



# Third National Coaching Psychology Symposium

*'Leading Coaching Excellence – How to do it'*

Developing the coaching alliance: Illuminating the role of the coach/client dynamic in achieving effective client outcomes

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## Introductions...

- My biases
- What I'd like to share
- What you may like to do with it



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## Agenda

- Introduce and explore the Coaching Alliance
- Where does self management fit in?
- Propose a simple framework for Self Management and template for supervision in that space
- Use this as a learning laboratory



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## Your turn...

- Turn to the person next to you and introduce yourself... Share an intimate secret...
- Then think of a coaching relationship that you have currently that is wonderfully rewarding for you...
  - What is it that you find most rewarding about it?
  - Describe in detail the positive effect it has on you...
- Then... An opportunity for courageous sharing...



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## Hold on to that reflection...

- It will become the raw material for your experience in this session...
- Now... moving forward... a request for granted trust and generous listening...



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## So what is the Coaching Alliance?

- The *phenomenon* of the relationship that is established between coaching psychologist and client
- The *dynamic* that is created within that relationship (antecedent conditions, processes, interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics)
- The *impact* that the relationship and this dynamic has on the client outcomes



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## Why is it so important?

- The central mediating variable to achieving developmental client outcomes (Bordin, 1979; Connor-Greene, 1993; Greenson, 1967; Rogers, 1957; Horvath, 2000,2001,2006; Horvath & Greensberg, 1989; Horvath & Symonds, 1991, Kivlighan, 2007; Lilliengren & Werbart, 2005.....)



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## What does this mean?

- We need to understand it more deeply... The what, how and why
- We need to understand the variables that we *can* and *can't* control within it



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## So what (do we think) can we control?

- Ideas?
- Several interesting questions emerge:
  - Is it what I do (method) or who I am?
  - Is it who I am, who you are or who we are *together*?
  - How much of who *we* are is you and how much is me?
  - Am *I* really *me* when we're *us* and how do you or I *know that for sure*?



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## Time for some introspection...

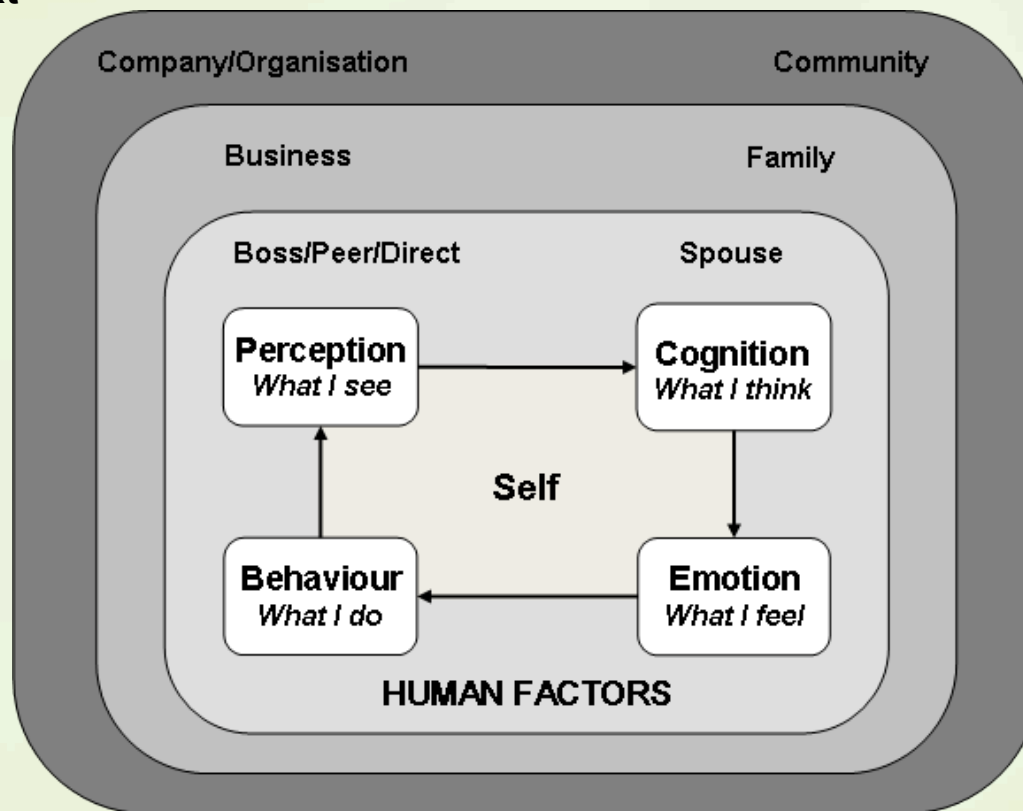
- If I am the “tool” or the “method”, how well am I calibrated and validated?



