to help me learn. Finally, to my most steadfast supporters: Alan, Chip & Mike Denis and Karen Lockwood, and the rest of my extended family and friends - I thank you for making it so easy for me to live with an attitude of gratitude for the gift of each of you in my life.

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		Page
1	Essential Coaching Framework	21
2	Essential Coaching Model	25
3	Gestalt Layers of Actualization and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs	32

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		Page
1	Original Wilkinsky 9-Step Process for Coaching	2
2	Comparison of Wilkinsky Process as used to create Essential Coaching framework and model	4
3	Ten Criteria of a Strength	15
4	Modified Wilkinsky 9-Step Process for Coaching	45
5	LIFO® Six Key Strategies	50
6	The Voices of the Septet Model	51
7	ICF Coaching Competencies	56

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	v
LIST OF TABLES	vi
CHAPTER	
1 Introduction	1
One Coaching Model	1
Identification of the Core Principles of Essential Coaching	4
Creating the Framework, Constructing the Model	6
Summary	8
2 The Core Principles of Essential Coaching	10
Core Principal #1: Authenticity	10
Core Principal #2: Positivity	13
Core Principal #3: Focus on Strengths	14
Core Principal #4: Active Listening	17
Core Principal #5: Mindful Questioning	18
3 Essential Coaching Framework	21
4 Essential Coaching Model	25
5 Theoretical Foundations of Essential Coaching	28
Historical Perspective	30
Diverse Thought	31
Gestalt, Humanism and Existentialism	34
Client-Centered Psychology: Definition and History	35
Client-Centered Psychology: Key Concepts	36
Positive Psychology: Definition and History	39
Positive Psychology: Key Concepts	40

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page	
6	Essential Coaching Method: Process and Tools	44
	The Process	44
	Tools	46
7	Essential Coaching Competency	56
	Coaching Industry Standards	56
	Essential Coaching Core Competency	57
8	Essential Coaching Summary and Next Steps	62
	Next Steps for Essential Coaching	63
	REFERENCES	65
	APPENDIX	
A	Notes from DYNM 629 on Systems Theory	69
B	Positive Psychology Assessments	70
C	VIA Classification of Strengths and Virtues	71
D	Sample Coaching Agreement	72
E	Client Information Form (CIF)	78
F	Coaching Prep Form (CPF)	81
G	Key Points of Positive Psychology Coaching	82
	NOTES	86

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A culmination of work done as part of the University of Pennsylvania Masters Degree program in Organizational Dynamics (Penn OD), this thesis/capstone presents a model for professional coaching which I call Essential Coaching. This chapter introduces the nature of the model and how it was developed. The intended audience for this capstone is the coaching student. I believe that the professional / executive coach is a perpetual student and so Essential Coaching incorporates a spirit of continuous learning to reflect that.

One Coaching Model

A model is a graphic representation of a system or process. A process model is used to visually represent the important steps of a process as well as the interactions of those process steps, how they build on each other and their relationship to each other (Pfeiffer & Ballew, 1991).

Multiple models exist for the process associated with professional coaching, ranging from the simple, step-by-step A-B-C model described by Leibling and Prior (2004) to the complex multidimensional coaching process described by Ruth Orenstein (2007). My preference is for a sequential model, one with a logical flow and the flexibility to incorporate best practices as one reads, learns, applies and increases one's own skills as a professional coach.

The Essential Coaching model is based on a coaching process model developed by the Penn OD Director of the Organizational Coaching Studies Concentration, in his

work as founder and President of organizational coaching and consulting firm, The Athyn Group. During the 1970s, Dr. William Wilkinsky developed the Wilkinsky 9-Step Model for Coaching (Table 1). This model has been used for over three decades of professional coaching in multiple industries and is one model presented in the class DYNM 641: The Art and Science of Organizational Coaching, which I completed in 2006. Subsequently applied to coaching engagements, it remains my preferred coaching process for its simplicity and flexibility.

Table 1: Original Wilkinsky 9-Step Process for Coaching

Getting Started	1. Call/Engage
	2. Get to know
	3. Ask client to set preliminary goals. Important to narrow focus to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral goal • Intellectual pursuit
Data Management	4. Establish the Data Plan
	5. Gather data. Analyze data
	6. Feedback. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan • Deliver • Reactions
Results	7. Action Plan
	8. Implement / Support Role
	9. Begin to Disengage

The 9 steps are organized into three categories: A. Getting Started, B. Data Management and C. Results; I use these three categories to describe the development of the Essential Coaching model.

Category one is getting started. In the Wilkinsky coaching process, this involves establishing the relationship with the client; the purpose is to build a foundation of trust to maximize the potential for results. In the development of the Essential Coaching model this involves establishing the foundational elements for Essential Coaching by asking and answering a series of questions focused on core principles essential to excellence in coaching.

The next category in the Wilkinsky process, data management, involves gathering data and research on behalf of a client in the context of a coaching engagement. In the development of the Essential Coaching model, the focus of this step was research, study, data analysis, and classification of the key elements of Essential Coaching. These essential elements were organized into a framework for coaching and a model for coaching, both of which were presented for peer review¹. Incorporation of peer comments and recommendations rounded out this step, and resulted in the development of the Essential Coaching framework and model.

The final step in the Wilkinsky process model focuses on results; when used in coaching it centers on putting the action plan to work. During the development of Essential Coaching, this step focused on application of the model in service to clients. In this step the model is applied in coaching clients and, in the spirit of continuous learning and improvement, to fine tuning it to best meet the needs of clients.

Table 2 summarizes the use of the Wilkinsky process categories as they were used to create the Essential Coaching framework and model.

Table 2: Comparison of Wilkinsky Process as used to create Essential Coaching Framework and Model

Process Category	Focus of Wilkinsky 9-Step Process	Focus in development of Essential Coaching
Getting Started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the relationship with the client. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the foundational elements of the Essential Coaching model. Identify core principles essential to excellence in coaching.
Data Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather data and research on behalf of the client; data analysis and delivery to the client. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research, study, data analysis and classification of the key elements of Essential Coaching. Organize key elements into a framework and model for coaching. Seek input; peer review.
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with client to create a plan of action, put it to work, and measure of success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the model in service of clients. Learn about and try new methods, seek and incorporate feedback, self assess against competencies, for continuous improvement.

Identification of the Core Principles of Essential Coaching

Essential Coaching started at a learning conference in 2004² which introduced theory and application of Gestalt-based techniques. I tied core insights gained from that experience to three core principles of Essential Coaching: authenticity, positivity and strengths.

Study and application of various professional coaching techniques, most notably The Mindful Coach (Silsbee, 2004), edited volumes by Goldsmith (2000; 2006), Positive Appreciative Coaching (Orem, Binkert & Clancy, 2007) and Positive Psychology Coaching (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007), yielded the addition of two more principles: active listening and mindful questioning.

The experience from 2004 to 2008 served to provide answers to the fundamental questions regarding what is essential to excellence in coaching, the answers resulted in

the creation of five core principles: authenticity, positivity, focus on strengths, active listening and mindful questioning, defined in Table 3.

Table 3: Five Core Principles of Essential Coaching

Authenticity	Authenticity is about acting in authentic way, demonstrating behaviors that include an unconditional positive regard for the client. Authenticity is about meeting the client where they are. Self-awareness, intention, roles and expectations play an important part in the Essential Coaching perspective on Authenticity. Authenticity is about keeping it real.
Positivity	Positivity starts with behaving in ways that illustrate a positive mindset and a positive attitude, best done through the use of positive language. A positive approach more often yields positive results, and generates more energy toward a positive outcome. With a positive mindset we recognize that the glass is half full.
Focus on Strengths	Focus on strengths means that a coach works to identify and build on the strengths of the client. Importantly, the strengths approach recognizes that 'bad' behavior is simply a strength overused: for example, tenacity, which is good, can turn to stubbornness if taken too far.
Active Listening	Active listening involves listening to the client with intent and appreciation. Complete attention to client communication, what they are saying and how they are saying it, what is not said or done, these are basics of active listening. A coach skilled in active listening also works on introspection to identify and set aside personal conversations and drivers that may adversely impact his/her ability to fully listen to the client.
Mindful Questioning	Mindful questioning is also about a behavior with the best interest of the client at its core. Using appreciative and positive language, mindful questions serve to guide the client to discovery.

The core provide guidance for the creation of the framework and model, for the subsequent selection of the psychological foundations and for the methods to be used in service to clients. Each principle is also a competency, a skill requiring mastery. Essential Coaches must behave in ways that are authentic and demonstrate a positive attitude; they must use positive language, focus on strengths; they both listen and ask questions mindfully and with intent.

The core principles are examined more thoroughly in Chapter 2 and further for their qualities as Essential Coaching competency in Chapter 7.

Creating the Framework, Constructing the Model

The next step in the Wilkinsky model is data management; the next step in the development of Essential Coaching involves data management as well, through the gathering of it and research, study, analysis, and classification. The result was the identification of the key elements of Essential Coaching. The essential elements were organized into a framework for coaching and a model for coaching.

Academic exposure provided two general categories of data for consideration in Essential Coaching, systems data and coaching data. Exposure to systems theory prompted the inclusion of it in Essential Coaching and it is represented by the Essential Coaching framework. Coaching concentration work, study and experience yielded the Essential Coaching model. The experiences that led to the creation of these are described next.

Beginning in the fall of 2006, first through the exploration of organizational consulting topics with Dr. Larry Starr in DYNM 629: Organizational Consulting (see Appendix B for notes), then through the application of process improvement tools and metrics to a case study client with Dr. Martin Stankard as part of DYNM 634: Process Improvement Tools and Strategies, my exposure to theories of organization increased. I applied lessons learned about theory, process, tools and metrics in a consulting project for the Information Technology division of a large financial services firm, completing a

process improvement project involving the evaluation and diagnosis of an organizational challenge and recommendations for improvement (Denis, 2006).

The transfer of these experiences to my own professional coaching practice began in earnest while studying DYNM 781: European Approaches to Organizational Coaching, Development and Change during the summer of 2006, in which the objective of one lecture by Dr. Mike van Oudtshoorn was to establish one's own framework for coaching. His shell for the framework assignment is the basis for the Essential Coaching framework (Oudtshoorn, 2006).

A lecture on multidimensional executive coaching by Dr. Ruth Orenstein featured the organizational system as a series of concentric circles resembling an onion skin, each layer deserving of evaluation and consideration when coaching an individual who is a part of it. Layers of consideration focus on the impact of one on the other in a rippling effect inward and outward from the individual (in the center) outward to the interpersonal, group, intergroup and organizational layers of the model (Orenstein, 2007, p.161).

The one-on-one coaching relationship takes place within a larger organizational system which must be factored in when coaching and individual. Thus the need for two working illustrations to support Essential Coaching, the framework and the model, comes from the recognition that the client being coached is part of a team of people, a department or workgroup, an organization, and as such, the framework for coaching recognizes the existence of the system and all of its implications. The framework for Essential Coaching is presented and discussed in chapter 3.

The framework takes into account the system within which a coaching relationship takes place; the model is an extract from that system, designed to focus on the relationship between the coach and client. Specifically, the model for Essential Coaching incorporates the theory, methods and competency employed by the coach in the one-on-one coaching relationship. The Essential Coaching model is designed to guide the action of the coach, from psychological foundation through to the process, application of various tools, and core competencies employed in service to the client.

Summary

This chapter introduced Essential Coaching and described the process used to develop it. Throughout its development, five core principles were identified as essential to excellence in coaching; these core principles are introduced and defined. The development of Essential Coaching, stemming largely from academic study and experience in Penn OD, involved studies in the areas of organizational dynamics as well as professional coaching. Organizational systems work and study resulted in the creation of a framework for coaching; study and experience with psychological theory, methods and competencies for professional coaching were gathered to create a model for coaching.

The five core principles are presented in greater detail in Chapter 2. The framework, providing the larger, systems orientation of Essential Coaching is presented and explained in the Chapter 3. The focus of this work narrows in Chapters 4 through 7, which explore application of Essential Coaching to the coach-client relationship. In those chapters the Essential Coaching model is presented and explained, followed by detailed

exploration of each of its layers. Chapter 8 provides a summary and conclusion, including recommendations for the future of Essential Coaching.

CHAPTER 2

THE CORE PRINCIPLES OF ESSENTIAL COACHING

The core principles are key elements I have identified as essential to excellence and serve as fundamental concepts that have informed the creation of Essential Coaching. Illustrated by examples from social science, psychological theory and coaching literature, each core principle has been selected for its contribution to excellence in coaching. The core principles are not intended to limit the boundaries of Essential Coaching, but rather to guide its creation.

Core Principle #1: Authenticity

The first core principle to Essential Coaching is authenticity. Authenticity is temporal, its dimensions in the past, present and future. Authenticity includes a focus on the coach's ability to integrate his/herself in interpersonal interactions. Authenticity is about behavior stemming from self-awareness and intention.

Evaluating authenticity begins with answering the following questions, does the coach bring his or her true self to the coaching engagement? Are there personal filters informed by the coach's past that could be impacting his or her ability to be fully present and wholly focused on the client?

Self-awareness is an important foundation to authenticity, since without it a coach may be limited in his/her ability to be fully present with the client. Self-awareness is achieved through genuine introspection. Craddock (2004) suggests "We attain self-knowledge through emotional realizations. Intellectual concepts that are not reinforced by the emotional energy of personal experience ... are unlikely to foster meaningful

changes in our lives” (p. xxv). Gestalt psychology supports this theory in that without the emotional experience, one does not complete the gestalt or change. The Gestalt term is contact, or the emotional connection to the experience, suggesting that through contact we are able to become aware then make real change (Kirchner, 2000; Taylor & Denis, 2008). In a presentation to DYNM 611: Strategic Perspectives of Coaching, Taylor and Denis (2008) note that “Gestalt is concerned with helping individuals with self-discovery from their immediate experience – in the here and now. Mere thinking without self-awareness of the emotions and over-rationalizing and/or intellectualizing can become a barrier to development, and an impediment to awareness of feelings and emotions.”

