

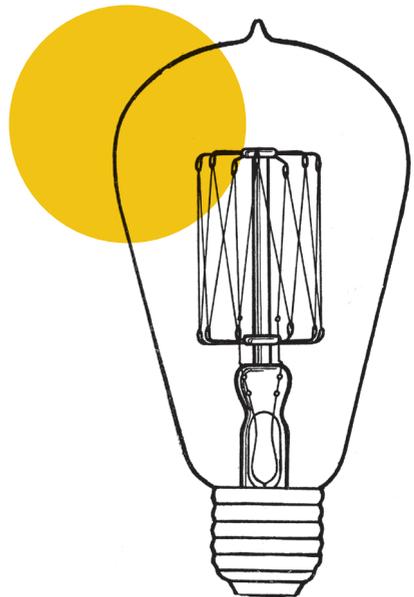
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# LIGHT BULBS!

Stories of Personal Insight in Coaching

Edited by Nick Bolton



Studies in Coaching

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# About the authors

## Editor

### NICK BOLTON

Nick is the founder and director of Animas Centre for Coaching based in London.

Animas is dedicated to training, growing and supporting transformational coaches with an integrative and humanistic approach.

This means that, unlike many coaching schools which focus primarily on performance or behaviour, Animas coaches develop a wide range of skills and theoretical underpinnings to work with the whole person, giving as much attention to how the client is *being* as to what they're *doing*.

Nick is passionate about coaching believing in its transformative powers at all levels in someone's life. Despite mastering other change approaches, he has always found his heart in coaching with its core, underlying trust in the client to be their own answer.

Over many years he has seen his own coaching style develop, deepen and mature and he is currently exploring the role of existential thinking and practice in his work.

As founder of Animas, Nick wants to offer the very best coach training available to those who want to work independently or within the workplace at a deeper level of change.

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## Authors

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### PAUL BROWN

Paul is a transformational life coach and NLP practitioner with a passion for helping people see beyond their limitations and walking with them in their transition into healthier and happier ways of thinking and acting. As a former osteopath he's also fascinated in the interaction between mind and body, and runs training courses for healthcare professionals to help them improve patient outcomes. You can contact Paul at: [www.empoweringbeliefs.co.uk](http://www.empoweringbeliefs.co.uk)

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Sonia Gill is the founder and director of Heads Up ([www.ukheadsup.com](http://www.ukheadsup.com)) who specialise in providing leadership coaching and leadership development to School Head Teachers, supporting them in leading their organisations through the unprecedented level of change ongoing within Education. Sonia's own experience includes a blend of Business and Educational experience – initially training as a teacher before joining the John Lewis Partnership. After a successful career in retail management, Sonia returned to Education and created Heads Up.

## **NAMI HAGHIGHI**

Nami is a small business specialist, coach and mentor and founder of [www.yourbusinessbuddy.biz](http://www.yourbusinessbuddy.biz). Nami started his first business over 30 years ago and has been a small business consultant for most of that time, helping committed individuals to achieve the results they want and deserve. While serving clients as an accountant and consultant in the early days of his career he realised that running a small business successfully depends on acquiring a minimum level of knowledge and experience in many disciplines, as well as balancing your efforts, staying focused and maintaining momentum. Nami offers help and support for clients to become more effective and empowered in running their own business, achieving significantly better outcomes while at the same time feeling more fulfilled. Nami currently works with clients in the UK, Ireland and Spain.

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## **ANNA AGOTA HURL**

Anna describes herself: "I'm married with two great kids, so I understand the challenges of a daily life with family and a job. I am finally embracing my calling by assisting others who want to reevaluate their lives and offering practical support in their journey. I feel passionate about showing them different ways of thinking of situations. I truly believe that this, in turn, will allow them to take their own power back. Since I started studying with the Smart School, this process has allowed me to see a way to repaint my own canvas all over again. Since I've applied this principle to my own life, I have not looked back. I am excited about the realisation that my eyes have become fully opened to the possibilities around me and this is what I wish for my clients to experience too. It is my heart's desire that, by showing them an example, my children will grow up with the same understanding and be able to have their eyes wide open to the opportunities around them."

## **ELISA KLÜVER**

Elisa is the founder of ComPassion Coaching. ComPassion Coaching stands for finding and living *your* passion in your life. She helps people discover that passion and have all the energy and resources to be compassionate towards others. In her own words, "I want to help you find out what it is you really want and start making it happen, so you love waking up in the morning knowing your life is so great!" Elisa can be contacted at [www.elisakluever.com](http://www.elisakluever.com)

## **M. ANGELIQUE LUCAS**

M. Angeliqve Lucas is a personal and professional development coach working in the US and UK. She works mainly with female clients struggling to lose weight or maintain their ideal weight, in addition to helping anyone looking to relocate internationally for personal or professional reasons. She is a qualified yoga and qigong instructor and a Thai Yoga Massage practitioner. Her clients are able to work through life's

everyday challenges more easily, and often realise the health benefits of letting go of stress and tension through releasing the burden of weight we all mentally tend to carry with us. [www.releaseyourwait.com](http://www.releaseyourwait.com)

## **HAZEL MCCALLUM**

Hazel is a transformational life coach whose passion is helping people who are struggling to live the life they truly want. “I support clients to discover their direction in life and realise their genuine potential. I motivate and challenge my clients to question their limiting beliefs and recognise how much they really are capable of. This may involve working on self-esteem and confidence to equip them to make the changes necessary to achieve authentic happiness.”

## **DANIEL PEREIRA**

Daniel started his coaching journey in June 2011 with great determination and enthusiasm. He qualified as a Personal Transformation Coach in August 2012. He also works as a body therapist and uses his coaching skills within his sessions. His passion has always been about helping people to improve the way they care for their health and body. After Daniel survived and recovered from a life-threatening disease, he felt totally driven to support others and found in coaching the master tool. Daniel has been working as a coach with cancer patients and people who want to improve their health and quality of life.

## **MALIKA REMILI**

Malika Remili is a French-born Personal Transformation coach qualified in Neuro-Linguistic Programming. She worked in Fashion in New York before buying business travel and events for international corporations in Europe. She now lives in London and her major interest is change, in the world as well as the individual. Malika can be contacted at: [mremili@likacoaching.com](mailto:mremili@likacoaching.com)

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## RACHEL SMITH

Rachel Smith is the founder of Re-emerging, specialising in helping people let go of their 'stuff'. After years of corporate administration she changed career direction in her early forties and trained as a remedial massage therapist. Discovering that many of the clients lying on her couch also needed to offload emotional pain, she expanded her interest from the body to mind and soul with a Diploma in Coaching Excellence with the Smart School, and then a Diploma in Therapeutic NLP and Hypnotherapy. She runs a busy massage and coaching practice in Maidstone, Kent, offering clients one-to-one sessions and the very popular 'Clear your Clutter, Clear your Mind' and Vision Collage workshops. Initially working with widows drawing on her own personal experience of widowhood, Rachel now helps people let go of any emotional loss or issue. Rachel can be contacted at <http://www.re-emerging.com/>

## HOLLY WORTON

Holly Worton helps authors make sense of social media so they can build their online platform and sell more books with her business Tribal Publishing (<http://tribal-publishing.com>). She also helps people achieve authentic happiness by answering The Three Happiness Questions with her blog Ready to Bloom (<http://ready2bloom.com>), which will be released as a book with the same name in late 2013.

# Foreword

NICK BOLTON

Coaching has come a long way since its early days.

From simple, process-driven approaches like GROW and SMART, it has become ever more flexible in the way coaches work, the environments they operate in and the issues they deal with.

Yet one thing has remained consistent throughout this development: its power to create moments of profound clarity that change a client's understanding and path of action for good.

When these moments happen they often do so in a flash. They are not logical step-by-step deductions, but instances of sudden insight that reveal new possibilities, perspectives and understanding. It's as though what was dark and unseen is suddenly lit up.

Notice the language there: *reveal, flash, sudden, dark and unseen, lit up...*

And of course, that's why we call these instances light bulb moments.

If you have ever seen *Se7en* with Brad Pitt and Morgan Freeman, then, like me, apart from being gripped by the story you will probably have been thinking, "Come on, guys, turn the lights on! It'd be so much easier to see what you're doing!" The film seems to take place in constant darkness, a city with no light, relentless, pounding rain and the threat of time running out.

Strangely, in a sense, coaching can have that same feel – albeit without the added horror!

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The coach and client can feel that they are scrabbling around in the dark trying to find the best piece of evidence to work with. What's the goal? What's the challenge? What's the problem? What can you do? What's stopping you?

All great questions, but when asked in the dark they can seem clumsy, confusing and plain frustrating.

That's the journey of discovery, and as coaching increasingly works with complexity and emotion rather than merely performance and task issues, these early sessions of stumbling exploration are quite normal and to be expected.

But it got me thinking.

What are these light bulb moments? They are so often the precursor to the change people seek that perhaps we can learn something from looking at them. Perhaps we can see a common pattern in what creates them or how we can harness them. Or maybe there is no common pattern, no single switch, but rather they are the consequence of the relationship between coach and client that is unique to their dynamic. Or further still, perhaps the coach is almost an irrelevance in the moment of the light bulb going on!

It seemed to me that rather than explore this by academically stacking theory upon theory like so much intellectual Lego, it would be best explored by hearing real stories from coaches who are working day in day out with their clients.

And so I am thrilled to be able to present thirteen real-life case studies from coaching that bring these moments to life.

If you are new to coaching, then I hope these stories will give you an insight into what being a coach is all about, the rich variation of issues you might deal with and a glimpse at some of the approaches you can use to facilitate a client's discovery.

