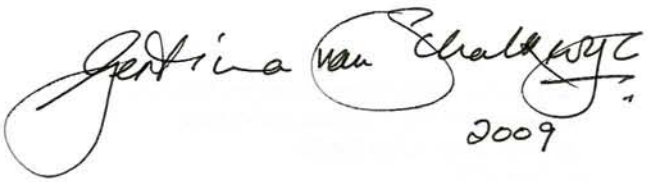
Handbook of Youth Counselling

Second Edition

Heinemann

Edited by Eugéne van Niekerk
and Johnnie Hay



Handbook of Youth Counselling

Editors
Eugéne van Niekerk
Johnnie Hay

Contributing authors
Terri Bakker
Elizabeth du Preez
Linda Eskell-Blokland
Chris Hoelson
Lyzette Hoffman
Greg Howcroft
Ansie Elizabeth Kitching
Andrew Lewis
Ingrid Lynch
Luzelle Naudé
Richard Nichol
Cheryl Potgieter
Annette Prins
Ilse Ruane
Christopher Stones
Henriëtte van den Berg
Magdel van der Walt
Gertina van Schalkwyk
André Venter
Annette Weyers

Heinemann

Published by Heinemann Publishers (Pty) Ltd
Heinemann House, Grayston Office Park
128 Peter Road, Athol Ext 12
Sandton 2196
P.O. Box 781940, Sandton, 2146, Johannesburg, South Africa

www.heinemann.co.za

First published by Heinemann Publishers in 2009
2013 2012 2011 2010 2009
8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

ISBN 0 7962 2481 1
ISBN 978 0 79622481 1

Book design and typesetting by Christopher Davis
Illustrations by Lebone Publishing Services
Cover artwork by Flame Design

Printed and bound by Ultra Litho (Pty) Limited

Contents

Chapter 13
Workshopping life skills

Gertina van Schalkwyk, Chris Hoelson

Outcomes

After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- define and explain coaching psychology
- define and explain positive psychology as the theoretical basis of coaching psychology
- use a social constructionist perspective and cognitive–behavioural approach to explain collaborative life coaching
- define and describe the nature of collaborative life coaching
- explain the process of effectively facilitating life coaching
- compile a collaborative life-coaching workshop on a specific life-enhancing and growth topic relevant to a specific community
- identify appropriate procedures and resources to support a locally relevant collaborative life-coaching workshop
- present a life-coaching workshop for a group of clients.

Objective

The objective of this chapter is to inquire into the nature of coaching psychology and the processes and procedures of life coaching. To further this understanding, we highlight positive psychology as the theoretical basis of coaching psychology and explore a social constructionist perspective and cognitive–behavioural approach to explain collaborative life coaching.

Introduction

The concept of coaching comes from sport. In sport, few can imagine making it to the Olympics without a coach to guide them through the steps and help them achieve success. In organisational and management context, coaching has become very popular since the move towards training and development became the vogue in the 1960s. Self-help literature and personal-development materials have also grown exponentially ever since the humanist psychologists (Maslow & Rogers,

for example) developed the client-centred approaches in the 1950s and 1960s. For the most part, self-help materials aim to address the general public's demand for techniques and processes that enhance life experience and facilitate personal development (Fried, 1994). Spreading beyond the scope of the business world, coaching has become popular for people from all walks of life in an attempt to achieve a variety of personal and professional goals. Individual, team, or group coaching; networks; and school/training programmes are all popular versions of coaching, and many consider coaching as a viable alternative to other forms of therapeutic intervention.

Coming from a variety of disciplines, often with little or no background in psychology, numerous coaches act as consultants for leadership training and to improve the performance and enhance productivity of big corporations. Grant and Zackon (2004) estimated the involvement of coaches with a background in psychology as a mere 4.8% compared to those with professional backgrounds as consultants (40.8%), managers (30.8%), executives (30.2%), and salespeople (13.8%). In recent years, however, the situation has changed somewhat with the emergence of coaching psychology as a sub-discipline in its own right. Most important in this regard has been the establishment of postgraduate programmes in coaching psychology in Australia and the UK (Grant, 2006a). Thus, coaching psychology is a fairly new field, drawing on techniques developed from a wide range of disciplines, including sociology, psychology, positive adult development, career counselling, mentoring, and numerous other types of counselling practices. Some of the greatest challenges for this newly established field are the development of coaching-specific models and theories, the conducting of empirical research to support practice and outcomes (Grant, 2006a), and regulation of the field through proper training, credentialing, and certification (Schneider, 2007).

Focusing on developing human strengths and competencies, coaching psychology finds a theoretical basis in the emergence of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Snyder & McCullough, 2000). Linley and Harrington (2007) propose that coaching psychology integrates the underlying principles of positive psychology. Positive psychology is concerned with the 'scientific study of optimal functioning, focusing on aspects of the human condition that lead to happiness, fulfilment and flourishing' (Linley & Harrington, 2005:13), and encourages research on topics such as happiness, wisdom, creativity, and human strength. Starting earlier with Rogers's (1961) contribution on the fully functioning person and Maslow's (1968) emphasis on self-actualisation and the study of healthy individuals, positive psychology strives to study people in their completeness, without a preoccupation with disorder and dysfunction. Overall, positive psychology values subjective experiences (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), ordinary human strengths and virtues (Sheldon & King, 2001), and the 'conditions and processes that contribute to the flourishing or optimal functioning of people, groups, and institutions' (Gable & Haidt, 2005:104). Both meta-theoretically, in terms of the aims of positive psychology, and at the pragmatic level (its topics of interest), positive psychology focuses on the scientific study of human experience and ways to enhance wellbeing (Keyes, Shmotkin & Ryff, 2002; Ryff, 1989a, 1989b; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

Positive psychology challenges one to adopt a more holistic perspective on human experience and change processes and to develop an awareness of both the positive and negative of human functioning. Coaching psychology fits well into this framework as it, too, focuses on change processes (Prochaska, Norcross & DiClimente, 1994), and on enhancing wellbeing and optimising human functioning through collaborative practice and motivation (Grant, 2001; Palmer & Whybrow, 2007). Anderson and Gehart (2006) explain the philosophical assumptions underlying collaborative life coaching as coming from postmodernism and social constructionism (Gergen, 2001). Postmodernism and social constructionism invite a sceptical stance, critical analysis, and continual questioning of taken-for-granted and inherited knowledge. They also invite an appreciation and privileging of local knowledge created within dialogue. Language, no matter in what form one tries to articulate, express, or communicate, is fluid and creative (Law, 2007). Meanings, both cognitive and perceptual, are created through a language influenced by context, history, time, culture, and relationships.

Different kinds of coaching

As indicated above, coaching in sport has been a phenomenon for quite some time. One can learn much from sports psychology on how to motivate and encourage individuals towards optimising their potential and achieving excellence. Transferring the notions of sport coaching to the organisational context, *executive coaching* focuses primarily on work goals and work teams (Ducharme, 2004; Kilburg, 1996, 2000). Just as the sports coach needs understanding of the specific sport for which he or she is coaching, the executive coach needs some knowledge of the uniqueness of the corporate world. Contextual knowledge is necessary in order to develop key executive and managerial skills, enhance teambuilding and leadership qualities, identify and optimise the use of key strengths, and build the competencies of emotional intelligence in the workplace. In the organisation, coaches are change agents who identify and modify managerial style and improve the effectiveness of individuals and teams. There is also an ongoing relationship between the coach and the organisation as both parties collaborate to cocreate and monitor developmental plans and improve organisational performance. Leadership training is one of the most prevalent forms of coaching in this context.

Individual life coaching has become more popular as the demand for enhancement of life experiences, personal growth and development, and self-regulated goals for individuals has become more pronounced (Grant, 2001; Greene & Grant, 2003). The publication of self-help books has become a prolific industry, and, visiting any local bookshop, one is amazed at the number of books available to the individual. Unfortunately, many of these authors have little or no psychology background, and the content is often neither well-supported nor evidence based. Coaching psychologists, however, aim to base their practice on sound principles, derived from multiple tried-and-tested methodologies in psychology (Grant & Greene, 2004; Grant & Zackon, 2004; Palmer & Whybrow, 2007).