Authenticity is concerned with self-awareness as well as with awareness of others. It considers what both we and others bring to social interactions. In this social construct view of authenticity, I wish to highlight the importance of self-awareness and intention.

Giardina (2002) describes how we create what he refers to as a 360 degree arc of authenticity, by being aware of our own authentic selves, and by bringing that authenticity to our interactions with others. This is done by “being fully present to each event in your workday, whether you perceive the event as good or bad. You do this by being fully present with each and every person with whom you interact in the course of your workday, again notwithstanding any judgments you may have about the person.” Giardina adds that this is done by “consciously looking at what you can do to make the situation better or the relationship more meaningful right now” (p. xxiv). There is a caution to attach to this that has to do with roles, and with what Giardina refers to as the increasingly western notion of an outward-focused reality, that some may adopt as authentic as they modify their own behavior to be more in line with the role expectations

that others have of them. A study by positive psychologist Susan Harter (2005) provides evidence to support the theory that from our earliest years we modify our behavior to avoid disappointing our parents, or to receive their praise, as an example. Po Bronson (2002) shares the stories of fifty people in an entire volume dedicated to illustrating by example, people who spent years living to impress others or behaving in ways incongruent to their own values until they finally discovered their authentic calling. “They did not find some SinglePerfectAnswer,” according to Bronson (p. xvii), but each “dared to be honest with themselves” (p. xx) and took their own path to discover the answer to the question (and title of the book), “what should I do with my life?”

Self-awareness and intention have significant impact on expectation, which can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. Without self-awareness we may respond solely to the expectations of those around us and live life in a false-self role. It is self-awareness that allows us to decide which expectations to keep, to own and to live by, and which to discard or ignore. When we have the intention of remaining true to our own best interests and healthful self, we make better decisions about which expectations to keep, and which to drop from our identity (Tibbons, 1987) .

Applying the premise that self-awareness and intention are important to our expectations of others, we can see the potential impact of our positive and negative expectations on them; in other words, what we expect from one another we actually receive from one another. This is not all bad, however, since by imparting our expectations to others, we may impact their behavior. Thus when our own expectations are used to motivate others, we can authentically choose to have a positive impact on those around us (Tibbons, 1987).

The importance of understanding and managing the authentic self is a precursor to having impact on others. The core principle of authenticity stems from my belief that intentions must be authentically in service to the client.

Core Principle #2: Positivity

Positivity has been described by the Greek philosophers. Modern work in the field of positive psychology argues that positivity is related to several other terms including optimism (Seligman, 1990), happiness (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007), authenticity (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Snyder, 2005) and hope (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Essential Coaching considers positivity to be a state of mind, a way of thinking which influences behavior and one's way of being. An optimist sees the glass as "half full" instead of "half empty" and positivity stems from optimism. The positivist, like the optimist, frames the past by employing gratitude and forgiveness; living a positive (but realistic) present, and thinking optimistically about the future. The positivist uses positive language to demonstrate a positive mindset.

Positivity is based in learned optimism (Seligman, 1990), a theory focused on reaction to adversity. Seligman proposes the traditional learning ABC formula representing the Adversity (the situation itself), Belief (thoughts in reaction to the situation) and Consequence (the result) to how one learns optimism. He argues that it is possible to apply positivity to adversity with excellent results.

Positivity is not about the absence of negativity. Rather, it is about applying positive thinking through positive behavior as often as possible. Seligman (1990)

explains that there are situations in which consciously applied optimism is not the best option. For example, some situations involving risk, particularly situations with the possibility for high-risk consequences such as loss, damage or injury, call for prudence and caution in lieu of pure positivity.

In Essential Coaching, positivity refers to how the coach approaches the client and in this respect it finds its roots in client-centered therapy (Rogers, 1951), a client-centered approach based on a premise that the coach has unconditional positive regard for the client. Positivity is also represented in the appreciative model for coaching inspired by positive psychology (Hall, 1998; Orem, Binkert & Clancy, 2007), in which each client is a mystery to be appreciated. In this approach, the coach uses positive, appreciative language which is reflective of positive, appreciative thought and regard for the client.

Biswas-Deiner and Dean (2007) combine the core principles of positivity and a focus on strengths in positive psychology coaching; they believe that “One of the most important aspects of coaching from a positive psychology perspective is the focus on strengths and the harnessing of the power of positivity” (p. 222). I concur, thus positivity is an essential component to Essential Coaching.

Core Principle #3: Focus on Strengths

Work in positive psychology drove a classification of strengths, created in response to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) classification of illnesses. The Character Strengths and Virtues Classification provides a robust, empiric and globally applicable guide to human strengths (Peterson & Seligman,

2004) which each strength was required to meet ten criteria in Table 3 in order to be included in the classification. The criteria provide a thorough definition of a strength.

Table 3: Ten Criteria of a Strength

1. A strength contributes to various fulfillments that constitute the good life, for oneself and for others. Although strengths and virtues determine how an individual copes with adversity, our focus is on how they fulfill an individual.
2. Although strengths can and do produce desirable outcomes, each strength is morally valued in its own right, even in the absence of obvious beneficial outcomes.
3. The display of a strength by one person does not diminish other people in the vicinity.
4. Being able to phrase the ‘opposite’ of a putative strength in a felicitous way counts against regarding it as a character strength.
5. A strength needs to be manifest in the range of an individual’s behavior—thoughts, feelings, and/or actions—in such a way that it can be assessed. It should be trait like in the sense of having a degree of generality across situations and stability across time.
6. The strength is distinct from other positive traits in the classification and cannot be decomposed into them.
7. A character strength is embodied in consensual paragons.
8. We do not believe this feature can be applied to all strengths, but an additional criterion where sensible is the existence of prodigies with respect to the strength.
9. Conversely, another criterion for a character strength is the existence of people who show—selectively—the total absence of a given strength.
10. As suggested by Erickson’s (1963) discussion of psychosocial stages and the virtues that result from the satisfactory resolutions, the larger society provides institutions and associated rituals for cultivating strengths and virtues and then for sustaining their practice.

(pp. 16-28)

A focus on strengths has its roots in psychology. Humanistic psychology emerged in part due to a reaction to the mechanistic stance of behavioral psychology and the unconscious drive reductionism of the psychoanalysts. Humanists determined to approach the client with a positive and non-judgmental mindset as opposed to seeing the person as a series of responses to stimuli (Peltier, 2001). In an address to the American Psychological Association, Martin Seligman explained that positive psychology was a reaction to the illness model of psychology, treating that which is broken instead of nurturing wellness (Seligman, 1990).

Essential Coaching's focus on strengths is a reaction to what others (Seligman, 1994; Burrell, 2000; Buckingham & Clifton, 2001) have proposed: that feedback focused on what a person has to fix is de-motivating and while it may inspire gains or improvements in the short term, will result in disengaged employees in the long run. By focusing on the negative, we miss the chance to tap into the source of a person's energy and motivation; we miss the chance to inspire the things that engage a person in their work, life and play. By focusing on the positive, however, by recognizing what someone does best, individuals are more engaged and more productive, they and their customers are more likely to remain loyal to the organization according to studies done by the Gallup organization³. These also show that only about twenty percent of employees feel that the work they do is playing to their strengths (Buckingham & Clifton, 2001); this suggests that there is considerable room for improvement by focusing on strengths.

Core Principle #4: Active Listening

Academic exposure to active listening, beginning with a Bachelors degree in Communications and continuing as part of my first course in coaching, DYNM 641: The Art and Science of Organizational Coaching generated the inclusion of it as a core principle.

Active listening involves observing both the client and oneself. Observing the client includes listening to the client's words, tone, observing their body language and every aspect of interpersonal communications that will help to form the full picture of what they are saying, and what they are not saying. The second part of active listening depends on a self-aware coach who recognizes his or her own filters, thoughts and reactions, one who does not allow those to influence the overall understanding of what the client is saying, and what the client may be thinking, feeling and/or not saying; in this sense, active listening is a way to demonstrate authenticity.

Active Listening is about taking in all that is being offered by the client as well as full awareness of the impact of one's own mindset on the interpersonal communication. Related to the Essential Coaching principle of authenticity, the mindful coach recognizes their own filters, judgments, reactions, and thoughts; acknowledges the presence of these potential distracters in one's own thoughts; then consciously chooses to set them; this allows a focus wholly on the client. Client-centered psychology contends this is done by listening without judgment or bias, filtering the client's words with unconditional positive regard, with belief that the client knows his/herself best, is critical to establishing trust (Silsbee, 2004; Wilkinsky, 2006).

Core Principle #5: Mindful Questioning

DYNAM 641: The Art and Science of Coaching provided a thought-provoking beginning to the identification of questioning as a core principle to Essential Coaching. The art is in knowing the right question to ask, the right way, at the right time. Asking the right questions serves to help a client better understand a situation, to better articulate their influences on the situation and to begin to visualize the desired outcome and/or course of action.

Silsbee (2004) refers to several levels of questioning, each building on the other, to help the client. The first level of questions “illuminates...external aspects: What did he do next? Who do you need to involve in that decision? What have you tried before that has helped?” (p. 125).

The second level of questioning, according to Silsbee (2004), gets at how the client influences what happened or what may happen. Focused on the client, these questions “get at the contributions that the client has made to the situation, and therefore to what he can do to affect its outcome” (p. 126). The coach can ask, “What might you have done to make it difficult for her to support you?”

The coach begins to intersect with the authentic client in Silsbee’s third level of questioning, asking about underlying assumptions or “personal filters” the client may be working with in a situation. Aiming for the underlying, root cause of certain behaviors and personal drivers, it is this level of questioning that begins to uncover what may result in longer lasting change because it helps the client realize not only how they influence the situation, but why. Most importantly, this level of questioning may help the client so that

they have the ability to move beyond current behavior should they choose to. Examples of the type of question at this level are “What do you get from engaging in that behavior? How does it benefit you?” (Silsbee, 2004)

Bringing the client’s own evaluation of a situation through the various levels of questioning, deeper and deeper and down to personal root cause, is a way of guiding them to discover the answers that they know best, and that only they can own and change. Even if the coach has an answer in mind, the role is to be open to what the client responds with, as well as how they respond, since this is a journey of non-judgmental positive regard and shared discovery.

Mindful questioning to coaching is also suggested by Orem, Binkert and Clancy (2007) in Appreciative Coaching, a model for coaching based on Appreciative Inquiry, which itself was generated from Positive Psychology (Hall, 1998). This model relies on four core appreciative questions: “What gives life to you now? Describe a high point or peak experience in your life or work up to now. What do you most value about yourself, your relationships, and the nature of your work? What one or two things do you want more of in your life?” (Orem, Binkert & Clancy, 2007, p. 97)

Examples of the power of questioning based in an approach applied with the authors’ coaching clients as well as my own, the questions are positive and appreciative in their language and result in powerful reactions, realizations and responses.

Both listening and questioning are incorporated in the VIA classification of Character Strengths and Virtues (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) which posits six global virtues: courage, justice, humanity, temperance, transcendence and wisdom. Within this classification, listening and questioning are considered strengths of wisdom. Listening is

categorized as the character strength of open-mindedness which may also be thought of as judgment and/or critical thinking. Questioning comes under the character strength of curiosity.

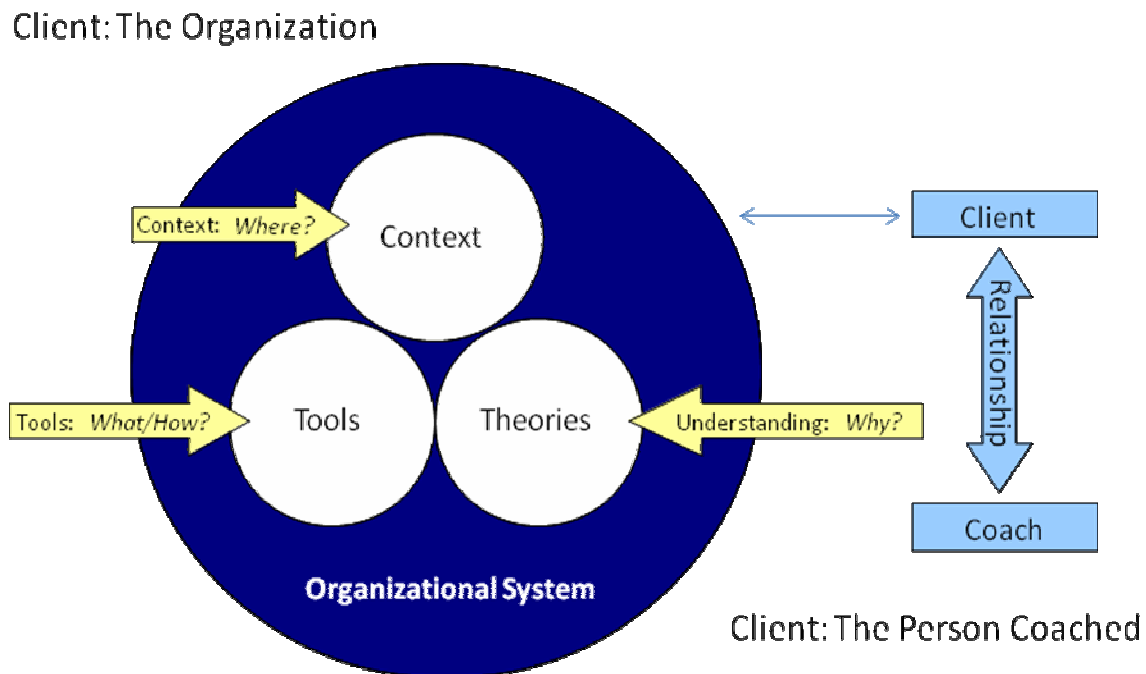
Coaching literature, offers support to fundamental importance of both listening and questioning in coaching. For example, Baldoni (2007) and Goldsmith (2006) link the importance of listening as a tool to remain true to one's values. Both listening and questioning are core components of Silsbee's Septet model of seven voices that each listen and ask with intention (Silsbee, 2004). In their guidelines for Human Resource professionals on how to select a coach, Valerio and Lee (2005) list active listening and powerful questioning as key attributes which will determine the interpersonal effectiveness of a coach. Bardick (2000) describes listening and questioning for leaders interested in applying "counseling" type techniques; she advises them to "ask responsive questions" as well as "hear with your eyes and ears and emotions" (pp. 289-90). Chapman (2003) lists "active listening" as the number one element in rating a coach's communication abilities. Hargrove (2003) describes the importance of the conversation to coaching, and most specifically that "committed listening is the foundation for all-powerful coaching" (p. 67).