If you're already a coach, then I have no doubt that these stories will resonate with you and, I hope, enable you to feel you're in good company when your coaching sessions feel stuck or you're not sure where they're going next. That light bulb moment is always around the next corner if you maintain your commitment to helping your client achieve the new understanding they want and the change they are trying to create.

Interestingly, the coaches writing here have all trained through our institute and have been introduced to the same approaches, concepts, coaching styles and so on. Yet it is clear that they each have unique styles and particular views on how to work with people to create change. For me, it's that lack of dogmatism that makes coaching one of the last bastions of creative work with human change.

We will each draw our own conclusions from these stories, but they leave me feeling that light bulb moments are the result not of a *process* but rather the patient, and committed holding of a clear exploratory *space* by the coach in the face of unknowing and even self-doubt. None of the coaches here attributes the breakthrough to a specific coaching model or set of steps, even though in some stories the particular models used have been explored. Instead, what becomes clear is that it is in facing the confusion and turmoil together and being open to there being a new way to *look* at things, rather than merely a new way to *do* things, that the moment of true discovery resides.

All identities have been protected; names have been changed and in some case circumstances altered to maintain confidentiality. But the message in each story is true to the coaching journey undertaken.

I hope you enjoy each story presented here, and I'd like to thank the coaches for their contributions and their dedication to helping people change and become who they truly want to be.

# Acceptance Leads to Transformation

PAUL BROWN

It was a phone call that would change both our lives.

It was January 2012 and the voice at the other end had an intriguing quality to it, making me wonder if I hadn't heard it somewhere before. 'Steve' had called the number on my website and was bursting with energy to find out if I might be able to help him out of his current situation. At that time I hadn't settled on a niche, but before taking anyone on I was keen to gauge their level of commitment to the process. "How much do you want to change?" I asked him. "I tell you, mate, I'd rip my own throat out!" Rather than being shocked by this reply, I knew instantly that this was someone I could work with.

At six foot tall and 19 stone with a shaved head, Steve looked like the stereotype of how he'd described himself - a gangster, with his own niche in recovering debts for the underworld. My first impression, however, echoed my thoughts from that initial phone call - there is a lot more to this man than perhaps even he was aware. There was a natural charm and smile trying to shine through.

Steve said he didn't like the person he was turning into - a violent man just like his father. To me he seemed so focused on the 'negative' aspects of himself that he'd forgotten there were others - he spoke with such love of his wife and young son. The metaphor that had the most resonance was that we are each like a beautiful blue sky, yet often make the mistake of associating who we are with individual clouds. Clouds are always moving, are impermanent and represent just a fraction of the whole horizon. Steve seemed to be associating with some dark clouds indeed. His body language changed noticeably

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when we allowed him to focus more on the positive aspects of his life, such as his past successes and the positive things his family would say about him if someone were to ask.

Steve's main challenge was his anger, something he felt he had no control over (a belief which had become a self-fulfilling prophecy). This wasn't helped by describing himself as 'an angry man' – elevating the status of a behaviour (something he did) into an identity (who he was). People who smoke often do the same thing (and make it harder for themselves to change) when they describe themselves as 'smokers'. The biggest problem with the anger, however, was his relationship to it – it was something he had been fighting and resisting for such a long time. 'How you see the problem *is* the problem' according to Dr Stephen Covey. He was essentially angry at being angry. By hating the anger with such intensity he was hating himself in the process, in the same way that holding dislike for an aspect of our physical appearance makes us feel bad about ourselves. It was interesting that Steve and I should meet at a time when I was becoming increasingly interested in the theory and practice of mindfulness, and had just read the following:

*“What you resist persists, what you accept transforms”*

Reflecting on Steve's relationship with his anger, this gave me an idea. If we could somehow allow him to see his anger in a different light, then maybe this could lead to greater acceptance (again, both of the anger and himself) and possibly even transformation. The word 'anger' has negative connotations for most people (and Steve was certainly no exception) so I knew that it would be important to change this label.

I find it fascinating how little we understand about the true nature of our emotions – like a piece of driftwood floating on a turbulent sea, it can feel like we have no control but are rather at the mercy of external events and situations. At what point do people choose to give away

their personal power? Statements like “you make me happy” or “the way he ignored me made me upset” are erroneous – how can we leave our buttons so open for people to press? The same can be said for habits – a behaviour must produce something worthwhile if we go to the time and trouble to learn it. I was really curious to find out, therefore, what purpose getting angry served for Steve. To ask him outright may have been counter-productive – on a conscious level it was impossible for him to even begin to accept the anger, as it had been viewed as ‘bad’ for such a long time. We needed to tap into a deeper wisdom, one that knew the anger serves (or at least served) a purpose.

Steve had essentially reached an impasse – he had been trying to find the ‘off’ switch for his anger, and it was like it had developed a personality of its own and was understandably resistant to this idea! I couldn’t be certain how it would turn out (although Steve had a chequered past, we’d built up good rapport and trust by this stage) but I wondered what might happen if we could get him to *become* his anger and see things from *its* perspective. This aspect of his personality had been getting the rough end of the stick for a long while, so I was interested to hear what it had to say!

I was pleasantly surprised how readily Steve was able to become his anger. We quickly came up with a more neutral name, ‘Phil’, and it was clear that ‘Phil’ hadn’t felt greatly appreciated in this whole relationship. Steve could conceive no way in which having ‘Phil’ around could be useful, but Steve had brought ‘Phil’ into existence many years ago. Steve couldn’t recall why but perhaps ‘Phil’ could?

Once Steve had settled into the role of ‘Phil’ I decided to ask him, “So, what role are you serving?” “I’m protecting him”, came back the reply. ‘Phil’ went on to explain that Steve (despite his physical presence today) as a child hadn’t learnt to look after himself. This correlated with the history – a stormy environment at home growing up, and the fact that Steve had been bullied at school. I’ve never experienced such a transformation in one session of coaching. Although this represented

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a light bulb moment for me, I could tell by Steve's appearance that his realisations were many and deeper. Steve could really see how 'Phil' had not only been incredibly useful in the past but how he may need to be called upon in the future - we never know what we may encounter down a dark alley and when the need to protect ourselves could come.

'Phil', feeling appreciated and understood again after all these years, could be more in the background and allow Steve to get on with his life. 'Phil' had been overworked and could imagine how nice it would be to have a holiday and come back rested for when Steve might really need him. Moments of inner change in coaching can be too subtle to notice, but this was altogether different - Steve reported feeling lighter, more and relaxed and he looked like a different person!

'There is no such thing as an inflexible client, only an inflexible coach' is an expression I had heard during my training and one that resonated with me. Up until I started working with Steve, however, I had only really grasped this need to be flexible on a superficial level, as an intellectual concept. My typical clients up to that point were from a similar background to my own - maybe I'd been operating too much out of my comfort zone thus far with limited opportunity to try out my 'flexibility muscle'! Steve was from a very different walk of life so working with him offered me a wonderful growth opportunity. Not only did I gain the confidence to work with a wider range of people, but the results we achieved together reinforced in my mind that it's not the story that counts but rather how we allow these events to either hold us back or use them to inspire us to achieve greater things.

Steve continues to turn his life around, and he now wants to earn enough money (through legitimate means) to fund trips to Africa to help the villagers dig water wells, and to get his own hands dirty in the process. With his passion, warmth and charm he's well on the way. It was a great learning experience for me and a pleasure to be part of his transition.

# Making Connections for New Possibilities

HOLLY WORTON

We all have an idea of what a light bulb moment is, but what makes them happen? What are their ingredients? From my coaching experience, light bulb moments most often happen when someone recognises a connection between two seemingly different things which then creates a new possibility or understanding.

The client often already has all the information they need to make their own link, and my job is simply to ask the questions that help them find the connection. That's when coaching leads to the powerful experiences we like to call light bulb moments.

The trick, of course, is to help the client arrive at this realisation without leading them where we think the connection lies. The connection is not mine to make as a coach, and usually I have no idea what the link is before it occurs. All I can do during the coaching session is to help the client explore the issue further by asking questions that probe, challenge and tease out ideas.

It's up to the client to make the connection, because of course it's the client who has all the elements needed within their mind. What they need from the coaching session is guidance to arrive at that connection, and coaching questions can be a vital part of the process. When the connection happens, it's so powerful that it's as visible on the client's face as the light bulb above a cartoon character's head!

One particular light bulb moment that stands out most in my mind happened during a conversation with a fellow coach. We had just met and were discussing our respective businesses. It was a brief and

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casual conversation and I never would have guessed that it would lead to a light bulb moment. Most people who get into coaching are confronted with the need to find their own niche within the world of coaching: to specialise in one particular area, or to help clients with a particular need. It's often a source of great confusion and frustration for many new coaches, but it can also be a beautiful path of self-discovery. It's something that can take months or, in some cases, even years!

Our conversation quickly led to his frustration at not being able to pin down his niche and how he never felt drawn to any one thing in particular. He had the sense that having a niche would help his business, but he hadn't figured it out. This had recently become more pressing as he'd left a previous business to dedicate himself full time to his coaching/hypnotherapy practice. He needed to make this business work now or he'd struggle.

I often find that clients come to me with issues that strike home for me too: often they're things I've found challenging myself. I knew, even as I was investigating which coaching programme I wanted to attend, that I needed to find a niche. I struggled all through my studies to find one, and it wasn't until many months after I finished my coaching and NLP courses that I got clear on what it was. I kept a notebook with a list of possible ideas: I wrote down everything I had personally battled with and wanted to help people with, I added issues that frequently arose with my clients, and I made notes on topics that I particularly enjoyed helping clients with.