Group programmes are not very popular. However, many community projects involve a form of group coaching aimed at empowering citizens, encouraging group participation, and focusing on collective goal achievement to enhance wellbeing (Dalton, Elias & Wandersman, 2007). Psychoeducation and life-skills training have gained a lot of ground in the past decades, particularly when aimed at providing preventive interventions for at-risk groups (Durlak & Wells, 1997). Presenters of these programmes apply many of the basic principles of life coaching with groups. Their aim is similar to that of coaching: to enhance the optimal functioning of communities, be it a community of workers in an organisation, young parents gathering at a community centre, or teenagers starting to date the opposite sex (Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005; Maton, Schellenbach, Leadbeater & Solarz, 2004). Generally, group programmes focus on empowerment evaluation principles (Wandersman, Snell-Johns, Lentz, Fetterman, Keener, Livet, Imm & Flaspohler, 2005), encouraging positive outcomes, community ownership, inclusion, democratic participation, social justice, community (local) knowledge, evidence-based strategies, capacity building, organisational learning, and accountability (Dalton, Elias & Wandersman, 2007).

Theoretical approaches underpinning coaching psychology

According to Grant (2006a:16), coaching psychology, as a sub-discipline of psychology, aims at applying behavioural science systematically to enhance the 'life experience, work performance and wellbeing for individuals, groups and organisations who do not have clinically significant mental health issues or abnormal levels of distress'. However, although life coaching has grown substantially over the past decade, there is still a dearth of empirical research and evidence-based practice. Professional coaching, on the one hand, is cross-disciplinary and derives from multiple methodologies to foster individual and organisational change. Coaching psychologists, on the other hand, use theoretically grounded and scientifically validated techniques to help well-functioning clients reach their goals in their personal and professional lives.

Palmer and Whybrow (2007) list eleven theoretical approaches to coaching based on psychological theories and frameworks. The range of theoretical approach spans psychodynamic and systemic coaching (Kilburg, 2000; Roberts & Brunning, 2007), developmental coaching (Laske, 1999a), and behavioural coaching (Passmore, 2007; Skiffington & Zeus, 2003). In coaching, these approaches involve a structured, process-driven relationship between coach and client or group, involving assessment, defining focused action plans for changing behaviour or influencing unconscious mental life, and using validated tools and techniques to enhance sustainable change. Other approaches include Gestalt coaching (Allan & Whybrow, 2007), NLP coaching (Grimley, 2007), and narrative approaches involving motivational interviewing, person-centred therapy, and conversational learning. These approaches are more flexible, tapping into the strengths and competences of the client and modelling action plans on constructivist and

transformational strategies (Bostic St Clair & Grindler, 2001; Duignan, 2007; Law, 2006, 2007). Most prevalent, however, is cognitive–behavioural solution-focused coaching, impacting on meta-cognition and socio-cognition, self-directed learning (Grant, 2003), and psychological wellbeing (Keyes, Shmotkin & Ryff, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

Collaborative life coaching

Defining collaborative life coaching is no easy task as definitions are informed by a variety of perspectives and are the subject of much debate (D'Abate, Eddy & Tannenbaum, 2003; Kilburg, 1996; Palmer & Whybrow, 2005). Earlier definitions focused more on an instructional approach (Druckman & Bjork, 1991; Parsloe, 1995), that is, immediate improvement and development of skills through tutoring or instruction. This approach aimed at directing students through feedback, reminders, and new tasks to approximate the expert's performance as closely as possible. Definitions coming from a facilitation perspective define coaching as 'unlocking a person's potential to maximise their own performance. It helps individuals to learn rather than teaching them' (Whitmore, 1992:8), and view the coach as 'a person who facilitates experiential learning that results in future-oriented abilities' (Hudson, 1999:6).

Grant defines collaborative life coaching and elaborates the key concepts of both the process and the content of coaching to include a psychology perspective:

> *Personal or life coaching is a collaborative solution-focused results-oriented systematic process, used with normal, non-clinical populations, in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of the client's life experience and performance in various domains (as determined by the client), and fosters the self-directed learning and personal growth of the client* (2001:20).

Collaborative life coaching is a partnership and a facilitative process, using well-tested methodologies from psychology, to enhance the personal growth and wellbeing of individuals who do not present with any particular clinical conditions. In the collaborative relationship and dialogue with the client, both coach and client engage in mutual inquiry, critical reflection, and generative processes that enhance their professional and personal effectiveness, satisfaction with life, and overall success in goal achievement. Clients develop a sense of self-agency and an ability to take action, thus becoming self-directed and goal-oriented (Anderson & Gehart, 2006; Grant, 2001). Transformation is, therefore, inherent in collaborative life coaching.

Overall, collaborative life coaching focuses on cognitive–behavioural and solution-focused principles and involves the four dimensions of human experience and goal attainment: environment or situation, thoughts, feelings, and behaviour (Grant, 2001; Grant & Greene, 2004) – see figure 13.1. For successful

goal attainment, these four dimensions need to be regulated and integrated purposefully. As Grant and Greene state: 'It's a bit like building a house. If we don't pay attention to building all four corners of the structure, the roof won't be supported and the house may collapse' (2004:38).

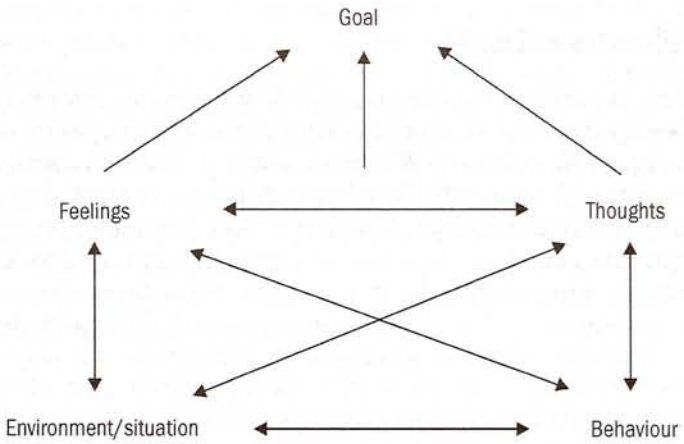


Fig. 13.1 Four dimensions of human experience and goal achievement. Source: Grant & Greene (2004:38)

Collaborative life coaching is a systematic goal-directed process to facilitate sustained change, and to foster ongoing self-directed learning and personal growth. It tends to draw on a range of theoretical frameworks, using client-congruent techniques in order to help clients to reach their coaching goals in the best way. Being flexible in working with different client populations, the collaborative life coach/psychologist needs to view presenting issues from different theoretical perspectives. The key concepts of collaborative life coaching involve the client, the coach, and the context, and the way these concepts are interrelated in the process (coaching) of goal attainment (the outcome).

Theoretical underpinning of collaborative life coaching

Collaborative life coaching is grounded within a cognitive–behavioural, solution-focused approach that integrates both cognitive and behavioural strategies for enhancing or maximising performance under pressure (Anderson, 2002; Edgerton & Palmer, 2005; Kodish, 2002; Neenan, 2006; Palmer, 2002, 2007). Cognitive–behavioural solution-focused life coaching is a structured approach aimed at helping the client achieve her or his realistic goals through a process of change (Ducharme, 2004). The focus is on the client's resources and competences, and

it is present- and future-oriented, finding constructive and positive solutions for problems of everyday life. The coaching relationship is collaborative and egalitarian rather than authoritarian, and resembles the everyday ordinary relationships and conversations that most people prefer (Duignan, 2007; Joseph & Bryant-Jeffries, 2007; Law, 2007). The coach and client engage in a shared relationship of mutual inquiry and, in an interactive and fluid process, coexplore the familiar and cocreate the new. Mutual transformation takes place when the coach and client participate in a collaborative relationship and dialogue; both are shaped and reshaped as they work and create together. The coaching relationship is more an 'insider' than 'outsider' endeavour, avoiding expert/non-expert dichotomies. Consequently, clients experience a sense of ownership, belonging, and shared responsibility.