CHAPTER 3

ESSENTIAL COACHING FRAMEWORK

The Essential Coaching framework follows the example provided by Professor Mike van Oudtshoorn (2006) and incorporates the elements identified by iCoach as critical to a coaching framework (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Essential Coaching Framework



van Oudtshoorn (2006) argued that there are certain questions that must be answered from one's own perspective in order to define the elements of one's framework for coaching. These include: Where does the methodology fit? And the process? What about the increasing set of tools one is exposed to in academic studies and professional application? Further, van Oudtshoorn provides that the framework should be easy to

understand in order to be of use in explaining the coach's resultant framework for coaching.

The framework has two general parts, which serve to illustrate that in a professional coaching relationship there are two clients to be considered, the organization and the individual. Orenstein (2007) refers to this in one definition of executive coaching:

Executive coaching, by definition, is a consultation to an individual regarding performance within an organizational role; it therefore must simultaneously consider the individual, the organization, and their continuous interaction (p. 25)

The organization is often the one paying the bill. The organization is impacted by the improved performance of the individual being coached. I agree with Orenstein that professional coaching takes place within an organizational system and that both the individual and the organization must be considered when coaching.

The right side of Figure 1 shows the relationship between the coach and the client. The double-headed arrow indicates a two way relationship, both sides of the arrow are equal as are the boxes for coach and client, indicating that this is an equal partnership, a one-on-one relationship, based on trust and confidentiality between the two parties. The health of the relationship is paramount to the success of the coaching. The left side of the framework represents the organizational system, depicted by the large dark blue circle; responding to the questions posed by van Oudtshoorn, there are several categories for consideration when coaching within the organizational system: context, theories and tools.

There are three key categories for consideration of an organizational system in the framework of coaching according to van Oudtshoorn (2006): (1) the context in which coaching is taking place; (2) theories informing the work within the system; and (3) specific tools in use within that system.

Environmental factors that support the coaching relationship can bolster a client's success while oppositional forces may hinder it; this is the context of the organizational system. Context allows for consideration of where the client is being coached; the nature of the environmental factors associated within the organizational system. Context considers the core beliefs of the organization and the business goals. Organizational structure, workgroups and teams, and other organizational dynamics.

Organizational theory helps the coach understand why certain organizational policies, politics, practices and procedures are in place, and the potential impact to the client who is a member of that organizational system; conversely, it helps the coach understand what may or may not meet with support (or resistance) from the client as s/he works on change through coaching.

Lowman (2002) suggests that understanding the "psychology" of the industry or organization is important data for consideration when coaching, though it is not always visible or stated. An excellent resource for comparison of organizational characteristics to psychological theories for purposes of identifying which theories may be at work within the organization, Lowman's work explains that the psychology of an organization can be gleaned from the types of tools in place, as well as through a better understanding of the elements within context. The tools in use within the organization, particularly those supporting the employee lifecycle of development, not only answer process

questions such as what and how the company supports the lifecycle of the employee, but may also help to explain why they are being used, thus these may serve as indicators of the underlying organizational theories at work.

Understanding where the client works is important to determining his or her potential impact on others within the system; understanding the business goals and core beliefs of the individual as well as his or her larger systems--the company as a whole, the division, department, his or her team--each is important data for consideration during coaching.

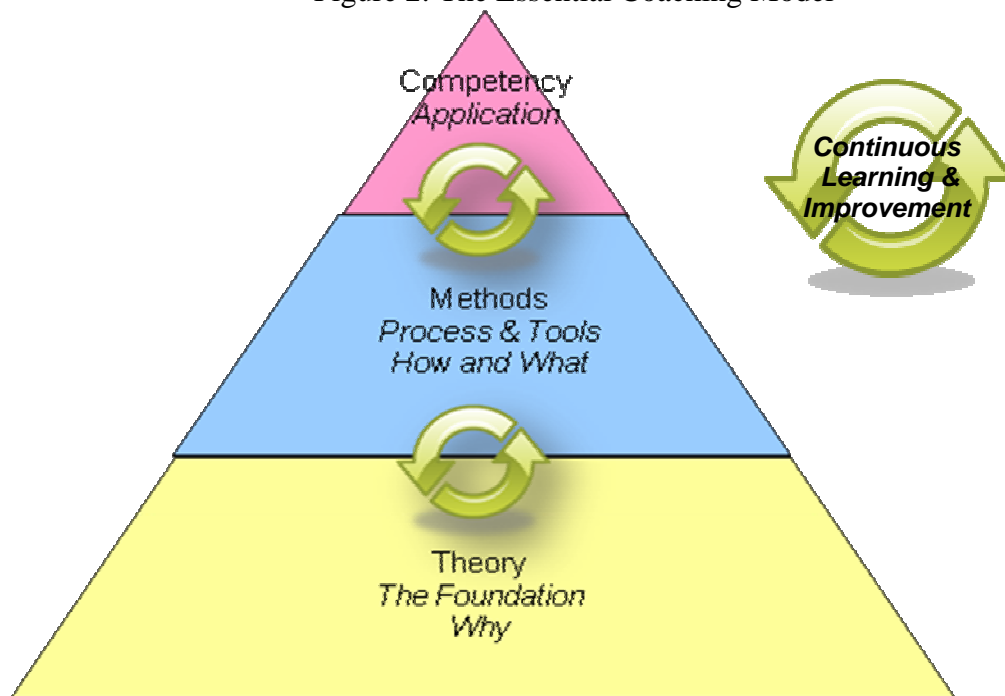
These and other data points must be considered when determining which theories, processes and tools in the coach's toolkit are the best match for the client, within their organizational context. Use of language and tools familiar within the client's industry and organization will help to achieve a greater level of success for the client engagement. Morgan (1997), Lowman (2002), Bolman and Deal (2003), and McLean (2006) agree that understanding and matching to organizational style is important for professional coaches. I agree with them and with consultant Peter Block (2000), that working with something familiar to a client, for example, can serve to shorten the learning curve in this increasingly fast-paced world within (and outside) organizations. Unfamiliar language can appear academic or soft to a business client, and so matching language as well as tools and process to context are extremely important to client acceptance at both the individual and organizational levels. It is important to provide coaching that matches the organizational system's style as well as that of the individual being coached.

CHAPTER 4

ESSENTIAL COACHING MODEL

The purpose of this model (Figure 2) is to organize what the coach has in his/her toolkit and to guide the coach in the use of that toolkit in service to his/her clients. The following questions should be answered: What are the psychological schools of thought that inform why s/he does what s/he does? Which methods, processes and tools is the coach trained to use? Which competencies is the coach using to put these things to work for the client? Using the toolkit metaphor, the model includes a drawer for each of these things: theoretical foundations, methods (processes and tools) and competencies.

Figure 2: The Essential Coaching Model



The Essential Coaching model consists of three layers, each building on the other through continuous learning and improvement: theory, methods and competency. Each layer is explored in greater detail and in linear sequence in Chapters 5, 6 and 7; they are introduced here to show their interconnectedness as part of the whole model.

Theory provides the foundation, the why behind the approaches to coaching. Essential Coaching relies most heavily on psychological theories of client-centered and positive psychologies, although as Chapter 5 will explain, both have roots in other schools of thought such as gestalt and existentialism; Essential Coaching is informed by these as well.

The second layer of the Essential Coaching model consists of several processes and many more tools, each inspired by the client's goals, strengths, preferences, and style, and with consideration to what is in place within the client's organization, as discussed in the previous chapter. Methods explain what the coach uses in service to the client (the tools) and how they are used (the process).

The third category of Essential Coaching is its pinnacle, focused on competent application of the skills and knowledge the coach has developed. There are proposed industry standards for competency in coaching; I have selected five core competencies for Essential Coaching based on introspection, study and experience. The Essential Coaching model represents a body of skills and techniques which have been accumulated over the past few years of my study and decades of professional experience in organizations, as well as supervised application from both roles as client and coach. Understanding what it is like to walk in a client's shoes, to experience receiving difficult feedback, for example, or to struggle to narrow a set of goals and measures, improves the coach's ability to empathize with the client, and therefore to be a better coach. Living the roles of both client and coach, one begins to realize the supreme art of mindful questioning and the absolute importance of active listening in the one-on-one coach client

relationship. This third layer of the Essential Coaching model brings attention to how the first two layers are combined in service to the client.

CHAPTER 5

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ESSENTIAL COACHING

Why is a theoretical foundation so important to excellence in coaching? There are two reasons: the belief that use of the scientific method brings validity to a theory, and because theory provides a roadmap. Through testing and the creation of a repeatable process, a hypothesis is validated and the theory accepted. Thus a foundation in theory adds credibility, is respectable and very important to the field of professional coaching as well as to the coach. The coach with a theoretical foundation has evidence-based research behind his or her work. Second, theory provides to the coach a navigable path, a substantiated approach, as well as tools and methods validated and supported by research with which to measure, assess and help clients. In short, a theoretical foundation provides an empirically-based roadmap (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007).

Historical Perspective

Sigmund Freud, commonly accepted as the father of psychology, developed psychoanalysis at the start of the 20th century (Peltier, 2001) which focused on biologically based human desires and drives, many of which he believed were interconnected with childhood experiences and related to the mother and father. In Freud's view, the therapist was the expert who told the patient what to do to fix what was wrong with them. Psychoanalysis follows a medical approach of doctor and patient in a diseased model of care (Peltier, 2001). Though one must give credit to Freud as the founder of modern psychology, I have been unable to embrace this approach, recognizing instead that there comes a point in life to stop blaming parents, recognize that humans are

driven by more than animalistic desires and that we can and should take responsibility for our own behavior. I therefore disagree with his fundamental assumptions and am not convinced that his results were the result of a theory or foundation that remains relevant given all that has been developed since.

At the same time, another perspective emerged that took a different view of human behavior, one that came to be labeled behavioral psychology. Ivan Pavlov, John Watson and B.F. Skinner are commonly accepted as main forces in the behavioral movement of psychology, the basic premise of which is that much of learning and human behavior results from consequences. Behavioral psychology takes a mechanistic view of animal and human behavior. It demonstrates through observation that humans and animals respond to stimuli and further, that a pattern of response can be repeated or, if undesirable, can be altered (Peltier, 2001).

Just as behavioral psychology was developed as a reaction to psychoanalysis, existentialism came about in response to behavioralism. Peltier (2001) explains that existentialists like Jean-Paul Sartre, Franz Kafka and Viktor Frankl took a less mechanistic view of human behavior, believing that self-actualization was possible through choice. Existentialists propose that is the way we choose to experience a thing (life, a situation, etc.) that matters and people have a choice. Meaning provides hope for the future; those with something to live for find a way to live despite adversity and the worst possible conditions (Frankl, 1959).

The humanist perspective, championed for over fifty years by Rogers and Maslow in the 1950s (Peltier, 2001), is the next phase in psychology's evolution. Theories of self-actualization, such as Gestalt, begin to take a turn in their perspective from the

existential angle concerned with a person's ability to survive by finding meaning in the life they live, to the humanist view focused on a more optimistic perspective, based in the ability to thrive. Optimism finally taking root in mainstream modern psychology, Roger's person-centered theory, also known as client-centered, is based on the ability of the individual to self-actualize toward the positive, and beyond basic survival (Pfeiffer & Ballew, 1991; Peltier, 2001).

Diverse Thought

A coach must be open to multiple ways of thinking and doing things. According to van Oudtshoorn (2006), if one only knows a single model then one tries to fit everything into it, or fit it onto every situation. For example, Peltier's (2001) The Psychology of Executive Coaching, is written for psychologists looking to transfer their perspectives in psychology to careers in coaching. While it does not highlight the interrelated development (the author presents with the assumption that the psychologist reader is versed in this as psychology is their specialty), it does highlight strengths and weaknesses of each approach as it applies to coaching. Peltier shows that no single theory or model has all of the answers, rather, behavioral sciences provide multiple ways to serve the client.

In another example, Stober and Grant (2006) showcase best practices in coaching in the Evidence Based Coaching Handbook. It is their belief that "coaching has become an increasingly accepted cross-disciplinary methodology... [including professionals from] the behavioral and social sciences, organizational change and development, psychoanalytical therapy, cognitive and behavioral psychology, adult education, as well

as business and economic science” (p.1). They identify an important reader of their text as the “student of coaching who [is] in the process of identifying their preferred or personal framework for understanding and working with human behavior” (p. 4).