So when the subject of finding a coaching niche came up, I was instantly hooked. I didn't think I'd be able to help him find his niche in a single conversation, but I wanted to help in any way possible. This had been such a long, drawn out issue of concern for me that I wanted to help him take any steps that might lead him towards his own niche.

I began by asking a few questions to get to know him and his business a little better. I asked him if there were any particular topics or issues that were a common thread among his clients, but he simply couldn't think of anything. They all seemed to come for different reasons. They had nothing in common. He was drawing a blank.

But as he continued to think over his clients and the issues that they came to him for, one thing popped into his mind: he often did hypnotherapy work with people who wanted to quit smoking. He felt that this was a fairly common issue in hypnotherapy: there was a clear programme to help people seeking to quit smoking, and it was becoming increasingly popular as a way to end the addiction.

He didn't, however, see this as a niche possibility. I explored further, asking him how he felt about smoking, and whether smoking was something he felt strongly about in any way. It was at that point that I saw the light bulb go on. There was a brief pause as he reflected on the question, and his eyes lit up. He quickly replied that smoking was something he felt very strongly about. *Very strongly about*, he repeated.

It was instantly clear to him that because of these strong feelings about smoking, it was an issue that he really enjoyed helping clients with. His quit-smoking clients had provided him with some of the most satisfying client sessions he had experienced in his business. Strangely, you might think, he'd never noticed that before!

I was amazed at how, in such a short chat, the power of coaching had led to a light bulb moment that unlocked his ability to move forward in his business. It may have helped that I had been through a similar situation less than two years earlier but, of course, each person's journey towards his or her business niche is very different. It was truly satisfying to me that such a brief conversation had led to such clarity around another person's business. That's the power of coaching-style questions. And it was so much more effective than if I had simply given him advice based on my own experience.

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This coaching conversation reinforced the importance of two elements that I have consistently found to be important when coaching clients: natural curiosity about the client's issue or situation, and paying close attention to the clues that pop up in a client's responses. My natural curiosity about his struggle to find a niche led me to help him explore his current coaching practice, through the use of targeted questions.

As a coach, light bulb moments are truly satisfying to me, partly because I know how powerful it can be to experience that moment of profound clarity, and partly because I've seen just how liberating they can be for clients. They're a clear sign that the client has made a connection that they had been unable to make before the coaching session or conversation. That's when I know I'm doing my job as a coach.

Of course, satisfying as it would be, it is clearly unreasonable for me to expect to create a light bulb moment from each and every coaching session! After all, that intense recognition of a connection may not be what a client needs right then. Instead, these connections or moments are things to be appreciated and harnessed when they occur but not forced or created on demand! It's the blend of art and technique that makes each session so unique, and the light bulb is one moment of magic that illuminates a longer path.

# It Happened Sooner Than I Thought

ANNA AGOTA HURL

She's a young, single woman who comes across generally happy, enjoys socializing with her friends, does regular exercise and has high hopes for her future.

She has a part time job doing admin work, which she likes, particularly when she has a lot to do because she generally enjoys being busy at work. She lives in a bedsit and dreams of getting her own flat to give her the freedom and independence she would really like to have.

She also dreams of passing her theory test so she can learn to drive. But her lack of confidence in her abilities lets her down. She tried it and failed twice a couple of years ago, and because of this she keeps thinking, "I can't do it". Although she tests herself regularly using the theory book, it's clear that her limiting belief is stopping her progress. She doesn't want to rely on other people to give her a ride everywhere. She wants to pass her driving test because freedom and independence are two of her main values, and she feels she misses out on seeing her brother and his children as a result of not being able to drive. She wants to spend more time with her nephew and niece, but they live far away and without a car it takes her a long time to get to them. Passing her theory and driving test would mean a lot to her, because she could just jump in the car and pick them up to take them out to the park, shops or the cinema. She loves her family and spending time with her brother's children would mean she would be able to do this as often as she wants.

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She shares with me something special. When she was 12 she met her disabled uncle in Jamaica, and since then has been inspired to get a really good education in caring for people with learning disabilities. She clearly feels strongly about this. She feels having a good education is important in life and is using the inspiration from her uncle to try to work it all out. She feels she has two options in how to go forward with her studies: either college or apprenticeship. She feels she'd rather choose apprenticeship because she would not have to do an exam. We can see that the lack of confidence from failing her theory tests have made a big impact in this area too.

Her inspiration from her uncle is so strong that she wants to set up a youth centre in Antigua to help young people and their families less fortunate. She has a plan to buy land and build this centre in order to make it happen. She thinks it will take her about seven to 10 years to save up, and feels totally OK with a longer plan.

Firstly she talks about her current situation and how a lack of confidence has been affecting her life in every level. In particular, she has a big issue walking past or through a group of people when she is out. She makes a conscious effort to go around them, or even change direction completely as she gets closer to avoid being anywhere near them. She says this scenario makes her feel intimidated, nervous and tensed up. She walks with her shoulders down holding her breath and avoiding eye contact, as if she doesn't want to be seen by anyone.

She uses the same pattern of negative self-talk she has used for a long time, including "what do others think of me?". She cannot wait to get round the corner so she can finally breathe properly and relax again. Lack of self-confidence also affects her self-image. She questions the way she looks and walks past shop windows viewing her reflection, full of self-doubt. She's a sociable person and knows this is debilitating her. She tells me she doesn't want to feel this way any more and feels stuck with this.

I ask her what it would mean for her to not feel like this again and she says “everything”. She wishes she could just walk past a group of people and not feel those weakening emotions. I want to tell her “It’s OK, I know how you feel” because I experienced something similar when I was her age. But of course I realise that as a coach it’s not what I’m meant to do, and in these circumstances I would not serve her well if I brought my personal experiences to her session. This was her time to spill the beans. She is in a safe place where she can be really honest and talk about how she is experiencing her thinking in her everyday life.

In a moment of quietness, and allowing her to express fully what she wants, I know I have to ask her about past experiences that could act as a trigger for her. It doesn’t take her long to recall being about 10 years old. On the way home after school she was teased by a teenage group of kids almost daily. It becomes clear that this experience had a much stronger hold on her than she ever realised. She describes the situation well, full of emotions as she details her every move. She says, as she approached them, she would start looking down, hold her breath and could not wait to get past to literally breathe in again. Gradually over time this daily ritual created by these teenagers would wear her down to a point that she would dread home time every day. They teased her just to have a bit of fun. Of course these kids didn’t understand the long-term effect this sort of behaviour has on anyone. As a result she thinks she is being talked about and criticised every time she walks past a group of people.

I want to encourage her to think about the situation differently. Could she give it a different meaning somehow? Her current feelings have been acknowledged but she was ready for a change in her thinking. So I say to her, “How do you know those people are talking about you?” She says quietly, “I don’t.” I ask, “Do they look at you and say your name as you approach?” She says, “Actually, they don’t. They probably don’t even see me. They could be talking about anything!”

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I don't think she's realised the importance of what she's just said so I pretend I didn't hear her well, blaming it on Skype, and I ask her to repeat the last few sentences again! As she does I feel so excited for her, because I know a weight has been lifted off her shoulders. She says she can't believe how different she already feels: relieved and light and surprised to realise how she's never thought of it like this before. She understands she is the one with the power over the situation and not the other way round.

She decides to use the rest of her time with me to set clear goals and make future plans. Gaining confidence has given her a platform, and I love the way she flies with her ideas now. She's taken off like a bird. I do hope she lands for food at times!

In later sessions, she tells me that people notice her new confidence. She moves into her flat and books her theory test, which I'm sure she'll pass first time. She tells me she has the power to make the best of every situation. What a great attitude!

This was a superb first client experience for me. I mean, is it really possible to help someone achieve such transformation in 60 minutes? The answer is YES!

I learned so much in this first session. I realise the importance of holding space and being quiet so someone else can talk. This alone cannot and must not be underestimated. Sometimes that's all they need to step out of their own way. I realised there is a different level of listening to people, when you really pay attention with nothing on your mind. I admit, this alone made me feel a little guilty about the level of listening I had been applying in my everyday life before. But we all have to learn!

## Sometimes It Takes Longer...

M. ANGELIQUE LUCAS

As a new coach it was hard to trust that I knew what I was doing in the early days, and I struggled to maintain faith in the models and methods I chose when working with clients, especially today with our fast-paced lives where people expect immediate results or assume money and/or time has been wasted.

It was one of my first clients who came to me wanting to know why his previous relationships had failed and whether he wanted the “hassle” of being with another partner or in any future relationships. I certainly didn’t think it would be easy, but visions of coaching methods began dancing in my head and I can remember thinking how each one would be introduced and benefit him, allowing him to see his progress every step of the way. Of course, it didn’t turn out that way. In fact, session after session I didn’t think I was getting through to him and he didn’t seem too invested in the actions he needed to take. It wasn’t until the time between our fourth and fifth sessions that he had a turning point and figured out the change he needed to make, and took great steps forward to make it. It was as if the light bulb had finally switched on, and in the nick of time as far as I was concerned!

Our first session together seemed to be mainly a time for him to voice all his complaints about relationships. He focused on previous partners’ actions leading up to the end of relationships and red flags he’d missed. He provided rationale as to why relationships are a lot of work. And he spent a fair bit of time speaking of the unattractiveness of his partners. I was clear upfront that, unlike counselling, coaching wouldn’t look too much at the past to figure out what had happened but instead look to the future to see how things can move forward. I also mentioned we’d pull in past examples where things had not gone so well in order to avoid repeating some actions, but mainly

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we'd use past experiences as a way to establish best practices going forward. So he decided his overall mission for the coaching was to decide whether he wanted to be in a relationship and, if so, how best to be in one which was positive and rewarding.

