

COACHING for **Transformation**

SECOND EDITION

Pathways to Ignite
Personal & Social Change

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Coaching for Transformation: Pathways to Ignite Personal & Social Change

Second Edition

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Section I: Getting Started

*I will not die an unlived life.
I will not live in fear
of falling or catching fire.
I choose to inhabit my days,
to allow my living to open me,
to make me less afraid,
more accessible;
to loosen my heart
until it becomes a wing,
a torch, a promise.
I choose to risk my significance,
to live so that which came to me as seed
goes to the next as blossom,
and that which came to me as blossom,
goes on as fruit. —Dawna Markova*

Welcome to the world of coaching! Even if you've been coaching for years, the journey of becoming a professional coach holds both promise and uncertainty about the unknown. We invite you into the mystery of this new path knowing that both your life and the lives of others will change as a result.

Section I orients you to the foundation of Coaching for Transformation—the approach, core principles and process, building relationships with clients, and developing the core skills for truly effective coaching. May your journey be richly rewarding—for you and for those whose lives you touch.

1

Welcome to Coaching

Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life? —Mary Oliver

TOPICS

Welcome
 What is Coaching?
 What is Transformation?
 Leadership that Works
 Core Principles
 Coaching for Transformation Process
 Three Levels of Coaching
 Core Competencies

Welcome

Whether you choose to establish a coaching practice, integrate coaching into your current profession, or use coaching skills to enhance your interpersonal relationships or for social justice, welcome to this transformational journey. As you step into coaching, you create sacred relationships with people that take them to the core of their being. These relationships are the foundation for their discovery of who they are, what they want and how they contribute to their family, workplace, community and the world. Coaching invites people to take action that reflects their power, creativity and authenticity.

The journey of coaching takes you deep into your heart and far out into the world. As you support transformation in others, you awaken your own inner transformational process.

In Chapter 1, we explore the foundation of coaching and the Coaching for Transformation process. In this orientation we look at definitions, guidelines, core principles and coaching competencies, and introduce how coaching can make our world a better place.

What is Coaching?

Coaching emerged as a way to provide support and guidance for individuals moving through a change process toward greater effectiveness and fulfillment. Coaching is part of the cultural shift from a pathology worldview to a resourceful worldview. In the pathology worldview, problems are identified, evaluated, and solutions are implemented, usually by outside experts. In contrast, coaches work with people from a resourceful point of view—collaborating to explore

opportunities and identify resources to create an exciting future based on awareness, choice and action. Coaching is world-changing, as well as life-changing work.

Although coaching is a fast-growing profession, many people confuse coaching with giving people advice. In practice, coaching is an empowering process where the coach asks rigorous questions and provides sacred space so people can discover their own creative solutions.

Coaching is a partnership that maximizes human potential. We define coaching as a skillset and a mindset that taps into the resourcefulness of people to initiate creative solutions. We can create coaching partnerships with individuals, groups, organizations or communities.

As coaches, we are trained to listen, observe and ask empowering questions. We reflect what we see and hear to help people clarify their feelings and values, leading to insight and action. We customize our approach based on the individual's, organization's or community's challenges, experiences, cultural norms, values and knowledge. We trust that our partners are resourceful and that they have the inner wisdom to overcome obstacles and generate compelling strategies and action plans. Our job is to provide support to enhance the skills, resources and creativity they already have. In addition, Coaching for Transformation is a holistic coaching process that combines awareness of body, mind, soul and spirit. We delve into the impact of cultural identity, power and privilege, and institutionalized inequities to support deep, lasting and real transformation.

Coaching helps people articulate their vision, identify their needs and core values, bring their inner and outer worlds into alignment, set goals they feel passionate about and create a plan for their own development. Coaching provides a structure to continuously reflect and capture learning, and take that new learning directly into action. Through the coaching partnership, people can build capacity, expand possibilities and achieve greater fulfillment and success while staying on track with their objectives.

How does coaching differ from other helping professions?

Coaching is not mentoring, consulting, training, psychotherapy or counseling. While coaching shares the end goals of learning and growth with these professions, the focus and process of coaching differ in significant ways.

Therapy (psychotherapy or counseling) frequently focuses on the past and healing—assisting clients in healing psychological problems such as depression, anxiety, phobia, trauma, destructive behaviors and addiction. Coaches are not trained to heal psychological problems and make referrals to therapists when warranted. Instead of analyzing the past, coaching looks forward to create a deeper engagement with the present and a more desirable future. Coaching is primarily for expanding awareness and designing actions that move people toward the fulfillment of their life purpose, dreams and goals. Although coaching is not therapy, coaching can be a very healing process.

