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- **Raising awareness through coaching**
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Introduction

Coaching as a professional service has its ethics, regulation and boundaries. As coaches' values are our moral compass and ethics which we learn and take from the professional bodies as well as the dilemmas we face together; guide us through our work to make sure we provide to the clients best interest. However, this also contributes to the development of the coaches progress.

Coaching and other helping systems like mentoring, counselling have a standard method of assisting people to change. What exactly do people want to change? It is mostly their actions and behaviours. In order to achieve these goals, it is worth investigating how behaviours are shaped psychologically and why it is necessary to increase self-awareness prior to any changes that coaching may make.

Coaching values, like honesty, confidentiality underlies in the centre of any coaching activity. This article reviews critically about integrity as one of the them

Analysis of either the legal, ethical or diversity implications of coaching;

Ethics are termed and defined differently by many authors and academics, but it is mostly seen as the “science of morality”(Passmore, 2016) it is referred to as the judgments made regarding what is believed to be right and wrong between people. Furthermore, it is seen as an intellectual thought process which shapes an individual's perspective of what is right or wrong. These moral principles, in essence, govern a person's behaviour or conduct and ultimately determines the decisions they make as to what is right or wrong (Iordanou, Hawley and Iordanou, 2017). In coaching the decision-making process should be guided by an ethical process with underlying values held by that coach. Coaching even though may be seen as a profession it isn't in the same category as a medical doctor for example, therefore not scrutinized or regulated as rigorously. There are professional frameworks and regulatory associations which can be joined to ensure that as a coach you adhere to a code of conduct or ethics agreed on by that particular association, for example, the Association of coaching in the UK (Iordanou, Hawley and Iordanou, 2017).

One study by Frances T. Hannafey states that recent analysis to comprehend the professional ethical standards for executive coaching shows its inadequate given that coaching can be a unique and diverse profession which has a variety of approaches and applied in different cultures, settings and organizations Hannafey and Vitulano, 2012). Equally, there are many regulatory bodies and

associations with codes of conduct that are well known, respected and adhered to, examples of these will be discussed later.

One of the biggest challenges facing a coach is related to confidentiality and being clear about the terms of the contract. Who is the coachee? Are there any third parties involved such as the organisation paying the coach to coach an executive; who will ultimately work for the success of that particular organization. The challenge here is related to loyalty, confidentiality and discretion what would ethics dictate in this situation? If the employee shows a desire to leave this company how does a coach respond in this situation? This is the type of challenge that may arise in an executive coaching environment, and it will be up to the coach's morals, ethics and terms of contract how they deal with this information (Peltier, 2011).

The Global code of ethics (GCoE) for coaches, mentors and supervisors clearly sets out guidance for the mentioned professions. This is to maintain and promote good practice and to ensure adherence to the professional charter set out for coaching which is drafted in accordance with European law. The code even though thorough and includes the five major signatories related to coaching in Europe; it is not a legally binding document. It provides guidelines, expected behaviour, development and growth of the profession; serves as a guide to practising but not necessarily registered professional coaches and mentors and finally served as a guide in any complaint or disciplinary matters (Associationforcoaching.com, 2018). Apart from the GCoE there are organisations worldwide which have their own codes of conduct or regulations, these are namely the Africa Board for coaching consulting and coaching psychology ABCCCP, Association for coaching AC, association for professional executive coaching and supervision APECS, European mentoring and coaching council EMCC, international association of coaching IAC, international coach federation ICF and worldwide association of business coaches WABC. Becoming a member of any these organisations enhances the practitioner's credibility as they have to adhere to regulations and therefore as a coach you are accountable and abide by the ethics set out.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into practice in May 2018; it is the most significant change to the data protection law in 20 years, it will apply to any business operating in Europe which holds personal information. It aims to change the simple box-ticking exercise companies were required to do to comply with data protection procedures, this will ensure informed data collection and adequate storing procedures. There are ten key points to the GDPR.