Gestalt, Humanism and Existentialism

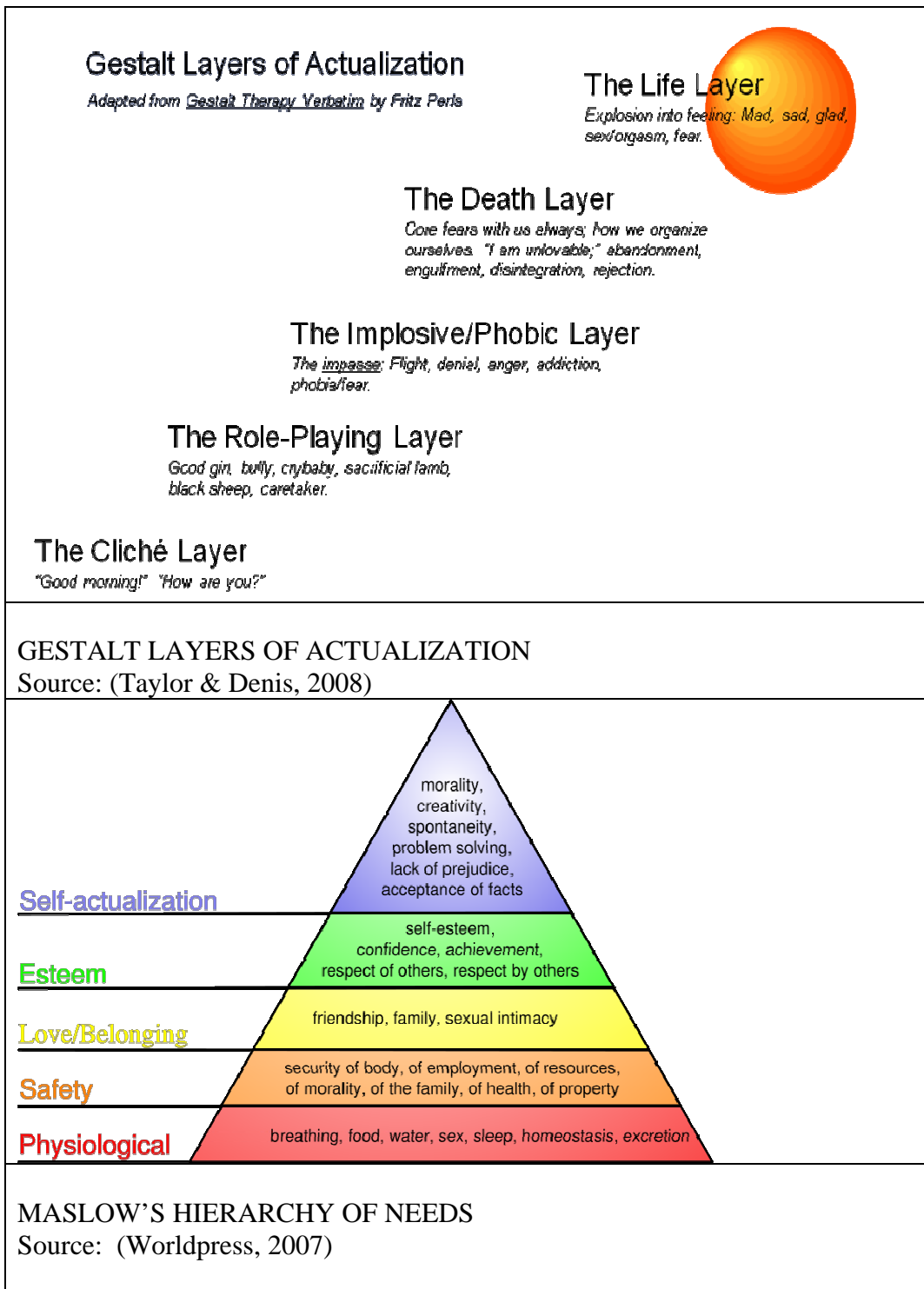
It is through gestalt coaching that I made preliminary personal discoveries, breakthroughs to the identification and pursuit of a life based on core values that would eventually become the fundamental elements (core principles) of Essential Coaching. In doing so I recognized the power of the Gestalt approach. These experiences have been reinforced by study and lecture on the topic of gestalt approaches to coaching and as such have been incorporated into the psychological foundation of Essential Coaching.

The Gestalt approach focuses on experiences in the moment in which a client re-plays a scene, replacing it with what s/he would have preferred to have said and done. It is a very powerful way to re-frame a situation, re-writing the history in a positive sense and instilling optimism; it is an excellent means to practice affirming, positive and powerful new behaviors.

A discussion of the history of psychology is not complete without mention of Abraham Maslow. Maslow’s hierarchy of need has validity in coaching. A visual comparison of Figure 3 and Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, illustrates the development aspects of each, to a pinnacle of self-actualization. There is also visual similarity between Maslow’s hierarch to the pyramid structure of the Essential Coaching Model (Figure 1), designed to guide the development of a professional coach through its layers to reach a pinnacle of excellence in coaching. Both theories represent a path to

actualization, referred to in the Gestalt example as “The Life Layer” and in Maslow’s hierarchy as “Self-actualization.”

Figure 3: Gestalt Layers of Actualization and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



While the visual similarities to Gestalt and Essential Coaching are of interest, of importance is the underlying theory of Maslow's hierarchy. Referred to as both the hierarchy of motives and the hierarchy of needs, Maslow's theory is that human behavior is influenced by a ranked grouping of five needs, the lowest of which must be at least partially met before the others can be motivating factors (Bernstein & Nash, 2002).

Maslow's theory posits that people are motivated to achieve higher levels of need only after the lowest levels of physiology, security and safety are met.

Petty (2007) proposes that there are three main reasons for which we value something and it will therefore motivate us to want to achieve it. First, at the belongingness level, we must be doing it with others and for others, working as a team. Second, we need to believe that others respect us and what we can do, and that what we do is valuable; thus we fulfill the esteem level. Finally, and only when the other needs have been at least partly met, we desire or need to become ourselves more fully, to realize (self-actualize) our potential. Similarly, the top of the pyramid of the Essential Coaching model is competent execution of the previous layers in service of the client.

The goal of Essential Coaching is to help clients work toward their potential. Thus Essential Coaching recognizes the important influence of Maslow's work, specifically the hierarchy of needs, for motivation of the one's self and the client.

Essential Coaching is also influenced by existentialism. A lecture by Dr. Ernesto Spinelli in the summer of 2006, based on his book, The Interpreted World (2005), on the contemporary application of existential psychotherapy and psychology to coaching, introduced me to the idea of existential psychology as a theoretical foundation for coaching. Followed by repeated references to existential psychology in positive

psychology texts, and encouragement to read then discuss Man's Search for Meaning (Frankl, 1959) with Linda DeLuca, Existential Coach, existentialism became a recognized influence on Essential Coaching.

Client-Centered Psychology: Definition and History

Carl Rogers, founder of the client-centered approach to understanding human behavior, is considered by many to be the father of the humanistic school of behavioral science (Peltier, 2001). Although psychoanalysis had not disappeared, humanistic psychology came about in reaction to behaviorism, as mentioned previously, and a focus of psychology moved from the mechanistic, reactionary stance to a focus on the human elements of the person.

Rogers rejected the mechanistic approach that the therapist is the expert who diagnoses what is wrong with the patient. In Rogers' view, the therapist who "had a certain set of attitudes would, as a result, effectively use techniques and methods consistent with those attitudes" (Pfeiffer & Ballew, 1991) to guide the client—the individual with the answers. Thus attitude is an important concept in client-centered coaching, and in fact, is a key concept of it: Respect for the client, first and foremost. This attitude implies that the coach, aware of his/her own filter, thoughts and reactions, operates beyond them with a complete focus on walking in the client's shoes (Pfeiffer & Ballew, 1991).

Client-Centered Psychology: Key Concepts

A hallmark of Rogers' client-centered approach is the creation of a relationship based on trust in which the client feels safe, valued and respected. This is encouraged by the coach who employs behaviors that demonstrate the attitude which is built on three key concepts: unconditional positive regard, empathy and congruence.

The first key concept of client-centered psychology is unconditional positive regard for the client. This describes behaving in ways toward the client which confirm that the coach views the client as a valued person. The coach listens to the client without judgment and accepts what the client says. In the client-centered approach there is no need for the coach to provide approval or disapproval since simply reflecting serves to illustrate acceptance. Reflective behavior can help a client feel that higher level needs (according to Maslow's hierarchy) have been met, specifically belongingness and esteem, thus building trust between client and coach. This approach argues for recognition of the client's strength, more specifically that the client possesses both the answers and the ability to solve their own problems; it is the job of the coach to help them discover these by beginning with the attitude of unconditional positive regard and incorporating the next two concepts. In this core concept we see the Essential Coaching core principles of positivity: a positive mindset and approach to the client, as well as a belief in the strength and ability of the client's potential for growth.

The second key concept of client-centered therapy is empathy. Empathy is a way of placing oneself into the client's shoes, of seeing and experiencing the thoughts and feelings of a situation from the vantage point of the client. Behaviorally, this is

conveyed through active listening and mindful questioning, two of the five core principles of Essential Coaching. Corsini (1995), Kirchner (2000), and others use the term empathetic listening, a technique known to be an effective approach in a wide variety of therapies (Peltier, 2001; Bernstein & Nash, 2002; Stober & Grant, 2006).

Congruence, sometimes called genuineness (Kirchner, 2000; Stober, 2006) or authenticity (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007; Orem, Binkert & Clancy, 2007), is the third core concept of the client-centered approach. Behaviorally, congruence means being true to one's own feelings as a coach, recognizing and acknowledging them, and bringing them into service for the client when appropriate. For example, if the coach is confused by something the client is saying, it is an authentic behavior for the coach to seek clarification rather than imply total understanding, omnipotence and knowledge (Bernstein & Nash, 2002).

Rogers' work included "empirical testing of the core conditions associated with personal change in high-functioning individuals" (Peltier, 2001, p. 66). This is clearly a precursor to positive psychology's focus on empirical testing of positive, optimistic human strengths for maximum impact.

Positive Psychology: Definition and History

Positive psychology is a relatively new arena with tremendous potential for human health and wellness. Also known as "the Science of Happiness," this body of knowledge will be increasingly important to what many scholars and psychologists believe is the next generation in understanding and maximizing the potential within

human and organizational psychology (Seligman, 1990; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Dean, 2006; Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007).

Positive psychology is constructed on a foundation of optimism and positivity. A movement based on the belief that we can improve our existence by focusing on values and virtues, by building on strengths and focusing on wellness, by concentrating on things such as resiliency and happiness. Positive psychology incorporates each of the core principles of Essential Coaching: authenticity and the importance of being real; positivity via a positive mindset and approach; and positive psychologists work to identify and build on strengths. The application of positive psychology to coaching relies on active listening and mindful questioning (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007).

Martin E.P. Seligman, commonly accepted as the founder of Positive Psychology, provides an excellent definition in the first chapter of The Handbook of Positive Psychology (Snyder, 2005), highlighting the key elements of positive psychology: the time-bound possibilities for application to past, present and future; the twenty-four values and virtues and their applicability at the individual, group and even societal levels:

The field of positive psychology at the subjective level is about positive subjective experience: well-being and satisfaction (past); flow, joy, the sensual pleasures, and happiness (present); and constructive cognitions about the future--optimism, hope, and faith. At the individual level it is about positive personal traits -- the capacity for love and vocation, courage, interpersonal skill, aesthetic sensibility, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future-mindedness, high talent, and wisdom. At the group level it is about the civic virtues and the institutions that move individuals toward better citizenship: responsibility, nurturance, altruism, civility, moderation, tolerance, and work ethic (Seligman, 2005, p.3).

According to Seligman (2000), positive psychology is about applying the rigors of scientific method to determining how to tap into “human strengths that act as buffers

against mental illness: courage, future mindedness, optimism, interpersonal skill, faith, work ethic, hope, honesty, perseverance, and the capacity for flow and insight, to name several” (p.4). Positive psychology is about building wellness instead of curing illness; building on signature strengths as opposed to correcting weaknesses in human behavior and capability. Positive psychology came about largely in response to the disease model of treatment for human behavior, as well as the recognition that “major strides in prevention have come largely from a perspective focused on systematically building competency, not on correcting weakness” (Seligman 2000, p. 4).

Biswas-Diener and Dean (2007) explain that the science of happiness, a science of optimism, is a newer “branch of psychology that focuses on what is going right, rather than what is going wrong with people” instead of what is wrong with them, or their disease (depression, paranoia, psychosis). They add that “positive psychology takes aim at happiness, optimism, and character strengths.” This is about a focus on “the dynamics of healthy relationships, the factors that lead to highly functioning work groups, and what leads to lasting personal fulfillment” (Biswas-Diener 2007, p. x).

Kauffman (2006) provides that “The mission of positive psychology is to develop sound theories of optimal functioning and to find empirically supported ways to improve the lives of ordinary and extraordinary people” (p. 219). The primary website for positive psychology studies, hosted by the University of Pennsylvania, defines it as “a new branch of psychology which focuses on the empirical study of such things as positive emotions, strengths-based character, and healthy institutions” (www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu).

Positive psychology is not a standalone approach, nor is it a new idea. The University of Pennsylvania's Martin Seligman is commonly credited with founding the positive psychology movement and that is how he refers to it: as a movement, since scientists and researchers of human behavior have thought of this type of approach before. Before the advent of the positive psychology movement, the rigors of science had not been applied to the study of human strengths and positive values and virtue, and as Seligman points out, there are two economically-driven reasons for this.

Prior to World War II the field of psychology focused on identifying and developing high potential individuals, and on designing productive and fulfilling work systems. After World War II the study and practice of psychology narrowed its focus to pathology and illness. The Veterans Administration, founded in 1946, opened up opportunities for thousands of psychiatrists to practice curing the illnesses of veterans returning from the war and others. In 1947, the Institute of Mental Health was founded, providing research grants; especially easy to procure were grants for any research having to do with finding a cure for illness, for pathology. Thus American society provided financial incentive to the treatment and study of "repairing damage within a disease model of human function...damaged habits, damaged drives, damaged childhoods, and damaged brains" (Seligman 2000, p. 1). While great strides have been made in finding cures or treatments for at least 14 mental disorders (Seligman, 1994), more and more evidence mounts to support the counter-balance approach of prevention by way of building on strengths and other human behaviors that serve as to bolster good health.

