

# **REFLECTIONS ON THE FUTURE OF COACHING IN TODAY'S WORLD**

**Global ideas to boost your personal  
and business sustainability**

**Editors**

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**Rolf Pfeiffer, Jeffrey Hull  
and Ramón Estrada**



## **PUBLISHER'S NOTE**

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**Institute of Coaching**

*This book could not have occurred without the passionate and insightful energy of all those who attended the conference in Barcelona in September 2022, to whom we dedicate these pages with grateful thanks.*

*The images and design theme throughout this book are drawn from motifs and details by Barcelona's inspirational architect, Antoni Gaudí, which can be found in his first major commission, the Casa Vicens, that was visited as the closing experience of the conference.*

# CONTENTS

<b>Institute of Coaching</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Prologue</b> More than just a conference <i>Rolf Pfeiffer and Ramón Estrada</i>	<b>2</b>
<b>General Reflections</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Introduction</b> <i>Jeffrey Hull, Ramón Estrada and Rolf Pfeiffer</i>	<b>16</b>
<hr/>	
<b>PART ONE - KNOW YOURSELF</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Inner Development</b> The Path to Personal Sustainability <i>Vanessa Daswani and Daniel Hires</i>	<b>22</b>
<b>Seventh Generation Exercise Reflections</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Agency, Benevolence and Community</b> The solution to the six burnout mismatches <i>Jacinta Jiménez</i>	<b>28</b>
<hr/>	
<b>PART TWO - KNOW YOURSELF</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Research</b> Selected scientific underpinnings of coaching practice <i>Angela Passarelli</i>	<b>52</b>
<hr/>	
<b>PART THREE - KNOW THE CLIENT</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Challenges in the C-Suite</b> <i>Ramón Estrada</i>	<b>64</b>
<b>How to address sustainability in the C-Suite?</b> <i>Rolf Pfeiffer</i>	<b>76</b>
<hr/>	
<b>PART FOUR - KNOW THE TERRITORY</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Territory</b> That is all that matters <i>Roddy Millar</i>	<b>88</b>
<b>Territory Mapping Reflections</b>	<b>105</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Epilogue</b> <i>Jeffrey Hull</i>	<b>106</b>

# INSTITUTE OF COACHING

The *Institute of Coaching* is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the integrity and credibility of the field of coaching. By advancing coaching research, education, and practice, the Institute supports professional coaches and others who use coaching skills in their personal and professional lives.

The Institute evolved from The Coaching and Positive Psychology Initiative, founded by Carol Kauffman and Margaret Moore in 2006 to better understand the scientific foundations of coaching.

In 2009, with financial support from the Harnisch Foundation to McLean Hospital, a Harvard Medical School affiliate, the Institute was launched with Dr Kauffman as Executive Director.

Today the *Institute of Coaching*, led by Chair Margaret Moore and Executive Director Jeffrey Hull, has over 4,000 members, located in more than 130 countries. Its primary activity continues to be supporting coaching research, but it also assists members through its extensive online resources, network and events that run throughout the year both online and, once again, in-person.

This short book captures the flavour and thinking of one of our first post-pandemic in-person events. We hope you find it valuable and thought-provoking – and that we can meet with you at one of our events in the near future.

To learn more about the Institute of Coaching and how to become a member please visit: [www.instituteofcoaching.org](http://www.instituteofcoaching.org) or contact Jeff directly on [jeff.hull@instituteofcoaching.org](mailto:jeff.hull@instituteofcoaching.org)



**Institute of Coaching**

The image features a highly detailed, ornate wrought-iron gate as the central focus. The gate is composed of intricate scrollwork, including a large central crest with a crown and floral motifs, and a series of vertical bars with decorative flourishes. The entire scene is set against a background of a repeating floral pattern, possibly wallpaper or fabric, which is rendered in a monochromatic red color. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures and curves of the ironwork.

**PROLOGUE**

MORE THAN JUST  
A CONFERENCE



You are never “done” with your development, there is always something that can be learnt, developed, improved.



