

CONVERSATIONS

...In Search of the Inner Self



"COACHING IN A DISRUPTIVE WORLD"

From the Desk of the Editorial Team

Dear Reader,

On behalf of the ICF Bengaluru Chapter, we take immense joy and pride in launching the inaugural issue of this Magazine – the first of its type in the country. This magazine aspires and endeavours to bring to the fore those aspects of the human mind which lie largely unexplored and unutilized, holding back people from achieving what they truly are capable of achieving. The Magazine has been aptly named, “CONVERSATIONS...In Search of the Inner Self”

In these uncertain and difficult times in the world, the benefits of coaching truly assume great significance. The ability to stay hopeful and optimistic and to see a better future is at the core of human existence. Coaching, to a great extent helps in igniting and sustaining this flame of hope and optimism.

“Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.” – Desmond Tutu

This first issue of our magazine focuses on “Coaching in a Disruptive World”.

We would like to record our gratitude and appreciation towards all the Coaches who invested their time, energy, and emotions in contributing their articles, poems, stories, excerpts from their conversations and experiences from their journeys.

Happy Reading!

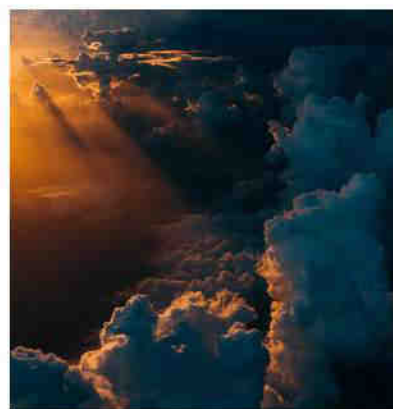
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The Editorial Team
September 2020



Bengaluru
Charter Chapter

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ICF Bengaluru or the Editorial Team takes no responsibility for the material published as the views and opinions expressed in the articles are solely of the authors

From the President's Desk

The world has been changing at a rapid pace, with new kinds of work and new ways of doing that work, especially in these unprecedented Covid days. **The new “Digital” way of life is rapidly getting into our DNA.** Big moments of Change for us Coaches too.

That's why, at ICF Bengaluru Chapter, we were keen to provide a platform for our members to share with each other and with the external world our ideas and thoughts on the way forward as Coaches. To recalibrate ourselves and leverage each other, help each other to adapt and change as Coaches. Thus was hatched the idea of an **ICF Chapter's Magazine!!**

We visualize our magazine to evolve into a buzzing platform for us in the Coaching Community to freely express ourselves and share, build our views on Coaching related topics. A magazine co-created by our Members: To imagine—then create—the future of the Coaching world they want to inhabit. A vision to cultivate a broad, inclusive, inventive spirit.

It is my honor as the President of the ICF Bengaluru Chapter, to launch this first issue of our Chapter's digital Chapter Magazine **“CONVERSATIONS... In Search of the Inner Self”**. **Our vision, our dream is that in a couple of years, we will work together to create the right brand for our magazine, so that our stakeholders will reach to “CONVERSATIONS” as their one stop, GO TO place for Coaching.**

I'm indeed inspired by what our Members, the Editorial Team, and the Managing Committee are already doing to shape our future. The launch of the magazine is yet another humble beginning but a proud and big milestone in our Chapter's exciting journey. I am excited about the overwhelming support and participation we received for the first issue. I take a bow to each of these members. A BIG thanks to you!

Please join me in celebrating this event and I am sure with the continued patronage and participation of the Chapter Members, we will get where we want to go!!

Cheers and Stay Safe and Healthy.

MG Raghuraman
President, ICF Bengaluru Chapter



Bengaluru
Charter Chapter



ICF Bengaluru Chapter - Early days...

By Hemant Acharya, Dr. Winston Jacob, PK Narayanan

Year 2014. ICF and a group of Coaches felt it's time to establish a Chapter in Bengaluru.

The seeds for ICF Bengaluru Chapter were sown over a couple of Zoom virtual meetings held on 13th November 2014 and 23rd December 2014. These meetings were coordinated by Fiona Toy, the ICF Regional Manager for Asia Pacific. 22 Coaches from Bengaluru participated in the December Zoom meet.

A 6 member team of Volunteers consisting of Akhilesh Chaturvedi, Krishna Setlur, PK Narayanan, Rajat Garg, Satyanarayanan Kumar, and Dr. Winston Jacob was formed to set the ball rolling.

On 14th March 2015, the first meet of ICF Bengaluru Coaches was held at Hotel 12th Avenue, Indiranagar, where the structure for the Chapter (a non-profit Society) and the initial management team was chosen. The works that ensued included finalizing the bye-laws and governing principles and rules for the Chapter. Many existing Chapter models were studied for adaption during this phase. During the previous year, Bangalore's name had been officially changed to Bengaluru. Bangalore evoked nostalgia, while Bengaluru was going to be the future. After a brief debate, Bengaluru carried the day, so ICF Bengaluru it was to be!

On 20th June 2015, a few Volunteer team

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members met at Coffee café day, Indiranagar, to give final touches to the evolving incorporation documents including Bye-laws.

ICF Global was very particular that all the legal formalities with respect to formation of the non-profit society are completed and the Chapter is legally recognized by the local Government, before to their formal approval. Also, they needed a minimum of 20 members to sign-up for establishing the Chapter.

On 24th August 2015, 12 Founding Members of Bengaluru Chapter met at Hotel Woodlands, Richmond Road, to sign the incorporation documents for registering ICF Bengaluru Chapter as a Society under Indian Societies Act. Dr. Winston Jacob graciously agreed to offer his home office as the registered office for the Chapter, which continues to be the Chapter address even today.

The Registrar of Societies Bengaluru gave the incorporation certificate for our Chapter on 6th September 2015. The Society Registration Certificate (in Kannada, which had to be translated to English!) and the Chapter Agreement duly signed along with the rest of the documentation were sent to ICF Global for formal recognition as a Chapter. In a couple of days, ICF Bengaluru Chapter came into being - on 9th September 2015.

The efforts that started in November 2014 took almost 10 months to culminate in creation of our Chapter!

The immediate priority was to create a membership base for the Chapter. 50 members were needed to make it a 'Charter Chapter', eligible to receive grants from ICF Global.

The first global membership list of Bengaluru Coaches was made available on 27th September 2015 with 88 names in it. INR 2,000 was fixed as membership fee for the Bengaluru Chapter for the period 2015-16. Membership drive started with the formation of a 3 Member Team. The bank

account was set up on 01st October 2015.

In parallel, efforts started to enable social media presence of our Chapter - LinkedIn Group, Facebook Page, and Twitter feed were started in November 2015.

2 google groups were established to manage Chapter communications - one for the Chapter members and the other for the larger coaching community. The Chapter website was up and running by March 2016. WhatsApp group of the Chapter wasn't established until November 2016. In 2015, new Chapters were set up in Delhi and Mumbai as well. Chennai was in the final stages of formation. The ICF Global Board was heartened by all these activities and decided to make a formal visit to India; early December 2015 was chosen for the visit.

Our Chapter looked at this as a great opportunity. The Chapter leadership team felt that a formal launch program for the Chapter, which was already on the cards, would get a great boost if done in the presence of ICF Global Board of Directors. We felt it would provide great mileage if we could have a big bang launch in December and achieve Charter Chapter recognition before that. So, there were two ambitious targets in front of the fledgling Managing Committee - achieve Charter Chapter status by the end of November, and have a spectacular launch program with the ICF Global Board in attendance.

The planning and execution for the launch event in December took some effort. We wanted to have it in a grand setting with an audience of at least 100 - 50 coaches and 50 corporate executives. While having the coaches posed lesser challenge, reaching out to corporate executives proved otherwise. That gave rise to a successful collaboration with NHRD, Bengaluru Chapter. While the coaches and executives would get an opportunity to interact with the ICF Global Board, an added attraction was a session by Lisa Edwards, a Fortune 100 Coach from the US, on The ROI of Coaching. Considering the eminence of the ICF Global visitors as well as the audience,

we decided that the program must be held in style, so the Taj Vivanta on MG Road it was for the venue.

Relentless efforts of the Team made it possible for our Chapter to become a Charter Chapter in 64 days - by 30th November 2015. (Ultimately the membership rose to 68 for the year 2015-16).