Consulting typically focuses on developing the whole organization systemically. Consultants work with senior leaders providing expertise and interventions to develop leadership skills,

strategies, structures, policies and procedures to improve the effectiveness of the organization. Consultants are usually hired to address specific problems, design interventions and offer solutions. In contrast, coaches support staff in discovering and creating their own solutions. Many consultants offer coaching as part of their services or integrate a 'coach approach' into their consulting.

Training and **teaching** are professions in which knowledge is imparted to support learning. Rather than teaching how to do something, coaches support and challenge people to access their own inner and outer learning resources.

What is Transformation?

You can think of the kind of transformation described here as drawing new water out of your old well—by going deeper than you ever dipped before. The way to get your bucket deeper into your well is by taking on powerful questions, instead of jumping at attractive-looking answers. —John Scherer

Humans have the potential and deep desire to learn, grow and evolve. Transformation is a process of profound and radical change that arises from deep awareness and leads to fresh orientation and new direction. Transformation honors what is, while reaching deep within us to find what is emerging—the birthing of something brand new. Instead of denying the past or the present, the transformational process cradles or embraces our life force. Coaches act as midwives to the birthing process—the creation of something new and exciting.

Transformation happens when people are deeply seen, heard, understood and recognized for their gifts. Ironically, when we try to change people, they resist. In contrast, coaching helps people become more of who they already are. Simply witnessing the process and being fully present has a transformational impact.

In holistic coaching we create an essence-to-essence relationship of reciprocity. We look for and bring out the client's essence and, at the same time, bring our own essence to the relationship. In this essence-to-essence relationship, both coach and client experience transformation. The coach is transformed just by witnessing the powerful shifts in the client. Naming what is happening in the moment on a physical, emotional and energetic level amplifies the transformation. Naming the impact the client has on the coach can serve as a source of inspiration.

Transformation is the change that happens within to bring people into greater alignment. For example, a young father wants to honor his values of family and responsibility, and at the same time he wants freedom. The exploration leads to transformation and a new way of being in the world. Transformation nearly always involves a change in pattern, be it a pattern of thinking or a pattern of behavior. Instead of looking for the big "aha" moment, we notice that transformation can happen in any moment.

Leadership that Works

Leadership that Works began offering coaching and training programs to visionary leaders in 1997. The Coaching for Transformation process, developed by the partners at Leadership that Works, stands on the shoulders of the human development field, psychology, soul work from indigenous cultures and philosophies of the East. We are committed to building awareness of cultural norms, power, privilege and social inequities. On the cutting edge of the expanding profession of coaching, we integrate the heart and mystery of transformation with the practical world of tools, skills and results. As part of our mission, we help people awaken their gifts and access inner wisdom in service of individual and global transformation.

Deep awareness of emotions and needs

Lasting, sustainable change is rooted in deep awareness. Traditionally, most coaching models focus on helping people achieve their goals by taking action. Often the change is temporary. The Coaching for Transformation process helps people break through limiting beliefs, become aware of the wisdom of their bodies, identify their emotions and understand their needs and values. From that grounded, centered place of deep awareness, people can develop strategies and take actions that honor their values. The coach's deep empathic presence does more to facilitate transformation than pushing people toward end-goals. By developing a fierce heart connection, we prioritize depth of awareness before moving into action.

Holistic—body, mind, soul and spirit

Our holistic approach combines awareness of body, mind, soul and spirit with solid coaching skills. As we exercise the right and left brain, we integrate the heart, mind and body with logic and the mystery of transformation.

Cultural awareness and commitment

We are committed to changing the demographics of the coaching profession by making coaching available to diverse communities. We actively seek faculty with deep roots in multicultural competencies and participants that represent many different communities and backgrounds. We look for creative ways to bring coaching to people who traditionally don't have access to coaching—the social sector, communities of color, LGBTQQ and more.

The coach's stand

We take a stand for deep, transformative coaching. As we replace rote, predictable coaching with coaching that comes from listening for what is beneath the surface, we respond with clarity, energy and boldness.

By developing our own personalized coach's stand, we can step into a powerful way of being that mobilizes transformation. The coach's stand is a set of physical, visual and spiritual practices and commitments that a coach embodies in order to make each coaching moment, session and relationship more powerful. Together, the practices create an orientation that allows us to effectively call out our clients' power. By taking risks and following our intuition about what we sense is possible, we hold a vision for clients that is larger than what they have been able to see on their own. This calls clients into being whole, humane, loving and powerful.

