

# Philosophy of Coaching

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## Editor's Introduction

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Welcome to this new issue of *Philosophy of Coaching: An International Journal*. In this issue, we continue the mission identified in the Editor's Introduction of the first issue – to offer a “rigorous discourse on the nature and value of coaching – one that brings clarity to conceptual distinctions, awareness of orienting assumptions, and deeper understanding of best practices,” as we focus on the often-unspoken foundational practices of our field.

In the nine papers that make up this issue, we examine assumptions that quietly shape coaching in the background, calling us to critically identify and examine assumptions and envision what might emerge when they are brought into question. This provides space for renewed curiosity, deeper connection, and fresh insight into the work of coaching. In doing so, we not only expand how we think about coaching but also how we engage with one another in the shared pursuit of learning and growth, creating space to reimagine coaching as a continually evolving field shaped by inquiry as much as by experience.

We invite you, our readers, to enter this inquiry with openness – to examine how your own frameworks of meaning shape your practice, and how cultivating reflexivity can extend the possibilities for growth and transformation in coaching.

We begin with “*A New Concept of Coach Development: From CPD to CPPD*” in which Julia Carden and Elizabeth Crosse reframe coach development as Continuing Personal and Professional Development (CPPD) and introduce a conceptually grounded, practice-oriented perspective integrating professional and personal growth as essential foundations for sustainable, high-quality coaching.

Next, Richard Clarke asserts in “*Beyond Neutrality: Reimagining the Coach's Role as Influencer and Co-Creator*” that coaching is inherently shaped by identity, context, and power – and that influence is not a risk to control but a responsibility to examine. He reframes the coach as an ethical co-creator and advocates reflexivity, supervision, relational and systemic awareness and transparency over static ideals of neutrality.

In “*How can Antifragility help us Theorize Coaching in a Volatile and Unpredictable World?*” Sarah Corrie and Louise C. Kovacs introduce the concept of antifragility and explore how it might support a process of greater critical reflexivity. They argue that coaching should shift from optimizing individuals and organizations to driving meaningful social change and propose that antifragility offers a valuable lens for re-examining and redefining some of the under-theorized norms of coaching.

Rod Francis presents practical, theory-informed frameworks rooted in lived experience in “*Embodiment in Coaching: Expanding Coaching's Cognitive Horizon with a 4E Approach.*” Arguing for a more holistic coaching paradigm that honors the body's role in

cognition and transformation, he shows how embodied coaching can deepen impact and address emerging challenges like Artificial Intelligence.

Sebastian Fox questions whether coaching can escape the “tyranny” of goals, noting that performance goals are not always the most effective approach to structuring a coaching engagement. In his work, *“Can coaching ever be free from the “tyranny” of goals?”*, he argues that deliberately foregoing automatic goal setting can help clients achieve more meaningful outcomes.

In *“Epistemological criticism of coaching for a transition to humanistic transformation,”* Stefano Luca Patania & Catherine Lejtenyi identify well-being challenges in coaching and, drawing on health coaching and the work of Erich Fromm, propose a balanced model where performance and well-being reinforce each other. Their framework offers practical guidance applicable across all coaching contexts.

Then, Veronica Madan reconceptualizes coaching as a fluid, presence-based practice, framing it as the liminal space between awareness and transformation in *“The Womb of Becoming: Rethinking Coaching through Fluidity, Presence, and the Space Between.”* She urges coaches to embrace ambiguity as a crucial stage of growth, a sacred process of becoming rather than merely a tool for performance-driven change.

Paul Berry examines internal organizational coaching in *“Becoming A Reflexive Practitioner: A Systems-Psychodynamics Perspective of Working as an Internal Organisational Coach”* and suggests strategies to strengthen coaches’ reflexive skills. Analyzing two coaching case studies, he uses a systems psychodynamics perspective to help coaches understand and interpret the dynamics at play in complex situations.

We conclude with L. Michelle Bennett and William Wilkinsky challenging two long-held assumptions in coaching, questioning whether mastery in one-on-one coaching naturally extends to team and organizational contexts. *“The Sacred Cow of Transferability: Why Training in One-on-One Coaching is Not Sufficient for the Team Setting”* argues that effective team coaching demands a distinct integration of theory, models, practices, and collaborative facilitation skills, calling for a paradigm shift in how team coaching capability is developed and defined.

Together, these nine articles invite a re-examination of the often-unquestioned truths in coaching, reframing traditional perspectives and illuminating new pathways for learning and practice. The common thread marks a transition from outcome-driven coaching toward an approach concerned with learning processes, self-awareness, and potential, and how these contribute to reflexivity, identity development, and enduring behavioral change leading to transformative development and wellbeing.

These insights present a broader view of coaching – one that recognizes complexity, deepens human understanding, and supports genuine transformative development. As the field of coaching continues to evolve, adopting these broader perspectives can help shape practices that are more relational and attuned to the whole person. In doing so, coaching can continue to more fully realize its potential as a catalyst for meaningful and enduring change.

We are, as always, grateful to our sponsors who make this open access, peer reviewed journal possible – the Association for Coaching (AC) and the Graduate School Alliance for Education in Coaching (GSAEC).

We welcome newcomers to the Philosophy of Coaching community and thank you for reading the journal.

Charline S. Russo, EdD  
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