9th December 2015 was a red-letter day in the history of the Chapter. At 4 pm, the ICF Global Board representatives - Dave Wondra, the Chairman, Magda Mook, the Executive President, Bhaskar Natarajan Director, accompanied by Fiona Toy, Regional Manager of ICF Asia Pacific - had a formal meeting with the Managing Committee of ICF Bengaluru. A proud moment was the recognition of Charter Chapter status on ICF Bengaluru. It was noteworthy that ICF Bengaluru achieved Charter Chapter status within 64 days of formation - a record.

At the formal Chapter launch in Vijayanagar Hall, Magda Mook gave a talk on the global trends in Coaching and drew extensively from the PWC Report that had been commissioned by ICF Global. Lisa Edwards spoke on the challenges of measuring the Return on Investment on Executive

Coaching. A spirited Q&A session was followed by a sumptuous dinner. All who attended felt that the newly formed Chapter had ticked all the boxes and was well on its way to becoming a constructive platform for coaches and corporates. Mr. PGR Sindhia, former Minister in the Karnataka Government graced the occasion on our invitation, and welcomed the foreign dignitaries in traditional Karnataka way with a turban and silk shawl, much to their surprise and amusement!

And so ended the year 2015 - a memorable year in Chapter's history, filled with enthusiasm, struggle, and celebration!

Trivia:

There were 4 teams that worked on formation of the Chapter and its early days!

1. The first Volunteer team of 6 members - formed on 23rd December 2014.
2. The Management team of Volunteers - formed on 14th March 2015.
3. A regrouped team of Volunteers that drove incorporation, founded the Chapter, and gave direction to early works.
4. The elected Management Committee that came in to being on 17th February 2016.



Chapter launch with Global chair and Board members - 9th December 2015

L to R : Rajat Garg, N Siddharth, Krishna Setlur, C J Jeyachander, PK Narayanan, Sridhar Laxman, Fiona Toy, Dave Wondra, Magda Mook, Hemanth Achaya, Bhaskar Natarajan, Winston Jacob, Charles D'Cruz, Bharathi Srinivasan, Leni Mathews, Moushumi Bose, K Satyanarayanan.

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1st Elected Management Committee - Feb 2016

L to R : Charles D'Cruz, CV Subash, K Satyanarayanan, Hemanth Achaya, Winston Jacob, PK Narayanan, Vishy Sankara, C J Jeyachander; Foreground: Bhavna Dalal, Bharathi Srinivasan



Chapter launch - 09 December 2015



Hemanth Achaya is Co-founder of ICF Bengaluru Charter Chapter and its first President. He is a PCC and Coaches CEOs and C-Suite Executives. Currently Hemanth heads a start-up in the Aerospace sector.



Dr. Winston Jacob MBE is a Transformational / Mentor Coach and Ambassador to the Global University for Life Long Learning (USA). His contributions to PNG Red Cross Society and Scout Associations were recognised by Her Majesty, the Queen of UK, by awarding him the coveted 'Member of the British Empire' (MBE).



PK Narayanan is a CEO Coach helping CEOs and business owners grow their business faster and position for long-term success. PK's passion is to help growth-driven leaders become even more successful thus creating a positive impact for themselves, their people, and the society at large.

AN ODE TO THE DIVINE

By Leni Mathews



Leni Mathews, PCC, a leadership facilitator and coach since 1997, Director of Emmpower is a pioneer in conducting the ICF accredited coach certification training in India since 2014. Certified by Harvard in "Building Global Enterprise"; a MBTI, SII & Enneagram Assessor with work experience in hospitality, banking, IT, Consultancy and social domains.

I was awoken today by the calling bell,
Of a burst of song that I could tell,
That the birds of the air and the bees on the blooms,
Orchestrated as if to dispel all gloom.
The sun shone through the showering clouds,
Much like our soul, the spirit abounds.
From the ponds stood up the lilies to shout,
To glorify the Lord all about!
And so I arose to the incessant call,
The cuckoo, the magpie, the parrot and all,
Clamouring to get their message across.
Awake, don't waste this glorious day,
Of hope and abundance and God's mighty display!
All of nature is resounding in joy,
Unstoppable in music with dancing ahoy!
The parrot screeching across the blue sky,
The magpie flip flopping on the luscious fruit nearby.
The red breasted couple in shy duet,
Made an appearance, as if to test,
What would I do, awaken anew?
Would I sing along and know we are blest?
Spring has burst forth through thunder and storm,
That quenched all our thirst for forgiveness of wrong.
The raintrees are crowned with pink petals a bloom
The earth heaves a sigh, her children have learnt,
How sacred love, in bargains, they had burnt.
In sorrow and peace and heart cleansing tears,
Awaken to realize, they are still God's very "Dears".
The gifts of the divine so precious we bear,
Let's learn to celebrate while we take good care.
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art!

OMG moments in a Leadership Journey

By Jagdish Kini



Last year, I was coaching a senior executive and I heard myself telling him that he was fortunate to have been tested as a Leader. He and his team faced a challenging time and some even lost their jobs for what had happened. He could have easily looked for another job as the mess that existed was created before he took up that Leadership position. He preferred to stay on, take it to the board and sort things out, and set new standards and benchmarks for the organisation.

The motivation for him to go through the struggle was that he took ownership of what happened in his organisation knowing fully well that it was something he had inherited. He was clear that inheritance brings in some bad with the good. He

saw this as an opportunity to clean up the mess and start the process to leave behind a legacy that the employees would be proud of. He saw it as an opportunity to create an organisation that he could be proud of, that he served and helped build.

How many of us have been tested in a way, which has made us say “OMG! what do I do now?” How many of us are willing to be tested in a way which leaves you blank in the mind? I have been fortunate to be tested and every time a crisis came up, I felt that it could not get worse than that.

In 1992, we were operating through a franchise before L’Oréal set up the subsidiary in India.

During that time, my boss Mr. Mouvillier always reminded me that I was to make sure that no one from the team churned. One month, I was told by the CFO of the franchise that they did not have the money to pay the salaries. That was a situation, which in my opinion, could not get worse. I was in charge of Gillette and one morning, we woke up to the news of the Patna crash where we lost two of our sales managers. I was being tested but we managed. It was tough for me to go to Srinagar and face the Brigadier who had lost his older son in a war and the younger one in the crash. It toughened me and made me humbler and more resilient.

I was not sure of how many times a leader gets tested in his career and I was sure I have had my share, till one day we woke up to hear that an Indian Airline returning from Kathmandu was hijacked to POK; our senior Vice President was in that plane. I will never forget that week. We were tested at different levels and for different skills. Keeping abreast with the government decision-making process, managing his family stress, and managing the morale of the colleagues and company personnel. It was a relief to see him walk out of the plane when they returned to India. I was sure that my tests were done with it could not get worse than that, ever.

It was in 2003, I was in the Bangalore office of Airtel, a senior Police officer with two other officers and my Nodal officer walked into my room and told me in a calm tone that they had

received a call about a bomb planted in the Airtel Office and we needed to vacate the premises in a matter of 5 Minutes for the Bomb squad to search the place. Those 5 minutes for me was absolutely tense. The only way to manage this was for me to start from the 5th floor and personally tell the people to abandon all belongings as is and leave now and use the stairs on their way down. I asked them to go silently, no discussions. Then the fourth floor and then the others.

With this, I was convinced that my share of OMG moments was done till the tsunami hit us and took away our switch room at Chennai.

In all these situations what helped me was being vulnerable and authentic. When I did not know what to do, I would look for help and it dawned on me that being vulnerable was actually a strength. Being human and showing it, was a glue that helped me bond with my colleagues and people in authority. These OMG moments helped me to understand myself and to be naked with my clothes on. I was ready to listen with a want to have a deep understanding of the situations. It helped me prioritise the issues and make decisions that were meaningful. I began to understand that knowing what to when you don't know what to do is a Leadership skill. The deepest transformation I underwent was that I began to slow down. I slowed down to the speed of Presence. When I was in the presence, I began to trust the moment, I began to trust that it would take care of everything, including me.