First, his idea of the ideal or "perfect partner" came up, along with his negative beliefs around a relationship with this person even being a possibility, but he didn't want to explore his thinking around this. Then we discussed how many of the opposite qualities to his "perfect partner" were to be found in previous partners, and he dismissed that as something worth too much thought or attention. However, that did bring up a concern that he may be choosing partners he knows he won't make a long-term commitment to, and is then disappointed when they break up with him.

As we went through specific situations and looked at them with a bit more clarity, there was a pattern coming up again and again; yet he kept placing the blame of ending relationships on partners or circumstances. During our second and third sessions we spoke mainly about a new relationship he'd started with a woman he wasn't really interested in but enjoyed spending time with. He had begun using some of the communication tools we discussed but he wasn't seeing the results he wanted. It wasn't until our fourth session when he mentioned the partner's possible relocation that I thought a shift might happen, because he was upset that she didn't consider him in her decision to move. But to no avail.

By the time we finished our fourth session, I was losing faith in my ability to help this client and his willingness to trust the work he was doing, since it was all right there for him to see. Needless to say, I wasn't looking forward to our fifth session since that was one session away from closing out the relationship, and we hadn't yet answered the original questions or made progress so that we were close to getting there.

To my utter amazement, it was as if a completely different client had joined our fifth session.

He was optimistic: about the session, about the possibility of a partner and future relationship, and about the work he'd done on his own since we last spoke. He even took the initiative to write up some further observations and ideas to discuss in the session with me. He spent most of that hour talking me through all the stuff he'd accomplished in the week since our previous session, coming off the back of his current partner's comment that there was nothing there to keep her from relocating. He said he took time to reflect on his feelings about that, in anticipation of questions I would ask him, and he realised his desires and actions were in complete opposition. He wanted to be in a relationship but was choosing partners he wasn't interested in being with long term. In this current situation, he felt that she was keener on him than he was on her, yet he was concerned when she didn't consider him when relocating. In a series of realisations from this response, he finally admitted to himself that he was choosing to be with anyone rather than no one because he didn't like being alone. Despite my many questions around these points in previous sessions, he'd come to it on his own, in his own time, and was excited about the revelation.

He said he finally realised he was focusing on what his partners had done in the relationships, instead of taking responsibility for his part in both choosing to be in a relationship with someone he only felt moderately interested in and, more importantly, his unwillingness to make the relationship work. He then spoke of a questionnaire he'd put together to review on his own in future relationships, about the time a relationship was beginning to get serious. This was a list of questions that he would ask himself to check in on how he was feeling about things; a way for him to take responsibility for where he was in the relationship, rather than go along with what was happening to him.

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I asked how he felt about the possibility of being in a relationship in future. He answered quickly, with a smile on his face, "I feel good about the idea of being in a relationship, but more importantly I'm less concerned about jumping into a relationship that I don't want to be in, just because the alternative is being single for a while longer."

The light bulb had finally turned on and it was shining bright!

For more than four hours of discussions with him, nothing seemed to be sticking or making him change the attitude that his life was happening to him until he took the time to consider what I would ask about in our next session. For someone I thought I had turned off the benefits of coaching, my witness of such a turnaround in one short week brought home to me the faith in my abilities as a coach: that it can work, not necessarily in my time, and that change and transformation takes place outside of the actual time in coaching. This was something I'd learned in my training but didn't understand fully until that day.

# Chaos and Structure in Coaching

ALICIA BENITO-MARTINEZ

Why do clients come to coaching?

Some of them may have one clear aim in mind, but more often than not clients are too confused to know exactly what they are looking for, or even what is wrong.

When a client brings to the table a large number of issues to be dealt with, or has a need to share a wide variety of experiences and feelings, it can be difficult to find the balance between providing sufficient time and space for the client to express himself fully and making sure he is working towards a positive outcome.

For me, that's why goal setting remains a critical component of transformational coaching; as important in this context as it is in performance coaching. It is the coach's job to make sure that the outcomes are well defined from the beginning, and the client is gently brought back to the original goal throughout the sessions to ensure progress. This is not only to check that the client actually wants change and that the outcome can be monitored, but also to provide the client with a safe framework to define his personal experience.

The following is an example of a "light bulb" moment related to goal setting that I had with one of my clients:

From the moment this client answered his phone I could hear how low in spirits he felt. His tone of voice was monotonous, he was undecided, apologetic and sounded very concerned.

I found myself thinking that if I had met him randomly I probably wouldn't have chosen to hang around with him for too long. You

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know what I mean: the kind of person that has a negative view of the world, himself, or both, and completely saps your energy. However, I was determined to help him feel better and we agreed to meet the following week in central London.

Looking at him confirmed my initial impression: a gentleman in his forties without a trace of a smile, looking pale and worn out.

During our first exchange his main concern seemed to be whether to move to a different country or not. With this as an opener, I went on to enquire about his life and current situation to try to figure out the shape of his map of the world.

He was a consultant, which gave him the freedom to work from anywhere he liked; but such freedom was also a burden, since he had many more options to consider. He felt disconnected from friends and family, literally describing his interactions with other people as disjointed, like little circles that coexist but never get to form one compact, bigger circle.

He also went on to discuss his perceived lack of social life and search for a special person. He didn't know which country to choose as destination, whether to sell his flat - which he had bought and then decided it wasn't for him - and he also wanted to look at health and wellbeing, finances and work.

Nothing seemed to be in order!

As the conversation unfolded, it also became apparent that he had an acute sense of having lost himself and the way his life used to be, and of being in the process of creating a new one without a clear idea of where he stood and how to start creating what he wanted. He also seemed to be tremendously hard on himself, with many words of harsh self-criticism.

For about fifty minutes he willingly provided me with a wealth of information about himself; so much so, in fact, that I found keeping track of everything that needed to be discussed a challenging task, with every question bringing yet more elements into the conversation that had to be explored or changed. I wondered if that is what it was like to be him: overwhelmed by a world in which one problem leads to another, where there is no direction, no clue of what is important – no wonder he looked like he was carrying a heavy burden on his shoulders.

At that point, I simply asked, “What do you want your goal for the next session to be?”

And there was his light bulb moment! He was quiet for a minute. It seems obvious, but he was so caught up in all his feelings that he hadn't realised he could actually compartmentalise the different aspects of his life to be prioritised and explored methodically. I could see that his mind was busy trying to work out where he stood and what was most important for him.

By then the session was almost finished, but I had witnessed the most remarkable physical transformation: colour was back in his cheeks and he was smiling and walking straight. He gave me a quick hug – which took me a bit by surprise – and also requested confirmation that we could meet the same day, same place the following week.

He turned up to the next session with a clear idea of where he was in the different aspects of his life and what he wanted to explore. He had written it down and we worked together on defining the steps that would take him closer to those aims.

He had fully owned his own growth process and was working towards it one step at a time. I was just giving him the space for him to do so.

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This experience taught me a number of things. As coaches we are so used to having the coaching hat on that we forget how easy it is *not* to take the time to stop and reflect on priorities; or know what the priorities are but not work towards them; or work towards them but not effectively. Indeed, how often do we do that ourselves?

Asking my client to set up a clear goal turned his inner chaos into a structured experience, giving him a sense of control over his life. This is especially true with clients in great emotional turmoil: it's worth taking a step back, bringing order back and reminding them that they are capable of taking control.

I also learnt that an attitude of non-judgment is essential in coaching, no matter what first impression we have of the client. Plato was very right when he said, "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle". People suffering from depression, anxiety, addictions and so on have simply taken themselves to their personal limit by trying to stay strong for too long. We must believe that they have their own resources to heal themselves. It is a pleasure and an honour to be there to help the client fight his own battles.

# Taking Responsibility for A Great Life

ELISA KLÜVER

When we began the session my client was feeling frustrated and resentful towards her boyfriend. To her mind, he wasn't taking an equal share in their financial responsibilities even though they have a son together. She felt she had to work more in the job she didn't love to be able to pay the bills and so couldn't find the time to explore where she'd like to go and what she'd like to do instead.

I suggested she consider that resentment provides us with a payoff we are not aware of, and that if we found that hidden benefit she'd be in a better position to create change. She was surprised at this idea yet open to hear more. We explored the effects of resentment - does it benefit our mood or our enjoyment of life? Or does it lead us to change something about our life that doesn't work? No, it doesn't. If it did, there wouldn't be any resentment - identifying and changing something that doesn't work for us is a beautiful expression of life. There is nothing stuck there. She accepted my suggestion that being resentful might be hiding something - yet it was unclear to her what that might be. Surely she would love this situation to change and have the time and freedom to find out what she wanted to do with her life, and care about herself for once?

We needed quite a while to find out what the benefit of being resentful might be for her, but I was clear that if there is an area in our life where we choose to be resentful and in *inaction* rather than in *action* to change things (which would immediately alleviate the resentment), the resentment is hiding the real reason for us to not be in action!

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Looking at the area of our clients' lives where they aren't taking any action is helpful; in this case my client was not having an open conversation with her boyfriend, she wasn't working out a deal with him on how to improve the situation, she wasn't even arguing with him about it, nor did she break up with him.

