



META-COACHING:

COACHING AT A HIGHER LEVEL

Introducing Neuro-Semantic Coaching

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Coaching offers a new paradigm. As a paradigmatic shift, *Coaching* has become a much more acceptable way to think about change, personal transformation, and renewal. Why?

Coaching invites us to think about change in terms of becoming more, refining and adding new skills, focusing on direction and outcomes, and receiving feedback as information for continuous improvement. As a paradigm, *coaching* presents and implies numerous frames that supports the process of transformation and makes it a positive experience. Unlike counseling, therapy, and even consulting, coaching does not imply that there's anything wrong or that the process involves pain.

For these and many other reasons, *coaching* nicely fits with the field of NLP and even more so into Neuro-Semantics. That's because these models focus on *generative change* based on the idea that people have all the resources they need and only need at most an expert in facilitation. This changes the expert role of the change agent. To be an expert in coaching does *not* necessitate being an expert in the content, only in the facilitation process. It necessitates becoming an expert at a higher level, at a *meta* level of awareness. The coach as a change agent works with, and at, the meta-level of the processes regarding how we humans transform and develop.

Similarly, actual coaches in sports do not have to be experts at baseball, soccer, pole vaulting, gymnastics, tennis, golf, etc. The personal coaches that work in these areas, even with the world class experts in these events, have an expertise at meta-levels. That is the expertise they and an information and expertise. As a coach, they work to mark and measure the processes as the expert prepares and practices. Coaching, then by definition, is inevitably a meta-discipline, and when we step back to understand coaching, we have *meta-coaching*.

Those individuals who seem to have a natural and implicit skill at coaching may not know what or how they do what they do. Though they may be extremely skilled at the art of coaching, they may not know what they do or how to transfer that ability to others. Yet to coach with mindfulness in knowing *what* we are doing, and *why* describes what we mean by a *Meta-Coach*. Using NLP and Neuro-Semantics as our base, we call this Meta-Coaching.

Masterful Meta-Coaching

A Meta-Coach will first and foremost be able to recognize, detect, and effectively address the processes, structures, mind-sets, frames, beliefs, etc. of the expert, or person learning to become a master in a given area whether business, leadership, management, creativity, relationships, persuasion, etc. This means the ability to *rise up to the mental-emotional matrices* of a person's experience.

After recognition of the structure of experience, and being able to model and profile the experience, the Meta-Coach needs to be able to see the neuro-semantic system of mind-body-emotion within relationships, contexts, etc. as a system. This means systemic thinking about the human mind-body system within yet higher systems (business, culture, family, government, politics, economics, etc.) and within with yet lower systems are embedded (thinking, valuing, believing, feeling, remembering, imagining, etc.).

For this reason we have developed the following matrices of the mind based upon the neuro-linguistic model of human communicating and functioning (NLP) that describes how to run our own brain and manage our own states and upon *the Meta-States Model* of Neuro-Semantics that describes the levels of mind-body-emotion as a systemic process. The idea of *framing* from Bateson came into NLP in terms of a few basic frames: ecology, as if, relevancy, outcome, meaning (reframing), etc. In Neuro-Semantics, I developed this much further to create *Frame Games* as a model of the embedded nature of frames within frames. This has led to being able to work with mastering fear, becoming fit and slim, modeling the frames of business experts, wealth building, prolific writing and researching and other creative arts, relationships, persuasion, and much more.

The 7 Matrices of the Mind

Within NLP we have more than 150 patterns and another 110 patterns in Neuro-Semantics (as of 2004). These *patterns* enable us to work with various facets of the mind-body-emotion system to bring renewal and transformation. There are also within NLP/NS scores of Meta-Program distinctions (60) and scores of Meta-Model and Mind-Line distinctions. With all of these patterns and processes, how can we keep track and know *what to do when?*

The Content Marices

The structuring that we have discovered in the 7 matrices of *the Matrix Model* resolve that. This model gives us a way to organize a large field of information, distinctions, and patterns so that we can work with it as we provide coaching for a person wanting to develop more expertise in a given area.

These areas (or matrices) work with, and around, a basic *state*—the mind-body-emotion state of a

person. This is the space or place that we all work from in terms of how we think and feel and what we say and do. Yet informing our every state are many matrices. There are seven core matrices that always seem to be activated by anything and everything that we experience and which interface with each other in multiple ways.

Self

First the matrix of Self inquires about how a person has mapped out a “sense of self” and how well does that mapping and framing work? What are the linguistic distinctions that cue us about a person’s Self Matrix? What are the meta-programs within such? How do they interface with each other? What are the patterns and processes that we can use to bring about a generative transformation so that the person builds up a mapping of self that allows him or her to become more who they can become? A healthy Self Matrix is the difference between feeling worthy, valuable, respectable, and loveable and seeking to experience things in the world to obtain these experiences. With a healthy Self Matrix we can celebrate ourselves and value ourselves without putting our “self” on the line with the activities that we engage in. It allows us to separate person from behavior, self-esteem from self-confidence.