What is cognitive–behavioural coaching?

Applying the principles of cognitive–behavioural theory to life coaching, Palmer and Szymanska define cognitive–behavioural coaching (CBC) as:

> *... an integrative approach which combines the use of cognitive, behaviour, imaginal and problem-solving techniques and strategies within a cognitive behavioural framework to enable clients to achieve their realistic goals. It can improve performance, increase psychological resilience, enhance well-being, prevent stress and help to overcome blocks to change* (2007:86).

Cognitive–behavioural theory (CBT) is one of the most influential theories of behavioural change in existence today, particularly in the Western world. Its influence is found in sports psychology, psychological counselling, psychotherapy, mentoring, coaching, teaching, nursing, management, and organisational development. The appeal of CBT lies in its relatively simple, structured, active approach to behavioural change and its versatile application in diverse fields of human behaviour (Ducharme, 2004; Grant, Young & DeRubeis, 2005). Among the key theorists associated with the development of CBT are Albert Ellis, Aaron Beck, and Donald Meichenbaum.

A prerequisite for applying CBT is a sound understanding of the principles and processes that underpin behavioural change. The various forms of CBT can be thought of as being located on a continuum, ranging from 'behaviour therapies that focus upon behaviour and environmental determinants [and] elementary learning theory' (Grant, Young & DeRubeis, 2005:15) to therapies that focus entirely on cognition. Palmer and Szymanska (2007) identify two basic premises of cognitive–behavioural coaching:

- People have underdeveloped problem-solving skills or an inability to apply available skills successfully in stressful situations.
- People have beliefs and appraisals of situations or problems that influence their feelings and/or behaviour.

McLeod (2007) proposes that CBT is based on the premises of vicarious learning:

- Human behaviour is learnt through the process of reinforcement – desirable behaviour is rewarded and reinforced while undesirable behaviour is not.
- Undesirable behaviour is maintained by irrational, exaggerated, or negative thoughts.
- Simple techniques can be used to facilitate behavioural change.
- Homework assignments are helpful in assisting the transfer of newly learnt behaviour to everyday life and the world outside the consulting room.
- The change agent's role is active, directive, and didactic in influencing the emergence and maintenance of the new behaviour.
- CBT-based theories of behavioural change differ in how they view the client–therapist relationship, the target and the assessment of behavioural change, the role of client self-regulation and self-directed learning, and the degree of cognitive or behavioural change processes employed during intervention (Grant, Young & DeRubeis, 2005). Nonetheless, Grant, Young and DeRubeis (2005) identify the following principles that are common to all forms of CBT:
  - Client difficulties are viewed objectively, in quantitative and measurable terms. Through the use of questionnaires, physiological tests, and behavioural assessment, problems can be identified and behavioural change monitored.
  - Behavioural change is dependent on cognitive changes and the adaptive learning experience.
  - Explicit goals are negotiated between client and therapist, and the focus is on the client achieving realistic measurable goals that can be revised as intervention progresses.
  - Interventions are solution and present focused, achieving brief, time-limited goals, usually within 12–16 sessions.
  - Clients are viewed as being able to change their thoughts and behaviour, therefore, intervention is an educative process of assisting clients to acquire skills and knowledge.
  - Through the collaborative identification and creation of relevant tasks, and accompanied by carefully designed homework assignments, clients are able to play an active role in changing their behaviour.
  - CBT is a collaborative process called guided discovery (McMahon, 2007). The client is guided, through Socratic questioning, to identify her or his automatic negative thoughts and changing these into performance-enhancing thoughts.
  - During the collaborative change process, both client and therapist are active in pursuit of cognitive–behavioural goals. The quality of the collaboration enhances the client's motivation, co-operation, and commitment to the challenges and obstacles that usually arise in the process of personal cognitive and behavioural change.

The most prevalent CBT strategy for cognitive and behavioural change is the ABCDE model (Edgerton & Palmer, 2005). Edgerton and Palmer (2005) propose the use of the ABCDE model to assist clients experiencing difficulties achieving their goals. Sometimes, clients experience difficulties in solving their own problems. These difficulties are often related to automatic negative thoughts, and occur when a client cannot implement the action decided upon previously in order to solve her or his problems effectively. Grant and Greene (2004) call these automatic negative thoughts ANTs and propose using CBT strategies to change them into performance-enhancing thoughts or PETs. The ABCDE model involves several steps, and also includes homework assignments for the client, collaborating with her or his coach or counsellor, to learn how to change ANTs into PETs (Grant & Greene, 2004):

- A – Activating event (for example failing to implement the selected solution)
- B – Beliefs (for example, 'This is terrible. I cannot stand all this pressure. I'll never finish the project on time.')
- C – Consequences (for example when the client experiences unpleasant emotions and/or engages in dysfunctional behaviour, such as anxiety, headaches, and procrastination)
- D – Disputing (for example, 'I don't enjoy this project but I can stand it. If I start working on it now, I could finish it in time.')
- E – Effective adaptive approach (that is, anxiety is reduced, starts working on the project, which will assist in completing the project, implementing and achieving the solution selected previously).

Further, Edgerton and Palmer argue that:

> *Cognitive Coaching or Cognitive Behavioural Coaching or Rational Emotive Behavioural Coaching can all be considered as dual systems approaches focusing on the practical and/or psychological aspects of a client's problem or issue as and when required'* (2005:27).

They also developed the SPACE model (Edgerton & Palmer, 2005), a comprehensive psychological model for use in cognitive–behavioural life coaching. Briefly, the acronym SPACE refers to the following components: **S**ocial context, **P**hysiology, **A**ction, **C**ognition, **E**motion. The SPACE model employs an interactional perspective that broadens the traditional CBT framework, and assumes a more linear cause-and-effect relationship between the components of the ABCDE model. The inclusion of P, as the physiological component which consists of the physiological arousal and physical sensations that the client might experience, makes explicit the biological component of individual reactions. By incorporating the social context through the S in the model's acronym, the model acknowledges the role of the environment in the client's experience, and, in so doing, addresses one of the major criticisms of traditional psychotherapeutic models: their predominant individual and intra-psychic focus. The model enables a change agent to conduct a quick yet comprehensive assessment, illustrates the interaction between the five components, and provides potential launching stations for collaborative change efforts by the client and change agent.

There is a vast literature on the efficacy of CBT as applied in clinical and counselling contexts, associated with the empirically validated treatments movement (Chambless & Hollon, 1998; DeRubeis & Crits-Cristoph, 1998; Nathan & Gorman, 2002; Roth & Fonagy, 1996). However, in comparison, empirical research on CBT in applied coaching settings is limited (Ducharme, 2004), for example studies examining the effects of coaching on leadership skills (Kilburg, 1997; Saporito, 1996), and emotional competencies (Laske, 1999b; Tobias, 1996). While recognising the versatility of CBT, Gabbard, Beck & Holmes (2005) also highlight certain potential limitations that are not unique to CBT, but hinder the efficacy of any psychotherapeutic approach. Chief among these limitations are low motivation in the client; positive beliefs about dysfunctional cognitive or behavioural patterns (for example delusional beliefs); egosyntonic cognitive and behavioural patterns; limited mental ability, which may include cognitive limitations and dysfunctional personality characteristics, such as antisocial personality traits; and cultural differences that may impact on the building of therapeutic alliance, and how cultural beliefs affect thinking and behaviour.

What is solution-focused life coaching?