Once I asked what would happen if she did sort this situation out, and he *did* take more financial responsibility on, we arrived at the so called light bulb moment: if she stopped being resentful and took action, she might actually get the time to find out what *she* wanted to do with her life and start making it happen. This thought, however, didn't make her happy or *smiley*, instead her deeply hidden worries surfaced: she might not find anything. Maybe nothing inspired her, maybe she had no 'me' to find. Thinking 'I want a great life, but I can't have it because of my boyfriend' was in comparison the safer option. That way she wouldn't have to confront a possible emptiness or lack of dreams inside herself. On the other hand, it obviously didn't allow her to ever get what she really wanted – a life with a job she loved, creativity and self-expression!

Having fully understood the purpose of her resentment, the resentment itself was no longer an issue for her. She was free from the superficial obstructions of getting closer to her dreams, and I used the rest of the session to encourage her that she *would* find out who she was and what she wanted to do, as soon as she actually created the space for that to happen. Sure, it might be uncomfortable at first to have 'empty' time to herself, say one hour of solitary 'me-time' in which she wasn't going to be able to be busy and hide from *pure being* and whichever emotions and thoughts that would bring up; but soon enough her creativity would start to flow and she would find things she'd want to do with herself and that time!

Ultimately she was calmer; she was clearer; she wasn't altogether upbeat and excited about making that time for herself, as she still didn't know what would come out of it, yet she saw the necessity of doing so and set about doing it. No resentment hampered her relationship and, having distinguished the fear of finding nothing, no cover-up was possible any more and the next steps to take were clear.

A few months after this session, she is already full of new ideas and actions and much happier. She's started to sing, even though she believes she doesn't actually know how to do it, and she's asked her boyfriend to record her!

Without this session and getting clear on her fear, we might have spent another six sessions making brilliant plans on how to free her up. None of them would have worked, as she was subconsciously avoiding finding nothing!

So, how can we, as coaches, lead to these kinds of light bulb moment? By standing for our clients' responsibility in absolutely every area of their life! And by that I mean their power to create something in any situation at all. By being unwilling to get distracted and lost, looking at circumstances that suggest our client is somehow unable to change things as the factors lie outside of them, and by asserting that anything in our clients' lives is within their reach of influence. All of this in an empowering way, not leaving them to feel that they are responsible for having messed their own life up and should get it together, but instead curiously inquiring into what stops them changing things. What benefit does being stopped offer? And mind you, that benefit is never actually worth the cost, but it does provide a value that we need to discover.

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For me, another prerequisite is the coach's own life. We have to constantly take responsibility for our own lives. Looking at my client's resentment in that way can only work if it doesn't mean that I am losing out on good excuses for myself! If I was resentful in some area of my life, surely I wouldn't be able to help someone else to look at whatever their resentment hides.

Finally, regular sessions and commitment from the client are necessary, I believe, for this kind of result. Initially, she and I had met several times before but with long interludes between each session, which made it hard to notice a pattern. While I'd say we progressed it was comparatively superficial. Once we got into regular sessions, as well as the one described here, we jumped miles ahead each time!

All in all, the skill applied in this session was simply being fully present with the client, without judgement, curiously looking into what is stopping them having a great life in which they are wholly responsible for every aspect of it. And not being worried about what the client might think of me if I pointed them towards responsibility. Some won't like it (my client was very gracious about that indeed), and if they don't, we need to explain it in a way that presents the benefits of this kind of world view. It can be challenging to acknowledge that the *stuff* that annoys us is really our own responsibility – it's also generally unconventional thinking in our society. However, if they understand that this outlook on life will give them a great amount of power to create a life they love, and that there is nothing wrong with how they are now (in fact, it's how human beings usually are) they should be much more open to try responsibility on and achieve amazing results – which is what we coaches are about, isn't it?

# Choosing the Right Tool for the Job

HAZEL MCCALLUM

Karen was a single mother with two sons, 17 and 24 years old, both attending college and living at home. She had a very demanding job, working long hours as well as every other weekend, and was often on call. She approached me to work with her on a goal of wanting to 'change her life'. She acknowledged that this was quite an ambitious goal but we could work on different areas in turn. We needed to establish what she meant by this, and by getting more specific we identified the changes she wanted to make.

The first thing she wanted was more time to spend on herself doing things she wanted to do, like running or going to the gym, and less time spent on housework and chores. Karen supported her sons financially and did everything for them - shopping, cleaning, washing, ironing and cooking. I asked if the boys had ever helped around the house, and she said that they did if she asked them but not otherwise. One of her sons had worked before going back to college and had looked after himself then. When asked if there was a way she could get the boys to do more, she couldn't think of anything and said she had 'tried everything' and had given up.

She said she was sick of coming home from work and finding the house a mess, with dishes in the sink, washing still on the dryer, no supper cooked and the house dirty and untidy even though her sons may have been home all day.

She felt 'at the end of her rope' and thought if she could just change this one thing, she would be much happier; but she doubted that it could be changed as nothing had worked in the past. She felt her sons

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didn't appreciate her and took her for granted, and she felt 'beaten and tired'.

When we spoke about her relationship with the boys generally she brightened and said that, apart from in this situation, they had great fun together at times. They were good boys really and she wanted to have more quality time with them and stop being a miserable, nagging mother.

We used the cognitive behavioural coaching approach with the STAR model to explore the context of this particular **S**ituation, the **T**houghts and feelings she had when she was going into this situation, her typical **A**ctions and the **R**esults of those actions.

Although Karen already knew the boys never did any work at home, she said when she arrived home late and tired and found nothing done she would still feel disappointed, upset and angry. She would then do what needed to be done without comment.

To cope she would then 'crack open a bottle of wine to calm down'.

When asked how effective her reaction had been up until now, she said that it hadn't led to any change but that she couldn't really seem to act in any other way. It was having a negative effect on her health; she dreaded going home and was drinking too much and had even started smoking again, which she hated.

I asked Karen what she thought her sons expected of her and she replied that they depended on her and that it was her 'responsibility as a mother' to do everything for them. I asked what she meant by this, and she replied that she was responsible for her sons' happiness and repeated that it was her 'duty as a mother' to look after her children.

I questioned Karen on her values, and she immediately replied that her most important value was 'family'. When I asked what she meant by this she said she believed she had to look after her family, as they

needed her. I asked if this is what was really expected of her and she admitted it probably wasn't, but when she did things for herself, not for the benefit of the house and her sons, she felt guilty. This was the first time she had recognised this and it took her a few minutes to absorb it. I asked Karen if this belief regarding her sense of duty was inhibiting her and, after some thought, she said it did stop her asking for help. It was having a negative impact on her and the boys and she was imposing very strict standards on herself.

Continuing to explore her beliefs, I decided to use the A-F model to unpick this limiting belief. We looked at the possible sources of the belief, which Karen thought came from her traditional Irish parents. She described her dad as the 'higher' one and that her Mum's job was to 'do everything for the family'. Her mother had given up her nursing career when she married her father, and prided herself on keeping a 'good home' and was responsible for everything to do with the house. Her father and brothers hadn't lifted a finger around the home, but Karen had been expected to do so from an early age.

As she was talking about this Karen began to realise that the negative aspects of her behaviour came directly from her mother, and her reaction reflected the air of martyrdom her mother had affected. This was a real light bulb moment for Karen and she needed some time to grasp this. I held silence and, when she was ready, Karen began to speak again about how she hadn't appreciated this before, and how she had adopted her mother's beliefs as to what the males in the family should be expected to do, and her role as a mother.

I asked if there was any evidence to support the belief that she should be responsible for everything and she said there wasn't.

She said she realised that this behaviour was not relevant in her situation, as she had a career whereas her mother had sacrificed her career for her family. In transactional analysis we learn that operating from a particular ego state often elicits a reaction from a

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corresponding ego state. In this particular situation Karen reverted to her controlling parent like her mother had, and the boys had reacted by adopting a corresponding child ego state. We discussed this and how Karen, operating in her adult ego state, may elicit an adult response from her boys. She recognised that in other situations the three of them communicated as adults, such as when they were out, and she appreciated the difference in their attitudes and behaviours at these times.

She accepted that this belief was not serving her and had been the reason for her failure to find a solution in the past. We looked at an alternative belief she could exchange with this that could better serve both her and the boys. She suggested that she was a good mother and would always support them, but didn't have to do everything for them. She said she would substitute the limiting belief with a new belief that she could still be a good mother and have a close relationship with her boys whilst encouraging them to be more independent of her.

We returned to the practicalities of getting the boys to help. Karen appeared stuck so I suggested we brainstorm possible solutions, which she welcomed, and for two minutes only we each wrote random solutions. I wanted Karen to come up with the solution and I wanted to introduce an element of fun into the session. We came up with many ideas, but the one Karen was excited by was drawing up a rota and allocating the main chores that needed doing each week. She would sit with the boys and discuss this to get their buy in. Karen agreed that this action was achievable. As an added benefit, if she had less housework to do on a Saturday she could spend time teaching her youngest child how to cook, which Karen knew he would enjoy.

I asked what the barriers could be to achieving this, and she said work might get in the way of actually writing the rota, but she couldn't see any other obstacles to be overcome. I asked what she would do if the boys still didn't do the chores; but she was confident that if she told them how she felt they would do it.

The following week a different Karen walked into the room. She reported how she had drawn up the rota, helped by the boys who thought it was a fantastic idea and took to it readily; even to the extent of her youngest cooking her supper one night, which delighted both of them – even if it was just cheese on toast.

On reflection, I realise how the choice of coaching models and holding space collaborated to create a light bulb moment when Karen realised how a limiting belief had been causing her to behave unhelpfully in her situation. The STAR model enabled us to unpick Karen's problem situation and acted as a natural precursor to using the A-F model for exploring values and beliefs. The more I practice with coaching models, the more I realise how they can be used in their entirety or simply the part relevant at that time. Like any craftsman, familiarity with the tools at my disposal means that I can flow easily in and out of the models and frameworks as required, reaching that all-desired, unconsciously competent stage of my professional growth.