"I feel Blessed at P&G I learned to manage and build brands. At L'Oreal and at Gillette, I learned to manage and build companies. At Airtel, I learned to build an industry and Now I am on a journey to build lives"

Jagdish is an accredited executive coach (PCC....certified by ICF). He has trained under Marshall Goldsmith and in processes developed by the Neuroleadership Group and Dr. David Rock. He currently coaches across the board - CEOs, business leader's middle managers and young Entrepreneurs. Besides, he is a global resource person for DukeCE, empanelled as global executive coach for CoachA of Japan, TLC of USA, and Acuity of UK for their clients. Jagdish's workshops titled "Unleash Your Potential", "Designing Solutions", "Coffee with Kini" and "Take Charge" are highly regarded and well-attended. In these he uses lessons from his own corporate and personal life to help young professionals focus themselves and grow as individuals and as professionals and members of the society at large.



By Vivek Ananthakrishnan

The Commitment

This happened a long while ago. Life seemed so simple and less complicated then. The days when the post and telegraph department was the mainstay of communication. Letters posted in villages would take a few days to be delivered. And you could be certain that it would be delivered. Telephones were a luxury limited to the privileged.

As coaches or leaders and specialists, I leave you to draw your lessons and conclusions from this story.

Trials and Tribulations

We had just settled into peacetime mode in a small city in Central India. Time being spent in training, playing games, and more training as all infantry battalions do. Summertime was on us, with longer days and shorter nights.

That morning, as I was walking to my company office, I saw a stocky person standing outside the office. As I went nearer, I realized it was Amrik, my go-to man. Amrik looked different in uniform and perfectly tied turban... or was it because I had only been seeing him in his boxing rig in the last few months. Thoughts raced through my mind. Shouldn't he be preparing for the event that evening? Normally, soldiers would have to be dressed in full uniform for the Company Commanders formal interview. So, what was he doing dressed in uniform? Was he in trouble again? Entering my office, I could see a perplexed looking 2-i-C (the second in command) holding an inland letter. He whispered, "Sir, Amrik's father died a few days ago in his village. We

THE COMMITMENT

just received this letter." An occupational hazard for soldiers. I could comprehend Amrik's situation. I remembered I could not talk to my father before he had died. A lot remained unsaid and not done. The 2-i-C continued, "Sir, please don't tell Amrik. I implore you. We won't have an answer for the Commanding Officer."

"Why?"

"What, Sir? You know that his final bout is in the evening. He won't be in a condition to fight."

The Decision

The Brigade boxing finals were later that evening. Amrik was Alpha Company's star performer, the only representative from my Company. A gold prospect for our battalion. Amrik was pitted against a Services welterweight runner up, a man with a reputation of being a fierce opponent, the rival battalion's star performer. Now, the odds seemed near impossible.

"Leave it to me," I told my 2-i-c as he looked at me in disbelief. I asked the company clerk to prepare a leave certificate.

I called Amrik into my office and gave him the inland letter. He read it silently. Soldiers do not make a show of emotions. There were no tears, those would come later with the memories. He was the eldest son. The burden of responsibilities was traditionally the privilege of the firstborn. So much to do and yet not enough.

After consoling him I said, "Here is your leave letter. I have sanctioned full leave. Rest, the

choice is entirely yours. Whatever you decide, I stand by you." These are simple folks from the border villages of Punjab- large-hearted, living their dreams as soldiers-proud as the land they come from.

What he said that day, I still remember. He said, "Sir, my father is gone. Nothing can be done now. I shall fight".

Meanwhile, I met the Commanding Officer and informed him of what I had done. For once he seemed to agree with me. I went back to routine work for the day.

The Final Bout

The tourney was being held in the open. The sweltering heat meant that the finals would commence just after sundown. I could see the ring lit up in the distance as I hurried to the venue. The fanfare was announcing the VIP's entrance. I just made it in time.

Amrik's bout was the first match of the evening. Moments later the gong sounded. Round one was on. I spotted a vacant chair and was easing myself in. I did not get a chance to sit. It was all over before it had started. A section of the crowd went berserk, and there I was, jumping and cheering. It was probably the shortest bout I would ever witness. A KO (knock out). Seconds into the round, Amrik unleashed a vicious short hook. His much-fancied opponent never knew what hit him. Amrik Singh threw his gloves away, walked up to me and said, "Sir, Can I go now?" I nodded and just beamed.

Unwavering commitment in the faith and trust reposed is a soldier's creed. Do what you must against all odds, for the pain is secondary, I, Me and Myself come last, What matters is my commitment to the goal!!



Associate Certified Coach (ICF).
Member and Executive Coach Pro Coach & Potential Genesis HR.
People Development Practitioner.
Carl Jung Concept Certified
Trained in Neuroscience Program for Coaches

A Graduate from Ramjas College, Delhi University and Post Graduate Degree in Defence Studies from Madras University. As a Certified Coach, he works with Senior-level Executives, Professionals, Academic Faculty and Management Students helping them to help themselves. Also Facilitates Workshops on a wide range of subjects (Master Trainer Facilitator, Instructional Design, OD Tools, Leadership and Team Building). Former Colonel of the Indian Army decorated with a Gallantry Award in combat operations.



By Meenakshi Rajagopal

The word Mandala is believed to come from Sanskrit, and it means "Circle". Many cultures and religions are said to have practiced Meditation and Art based on Mandalas. They have been used for self-awareness and healing.

In her book, "Mandala Symbolism and Techniques", Susan I Buchalter says, "The Mandala represents the circle of life and wholeness. It reminds us of the impermanence of life and the need to accept change. The Mandala

provides a sense of calm and comfort, focus and insight.”

Carl Jung, the well-known Swiss Psychiatrist and Psychoanalyst used Mandalas in his Psychotherapy. He believed that creating Mandalas offered a “safe refuge of inner reconciliation and wholeness”.

I first heard about Mandalas around four years ago. A co-participant in a workshop talked about the concept of colouring mandalas as a meditative and mindful practice. This piqued my curiosity and the very next day, I ordered a Mandala colouring book and a set of colour pencils from a well-known online site. Once I opened the package, I was hooked!

Since then, I have coloured many Mandalas. About a couple of years ago, I attended a workshop to learn to draw them too. I now draw my own Mandalas, as well as colour those that

are available in published colouring books. This hobby has been deeply transformative for me in various ways. I find it meditative and calming. At the end of a long workday or week, when I sit down and draw or colour one, it washes away all my stress and I feel extremely calm and centered. It has honed my concentration and focus and there is a sense of joy, satisfaction, and fulfilment when I finish one.

As a school student, I believed that I was not at all creative. I failed the art exam that was held to select students for the next level of art classes. This hobby has now helped me overcome that limiting belief which I carried for years. It helped me access my creative side while coming up with my own designs as well as colour combinations. I now find that I am slowly able to apply the same creativity to various aspects of life.

In a way, it has enabled me to connect deeply and be more present with myself.



Meenakshi Rajagopal is a certified Leadership and Life Coach and Group Facilitator. She believes in balance and the mantra that she lives by is ‘Head in the clouds and Feet on the ground’ – flying high and yet very grounded. She continuously reinvents herself believing that life is all about continuous improvement. Her driving force is to enable individuals and groups to explore Limitless Possibilities and live a more fulfilling life

REFLECTIONS OF COMPASSION & RESILIENCE DURING CURRENT TIMES

By Rekha R Upadhyay



The current pandemic situation has been reeling for over four months and has taught a lot of life lessons- patience, being available for someone to talk to, being a soundboard, being available for your family vis-a-vi how we used to tell people- I am so busy, don't have the time for it. We hear this sentence very often isn't it! Whether it is clients, family, friends, extended family members. Whenever I would hear such a sentence from anyone, I would always respond to the person saying, 'I don't believe in this sentence', the person would ask 'why?' I always say 'time will automatically never be ours, we need to make time for ourselves.' And I would ask them 'do you have time to do your essential routine of freshening up, eating, sleeping and even breathing?' There would be an answer in a very defensive tone- 'Ya of course', and I would again ask them, 'why do you say you don't have time?' And I would hear an elephant pause.

On the contrary, since childhood, I have seen my parents being there for their family and extended family whenever required. This has been a very important life lesson. At times I would tell my mother, "you have the same things to talk again and again every day, and if it's the same you want to repeat, let's talk later, I am busy!" She would say "ok fine".

