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From TRIAGE to
RECOVERY

Coaching through COVID-19

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Coaching through COVID-19

COVID-19 is presenting coaches and their clients with significant challenges. How does coaching offer a solution to the world's 'new normal'? What is the impact of COVID-19 on our clients' ability to perform? How can we help clients recover after a major crisis? How can we coach teams from chaos to health? How can you reinvent your coaching practice? Join us as we explore how coaches can help their clients get ahead of the curve.



FEELING *the* WORLD

Coaching through a pandemic as a kinesthetic empathic coach

By Cheryl Fountain, BSW

Part of being a coach is having tools to support the ability to stay grounded during coaching conversations, and during life in general. Many coaches are drawn to the profession through seeking their own grounding and self-development, finding something that works, and wanting to share that process with others. Coaching in a pandemic changes our coaching practices as we are affected by the pandemic in multiple ways, as are our clients, heightening everyone's emotions. Keeping grounded becomes more challenging.

A kinesthetic empath is someone who physically feels the emotions of others inside their own body and experience.

When you are a coach who experiences others' emotions – feeling the world in your body as your own emotions – grounding in the conversations, and in your life after coaching conversations, offers a different level of challenge.

Some of the tools you normally would use might not work as well because everyone on the planet is affected by this pandemic in one form or another. For example, I can no longer meditate during this time, as meditation was drawing my attention to the emotions of the world, and I was so affected by the overwhelming feeling that I couldn't sleep after meditating.

Emotions are energy. As a human you pick up energies around you and in the world. If you are a person who can



sense these energies, you notice them and they affect you. If you are not a person who physically experiences the emotions of others, you might have clients who are kinesthetic empathic persons who are feeling the world. We are all affected by this pandemic, and how we respond during it affects the people around us. Recognize this. Below are some tools to support you as you move through your and your clients' emotions during a pandemic.

TOOLS DURING A COACHING CONVERSATION

1. Remember to BREATHE

With breath comes inner movement. You cycle in new air and energy and release the retained energy from within your body. Breathing cycles energy and helps the emotion work through you. Holding your breath keeps things stagnant. Emotions are fluid, and holding onto an emotion makes it feel larger.

Breathe in deeply and calmly. Breathe out, releasing the energy, and repeat. This is easily done while listening to your client as well when you are asking questions to support your client. Use your intuition to support and bring the client into the breathing with you if needed.

2. Remember Coach POSITION

Coach position is important, and is even more important during a pandemic. Coach position is that outside third-person observer position where you are in a place of curiosity. You can stay in this position even when experiencing heightened emotion. In this third person observer position you are capable of also seeing your own emotion from the same point of view. You not only have risen out of judgment for the client, you have risen above judgment for yourself.

We are all affected by this pandemic, and how we respond during it affects the people around us. **Recognize this.**

There are tools such as visualizing yourself rising above the conversation and looking down and watching yourself and the other person having the coaching call. You are still there, but you are viewing it from a different perspective. Also, using an inner verbal comment or dialog can help shift you back into coach position; for example, "remember coach position." As an experienced coach, a gentle reminder such as that is enough to switch you back in gear to support your client and yourself through the experience.

3. Remember You Are HUMAN

As a coach you are neither a know-it-all nor have to be 100 percent perfect on your game all the time. You are human. You are a growing feeling being who has the best intentions to support others. Even with our best intentions, environments will affect us. Feeling others' emotions, or even the emotions of the world, are examples of how the environment affects us.

Some are more attuned than others; some feel this effect more than others. No matter what, you and your client are going through a human experience together. Your intention is to support, and clients come to you for this support. That basis of the coach-client relationship is enough to support you while you navigate difficult sessions and conversations. Love yourself too, and give yourself the patience, respect, and non-judgment you offer your client.

TOOLS OUTSIDE OF COACHING CONVERSATIONS

1. Be HONEST With Yourself

There might be days you cannot be there for your clients during this time. Be honest with yourself and postpone sessions if necessary. Your clients are resilient resourceful people and they will be okay if you need a day or more for yourself.

2. Get Your EXERCISE

Movement shifts the energy of the emotions you are experiencing through your body. Set a regular time each day for exercise to keep your energy moving. Yoga, kickboxing, sit ups, walking, running, do any movement that works for you. Regularly moving with intention will support you mentally, physically, and emotionally.

With exercise you physically move the energy without actively mentally processing the emotions, therefore helping you release emotions without the mental struggle that sometimes can be involved.

3. Take TIME For You

Taking time to love yourself and take care of yourself is even more important during a pandemic. Whether it is a walk through nature, or meditation, or watching a funny movie, doing something you enjoy to support rest and gentleness in your spirit will balance you.

4. Do a REALITY Check

Remind yourself of the reality we are facing. We are experiencing a historical event that affects the entire planet. This is a time to acknowledge our humanness. Part of being human, and even more heightened for kinesthetic empathic humans, is experiencing energy that we create and that is created around us.

Realize much of the energy you are experiencing is from the environment and is not yours. Watch the emotions and watch them move through you with this understanding. This is a time for those who do energy work to use their skills or hire someone to help move energy through you.

5. Seek SUPPORT

Reach out to your mentors during this time to support grounding and to keep you on track. Extra support is needed while you experience the world during a pandemic. We are truly in this together, and by being supported, we can support others. In this spirit, I even reached out and offered to coach my mentor in case she did not have effective support during this time.

Experiencing a pandemic is a global historical event during which everyone on the planet is affected. We also affect the people around us by how we respond to this event. Being a coach means we are leaders, and at the same time we are human. Keeping ourselves healthy and grounded means we can be leaders who support others during challenging life events.

We are also human, and therefore we, like our clients, are affected by energies. During a pandemic we soak up more energies than we normally would. Now more than ever, we need to check in with ourselves and utilize our tools to support ourselves, so we can show up and support others. •

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