Positive Psychology: Key Concepts

This section provides key concepts of applied positive psychology, specifically in how it applies to the Coaching profession, and in particular the direct link to Essential Coaching.

When positive psychologists started to apply their psychology to coaching, it was called Authentic Happiness Coaching (AHC), a partnership between the founder of MentorCoach®, Ben Dean, Ph.D., and the founder of positive psychology, Martin Seligman, Ph.D. AHC is a virtual training organization that has trained over a thousand people globally in the theory, assessments, interventions, and exercises of positive psychology (Dean, 2006). AHC “has been developed from the outset with an empirically based orientation” according to Kauffman (2006), and “the goal of Seligman and others in creating the AHC model is to provide a theoretically grounded and empirically supported set of techniques to foster happiness” (p. 234).

Dean later partnered with Biswas-Diener to write, Positive Psychology Coaching (2007), which provides simple, practical ways to use positive psychology in service to clients via coaching. They propose two foundations to Positive Psychology Coaching: I. Happiness and Optimism (listed together as the first foundational element) and II. Character Strengths. These are clearly a match for the core principles at the base of Essential Coaching.

Kauffman (2006) describes four research areas of positive psychology to be applied to coaching: (1) positive emotion, (2) flow, (3) hope therapy and (4) the classification of strength in the Values in Action survey, also known as the VIA Strengths Survey. The theoretical foundations of positive psychology and the empirically based

application of its methods and theory to coaching have direct correlation to core principles of Essential Coaching as illustrated below.

Authenticity appears in studies by Biswas-Diener and Dean (2007). They have developed ways apply the scientific method to the measure a person's level of happiness as well as to define the optimum level of happiness. The label for the community of scholarly effort is "Authentic Happiness."

Positive psychology literature appears to be the exclusive domain of positivity. A close relative in the history of psychology warrants mention as an antonym: positivism. Essential Coaching positivity is not the type of positivism that swept the social sciences in the 1920s. Gordon Allport, noted 20th century personality trait psychologist, defined positivity when applied to a person's character as having value in a philosophical sense which could not be measured or empirically validated in a scientific sense. Allport and similar thinkers of his day would label positivity as a non-scientifically valid value and character trait (Peltier, 2001); I disagree. I agree with the importance of the scientific method as a proving mechanism, but disagree that positivity is unable to be empirically measured and validated. Rather, my opinion aligns with John Dewey and current-day positive psychologists, who not only recognize positivity as an entity which does have intrinsic worth (a value), but who have shown its empirical validity (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Positivity is one of thirty-four strengths in the Strengths-Finder™ tool developed by Martin Seligman, founder of positive psychology, and sponsored by his client, the Gallup organization; it was made popular by Marcus Buckingham. Buckingham and Clifton (2001) describe a person strong in *positivity* in the following manner:

... generous with praise, quick to smile, and always on the lookout for the positive in the situation. Some call you lighthearted. Others just wish that their glass were as full as yours seems to be. But either way,, people want to be around you. Their world looks better around you because your enthusiasm is contagious. Lacking our energy and optimism, some find their world drab with repetition or, worse heavy with pressure. You seem to find a way to lighten their spirit. You inject drama into every project. You celebrate every achievement. You find ways to make everything more exciting and more vital. Some cynics may reject your energy, but you are rarely dragged down. Your Positivity won't allow it. Somehow you can't quite escape your conviction that it is good to be alive, that work can be fun, and that no matter what the setbacks, one must never lose one's sense of humor (p. 109).

Focus on strengths, the third core principle of Essential Coaching, is a cornerstone of positive psychology theory, which was developed to focus on strength, health and wellness instead of illness. Grants provided initially by the Gallup organization helped to develop an inventory of twenty-four strengths (Buckingham & Clifton, 2001) which was developed further into the VIA Character Strengths and Virtues Classification, by the Values in Action Institute, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the development of a scientific knowledge base of human strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Just as positive psychology was developed to be the opposite of the illness model of medicine, this robust compendium was developed as the positive version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) and the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Active Listening and Mindful Questioning, the remaining core principles of Essential Coaching, are incorporated into the application of the empirically validated theory and tools developed for positive psychology coaches. Appendix C provides an outline of applied positive psychology via AHC; listening and questioning are listed within.

I agree with Kauffman (2006) that, “positive psychology theory and research will provide the scientific legs upon which the field of coaching can firmly stand” (p. 221).

CHAPTER 6

ESSENTIAL COACHING METHOD: PROCESS AND TOOLS

The Process

Essential Coaching uses a modified version of the Wilkinsky 9-Step Process for Coaching (see Table 1) which shows that there are nine steps within three categories. Kauffman explains the importance of using business language to explain what might otherwise be viewed as ‘soft.’ Using words like “efficacy” and “predictors of success” then backing them up with studies (in the efficacy of positive psychology, for example), she is able to translate the value of coaching for the business person who may be considering it. (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007) I agree that the language of these tools must be business appropriate in order to gain acceptance; the Wilkinsky process uses business language.

This is the first process model for coaching I was introduced to and the first I used in academic coaching engagements as both coach and client. Though I have evaluated other process models such as those presented by Orem, Binkert and Clancy (2007), as well as Biswas-Deiner and Dean (2007), I keep returning to this one for its ease of use and flexibility. I added to the Wilkinsky process after academic exposure and study of coaching psychology and coaching experience using it, as shown in Table 4. “Always Getting to Know the Client⁴” was added to reflect continuous learning and improvement for both coach and client, recognizing that the client develops and changes as the coaching process unfolds, and is always a person to be valued and appreciated (Orem, Binkert & Clancy, 2007). Existential and gestalt psychologies would agree that, with

each choice or step toward gestalt, a client is someone new to discover (Frankl, 1959; DeLuca, 2008; Taylor & Denis, 2008).

Wording was modified, though not meaning, to create a tool for communicating the steps of the coaching process to a client. The goal is to provide clarity regarding the steps in which client would be active, such as step three goal setting, and the steps the coach had full responsibility for such as step five data gathering.

Table 4: Modified Wilkinsky 9-Step Process for Coaching

<i>Always Getting to Know the Client</i>	Getting Started	1. First Meeting
		2. Get to know client's STRENGTHS
		3. Client sets emerging goal & SMART measures of success i. One Behavioral goal, and/or ii. One Intellectual pursuit
	Data Management	4. Coach & Client work together to establish the DATA PLAN based on goal
		5. Gather data. Analyze data & Create the Feedback Report for your client
		6. Coach provides Feedback Report to client
	Results	7. Client creates the Action Plan
		8. Client implements the Action Plan / Coach is in Support Role
		9. Begin to Disengage/Closure

There are several reasons why I prefer the Wilkinsky 9-Step process for coaching. First, the process was developed with a client-centered approach (its developer is a client-centered psychologist). Second, it seamlessly incorporates all of the Essential Coaching values of authenticity, positivity, a focus on strengths, active listening and mindful questioning. Third, it allows for the use, addition or subtraction of any number tools based on the coach's toolset. Fourth, it does not restrict the coach or client to any

particular number of sessions. Thus yet another benefit of this process is revealed: it is a great way to track and communicate progress while maintaining confidentiality, especially for teams of coaches as well as for coach and client. In other words, progress can be reported based on where the team is in the process.

Tools

A sample of tools is provided here, presented in an order in which they might be presented to a client by a coach following the process map of the Wilkinsky model. There are tangible tools, forms to use to gather information from the client, assessments to measure and discuss strengths preferences, as well as intangible tools that fall more solidly into a method or approach category. First, in the tangible tool category, is a sample contract, followed by an intake form and coaching prep form, both based on best practices from Orem, et al (2007). The LIFO® method, a strengths-based tool, and the Septet model (Silsbee, 2004) for active listening and mindful questioning are examples of hybrid tools, having both tangible and intangible elements. The final tool presented here is best described as intangible, part of the mental toolkit of the Essential Coach: authenticity in 360 feedback.

The Contract is a fundamental element of every coaching engagement, without which many coaches and clients experience frustration or miscommunication. The Essential Coaching Contract template was developed originally by Mary O'Connor. It has been modified by this author to incorporate elements of Essential Coaching, most notably the Client Information Form, Coaching Prep Form, and both language and

questions that resulted from AHC and Appreciative Coaching techniques (see Appendix F: Sample Coaching Contract, for a sample contract used in service of clients).

The client information form (see Appendix G: Client Information Form, for the sample) is based on one used in the appreciative coaching process, thus named for its roots in Appreciative Inquiry, a discipline unto itself related to Positive Psychology (Hall, 1998; Orem, Binkert & Clancy, 2007). The CIF is a beneficial intake for the new coach-client engagement for several reasons. First, it uses positive language. Second, the use of positive language and visioning questions helps introduce the client to a positive, strengths based process. Third, it helps the coach begin to get to know the client.

Questions are arranged into five categories:

1. Your History, in which the questions are designed to help the client reflect on past successes and how they may relate to the present and future.
2. Your Life, in which questions help the client identify their support network.
3. Your Self Today focuses on life in the moment, the present time.
4. Your Potential, in which the client envisions the future.
5. Making It Happen identifies client preferences for action.

This form has been helpful to me in helping my clients focus on their strengths and for me as I begin to get to know and understand the client. Orem, Binkert and Clancy (2007) recommend giving this to the client after the first session. My experience with multiple clients suggests that asking the client to complete the form before the first meeting is an alternative, as some of the preliminary questions a coach may ask during that first meeting are included within the form and may feel to the client like a duplication of effort. In the case in which the CIF is given to the client following a first

meeting, this author recommends that the coach review the questions and remove any that have already been discussed. The creators of the form (Orem, et al, 2007) advise that customization of the form is entirely appropriate. I believe that the use of the intake process, very common in psychotherapy, helps to speed the process to action for both the client and the coach.

Also adapted from Appreciative Coaching: A Positive Process for Change (Orem, Binkert & Clancy, 2007), the CPF has been modified to streamline and incorporate more directive language⁵. Feedback has confirmed that clients prefer the modified version. See Appendix H: Coaching Prep Form, for the modified version used in service to clients.

Given to the client following each coaching session, the CPF has two equally important benefits. First, the CPF helps the coach to prepare for the next coaching conversation; the coach is better able to serve the client. Second, it helps to ensure the client is driving the coaching conversation, that topics of most importance to the client are the agenda. Based on experience, the coach should be clear with the client that the intent is not for the client to have to do a lot of work on the form; be clear with the client that completion of the form can be as brief or as detailed as the client would like. Be sure your client knows that a coaching session should never be cancelled because s/he was unable to complete the form.

Goals are an important part of coaching. Goals give focus and purpose to the coaching engagement. A purpose provides meaning for the work, thus goals provide meaning and something to strive for. Goals are included in the tools section of this report because positive psychology research indicates goals and happiness are linked (Emmons, 1999). Kauffman (2006), Biswas-Diener and Dean (2007) and Orem, et al, (2007) agree

with the use of coaching goals that are specific, measurable, actionable, realistic and timebound (SMART). Further, they agree that client goals should be worded in the affirmative, using positive language.

Biswas-Diener and Dean (2007) describe several important attributes of goals as a result of their positive psychology studies. They make the case for a specific goal orientation, content, and motivation, as well as the importance of acknowledging and working with conflict and anxiety about the goal. Simply put, goals should work toward something positive as opposed to working to avoid something negative. Goals related to certain fundamental values have a higher success ratio than power-related goals. The authors describe the use of a goal chain to ensure connection from a client's values to his or her goals, which helps to avoid goal conflict and which may reduce goal anxiety, quite common for the most closely-held goals. See Appendix I: Key Points of Positive Psychology Coaching, for a full outline of points and tips, including goal-related tips.

There are several forms a goal can take throughout the lifecycle of a coaching engagement. The contract (see Appendix F) includes a statement that “Over time, should the goal change, it will be known as the “emerging goal” and it will receive the full attention and focus of the parties, who expect that this will occur as the client formalizes her goal and clarifies her vision of what she wants her life to become.”

Based on the work of Atkins (1981), the Life Orientations Method (LIFO®), is a powerful strengths-based tool for both individual and group work. My experience with the tool, both as a certified instructor and professional coach, has helped to increase both my understanding of it, as well as effectiveness in using it to focus on clients' strengths. LIFO® emphasizes that behaviors are used on a sliding scale; strengths can be overused

or underused, sometimes resulting in the miscommunication and frustration that comes from not being heard or being misunderstood. The tool allows a coach and client to work together to identify others' preferred strengths and further, how to use this knowledge for maximum effectiveness in interpersonal communications.

LIFO® is based on understanding four behavioral styles under both favorable and stressful situations. There are six strategies available for the coach and client to use as tools for managing strengths (Atkins and Dahl, 2000, p.9):

Table 5: LIFO® Six Key Strategies

Confirming	Understanding and appreciating one's own most preferred strengths.
Capitalizing	Identification of situations in which one's best strengths show.
Moderating	Learning to avoid overusing one's strengths.
Supplementing	Work to become more comfortable with one's least preferred styles. Seek the assistance of others with different styles.
Extending	Learning to use more of one's strengths as well as the perspectives of one's least preferred styles.
Bridging	Learning to identify others' styles and match one's own message to the others' ways of communicating.

The strengths-based approach is what makes this tool effective and useful to Essential Coaching. The LIFO® toolkit includes various assessments and exercises based on the strategies outlined above, which can be used throughout the coaching lifecycle as needed. For example, the personal assessment and report are excellent first steps to client self-discovery of strengths. Following the baseline establishment of self-awareness, the next step is to identify and bridge to the styles of others. The exercises in

managing strengths, including coaching to understand intent, behavior and impact, are often useful in action planning following 360 degree feedback.

Silsbee (2004) presents a list of seven “voices” to use when working with a client, each with its own unique focus in service to the client. Useful as a driver of Essential Coaching core competencies, especially active listening and mindful questioning, the voices and their qualities are summarized below (p.79).