Coaching is also solution focused rather than problem focused. As O'Connell & Palmer state, 'Solution-focused coaching (SFC) is an outcome-oriented, competence-based approach [helping the] clients to achieve their preferred outcomes by evoking and co-constructing solutions to their problems' (2007:278). Solution-focused coaching has its origins in brief solution-focused psychotherapy, and has been extensively used in many areas. O'Connell (2003) emphasises the relationship between coach and clients, seeing the coach as facilitator of change rather than as a problem solver. The coach facilitates processes of self-directed learning and self-regulation (Grant, 2006b), and focuses on the client's resources and competences to attain future goals and life-long change (Grant & Greene, 2004). The problem is considered as something one has, and can get rid of, while one charts one's progress towards the solution.

What is the difference between coaching and counselling?

For many, the difference between coaching and counselling is vague. Both the coach and the counsellor are in the helping profession and engage with their clients towards achieving positive change and optimal personal functioning. Both aim to help or assist the client in gaining insight into, or understanding of, her or his problem, and in finding solutions for unresolved psychological issues, or healing in the therapeutic relationship. Some counselling and clinical psychologists have been applying coaching skills in their continuous interaction with clients. However, the orientation in counselling and clinical psychology tends to be on repairing some form of psychological disorder or dysfunctional behaviour. In coaching psychology, the focus is on enhancing wellbeing and goal attainment of normal, well-functioning adults, who wish to enhance their quality of life and develop their growth potential (Berg & Szabo, 2005; Bluckert, 2005; Grant, 2006a;

Greene & Grant, 2003; Hudson, 1999). We list some of the more conspicuous differences between counselling and collaborative coaching in table 13.1.

Table 13. 1 Differences between traditional therapies and collaborative coaching

Traditional therapies	Collaborative coaching
Patient – often dysfunctional, ill, or meeting diagnostic criteria of psychopathology	Client – non-clinical and normal well-functioning individual with strengths and resourcefulness
Focus on unresolved psychological issues of the past – more listening oriented	Focus on future and assisting the client to take action – more action oriented
Bring patient to 'normal' functioning	Move client to successful/motivated higher-order functioning
Curative and seeking solutions for problems	Seeking to enhance performance, goal attainment, and wellbeing
Slower pace – psychotherapy can sometimes last for years	Fast, focused pace with ongoing relationships
Guarded, cautious communication	Clear, open communication
Stigmatisation prevails – client often secretive/discrete with others, avoiding social exposure	Socially acceptable – clients usually public and open with others
Hierarchical relationship with counsellor as expert	Collaborative relationship with coach as non-expert facilitator
Boundaries – no social contact allowed, a dual relationship is unethical, with little or no therapist self-disclosure	Looser boundaries – social contact is appropriate and a dual relationship is allowed, with coach more open about self
Therapy usually takes place in therapist's office	Flexibility in delivery of coaching, allowing telephone sessions, e-mails, and personal meetings over lunch or even on a golf course

Principles of collaborative life coaching

Underlying collaborative life coaching are the basic principles of person-centred coaching, motivational conversations, the psychology of learning, personal construct psychology, and cognitive–behavioural solution-focused techniques (Palmer & Whybrow, 2007). These principles and techniques are essential to inviting and sustaining the preferred relationships and dialogues. These principles also imply that coaches assume a particular way of being with the people they meet in coaching. Thus, in a collaborative relationship and dialogue, knowledge

and language are relational and generative. It is in and through relationships and conversations that things come into being as people continually respond to, and try to understand, each other. Change, psychological mindedness, and self-directed learning happen coconstructively, as the relationship between coach and client unfolds over time, and through the collaborative inspection of important values to influence behaviour in different contexts.

Change and the change process

Change happens. The only certainty one has in life is that change will take place, mostly at an ever-increasing pace. In his book *The Age of Turbulence*, Alan Greenspan (2007) writes about the fast pace of change in the twenty-first century, saying that change happens so fast it is like having to learn an entirely new layout for the computer keyboard every two years.

Change is at the core of human development, and many theories and techniques have developed in psychology to explain change and change processes. For many people, however, dealing with change is difficult. Nonetheless, some people do manage to make successful changes in their lives, even under difficult circumstances. In collaborative life coaching, one aims to facilitate the change process in order to help people adapt to the multiple changes in life and to live up to their full potential (Grant & Green, 2004). Psychologists have been studying the processes of change for some time now, and Prochaska and his associates (Perz, DiClimente & Carbonari, 1996; Prochaska, DiClimente & Norcross, 1992; Prochaska, Norcross & DiClemente, 1994; Skiffington & Zeus, 1998) have devised a model of change (see figure 13.2). Table 13.2 on the next page details the stages in the change process.

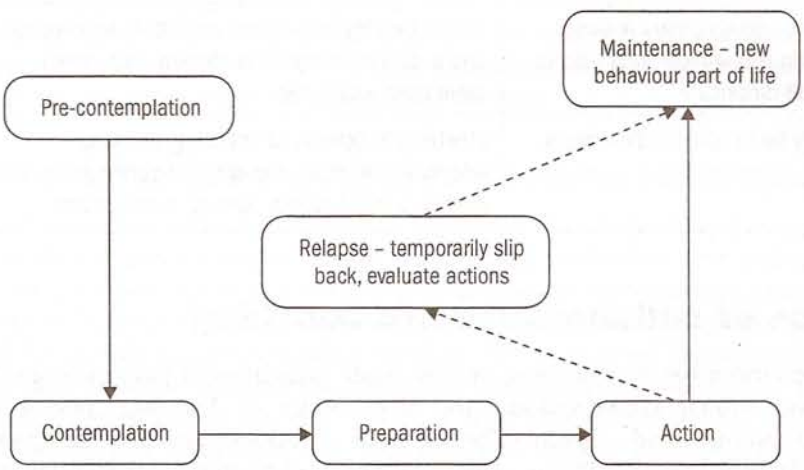


Fig. 13.2 A model of change

Table 13.2 Stages in the change process

Pre-contemplative stage	The client is aware of changes happening around her or him but she or he has not been thinking about making any changes to her or his own life, and does not intend to do so in the near future.
Contemplative stage	The client has thought about making changes in an area of her or his life but has not actually done anything about it yet. She or he is gathering information about the reasons to change, considering the benefits and disadvantages of change, and examining a wide range of options. The client experiences ambivalence, and may even engage in resistance behaviours when the goal is unrealistic.
Preparation stage	The client has the intention to make some changes in her or his life or has started to do so within the past week. She or he now develops an action plan and makes a commitment, both privately and publicly, to change.
Action stage	The individual is actively making real changes in her or his life and has been working at this for at least the past month. Actions are aimed at attaining specific goals, and integrate thoughts, behaviour, feelings, and context in continuous commitment to change. In collaborative life coaching, this stage also entails various self-regulatory processes of monitoring, evaluating performance against measurable standards, and gaining insight for further actions to attain sustainable change.
Maintenance stage	Now the client celebrates her or his success. She or he has been successful at making real changes in her or his life for about six months. The changes have become embedded in her or his everyday life.

Apart from matching the coach's style to the client's readiness to change, it is important to understand the motivation to change and how it emerges over time. Prochaska and DiClimente (1992) and others claim that clients in the pre-contemplative stage of change are not ready for coaching. In this stage, building a relationship with a client may not go very far. Thus, the coach needs to examine closely where the client is in the change cycle before barging in with action plans and expectations of sustainable change.

Grant and Greene (2004) also add the prospect of *relapse* to the change process. Relapse happens and should not be overlooked in the coaching relationship. In the relapse stage, which can occur at any time and repeatedly during the change process, the individual has started making real changes but there seem to be further obstacles on the road to successful and sustainable change.