## A Moment in Someone Else's Shoes

SONIA GILL

I'd always thought that to use any kind of NLP-type coaching technique, like perceptual positions, you had to be physically present with the client; however, my view was to change after working with Chloe.

Chloe, a deputy head in a challenging primary school, recently had a new head teacher join her school. John was a highly regarded Head, who had taken his previous school to Outstanding (the highest grading a school can achieve) and was very much seen as the man to turn Chloe's school around whilst still running his outstanding school.

Whilst Chloe was an easy-going, competent and likeable person, the relationship with her new Head was becoming strained. She liked him, but she found the way in which he worked so different to how she worked; and despite her best attempts both to be flexible and to discuss the issues with her Head, the steps to move them forward were slow and small.

During a telephone coaching session with Chloe, I decided to try using perceptual positions. I'll admit I had never tried this over the phone before; in fact, I'd never tried any NLP techniques on the phone. But I had seen their immense power and it seemed like the right approach to try. Perceptual positions is a particularly useful technique for helping people who are having difficulty with a relationship. It works by putting the client in four positions: 1) themselves, 2) the other person in the relationship, 3) an onlooking friend or colleague and 4) an expert with great knowledge of their field (such as an anthropologist, psychologist or leadership expert). There are two very important parts of the process: firstly the client needs to physically sit, or stand,

as if in conversation with the person or as an onlooker, whichever is appropriate for the position; and secondly they need to assume the role of the other person when in the position. The skill as a coach is in gently supporting them to truly be in role when necessary and, in my experience, this has been about tuning into the client's non-verbal signals and reminding them to sit as the other person would, to use their words, their tone of voice and their gestures.

Without explaining the process first, I simply asked Chloe if she wanted to try something that I thought would work to help her develop this relationship; she did.

I asked her to set out some chairs as if she and John were going to have a conversation and sit where she would sit within that. In the first position, as herself, I asked her to tell John how she felt and what she wanted from him. As she talked I could hear in her voice how she was saying what she thought she should be saying to John; it was all very measured and professional, but not the kinds of things she would talk to me about during our coaching sessions. I pushed Chloe, through some gentle questioning, to start telling John the impact it was having on her, and soon the emotion started to come out along with what she would really like to say to John, all of which was still professional but hit at the real issues for Chloe.

When she had finished I said we should thank John for listening to Chloe and then asked her to move to sit where John was sitting. In this second position, as John, she took a little while to feel comfortable but soon began to take on the role of John. She used his words, the way she spoke changed to being more authoritative and forthright, and as John she shared how he understood things were hard for her in the way he worked, but that he relied on her and trusted her in running one of his two schools, and that he valued her contribution immensely.

Moving into the third position of a friend or colleague I asked Chloe to stand so she could see the seats where Chloe and John had spoken

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to each other and to tell me what she saw, as an onlooker, in this relationship. As she spoke I could hear Chloe's own voice begin to change; she began to sound excited and strong. She explained how she saw respect, how these were two people who admired one another and could have a great working relationship, but that in these early stages of just a few months they were learning about each other. I could see Chloe's light bulb beginning to burn bright and I wasn't sure whether to stay in this third position or move onto the fourth. I normally opt for holding the silence in coaching and giving the client space; however, the excitement and energy made me feel moving into the fourth and final position was what Chloe needed, because it felt like we were on the path to insight and we needed to keep moving forward.

In this final position, that of an expert, I asked Chloe to move as far away as she could from the chairs John and Chloe had had their conversation in, but to still be able to see them. When in this place I asked her to be an expert, such as a historian, anthropologist, relationship guru, experienced retired head teacher, whatever she wanted, and when she was ready for her to tell me, in her expert opinion, what she saw and what advice she would give John and Chloe. She also saw respect and the early stages of their relationship forming, and added that this journey would be bumpy but incredibly rewarding. The expert went on to say that Chloe had a Head Teacher who believed in her and wanted to empower her as much as possible and, in Chloe, John had a capable, committed Deputy Head who would help him with his new challenge which was taking him out of his comfort zone, something he hadn't experienced for quite some time. Together they could achieve great things and have a strong and enjoyable relationship, but this would take some time and effort. Communication was going to be key within all of this; they needed to build on the honesty they had already established as this would be important in their continuing relationship development, and even when it felt hard it was always worth being open with her thoughts, ideas and where she disagreed with John, something he respected her for.

Having spent about forty minutes working through the four perceptual positions, I asked Chloe to be fully herself again and, as herself, what she thought about the situation now. The difference in her was incredible; in her own words she felt powerful and she certainly sounded powerful over the phone. Through a combination of position three, a friend, and position four, an expert, Chloe had her light bulb moment; she was able to see the relationship in a new light and for what it was, without the noise of her own thoughts and emotions. Looking at it objectively she could clearly see not only the strengths, but also the context of their relationship and work to date; it was a young relationship, and whilst the communication had been hard it had been laying the foundations for the respect Chloe saw and the future strength of the relationship. Equipped with this new insight into their relationship she was in a strong place to move it forward, which she did, her new perspective and understanding providing the key to this.

For me it was startling to experience the power of perceptual positions through telephone coaching. It was a leap of faith and I have learnt a lot from it. Firstly, with coaching you never know how it's going to work out, and that is more of a reason to try something different than not. After all, that's exactly what we are trying to get our clients to do, isn't it? To try something different in order to create positive change.

Secondly, NLP techniques, those that require the client to move into a different state, be it a future position or someone else's shoes, do work over the phone, and also Skype as I have subsequently discovered, and I have used several different techniques in this way, all with a huge positive effect. I've always thought the different formats for coaching (in person, telephone and Skype) offer their own advantages, and this has really been borne out for me in using NLP techniques. I'm now always on the lookout, and even actively searching, for other NLP techniques that work well within coaching so I can use them to the benefit of my coaching clients, and help them create positive change in their lives and in the lives of others.

animas

## **We Are Human Beings, Not Machines!**

**DANIEL PEREIRA**

Like many new coaches first starting out, my initial concerns in coaching sessions were around identifying which questions to use during the sessions. What had seemed straightforward in training felt very different in the real world and I often felt I had no idea what question to ask. I had thought I would know intuitively, or that the questions would come with practice. I assumed we all use coaching questions without realising it and I had learned my first coaching model which I felt should help.

I was following its pattern of questions when I realised, after a few sessions, I was becoming a machine! I was going through the motions and I wasn't truly present for the client. I think this happens to many other coaches at the beginning of their journey; perhaps it's the nerves and a need for some clear structure that make us start coaching like robots. But the sooner the coach can spot this tendency and recapture the true spirit of coaching the better.

For me, thankfully, this realisation took place quite quickly, allowing me to develop a much needed connection and space for my first client.

She was a young professional in her 30s and her main goal was to improve her organisational skills so that she could conclude her Master's Degree. She had a tight schedule to deliver it and we worked towards delivering by the deadline. It was very important to complete it on time as she had a flight booked; she was going to stay with her family for Christmas after a long time without seeing them.

Her main challenge was to be able to concentrate on writing her dissertation, continue with her job and at the same time not to allow some unspoken issues with her family to block her.

To start, in my somewhat uncertain, robotic state, I used my foundational model; but by the third session I started to realise that sticking to the model was narrowing our work and was not giving space for a more exploratory approach. The client seemed to have a very clear goal, but I felt that she was avoiding something. After the third session, I thought about changing my approach; however, I was still unsure about trying different ones.

But events were to ensure I changed my approach! During the fourth session, something shifted on her side and everything changed dramatically without much effort on my part. We had barely started, and before I said much she started crying desperately. She took some time to recover and to explain what was happening.

The client had received the news that her father had been diagnosed with cancer and her life was about to change completely. She had not mentioned much about her personal life in the beginning, and that moment was really powerful to me and for the client as well.

For a few seconds, I had no reaction. But then I decided not to use any techniques, models or approaches. Instead, I simply made a strong connection with her as a human being and asked how I could best support her in this session. The client said she just needed to be listened to and asked if that was fine with me. I totally agreed with her and connected deeply with her needs. It was an overwhelming but wonderful experience for both of us.

After having the space needed to talk, she was even able to refocus on her dissertation tasks. From that session, the client opened up and was able to trust more in our work and even explore areas of her life which she was in some way or another avoiding.

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So it seems the light bulb was really for me! I discovered that coaching is not about models or particular questions but about creating the space to connect with another human being and allow what surfaces to happen. From that session onward I changed my approach and that experience was one of the greatest stepping-stones of my journey.

I now take a much more open and flexible approach to coaching and I feel relaxed in my sessions. I work with my intuition, my personal attributes, and I am not afraid of trying new approaches.

Sometimes in life we may doubt our capacities and abilities, or even attach ourselves to things because they are familiar and safe. We end up limiting ourselves. What we truly are has no limits; we are creators, and with faith and compassion for what life brings us we can open ourselves to receive and serve the whole.

# Social Breakthrough Within A Couple

MALIKA REMILI

Sometimes it takes a series of tiny sparks to shed light on an issue not previously deemed relevant. And then there is the “hit over the head” comment or remark that blinds you like a floodlight; and suddenly, a new path seems to open up and anything is possible again...

My client Jessica has been married to Mark for the past ten years and they have two kids. She realised that, as a couple, they don't share much anymore. They hardly go out, nor do they socialise together because they don't have mutual friends. She feels that they are more and more going their separate ways, except for the kids.

I asked her to describe how she would *want* things to be.