Table 6: The Voices of the Septet Model

<p><u>The Master</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains self-awareness. • Listens with focus and presence. • Models learning and growth. • Embraces the client with compassion and respect. • Chooses which of the operational Voices to use at a given time. <p><u>The Partner</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes and honors an explicit structure for the coaching relationship. • Makes explicit, clear choices with the client about the coaching process. <p><u>The Investigator</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks questions that deepen a client’s understanding of the situation. • Helps the client articulate desired outcomes. • Asks the client to generate courses of action. <p><u>The Reflector</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides direct and honest feedback. • Directs the client’s attention toward his/her capabilities and potential. • Encourages self-observation and reflection. <p><u>The Teacher</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides “expert” information, tools, and language. • Challenges and stimulates client’s thinking process. <p><u>The Guide</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages the client to take action. • Offers options and/or recommends courses of action.

The Contractor

- Establishes clear agreements about actions.
- Explores and resolves client doubts and hesitations.
- Follows up with client about agreed-upon actions.

Authentic behavior begins with self-awareness and ends with inspiring others to be their true selves. The first part of this subsection explains how this best done through the client-centered tenet of unconditional positive regard. By meeting a person where they are, the coach is able to establish a foundation of trust, without which the relationship cannot be beneficial. The second part of this subsection addresses the importance of role adoption, self-awareness and intention to coaching and to 360 degree feedback as part of the coaching engagement.

Swann and Pelham's (2005) theory of self-verification offers evidence to support that people with positive self-regard tend to (a) attract and be attracted to those who also have positive self-regard (which they call selective interaction) and who (b) relate to the person as they see themselves (positively). Further, self-verification studies have shown that people are (c) more attentive to those with similar self-regard (selective attention) and (d) remember more of what is congruent to their own self-view (selective encoding and retrieval). Perhaps most importantly these studies show that (e) people are more likely to agree with and accept or own feedback that comes from someone they believe shares their positive self-view. While this is great news for positive psychology coaches, the corollary is also true: that negative attracts negative; further that those with a negative self-view are likely to disregard the opinions, feedback or guidance from someone who does not approach them with similar recognition. While it would be nice to discuss

nothing but positive client attributes and strengths, it is always necessary to meet the client where they are first, and if they are holding a negative self-view, then it is important be there with them, to acknowledge the fact that they are depressed, or are using a strength to excess which is perceived negatively by others, for example.

Swann and Pelham (2005) suggest that optimism without deference to negative self-perceptions is potentially wasting time. They argue that the coach must meet the client where they are, confirm the client's self-view and establish the trusting foundation so critical to the client's success. Their advice is to acknowledge the elements of the person that are forming this negative view (you are anxious before you speak, you are aggressive in meetings), then work to establish a better self-view; the optimal outcome being increased self-esteem and optimism.

Why is authenticity as a multi-faceted competency so important? It has tremendous psychological benefits and has been shown to be linked to higher self-esteem which, according to Swann and Pelham (2005) attracts others with high self-esteem; a more positive disposition and cheerfulness both within oneself and at a broader level in social groupings; as well as more hope for the future (Harter, 2005).

In this second part of the subsection on authenticity and 360 feedback, I explore relevant literature with special emphasis on that of Harter (2005).

Authenticity has many facets, some based on an assumption that many people want to be authentic individuals, that they want to be who they really are and represent themselves in an authentic way to others. Relationships serve to validate our own perceptions of ourselves and boost our feelings of authenticity. We want to be perceived

as authentic by others and we want to be validated as being authentic, that is, we want to be authenticated by others.

Being perceived as authentic may “bolster feelings of existential security and grease the wheels of social interaction,” while being perceived as a phony can be the social equivalent of a “train wreck.” (Harter, 2006, p.368). This is important to keep in mind for coaching since often clients receiving 360 degree feedback will be presented with perceptions of themselves that are unfamiliar and which can be personally unsettling. We use our ability to determine what is real to organize our lives and our world, our behavior.

If we can't be sure that our perceptions of reality are sound, if we perceive favorable situations from deceptive people for example, then how can we trust our ability to know what is real and what is false?

One possible response to that question is to consider the impact of social roles, and the adoption of them as our own. Adopting behaviors associated with a role can cause one to lose oneself, can result in behaving the way another prefers, not the way one would choose without that influence or expectation from the other. Ingrained from our earliest years, when we modified our behaviors to please our parents or to avoid displeasing them, this can be a tough pattern to break. I agree with Harter (2005), who provides that subordination of oneself is not compatible with authenticity. This is why the Essential Coaching competency of authenticity focuses on identifying with one's own authenticity first, in order to be of best service to the coaching client. In other words, get out of your own way first: perfect your own authentic self and delivery of that real self. Once accomplished, the second level of competency in authenticity is to work on the

connectedness with others in a truly authentic way -- authentic to how you are and how they are (Harter, 2005).

Self-awareness and intention have significant impact on expectations. Without self-awareness we may respond solely to the expectations of those around us, resulting in living a false-self role. It is self-awareness that allows us to decide which expectations to keep, own and live, and which to discard or ignore. When we have the intention of remaining true to our own best interests and good health, we make better decisions about which expectations to keep, and which to drop from our identity (Pfeiffer & Ballew, 1991).

CHAPTER 7

ESSENTIAL COACHING COMPETENCY

Coaching Industry Standards

Competency, specifically the competent application of knowledge and skills delivered for the benefit of the client, is what brings the entirety of Essential Coaching together; competency is what helps the informed coach perform.

The International Coaching Federation (ICF) (2007) provides a series of competencies that have been identified as critical for professional and life coaches. The competencies are grouped and arranged along the lifecycle pattern of a typical coaching engagement, outlining what a coach must be familiar with throughout the engagement, as illustrated in Table 7.

Table 7: ICF Coaching Competencies

<p><u>A. Setting the Foundation</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meeting ethical guidelines and professional standards 2. Establishing the coaching agreement <p><u>B. Co-creating the Relationship</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Establishing trust and intimacy with the client 4. Coaching presence <p><u>C. Communicating Effectively</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Active listening 6. Powerful questioning 7. Direct communication <p><u>D. Facilitating Learning and Results</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Creating awareness 9. Designing actions 10. Planning and goal setting 11. Managing progress and accountability

Essential Coaching core principles translate throughout the ICF list of core competencies. Authenticity, positivity, and focus on strengths inform the mindset one brings to the coaching work; this is most closely related to the ICF Competency category B: Co-Creating the Relationship. These same core principles (authenticity, positivity, and focus on strengths) largely inform how one delivers to the client and thus also come into play in ICF category D: Facilitating Learning and Results. Essential Coaching core principles of active listening and mindful questioning are quite clearly evident within ICF competency category C: Communicating Effectively.

Essential Coaching Core Competency

In this section the core principles of Essential Coaching are presented as the core competencies to Essential Coaching. Empirical foundations to the importance of each, presented in the introductory chapter of this capstone, shall serve as supporting evidence for each as a core competency. The previous work shall not be repeated here, rather, will be summarized and shown in an action format similar to that used in the ICF Competency model.

Authenticity - The Authentic Coach recognizes that there are three key components to the verb: a time dimension, the self and the other and continually works to remain true to each.

- a. Is reconciled with the past to eliminate distraction in the present.
- b. Is present, living and working in the moment, in the here and now.

- c. Has a positive future orientation; thinks and speaks of optimistic possibilities.
- d. Is self-aware.
- e. Lives in accordance with own identified personal values.
- f. Acts with intention for good.
- g. Resists role adaptation, behaving to please others at the expense of self.

Positivity – The Positive Coach thinks and acts positively, approaching life --and work with clients-- with an authentically optimistic spirit, living as an example to inspire the same in others along with increased happiness and hope.

- a. Has unconditional positive regard for the client.
- b. Respects, values and appreciates the client.
- c. Is able to understand the feelings and experiences of the client; reflects with empathy.
- d. Is realistic, recognizing and acknowledging that risk has a reason.
- e. Uses positive language.
- f. Works with clients (and self) to re-frame the past positively when appropriate for positive impact in the here and now and future.
- g. Sees the glass as half full.
- h. Has a positive state of mind and allows that optimism to impact their behavior.
- i. Employs an attitude of gratitude.
- j. Practices forgiveness.

Focus on Strengths – The Coach using a Strengths-based approach recognizes and acts on the potential for increased engagement and productivity in his/her clients.

- a. Approaches the client with positive regard and a non-judgmental mindset.
- b. Employs the LIFO® Method or similar.
- c. Is aware of his/her own strengths, including over/under use tendencies.
- d. Actively manages own strengths, seeking to match styles with others for maximum effectiveness.
- e. Understands and values the client's style.
- f. Reinforces client through development of strengths.

The competency definitions for Active Listening and Mindful Questioning are adopted from the ICF Competency listing (ICF, 2007). The Essential Coaching competency definitions expand on the ICF base using key elements of The Septet Model created by Doug Silsbee (2004).

Active Listening - Ability to focus completely on what the client is saying and is not saying, to understand the meaning of what is said in the context of the client's desires, and to support client self-expression

- a. Attends to the client and the client's agenda, and not to the coach's agenda for the client,
- b. Hears the client's concerns, goals, values and beliefs about what is and is not possible,
- c. Distinguishes between the words, the tone of voice, and the body language,

- d. Summarizes, paraphrases, reiterates, mirrors back what client has said to ensure clarity and understanding,
- e. Encourages, accepts, explores and reinforces the client's expression of feelings, perceptions, concerns, beliefs, suggestions, etc.,
- f. Integrates and builds on client's ideas and suggestions,
- g. *"Bottom-lines" or understands the essence of the client's communication and helps the client get there rather than engaging in long descriptive stories,*
- h. *Allows the client to vent or "clear" the situation without judgment or attachment in order to move on to next steps.*

In addition to the above, Essential Coaching includes the following, adopted from The Mindful Coach (Silsbee, 2004):

- i. Checks and challenges his or her own reactions, thoughts and feelings, evaluating them to determine if they are reflecting what the client may be thinking or feeling, or not.
- j. Works to establish a peaceful, distraction-free environment, one that is free of physical clutter as well as personal, mental 'noise.'
- k. Silence cell phones and in conference calls turn off the computer
- l. Have only their pen and notes and an active ear for the client at hand.
- m. Ignore the mental 'noise' of grocery lists, work yet undone on the desk, the phone call that just has to be made.
- n. Focuses completely and with intention on the client.

Mindful Questioning - Ability to ask questions that reveal the information needed for maximum benefit to the coaching relationship and the client

- a. Asks questions that reflect active listening and an understanding of the client's perspective,
- b. Asks questions that evoke discovery, insight, commitment or action (e.g., those that challenge the client's assumptions),
- c. Asks open-ended questions that create greater clarity, possibility or new learning
- d. Asks questions that move the client towards what they desire, not questions that ask for the client to justify or look backwards.

In addition to the above, Essential Coaching includes the following, adopted from The Mindful Coach (Silsbee, 2004):

- e. Approaches the client with a genuine spirit of inquiry.
- f. Is clear in own mind about the why behind each question.
- g. Is accountable for grounding questions in service to the client; explains the reasoning to the client.
- h. Is skilled in the use of the Septet Model or similar.

CHAPTER 8

ESSENTIAL COACHING SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

The Essential Coaching model for coaching is driven by five core principles: authenticity, positivity, a focus on strengths, active listening and mindful questioning. Foundations for the relevance and importance of each of these to the art and science of coaching have been presented in this capstone, illustrated through various schools of psychology and application in coaching. These are core principles because they inform each layer and each element within the three layers of the Essential Coaching model: theory, method and competency.

Parallels illustrated how the core principles drove the selection of the theoretical foundation of Essential Coaching: client-centered (humanist) and positive psychologies dominate, with influences from various earlier behavioral sciences, as is the organic nature of the development of human behavioral psychology.

The core principles and psychologically-based theoretical foundations were used to select the various methods (process and tools) which comprise the second layer of the Essential Coaching model. The primary process model for coaching, the Wilkinsky 9-Step, was shown to be supplemented by a wide variety of tools, a sampling of several types were explored; tangible, intangible and hybrid.

Finally, the core principles were directly translated into action as Essential Coaching core competencies, the pinnacle or upper-most level of the Essential Coaching model. Authenticity, positivity, a focus on strengths, active listening and mindful questioning: The Essential Coach seeks to exhibit behaviors indicating competency in each of these areas and puts them to service for the client. The Essential Coach is

committed to continuous learning and improvement; this is the thing that will keep the model fresh and alive in continuing service to clients.

Evidence-based approaches are essential to successful coaching, especially in the business world. Kauffman describes what she sees as a first and second generation of coaches: the first established coaching as a business; the second will work to increase the respect of the discipline through “the development of explicitly defined theories of human development and research on coaching effectiveness” (Biswas-Diener 2007, p. 30). Stober and Grant (2006) agree to the importance of establishing a link between coaching and empirically proven knowledge bases of science; in their view, the credibility of the profession depends on it. I agree and as a result have taken the approach to follow a proven process as well as use validated tools in service of clients. These are the things that make up the Essential Coaching model.

Next Steps for Essential Coaching

Learn avidly.

Question repeatedly what you have learned.

Analyze it carefully.

Then put what you have learned into practice intelligently.

-Confucius

As far back as 551 BCE philosophers recognized the importance of continuous learning and improvement. The coaching experience reinforces the importance of being open to learning. One must think about the lessons one receives, about how to put them to good use. Confucius speaks not only to the importance of continuous learning and

improvement, but also to the importance of maximizing the skills of listening and questioning, core principles of Essential Coaching.