Psychological mindfulness in collaborative life coaching

Psychological mindfulness refers to a person's ability to engage in, and benefit from, insight-oriented interventions. This involves cognitive abilities and intuitive talents, curiosity, and a genuine interest in humans and the way the mind works, and the self-directed ability to engage in reflective processes (Appelbaum, 1973). More recent definitions involve McCallum and Piper's (1997) psychoanalytic description of a person's ability to identify intra-psychic conflicts (for example wishes, anxiety, and defences) and relate them to her or his difficulties. Conte, Ratto and Karusa's (1996) definition is more trans-theoretical, explaining psychological mindedness as an attribute and the mechanism for accessing one's thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in the interest of motivating one's capacity for change. Grant defines psychological mindfulness as 'a predisposition to engage in acts of affective and intellectual inquiry into how and why oneself and/or others behave, think, and feel the way that they do' (2001:12). It also involves a spiritual aspect and mindfulness of one's mind–body wholeness (Kabat-Zinn, Massion, Kristeller & Peterson, 1992), instead of focusing on the mind–body duality prevalent in many traditional forms of intervention.

Mindfulness meditation has its origins in Buddhist meditation practices, and was popularised in the West as part of stress reduction and relaxation programmes (Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Roth & Creaser, 1997; Shapiro, Schwartz & Bonner, 1998). It consists of several meditative practices that seek to develop the ability to focus one's attention in the present moment in a non-evaluative and non-judgemental manner (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Combined with cognitive–behavioural approaches, mindfulness meditation emphasises empirical validation of change strategies, personal regulation of emotional states, and behavioural change through transformation of unhealthy thought and behaviour patterns. Mindfulness meditation is also congruent with positive psychology's goal of enhancing wellbeing, self-awareness, resilience, and self-regulation of emotions and behaviour. It has a preventive focus and emphasises the pursuit of healthy living rather than focusing on pathology and symptomatic change (Hamilton, Kitzman & Guyotte, 2006).

Meta-cognitive processes of mindfulness, self-reflection, and insight underlie the multidirectional relationship between ability and interest to perform a task. Grant (2001) suggests that insight is a product of reflective inquiry, while an increase in insight ultimately enhances one's psychological mindedness. This implies that psychological mindfulness is not a static characteristic but a malleable and changeable aspect of self-monitoring and self-evaluation. The construct of psychological mindfulness in children and adolescents has begun to receive much attention. It involves a child's growing comprehension of the motives, attitudes, and characteristics of self and others (Hatcher & Hatcher, 1997), and characterises the child's ability to make sense of herself or himself and of the world in psychological terms. As children and adolescents develop an increasing ability for abstraction, growing understanding of self, of mixed emotions, and of taking the perspective of others, they gain psychological mindfulness.

Despite the many varying definitions of psychological mindfulness, there appear to be some shared assumptions (Boylen, 2006). On the one hand, a psychologically minded person turns attention inward, evaluating subjective experiences as they relate to outside events by utilising cognitive and emotional process. The person gains self-knowledge through accessing feelings and attempting to reflect upon and integrate experiences. On the other hand, there is an openness and receptivity of the psychologically minded person to self-evaluate and gain insight that is not limited to an intellectual understanding of events.

Self-regulation, self-reflection, and insight

A simple model of self-regulation entails the process by which individuals control and direct their actions in pursuit of their goals (Garcia, 1996). This involves self-observation (monitoring the environment and one's own behaviour, thoughts, and feelings), self-evaluation (evaluating the environment and one's own behaviours, thoughts, and feelings), and self-reaction (making purposeful changes to achieve defined goals). In principle, goal-directed self-regulation consists of a series of processes (see figure 13.3).

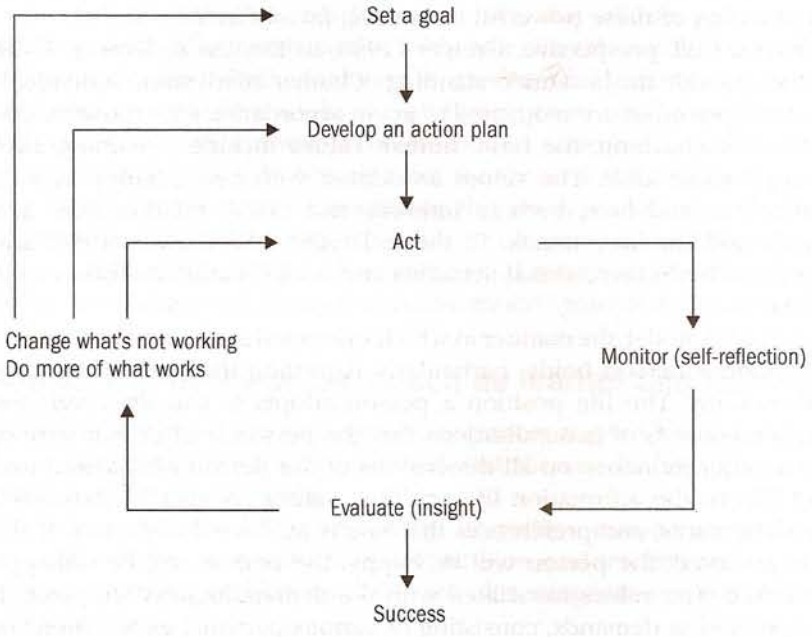


Fig. 13.3 Generic model of self-regulation and goal attainment showing self-reflection and insight. Source: Grant (2003:255)

The individual sets a goal, develops a plan of action, and starts with taking action. As the process progresses over time, the individual monitors her or his performance through self-reflection and evaluates the performance against a measurable standard, gaining insight into the possible changes and further actions necessary to enhance goal attainment and success. The coach facilitates the process, providing feedback, suggestions, and advice to assist the individual through the self-regulatory cycle to ultimate success.

The importance of values

Values and needs are important motivators of change. People are motivated by different things, and one person can be motivated for change by different factors at different times. One's values inform one's decisions and choices of behaviour in different contexts. For example, Swenson and Herche (1994) explain the predictive role of values in enhancing sales performance: working in alignment with their core values increases the performance of salespeople. Values underlie one's vision for the future and the goals one sets for oneself. Therefore, assessing exactly what the underlying values are that direct one's behaviour in different situations plays a pertinent role in collaborative life coaching and in goal setting. As Grant & Greene state, 'We need to make our values explicit to ourselves' (2004:83) in order to gain understanding of these powerful motivating factors in life.

Writing from a CBT perspective, Greiger (1988, in Dryden & Trower, 1988) states that values provide the best understanding of human motivation. Individuals who value certain outcomes are motivated to act in accordance with those values. In collaborative life coaching, the basic human values include remaining alive and being happy while alive. The values associated with being happy include friendship, affection, and love, both in intimate and casual relationships, and success in work and similar pursuits. To these, Dryden and Trower (1988) add having fun or pleasure in recreational activities and hobbies and comfort or ease in life generally.

In Geiger's (1988) model, the manner in which values influence actions depends on the life position a person holds, particularly regarding the demandingness–affirmation dichotomy. The life position a person adopts is usually developed when young, and consists of generalisations that the person is often unaware of but that have a major influence on all dimensions of the person's behaviour and experience of life. In the affirmation life position, values are usually expressed as desires, wishes, wants, and preferences that one is motivated to pursue. If the valued goal is achieved, the person will be happy; the person will be unhappy if it is not achieved. The values associated with the demandingness life position are usually expressed as demands, consisting of various personal expectations or needs that tend to be absolute and excessively demanding of satisfaction. These life positions are usually identified during interactions between client and suitably trained collaborative life-coach practitioners. Such positions can also be obtained from appropriately designed homework assignments, completed by clients in the process of applying cognitive–behavioural and solution-focused principles to identify their unhealthy or irrational beliefs about themselves, the world, and other people (Grant & Greene, 2004).

Key concepts of collaborative life coaching

The key concepts of collaborative life coaching relate to the relationship, the focus, and the basic assumptions of coaching psychology. O'Broin and Palmer state that the 'coach–client relationship is a fundamental factor in every coaching contract' (2007:295), while Grant (2006a) elaborates on the thematic factors considered as critical within the coaching process. Fillerly-Travis and Lane (2007) explain the factors impacting on effective coaching in a generic model involving coach attributes, client attributes, working environment, the coaching process, and the outcomes. Based on their model, one can identify the following key concepts of collaborative life coaching, which will be discussed in more detail below:

- client attributes or the client as expert
- coach attributes or the coach as learner and facilitator
- the coaching relationship
- the coaching context and work environments
- the coaching process
- the coaching outcomes.

