

# CoachED UPDATE NOVEMBER 2023

Enhancing the quality of conversations in education communities

Short Read

## THE SLIPPERY SLOPE FROM DOUBT TO HOPE – AND COACHING IN BETWEEN

By Debbie Lowe, Managing Consultant, Growth Coaching International.

Coaching for what's wanted brings a solutions focus perspective to any formal or informal coaching conversation. Solutions focused coaching amplifies hope and the possibility of the achievement of change so that something is 'better'. Better for the coachee.

However, this does not mean that the change the coachee seeks is easy, down to a few simple steps and actions. The desired change may feel a long way away, the road to it uphill. And while hope 'springs eternal', doubt lies in the shadows - in an eternal tension between what's wanted and what's not. Doubt seeks to drag hope back to base and extinguish it with fear. The fear that "you" won't be able to achieve the change, that "you" are just not up to it. The struggle against beliefs that are old stories surface our vulnerabilities with relentless ferocity.

What's not wanted may often present at the outset of the coaching conversation as stronger than what's wanted. This is the space between hope and fear that the coach and coachee will work in together. Grant (2012) articulates this 'in between' space as the difference between avoidance goals, which are about moving away from an undesired state, and approach goals, expressed as moving towards a specific state or outcome. Evidence suggests there are different effects associated with these types of goals. Studies have shown that people who set avoidance goals have lower levels of wellbeing. In the service of our coachee an approach goal enables a higher level of specificity and goal-striving behaviours.

Pfeffer & Sutton (2000) describe the Knowing-Doing gap and outline the opportunities that come from the paradigm shift from problem-based to solutions focused thinking. The gap between hope and doubt for a coachee is no less of a divide. It includes feeling gaps that are real, personal and weighed down by deficit thinking. While hope springs eternal, the fear is that what's wanted is just out of reach. The coachee's terrain is sloping uphill. Not only is there going to be work ahead for our coachee, they will be doing that work over the course of a steep, slippery climb. The coach will also be working, entirely engaged in the service of their coachee, but the terrain they stand on is very different.

Using a continuum, Munro (2020) describes various 'stances' a coach may take within a coaching conversation to position themselves to be agile and responsive to emergent needs as the coaching conversation unfolds. Utilising their coaching skills and understanding of the continuum, the coach can move back and forth on the continuum with intentionality. They can choose to be more or less directive, facilitative or dialogic as they hold space for their coachee to do the deep work of their climb.

Powerful questions, informed by listening and noticing, energise solutions focus thinking and give life and specificity to the expected outcomes of the coachee's desired change. They acknowledge and respect the work already done. *You've obviously thought a lot about this? What's really at stake here? What's that telling you? What do you think you should do?*

Powerful questions shift the balance to what's wanted. *What would be different? What would be better? What else? What would others be noticing? What would you be noticing about yourself? What would you be seeing and hearing? What would you be thinking?*

This understanding of terrain renews our understanding of the purpose of coaching. "A one-to-one conversation that focuses on the enhancement of learning and development through increasing self awareness and a sense of personal responsibility, where the coach facilitates the self-directed learning for the coachee through questioning, active listening and appropriate challenge in a supportive and encouraging climate." (van Nieuwerburgh, 2012, p17)

And, in the context of educational leadership, whether it is a formal or informal coaching conversation, we can harness moral imperative and will. What will be better for the students? What's wanted? What's working? What's next?

### Reference:

Grant, A.M. (2012). An integrated model of goal-focused coaching: An evidence-based framework for teaching and practice, *International Coaching Psychology Review* (Vol.7 No. 2, Pages 146-165).

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Munro, C. (2020). A continuum of professional learning conversations: Coaching, mentoring and everything in between. *CollectiveEd* [1], Pages 37-42. Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University.

Pfeffer, J & Sutton, R., (2000) *The knowing-doing gap: How smart companies turn knowledge into action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

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Announcement



## COACHING IN LEADERSHIP In partnership with ACEL

**Growth Coaching International and ACEL are delighted to announce a brand new partnership that will bring the *Coaching in Leadership* course to educators across Australia in 2024.**

As the leading organisations in coaching, mentoring and educational leadership in Australia, our relationship is based on strong alignment of our aspirations for the profession and our organisational values, plus our decades of experience supporting the development of educators.

*Coaching in Leadership* is fundamentally about how to best support and grow the capacity, motivation, and wellbeing of others through more intentional conversations that lead to better relationships and, ultimately, better outcomes for students.

Registrations for 2024 cohorts of this course are now open.

[Learn More about Coaching in Leadership](#)

*"An amazing opportunity that I believe will be a game changer for me as a leader."*

**Kristi Cromer**, School Improvement Leader, Clonard College VIC

Be sure to **click on the dates** to visit the registration pages!

