

CONTRIBUTIONS

Leadership Coaching

I'm grateful for the learning and opportunities discovered on my journey to becoming and being a Coaching Psychologist, particularly founding and leading the Coaching Psychology Special Interest Group from 2009-2013 with colleagues.

Wanting to push my knowledge borders, and informed by my work in the coaching and humanitarian fields, I am exploring how I might contribute to leadership within the international development sector. My networks are growing, as is my understanding of the Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous world in which we follow and lead. Interested? Get in touch!

EFL Brieflets: Thanks for the positive feedback for the three EFL Brieflets to date. Prioritising their intermittent frequency, whilst sustaining their utility, I will send the following Brieflets to you in the coming 12 months:

- Engaging with Conflict
- Engaging with Emergency
- Engaging with Stress
- Engaging with Team Coaching
- Engaging with Diversity
- Engaging with a Coaching Culture

LEARNING POINTS

Leadership Coaching

At the bi-annual Australian Coaching Psychology Conference, in Melbourne, three presentations stood out for me.

- i. In relation to developing coaching competencies "in a world of uncertainty", [Prof David Lane](#) challenged traditional pedagogical approaches within the current global context. He questioned standardised models that value academic time served over field knowledge. However the use of an acronym, which I have noticed and found apt several times since in the context of global leadership, was my key **Learning Point**:
 - **Volatile, Uncertain, Complex & Ambiguous (VUCA)** has been used by the US Military for some time and is well understood by the [World Economic Forum](#) hungry for a new breed of leader.
- ii. **Procrastination** is experienced by many people from time to time. We give ourselves various excuses: mine is sometimes "the task doesn't inspire me". However, [Prof Stephen Palmer](#) points out that it can be a serious block. A key **Learning Point**:
 - Be alert to and check those thoughts and feelings that occur immediately prior to the distracting/delaying behaviour. Try to prioritise manageable chunks of the task, And delay the distractions a little longer: surf the urge!
- iii. **Perfectionism** can deliver fantastic work; it can also get in the way of a balanced relationship with ourselves or others. [Prof Sarah Corrie](#) left me with some important Learning Points:
 - Clarify nature of perfection-oriented thoughts
 - Build self-compassion
 - Practise discovering what happens when more flexible standards are adopted for some objectives.

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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 Papua New Guinea and Myanmar
- Increasing support of individual clients based in New Zealand.

Supervision

- Ongoing provision of supervision for individual professionals



LEARNING POINTS

Psychosocial support

Having applied principles from [ACT](#) (Acceptance & Commitment Training (or Therapy)) in New Zealand, I've started to apply them overseas in collaboration with my clients, using pictures and diagrams. The client-centred nature of ACT translates well in diverse cultural, ethnic, linguistic and national contexts – even where the socio-political context is extremely challenging.

1. Stick figures/ diagrams and pictorial metaphors can represent and acknowledge client experience (the good and not so good), and facilitate discussion about what clients can choose to do, even where choice is limited.
2. Such illustrations can also be used to elicit core client values, and clarify workable steps that are consistent with these, even within constrained circumstances.

Learning Point? Taking courage in risking the somewhat basic nature of my artistic skills can engage greater self-confidence, self-compassion, courage – and humour!

Supervision

The Coaching Supervision relationship process is influenced by similarities and differences experienced between the Coach, Coachee and Supervisor, e.g.: gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality, culture, economic and professional status. It can also be influenced by the approach of the Supervisor, for instance acting as an expert from whom the Coach learns their coaching craft. Other Supervision relationships might see the Coach taking much more responsibility for their own learning. And there are variations of these approaches, which are important topics for consideration and discovery from the outset of the Coaching Supervision relationship.

In New Zealand, some Coaching Supervision relationships draw upon the Maori concept of *ako*, learning from and teaching one another. *Ako* informs the [Tuakana-Teina Concept](#) of buddying – developed from the tradition of an older, more-experienced sibling guiding a younger, less-experienced one. For both Coach and Supervisor, this concept can deepen the value of the coaching relationship as each party collaborates in both the experiences of learning and the responsibilities of teaching, as well as in the humility and wisdom that go with each.

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Wishes you a Very Happy Christmas
And an Awesome New Year

Best wishes

Sam

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