Client attributes or the client as expert

First, collaborative life coaching assumes that clients are capable and not dysfunctional. The coach works with non-clinical populations of clients of all age groups, either individually or in groups. Children, teenagers, young adults, and mid-life and older adults can all benefit from a collaborative and generative dialogical conversation with a coach who has expertise in facilitating processes of change. The client's problems are not the focus of the relationship. Problems are not categorised in terms of normal or abnormal, functional or dysfunctional. The client is considered the expert on her or his personal and professional life, and the coach respects the local knowledge and interpretations that the client brings to the coaching relationship and conversation (Joseph & Bryant-Jeffries, 2007).

Coach attributes or the coach as learner and facilitator

Although the characteristics and competences required of a coach have not yet been fully established, it is proposed that the coach should have the following attributes (Dingman, 2004):

- inter-personal skills, including empathy, encouragement, genuineness, authenticity, approachability, compassion, and intelligence
- communication skills involving tact, listening/silence, questions, and playful exchange
- instrumental support skills including creativity, dealing with paradox, self-knowledge, positive regard, and tolerance for interventions made, the ability to stimulate thoughts, feelings, and to explore new ideas and behaviours, and to work on resistance to change.

The coach has expertise in facilitating learning through coaching, not necessarily domain-specific expertise. In her or his not-knowing capacity, the coach is a learner who is genuinely curious, who acts spontaneously to invite thoughts into words, and who engages in new ways of talking about the familiar, thus leading to the cocreation of newness in meaning and preferred outcome. Not-knowing refers to the belief that one person cannot pre-understand another person or his or her situation or what is best for them. Rather, knowledge and expertise (from research or theory, for example) are offered tentatively as food for thought, and remain open to challenge and change. In this way, the coach uses her or his interpersonal skills, communication skills, and instrumental support abilities to open up, rather than close down, words and actions. Co-operative language, questions, opinions, speculations, or suggestions are offered in a manner that conveys genuine respect, interest, and appreciation for the client's expertise (Dingman, 2004; Passmore & Whybrow, 2007).

Coaching relationship

The coaching relationship between coach and client is crucial in collaborative life coaching. The relationship unfolds as a conversational process and generative dialogue, and is shaped by the multiple characteristics of the coach, the client, the situation, and the contexts. Every coaching relationship and conversation is unique, new, and often surprising. It generates continual excitement and enthusiasm for coaches and clients. A coach orients herself or himself to be, connect, act, and respond with the client (Anderson & Gehart, 2006; Grant, 2001:21). The intention is to invite the client into a shared conversation or joint action in which transformation is inherent. In the generative dialogue between coach and client, the inventive and creative aspects of knowledge and language are used to generate change. The client has a sense of participation, belongingness, and ownership. Coach and client examine, question, wonder, reflect, etc. jointly, and develop a genuine dialogue, a social activity that is transforming for all participants (Grant, 2006a). Collaborative life coaches also develop language and attitudes that will motivate, empower, and support goal achievement.

Coaching context and work environments

There has been a great deal of research into how ecological contexts influence the way people behave. Ecosystemic researchers are in agreement that, without understanding encapsulated environments within which people live, coaching efforts may have little value. People and contexts influence each other. Instead of first-order change that tries merely to influence the context or the individual's actions, second-order change aims at influencing the changing relationships, shared goals, roles, rules, and power relations within the context where change happens. Coaching psychologists aim to understand people within their social and change contexts, in order to promote quality of life and person–environment fit better, and to enhance performance within different ecological settings.

Within different ecological settings, behaviour patterns emerge in space and time involving both implicit and explicit rules of behaviour (Barker, 1978). Ecological settings are more than the mere physical setting and time frame in which behaviour occurs. Unique and largely interchangeable behaviour patterns develop in different ecological settings pertaining to the structure (programme circuit) and intention (goal circuit) of individual and collective actions. In referring to activity settings, O'Donnell, Tharp, and Wilson (1993) also include the shared experiences and subjective meanings that develop in the context. From this perspective, one is aware of the inter-subjectivities as beliefs, assumptions, values, and emotional experiences are shared by those who co-operate in a particular context. Furthermore, Kelly (1966, 1970) observed the four principles of ecological contexts, namely

1 *interdependence* of the multiple, related parts where change in one affects change in the others
2 *cycling of resources*, and creating, conserving, and transforming resources
3 *adaptation* as the person settles into the context and copes with constraints or demands of the environment, utilising available resources, and accessing the values and skills necessary for optimal functioning within the context
4 *succession* as an understanding of the history of the system, in order to identify behaviour patterns and how patterns have changed over time.

Similarly, a coaching culture develops in the interaction between coach and client in different ecological settings. Every coaching relationship involves a predominant style of coconstructing meaningful outcomes (Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005a), while the context and content of the coach–client relationship are very much influenced by the coaching culture, social climate (Moos, 1994), and social regularities (Linney, 1986; Toro, Rappaport & Seidman, 1987) that exist in a community or society. In order for coaching to be successful in organisations, the community, or an individual life, one needs a context devoid of stigmatisation, where a client is encouraged and supported, and to make use of coaching as a way of adapting to change (Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005b).

Coaching process

The focus of collaborative life coaching is on constructing solutions, not analysing problems (Grant, 2006a). New horizons open up when engaging in the collaborative life-coaching processes of goal setting, as does a culture of opportunity and possibilities, forward thinking, and taking action and accomplishing changed behaviour patterns. There is much uncertainty in the coaching process as solutions, resolutions, and outcomes develop from within the local conversation as it is uniquely tailored to each person's or group's need for growth and wellbeing. Put simply, there is no way of being entirely certain of the direction in which coaching will unfold or what exactly the outcomes of the collaborative relationship and dialogical conversation will be. As conversational partners, the client and the coach connect and engage in processes in which they

act and talk with each other, rather than to each other, about the issues at hand and the desired outcomes.

Despite these uncertainties, Dingman (2004) identifies six generic steps or stages in the coaching process:

- formal contracting
- relationship building
- assessment
- getting feedback and reflecting
- goal setting
- implementation and evaluation.

These steps involve the elements of establishing rapport and creating trust, identifying and clarifying the coaching agenda, and identifying both the inner challenges and outer obstacles to coaching and change. As the coaching relationship unfolds, the coach identifies the strengths, values, and passions of the client; then, collaboratively, they strategise a successful plan of action. Progress is validated through feedback, self-directed learning, reflection, and insight (Grant, 2006a). No successful coaching process is concluded without proper preparation, celebration of success, and arrangements for follow-up coaching and sustaining accountability.

Coaching outcomes – prevention and promotion

Based on the principles of mental health promotion (Mrazek & Haggerty, 1994), coaching outcomes are seen as preventive in nature. Collaborative life coaching aims at promoting competence and wellness, preventing disorders, and promoting wellness that benefits and empowers everybody in the community. Prevention and promotion are activities undertaken in a healthy community to prevent physical and/or psychological distress, and to promote and maintain emotionally healthy societies (Dalton et al., 2007; Durlak & Wells, 1997). Including community psychology perspectives in collaborative life coaching involves enhancing the developmental assets and psychosocial protective factors of individuals in a community, thus encouraging functional and adaptive capacities. The focus is on strengths and positive responses to life's challenges, addressing both distal factors and proximal processes.

Coaching outcomes that focus on collaborative processes and prevention and promotion aim to reduce or eliminate stressors in key settings, reduce operational or physical risk factors, improve socialisation practices, increase accessible social-support resources, and increase opportunities for positive relatedness to others. Prevention and promotion interventions are multilevel and multicomponent programmes contributing to structural changes in people, community norms and resources, and sustainable outcomes (Dalton et al., 2007). Long-term programmes include refresher sessions that encourage change to become part of a person's perspective on life. They are built on the norms and needs of people in a particular context and are developed through active participation of the community (Chinman, Imm & Wandersman, 2004; Everhart & Wandersman, 2000; Fetterman

& Wandersman, 2005). Both at-risk and high-risk individuals and groups benefit from participation in prevention interventions, while promotion strategies enhance the competence and assets for adjustment in normal populations.