Focus on transformation for the client as well as the coach

Although we hold the focus on the transformation of people we coach, the coach's life is also transformed by the process and there is no going back to a mediocre life.

Values

At Leadership that Works, we build relationships and make decisions based on our core values. We draw inspiration from these guiding principles that are reflected through daily interactions within the organization and with students, clients, partners and communities.

Heart Connection—We believe our human capacity for empathy and compassion builds trust, cultivates authentic and meaningful relationships, and empowers collaboration. We are committed to creating space for every part of every one of us. We believe in the power of love and generosity to support, challenge, respect and inspire each other.

Social Change—We take a stand for social, economic and environmental justice. We believe that each of us represents a complex mix of lived experiences, social identities, spiritual traditions and cultural backgrounds. We are committed to practicing cultural humility, and to authentically exploring issues of power, privilege and rank within ourselves and our communities, within our institutions and societal systems.

Integrity—We strive for excellence in everything we do, from innovative leadership programs to inclusive organizational practices grounded in accountability. We are committed to earning and sustaining trust with all our stakeholders and communities. We create and deliver rigorous learning experiences that impact human evolution.

Collaboration—We believe that working together unlocks greater potential than we can achieve on our own. Creating conscious relationships and teams encourages each of us to make a uniquely powerful contribution. We enthusiastically partner with other entities in order to expand our collective knowledge and ignite synergy.

Innovation—We embrace our existing wisdom, curiosity and entrepreneurial spirit to explore realms of possibility and to identify natural openings and real-time opportunities. We are committed to cultivating wildly creative and supportive spaces that invite us to play at, and go beyond, our edges. We celebrate our successes as well as our failures in service of our collective learning.

Core Principles

The foundation of holistic coaching is built on our beliefs about human beings and the coaching process. These beliefs form the core of effective communication, impacting the relationships we build, the level of trust that develops and the client's willingness to share vulnerably. Our beliefs permeate our body language, energy and the signals we send while coaching. When we internally integrate these beliefs, or core principles, we can create even more powerful relationships based on all that is possible.

1. People are whole, and simultaneously moving toward a fuller experience of their wholeness.
2. People are inherently resourceful and wise.
3. Honoring the full diversity of experience expands awareness.
4. People have the freedom to choose how they respond.
5. Much more is possible than any of us can imagine.

The core principles help us create the container for powerful and transformational coaching relationships. We can share the core principles with clients because these powerful foundational beliefs about life can build authentic connection.

WHOLENESS: People are whole, and simultaneously moving toward a fuller experience of their wholeness.

Consider the power of being in relationship from a place of wholeness, honoring all that is present, while holding the space for all that is yet to be born. The pathology worldview focuses on what's wrong or needs improvement, creating comparisons and images of brokenness. Seeing people as whole shifts the paradigm to one of reverence and respect, setting the foundation for a powerful, resourceful partnership.

Example:

Mai was told she was too shy and soft-spoken to be a strong leader. Her coach worked with her to understand what positive intent drives her behavior. Mai realized she didn't have to be loud and out-going to lead well; she just needed more confidence. She developed her unique ability to develop people and foster effective leadership in the organization.

DIVERSITY: Honoring the full diversity of experience deepens awareness.

When we support people to embrace the fullness of their life, including their cultural experience, we help them honor and integrate all parts of themselves. This leads to deeper awareness as they notice what's important across the spectrum of their inner and outer world. The more aspects of ourselves that we acknowledge and accept, the more accepting we are of diversity in the external world.

Example:

Ashanti wanted to change her profession. She dreamt of healing the trauma of internalized oppression. She was torn between her passion for making a difference and her fear of losing the security of her stable job. Her coach helped her savor both parts of herself fully. In that space she created an action plan, based on embracing two important values—contribution and security.

RESOURCEFULNESS: People are inherently resourceful and wise.

Trusting that our clients are wise and resourceful allows us to remain curious and hold space for what is emerging. We support them in tapping into a deep well of resourcefulness that connects them with new insights, creativity and action.

Example:

Johan has a long-term belief that he is “not good with people.” His coach gets curious about this belief and Johan realizes he tells himself this often to prevent criticism. But deep down he has a strong desire to have great relationships. He decides to journal all the times he is “good with people,” and begins to discover that he listens fully, supports his friends and helps colleagues grow.