It is seen to have a broader geographic scope so companies doing business with EU residents must comply. The Data Protection Authorities can now enforce more severe penalties for breaches by companies, and there is a tiered approach to fines under the new GDPR, and serious violations due to consent for are 4% of annual global turnover or €20 million or whichever is more significant. The personal data definition has now been widened to include IP addresses and mobile device identity. Consent needs to be explicitly taken before processing an individual's data. Data encryption and protection will become mandatory. Data processing registers have become mandatory this means organisations will need to keep written electronic records of personal data processing procedures. Where privacy that has existed as part of the concept it has now become a

legal requirement it means the system has data protection by design right from the onset General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, 2018)

As an organization is dedicated to by rules and regulations, set out in frameworks a coach needs to self-regulate and be mindfully ethical while coaching. The coach needs to be self-aware and cautious, as claimed by Passmore *“most coaches are in most cases ethical pluralists, who hold a few solid principles, but for most of what they do they consider the circumstances of the situation and consider the motives and situations of the characters involved to help them reach a decision about the course of action to follow”* (Passmore, 2016, cited by Iordanou, Hawley and Iordanou, 2017,p. 20)

The behaviour of a coach is their own responsibility ethical dilemmas will arise as stated previously due to the uniqueness of coaching and its diverse applications. Dilemmas are likely to appear and they are moments in which a coach can develop due to how they react and deal with these dilemmas. Alertness and an appropriate amount of worry will show self-awareness, commitment and professional maturity. Ethical decisions involve thinking about what is wrong or right, personal values tend to guide the behaviour chosen to deal with the situation, in coaching specifically ethical standards of professional practice are self-imposed, not obligatory, yet most coaches will comply with the several ethical codes provided by the various bodies. They do not ensure excellence as they do not outline the solutions to all the problems which can be encountered. Encountering these dilemmas and conscious reflection is the best way to develop a maturity which will help deal with ethical dilemmas in the future (Iordanou, Hawley and Iordanou, 2017)

Explain the purpose and process of raising client awareness through coaching

While awareness means knowing what is happening around you, self-awareness concentrates on the understanding of what you are experiencing. Awareness leads to choices that were hidden before (Whitmore, 2017).

A recent study published by Harvard Business Review which uses 800 existing scientific studies about self-awareness and interview with thousands of people shows that there are a lot of myths and misunderstanding around the subject; Even though most people believe they are self-aware, only 10-15% of the people they studied actually fit the criteria. She clarifies her definition by pointing out that self-awareness(SA) consists of two elements: internal SA and external SA.

Internal SA means being aware of our own values, passions, aspirations, fit with our environment, reactions (including thoughts, feelings, behaviours, strengths and weaknesses), and impact on others. external SA means understanding how other people view us (Eurich, 2018, p.4)

This awareness contains the patterns of thinking, our values and investigating their validity for the current time. The reason that this self-awareness is so crucial in the coaching system is that it helps people to see a new horizon of choices which is an outstanding outcome.

In the similar description, Self-awareness is being conscious of everything that goes on inside client or coach, covering sensations, feelings, memories, experiences and so on (Williams and Thomas, 2005, p.31). By increasing awareness to the present moment, the coachee will be able to find out how his past is repeating in the present, this knowledge and cognition can lead to behavioural change (Cox, Bachkirova and Clutterbuck, 2014, p.86).

By raising self-awareness, some authors claim that clients can use that knowledge to generate almost any outcome (Williams and Thomas, 2005, p32) which is an overestimation but it shows how necessary the knowledge of inside is.

In the work environment, "Research suggests that when we see ourselves clearly, we are more confident and more creative. We make sounder decisions, build stronger relationships, and communicate more effectively. We're less likely to lie, cheat, and steal"(Eurich, 2018, p.1)

A coach helps the individual or team to become more curious and interested in his current pattern by different methods like reflecting back, feedback, using creative instruments like showing some postcards to the coachee to describe himself and dominantly by asking the right questions. Questions are around "what" and "how" rather than "why" which is risky in that it will raise a judgmental perspective

A more practical question could be "what are you going to do now?"; "how do you want to finish this project?"; "whom do you prefer to start with?". Using "how" and "what" rather than "why" as "why" will interfere with increasing his awareness. "why" is a surprisingly ineffective self-awareness question, Eurich says (2018)