### UPCOMING COHORTS:

2 x 2 Day Cohorts - commencement dates below

**Melbourne** - 28th February 2024

**Brisbane** - 4th March 2024

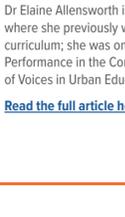
**Sydney** - 6th March 2024

**Perth** - 16th May 2024

Resources



## GET READY FOR AN EXCITING NEW MINI SERIES!



Over the last 18 months in our 'Stories from the Field' series, I have been in conversation with some inspirational educators learning about the journey of developing coaching in their schools. In addition to this very popular series I am introducing a new mini series called 'Stories from the Coaches'. In this new series we're shifting the spotlight to those who train the educators to become exceptional coaches. Join me in conversation as I sit down with some of our own GCI team to explore their unique perspectives on developing coaching cultures in schools.

Learn from the experts who empower school leaders and teachers to bring about positive change and transformative coaching practices to their educational institutions. Discover strategies, insights, and inspiring stories behind the scenes of coach training in education.

In our first episode I'm in conversation with Dan Steele, Managing Consultant for Victoria and Tasmania.

**Richard Reid - Podcast Host** [LISTEN NOW!](#)

You can subscribe to our podcast via [Apple Podcasts](#) and [Spotify](#).

## WANT TO IMPROVE TEACHING?

Written by Dr Elaine Allenswort.

Dr Elaine Allensworth is the interim executive director of the Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago, where she previously was the senior director and chief research officer. Currently, she is working on several studies of high school curriculum; she was once a high school Spanish and science teacher. This article is adapted, with permission, from "Teacher Performance in the Context of Truly Disadvantaged Schools in Chicago" by Elaine Allensworth, which appeared in the Fall 2011 issue of *Voices in Urban Education*, published by the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University.

[Read the full article here](#)

Upcoming Courses



## COACHING ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

Our flagship coach training course with Prof. Christian van Nieuwerburgh, delivered fully ONLINE over 6 months with a GLOBAL cohort and a pathway to individual European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) credentials. Our next cohort commences in February 2024.

[Click here to secure your place now](#)

## THE IMPACT CYCLE

**The Impact Cycle** Delivered by GCI under our partnership with Instructional Coaching Group, this course aims to support educators in establishing instructional coaching cycles that lead to improved teaching and student learning. The course is for anyone who works alongside teachers to help them develop their practice.

*"Thank you so much for an amazing 2 days. Thank you for your care and authenticity. I have learnt so much and feel much more confident as a leader and to begin engaging in the coaching process with my peers."*

**Sanja Ivetic**, River Gum Primary School, VIC

### UPCOMING COHORTS:

**Melbourne** - 26th & 27th February 2024

**Perth** - 29th February & 1st March 2024

**Brisbane** - 18th & 19th March 2024

**Sydney** - 15th & 16th May 2024

Be sure to **click on the dates** to visit the registration pages!

## INTRODUCTION TO LEADERSHIP COACHING

The **Introduction to Leadership Coaching** Course provides an exceptional entry level to coaching in education. It's the course for leaders and teams wanting to amplify and cascade a positive, strengths-based, student-centred learning culture at every level in their school or educational organisation. Not through just one conversation at a time, but many conversations at a time. Conversations that inspire joy, teamwork, purpose and self-belief.

*"Excellent sessions with implementable strategies for whole school improvement."*

**Richard Fisher**, Principal, Nambour Special School QLD

### UPCOMING COHORTS:

**Online Intensive** - 16th to 18th January 2024

**Sydney** - 20th & 21st February 2024

**Melbourne** - 21st & 22nd February 2024

**Perth** - 14th & 15th March 2024

Be sure to **click on the dates** to visit the registration pages!

## VIDEO PEER COACHING

**Video Peer Coaching** is designed to help teachers engage in rigorous, collaborative conversations that utilise the power of video. Developed jointly with the Instructional Coaching Group, this course introduces a reciprocal collaborative cycle of coaching conversations that are based on the principles of partnership and trust. Classroom video is used to enhance the process by helping teachers to identify and monitor progress towards student-centred professional learning goals.

**We can come to you to deliver this course in-house**

**Contact us today** for a discussion on how we can bring this course to your school.

**FIND ALL OTHER OPEN-ENROLMENT COURSES ON OFFER BY CLICKING HERE**

Complimentary Professional Learning



## Curious Convos

Click below to browse hours of content from our Curious Convos Webinar series, featuring a variety of guests and topics.

[Click here to view previous Curious Convos webinars](#)



Keep and eye out for our latest issue of GCI Insights!

Our November 2023 issue of GCI Insights is our biggest issue yet! Featuring over 30 pages of thought provoking articles from a wide variety of voices in our education space.

As in previous issues, our latest Insights has been created as an interactive Flipping Book, featuring video interviews with leaders in the field and links to other useful resources for coaching in education.

We hope you enjoy this issue of GCI Insights once released as a companion to your coaching journey.

Coming Soon!