



Demonstration of Performance Coaching Session between Sir John Whitmore and Carol Wilson

COACH	COACHEE	GROW	NOTES
John:	So, Carol, I'd like to know what you'd like to work on in this session.	G	Coach focuses immediately on coachee's keywords without leading in any direction.
Carol:	The key thing for me at the moment is about my business model and life model and aligning the way I'm spending my time.		
John:	So how are the business model and the life model related to each other?	R	Coach clarifies to check the purpose of the session. This clarifying elicits further thoughts from coachee.
Carol:	Completely related. All of my work involves things I'm passionate about, but I tend to be doing so much that I can't keep moving forward.		
John:	So what you'd like to have a look at is how you can unblock that and move forward to wherever that might take you. Is that what you're looking for?	G	Coachee has mentioned 'passion' several times. Coach picks up on this and explores it with an open question.
Carol:	Yes. It has got to the point where there are things going on in half a dozen areas, none of which I want to give up, all of which I'm passionate about.		
John:	You mentioned 'passion' just then. Can you give me an idea of the sort of things, even before you started your current career, that you got passionate about?	R	Coach mirrors back a pattern he has noticed.
Carol:	My whole life has been about taking risks and challenges. I ended up running record companies which was a great challenge. I realised early on that what I loved about doing it was the opportunity for developing people – both artistes and staff.		
John:	The pattern here is about stretching and supporting people. Are there any other words you would say that you like to do with people?	R	
Carol:	I like to see them enjoying themselves.		

John:	So, going back to you personally, what are your personal values, the sorts of things that you really value in life, to get a sense of what's going on behind that passion?	R	Coach returns the focus to the coachee's interior life.
Carol:	The key thing is freedom – people being in a situation where they have the freedom to express themselves and develop.		Coachee evades the personal focus by talking about other people.
John:	You are talking about people there in an objective sense – what about you?	R	Coach persists by re-presenting the question.
Carol:	For me it is essential to have the freedom to develop myself.		
John:	Are you suggesting that in your present situation, and why we're doing this coaching, that there is some restriction on that freedom? And would you like to elaborate or build on that?	R	
Carol:	I have managed to get myself into the position where it can all be developing and stretching. The only constriction now is time.		
John:	In terms of your skills, Carol, what would you be able to put your hand on your heart and say 'I'm good at this'?	R	Coach avoids the temptation to ask about 'time', which often hides deeper blocks, and approaches from a more oblique angle. Lack of time is not referred to again during the session, confirming that it was not the real issue.
Carol:	I'm good at writing, listening, working in a facilitator or public speaking role, engaging people, maintaining my health and being disciplined about work life balance.		
John:	So if we put those three together, your passion, your values and your skills, what stops you being able to exercise the full range in what you're doing at the moment? I'm talking about internally now, not external circumstances.	R	With these new insights, coach asks again what is getting in the way.
Carol:	Can I start with external and move in? I run a business in training, leadership and coaching and my big passion is writing. But when interesting work comes in, I'm drawn by the challenge of doing something new, and I don't put enough into the other areas. Does that answer your question?		Coachee evades the question.

John:	It does, but I'm looking a little deeper here. What inside you stops you doing things in exactly the way you want to? There are always external circumstances and they will always be there. But it really all begins internally, so what is it inside you that has not changed things to exactly the way you'd like them to be?	R	Coach persists in looking for the inner answers.
Carol:	That's a very good question. I think there is a battle between the Introvert and the challenge of going out and developing people. And in our work we get a lot positive feedback, so there's a bit of 'feeding the ego' there too.		Coachee confirms this is a question that makes her think, and finally focuses more inwardly.
John:	You've mentioned three parts of yourself: the Introvert; then there's the person who's 'out there'; then there's that other part that needs and likes to get good feedback. If we just look at those three parts of yourself, to what extent do you notice some degree of conflict between them?	R	Coach has now heard a response he thinks worth exploring further and presents back the coachee's words.
Carol:	That's interesting, because there's quite a lot of conflict. If I have a few days writing, it is quite hard to go into training. Yet after three days of training I look forward to the writing.		Coachee confirms the value of this line of questioning.
John:	So that way is the easy one, the other way is not so easy?	R	Clarifying with a closed question.
Carol:	Yes.		
John:	What does your writing give you?	R	Breaking down the areas to focus on more detail.
Carol:	Good question. If I start the day by writing, I feel buoyant, free, happy and flowing. I don't function so well without it.		
John:	So that part of you is very important to you? That part of you that has that need, so to speak - and you're clear that it serves you to have that. What's the downside of the fact that you like that part so much?	R	Clarifying and further exploration.
Carol:	The down side of the introverted self - and this is probably a key thing that you have uncovered here, John - is that if I did give up the delivery I am afraid that the Introvert would take over and I would never be able to go out again!		