Changing behaviours without considering significant underlying factors prior to action, could lead to the failure of establishing long-standing change. These factors, similar to the steps of a ladder are multiple. Giving a brief review of the relevant academic literature indicate to the sort of phenomes that lead to actual actions, for instance, Bernham and Fielding and Stevens (2018) point out to this chain which starts by Personality and continues by values, beliefs, opinion, attitude, experience , knowledge and finally Actions and Behaviors (2018, p.10). Briefly explaining of the most important parts of what they say, Personality is at the core of a person that ultimately leads to the behaviour. Values and beliefs are products of our early conditioning which determine the frameworks of our actions. Our values like honesty, integrity are the assumption that we have learned during our life and influence our behaviours directly. We experience life based on our previous assumptions. For example, when a British host is asked to

bring a cup of tea, he would often serve it by a cup of milk which is upon his assumption of the “tea serving”; in the same situation, an Iranian woman rarely provides milk with a cup of tea which is probably because of her different assumption due to the tea serving since her childhood. So, differences of values make different actions and to change a behaviour; it seems necessary to change values and beliefs of the person rather than focusing on some superficial and temporarily behavioural change (Bernham and Fielding and Stevens, 2018, pp.10-11).

“We believe that if people want to change, they need first to be aware of the patterns of thinking and behaviour they have been using in the past.” (Hutchinson, 2015, P.2).

Pat Hutchinson and her colleagues use a methodology of AIM to help people increase their personal development. “A” stands for awareness; “I” is an acronym for Intention behind our thoughts and “M” stands for “move to action”. How AIM works? By showing the clients his thinking pattern, his values and the origin of them, they learn how to adjust or change in order to reach his new objectives. Part of this awareness is finding the values that a person lives by. To achieve this point we could to ask client something like “What is essential in your life job, career and reputation?

She recommends by adding the question “what else” you can find more about a personal value system. Regarding her works, client values come from different sources:

- Family values which are more inherited rather than chosen and have a profound impact on our life.
- Borrowed values, we learn them from important people in our life and use them.
- Compensatory values, for instance being raised with a greedy parent may influence the children of this home to be more spendthrift.

To achieve new goals, we need new thinking and to rebuild new thinking we need to re-evaluate our underlying values regarding their type, origin and validity for our current life (Hutchinson, 2015, pp 3-5)

Increasing self- awareness is a subject of the matter in the various arena of coaching. For instance, around the essential topic of “emotional intelligence”, there is a lot of application to increase awareness individually and socially. The history of coaching and EI is interesting that even one of the most popular types of coaching is emotional intelligence. But how EI interacts with the concept of “awareness”?

Whitmore (2017, p.39) states that coaching is Emotional intelligence(EI) in practice He also indicates three areas that a coach should consider raising the client performance; this idea and definitions and divisions seems very similar to what Daniel Goleman writes in his books (Goleman, 2002 cited in Peltier, 2011 p.219)

- Awareness of self: values, potentials, accurate self-assessment (Whitmore, 2017,p.42). perception of one`s own emotional states (Peltier,2011)
- Awareness of others: their values, motivations, strengths, empathy. Peltier uses the term social awareness to indicate to the awareness of relationship surroundings and empathy (2017)
- Awareness of organization: learning the organizational goals, vision, principles and style (Whitmore, 2017, p.42)

Not all of the writers about EI follow Daniel Goleman as a pioneer of the subject, for instance, some British psychologist like Petrides ,Furnham and Fredrickson believe that EI is more a personality trait rather than a cognitive nature. This different approach may affect the concept of the EI in future (Peltier,2011, p 225).

Gestalt coaching, pioneered by Perls, uses awareness as the central taught core. coaches are invited to be fully aware of what is going in them, their environment and their client right now, emotionally and cognitively.it is essential to notice the whole image of the client rather than just his words and Gestalt coaching is concerned about what is here and now rather than what should be.

Critically review a core coaching value;

Values refer to our beliefs as individuals; it is shaped according to our environment and experiences . (Brook and Brewerton, 2018). Values represent the unique and individual essence of each individual. Our values serve as our moral compass; we must honour our values on a regular and consistent basis, (Coactive.com, 2018).