She referred to other couples and how they organise dinners, picnics, and go on holiday with their friends and the kids. All she wants is to share a social life with her husband; unfortunately he systematically refuses to go out and meet new people with her. He is, however, often out with his own friends.

I asked her to tell me about a situation where she did organise something and Mark refused to join.

She replied: “When there are events at the school, all the parents would be there chatting to one another, while Mark would not bother talking to anyone. He would just stand around for few minutes and then disappear”. On another occasion, she invited a couple home for a coffee. Yet again, Mark did not bother sitting with them; instead he quickly greeted them and disappeared.

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After listening to Jessica talking about her frustration and her need to create mutual friends with her husband, I asked her to tell me about Mark's friends and her own.

She raised her eyebrows and went silent for a second. She didn't seem to expect this question and looked like she had long forgotten that they actually do have friends...

She explained how her friends are very different from her husband's friends and so therefore they have been seeing them separately.

"How different are your friends?" I asked, trying to get to the value behind the statement.

Dismissively, she replied that Mark's friends and hers come from two different 'worlds' and so she wants to create a new 'world' acceptable for both.

Intrigued, I asked her to give me five adjectives to describe these two 'worlds'.

As I took note, it became clear that Jessica did not like Mark's friends. She became more and more uncomfortable as she tried to explain why she disliked Mark's friendships. In the end, she recognised that she never really made any effort towards them and so doesn't really know them after all. Ultimately, she admitted that her opinion about them was mainly driven by presumptions and prejudices.

"I come from an upper class family and Mark comes from a modest background. His friends and their wives are not very educated and so I find it hard to connect with them on a social level," she explained.

On the other hand, her own friends were successful artists and high flyers, and although Mark had always been nice and respectful towards her acquaintances, he was never really interested in getting more involved with them either.

As I could feel a sense of regret in her voice, I asked Jessica to close her eyes and hold her two hands in front of her. "Imagine that one hand represents your friends and the other hand represents Mark's friends. How could you make these two hands join together?" I asked.

As she was painfully trying to join her two hands, she gave up and affirmed that there was no chance these two can join because without doubt they would clash.

"How do you know they will clash?" I challenged.

She went silent. Her eyes observed the walls and the ceiling for few seconds. Then she was going to say something but instead she closed her eyes again and held her two hands in front of her.

As she closed her eyes, she couldn't understand why the first image that flashed in her mind was the pub across their street where Mark usually hangs out.

A minute later, she suddenly opened her eyes and pronounced the word "event".... She repeated the word several times like she was trying to make sense of it.

Then, she looked at me and said: "I suppose it's about time for me to start building a bridge between our two worlds... Maybe I could indeed organise something... and I would invite his friends, and mine and some couples from the school... I could do it in the pub; it's across the street so it's convenient to keep an eye on the kids..."

She was absorbed with her thoughts, when suddenly, shaking her head, she rejected the idea and declared; "This is completely silly! Mark will never accept doing this!"

"What will you do next?" I asked, inviting her to a task and leaving the control of her journey with her. This was going to have to be her move.

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A week later, Jessica reported back that she had talked to Mark and he liked the idea, and even volunteered to help organise the event!

It is such a powerful moment for a coach to see the client's stream of thoughts unfold and to reach a decisive point where everything shifts to give way to a new perspective.

For Jessica, creating new and mutual friendships was a necessity to maintain balance and harmony in her relationship. She hadn't considered other options and dismissed their current friends for reasons that, it appeared, needed to be addressed.

When Jessica talked about their "two worlds" and creating a "new world", I paraphrased her naturally and said "so you want to create a third world?" We both smiled at this uninvited analogy, but it still left us thinking...

# Shining the Light on a Limiting Belief

RAJ CARR

It was four sessions in and Dave was getting increasingly agitated at his inability to finish projects. Dave hadn't actually come to me to explore this particular challenge - it had originally been simply about helping plan his move from Manchester to London. But as it turned out, it was the work that we did around finishing projects that became life changing for him, empowering him to live a happier and more fulfilling life.

Dave had a number of projects going on, some producing income and others that had been put on hold. He was a co-director of two successful city centre bars/cafes, co-founder of a furniture company, a musician with an unfinished music project and he had started writing a book. There was a fifth project, a bar/cafe in London, which he had recently launched himself into. It was for this project that he had planned to move back to London.

The first two sessions had mostly been about exploring the ensuing move to London. Something shifted in the third session and Dave was clearly more interested in exploring the present and what was happening in his life right now. There was a past relationship that was haunting him which he felt he had never really resolved, and he was having very negative feelings around his inability to finish projects. I picked up on how important these things were for him and in the following sessions we began to explore the landscape behind these negative feelings.

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As he started to explain his *inability* to finish projects, he shared an example of how he had built a beautiful tree house in his parents' garden but had never quite managed to finish the roof off. He had been the butt of many family jokes for not finishing it and had been ridiculed, particularly by his brothers. There were other projects that hadn't been finished that had produced negative comments from outside his family, and it seemed this had led Dave to a belief that it was necessary to finish projects in order to be a successful person. The challenge that Dave had was that he was that he felt he was not a natural finisher.

Further exploration uncovered some natural tendencies in his life. He was someone who had innovative ideas and was able to put them into action. He was a great team worker and was able to collaborate with other people to make things happen. Many of his projects had been successful in terms of benefitting local communities. It was often the case that when the projects were deemed to be successful he would get bored, lose interest and start looking at the next project to develop.

The fourth session arrived. I thought that it might be useful to look at Belbin's team roles. Belbin detected that people generally have different strengths and when working as part of a team are more accomplished at carrying out roles connected to their strengths. Dave got excited about Belbin's ideas (in fact, he would go on to show the model to his team to explore with him). He said that it felt like a seed had been planted in his mind, allowing him to feel more comfortable around his own strengths and what he had perceived as being weaknesses.

In the last fifteen minutes of that session I introduced the idea of limiting beliefs to him. I asked Dave a key question, "Why do you think it's a negative thing not to finish projects?" After a long pause he answered carefully, citing all the negative feedback he had received

from his family and friends over the years. The conversation continued for some time. I asked “So how do *you* feel inside yourself about not finishing projects?” Dave smiled and relayed a long list of reasons why he felt it was OK not to finish projects. He laughed out loud, turning a few heads in the café!

In that moment, Dave understood the limiting belief that he had been living with for so long. He realised that he did not need to finish a project that he had set up if he did not want to. This realisation was a massive relief to him. Dave was clear that he wanted to explore how he could carry this forward in his life.

Over the next couple of sessions we looked at ways Dave could turn this limiting belief into an empowering belief and strength. There were two things in particular that challenged Dave. He was unhappy at the way new people were now running some of the projects that he had set up *and* he had admitted he had become envious of the income that was being harvested from a couple of the projects that others had taken over from him. I asked Dave how he would like things to be. He was cautious in answering, “I would like to handover the projects to people who have similar aims to myself and I would like to continue to receive an income from some of the projects.” “How do you think you can make this happen?” I asked.

Dave spoke about a number of ways he could recruit people with a similar ethos to himself, and how he could hand over the day to day running of the project without losing complete control. He came up with ideas about how he could retain a reasonable percentage of the income from any given project. He realised it would make him a lot happier if he could work out a way of putting these two things into action, and we spent a couple of sessions doing exactly that. He eventually developed a blueprint for project handover and income continuation, which he felt would work for him.

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Dave put some of these things into action in a very short space of time. On the back of this he managed to create space for some of the projects that he really wanted to get back into.

In short, he said, that he was beginning to live again!

In retrospect it's interesting to see how a limiting belief exists as an inner law and can prevent a person from doing what they really want to do. This in turn can affect their happiness and self-fulfilment. For me, the light bulb moment of realisation is when that person becomes aware they are limiting themselves with an unhelpful belief. This is what makes the light bulb moment so profound. And of course, a person may be holding a number of limiting beliefs and this may be just one of many insights on their journey to a more fulfilling life.

Light bulb moments may not happen every session. Because light bulb moments are so empowering it's difficult not to want them to happen more often. In my experience once you start wanting them to happen, they don't! Essentially the whole client journey is important: the exploration; the silences; the visualisations; the dream scenarios; the goal setting, and so on.

One thing's for sure. When a light bulb moment does happen, it is often a beautifully powerful moment!

# Where Are Your Perceptions Holding You Back?

NAMI HAGHIGHI

Sometimes it is very difficult for us to see things from a different perspective and even if we listen to our friends' and family's advice, we can fail to see the value of such advice and act on it. As a coach you notice how this shows up in a client's language and how they defend the way they see and do things.

This story began when a client contacted me concerning a franchise he was about to buy into in the North of England and about which he wanted my input. He had been searching for the right franchise deal for about two years and was keen to sign the agreement and get started. He updated me with all his findings and shared the agreement and projections supplied by the franchisor.

The franchise was a café business with a popular range of cakes as their key product. And on the surface it all looked like a credible business with several franchises already in place. He had also followed the process we agreed, visited many of the branches and met the master franchisor. He liked the team and their outfit but thankfully he was smart enough to know that he was too close to the deal and was blind to any downsides it might have. He had enough savings to meet the reasonable start-up costs and fees, and the projections the franchisor had provided seemed reasonable, showing healthy profits within the first year. I could see that his excitement was starting to cloud his judgment and he just wanted to get started.

We started to examine the details and I could hear the excitement in his voice during our meetings. He shared his vision of expanding to three units within two years, how his cafés would be even better and

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how introducing home delivery could boost sales. He was so excited and convinced that he was about to put down a deposit to secure his territory.

