

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

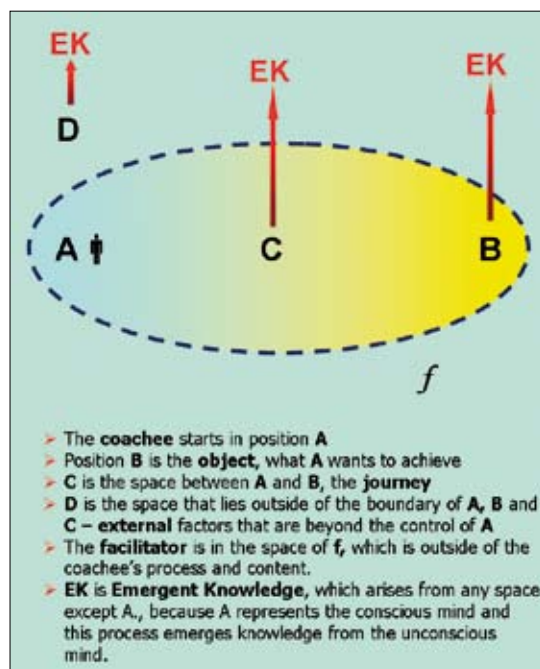


In a regular series, **Carol Wilson** identifies the tools and models frequently used during coaching projects. This month, she focuses on Emergent Knowledge

David Grove pioneered the ground breaking technique of Clean Language (which we covered in this series last October) while working with traumatic memory cases during the 1980s. He discovered that patients (typically Vietnam veterans or victims of child abuse) would often speak in metaphor to describe their experience and that the most effective way of resolving their trauma was to encourage exploration of these metaphors with the least possible interference from the therapist, hence the term 'clean' because his words did not contaminate the subject's experience.

Grove went on to develop his work from a linguistic approach to a spatial one, called Clean Space, where he had the subject literally move around the room. He found that subjects would unearth new self knowledge in different positions, and that they seemed to have an instinctive knowledge of which space in the room would enable them to do this. This work developed into Emergent Knowledge, for which he used the symbol EK. It was at this point that I met Grove and helped him identify and record the new techniques, with a particular emphasis on ensuring that

Emergent Knowledge



coaches and other practitioners who are not trained therapists could safely use them.

Throughout his life, Grove was adept at drawing on knowledge from many sources to further his own unique theories, and EK combined principles from the science of Emergence, the theory of the Six Degrees of Separation, Chaos Theory and his own Clean Language and Clean Space principles.

Emergence is a science for the age of technology and seeks to explain:

- How ant colonies are formed in a logical way, for example siting the rubbish dump as far away from the food supply as possible. It was once thought that there must be a 'leader' ant, communicating to the others the master plan, but it is now understood that the ants act as a collective, constantly exchanging signals with each other, and decisions emerge from this process
- How our own cities have evolved using a similar logic
- How Google works through a process of iterative algorithms (to put it simply, repetitive questions which change slightly each time).

"Emergent Knowledge is an information centered process developed as a theory of self-discovery, to facilitate an individual's journey into the inner landscapes of mind, body and soul. This information contains knowledge which, when drawn on, provides a solution to whatever problems have been identified. This knowledge or wisdom resides in the inner world of the individual and can be used to resolve life's challenges or problems."

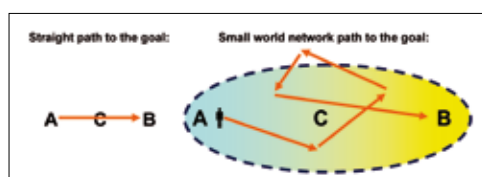
– David Grove 2005

Left is a diagram that maps out the theory of EK. If we take the subject as being at A, the subject's goal at B, and the space in between as C, C is the place where we are likely to find all kinds of resistance built up from habits, memories, previous unsuccessful experiences, fear and the other hurdles that stop us in our tracks. We will also find resources in C that the subject may have lost sight of, but that can now be rediscovered and used to reach the goal. The

facilitator is marked as p, outside of the process altogether. EK is represented by the symbol EK, and the arrows show the areas from where knowledge can emerge. Note that this does not include the conscious mind – from there all we will get is what the subject already knows.