Through the creative orchestration of collaborative life coaching (for example prevention and promotion innovations), the coach and client engage in environmental reconnaissance, agree on programme goals and outcomes, and ensure connection of programme goals to the core mission of the ecological (local) setting (Dalton et al., 2007). Developing strong and clear leadership in the community, programme presenters ensure implementation of core principles and elements of the programme. Continuously measuring programme implementation and attainment of goals, searching for the unintended effects of the programme, and planning for sustainable behavioural change constitute the rewards of collaborative life coaching.

Characteristics of successful coaches

Based on a cognitive–developmental and ego-development approach, Bachkirova and Cox explain that coach training involves the view that adults are 'continually learning, developing and growing' (2007:325). This means that the coach and client mutually benefit from the coaching relationship. Therefore, the characteristics of a successful coach lie in

- the cognitive–reflective dimension, regarding the degree of complexity of thought and reflective judgement (King & Kitchener, 1994)
- the ego-development dimension, in terms of intra-personal and inter-personal functioning and the degree of openness, authenticity, and inclusiveness of others (Kegan, 1982; Loevinger, 1987).

The successful coach aims to assist people in discovering what they want in life and in unlocking their own brilliance to achieve it (Anderson & Gehart, 2006). Utilising the principles of collaborative life coaching and its associated theories and models, the life coach adopts a more relational, conversational, and collaborative perspective. The life coach focuses on people generating their own answers rather than looking outside themselves for solutions. Collaborative coaching is also not about teaching or the unequal power relations of a teacher–student relationship. It is about facilitating people to invent something new, to think something they have never thought before, to take action towards realising their goals, and enhance growth and development across the lifespan. The focus is on the future and the multiple paths of reaching one's goals; the successful coach facilitates that journey. Therefore, the characteristics of a successful collaborative life coach may be summarised as follows:

- well adjusted and constantly seeking personal improvement or development
- passionate about life and about mentoring/helping people
- able to suspend judgement and stay open-minded
- entrepreneurial – even if they do not have great business skills, they are visionaries, able to see the big picture and to reinvent themselves and their business to meet current trends

- naturally motivational and optimistic – exuding confidence, even when unsure
- great listeners who are able to empathise with clients
- able to collaborate with and partner their clients, shedding the 'expert' role
- have a willingness to believe in the brilliance or potential for greatness in all people
- look at possibilities instead of problems and causes
- present as authentic and genuine, with high integrity
- willing to say 'I don't know', and explore where and how to learn what is needed (adapted from Williams & Davies, 2002. *Therapist as Life Coach: Transforming your Practice* (Anderson, 2007)).

Locally relevant collaborative life coaching

There is a variety of reasons why people come to coaching and multiple goals they want to achieve when engaging in a coaching relationship. Each person's reason and goals are unique, and each person brings unique strengths, skills, and resources to the coaching relationship. For collaborative coaching to be locally relevant, the coach must take each individual's uniqueness and goals as legitimate and worthy, believing that most people want to lead happy lives and have successful relationships (Diener & Oishi, 2007).

Supporting steps of collaborative life coaching

Locally relevant collaborative coaching involves various supporting steps critical to the process of successful coaching, regardless of the goals the client wants to achieve. These steps suggest an attitude, rather than a structure, for the coaching process. They are aimed at helping coach and client develop and articulate the coaching agenda. There is also no specific order in which these steps follow one another. Rather, whether working with an individual or a group, these steps provide a framework for establishing the coaching relationship, identifying goals, and developing a solution-focused action plan for goal achievement that is rational and attainable. Articulating these steps in a generative and ongoing process helps coach and client develop clarity, focus, and future-oriented thinking. Identifying her or his goals and action plan for goal achievement, as well as her or his strengths and talents, helps the client develop an appreciative, positive attitude towards herself or himself, the future, and her or his ability to accomplish successful change.

- Personal definition of success (PDS): Success is a highly individual concept; each person's definition is unique. The client creates a unique definition of what success is, and clarifies the goals and objectives for the coaching conversational relationship and dialogue.
- Preferred identity (PI): Self-identity is the way one thinks and values oneself, and it influences the way one presents oneself to others and how they will perceive one. Some self-identities enhance success and some hinder it. In this

step, the client identifies her or his role and chooses an identity, clarifying also her or his values that will enhance success.

- Personal power statement (PPS): A PPS articulates identity, goals, values, and assets (one's competitive edge) that will ensure goal achievement and success.
- Exceptional performance plan (EPP): To actualise success, there must be a plan of action with a timeline. Collaboratively, the client and coach plan the actions for success and the mechanisms for evaluating thoughts, feelings, environment, and behaviour in order to reach the identified goal. Setting clear and attainable goals maximises motivation for change. Grant and Greene (2004) suggest the SMART plan for setting goals:
  - ***Specific*** goals are better than vague and fuzzy visions for the future.
  - ***Measurable*** goals help one to evaluate progress.
  - ***Attractive*** goals are more motivational than unattractive ones and elicit sustained effort.
  - ***Realistic*** goals are achievable and give a sense of success.
  - ***Time-framed goals*** and a clear plan of action help to move the client towards a successful change outcome.
- Challenges and relationships: Coach and client collaborate in identifying the obstacles on the road towards success.

Developing a locally relevant collaborative life-coaching programme

In the case studies below, we give some examples of collaborative life-coaching programmes for different scenarios. Note, however, that the client concerns listed here are not exhaustive. Developing locally relevant collaborative life-coaching programmes always implies that coaches should explore the local context and identify and clarify issues of concern that may be relevant to their contexts and those of change processes of clients.

In the examples below, we present three alternative scenarios. In each of these scenarios, client expectations are similar: clients are looking for long-term solutions and a positive approach to achieving change. They want the potential coach

- to develop a collaborative life-coaching programme for sustainable change in the community
- to provide coherent and inclusive life coaching.

The steps for developing a collaborative life coaching workshop are the same for all three scenarios – only the content differs.

Familiarise yourself with the steps, and develop a collaborative life-coaching programme to enhance the quality of life for adults, fostering personal (individual) and community growth through self-directed learning and action. In this programme, you will utilise and integrate knowledge from different fields in psychology (for example

developmental psychology; community psychology; prevention and promotion; solution-focused, systemic, and cognitive-behavioural interventions, etc.) to develop the content for, and processes of, collaborative life coaching related to a specific issue of everyday life.

Case study

Scenario 1: relationship building in young adulthood

As they develop into young adulthood, adolescents establish relationships outside the safety network of the family. They embark on making new friendships and engage in dating relationships. A major developmental outcome for young adults is finding a life partner with whom they can embark on life's journey into adulthood. However, they are concerned about four major issues:

1 establishing healthy relationships and recognising the warning signs of relationship abuse
2 proper behaviour in a dating relationship, understanding and setting boundaries, and making good decisions
3 ways of asserting oneself and building and improving self-esteem in relationships
4 the dangers of sexually transmitted diseases because of pre-marital sexual activities among young people.

Case study

Scenario 2: changing anger into constructive behaviour

People of all ages experience difficulties controlling their anger. Children, adolescents, and adults engage in anger-related behaviour sometimes, to vent their frustration about lack of skills and competences in certain areas of life, sometimes to resolve conflict. For example, a father or husband who is frustrated with the slow pace of productive output in his work context vents his anger on family members. Women and children are physically and emotionally abused because of a spouse's inability to deal with conflict. Some cases of elder abuse are related to feelings of incompetence and fear of the unknown. Public violence escalates when people try to resolve their differences in aggressive ways. They are concerned about four major issues:

1 tolerance and impulse control
2 mechanisms for evaluating their own behaviour
3 social skills, prosocial behaviour, and positive responses towards authority figures
4 coconstructing respect for self and others, and developing psychological mindfulness.