John:	This extraverted bit – in what other ways does that enrich you?	R	Coach has identified rich ground for exploration and continues to question each aspect.
Carol:	Intellectually, it is the very fabric of the stuff I write. Out of that comes the new development.		
John:	So these two parts of yourself, the introverted part and the extraverted part, they serve each other?	R	Clarifying by presenting back what the coachee has said.
Carol:	Yes. They do, don't they?		
John:	If you were not out there ...	R	
Carol:	... I wouldn't have anything to write about.		
John:	It sounded as if these bits were in conflict with each other, but perhaps we're seeing now that they need each other in some way.	R	Clearly, coachee had not realised this as she is crediting the coach with the insight. Coach challenges coachee
Carol:	Yes you're quite right – one couldn't exist without the other.		
John:	Can they be friends?	G	This reveals new information to the coachee.
Carol:	I think they are friends ...		
John:	You don't sound very convincing when you said that.	R	
Carol:	I'm just wondering. I've never thought about whether they were friends or not.		
John:	Just imagine they were totally collaborative these two parts, and worked together, what do you think that would that feel like?	G	
Carol:	I don't know what the reason is, but there is a reason why that can't be. I can sense there is a barrier between them but I don't know what it is.		
John:	Let's go away from that for a moment. The bit that you described - the ego, the liking good feedback – tell me more about that. What does that give you?	R	As coachee was unable to answer, coach does not persist but takes coachee's conscious attention to another area she has raised. Again, the oblique approach.
Carol:	It raises my energy and the validation gives me confidence to stick my neck out.		
John:	And what's the downside of that bit of you?	R	Further exploration.

Carol:	It takes up more energy than it gives. It raises short term energy, but I pay for it with long term energy. Writing is the opposite and raises long term energy.		
John:	So are there any other areas where that ego part affects you? Relationships?	R	Broadening the field of exploration.
Carol:	I'm sure it does!		
John:	Tell me in what way.	R	Further exploration.
Carol:	I think of myself as a good listener, but sometimes I don't listen because I'm waiting for someone to stop speaking so I can tell them my big idea.		
John:	So there are these three obvious parts of yourself that you've talked about. Have you got another what we sometimes call 'sub personality' in there which is different to those? I don't want any other parts of you to be ignored. What else comes to mind? When you go away on holiday or when you do things completely differently, is there another part of you that comes in there?	R	Coach tries some clarifying. Coach makes a suggestion. Note how rarely he does this.
Carol:	Yes, there's a person who slob out. That's the space where you recharge because you are not making any demands on yourself. I do yoga, walk and swim. Without those the rest couldn't happen.		It provides a welcome new perspective and aids the coachee in seeing exactly where she stands.
John:	So you're comfortable with that part of yourself?	R	
Carol:	Yes.		
John:	Any other parts that are lying around there somewhere that we haven't uncovered yet?	R	
Carol:	There's the Shopper! And the Friend.		
John:	So it sounds like you feel a lot of pressure from all the different things you are doing out there. That pressure comes from inside because of not being able to fulfil all the things that you would like to fulfil in yourself.	R	Coach clarifies, recognising and validating what coachee has said
Carol:	It is pressure but very exhilarated and energetic pressure - pressure in the sense that there isn't enough time to follow all the avenues.		

John:	Certainly what you've indicated is a degree of collaboration between these different parts of you, and you recognise that one is meeting the needs of another. What I'm also hearing is that there is a competition for time between these parts of yourself. Can you imagine these parts negotiating with each other and coming to a kind of an agreement about a way forward that you don't have to stick to, but could say, 'Let's make this sort of agreement between ourselves and try that out for a month or six weeks', or something like that, so that each could get their needs met without pulling on each other? Could you envisage these parts negotiating with each other?	O	Coach makes a second suggestion – notice that these happen a long way into the session and only after coachee has unearthed her own insights.
Carol:	I think it would be a really good idea. Whether I can get them to the table I'm not sure.		
John:	If we were having another session in future, the sort of thing I would suggest we work on would be that negotiation process, and we have methods for doing that and getting you to negotiate between those. I suspect that because they are, in principle, supporting each other, and you are recognising that, that they are not really in conflict. There would be a lot of benefit for smoothing that out.	O	Coachee has credited coach with her new insights several times; this time coach alerts her to this. Coach persists.
Carol:	I can sense as you are saying it there would be a huge benefit. I think now you have identified it ...		
John:	Who identified it?		
Carol:	You identified what you heard me saying and hearing it back from you has made me identify that that process has already started happening.		
John:	Can you just say 'I, Carol, identified'?		
Carol:	I identified it - with your help John!		
John:	Let's look at stepping back from that. Those are all parts of you but they're not you. Who are you underneath this?	R	
Carol:	I hate this question.		
John:	It's a great question for you then!		