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## Rolf Pfeiffer and Ramón Estrada

**W**inston Churchill has given us many memorable sentences. The one we’d like to take for inspiration here is “this is not the end, it isn’t even the beginning of the end, it is merely the end of the beginning.”

Initially we intended this publication to be a documentation of the rich conversations that happened during the Leadership Forum of the Institute of Coaching in Barcelona in September 2022. It was to be the documentation of an event that had ended, with the ambition to capture great ideas and input for those who didn’t attend, and to create a container of beautiful memories for those who did.



We had received all the contributions for this publication, and we were ready to proceed down the next steps of the publication process, when one of us said “stop”. Not literally. It was clear feedback provided that made us rethink the purpose of this publication.



What if this publication was merely the end of the beginning of a broader conversation, engaging many more interested individuals than those who attended the conference, or those who would have liked to attend but couldn't (for all the usual reasons)?



Coaches and leaders are in the business of having an impact: on people, on organizations, on communities and societies. Coaches desire to support leaders and organizations in creating a better world for all, one leader, one organization, one community at a time.

This thought quickly got us excited and made us rethink and reshuffle the content, and the result of this reshuffling is now in your hands. Here we go ...

Both coaching and leading are learning journeys that start, sometimes more, sometimes less consciously, and never have an end point. You are never “done” with your development, there is always something that can be learnt, developed, improved.

Coaches and leaders are in the business of having an impact: on people, on organizations, on communities and societies. The coaching profession as such, and coaches individually, desire to support leaders and organizations in creating a better world for all, one leader, one organization, one community at a time. They partner with leaders, and leaders can partner with coaches, to achieve important objectives amid a sea of challenges.



This publication aims to contribute in several ways to this developmental journey for both coaches and leaders on which they can embark together. This journey is grounded in self-knowledge, science, and community building.

It's a combination of knowing yourself, knowing the science, knowing the client, and knowing the territory.

1. Know Yourself – inner work comes before outer work
  - Inner Development: self, other, world
  - from Resilience to Thriving: avoiding burnout
2. Know the Science – keep abreast of the latest evidence-based research on human performance
  - 3 mini-sections on research
3. Know the Client – understanding the needs of leaders today – and tomorrow
  - challenges of the C-suite
  - challenges of the age of “sustainability”
4. Know the Territory – from self to community to world
  - building maps that ground us in self, tribe, community, world
  - forging a collective map of an imagined future

## Know Yourself – inner work comes before outer work

Daniel and Vanessa are both intimately connected to *the Inner Development Goals (IDGs)* movement<sup>1</sup> and brought us an overview of how the movement was started, an idea of what the IDGs look like, and a powerful exercise to set the context for its impact. Their piece also creates the link between requirements for the development of our organizations and societies, and the role of individual leaders in this development. From these, it is a small step to understanding how coaches can work with these leaders helping them to be the actors of individual, organizational, and societal change. It is an invitation to think of our impact as coaches holistically and create a different frame for the importance of our work with leaders across organizations, industries, sectors of society, cultures, and countries.

We understand that just adding more work and more priorities to the plate is not going to be a realistic road ahead for most leaders and organizations.

This is where Jacinta's piece comes in handy. It focuses on core insights to help us understand how leaders can foster and develop their individual sustainability, and how we as coaches can support that. Jacinta shares the interrelated components of burnout: immense fatigue, cynicism, and inefficacy. She then dives deeper into distinct mismatches between people and their job, from work overload through breakdowns in communities to values misalignment. These may occur in isolation from one another, however, they are clearly interdependent. Jacinta rec-

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<sup>1</sup> [www.innerdevelopmentgoals.org](http://www.innerdevelopmentgoals.org)

## We need inner clarity and alignment before we can help to develop clarity and alignment in our environment

ommends that organizations foster agency, benevolence, and community, thereby creating a vitality shield. She invites leaders to develop psychological safety norms, detect and monitor for signs of burnout, and demonstrate pro-resilience mindsets. She closes with her very own framework for effectively engaging with leaders in coaching, modelling pro-resilient behaviours in her approach to coaching.