Research from positive psychology tells us that there is a bevy of important personal strengths that are frequently overlooked in our work with clients. While it makes sense to harness creativity and curiosity there are other, more subtle resources at our disposal. Each of us is a person existing in a timeline, and how we relate to the past, present and future can have important consequences on our quality of life. The happiest, most successful people tend to be those who reminisce positively about the past, savor the present, and are optimistic about the future (Biswas-Diener 2007, p.162).

I wish to continue my journey of continuous learning and improvement of the Essential Coaching model. This is best done through application in the field with clients as well as continued process improvement via feedback from clients and experts in coaching, and of course, study in the area of coaching, particularly in the areas of client-centered and positive psychology coaching. Most of all, I look forward to more opportunities to apply what I have learned in service to clients, something I am continually grateful to be able to do.

REFERENCES

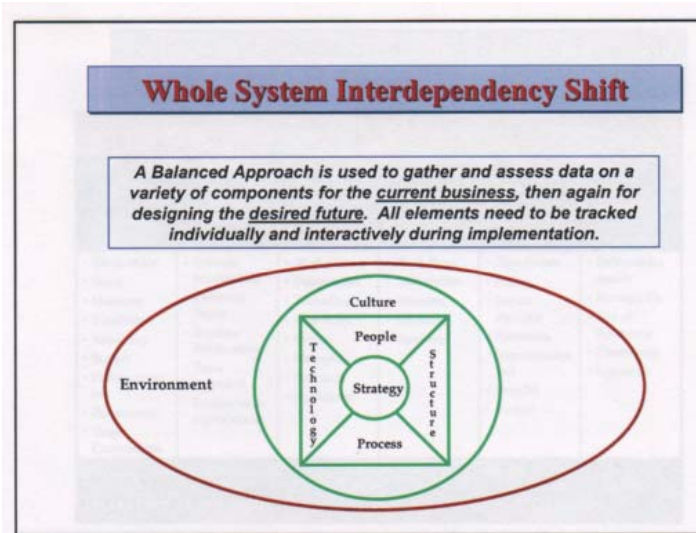
- Atkins, S. (1981). The Name of Your Game : Four game plans for success at home and work. Los Angeles, BCon LIFO International, Inc.
- Baldoni, J. (2007) "Leadership: Make It Positively So." Fast Company Volume, DOI: <http://blog.fastcompany.com/experts/jbaldoni/2007/07/leadership.html>
- Bardick, J. M. (2000). Interpersonal Techniques for Leaders. Coaching For Leadership : how the world's greatest coaches helped leaders learn. M. Goldsmith. San Francisco, CA, Pfeiffer: 285-297.
- Bernstein, D. A. and P. W. Nash (2002). Essentials of Psychology: Annotated Instructor's Edition. Boston, Houghton-Mifflin.
- Biswas-Diener, R. and B. Dean (2007). Positive Psychology Coaching: putting the science of happiness to work for your clients. Hoboken, NJ, Wiley & Sons.
- Block, P. (2000). Flawless consulting: a guide to getting your expertise used. San Francisco, Wiley.
- Bolman, L. G. A. D., Terrence E. (2003). Reframing organizations: artistry, choice and leadership. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.
- Bronson, P. (2002). What Should I Do with My Life? The True Story of People Who Answered the Ultimate Question. New York, Random House.
- Buckingham, M. and D. O. Clifton (2001). Now, Discover Your Strengths. New York, NY, The Free Press.
- Burress, M. A. (2000). "The Relationship Between Leader Behavior and Team Performance and Satisfaction." The 2000 Annual Volume 2(Consulting): 277-291.
- Chapman, T., B. Best and P. Van Casteren (2003). Executive coaching : exploding the myths. New York, NY, Palgrave MacMillan.
- Corsini, R. J. W., D. (1995). Current psychotherapies (5th Edition). Itasca, IL, Peacock.
- Craddock, M. (2004). The Authentic Career - Following the Path of Self-Discovery to Professional Fulfillment. Novato, California, New World Library.
- Dean, B. P. D. (2006). Authentic Happiness Coaching Newsletter: Integrity, Positive Psychology Website from the University of Pennsylvania.

- Deluca, L. (2008). Existential Coaching. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania. Unpublished work.
- Denis, D. (2006). PILOTS: Production Implementation of Operations Technology Systems, Vanguard: 35. Unpublished work.
- Emmons, R. A. (1999). The Psychology of Ultimate Concerns: Motivatin and Spirituality in Personality. New York, Guilford Press.
- Frankl, V. E. (1959). Man's Search for Meaning. Boston, Beacon Press.
- Giardina, R. (2002). Your Authentic Self - Be Yourself At Work. Hillsboro, Oregon, Beyond Words Publishing, Inc.
- Goldsmith, M. (2006). Coaching for Leadership: the Practice of Leadership Coaching from the World's Greatest Coaches. San Francisco, Pfeiffer.
- Hall, J. S. H. (1998) "What is Appreciative Inquiry?" **Volume**, 9 DOI:
- Hargrove, R. A. (2003). Masterful coaching. San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer.
- Harter, S. (2005). Authenticity. Handbook of Positive Psychology. C. R. a. S. J. L. Snyder. New York, NY, Oxford: 382-394.
- Icf (2007). Coaching Core Competencies, International Coach Federation.
- Kauffman, C. (2006). Positive Psychology: The Science at the Heart of Coaching. Evidence Based Coaching. D. R. S. A. M. Grant. Hoboken, NJ, Wiley & Sons.
- Kirchner, M. (2000). "Gestalt Therapy Theory: An Overview." Gestalt! 4(3).
- Leibling, M. A. P., Robin (2004). Coaching Made Easy : Step-by-step techniques that get results. London and Sterling, VA, Korgan Page.
- Lowman, R. L. (2002). The California School of Organizational Studies Handbook of Organizational Consulting Psychology. San Francisco, John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Mclean, G. N. (2006). Organization development: principles, processes, performance. San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.
- Morgan, G. (1997). Images of Organization. Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage Publications.
- Orem, S. L., J. B. Binkert and A. L. Clancy (2007). Appreciative Coaching: A Positive Process for Change. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.
- Orenstein, R. L. (2007). Multidimensional Executive Coaching. New York, NY, Springer Publishing Company.

- Oudtshoorn, P. M. V. (2006). A Framework for Coaching. London, England, iCoach Academy.
- Peltier, B. (2001). The Psychology of Executive Coaching: Theory and Application. New York, Routledge.
- Peterson, C. and M. E. P. Seligman (2004). Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification. New York, Oxford Press.
- Petty, G. (2007). Making use of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to Problem Solve C. R. College. Cambridge, UK, Media Merge.
- Pfeiffer, J. W. and A. C. Ballew (1991). The Differences Between Theory and Models. Theories and Models in Behavioral Science. J. W. Pfeiffer and A. C. Ballew, Pfeiffer & Company: ix-xiii.
- Pfeiffer, J. W. and A. C. Ballew (1991). "Jungian Typologies." Theories and Models in Applied Behavioral Science(January).
- Pfeiffer, J. W. and A. C. Ballew (1991). "Rogers' Helping Process." Theories and Models in Applied Behavioral Science.
- Rogers, C. (1951). Client-Centered Therapy. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (1990). Learned Optimism : How to Change Your Mind and Your Life. New York, NY, Random House.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (1994). What you can change and what you can't. New York, Knopf.
- Seligman, M. E. P. and M. Csikzaentmihalyi (2000). "Positive Psychology : An Introduction." American Psychologist **55**(No. 1): 5-14.
- Silsbee, D. K. (2004). The Mindful Coach: Seven Roles for Helping People Grow. Marshall, NC, Ivy River Press.
- Snyder, C. R. A. S. J. L. (2005). The Handbook of Positive Psychology. New York, NY, Oxford Press.
- Spinelli, E. (2005). The Interpreted World. London, England, Sage Publications.
- Stober, D. R. (2006). Coaching from the Humanistic Perspective. Evidence Based Coaching. D. R. a. G. Stober, Anthony. Hoboken, NJ, Wiley & Sons: 17-50.
- Stober, D. R. and A. Grant (2006). Evidence-based coaching handbook: putting best practices to work for your clients. Hoboken, NJ, Wiley & Sons.
- Swann, W. B., Brett W. (2005). The Truth About Illusions: Authenticity and Positivity in Social Relationships. The Positive Psychology Handbook. C. R. a. L. Snyder, Shane J. New York, Oxford Press: 366-381.

- Taylor, M. and D. Denis (2008). Gestalt. DYNAM 611 - Strategic Perspectives of Coaching. Philadelphia. Unpublished work.
- Tibbons, K. (1987). Pygmalion Effect: Managing the Power of Expectations. C. Learning, CRM Learning.
- Valerio, A. M. (2005). Executive Coaching : a guide for the HR professional. San Francisco, CA, Pfeiffer.
- Van Oudtshoorn, M. (2006). A Framework for Coaching. London, England, i-coachacademy.
- Van Oudtshoorn, M. (2006). Notes from class, June 19-21, 2006, iCoach Academy.
- Wilkinsky, W. (2006). Lectures: The Art and Science of Organizational Coaching. Philadelphia, The University of Pennsylvania: Class notes from lecture and discussion.
- Worldpress (2007). Maslow's Hierarchy of Motives (Graphic), Worldpress.

APPENDIX A: NOTES FROM DYNM 629 ON SYSTEMS THEORY



A chain is as strong as it's weakest link

Performance Chain

White water raft
 example - they supply all this + guide so you have "the experience" w/ some safety
 So you stay in "stretch" mode, get that energy w/o pain.

Factor in audience, stakeholders - who is impacted by the change? They must be considered when developing org. change.

Who is impacted on a personal level?
 What is the impact?
 What's the history?
 What is the story with the organization?

APPENDIX B: POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY ASSESSMENTS

The following assessments are available free, to anyone interested in their use, through the website supporting the Positive Psychology community, Authentic Happiness, at <http://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/Default.aspx>

Emotion Questionnaires:

- Authentic Happiness Inventory Questionnaire - Measures Overall Happiness
- CES-D Questionnaire - Measures Depression Symptoms
- Fordyce Emotions Questionnaire - Measures Current Happiness
- General Happiness Questionnaire - Assesses Enduring Happiness
- PANAS Questionnaire - Measures Positive and Negative Affect

Engagement Questionnaires:

- Brief Strengths Test - Measures 24 Character Strengths
- Gratitude Questionnaire - Measures Appreciation about the Past
- Grit Survey - Measures the Character Strength of Perseverance
- Optimism Test - Measures Optimism About the Future
- Transgression Motivations Questionnaire - Measures Forgiveness
- VIA Signature Strengths Questionnaire - Measures 24 Character Strengths**
- VIA Strength Survey for Children - Measures 24 Character Strengths for Children
- Work-Life Questionnaire - Measures Work-Life Satisfaction

Meaning Questionnaires:

- Close Relationships Questionnaire - Measures Attachment Style
- Meaning in Life Questionnaire - Measures Meaningfulness

Life Satisfaction Questionnaires:

- Approaches to Happiness Questionnaire - Measures Three Routes to Happiness
- Satisfaction with Life Scale - Measures Life Satisfaction

APPENDIX C: VIA CLASSIFICATION OF STRENGTHS AND VIRTUES

Strengths of Knowledge: Those related to acquiring and using new information.

1. Creativity
2. Curiosity
3. Love of learning
4. Perspective (wisdom)
5. Open-mindedness

Strengths of courage: Those related to maintaining willpower in the face of opposition.

6. Bravery
7. Persistence
8. Integrity
9. Vitality

Strengths of humanity: Those that center around relationships with others.

10. The capacity to love and receive love
11. Kindness
12. Social Intelligence

Strengths of justice: Those that support the best possible interaction among a group.

13. Citizenship
14. Fairness
15. Leadership

Strengths of temperance: Those that protect from excess.

16. Forgiveness/mercy
17. Modesty/humility
18. Prudence
19. Self-regulation

Strengths of transcendence: Those that form connections with a larger whole.

20. Appreciation of excellence and beauty
21. Gratitude
22. Hope
23. Humor
24. Spirituality

(Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007)

APPENDIX D: SAMPLE COACHING CONTRACT

The following sample contract was originally developed as part of studies in DYNM 641: The Art and Science of Organizational Coaching by University of Pennsylvania colleague and Professional Coach, Mary O'Connor. The original version of the agreement was used in a coach-client engagement.

This document has been modified by Deb Denis for use as part of applied Essential Coaching.

THE CONTRACT

This coaching contract between [client] and [coach] will detail the agreement between the parties for the execution of coaching services during the Coaching Project.

The agreement may be amended by either party at any time during the period as needs change with notification to the other party in writing so that it can be added as an addendum to the agreement.

Time Period

The coaching period will be from [start date] to [end date]. The parties will meet a minimum of once per week for a minimum of 30 minutes to a maximum of 1 hour per session, except when the parties decide that an extended session is required to complete work.

The coaching sessions will take place according to the schedule set forth below. The parties agree that all sessions will take place [in the evenings after regular working hours so that the parties can devote their focus to the coaching sessions, unobstructed by work demands, stress or emergencies] or [during standard working hours; specify time zone]. Consideration for weekends would be included here.

Coaching Schedule

Session	Week Of...	Date	Time	Location	Caller
Introduction					-----
Session 1				Office	Coach
Session 2				Phone	Client
Session 3				Etc.	Client
Session 4					Coach
Session 5					Client
Session 6					Coach
Session 7					Client
Session 8					Coach
Session 9					Client

The schedule may change according to work demands of the parties and each agree to notify the other in advance by phone or email should their session need to be rescheduled. The rescheduled session will take place during the same week as originally scheduled, except in the event that there is an emergency. In such a case, the parties may conduct more than one coaching session in a particular week to ensure that a total of at least [xx] coaching sessions are conducted. A week is defined as the period beginning on a Monday and ending on a Sunday.

Client Goal

The client has decided on a goal for [his/her] coaching sessions. The parties recognize that the goal may change over time as coaching progresses, and agree that this is acceptable. The beginning goal, to be known as the “original goal” is as follows.