Carol:	I've never been able to answer it.		Now that a lot of clarity has been attained, coach encourages coachee to delve further. Coachee's assertion 'I hate this question!' confirms it is a challenging, and therefore productive, area of exploration.
John:	You might want to run through those and say – 'there is this part, but that's not me'. Can you actually say that – 'There's an introverted part of me but that's not who I am'? Try to say that out loud.	O	
Carol:	Ok. There's an introverted part of me but that's not who I am.		
John:	So that's true for each of these parts is it?	R	Coach assists coachee in unpicking some confusion which has arisen for her.
Carol:	It may be that the introverted part of me <u>is</u> who I am.		
John:	OK, so just take a look at it now. Just take thirty seconds on your own to say that slowly to yourself for each of those parts and see which is the strong one.	O	Coachee reaches a major new insight through this process and has uncovered a key sub-personality which has not been mentioned before. She has also shed some light on the question she was not able to answer when asked directly earlier:
Carol:	OK [<i>pause</i>]. What came out about the extraverted one was 'Leader'. Leader hasn't been mentioned, but it's part of the extraverted one. What came to me – it was a really good exercise – was that the introverted person was introverted because it was comfortable, and actually the real person wanted and needed to lead. Becoming an Extravert enabled the Leader to operate where the Leader couldn't operate from the Introverted position.		
John:	So the good news is that you sound rather clear about that – what emerged here is leadership and it looks ...	R	
Carol:	It's astonishing I've never seen that before. It's almost something I have to give myself permission to do.		
John:	So you've got to give yourself permission to be who you are, and leadership is definitely a part of that. Of course the Leader in you is another sub personality. So who are you? Again can you step back from that and say 'this is a part of me, there's a Leader here but that's not who I am'?	R	
Carol:	[Silence]. Then the Explorer comes up.		Further exploration, bringing in previous elements.
John:	So at a level beneath the Leader ...	R	

Carol:	Actually a metaphor came into my mind of the Explorer – it's about exploring who I am and exploring life, but I saw a picture of someone setting off in a ship.		Coach recognises the value of a metaphor as messages from the unconscious mind (which he refers to as 'non-rational')
John:	Sometimes those images that come up like that are very valuable. Because the kind of questions I'm asking are taking you a little bit outside your rational mind. And that's where there is great wealth in this non rational part, because what comes up are images that have great meaning for you. I should caution you not to get frustrated because you can't answer fully that question 'who are you?', because very often we discover who we are by discovering who we are not, so you never actually find out who you are. That in itself is an exploration and what it sounds like to me is that you are on that journey of exploration of yourself and you are using these other activities that you have as a way of that exploration. Does that make any sense?	R	
Carol:	Yes, that's what was coming up for me, definitely.		
John:	So now that has happened and you have talked out your issues, how might that understanding help you to balance the different activities that you get involved in, that cause you so much time pressure and so on? Can you imagine how you can use that deeper part of yourself to maybe 'conduct the orchestra' so to speak?	O	
Carol:	I'm sorry to say that what's coming up is how to contain the other things so I can put more things in. The Explorer wants to explore! I have a feeling that now we have identified all this, the component parts may start reorganising themselves and I will follow what the outcome is. Does that make sense?		

John:	Absolutely. What we are moving towards here is that you are the conductor of the orchestra. The conductor doesn't play an instrument, but manages the orchestra. As you go further down this you may begin to find that you can manage these components more and balance them, including the possibility of what you have suggested, which is another one coming to disrupt the process. If you can step back from that a little bit, and become more the observer, and manage the whole process from that place, the deeper you go into that question 'who am I?' the stronger that conductor capability emerges. Does that make sense?	R	
Carol:	I have a feeling that's what will emerge. Just by identifying all these things it's enabled me to step back and now, having stepped back and seen all these parts, I can't step back into the middle of them and not see them.		
John:	Just before we conclude here I would like to jump you forward in time: if you could fully express the things that have emerged here, and you could lead that process, what would be your positive fantasy of say five years or ten years from now?	G	Coach starts to consolidate the process and asks a Goal oriented question.
Carol:	The fantasy would look like doing more creative writing, being somewhere on a beach so I get my swim every day, and be invited to speak at conferences and run workshops all over the world. I think the leadership would express through the workshops and conferences; it is leading people into develop themselves rather than day to day management.		
John:	So the leadership retains its importance. You played it down for a bit in the scenario, and then it seemed to rise up again. In this life, five or however many years ahead, if it was perfect, when someone asked you what your life is like, what would you say?	G	Coach recaps to coachee the significant discoveries during the session.
Carol:	You know that expression 'quality time'? I would say 'quality freedom'.		Coach has enabled coachee to articulate a perfect coaching goal, in line with the EXACT goal setting model.
John:	Maybe that's a good place to stop on 'quality freedom'.		

Carol:	Thank you John, that was fantastic. Extraordinary!		Positive feedback from both sides rounds the session off in a motivating way.
John:	Thank you for being open.		