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## The Context



Kemp, 2008



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## Time for some conversation

- Find a partner and have a broad conversation about your strengths and vulnerabilities within each of the human factors...

Kemp, 2008



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## Time for some conversation

- The more able we are to manage “me”, the more “control” I have in the coaching alliance...
- But there are some inherent difficulties in achieving this that run across all humans...

Kemp, 2008



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## So what are our challenges?

- We often assume that people's intentions & dispositions correspond to their actions & behaviour ('attribution theory')
- We then tend generalise these assumptions to all similar people and situations ('trait inference', 'stereotypes' and 'schemas')



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## What are our challenges?

- Over time, people begin to behave as you expect them to behave  
(‘behavioural confirmation’)
- Your judgement of an individual as a ‘high’ or ‘low’ performer will tend to persist even in the face of evidence to the contrary  
(‘halo effect’)



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## What are our challenges?

- We tend to search for evidence that confirms our beliefs about people and situations ('confirmation bias')
- We tend to persevere with these beliefs even when there is contradictory evidence ('belief perseverance')



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## What are our challenges?

- We tend to overestimate the accuracy of one's beliefs and to be more confident than correct ('overconfidence phenomenon')



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## What are our challenges?

- Transference
  - The followers response (projections) towards the leader
- Countertransference
  - The Leader's response (projections) towards her/his people  
(Richardson & Hands, 2002)
- Can be seen in different ways:
  - Impossible to avoid but must be controlled
  - Natural and a valuable tool for insight (Embelton, 2002, McAuley, 2003)



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## What are our challenges?

- **Overconfidence effect**

- The human tendency to be more confident in one's behaviours, attributes and physical characteristics than one ought to be.
  - Svenson (1981) - 80% of respondents rated themselves in the top 30% of all drivers
- *What am I really competent to do as a coach?*



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## How else do we think?

- **False consensus effect**
  - The tendency for people to overestimate the degree to which others agree with them. People readily guess their own opinions, beliefs and predilections to be more prevalent in the general public than they really are. (Ross, Greene & House, 1977)



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## How else do we think?

- **Illusory correlation**

- The phenomenon of seeing the relationship one expects in a set of data even when no such relationship exists.

(Chapman and Chapman, 1971)



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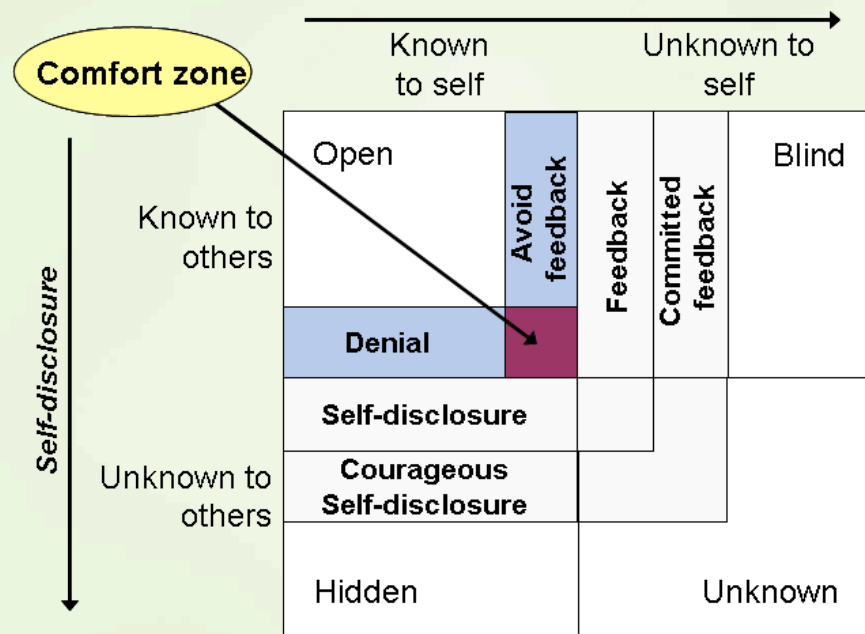
## The challenges of self-management in Coaching...