Case study

Scenario 3: family relationships and parenting

Adaptation to developmental and social change is embedded in good family relationships. Well-functioning family systems are grounded in the interrelatedness and inter-dependence of different individuals in the family unit, good communication, clear-cut behaviour patterns, role appropriation, and benevolent power hierarchies. Change in one member does not happen in isolation. It influences all members of the family as well as the dynamic balance within the system. Concerned about the break-up of family relationships in an ever-changing society, a group of parents in the community is concerned about the following issues:

- accepting and dealing with change as a natural part of growth and development
- setting family goals and establishing clear family rules and values
- ways of improving parent–child relationships and reinforcing positive family relations
- hostile versus benevolent power in parenting practices.

Learning points

1 Attempts at changing human behaviour should proceed from a collaborative perspective, involving relevant components of positive psychology and a cognitive–behavioural solution-focused approach. This chapter approaches collaborative life coaching from a postmodern and social-constructionist perspective and serves as a guide to collaborative life coaching for both prospective coaches and clients.

2 Developments in coaching psychology are associated with sports psychology, while executive coaching is aimed at establishing evidence-based practice and research for collaborative life coaching. Change happens, and collaborative life coaching influences the way one works, learns, and relates collaboratively in conversational practice. The global demand for enhancement of personal and professional growth goals encourages the creative meeting of the challenges of everyday living.

3 Collaborative life coaching should be geared towards achieving positive change and self-directed learning, thus motivating individuals towards effective goal achievement. Any change in thought, feelings, behaviour, and environment should not be seen in isolation but in the inter-connectedness and inter-dependence of all components aimed at goal attainment.

4 Positive, encouraging, and motivational conversations, and an ongoing relationship between coach and client, promote psychological mindfulness and self-regulated behaviour change. Through active participation and a sense of ownership, clients acquire new behaviour patterns to deal with life's challenges.

5 Coaching psychology, although a new sub-discipline of psychology, is evidence based and research oriented to ensure the best practice in all circumstances.

This chapter provided prospective coaches with the theoretical knowledge to develop effective collaborative life-coaching programmes. Adequately trained coaches, utilising well-researched models and practices, are change agents and influence effective coaching processes, behavioural change, and optimal goal attainment.

6 Privileging client expertise, local knowledge, and a critical awareness of process sensitise coaches towards recognising the limitations of traditional intervention strategies, which are biased towards solving problems instead of being future oriented. Collaborative life coaching is solution focused and future oriented, and is aimed at enhancing existing strengths and resources of clients to function optimally in their personal and professional lives.

7 Coaches should use their inter-personal skills, communication skills, and instrumental support skills to facilitate human change in individuals and groups, and to cocreate newness appropriate to challenges and constraints of life stages and contexts of clients. Coaches assist clients to achieve their personal and professional goals, and combine their cognitive–reflective and ego-developmental dimensions to create authenticity and inclusiveness of others.

8 Collaborative life coaching is in vogue in the twenty-first century. Collaborative life coaches are 'risk takers', willing to get out of their comfort zones, have a world-view and concomitant holistic vision, and focus on developing the future, not fixing the past.

Learning activities

Develop a collaborative life coaching workshop. Based on your knowledge of collaborative life coaching and the underlying principles of coaching, choose one of the scenarios in the case studies given above and design a workshop containing the following elements:

1 Background literature study regarding the strengths and resources of clients, their present situation and expected/desired future outcomes, and any other issues related to the scenario.

2 Devised mechanisms for identifying and clarifying the coaching agenda, including strategies for goal setting and goal attainment.

3 Developed strategies for enhancing psychological mindfulness, self-directed learning, and value assessment for clients, aimed at successful behaviour change, growth, and development.

4 A business plan for collaborative life coaching – a business plan is a work-in-progress and involves evidence-based content and evaluation. It includes something about each of the following areas:
   a a one-day workshop and materials
   b introduction and use of the supporting steps in collaborative life coaching (see above)
   c continuation session(s) for future coaching interactions with the target group

d client policies and procedures, and the coaching contract
e logistics, budget, and marketing tools
f assessment tools for evaluating short-term outcomes (of each session) and long-term impact in the community (measures for researching the outcomes).

Test-yourself questions

1 Describe briefly the characteristics of positive psychology, and explain its application in collaborative life coaching.
2 Describe briefly different kinds of coaching.
3 List and explain the characteristics of an effective collaborative life coach.
4 Explain the differences between traditional interventions and collaborative life coaching to a person of a different culture.
5 Write yourself a letter from the future, in which you identify the needs and values that are important to you and how you developed these values in your everyday life.
6 Describe how you would facilitate a collaborative life-coaching workshop for a group of adolescents in a sex-education class.
7 Compile a list of criteria you would use to evaluate the effectiveness of your collaborative life-coaching programme.
8 Present a collaborative life coaching workshop to your fellow students on the transition to young adulthood and ways of establishing an intimate romantic relationship.
9 Identify any solutions you have generated for achieving the goals of this chapter.
10 List a number of strategies that you can use for enhancing psychological mindfulness among adolescents.

Recommended readings

The following journals relate to coaching and coaching psychology:

- *International Coaching Psychology Review* (*ICPR*) – published by BPS Special Group in Coaching Psychology in association with the Australian Psychological Society, Interest Group in Coaching Psychology. It is peer reviewed and more information can be found at www.sgcp.org.uk/coachingpsy/publications/icpr.cfm
- *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring* – published by Oxford Brookes University, the journal is international peer reviewed and freely accessible through www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/education/ijebcm/home/html
- *The Coaching Psychologist* (*TCP*) – published by the BPS Special Group in Coaching Psychology with open access at www.sgcp.org.uk/coachingpsy/publications/thecoachingpsychologist.cfm

- *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice* – published by Routledge in affiliation with the Association for Coaching; more information can be found at www.informaworld.com/rcoa.

Useful addresses

Association for Coaching: www.associationforcoaching.com
Association for Professional Executive Coaching and Supervision (APECS): www.apecs.org/
Australian Psychological Society, Interest Group in Coaching Psychology: www.groups/psychology.org.au/igcp/
British Psychological Society, Special Group in Coaching Psychology: www.sgcp.org.uk
International Association for Coaching: www.certifiedcoach.org/
International Coach Federation: www.coachfederation.org/ICF/
Academy for Coaching Parents International: www.academyforcoachingparents.com/index.htm
Centre for Cognitive Behaviour Therapy – including the articles on this site, and the 'Links' page for references to other sites: www.rational.org.nz

Handbook of Youth Counselling

This handbook aims to equip professional and volunteer counsellors to deal effectively with clients in a multi-cultural context. It is an ideal text for courses in the behavioural and health sciences at under-graduate and graduate level.

Key features include:

- This book examines traditional psychological theory, recent worldviews on health and well-being, the biopsychosocial/spiritual model, positive psychology and Afro-centric perspectives on psychopathology.
- The role of the professional counsellor, present-day counselling theory, and practical counselling interventions and techniques receive attention; and cultural and ethical issues related to counselling interventions are covered.
- The wellbeing of the youth in the school context - emphasising ADD, dyslexia and underachievement; and social issues such as rape, teenage pregnancy, divorce, family discord and HIV are examined.
- Written for SAQA requirements, this volume follows an interactive approach and provides outcomes, ample case studies, pauses for self-reflection, summaries and group and individual activities that enhance learning.

Eugéne van Niekerk is a former associate professor in psychology. He currently practices as consultant psychologist with a particular interest in health psychology.

Johnnie Hay is an associate professor in psychology of education at the University of the Free State. He is a registered educational and clinical psychologist.

Heinemann
Inspiring generations

ISBN 10: 0-796-22481-1
ISBN 13: 9780796224811
9 780796 224811