In my journey as a coach, one of the biggest learning & change for me has been compassion and resilience. For me, compassion is being there for someone when they need me. Even if they just want to talk the same things, it's ok, they just want someone to hear them out, whether it is parents,

spouse, or siblings. The moment I would just be there for them, not judge them, let them share whatever is there in their heart, I felt a shift within myself and experienced people sharing beyond what they wanted to share. I also recollected and re-learned how my parents listened to us with compassion, be it any kind of circumstance.

The year 2020 has been turbulent, having heard, seen many deaths of loved ones in the family, especially my maternal grandmother and my mother passing away within five months. When my grandmother passed away, mom had a difficult time to go through, and when I would just hear her talking about grandmother, it not only helped mom share her thoughts, feelings, but also helped her grieve through remembrance, and I, consciously or unconsciously learned how to come to terms with the death of a loved one because when we are in our childhood, parents help us manage our emotions. As a child when I underwent the same experience of losing my mother unexpectedly, it was a very difficult moment to accept it and yet be there with my family. As a child, losing a parent is the most traumatic feeling as no one can take their place. This void will always be there. Family being together has been the biggest back bone. Restarting household work immediately the same evening post rites were completed, along with family arranging the next set of rituals for the next couple of days, and yet I always felt there was some energy system within which kept me going. In the Hindu rituals, there is a process where the soul is reunited with the ancestors. During this process, the ancestors are invited to take the soul

with them and when this ceremony happens one can feel this energy of your ancestors and post the ritual an unexplainable calmness can be experienced. All this while, I saw myself being more proactive, patient, just being there in the moment, and yet sharing my memories and grief as well.

Going through a loved one's death especially during these pandemic circumstances has been in itself a challenge. I call this resilience for myself. Death has taught me to be more compassionate, how to heal within, patience, being in the moment, and how to take a forward movement. As I write this, I recollect a very famous Sanskrit phrase- "*Mata Pita Guru Deivam*". Parents are our first teachers, mentors & coaches who direct us to Guru who helps us find God. God resides within us which signifies our awareness, consciousness, and who are we being for ourselves. Every time I went inwards, I discovered myself even more and this time, it has been compassion and resilience. When I reflect this for myself, probably these have been amongst the values bequeathed from the family I belong to. We might have not seen or met our ancestors but we inherit their qualities even though we may be many generations apart. We are their extensions and we will continue to pass on ourselves to our forthcoming generations.

If you look deeply into the palm of your hand, you will see your parents and all generations of your ancestors. All of them are alive in this moment. Each is present in your body. You are the continuation of each of these people.
-Thich Nhat Hanh



Rekha R Upadhyay is an ICF ACC certified Executive Coach and HR Professional with more than 15 years of industry experience. Professional credentials include- Hogan Assessment, NLP Practitioner, Theory U- MIT, CPI Career Transition Consultant. As a coach her passion lies in working with people across life ages to facilitate life transformation. Director of Research & Publication- ICF Bengaluru Charter Chapter. A passionate & professional Carnatic Music Vocalist and lifelong learner.

Climate on our Agenda can be the New Normal

By Rashmi Shetty

Disruption is like a double-edged sword. Wikipedia gives it meaning on the one hand of “unmanageable” & on the other, it could be “innovative or groundbreaking.” Currently what we are going through is definitely a disruptive world. The uncertainty is evident. The steps everyone is taking are diffident & unsure. Every top leader is talking Servant leadership, Planet Earth, family, team & wellbeing. These have become buzzwords in conversations & interviews. Qualities everyone is advising to bring out are compassion, humility, concern, care, kindness, mental health, empathy, & patience.

Every calamity brings with it an opportunity is a belief today. There is a majority worried that their ways of working have become outdated for the “new normal” while there are many more who have leveraged technology to the hilt to make the most of the very same situation. One thing evident across professions is generosity. People are now more than willing to share. Suddenly it is about us. For once we have seen why “My neighbour’s good health ensures mine.” The Indian prayer, “*Lokah*

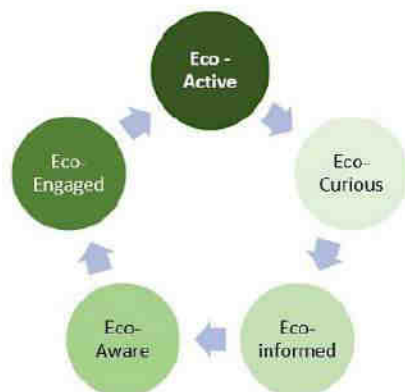
samastah sukhino bhavantu” is most appropriate today.

In this world, therefore, coaching too is a new challenge. As coaches, it is important for us to first work on ourselves & be forgiving of how we



can bring in the changed scenario into our coaching with new perspectives. The planet is one factor we can no longer ignore. Naturally bringing it into the conversation is today our responsibility. As a member of the Climate Coaching Alliance, (<https://www.climatecoachingalliance.org/>) the “global team of coaches are aiming to enable individual practitioners, and the profession of coaching to develop strategies and practices that provide our clients (individuals, leaders and their teams) the right space to step into

their necessary leadership role in the face of the climate emergency.” Therefore, I would love to write about how to bring in environmental awareness in our coaching conversations in the new normal we have moved into through this model created by Prof. Peter Hawkins.



Eco Curious: An openness to discovering more about the climate and ecological crisis and one's own part within it.

Eco Informed: Greta Thunberg challenges us "Look at the science" find out what is happening.

Eco Aware: Emotionally working through the various natural reactions when facing what we humans have done

Eco Engaged: Developing the skills to bring the ecology appropriately into every coaching relationship.

Eco Active: Taking responsibility to influence and create change through one's wider profession and all one's stakeholders.

This Cyclic model talks about the need to bring in environment into our coaching conversations. How the coach, coachee & the agenda are connected is important. The journey is from Eco Curious to Eco Active. Our stakeholders are our teachers. Asking "How do we treat our challenges, from COVID to climate change as our teacher?" is important. He suggests bringing in empty chairs for the stakeholders. Who does your work serve? "Who else?" he suggests is a question we need to keep asking & it is completely up to us to expand this agenda to life as well. This will help us understand what Eco Engaged is. Further, how do we spend our meeting as both leader & follower to find answers in our work together? Eco Active next is to go beyond your direct work, thus keeping the learning alive! At a personal level, if each of us thinks of an ecological commitment in all that we do, this cyclical model applies, as learning is a never-ending process. How are we sourcing our food? How much of a carbon footprint are we leaving to make our everyday life comfortable? We need to take our awareness of

the impact both upstream & downstream. The Eco Active approach is one where we learn a lot about ourselves & the influence we wield.

According to Prof. Peter Hawkins: "Today change is at 3 levels:

1. *What we can change by ourselves?*
2. *What we can change with others through partnership?*
3. *What we can influence others to change?"*

Therefore, it is very important to respect Nature around us as we have taken her for granted so long. The time is now to understand that Nature nurtures us every day. We are part of the environment & bringing this awareness into our everyday lives can make us mindfully aware. Therefore, bringing this into our conversations in the personal & professional lives can make a world of a difference. Maybe we can start by taking a nature walk. Concluding with a quote I read a long time ago, "There is no Wi-Fi in the forest but I promise you will find a connection."



Rashmi Shetty is a Voice & Attitudinal Coach who believes "Your Attitude decides your Altitude". She is a Professional Certified Coach (PCC) from ICF, Motivational speaker, RJ, Emcee, Storyteller and Behavioural facilitator. A catalyst with women leaders in transition, her coaching program "Power of W" is devised to bring about the balance from within. A National & International Award Winner for scripting & narrating Radio documentaries, her skills with Voice is what she delivers with VANI -Virtual Articulation & Narrating Instrument for enhancing virtual presentation skills. The Bhagavad Gita is where she gets her life lessons from.

Busyness to Business

By *Yatin Samant*

Busyness is probably the biggest Corporate disease

"The greatest enemy of good thinking is Busyness" - John Maxwell

"Busy is the new stupid" - Source unknown

Research tells us that most of us are underleveraged to the extent of 95% with only about 5% of our abilities being used, not because of lack of skills or talent, but due to an application gap. Primarily, we are often too busy to find the time to discover and bring forth our full potential. Worse still, many of us are blissfully ignorant that our busy state of mind is what blocks our rise to our full potential.

I am convinced that for a fulfilled work and life experience, we need to move beyond the 'busyness' trap.

