

CONTRIBUTIONS

Leadership Coaching

Action Learning Group for NGO CEOs – Progressing well, participants alternate hosting the group so that we can understand more of one another’s work environment. Discussion evidences the significant, and increasingly legal, accountabilities to multiple stakeholders within this sector. The implications for ongoing adaptation and development are challenging, requiring careful consideration and flexibility. The current ALG contributes an excellent opportunity to discuss such issues within a purposeful and confidential context.

Please **feel encouraged to contact me** if you want to find out more about ALGs.

Team coaching – having heard a number of different interpretations of this concept, I decided to do some reading. Unsurprisingly, understanding varies and it is therefore important that both sponsors and providers clarify their expectations prior to commencing team coaching. I’ve outlined my “Making Sense of Team Coaching” in [The Coaching Psychologist Vol 11 No 2 December 2015](#).

LEARNING POINTS

Leadership Coaching

Some Learning Points/Reminders I’ve acquired over the past few months:

- Mental health challenges are something that we all experience at work from time to time – some more than others. We can all work together to engage effectively with these. For instance, we can better enhance the energy, creativity, trust, and entrepreneurship of someone living with “Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder” by: breaking things down into achievable steps; identifying clear goals – and regularly affirming their achievement; providing strategies to avoid distractions. Company investment in staff mental health makes financial as well as moral sense ([Graham Lowe – The Wellness Dividend](#))
- Discovering and valuing others’ personal culture increases self-efficacy and fosters commitment
- Inspiring achievement is about empowering strengths. It is about enabling and supporting staff to engage in, and take responsibility for, decision-making – and mistakes. It is not about enforcing expectations and creating competitiveness amongst staff
- Formal coaching needs to establish trust and a psychologically safe space from the outset to create a powerful learning environment. Starting with frequent, purposeful sessions captures motivation and enhances the likelihood of sustainable change
- Self-awareness, self-compassion and courage are essential for identifying, understanding and moving towards what we value: self-awareness of our thoughts and emotions; self-compassion not to judge our hooks and avoidance behaviours; courage to bear the pain of pursuing our values.

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Thanks for your referrals and recommendations – always appreciated.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Psychosocial support

- In-field support to National and Expatriate staff working in Bangladesh and Afghanistan
- Support of individual clients based in New Zealand.

LEARNING POINTS

Psychosocial support

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy/Training offers very positive and purposeful principles and ideas that support how we choose to lead our lives, even in difficult circumstances. Its core invitation is for us to accept what is out of our personal control, and commit to action that improves and enriches our lives.

The “world is not stable. [Everyone] goes through stages and phases; happiness is followed by sadness and then relief or joy; one’s faith is strong and unconquerable [then] plummets [then] rises again”. This quotation, from an [Islamic website](#), helps to explain how it was possible to use an ACT approach with Afghan National Staff, even when their experience is of at least three decades of war including: loss of family; restriction of communication and movement; ongoing threat to life; kidnap. For them, a strong faith in what they valued – Allah – and “a holistic approach to life [covering] all aspects, spiritual, emotional and physical” contributed to the enrichment of their lives.

As well as sharing the values of humanitarianism, inter-cultural respect, ongoing consultation and affirmation enable staff from diverse backgrounds to work effectively together – despite the dire circumstances in which they find themselves. Additionally, exercise, sufficient sleep and nutritional food contributes to sustainable resilience.

Supervision

- Ongoing provision of supervision for individual professionals

Supervision

The profession of psychology provides opportunities to work with all sorts of people: from children to adults; from offenders to sports stars; from colleagues to chief executives; within small teams and huge organisations. Always and to varying degrees, we are privileged with informational, positional and professional power.

Learning Point? In my role as a supervisor, I need to consider the influences of the different kinds of power that I hold in relation to my supervisees. I also need to engage them in a discussion about how they understand and manage the power that they hold in relation to each of their clients.



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Whether it is for Christmas, Summer, Skiing, Space or Something Else, I hope that you have the opportunity to take some time off in December and January.

Thanks for engaging with me this year - I value your interest. Stay in touch.

Sam