- Before we can coach effectively, we need to understand our generic tendencies first, then illuminate our own unique:
  - Perceptions
  - Judgements
  - Biases
  - Prejudices etc.
- And surface our:
  - Projection
  - Transference
  - Countertransference

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### The Self Management Process



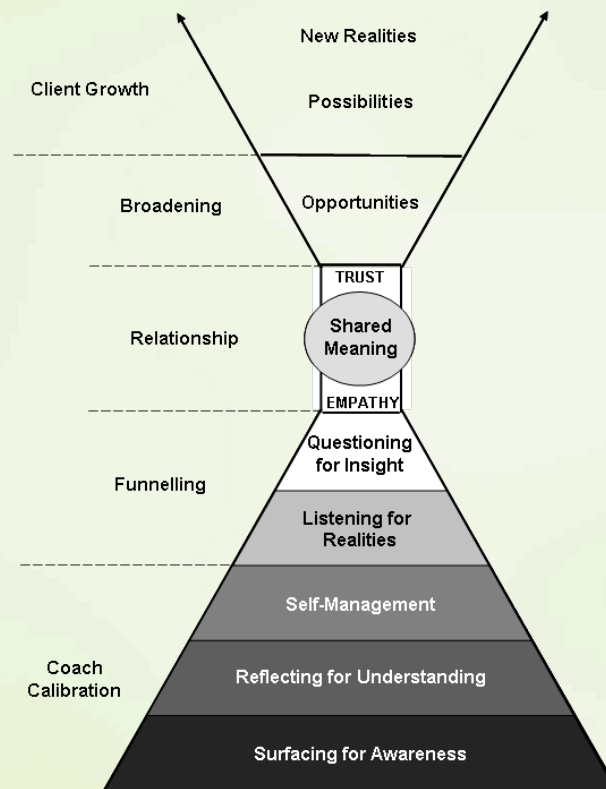
Kemp, 2007



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## The Coaching Alliance Framework



Kemp, 2008

22 - 23 August 2008

Dockside | The Balcony Level | Cockle Bay Wharf | Sydney

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## So what do I do with that then?

- **Create a Self Management Plan (SMP)**
  1. Strength/vulnerability/bias
    - When do these “flip”?
  2. Potential impact on Client and Alliance
    - Positive/negative/neutral
  3. What will surface and amplify my strength/vulnerability/bias?
  4. What cognition, emotion and behaviour manifests for me?
  5. What client cognition, emotion and behaviour triggers this?
  6. What antecedents surface prior to the trigger?
  7. What do I need to do when these antecedents surface?



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So let's use this time to give it a go...

- **Create a Self Management Plan (SMP)**
  1. Grab a piece of paper, a pen and a coaching psychologist and get planning...
  2. Try to reduce your number of vulnerabilities to 3 (I've only ever managed to get mine down to 23)
    - You may find that some will “concertina”
  3. Take about 10 minutes on you and then give your partner some time...



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Now....

**Reflect on this from a psycho-educative perspective?**

1. Could we teach our clients to do this?
2. Could it help to move us towards our ultimate purpose as a profession, *redundancy*?



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	High Coach Self-Management	Low Coach Self-Management
High Client Self-Management		
Low Client Self-Management		



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	High Coach Self-Management	Low Coach Self-Management
High Client Self-Management	Transformative Alliance	“Client Resistance”
Low Client Self-Management	“Client Stuckness”	Alliance Breakdown



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## Winding up

- The coaching alliance is “everything”
- Our ability to self monitor, regulate and manage our human factors is critical to the alliance
- It takes on-going work on “me”
- When we do this well, we help; when we don’t we, hinder at best and injure at worst



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Thank you