Busyness is a silent killer and is probably the biggest, most debilitating corporate disease. I call it a 3C's Disease: **Contagious, Chronic, and Cancerous**

- **Contagious:** Affects everybody around you or working with you
- **Chronic:** The longer you remain affected, the deeper you sink
- **Cancerous:** Unless detected and prevented early, it can be terminal

Being busy is like falling into a trap that one finds tough to come out of. Like stepping into marshy land- the longer you stay there, the deeper you sink.

This busyness is a vicious cycle, similar to the situation that Abhimanyu in the Mahabharat encountered. He was trapped inside a Chakravyuh and did not know how to come out. Busyness leaves an individual occupied with firefighting and constantly functioning in a reactive mode, where tomorrow is no better than today. Since the future can be created only in a proactive mode, busy people cannot create a future for themselves or for the organisation they work for, simply because they do not have time for the future!



Busyness has serious, lasting consequences

- **On your career** – Effectiveness, productivity, career growth
- **On your organisation** – Results reached, cost benefit of efforts deployed, growth plans
- **On your colleagues** – Busyness and its aftereffects are contagious like a chain reaction or a relay race, where one person's busyness and delay affects each person at successive stages
- **On you as an individual** – Work-Life balance, morale, confidence

There is a big difference between leaders who are successful and those who are not. The former are meaningfully engaged while the latter are just busy. Meaningful engagement requires connecting with a purpose, not just staying aimlessly trapped in doing myriad of mere activities the way busy people are.

Symptoms of Busyness

It is not difficult to detect the onset of this busyness disease. It has two components:

1. **Physical** –
 - Missing deadlines, always firefighting
 - Struggling to be ready on time for anything
 - Repeating mistakes
2. **Psychological** –
 - Tired or low on energy, overwhelmed
 - Caught in a victim trap – blaming others
 - Quick at self-defence, basking in past glorification

Is Busyness real or imagined? Is it a state of matter or a state of mind?

Busyness prevails in the absence of an organised mind, just like darkness does in the absence of light! The clutter is not circumstantial, it is inside. It is not about how much you work, but how you work that makes you busy.

- Imagine how much time it takes to access a book you need in a library where lakhs of books are well organised v/s how much time it takes if all the books were to be drawn out, well mixed, and spread on a table. These two scenarios reflect two very different states of mind of two different types of people: Organised and unorganised minds respectively.
- Busyness implies that you are falling short of time for your task. This shortfall is not necessarily due to higher quantum of work at hand or having less physical time but often is an issue of prioritisation and time efficiency. It is about productive time becoming compromised due to unproductive time that is consumed by unorganised, unscheduled activities.

Busyness is not real, it's a state of mind, and you can come out of it if you want. Since the root of this disease is in the mind, the solution also starts from the reorientation of the mind.

Way out of the “Busyness Chakravyuh”

It is important to understand that business can start only when the busyness ends.

The total time spent on any task has three components: **(i) Processing time, (ii) Waiting time, (iii) Idle time.** Often, the culprits are these unproductive time components of waiting and idle time, not the productive processing time component. Therefore, the way out is for us as leaders to identify and spend less time on access, and more time on the process to create business success.

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It is possible to get completely out of the Busyness Chakravyuh with a few steps:

1. Resolve: It has to start with your resolve. The more intense your resolve is, the higher are your chances of conquering busyness. My learning book (A simple tool- booklet designed by me towards self-development via reflection) will help you to create that intensity.

2. Structure: You need to transform to work with a structured approach with a direction, method, and plan.

3. Toolkit and Mechanisms: There is an entire toolkit available to help keep you on track -

- (i) Time priority plan
- (ii) Month planner
- (iii) To-Do list
- (iv) Pocket diary
- (v) My learning book

Use mechanisms like Time slot technique, Dedicated Solo Time, and Work regimentation.

4. Guide: Seek a guide or a mentor to help you through this withdrawal process.

In conclusion, therefore, we need to understand that in today's working world, Busyness appears a reality (seen as happening around), but is not a real entity, in that it is a state of mind & is actually due to an absence of an organised approach to work.

Good part of it being a state of mind is that it can be worked on & conquered, driven by a strong resolve, with a structured work approach, toolkit / techniques & a little initial guidance/handholding.

Remember, Business begins only when Busyness ends



34 years of Corporate working across a diverse set of industries in India and Asia Pacific. **Yatin Samant** has headed Organisations /P&L positions for over 20 years as CEO , MD , Country Director of reputed Indian & MN organisations. Served as Independent director on the Board of MT Educare(2011-2018). Been a visiting faculty at renowned Management Institutes in Bangalore.

Powerful Perspectives:

With his conviction that not Talent but perspective deficit, which makes decisive difference between an Outstanding performer & an Ordinary one, Yatin formed his Leadership Development venture : Powerful Perspectives. He works on ' Inside-Out' learning pathway to invoke (i) High Clarity , (ii) Deeper Insights & (iii) Alternative Perspectives. Yatin has 2 (Marathi) Poetry books published & over 150 unpublished Articles / Poetry in English & Hindi. Yatin is active on LinkedIn with more than 30 articles & 100+ posts

THE POWER OF CHOICE

By Rashmi Saran



Anita's new role demanded close networking with a number of stakeholders. She was petrified of talking to people new to her. This was taking a toll on her career. Whenever she was in a social gathering, her heart would pound, her palms would turn sweaty and she wished she could become invisible.

I listened to her stories of "trauma" and "horror" of "having to create networks" and attend a number of social events. She had turned anxious and touchy.

As we cruised together on her life journey, something suddenly popped up! When she was a small girl, her parents repeatedly told her

not to talk to strangers, as they could be unsafe. Since both parents were working, during the day, she was in the care of grandparents. She was an outgoing and friendly child, and this was a matter of concern to parents, they didn't want her to create any unsafe situation for herself and that was the reason they reinforced the belief that strangers were not to be trusted, and not to be approached with friendliness.

She carried this belief within her; as she grew, it became a limiting belief for her, which limited and disempowered her in the pursuit of her goals. A naturally friendly child became a recluse – she was doubtful of people not familiar to her and took a long time to create trustful relationships. However, all this was in the subconscious mind, she was not aware of them.

As our conversations progressed, her awareness grew. Then there was that moment when this aspect was realised – it was an "aha" moment for her. She was in a state of reflection. Once the illumination happened, there was no looking back.

While we observe others and their blind spots, are we aware of ourselves? Do we know what is there in the depths of our mind which drives our behaviour and approach in this world, or are we blindly flowing with the tide? Moments of reflection bring out the inner conversations and the drivers. Once we are conscious of ourselves, our beliefs, our mindsets, and our core values, we have achieved a power – the power of choice - to choose our inner conversations and our responses, to people and to situations. That is true liberation!



Passionate about bringing out the true potential of people and enable them live a life with purpose and clarity, **Rashmi Saran** is a PCC credentialed coach, and a mentor with the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women. She's also an HR professional, having worked in HR leadership positions in Fortune 500 Organisations for more than two decades; and hence, in her coaching practice, she brings in a blend of practical wisdom and the immense unlimited possibilities people can attain by realising their true strengths, their core values and beliefs and the mindset they need to reach the goals and the purpose of their life.

'Empathy in Coaching – A Buddhist perspective and yes, COVID –19'

By Payal Jindal Khanna

Does humanity today need saving?

Do I need to be saved?

Who will save me?

Or is there something a tad bit more important that needs saving?

Could that be the quality of 'being human' that is actually at stake?

If yes, (and you don't have to agree with me on this yet)

the most vital question that arises then is, how?

Can this question be addressed through empathy?

Can empathy make a difference?

But how does this resonate with coaching?

What can I do as a coach?

Can I make that difference?

Yes, I can, by impacting one life at a time, with empathy.

Oxford dictionary defines 'empathy' as the ability to understand and share the thoughts or feelings of another. To feel and display empathy, it's not necessary to share the same experiences or circumstances as others. It is about being in the other person's shoes to understand their standpoint and outlook. And you know, the funny thing with COVID-19 is that we don't need to even make an effort today to understand the other person's perspective. We all are, right in the middle of that perspective, without a choice and with a scale that shoots through the roof.

So why not take a moment to delve slightly into the concept of empathy?

