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Welcome to coach, to coach a podcast dedicated to showcasing the power of coaching. I'm your host, dr. Katie Linder, and I offer coaching to academics and higher education professionals to bring more ease to their lives and work. This season, I'm offering a slightly different format than earlier seasons.

I thought that might be useful to go over some coaching fundamentals for anyone listening, who hasn't gone through, coach training. I wanted to share some of the things that you can be listening for and each season that would be good examples of coaching structure, philosophy, and techniques. So for each of the episodes in the season, I'm going to offer solo episodes, talking about some coaching basics.

Feel free to email me with questions about these episodes or ideas of what you'd like to hear more about in future seasons. If I do this kind of format again now onto the episode.

I want to share a little bit more about what can feel like kind of a nebulous concept in coaching, and that is coaching presence. And I want to share a little bit about what the international coaching Federation says about coaching presence to give you kind of a concrete idea of what this can look like.

But this is one of the areas that I'm actually kind of assessing when I'm working with people in my coach training program, to see how they are bringing coaching presence. Into their sessions with clients. So there's a lot of things that happen, coaching presence. But one of the main things you're really trying to do do is get the client and into a space where they can have progress around clarity for whatever they're kind of working toward or progress towards meeting their goals.

And there's a ton of different ways that this can show up. But in general, these are some of the ways that the international coaching Federation talks about it. So one is that the coach acknowledges and respects the client's work in the coaching process. So this is kind of going back to the concept of trusting the client and partnering with the client.

So not feeling like you're the one who's kind of pulling them along and in terms of the coaching journey, but that they're an equal partner for you. Um, as you're working with them. Uh, the coach would be expressing support for the client encouraging and allowing the client to fully express him or herself or themselves.

And this would be part of the coaching presence, um, acting in response to kind of the whole person of the client and what the client wants to accomplish in the session is also a big part of coaching presence. Now what this looks like to me. And I talk about this a lot. And the coach training is really trying to pay attention to not just what the client is saying.

On the surface, but having a real awareness of like what's happening underneath the surface of what they're saying. So this can come out in their tone of voice, in the pace of their speech and how they're inflecting words, um, and how they are expressing emotions in the session. Um, there's all kinds of ways that you might see something kind of happening under the surface of what the client is saying.

And oftentimes you would act in response to that. You would either ask a question that's related to that. Or in some cases, if I see a client change in like energy or tone, I will draw their attention to that and say like, wow, you just got really excited. You were talking about that. What's that thinking about that for you?

And just really kind of go straight there rather than, um, not acknowledging that shift and change. Now, this is a big difference. I think, between coaching that's happening at what ICF describes as the ACC level. So the associate certified coach level and coaching that's happening at the PCC level or the professional certified coaching level, because I think PCC you're.

Expected to have this coaching presence. You're expected to be really aware of what's happening with the client as a whole person. Um, and at the ACC level, it may be a little bit more functional. You're kind of just focusing on the session structure, checking the boxes, you know, have you set the agenda?

Did you do accountability? Like those kinds of things. And one of my coach training participants described the difference as ACC being about kind of the science of coaching, right. And PCC being more about the art of coaching. And I definitely think that coaching presence falls a little bit more in the latter category of being the art, because there's a lot of different ways that you could approach, noticing how a client is engaging with you in a session, um, that would allow for that coaching presence to come out.

So some of the other things that the ICF uses to describe this is that the coach is observant and empathetic and responsive. The coach exhibits, curiosity with an intent to learn more about what's happening with the client. And the real kind of focus is on partnership. So you're supporting the client to choose what happens in the session.

You're inviting the client to respond to your contributions and you're accepting that response. Like you're trusting the client's response and not questioning their response. Um, sometimes you're playing back with the client is saying so that they can kind of hear their own language and, and. Explore it more deeply.

Um, and you're also encouraging them to formulate their own learning within the session. So what are they hearing from you in terms of your questions and maybe insights that you're sharing as a coach that is helping them to go deeper into their own understanding of themselves. But I do think that one of maybe the harder parts of this to be attentive to is noticing and exploring energy shifts that happen within okay.

