

THE COACHING HUB

Podcast Episode 72 - Coaching the whole person

Coaching is about so much more than a solution to a problem. It's about really helping our clients to explore who they are and who they want to be. And it's about holding space in a nonjudgmental way to appreciate the difference.

Hello, and welcome to the coaching hub podcast with me, your host, Ruth could fee if you're a coach or you're coaching curious, this is the place for you. We're going to be talking all things, coaching personal development and business development in a really fun way. You're going to have live coaching sessions and you're going to come away with tools and techniques that you can practically use and take away. If you enjoy this podcast, I would love you to subscribe. And if you really enjoy it, give me your view, coaching the whole person today. I'm talking about something that I think is

Really important in coaching, and that is that we coach the entire person. We coach the person, not the problem. And really this is kind of where the ICF international coaching Federation have been going. And it is about seeing that often the situation that the person brings is actually a reflection of what is going on for them. And it's about uncovering those last looking at the reason and the why and everything that is underneath what is going on in the situation. Really great transformational coaching goes deep and it respects the entire person and the context that they are bringing. There is so much richness with client context that we need to consider because every single client is an individual and this is why one-to-one coaching is so powerful. And of course, groups and teams can work really well too. But when we understand, and this is a fundamental point of psychology, that individuals are different.

Every single person you coach is going to come to you with their own context, they're going to come to you. Their own lived experience, their own beliefs, the environment that, that en the environment they'd been bought up in what has happened to them. And as a coach, it is our role to be non-judgemental and to hold space for that person as a person. So we've our us projecting what we believe to be true about them projecting what may be we have seen in other people or in our own lives, because that person in

front of you is a whole person multifaceted. Yeah. Everybody has got one they're light and they're shadow. We all have. We all, I have things that we have done in our lives that we're really proud of successes, that we feel that we, and, and we all have things in our lives that we're not so proud of.

I know there are things from my past that I wouldn't. Yeah. I wouldn't want people really to know about me. And it's the same with your client. Remember that the person in front of you is coming to make sense of who they are as well as what is going on for them. And the way that we can be with that person and non-judgemental safe space is in itself incredibly empowering because often in life, we're not in nonjudgmental spaces because depending on where you work, there is a culture and there are goals and performance objectives that people are chasing. And therefore, the managers are your team leaders, your team, as seeing things through their lens. And that lens may well be to do with the performance of the company. That isn't necessarily a bad thing. Although if the manager is aware, but they have this lens on and other people have different lenses depending on their experience and who they are, then that can be even more effective.

So at work, it's difficult to be nonjudgmental actually, as a leader, coaching staff, you can use coaching skills, but is often a line where you call, should we be truly nonjudgmental? It's a very difficult dance to do. If you're a leader and you are truly coaching your team, most leaders use coaching skills. And then they bring in external coaches because the external coaches are able to have that non-judgment and the coaches are able to really believe because actually, if you're coaching the whole person, it can be difficult in a corporate environment for your coachee to feel safe, to share everything about themselves. I know many of my clients share things with me that they would not share, or they haven't shared outside the coaching relationship because they know that it's a safe space. And equally as coaches, when we're coaching individuals, it's about recognizing that we do not know what is going on for them.

We do not know the lens that they bring. So being aware of everything that is going on within the context is really important so that we can truly hold space for the person to explore because whatever coaching you do, I think you're doing executive coaching of board members and C-suite members of footsie 100 companies, or you're doing relationship coaching of people who are looking for a partner, or you're doing youth coaching with young people, or you're doing business coaching of startup businesses. It's always about the person. And we know, and as someone who's been a business coach for three, four years, and I've also been a career coach, I've also been a leadership coach. It's actually rarely about the skills that you can acquire because as a leader, yeah. It's yeah, of course it's about developing those skills, but it's about the self-awareness of when you need those skills.

And it's about knowing actually for me, and this is my past some example for me as a leader, is it worth me developing my real detail analytical skills? Probably not cause that isn't one of my strengths. My strengths is much more big picture thinking than detail thinking. So as a leader, if I was being coached, I will be thinking about the people on my team. And I've got an amazing person who has just started. So I'm smiling when I'm saying this, the people on my team, who've got those leadership skills that I'm not as strong in. And if I was being coached, it would be about me understanding who I am and where I want to go. I'm really making peace with the fact that I don't need to be perfect. And, you know, looking at the stories that I've been telling myself where maybe I've been doing things that haven't been in my strengths and then looking at what I want to do, maybe I think forward.

And although coaching is solution focused, we always think solution is about action. But if we're thinking about the whole person, submission can be about being can be about emotion. Tell me about thinking, because we know that our thoughts impact our beliefs impact how we act and our reality. So if we know this, how does that inform how we show up? How does that inform how we hold for those that we cope? You know, from hearing this podcast, that I am very passionate about professionalizing the coaching industry and about talking about these things. It's very easy as a new coach and I train we've now had, well, I've trained hundreds of coaches now, but it's very easy as a new coach to stick with the situation because the situation can be safer. Okay. CR you know, you're having issues with your boss at work or whatever.

It may be that there is safety in the situation, but ultimately the real change comes when we focus on the person I can't does that situation impact them? Why is that situation so important that they've brought it to coaching? What is it about that situation? That's meaning they want to get clarity. What would it mean if it was different, starting to unpack all of this information can really help people to move forward. And I don't think there is another intervention quite like this. And you know, that I have utmost respect for people who do other work that is complimentary to coaching. So the message today is really coaching is about so much more than a solution to a problem. It's about really helping our clients to explore who they are and who they want to be. And it's about holding space in a nonjudgmental way to appreciate the difference that people bring, because everybody has a story.

Everybody has a context. Everybody has beliefs that don't work for them. And some people are going to have real structural difficulties in doing what they want to do. Of course, it is lovely to believe that everyone can achieve. And I wholeheartedly believe that. I believe that from when I was adapting had teacher, every child can achieve, of course, but what we have to acknowledge is a playing field is not even, even as a secondary teacher. And even as a primary teacher, I wasn't ever a primary teacher, but I

did work with primary schools. Even then it is not a level playing field. I mean, I'm talking about education in the UK. Many countries don't have education up to secondary level. So already we can see real barriers. I worked at schools where 60, 70% of people at those schools were asylum seekers, a particular school.

And how you can say that they have the same playing field as people who, well, people who've got who've come from my background is just unthinkable. And we really need to acknowledge that. Of course, we're not saying that people can't get results and solutions, but for many people, it's going to be harder because of real and perceived barriers. And they may be other people's unconscious biases. They may be years of oppression or suppression. They may be the fact that the client in front of you has lived through extreme poverty or war or disease, or they've lost their family. This is why context is so important. And it isn't that we need to have sympathy for these people. We don't, we need to have empathy and hold space and recognize that what has happened before informs where they are now. And that doesn't mean that the person in front of you, from whatever context they have can't achieve.

What it does mean is that we need to be aware of how this can show up for them, because it's a whole person, this isn't about cookie cutter, one size fits all. And it's why one of the reasons I'm so passionate about teaching a whole range of approaches in our professional coach diploma, because what suits me may not suit you with different and let's celebrate that difference. And remember the person in front of us has got as much right to everything as we have. And if we're holding space for them in a truly effective way, we're able to help them to move forward and change. Have a,

I think, feel of being ultimately how they act. And there's nothing more powerful than thank you for listening to the coaching hub podcast with me, Ruth Cathy, if you enjoy this, I would love you to join my Facebook group, the coaching community for more of the faith.