[goal statement]

Over time, should the goal change, it will be known as the “emerging goal” and it will receive the full attention and focus of the parties, who expect that this will occur as the client formalizes his/her goal and clarifies his/her vision of what s/he wants her life to become.

The parties recognize and agree that the stated goal may not be achieved during the allotted time period covered by this agreement. It is agreed that the outcome will be a work in progress to proceed at a pace determined and directed by the client in accordance with his/her comfort zone and her ability to move outside it to experience change in his/her work and home life.

Preparation

The client agrees to complete a coaching prep form to the best of his/her ability and email it to the coach at least 4 hours in advance of each coaching session. The purpose of this form is to ensure the coaching sessions focus on topics of most importance to the client.

The client agrees to complete all homework accepted to the best of his/her ability. The coach will always provide the purpose of the homework to the client; the client may choose to accept the assignment or not. In some cases the client will create the homework for his/herself.

Metrics

The parties agree that they will employ a variety of metrics which will be selected and finalized from the list below and may include the following:

- Existing feedback (existing reviews, plans, feedback from boss and others, the Client Information Form) in order to establish a baseline and direct goal formation
- Direct behavioral observation – if appropriate for goal, the coach may observe the client in situations in order to provide feedback based on real-life observation of interpersonal dynamics.
- Completion of objective assessment instruments (LIFO®, other)
- 360 Feedback (interviews, questionnaires, surveys)
 - Direct reports
 - Boss
 - Peers
 - Clients
 - Others as determined important to goal

The client will provide the coach with her recommendations on the people who should be interviewed, given a questionnaire or both. After the parties agree, arrangements to interview or email a questionnaire to the persons involved will be made.

Interviews will take place beginning the week of [date] and will be completed by the week of [date]. Those persons who do not agree or do not respond to a request for an interview three times will be dropped from the list and a replacement named. Interviews will be no more than 60 minutes and can be as short as 20 minutes.

The same questions will be asked of each person. The list of questions will be finalized during Coaching Session #. Potential questions are below; the agreed-to list of questions may be sent to the interviewee in advance.

1. What three strengths does this person exhibit which should be maintained?
2. What specific behaviors would you have this individual change in order to improve his/her effectiveness?
3. If you were in his/her position of leadership, what recommendations would you make in order to improve the morale and/or productivity of his/her department?
4. What several pieces of advice do you believe this individual needs to hear but which others, for whatever reason, may be reluctant to tell him/her?
5. What 3 competencies could the client improve to:
 - Be more effective in his/her job?
 - Be promotable?
6. What are the client's 3 most positive qualities as a manager/employee/peer?
7. What 3 things could the client do to create a more positive work environment?
 - If "nothing," what 3 things has s/he done to create such an environment?
8. How does the client react under stress?

- How does that make you feel?
9. What kind of leader is the client?
- How effective is s/he?
10. How is the client at being led, acting on your directions / taking direction?
- How cooperative is s/he?
 - How is s/he at accomplishing the task or project?
11. How is the client to work with?
- What about his/her style causes you stress?
 - Talk about his/her ability as a team player.

Rules of Engagement

The project may include an Assessment by an Assessor and Supervision by a Master Coach. The Assessor will collect information to be used as a way to measure the success of the overall project for a specific period of time. No communication will take place without express written consent of the Client and final reports to the Company will focus on themes, not individual feedback. The Master Coach will be privy to summary data regarding the coach/client sessions for purposes of providing guidance and advice to the Coach.

Both the client and the coach will maintain confidentiality of the information discussed as part of the coaching sessions. The coach will never disclose to any third party any information learned from or about the client or the client's associates in the course of the coaching sessions without expressed written permission from the client. The coach will not criticize the client for any reason nor discuss any actions taken or not taken by the client with any third party.

The client will be sensitive to the nature of the coaching process and if unsatisfied with the coach, will discuss the nature of the dissatisfaction with the coach and a mutually

agreeable remedy will be sought. The client will not criticize the coach nor express displeasure to others so as not to harm the coach's reputation in the coaching community.

Fees For Service

Option 1: The overall contract for services is between the Company and The University of Pennsylvania.

Option 2: The client agrees that individual fees for the coaching service will be [xxx].

Ending the Client/Coaching Relationship

The client and coach will collaborate on a review of the coaching process to recap the results of the coaching sessions for the client. A plan of action will be drawn up so that the client will have implementable next steps after the coaching sessions end should s/he wish to pursue those items as a continuation of her goal should it not be achieved during the sessions.

Agreement

This agreement is freely entered into by the parties and each agrees to put forth their best effort to complete the coaching relationship to the best of their ability.

Coach:

Client:

APPENDIX E: CLIENT INFORMATION FORM

The Client Information Form has been adapted from Appreciative Coaching: A Positive Process for Change (Orem, Binkert & Clancy, 2007) and has been applied as part of the development of Essential Coaching.

CLIENT INFORMATION FORM FOR [CLIENT NAME]

Your History

- Describe your three greatest accomplishments to date.
- What made these accomplishments stand out for you?
- What have you incorporated into your current actions from your past accomplishments?
- How could you use what you've learned from these accomplishments to assist you in making future changes?
- What major transitions have you had in the past two years? (For example, new assignment, new residence, new relationship, etc.)
- If you worked with a coach before or a similar one-on-one adult relationship (for example, tennis coach, piano teacher, therapist) what worked well for you?
- If you have worked with a coach, and you are not currently, how did that relationship end?

Your Life

- Who are or have been your major role models?
- What attributes of these role models do you admire and want to emulate?
- What are the five most positive things in your life that would make it even more satisfying, effective, and joyful? (Examples include relationships, information, environment, job.)

- Who are the key supportive people in your life, and what do they provide for you?
- On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being least effective and 10 being most effective), rate the quality of your life. ____ By what criteria did you rate yourself?
- What percentage of the life you are leading is actually YOUR life?

Your Self Today

- List five adjectives that describe you at your best.
- What prevents you from being at your best?
- What energizes you?
- What saps your energy?
- What are you learning and accepting about yourself at present?
- In what ways do you currently spend time that if you were to spend it differently, would yield greater happiness and achievement?
- What do you consume now, that if you didn't, would allow you to be healthier? (For example, alcohol, caffeine, sugar.)
- Could therapy effectively resolve some issue in your life now?

Your Potential

- What is your personal and/or professional vision?
- What would you like to contribute to the world?
- What are you most wanting to achieve in the next three years?
- What are you most wanting to achieve in the next six months?
- How ready are you to go for it?
- Use the boxes below as thought starters for the goals above.

Family/Home	Relationships
Financial situation	Leisure time

Career or business	Self-care
Personal character	Learning

Making It Happen

- Why have you said “yes” to this coaching engagement?
- What are three immediate changes you can make to get you off to a good start in our coaching?
- How can I help you to be more effective in working toward your goals?
- Here are ways coaching clients work with me. Which of these appeal to you?

Select as many as apply.

- Brainstorming strategies together
 - Support, encouragement, and validation
 - Insight into who you are and your potential
 - Painting a vision of what you can become or accomplish
 - Exploring possibilities and building on past success
 - Accountability; checking up on goals
 - Suggesting or designing action steps that lead to greater effectiveness and joy
- What approaches to change have you found less effective for you?
 - What responsibility do you have for ensuring that our relationship works well?
 - How will you know that your coaching experience has been effective?

APPENDIX F: COACHING PREP FORM

The author would like to acknowledge the contributions of University of Pennsylvania colleague and Professional Coach, Mary O'Connor, to the improvement of this form⁵.

Coaching Prep Form

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What have I accomplished since our last call? (What are my Wins!) What are my insights or 'aha's'?
2. What didn't get done, but I want to be held accountable for?
3. What am I grateful / thankful for? These are the little things (and sometimes big things) that we often overlook, i.e., good health, vacation time, lunch with people we care about, getting "the good project at work".
4. What do I want to get out of the call today? What are the challenges, concerns, achievements, insights, opportunities or areas of learning to be addressed?
5. What are my action steps, between now and our next call?
6. Other topics I want to talk about are: Anything else?

APPENDIX G: KEY POINTS OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY COACHING

The Following is an outline of the foundations, key points and tips for positive psychology coaches. Source: Positive Psychology Coaching: Putting the Science of Happiness to Work for Your Clients (Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007)

FOUNDTION I: HAPPINESS AND POSITIVITY

Happiness: The Goal We Rarely Talk About

- Point 1: Happiness is beneficial. Happy people live longer, stay married longer, make more money, receive better evaluations from work supervisors, take fewer sick days, are more altruistic, and more creative.
- Point 2: Very happy people have better health habits, effectively tend to their relationships, and use healthy thinking styles.
- Point 3: Happiness research is nonobvious. Happiness can be measured and studied scientifically, and the results of happiness studies are often counterintuitive.
- Point 4: Happiness is the experience of frequent, mildly pleasant emotions, the relative absence of unpleasant feelings, and a general feeling of satisfaction with one's life.
- Point 5: Happiness is functional. Individuals, families, organizations, and societies need happy individuals to flourish. Happy people are more likely to be curious and explore, to take risks, and to seek new relationships.
- Point 6: People adapt back to a mildly pleasant mood from both good and bad events. This means we should not expect intense happiness all of the time, and we should expect to recover from hardship and difficulty.
- Point 7: Although there is a strong genetic component to happiness, having meaning in life and good social relationships also contribute to our subjective well-being.

Choosing Happiness: Goals, Relationships, and Positive Thinking

- *TIP 1: Coaches and clients can measure if goals are realistic by evaluating client resources and determining whether these are relevant to the goal at hand.*
- Point 1: Approach goals promote well-being while avoidant goals can detract from happiness.
- Point 2: Certain goals, such as those related to intimacy, spirituality, and generativity, lead to happiness while others, such as power-related goals, do not.
- Point 3: Goals that are chosen because they are inherently satisfying are more likely to have a larger payoff, in terms of happiness, than those that are chosen because they serve the needs of others.
- *TIP 2: Extrinsic goals are often viewed as resources by which one can achieve desirable outcomes. It is possible to use a “goal chain” with clients to look at ways to achieve these same outcomes through intrinsically motivated goals.*
- Point 4: It is natural, and even helpful, for clients to experience mild anxiety around their most dearly held goals.

Solid Happiness Interventions

- *Tip 1: Study your marketplace. What is the language your clients use to describe their own challenges and solutions? Tailor the language of your sales pitches and interventions to words and concepts that will appeal to your clients.*
- *Tip 2: You can use the research on the benefits of positive emotion to help sell your services. You can highlight the fact that happiness leads to greater health and income, as well as a host of work-related benefits such as taking fewer sick days and receiving higher customer ratings.*
- *Tip 3: Beware of the temptation to focus on changing your life circumstances to enhance happiness. Typically, changing circumstances requires a heavy investment of resources with no guarantee of success, and results in little net*

happiness. Instead, help your clients focus on small, everyday activities in their pursuit of happiness.

FOUNDATION II: CHARACTER STRENGTHS

Strengths Coaching

- Point 1: Research shows that, in many cases, building on strengths is more effective than trying to improve weaknesses.
- Point 2: Strengths are personally and mutually beneficial, and are valued in their own right.
- Point 3: Although there is widespread agreement about which strengths are viewed as desirable, not everyone is equally comfortable talking about personal strengths. Positive psychology coaches need to create a safe environment in which discussions of strengths can occur.
- Point 4: Using character strengths not only makes an individual more effective, it has a positive effect on others.

Coaching to Personal Strengths

Personal Query: How balanced is your time orientation? How much time do you spend in the present moment, versus walking down memory lane or planning for the future? How does your particular balance help or hinder you?

- Point 1: Whether or not savoring comes naturally to your client, you rest easy knowing that there are several types of savoring, and many ways to engage in this activity. If one intervention doesn't work, keep trying others.
- Point 2: Successful savoring can be a matter of setting the stage appropriately. Taking time out from hectic daily life and being open to new ways of looking at the world are two great preconditions for savoring.
- Point 3: When clients notice that others around them have enjoyed more success, you can use it as an opportunity for inspiration. You can ask your clients about

times that the success of others has moved and motivated them. You can also study the actions and qualities of successful people as a wellspring of ideas.

- Point 4: Most people think about optimism as being a favorable attitude toward the future. Another way to look at it is that optimism is about having a favorable attitude toward yourself and believing that you can and will be successful in the future.
- Point 5: For many people, scaling back on effort is preferable to giving up a goal completely. However, this strategy rarely leads to success. Instead, it might be more fruitful to replace the old goal with one more worthy of full effort.

Coaching to Social Strengths

- Point 1: Mere exposure to a cultural message of success, positivity, and self-esteem can raise your clients' spirits and confidence.
- Point 2: There are two types of social strengths: Strengths that build relationships and those that build communities.

Helping Clients Craft the Perfect Job

- Point 1: The way people relate to their work is important. People in a wide range of occupations think about their work as jobs, careers, or callings.
- Point 2: People with a calling orientation are more satisfied with their lives and work.
- Point 3: People, especially those with a calling orientation, make their work more meaningful by modifying their tasks and relationships on the job.

NOTES

¹ The framework and model were presented to and reviewed by University of Pennsylvania professors who taught coaching: Dr. William Wilkinsy and Dr. Charline Russo, as well as fifteen coaching graduate studies students.

² The Authenticity Retreat run by Gestalt-trained partners in Corporate Hope. The conference objectives: to identify core values to one's life and work.

³ Gallup study of 198,000 people in 7,939 business units within 36 companies and Gallup database of >1.7million people in 101 companies from 63 countries.

⁴ The author wishes to acknowledge Linda DeLuca for this recommended modification.

⁵ I would like to acknowledge the contributions of Mary O'Connor to the improvement of this form, as well as Julie Fuimano, the original creator of the questions for use in coaching (Fuimano, 2006).