The client. And this is something thing that I actually really intentionally ask. Um, my coach training participants to start paying attention to once they get into the part of our training, where we do coaching observations, I'll kind of model for them what I'm hearing and seeing within the client.

Right. So that they have a better understanding of what to look for. Now, part of the challenge of this is when you're first starting as a coach, there's definitely the sense of cognitive overload, where you're trying to think about all these things at once. So you're just learning, for example, the session structure, which I talked about earlier in the season, and you're trying to remember all the components of that you're trying to remember, or that you need the topic that you need.

Uh, the measurable outcomes. You need to know the significance of it. You need to be able to mirror it back to the client. And so there's this kind of, you know, frenzy pace in your own mind of all the things you need to remember about the agenda setting. Then when you're actually in the session with the client, you're paying attention to, are you keeping to the agenda?

You're also listening very carefully to what they're saying so that you can formulate your next question. And then you're also depending on kind of where they go in their response, trying to decide, are they going off? If the agenda are they going to circle back to the agenda? Should you try to get them to circle back to the agenda.

If you feel like they're going off, should you let this go on for a little bit longer? And then in the midst of all of that, you're also always watching the clock because your session is a certain amount of time. And depending on what you're trying to accomplish within that session, you're constantly trying to move the client.

Forward, um, with the agenda that you've set together. And then there's a certain point before the end of the session where you want to shift the client into thinking about their next steps and the accountability for those next steps, which I'm going to get to in a little bit, uh, later in the season. So part of the challenge, I think.

Flooring energy and emotion on top of all, that is your brain is already like hooked in to try and understand what's happening from a structural perspective. And you're trying to use kind of the techniques of coaching that you've learned. So this is why my coach training participant called it the science, because you're really just trying to kind of do the technical pieces of coaching.

But once you start thinking about coaching presence, you're layering in the art form where you're really trying to understand from a more kind of holding stick perspective. Yes. They're saying something on the surface, but there's also maybe something happening underneath as well. And so they might be saying one thing, but you can tell from their body language that maybe they don't believe it, for example, or they might be saying something and kind of trying to convince themselves of something and you can tell from their body language, right.

That maybe this is not the direction that they want to go in. So it's, it's a very kind of interesting thing to begin to layer into, to all of your other awareness of what's going on within that session to also be paying attention to things like body language. Now, one of the things that I think about coaching presence, that's really interesting is when we start to incorporate the body into coaching, there's a whole other kind of coaching called sematic coaching.

And this is something I think I've talked about previously, um, on coach to coach, it's something I've certainly been asking. Exploring in my own practice and somatic coaching is when you're actually kind of very intentionally asking clients to, um, incorporate things like breathing exercises or other kinds of physical exercises into the coaching practice with you.

And it's a way to, again, kind of address the concept of the whole client and that you're not just. Thinking about working with them from like a cognitive perspective, but you're bringing the body into that. You're bringing the emotions and kind of their mental state and all the things into the relationship so that you can be kind of thinking about all of those things together.

And one of the things that somatic coaching really brings, um, I think to the scenario is this understanding that the body has a lot to tell us when it comes to things like a coaching relationship. Sometimes the words are not enough. Sometimes it's about how the words are stated or which words are chosen or how the body reacts when something is said.

And so I'll give you a couple examples. You might notice in a coaching session that a client, a speeds up their words. Uh, or they come into a session with really low energy and that's not what they normally look like when they're in a session with you. And so that might be something you would comment on.

Um, there are oftentimes when clients will get emotional in a session and they'll often apologize for being emotional. So one of the concepts of coaching presence is to allow for all emotions to come into the coaching space and have that be okay. Okay. Um, that a client can express a full range of women and that we can learn from that.

And we can, we can use that as information as we continue the coaching relationship. So again, coaching presence, I think can feel a little bit nebulous. But when I really think about it, I think a core element of it is what is the coach doing to create a space where the client feels comfortable expressing their whole self.

And when the coach can do that, I think they're establishing their own coaching presence. And again, that can be done in a lot of different kinds of ways. Coaches have different personalities and different strengths. Um, but the idea would be to really be observing the whole person and how can you create that space so that that can be fully expressed.

So that's a little bit about coaching presence and I'll see you in the next episode.

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