

Ideas for Presenting Cases, Questions and Quandaries in Coaching Supervision

In our work, every conversation can be a place of learning and new understanding, and coaches who have a way of reflecting on and metabolizing the lessons, wins, biases, triggers, joys, and hard knocks of their coaching practice will get better and have more fun—maybe even find that coaching is their life’s work.

Though I will usually bring interesting resources to Supervision, these Cohorts are less like a class and more professional development by way of wise and customized consultation. Much like “rounds” in the development of medical residents, I will challenge you to review and apply all of that stuff you onboarded during coach training and since, and to deepen your understanding of the Core Competencies. My focus will be on your coaching presence, on the application of your skills and on your curiosity, honesty, and courage.

At the beginning of each meeting, we will invite everyone to check-in. Together, we will listen for shared trends (it is amazing how close Cohorts co-create learning trends). And then it might be your turn to take the stage.

Q. “How do I prepare for a turn under the spotlight?”

A. I will ask in advance for volunteers to take the spotlight, usually two at each meeting. One way to prepare for your turn is to quietly reflect, in the days before our meeting, on questions like the following. Notice a who or a what or a that comes to your mind intuitively. Then maybe follow and deepen that “thread.”

- *What is happening between you and your coachee?*
- *What can you tell us about your coachee’s Big Agenda? Their Vision? How are you keeping an eye on that? How did your last conversation link to it?*
- *What happened just before you found yourself reacting—and bouncing into “level 1”? How did you recover? How could you have?*
- *Is there a missing piece? Something that puzzles you? Any hunches about what you are not talking or asking about?*
- *Does the “dance” need more (or less of) something? Grace/support? Truth/challenge?*
- *Any chance you are behaving differently with this coachee than you normally would? (Do you need to be right? Or liked? Or admired? Or unique? Or knowledgeable? Or cautious? Or fun? Or in charge? Or calm at all times?)*
- *Maybe you have an organizational or systemic question. For example, would it be useful to involve your coachee’s team or a manager? When your coachee changes, those people cannot not change. Is there a way you can foster greater communication while protecting the work you’re already doing?*
- *Maybe a practical contracting question is emerging. Remember, you are showing up like a coach even in informational interviews where contracting begins to happen.*
- *How about a related ethical quandary? Confidentiality question? Is there a dual relationship?*

- *How are you doing with coaching across differences—culturally, racially, generationally, temperaments, etc.? How are you learning to talk about those things? What do you do when you do or say something clumsy?*
- *What happened that required extra courage? From you? From your coachee? How did you mark that moment?*
- *How is your relationship with your own critical voices? As you grow, how are they evolving?*
- *What didn't you say to a coachee that you wish you might have? What stopped you?*
- *From the balcony, do you see any limiting beliefs? Alternative perspectives?*
- *What happened that made you so glad that you are a coach? (Do not be shy here . . . tell us about the times when you crush it!)*

Q. How do use my 10-15 minutes under the spotlight?

A. Once we've checked-in and we all turn to listen, give us an overview, highlighting your learnings and which of those burning questions have gotten your attention. Talk to us for eight to ten minutes. We will listen and engage with you like coaches and allies and, as we do, you identify the things we say that are most useful to you. Maybe we will go down a layer, from your skills to your presence.

And we will probably ask permission to circle back with you at our next meeting. What did you do next? What did you learn?

Then following a break, a second coach will take the spotlight. And, as we close, we will reserve time to review our take-aways and what we each will do next.

A good Supervision Cohort will help you think through what has become complex, to attend to ethical issues, to reflect on tendencies that can undermine your effectiveness and to take care of yourself along the way.

Maybe we will just champion you and help you to become clear that you really are on the right track. The individual challenges and learnings brought by each coach will help all of us. I promise.

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