FREEDOM: People have the freedom to choose how they respond.

When we remember that clients have the freedom to choose their response to circumstances in their lives, we free ourselves from judgment and from taking responsibility for them. We acknowledge their life experiences, honor their choices and create a space where powerful, respectful connection and cultural humility exist between us.

Example:

Liv frequently used words like, “I must, I should, I have to...” so her coach asked her to rephrase her sentences starting with, “I choose to...”

POSSIBILITY: Much more is possible than any of us can imagine.

The beauty and mystery of the transformative process is that neither the coach nor the client can imagine all that’s possible. The journey has no fixed destination, but holds great promise and rich rewards. As coaches, when we remain open and curious, we have greater access to our right brain, our intuition and extraordinary solutions. Far more is possible than any of us realize.

Example:

Rose said, “With the glass ceiling here, I have no options,” so her coach asked her to brainstorm all the options that seemed impossible. Quickly she realized that items on her “impossible” list actually were possible and she began to see new options for action.

Coaching for Transformation Process

We create sacred coaching relationships that take people to the core of their being. These relationships form the foundation for their discovery of who they are, what they want and how they want to contribute to the world.

Coaching for Transformation is a dynamic process, where we bring our full curiosity, compassion and courage to the coaching relationship. Yet our primary focus is on the person being coached. Whatever clients bring, whether a question, a dream or a desire, we support them to move into awareness, alignment and action.

Coach

The coach cultivates uncompromising presence by bringing these three qualities to every coaching session:

Curiosity—the opposite of judgment, curiosity invites us to accept all that is and explore the unknown. Every judgment, whether directed at ourselves or our client, has a built-in antidote—curiosity. With the curiosity of a child, we can awaken playfulness, joyfulness and creativity.



Coaching for Transformation Process

Compassion—empathic connection unlocks the heart because people are seen, heard and deeply understood. If we notice resistance, we can consciously choose to put our attention on our compassion. When we open our hearts, our clients open theirs.

Courage—bold, authentic communication helps us build trusting relationships. Courage supports clarity and can include trusting our intuition, being transparent, accessing spiritual guidance and supporting cultural consciousness. We sense what is missing and bring in our voice to explore what is emerging. Courage means coming from the heart even when feeling fear.

To engage in a mutually empowering relationship, coaches need a strong inner foundation. We enter our inner relationship to own, heal and transform our inner world. To create intimacy with people we coach, we first need to create space for self-intimacy. When we put attention on our

inner landscape, we can access an empowering inner freedom which we carry into the coaching relationship. As we cultivate mindfulness, we connect deeply to the life force in ourselves and in our clients.

Client

The word “client” refers to the person receiving coaching and can be someone who hires us as a coach, or someone in our organization or community. We can coach our boss, our peers and our direct reports. The coaching relationship is infused with equality and possibility. We support the client to develop presence by focusing on:

Awareness—tuning into whatever is present. Mindfulness leads to sparks of insight and awakens clients to their own inherent wisdom and inner clarity. We support the client to become more grounded, reflective and conscious.

Alignment—finding congruence between the inner and outer experience. Putting attention on aliveness and radiance supports convergence of different aspects of the self, including body, mind and spirit. The sense of “coming home” to oneself awakens vitality and full engagement.

Action—purposefully moving forward. Creative action that arises from awareness and alignment has beauty and power. By connecting with the heart we enliven the process of exploring options, planning action steps and building in accountability.

The client determines the desired outcomes for each coaching session. The possibilities are endless. As we hold their agenda, we also hold the intention for the client to deepen their awareness, move toward alignment and step into action. Creating space for reflection gives clients access to their inner-knowing. As they move toward new insights and deeper learning, we support integration, which allows them to consciously receive, savor and build upon their wisdom. When actions arise from that place of self-connection, their goals manifest more easily.¹

The coaching relationship

Connection comes first. Nothing happens without connection. Fierce love and unconditional support build trust and a flourishing relationship. The coach and client share power equally. This relationship is a space for experimentation, alchemy and human evolution. In the deeply connecting space of the coaching relationship, intuition blossoms for both the client and the coach.

Transformation for both the client and the coach

The coach never stops listening for transformation. One of the ways to accentuate what’s emerging in the client is for the coach to simultaneously track the transformational processes in the coach’s inner world. Honoring the transformational process of the client awakens transformational possibilities in the coach. In every moment, transformation is possible for both the client and the coach. Even more broadly, the ripple effect of transformation impacts all the systems the client and coach touch. Both parties expand their capacity to hold space for transformation that goes way beyond the coaching relationship.