I set to work analysing the figures and the agreement and he was to visit and talk to other franchisees to back up the facts and figures behind the business. It didn't take long before I found two major flaws in the businesses proposal. My client would be tied to buying all of his main supplies from the franchisor, and some inaccurate assumptions supporting the projections were alarming enough to raise my suspicions. The sales figures in the projections were inflated and many costs, including rent and rates (substantial costs in this case), were underestimated. The new projections I prepared showed that he would have to achieve sales higher than those achieved by any other franchisee in the last eight years to make a reasonable profit.

In a nutshell, I could see that my client was taking all the risk, putting in almost all the work and financing every new unit, and taking less than half of the profits; yet he was given the impression he was only paying a small royalty fee!

Although at the outset we had agreed that my client would visit the busiest franchisees and ask about their experiences, he never found the time or, more importantly, the courage to do so.

His perception was that they wouldn't have time for him, and why would they reveal details about their business to a total stranger? He was running a belief in his mind, based on his perceptions that people won't willingly help, even though he had never tried it out by asking! Don't get me wrong; I don't judge him. I know how challenging it can be to step outside your comfort zone and belief systems even when the stakes are so high. But it was now crucial to gather evidence to back up my findings, in order to show my client the reality of this business deal and help him make a more informed decision.

So I travelled up north and on a cold sleety day we walked in unannounced to have coffee and a chat with the owner of the most successful franchise café. He wasn't there but the manager called him at my request, and a two minute call led to him joining us for coffee. He spent over two hours giving us all the insights we needed. Chatting over complimentary coffee and cake, he confirmed that the franchisors were very supportive and the systems and the brand very helpful, but lack of profits had forced them to re-mortgage their home to keep the business going. Eight years on, they were still struggling to make the profit they wanted and deserved. Sadly they had not looked into the proposal too deeply at the outset and felt that they just had to work harder and longer and somehow make their business profitable. In return for his kindness I offered to help him build his profile on the social media platforms where he felt he needed some help.

My client's disbelief at what was happening was evident. His light bulb moment was clear to see, so I sat back and let him ask all the questions he needed to ask. It was so rewarding to watch him explore this new opportunity and engage and discover the new-found resource his perception had been denying him for so long.

My client saved himself at least £100,000 and two or more years of his life, and he just couldn't believe how a dozen franchise units were set up and running. He now felt able to go and talk to all of them if he so wished but he realised that the deal was not what it was made out to be. He was disappointed that it hadn't worked out but grateful he saw the full picture before it was too late.

On the way back to London he began to share how grateful he was for the huge amount of time, money and energy he was able to save because of that one conversation. He also reflected on the importance of his changed perception and felt it was the biggest lesson in our work together on this project.

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Looking back on the whole experience I was reminded of how challenging it can be for clients to see or accept reality as we may see it, and how helpful the coaching process can be to start them on a journey of discovery, where they can be supported in questioning their perceptions and be challenged to consider the validity of such perception by asking how such a perception is serving them and what if things could be different to how they perceived them.

We must also be prepared to go further and walk them through the process, if that's what it takes to change something they have believed to be true their entire life. It is often only by discovering a new perspective for themselves that they can grow, and as a coach we can facilitate this process.

# You Can Lead a Horse to Water, but You Can't Make It Drink

RACHEL SMITH

As an enthusiastic student of therapeutic NLP and hypnotherapy, learning new skills and processes each month, I would come away feeling that I could solve everyone's issues, especially after reading the books of Bandler and Grinder wherein deep transformation appeared to occur rather effortlessly. The session that I had with a particular client taught me it doesn't always go to plan and like all lessons it forced me to grow.

Grace was a 60-year-old yoga teacher who first came to me for help to cure her flying phobia. The phobia started about 30 years ago and was getting worse and worse. With the help of drugs she could just about manage a short flight into Europe, but the build-up to the journey made life very miserable for the preceding weeks and her time away was spent fretting about the journey home. Things were coming to a head due to a serious relationship with an Australian who was keen to take her home to meet his family and possibly move there together. She desperately wanted to go but felt paralysed with fear at the prospect of making such a journey. She had tried hypnotherapy before but had limited success. She was after a quick fix as her next flight to Europe was just two weeks away.

After further questions, she revealed that this phobia was about any kind of travel, whether that was by ship, car, train or plane. Time was ticking on in the first session and I wanted to give her a positive experience of hypnotherapy by anchoring in some positive states that we would utilise as part of the phobia cure in a later session.

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Grace took a while to settle into trance and I observed a lot of fidgeting. She found it very hard to access a time when she was feeling any of the desired states we had agreed on, so I asked her to imagine what it would be like to experience them. After some time she was able to access calmness, but I felt there was some incongruence in her body language in fully accessing this state. At this point I thought it odd that as a yoga teacher she was unable to access a state of calmness, but I didn't pursue it. The session time was coming to an end and I had to leave it there, now feeling that this was not going to plan!

During the next session I took her through Parts Integration to assist her in updating that part of her that has such a strong reaction to travelling and to give her more appropriate and useful responses. The process revealed that when she was much younger she had been in an abusive marriage and she had had a few weeks away to build strength, emotionally and physically, to leave her abusive husband. The journey home had been a fearful one as she knew what she was going home to.

The next time she flew was some years later which was when she first experienced the phobic reaction. Grace was very surprised to have made the connection between her phobia and that period of her life, because she thought that she'd dealt with the past trauma as it hadn't featured in her life for many years now.

Grace came back for her next session a few days before she was due to fly. After the previous session she had been able to book her hire car and was feeling much calmer about the prospect of flying. My intention was to run the phobia cure. She was very fidgety during the induction of trance and struggled to recall even the calmness anchor. She revealed that she couldn't settle, her mind full of images that kept flashing in and out. I gave her a 'container' to put all those thoughts and images into for the time being and for future use. I felt that we had lost rapport and that to continue with the phobia cure was not appropriate as we would not have sufficient time to complete the whole process.

Out of trance, I questioned her ability to access the states and she said she was a control freak and she never let go. She came up with a myriad of examples of how relinquishing control had created stress or trouble for her and she was very quick to dismiss any reframing, including the many times a pilot had got her safely through a flight from A to B. We had a long discussion about how having control in some contexts can be positive and beneficial, yet in other situations relinquishing control to others who have more skill, knowledge and experience is more appropriate and safe. We arranged another session before her flight.

But Grace didn't show up for her next appointment.

I contacted her, offering her more sessions when she returned from her trip, but I have never heard from her. My instinct is that she may have been fearful of working at a deeper level, of revisiting a painful memory that she had buried deep away.

So this is a story of my light bulbs!

My first light bulb moment came when I realised that her incongruence had been shouting out to me in the first session, in so many different ways, yet I chose to ignore the messages, anxious to push on with the process and give her the result she wanted. I discovered that pushing through incongruence doesn't work. Stop and address what is really going on for the client, otherwise the change they make is less likely to be long term change, if any at all.

My second light bulb moment was a real understanding of that old adage: you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink. Once I had acknowledged the incongruences and was ready to tackle them and work with my client on a very deep level, she backed off for some reason - that may have been fear of re-visiting painful memories, a lack of time or resources, or maybe not enough trust in the process or me as a practitioner. Whatever the reason, I could only take her

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so far by showing her the way forward in resolving this deep-rooted phobia, but ultimately the decision to proceed and fully address her phobia lay entirely with her.

As a practitioner, my role is to build trust and rapport, creating a safe space so that my client feels supported to explore their issues in a caring, non-judgemental environment. Building this relationship takes time, and with some clients it takes longer than others. They may prefer that you work with them on just a superficial or behavioural level for a quick fix, when in fact it is a core belief or the root cause that needs attention for deeper, permanent change. Ultimately, whilst I can create a safe space to facilitate the change they desire, they have to have trust, courage and willingness to do the work.

These were important lessons for me to learn and, whilst I often wonder what happened to Grace, the understanding I got that day has continued to inform my practice with my clients.

# Afterword

NICK BOLTON

I hope you enjoyed reading these case studies.

I certainly enjoyed putting the book together and what fascinated me in particular as I edited them was the sheer variety of approaches, personal philosophies and reflections that are represented in these thirteen stories.

It seemed to me that the light bulb moment was almost as important for the coach in their journey as it was for the client. And whilst, as many of the coaches said, one shouldn't strive overly to achieve these sudden moments of clarity, there seems no doubt that can have a profound effect on the coach's own state of confidence and sense of being on the right professional path.

Indeed, several of the coaches alluded to having to hold that space of *unknowing* as the coaching unfolds, along with the self-doubt and frustration this can bring. This is only to be expected since as coaches we are working with the full range of human complexity and, often, with concerns that have been a part of the client's experience of life for a long time. It seems that although we can't force the light bulb moment we can certainly bathe in momentarily when it occurs!

To me this shows yet again that the relationship between the coach and client is not one way. The coach and client grow together in different ways with the journey of one affecting the other. This is an important and perhaps even critical element in the power of coaching – that it's not just techniques and questions but the coming together of two human beings with their own unique histories, perspectives, belief systems, values and indeed everything that makes us who we are. And in that coming together is this spark, this catalyst, that enables the light bulb moments to happen.

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This book is not a *how-to* book or even a formal study – rather it's a series of snapshots of the power of the coaching which I hope will shed its own light on what coaching is really about and how broad its reach now is. I would like to think that it will encourage more people to seek out a coach and engage in their personal growth and also that, by showing the variety, depth and humanity of coaching, it will act as a spur to you to take the incredible journey to becoming a coach if that's right for you.

To find out more about the work of Animas Centre for Coaching and our training programmes, please visit our website at [www.animascoaching.com](http://www.animascoaching.com)

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