Empathy means that you feel what a person is feeling. And you feel it thoroughly, not just halfway or most of the way. It engulfs and encompasses everything that we feel, sense, experience, and create. It permeates both happiness and the lack of it.

And as ICF further corroborates this, in its core competencies; it states- it is important for a coach to be non-judgmental, to understand another person's feelings, and to communicate the understanding of that person's feeling.

ICF Competency No. 4, Coaching Presence, states that a coach must be observant, emphatic, and responsive. And this is reflected in the way a coach summarizes, paraphrases, reiterates, and mirrors back what the client says. It creates an awareness both for the client of his/her situation and that for the coach to better understand the meaning of what is said.

Let's pause and look at some words first:

Empathy, pity, sympathy, and compassion, because we tend to more than often use them interchangeably.

So, are these same, similar, or very different? [I have taken the liberty of using the most common definitions]

- Pity is a feeling of discomfort at the distress of others and often has paternalistic overtones.
- Pity is less engaged than empathy, sympathy, or compassion, amounting to little more than a conscious acknowledgment of the plight of others.
- Sympathy means you can understand what the person is feeling.
- And finally, compassion is the willingness to relieve the suffering of another. It takes empathy and sympathy a step further.



It's as simply put, about taking action. It's about having a genuine feeling to empower others to improve their lives. And true compassion cannot be brought forth without a sense of respect and equality, for its not about looking down upon someone mired in misery, but the selfless desire to help them become happy.

When viewed from the point of Buddhism we see that compassion, an empathetic sharing of the sufferings of others, is the bodhisattva's greatest characteristic.

The next obvious question is -

Am I empathetic?

If not, how can I be?

Do I need to be?

In the process of our sociological evolution over the last 70,000 odd years, we somehow forgot that we started to devolve as emotional empathetic beings, that we turned the biological evolution upside down by evolving super-fast as socio-political beings, bypassing the genetic evolution with the onset of the cognitive revolution.

Had we given nature a chance to take its natural course maybe things would have been different today. Maybe we wouldn't have been driven so much by greed and a sense of hoarding that began with the agricultural revolution. We'll look at that further down in the article.

Anyway, that's the precise reason we need to revive and revitalize the prime values of empathy in our lives.

The Buddhist practice underlines that life-condition of bodhisattva [a person who postpones his enlightenment to alleviate the sufferings of fellow- beings] is inherent in the lives of ordinary men and women, and the focus must be to strengthen that state until compassion becomes the basis of all our actions.

True that, isn't it?

At this point, an episode from Buddha's life comes to my mind. We all are well versed with the story of Angulimala of whom Buddha said this-

*"Whose evil deed is obscured by good,
he illumines this world like the
moon freed from a cloud."*

What can be deduced from the story above is that the power of love and compassion are stronger than any evil, and are absolute conditions for awakening. Awakening of the self, for maximizing one's potential [the latter too as stated in the ICF definition of coaching]. ICF's definition of coaching rests in the staunch belief in the unrealized potential of others and ourselves.

How do we realize this dormant potential, how do we get the person to believe in their inherent goodness and in the process become better ourselves?

Let's look at the core coaching competencies that talk about the ability to communicate effectively during coaching sessions, and to use language that has the greatest positive impact on the client.

To ask oneself, what is the impact of my talk on others, how do I influence them, do I empower them or leave them feeling a little less about themselves. But it's easier said than done unless the premise of our conversations lies in imparting hope and courage and not in pontificating.

Imagine the power each one of us has in lifting and elevating each other based on empathy and respect. And Angulimala is a singular, strong example of that. The essence of compassion therefore is empowerment.

How more sublime and how more parallel could the world of coaching and Buddhism get?!



Payal Jindal Khanna

The author is an ICF Accredited Coach- ACC, Carl Jung Concept Certified Coach, an experienced Educational Professional, and a practicing Buddhist. The author aspires to help individuals discover the limitless possibilities their lives hold and to empower them to put those abilities to full use.

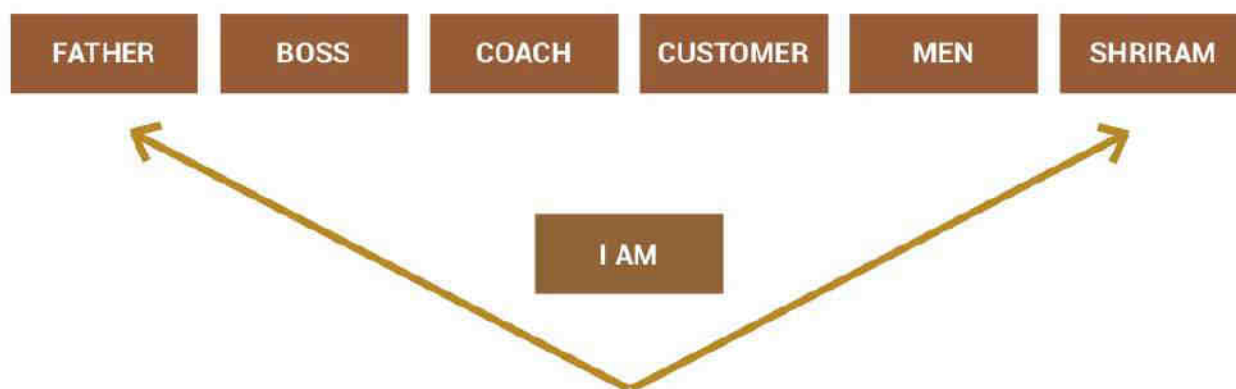
What is Being a “Centered” coach?

By Shankar Thayumanavan

When the great Indian sage Sri Ramana Maharshi was asked what is His central teaching?” He responded, “**Centre** is my central teaching”. What does it mean to be “**Centered**” and how can it help us, coaches? Let's explore.

If we were asked to talk about ourselves and the different roles we play in our lives we would probably say some of the below-

- “I AM” a Father/Mother/Brother/Sister...
- “I AM” a Leader/Subordinate/Employee...
- “I AM” a Coach/Innovator/Engineer/Doctor/Teacher...
- “I AM” a Customer/Buyer/Supplier...
- “I AM” a Man/Woman...
- “I AM” Sriram/George/Ahmed...



What is the common denominator in all the above? “I AM”, isn't it? How would it be if we constantly paid attention to the “I AM” ness in us which is something other than the names, forms, and the roles we play? Paying constant attention to “I AM” ness in us is being “Centered”. By doing so we are to get rooted in our Real Self which is the basis of higher cognitive and emotional abilities.

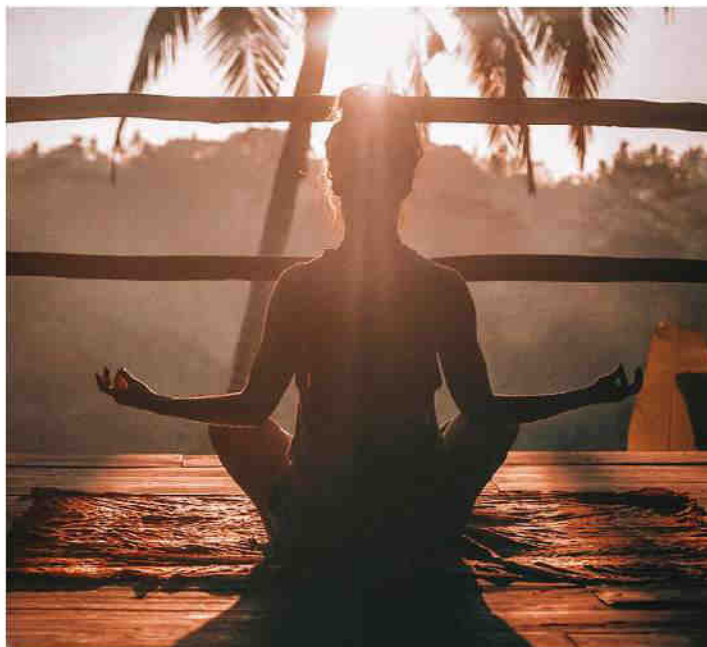
The father of modern psychology, William James says-

“And the faculty of voluntarily bringing back a wandering attention over and over again is the very root of judgement, character, and will.”