Power

Second, the Power Matrix. After the Self Matrix, the next most important one is the power matrix. This has to do with our ability to respond to the world. What can I do? What skills and resources can I develop? What are my aptitudes and capacities? How can I develop my potentials? The sense of power or resourcefulness makes all the difference in the world between living with a weak response style and a strong one. It’s the difference between learned helplessness and learned optimism, between reactivity and passivity and assertive proactivity. A healthy power matrix enables us to feel self-efficacy and to take ownership of our life. It’s the foundation for persistence, determination, resiliency, passion, and proactivity.

Others

Third, the Others or Relational Matrix. This matrix reflects how we have mapped out our understandings, beliefs, and expectations of people—those we like and connect with, those in whom we invest ourselves, and those we dislike and avoid. It relates to our views and concepts about relationships, love, associations, authority, roles, teams, races, cultures, arguments, conflicts, forgiveness and all of the other relational emotions.

Life coaching and executive coaching comes together in this matrix as we deal with the patterns and frames about people and human nature. The social meta-programs govern this matrix as well as patterns for rapport, communication, persuasion, leadership, groups, politics, etc. It is from this matrix that we mostly define and describe emotional intelligence.

Time

Fourth, the Time Matrix. The time matrix entails our orientation to the time zones (past, present, and future). Do we live in the past, the present, or the future? It relates to how we experience time, as a primary state (in time) or as a meta-state (through time or out of time)? With primary state time, we get lost in time and experience life randomly or all at once. With meta-state time, we operate

more sequentially, and in a step-by-step fashion.

The distinctions in the time matrix are also meta-program distinctions and so have a degree of redundancy. Healthy IQ / EQ relates to time so that we live in the now with an eye on the future and are able to use past for learning. It is the ability to sequence activities and plan and to get lost in them in relationships and creative expressions.

World

Fifth, the World Matrix. The world matrix has to do with everything outside of ourselves in all of the contexts in which we act and relate. It can refer to our immediate world of family and home, to the larger world of community and village, to the world of work and career, professional organizations, physics, economics, politics, etc. Intelligence as EQ and IQ enables us to adjust well to the changing times. Adjustment to reality is what we call ego-strength—the ability to look at what *is* without blinking.

The Process Matrices

Developmentally, we create the previous five categories as we grow cognitive, emotionally, and socially. And we create them via our three process matrices.

Meaning

First, the Meaning Matrix. The meaning matrix identifies how we create meanings which, in turn, creates all of the matrices. Within this matrix we associate things that may or may not be connected. This creates *associative* or stimulus-response *meaning*. Then, above and beyond that we have *frame meaning*, the meanings that arise when we classify and categorize things, even associative meanings. In this way that we create layer upon layer of embedded frames of meanings within frames.

Because the meaning matrix drives all of our matrices, it is the most significant of all the matrices. At first we use it to relate an external event to our feeling state and then to classify and categorize things. The significance of the meanings we attribute and invent creates the internal universe we live in. Ultimately we live in and by *meaning* because it is through the creation of meaning that we know what to call things, how to interpret events, and how to perceive the significance of anything. As a semantic class of life, we do not have innate programs for how to live, relate, or even be human. We have to learn to attribute meaning to things and the range of meanings that we can attribute is infinite.

We are all born inside of meaning matrices called family systems, cultures, societies, religious and political worlds, etc. We absorb the style and content from these meaning systems which indicate the previous meaning making of those who came before us. How does a person interpret something? What does anything mean to a given individual? Is that interpretation accurate, useful, productive, healthy, or empowering? Does that meaning induce one into a positive or negative mental world? Does it encourage love, compassion, joy, courage, confidence, development, etc.?

Intention

Second, the Purpose or Intentional Matrix. The purpose matrix addresses we sense of direction,

goals, reasons, motivation, and intention. It is from this matrix that we create the meaning of purpose which we experience as the motivation to live and what we live for. Purpose relates to what we value and think important or meaningful (the meaning matrix). Purpose relates to the agendas we develop that make up our motives and motivation. It answers the “why” question: Why is that important to you? Why do you want that? Why do you give yourself to that? What do you hope to obtain by getting that?

We typically experience our sense of purpose or intention as “the thoughts in the back of the mind” which then organize our *attentions* – “the thoughts in the front of our mind” – what’s on our mind. Together, intention and attention gives us our sense of “will” or choice. Moving up into this matrix allows us to understand and explore what we or another truly want, what we think we are going after and to check whether we are actually getting our highest intentions or not.

From the meaning and purpose matrices we experience the higher states that give us a sense of inspiration, passion, hope, love, joy, and transcendence, the very qualities that we call “spirit” or “spiritual” – SQ.

Summary

Neuro-Semantics takes coaching to the next level with its model of self-reflexivity, *the Meta-States Model* and its model of cognitive-behavioral and developmental psychology, *the Matrix Model*. Together these offer an insight into the systemic nature of our mind-body-emotion system and enables us to follow the energy of a client through the dimensions of mind-and-emotion.

Author:

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