Whoever the subject is at A, and whatever the goal at B, it will be fairly obvious to most people how to go about achieving the goal, but if it were that easy, A would be at B and there would be no gap. As A and B are not in the same place, it figures that there must be something else. This may be something that A has not recognised or dared to hope for and it is the unknown obstacle that EK tackles.

The Six Degrees of Separation is a theory developed in 1967 by sociology professor Stanley Milgram, which posits that, on average, one person anywhere in the world is no more than six degrees of contact away from another specific person. The key is that the links are often the least likely ones, not the most obvious. Grove translated this



into a questioning process that he termed Six Degrees to Freedom. This works on the premise that creating a 'small network' of moves will enable the subject to reach the goal more quickly and with less effort than taking the obvious route; sometimes it is through the most obscure links that the strongest connections are made.

During 2005, Grove identified eight new techniques that incorporated the EK hypothesis (see below).

The underlying principles behind all of Grove's work are well aligned with coaching:

- Being 'Clean': staying out of the coachee's way and focusing on the coachee's agenda
- Following the coachee in tone and pace and reflecting back his own words and gestures
- Focusing on the solution.

Where Grove's techniques can take coaches to a deeper level is

when they come across a coachee who has illogical repeating behaviour patterns, fear or blocks, such as uncontrolled temper or fear of public speaking. Clean processes are a method for exploring the unconscious mind which circumvent the need for years of therapeutic training because they are 100 per cent led by the subject. One major difference between Clean and conventional coaching is that in Clean, suggestions are never made and the coach's own insights are never presented back. In this way, as Grove used to put it, people can allow their intuition to be their guide; the unconscious mind is in control and will take the subject only where it is safe to explore in order to alleviate any psychological tangles or traumas and move forward.

Further reading

Books

1. *Small World: Uncovering Nature's Hidden Networks* by Mark Buchanan
2. *Linked: How Everything Is Connected to Everything Else and What It Means* by Albert-Laszlo Barabasi
3. *Sync: The Emerging Science of Spontaneous Order* by Steven Strogatz
4. *Six Degrees: The Science of a Connected Age* by Duncan J. Watts
5. *Emergence: The Connected Lives of Ants, Brains, Cities, and Software* by Steven Johnson
6. *Small Worlds: The Dynamics of Networks between Order and Randomness (Princeton "Studies in Complexity")* by Duncan J. Watts
7. *Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution* by Howard Rheingold
8. *The Life and Work of David Grove: Clean Language and Emergent Knowledge in Coaching and Business* (to be published 2010)

Websites

1. www.cleancoaching.com
2. www.emergentknowledge.com

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| Name | Function |
|-------------------------|---|
| Clean Start | To ensure that the subject and the goal are in the best places from which to emerge knowledge. |
| Clean Pronouns: | For the subject to understand that there is more than one self that may respond in any situation. The different forms of the questions address these different selves, some of which may be parts of the subject's psychological system which have become disassociated at some point in their lives. |
| Clean Time: | To re-align or re-scale the subject's internal time signature to match that of his or her current reality. |
| Clean Hieroglyphics: | To find the origin of the words which have been written down. Each of the letters in the spaces has a history to it. |
| Clean History of Goals: | To emerge knowledge which may have been lost when subject was deflected from their life's congruent purpose. |
| Clean Scanning: | To ensure that the subject is experiencing the knowledge exercise or operant that will be most beneficial. |
| Clean Action Space: | To tie the new knowledge and energy into tangible changes which will move the subject forward. |
| Clean Scapes: | To download the subject's information and provide clarity. |
| Clean Networks: | As we move through life we accumulate layers of knowledge. Some layers become separated through time, or circumstances, or disturbing experiences. When the subject physically moves to a different space, they will be able to access knowledge that had seemed lost. |
| Clean Spinning: | To emerge knowledge which may be uncovered when the subject faces different directions. |
| Clean Aid: | For times the subject crosses a boundary into the realms of therapy, or moves to a negative space which produces a difficult emotional reaction. |