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Just to give an analogy, a conceited professor went to meet a Zen master to learn, and lectured the master instead. The master politely listened and poured him tea in a cup. 'Stop' cried the Professor, 'can't you see the cup is full?'. 'So is your mind!' said the master. **"Centeredness" is akin to emptying the teacup.**

When we empty the teacup, our names and forms which are essentially a creation of our mind, disappear. **This is the state of complete empowerment because we are anchored in our Real Self and do not get imprisoned by the false images that our mind creates of ourselves.**



Here are some questions for us to ponder:

- What do we need to let go in order to become "centered"?
- What do we need to embrace in order to become "centered"?
- How can being "centered" help us find resilience in disruptive times like we are facing currently?
- How can being "centered" help improve our self-awareness and presence as coaches?
- How can being "centered" help improve the coach-coachee relationship and the overall coaching experience?



Shankar Thayumanavan is a Professionally Certified Coach (PCC) from the ICF and the Founder & CEO of Ash-Hubs, a Design Thinking and innovation consulting firm. With more than two decades of industry experience, Shankar has been a VP at The Arbinger Institute - an internationally reputed management consulting firm and scholarly consortium. Shankar has held leadership positions at Deutsche Bank, Accenture & IBM where he has driven strategic and mission critical initiatives. He is the author of the book "Making of a Level 5 Design Thinking" related to Design Thinking & Innovation which has got a mention in Times of India, Editorial in the "Speaking Tree" column.

A JOURNEY THAT WAS DIFFERENT

By KR Chandran



Those were the early days. I had just begun as a Coach a year earlier and was inching my way to becoming a PCC. An erstwhile client had meanwhile referred me to an acquaintance who in turn requested that I coach his nephew, a college-going teenager. With engagements being few and far between, and an urge to go beyond my niche, I agreed to the request. While the story did have a happy ending, the journey was far from conventional, and I learnt quite some!

The Story Till Then.

'AB', the teen-aged son of a well-to-do businessman, had grown up at his home town in a joint family along with his sibling and four other cousins. AB's father, Mr. S, as the head of the joint

family, chose to play the role of an aloof patriarch who ensured discipline leaving the upbringing of the children to the ladies, similar to what he had witnessed when he, himself, had grown up. AB did however enjoy some extra indulgence from members in the family as he was the eldest among the six children.

Having done very poorly in academics, AB had been detained to repeat his first year in college. He was, however, reluctant to go back to the same college since mingling with his old mates - now in their second year - was an uncomfortable thought. He was therefore sent to the city to join another college, and his stay arranged at the home of an uncle and aunt there.

The Chemistry Phase.

AB thus was the 'Client', in the classic sense, and Mr. S and the uncle- the 'Sponsors'. In order to complete the contracting, I set out to obtain agreement about the process involved, and the outcomes expected. I spoke on phone to AB and he came through as pleasant and amiable, aware that the engagement was being set up so that he improves his academic performance. The feeling, 'something is wrong with me' was evident. One significant statement which he made was that he was happy staying with his uncle since the latter would not scold AB the way his father did! While AB was unsure if coaching would help at all, my verdict was that he was eminently 'coachable.'

AB also sounded concerned about his being a little overweight. He said he wanted to take up games and swimming to help reduce weight but was not sure if the family would agree. This inclination of AB for the outdoors, however, led to a welcome spin off – his coaching sessions could be conducted as pleasant one-hour walks in the park every Friday morning!

Setting Goals.

It took three sessions before AB felt at ease to talk openly about his interests. One aspiration he mentioned was to go abroad to learn sculpting. When encouraged to seek out more details, he discovered it would be a post-graduate course, which in turn created a much-needed incentive for him to take college seriously and graduate soon. He also spoke of wanting all-round development beyond academics, and an interest in working for the under-privileged.

These conversations helped to create specific and relevant goals for AB:

- a. Become wholly responsible for life and achieve the goals he desired. Graduating with reasonable grades, and losing weight became part of this aspiration.
- b. Develop a higher sense of self-worth; be kind and respectful to own self.
- c. Deal with 'Fear': AB's growing up had been

greatly coloured by conversations within the family of impending disasters waiting to happen to him and/or others.

It was gratifying that the above resonated with what the family had wanted. The only goal that had been mentioned by the uncle initially was 'Make AB serious about his studies' to which, later on, was added 'Enable AB to get along with peers and family members'. With the goals now recast, AB appeared on firm ground on where he was headed.

The Journey Was Unique.

Coaching AB was an engagement that had its own peculiarities. Primarily, with teenagers, one is dealing neither with a child nor an adult - but a mix of both! Then there was the attitude of the Sponsors and members of the family to be heeded to. They sought change (or 'correction') for their ward and yet showed more cynicism than encouragement towards AB. At times, it appeared as though they were waiting for the next 'wrong' to occur!

Another aspect was the need for AB to restore his self-worth ('I am okay'). It took him time to acknowledge his positives and establish a happy relationship with his own self. Next, even as I promised AB that whatever we spoke would remain only between us, ways had to be found to align the elders and ensure their support to the overall effort without compromising confidentiality. I thus handled dual responsibilities – coaching the client, as also 'counselling' the sponsor!

Musings.

A few notes which I had scribbled for myself after this experience with a young client were:

- a. Teenagers are highly unlikely to look for coaches on their own (that's a no-brainer)! Such engagements happen more because parents/ family desire 'correction' and choose not to do it themselves. The effort, however, comes perilously close to counselling unless the coach brings out

the distinctions and makes the right declarations up-front before taking the call.

b. Peer acceptance is prominent in the thinking of the young and creates its own pressure.

c. The thought, 'something is wrong with me' that seeps into the young mind brings with it sadness, frustration, misery & low self-worth. There is resistance by the coachee, particularly in the early stages, towards what is perceived as 'enforced change'. It is essential to create meaningful goals that resonate with the coachee's inclinations.

d. Consistency from session-to-session is unlikely. The coach will have to accommodate banter about the past, seeking to blame somebody/something for what had occurred, and so on. Even so, the coach has to remain relentless in encouraging the coachee to dream, be future oriented, plan ahead, and move forward.

e. 'Fear' will invariably come up at some stage and needs sensitive handling. The right time to address this issue is when the young coachee

develops total trust in the coach.

The Last Word.

Preparing the parents/elders to accept the changing avatar of their ward after (or, due to) coaching forms part of the overall efforts. Elders can, in fact, effectively wreck the new persona that the young coachee tries to create if they remain unmindful or indifferent! Conversations with the elders by the coach will of course be more on the lines of guidance and counselling than coaching. Thus the two hats that the coach would wear in parallel!

During the engagement, it helped to keep the focus on active listening, cultivating trust and safety, evoking awareness, and supporting the expression of concerns and suggestions that the coachee had without diluting the responsibility for the choices made. The whole experience was, on the whole, a unique and interesting one for me as the coach.



KR Chandran has been an Executive and Leadership Coach since 2011. Earlier he was in the software industry in Senior Management roles and was consistently recognized for his abilities to optimize human resources, manage cultural changes and introduce best practices. Oriented in Applied Behavioural Science, he partners professionals and entrepreneurs to optimize their innate but often undiscovered and untapped potential to achieve their cherished goals. A Veteran from the Indian Army with a rich and varied operations background, 'KR' puts to use his people skills and effective communications to ensure that his clients achieve results well beyond what they seek and are left immensely satisfied with their experience.

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MY ONGOING BATTLE WITH MYSELF

By MG Ragburaman

I have been of late, on a journey to rediscover myself. Funnily, the trigger was my recent experiences in the most loved role I play these days – of being a grandfather to my two-year-old grandson, Ruhaan. Watching and experiencing him continuously keep discovering newer and newer things in life day after day, has ignited and rekindled the passion in me for life itself and the self-discovery. I thought, after 64 years of my life, one person whom I knew best was myself, but some of my recent reflections have made me question that premise.

The coach in me tells me that all my actions, words, behaviors “should” ideally be congruent with my beliefs and values. My trouble is in accepting this word “should”. Looking back in my life – both personal and professional, if I ask myself as to what percentage of my life was I being myself, and not an imitation of what I think I “should be” or have been told I should be, I realize my score is very low.