¹ The client side of the CFT model, “awareness, alignment, action” was coined by Vikram Bhatt, which inspired a group of CFT faculty to collaborate to develop the coach side of the model, “curiosity, compassion, courage”. Graphic design by Charlotte Morse.

The Three Levels of Coaching

At Leadership that Works, we support three levels of coaching:

Level One coaching supports transformation at the *personal level*.

- Creating a healthy relationship with self
- Honoring internal wisdom and trusting intuition
- Moving from awareness to alignment to action

Level Two coaching supports transformation at both the personal and the *interpersonal level*.

- Deepening conversations
- Supporting connection and collaboration
- Creating conscious relationships that serve

Level Three coaching supports transformation at the personal, interpersonal and the *collective level*.

- Honoring the spiritual dimension
- Creating transformation in communities and organizations
- Supporting systemic change that leads to social justice

Core Competencies

The International Coach Federation (ICF) is the leading credentialing agency for coaches around the globe. The Coaching for Transformation program is an ICF Accredited Coach Training Program (ACTP). The ICF core competencies are outlined below and detailed in Appendix II. These competencies form the heart of the ICF credentialing process.

A. Setting the foundation

- Meeting ethical guidelines and professional standards
- Establishing the coaching agreement

B. Co-creating the relationship

- Establishing trust and intimacy with the client
- Coaching presence

C. Communicating effectively

- Active listening
- Powerful questioning
- Direct communication

D. Facilitating learning and results

Creating awareness

Designing actions

Planning and goal setting

Managing progress and accountability²

COACHING *in Action* | **The Power of Coaching** by Rob McGowan

I am super shy, so I was nervous about Damon coaching me with 30 people watching, but my relationship with Damon spans some years. We're both social justice organizers and we really connect as fathers of sons who had some health challenges. My middle son passed away from brain cancer. We've had some profound conversations about our sons. As black men, we know our children are in danger. They are here today and can be gone tomorrow.

Already connected, we started the coaching session by jumping into a deep intimate issue around being a father, being a black man and what that means. I'm 6'1" tall, dark skinned, and grew up in Alabama. My mom drilled into me how to act, because anything perceived as a threat could cost me my life. She wanted to protect me and I felt the same about my sons.

Damon got me to talk about what was most important to me—the spiritual and mental health of my black sons who at any moment could be taken away. When my oldest son graduated from high school, I felt I hadn't had the conversations I'd wanted to have before he went off to college. I had missed a lot because I'd spent 10 years mismanaging the balance of my personal and professional life in the social justice movement. Little things, little conversations that were not had. I wanted my relationship with my youngest son to be different.

Damon said to me, "You say these things are important to you, I believe they are important to you, but what have you done to make time with your family, time with your son, time with yourself?" I was blown away because in social justice work we don't

do that enough. I couldn't continue to lie to myself about my good intentions, because there was no action. I had to take a hard look in the mirror.

That coaching session was deep and transformative for me. He helped me re-focus on things that are important. Ever since my son transitioned, I've wanted to start a foundation, but hadn't. I started the foundation for my son, because Damon said, "When are you going to get the paperwork done? Give me some dates. When will you have the conversations?" We set some deadlines and he asked me to check in with him, and when I did, a lot had changed.

I started looking at my health, losing weight and spending more time with my son. Because of coaching, my whole life changed. When my youngest son wants to talk to me, he gets my attention. I'm more involved in his life. I've made changes with my oldest son also. Our conversations are more focused... more present in the moment. The same is true with my wife and my friendships.

Amazing things were put in motion. Once I earnestly committed to the people and things that really mattered in my life, the universe got out of my way. Many things fell in place, because I let go of the grind and focused on my real desires. It's a tough journey for black men in the United States. I care about my son's safety. I can't prepare him for this world if I'm not around. There is no part of my life that hasn't improved. Later, I encouraged my wife to participate in an introductory coaching course and the afternoon that she finished, we had the most transformative conversation in 17½ years of marriage.

2 International Coach Federation. Retrieved from <http://www.coachfederation.org>

Beginning the Journey

The Coaching for Transformation core values, principles, process and levels of coaching form the foundation for the coaching skills, pathways to alignment and opportunities we explore throughout this book. Whether you are new to coaching or a seasoned coach deepening your skill set, you are part of a community of people doing life-changing and world-changing work. We are honored to be on the journey with you!