Both contributions and conversations drive the main point we want to make: inner work comes first. We need inner clarity and alignment before we can help to develop clarity and alignment in our environment. Even though this might not be as visible as outer work, and often less glamorous, it is key to create a strong and robust foundation from which we can contribute and take others along. In the words of the founder of the Boston Consulting Group, Bruce Henderson: “We need a place to stand on if we want to move the world”.

A key contributor to forming this “place to stand on” is, and always will be, science. We need evidence-based approaches to be as impactful as we can. *Our best practices must have a firm scientific foundation* is part of the mission statement of the Institute of Coaching<sup>2</sup>.

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2 <https://instituteofcoaching.org/about/mission-history>

## **Know the Science – keep abreast of the latest evidence-based research on human performance**

Enter Angela<sup>3</sup>, Carlos<sup>4</sup>, and Joan Manuel<sup>5</sup>.

Angela brought us highly relevant insights that show how we can improve the impact created by coaches working with leaders specifically when working at a distance, supported by technology. Even though this was not the aim of their original study, we can safely assume that this applies to leaders working remotely, too. Studies have revealed, perhaps unsurprisingly, that the perceived richness of a coaching conversation supported by technology (e.g., video conferencing) is mostly a function of how comfortable all those engaging in the conversation are with technology - and we can derive from that that a virtual coaching conversation need not be less rich than a face-to-face coaching conversation.

Carlos introduced us to an approach for leader development that combines a range of methods into an integrated offering that makes very

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3 Angela Passarelli - Associate Professor of Management at the College of Charleston, SC, and Director of Research at the Institute of Coaching, McLean/Harvard Medical School

4 Carlos Royos - Full Professor at the Department of People Management & Organization, ESADE Business School, Universitat Ramon Llull, Barcelona, Spain

5 Joan Manuel Batista Foguet - Department of People Management & Organization, ESADE Business School, Universitat Ramon Llull, Barcelona, Spain

good use of interactive, self-study, and reflection elements, all bound together by a technology platform. This caters to a broad range of learning preferences, helping to reach more people as a result, more effectively. It also allows to integrate learning activities more seamlessly into the daily agenda of leaders and their coaches, delivering inspiration and content in bite-size chunks, allowing to move learning and application ever closer together for higher impact.

Joan Manuel drew our attention to the fact that we need to be very mindful of the design of multi-rater assessments when we use them in leadership development, and that often, the source data that is available to us may not be exactly what we think it is. He showed us the risk of using information that was generated with one type of outcome in mind (performance assessment) to achieve a different outcome (leader development). Even though one can be closely linked to the other (performance assessment providing input into learning priorities), we need to be very careful how to interpret and use performance assessment information when setting out to working on leader development.

### **Know the Client – understanding the needs of leaders today – and tomorrow**

This is the moment to have the senior executives join the conversation: Maria, Stephanie, Alberto, Luc, Matthias, Sebastian, Toby. They helped us to understand the needs of leaders in organizations today and tomorrow. We set out to explore with them two distinct yet linked questions: what are the challenges that we see coming up for those in the C-suite, and how can those who are in the C-suite now look after their own personal sustainability to fulfil their roles properly.





**Our best practices must have a firm scientific foundation” is part of the mission statement of the Institute of Coaching.**

Some of the main themes for organizations to remain sustainable places for their people include: how forward-looking organizations need to properly address the needs of all their stakeholders; how important it is for organizations to instill a sense of purpose among its employees, well beyond just declaring a purpose statement; how stakeholders today have very different opportunities of engaging with organizations, and that organizations who ignore that do this at their own risk; how it is important to provide more than just a job for those who seek something beyond “just a job that pays the bills” and how learning and development have an important role to play in this space.