Integrity and being honest and transparent with the client or coachee is extremely important in building a trusting relationship; it is so essential that it has a category in the Global Code of Ethics (GCoE). It refers to giving accurate and honest representation to clients of their professional qualification affiliations and accreditations, to accurately and honestly convey any message to the client. The coach needs to ensure that anything stated, implied, advised is their own work and attributed to the originator where relevant. Additionally, the coach is to make sure they practice within the law and ensure no unlawful, unprofessional or discriminatory behaviour. This clearly shows that as a coach it is extremely important to have the integrity to adhere to the code. The code exists to guide but requires integrity on the part of the coach, mentor or supervisor to actually adhere by it as it is not legally binding (Associationforcoaching.com, 2018). Understanding and binding to the rules as a practitioner shows what it is you want out of your life and work as your applying this integrity in your life and work life. It shows that you agreed a set of core organisational, or client, values that are aligned with your own personal values. This also means that you adhere to them no matter what challenging situations confront you in your coaching career. integrity requires courage and to be continually aligned with your core values needs consistency, and more determination to stay integral in times of stress (Stout Rostron, 2018).

I consider integrity to be of the utmost importance in coaching, as coaching is one of the highest levels of relationships that requires absolute trust in someone whose guidance can potentially ruin the life of the coachee. Being an authentic leader who many coaches mean a leader must make sure they walk the talk, and this is what integrity is as stated by Goffee and Jones (Peltier, 2011, Goffee and Jones 2005:328)

Provide a reflective summary of your personal journey into growing awareness.

To coach appropriately and to raise my client's awareness, I need to be aware of my own strengths and weaknesses and also my needs and previous thinking patterns and their impact on my current life.

In order to reach this point, I used some methods to be more aware of myself.

I started with personal Values Assessment which is Prepared by Barrett Values Centre. Invented in 1996, the Barret model of consciousness is based on Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Richard Barret says (Valuescentre.com, 2018), this model describes seven level of consciousness model and seven stages of psychological development. 1- survival 2-relationship-self- esteem-transformation-internal cohesion-making difference and service. In the report that I received, it has been indicated that Our values reflect what is important to us. They are a shorthand way of describing our individual motivations. Together with our beliefs, they are the causal factors that drive our decision-making. it also shows that I am starting to live my sense of purpose really and are cooperating with others for mutual benefit and fulfilment. It also shows that my concern about physical needs and survival should be increased.

Other tools that I use for myself and the client is MBTI which is a questionnaire invented by Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers . The instrument indicates which 16 personality types we belong to.

“The underlying assumption of the MBTI is that we all have specific preferences in the way we construe our experiences, and these preferences underlie our interests, needs, values, and motivation”(Kaplan and Saccuzzo, 2009)

My type is ENTP which stands for extrovert which means that I prefer to achieve energy from the outer world, being intuitive shows that I prefer to get data from my correlation and significant patterns rather than my five senses. As a thinker I prefer to make the decision even against my personal values but because it is true and logic and right. and by being P=perceiver, I am more flexible in lifestyle.

Being an ENTP gives me a power to see the objects from distance, being more creative and let me do not take critics personally, on contrary, there are some weak points in this type of

personality like less concentrated, less scheduled and less caring into the impact of my decision on the others (Briggs Myers, 2000).

There are numerous tips and techniques in the academic and market literature to develop the coaching skills that I have to choose regarding my life style, many of them have a similar entity like meditation, regular questioning, ask feedback from colleagues and peers, writing down the priorities and so on (Tjan, 2015)

To improve self-reflection exercise, I found this structure very practical; starting reflection with me as a coach, then my client, our relationship, the interventions that I used and the environment of the coaching (Cooper, 2018). In addition, I choose the client reflection and immediate self-reflection before forgetting the details. I am also going to use supervision services to develop my skills and raise awareness during my career.

For the second unit of “the becoming a coach” journey, I had a fantastic experience to work with a client in a well-known international pharmaceutical company. Having a session with the manager gave me an opportunity to get a sense of what executive coaching does in a real workplace. I was concern that contracting would be very important in executive coaching to determine the expectations and objects realistically.

Getting aware of my limitations, helps me to adjust my expectations as a coach and admitting the client`s limitation more realistically.

To improve my abilities as a coach, I will register to be qualified in strengthscope method which is based on working with strengths profile and reducing performance risks specifically in the workspace (Brook and Brewerton, 2018, p.5). in order to increase my self-awareness due to Gestalt coaching, I practised to be full aware of what is happening in me, emotionally and physically and at the same time in my client. It was quite challenging for me how to be more in “being” position rather than “doing” position (Larry-Joyce, 2014, p.7

Conclusion

This essay has discussed the importance of the ethics in coaching and critically reviewed integrity as a core value of the coaching and explained the purpose of self-awareness for coaching and finished by self-reflection for the coaching experience that author goes through.

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