But was I happy playing the imitation, playing roles as I should be? Yes, I was. And I was also getting

better each day playing the roles as per script, and in some roles, I excelled. Whose script was it? As a coach, I also think I know the answer – the script was built on and around me – my genes, parentage, family, schooling, what values and beliefs I sponged so easily as a child, my role models in life, and the conscious and unconscious learning from my experiences and internalization over years. My “should be” is so strongly embedded in my system that it is almost like I have totally lost the sense of free will. In fact, the “should be” in me has been a powerful motivation to constantly strive to obtain a more desirable future. Naturally, “should be” also implied a certain level of discontentment with my present at any point of time and impelled me to work for the change, which I kept doing for several years. And sometimes, I even pride myself of my value systems and beliefs!!

Summing up today, I am very happy with who I think I “should be”!! The code is my personality as seen by the world. In all honesty, without sounding pompous, I seem to have tested well, removed most bugs, created a reasonably effective code; 64 years of fine tuning the code

But watching my grandson Ruhaan constantly shifting, learning new forms, live like a taut guitar string, responsive has set me thinking again-- I actually enjoy his infectious excitement of being himself – delights of authenticity. He also is clearly sorting through his baggage, fears, and doubts so frequently and so smoothly, with every passing hour. He is so free and alive.

I guess I must have started also like him years back. But is that what growing up does to all of

us? Gradually, do we all grow up to be “what we should be”? We all are social animals. Yes, we need harmony with the people around us – friends, families, and communities; and hence “should be” will always stay relevant and critical for our survival. But not at the cost of losing the “being” entirely. I sure want to live much more of “my” life.

My 64-year code perhaps needs some reviews and version changes. Clearly “some” of my beliefs that are structurally holding up my self-esteem, what defined my success, need a revisit. I need to unburden and feel freer. That could mean some of my “should be” will give way to a new “what I am”.

As a coach, I know the best way is taking time (these Covid days have given me this luxury) to reflect on what is important to me, what resonates, what is truly “my” belief. This is a train journey I have flagged off.

As I embark on this journey of reflection, I am excited but also a little nervous. Excited about my self-discovery and impending surge of happiness of just being. Nervous about a potential Kurukshetra battle within myself; between who I “should be” and who “I am”.

Is there a timeline when I should cry halt to this battle, or will it be a life-long battle? When will I know, it is not worth fighting anymore, tuck my gains and losses, and withdraw? And finally, a gnawing sensation – is the search for my being also being driven by who I think I should be?

I hope to discover my answers soon, gazing out through the train windows but looking in.



MG Raghuraman
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DISRUPTIVE TIMES?

By Jaishankar Balasubramaniam

***Yatra yogeshwara krishno yatra partho dhanurdharaha
Tarta shri vijayo bhutir druvanitir matirmama***

In this concluding verse of the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna says – “Where (Yatra) the highest of wisdom (yogeshwara Krishna) and the highest of execution (partho dhanurdharaha – Arjuna)

coexist, there (tatra), you will also have wealth (shri), victory (vijaya), powerful mind (bhutir), and firm policy or governance (dhruvaniti). This is my (mama) opinion (matir).”

It took 700 Shlokas in 18 chapters, for Arjuna to get to his aha moment, in disruptive times of the Dwapara Yuga.

To the average seeker, every yuga has had its own moments of disruption and redemption. Time is time. We attach to it as many descriptors as we perceive, and feel immobilized by such perception. So did Arjuna in the early chapters. As the Gita unfolds, he rises above his own internal confusion, to live his potential.

Times are not disruptive. We feel disrupted by our ability to respond to what happens to us. The challenge is to look within, recognize the 'bhava' - the emotion, attitude, and manner - that leads us to

'bhavati' - becoming who we are. As the scriptures say, Yad bhavam tad bhavati.

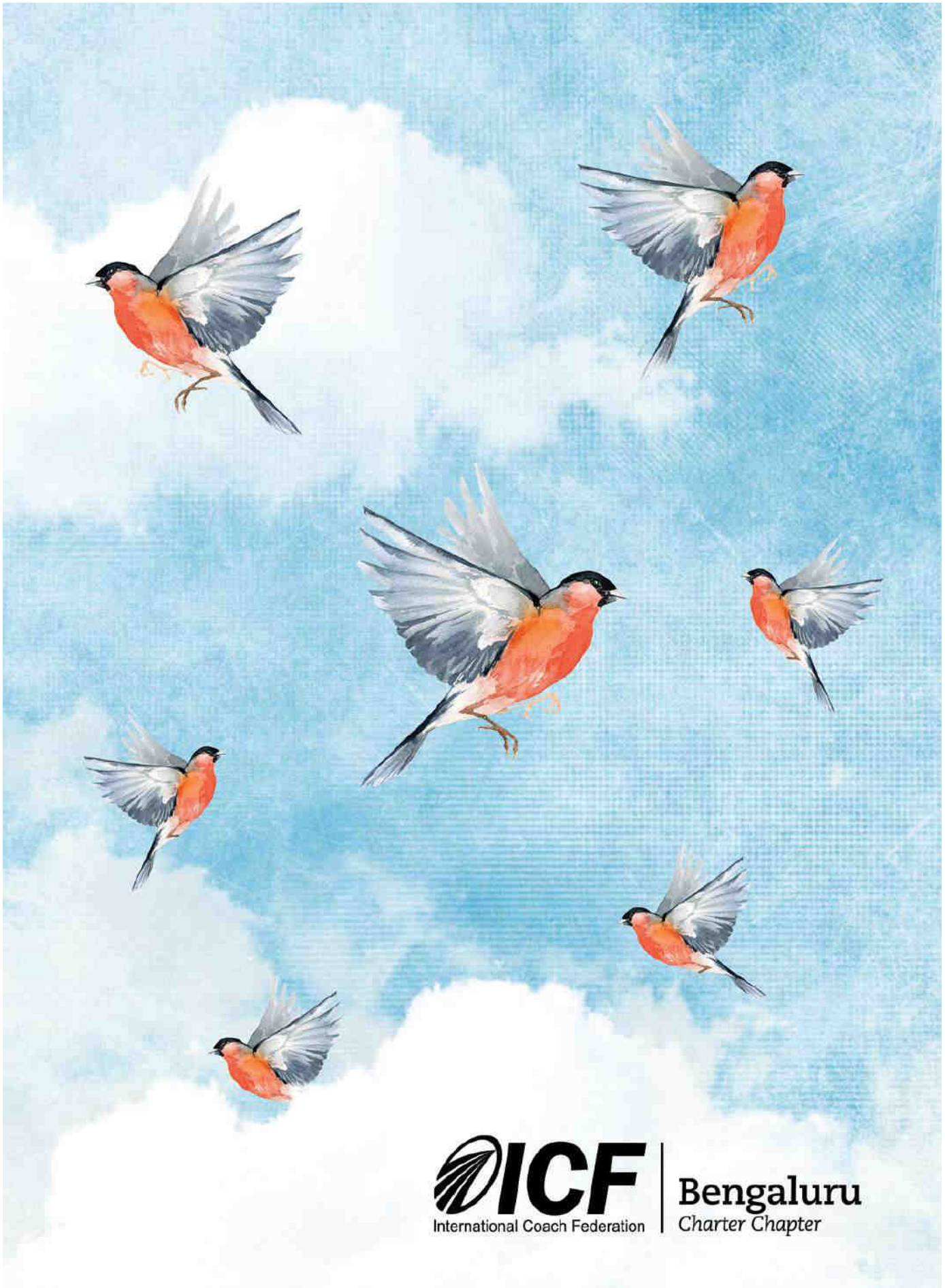
We are so caught up with what's happening to us, we have no way to pause and reflect over how we, ourselves, make it all happen... call it a new order, or call it disruption.


Coaching is our opportunity to access that space within where we make our world happen. Like Arjuna experienced, it is about becoming aware of our own depth of wisdom and then overcoming our own barriers to living it. Contexts and characters change over time. Coaching shines through them all.



Jaishankar Balasubramaniam

Feeling gratified in over three decades of helping discerning people, teams and businesses find their voice. ICF PCC Coach. Belbin Accredited Consultant. Passionate about leadership development and sales performance improvement. Digital Marketing enthusiast. NLP Practitioner. Fascinated by the ancient scriptures. Alumnus of the Faculty of Management Studies (FMS), Delhi. Recharge through writing, listening to music, community service, cooking for family, and Vipassana. A 'work in progress' person, excited in pursuit of immense possibilities between the ears.



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