Addressing sustainability in the C-suite is highly connected to the “tone from the top”. The idea of organizations increasing their profits while benefiting from uncharged social costs (such as pollution or poor labour practices) was deemed to be unacceptable for organizations that claim to be sustainable. Going against the grain of widely held beliefs was as important as finally finding ways to properly reflect a statement in our accounting standards that is more often heard than turned into reality: “our people are our greatest asset”. Speaking about the future of a business without involving the next generation clearly falls short. On a larger canvas, we were convinced that taking societal issues seriously was indeed a way of creating a more sustainable future and potentially even competitive advantage for organizations.

At this stage, we had many ideas and thoughts, a lot of inspiration, and one overarching question. Where to and what next? This is where Anthony comes in.

### **Know the Territory – from self to community to world**

He brought us many a story of his experiences with communities across Asia and Africa and told us how he had devised the process of Territory Mapping<sup>6</sup> to equip us with some of the key approaches that these communities have employed to survive, no matter the conditions that challenged them. This was a hugely powerful message of hope, rooted in ancient wisdom of successful, centuries-old communities. Territory Mapping helps us build maps that ground us and give us orientation, clarity, and purpose. We can come together, and in organizations we must come together, to create a collective map of an imagined

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6 [www.territorymapping.pro](http://www.territorymapping.pro)



future. If we are unwilling to create this map, someone else is likely going to do it for us, and then this map might not have what we need to create the future that we want for ourselves, our tribe, our community, our world.

We hope that you can easily gather why none of these conversations is “done”. There are many more perspectives to explore, many more questions to be raised, and many more voices to be heard to create the impact that is possible.

This publication tries something bold: address a set of topics that are important for coaches and for leaders, putting the topic front and centre, then look at it from different angles. We hope that specifically those leaders will find this interesting who think of themselves as coaches of their people, who use the “leader as coach” approaches in their repertoire often.

By putting this publication into your hands and before your eyes, we want to invite you to join the conversation, and participate in one of our upcoming Institute of Coaching activities, be they weekly virtual huddles, monthly virtual roundtables, or our annual conferences.

# GENERAL REFLECTIONS

*My overall impression in one quote would be  
“None of us is as good as all of us”*

**Stephanie Barbier (attendee)**

*Today’s society is facing major challenges which can only be addressed through joint problem-solving thinking and purposeful action. Throughout the conference and irrespective of the topic being discussed, making a purposeful contribution was a uniting theme. I felt very encouraged by this shared feeling of a very diverse group of people!*

**Luc Albert (panelist)**

*It is a continual reminder of the larger system in which I live and the value of deeply listening to myself and others and our earth so I don’t get caught up in the frantic superficial pace that is overtaking much of our modern world. Supports me to offer my gifts to the world and refuse to become burnt-out and good to no-one.*

**Christine Johnson (attendee)**

*I was in awe by the power of the small moments — the in-betweens that were unscheduled. Chatting with a colleague (and soon to be new friend) allowed you to hear about the rest of the world, envision and understand how coaching existed on a global front, and develop bonds with people in search of the same as you — connection, learning, growth, and community. I feel very lucky to have gotten to know so many special people in such a short window.*

**Mollie Eliasof (attendee)**



*When somebody lives the passion, or mission, it vibrates through the person's presence. The quality of presence reaches the hearts of others. We could also say when a leader embodies their mission, people connect and commit.*

**Lidija Drobez (attendee)**

*Awe-inspiring experience! Wonderful to see how the Co-Create, Co-Learn and Co-Celebrate dynamic empowered us to fully explore "The Future is Now" theme. The highly inclusive 'Fishbowl' exercises underlined the need for diverse constituencies to come together with a sense of urgency, if we are to bring about significant AND sustainable change in an inter-dependent VUCA world. Evidence-based Coaching can help reframe perspectives and bridge the gap in a dangerously polarized world. Coaches & consultants can facilitate Leaders to exercise a conscious choice to reach out, build strategic partnerships and co-evolve triple bottom-line focused metrics which can accelerate traction on SDGs/ESG.*

**Jaspal Baswa (attendee)**

*The notion of conscious Leadership is something that, I believe, can push our coaching industry forward.*

**Alex Kergall (attendee)**