

Tool Box - Mental Habits



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“A caring coaching presence creates the bond with your clients where they want to accept and appreciate coaching.”

Establish your presence by aligning your brain before you engage in a coaching conversation. Your presence creates a safe and open atmosphere even more than your words. Then you must maintain your alignment, readjusting your brain when necessary during your conversation. When you get distracted by your own thoughts, quickly shift back to being present.

The following three steps will help you align your brain:

1. Choose how you want to feel 2. Recall your intention of partnership 3. Believe in your client’s potential

Choose Your Emotional State

Before every meeting, stop and ask yourself what you are feeling. Then consciously choose how you want to feel. Deliberately shift your physical state by first releasing all tension your body. Then drop your awareness to the spot just below your navel. Breathe in the emotions you choose, flooding your body with the sensations you want to feel.

Choose only one or two emotions. To enter a state of flow, choose compassion, calm, love, contentment, gratitude, appreciation, courage or curiosity. Breathe in the words to the center of your body so you are out of your head. During your session, notice if fear, impatience, or resistance creep in. Return to presence by breathing in your chosen emotions.

Partner with your smart, resourceful client

You are their thinking partner, not their adviser. You can invite them to decide on specific actions and outcomes, but they choose the direction, clarify the options, and make the decisions. Never lose sight that the journey is theirs to take. The moment clients feel you are leading them, they will resist you, passively comply, or mentally check out.

Remember, your intention isn’t to fix their problem or make them into someone else. Your purpose is to broaden their perspective to find the answers they probably knew all along.

Always Believe in Their Potential

When you lose your belief in your clients’ ability to discover their own way forward, they are no longer a fully respected partner in the conversation. Not believing in your clients’ potential to solve their own problems shifts the power dynamics, disempowering your clients. You both lose when you give in to your urge to fix your clients’ problems.

Personal power comes from within, when people feel seen, cared about, and respected.

THREE TIPS FOR ALIGNING YOUR BRAIN TO BE PRESENT EMOTIONALLY AND PHYSICALLY

1

While coaching, stay detached from your judgment and emotional reactions. Practice aligning your brain daily until you are naturally able to regulate your thoughts and emotions. Align your brain before you start your day, before you sit down to answer emails, and as you prepare for a good night’s sleep.

2

Choose to stay open and curious to what will unfold. Listen for thinking patterns to examine, not answers that match your beliefs. Notice contradictions in their reasoning but give them time to process what you share. Trust they will see things differently with your coaching. They will trust you in return.

3

Coaching conversations require you feel respect for the human in front of you to inspire their willingness to learn and grow. See them, value their existence, and believe in their potential. They are doing their best to survive and succeed with what they know. You can help them realize what else they can know by coaching them see through the fog of their fears and conflicts.

More coaching strategies and approaches at <https://coveisioning.com>

"Receiving what clients offer goes beyond listening."

When you receive what clients offer in their words and expressions without judgment and then appreciate how they view their situation, you maintain coaching presence.

To fully receive, you need to be aware of your sensory reactions as well as your mental activity. With sensory awareness, you can receive and discern what is going on with others beyond the words they speak.

Sensory Awareness

Sensory awareness includes an inward awareness of your reactions in a conversation. When coaching, your reactions might be in response to what you energetically receive from your clients. Out of survival, all humans have an inner "receiver" that can pick up the electromagnetic waves we put out with emotions. It is important you tune into these sensations when coaching. This requires you access all three processing centers of the nervous system—your brain, heart, and gut. Then you can receive emotional vibrations that may or may not match what you hear and see. Ask permission to share what you sense then accept their response as true for them. When you allow yourself to be sensitive—to sense what they are feeling—your reflective statements have more impact.

Compassionate Detaching

You might feel their stress, anxiety, and anger in your body. If you let these emotions sit in your body, you won't be able to effectively coach. Empathy is where you receive what another is feeling using sensory awareness, and then let these sensations pass through you. You then experience *nonreactive empathy*. You share what you saw, heard, and felt with your clients. You feel their emotions and then relax your body to let the emotion subside as you return to being fully present with them.

Receive and then offer your clients what you see, hear, and feel to help them better understand the experience. Release their emotions so you can hold a safe space for them to process your offering.

Practice aligning your brain to stay present with curiosity, care, and the belief in clients' potential. Receive what they offer without analysis or judgment. Share what you receive. Release the emotions you sensed they felt. Your presence encourages connection, safety, and the openness to discover a new way forward together.

Being sensitive is a gift if you don't get lost in their story and drama.

THREE TIPS FOR INCREASING SENSORY AWARENESS TO FULLY RECEIVE WHAT YOUR CLIENTS OFFER

1

Receiving means you take in what clients offer you. Hear their words, catch the subtle shifts in posture and expressions, and sense when there is something they haven't said without judgment or interpretation. When you honor who they are and what they are experiencing, they will be more open to explore deeply with you.

2

Quiet your mind. Inner stillness clears your sensory channels. Then open your heart and gut with love and courage. While coaching, when you feel a sensation in your heart or gut, share what you think your clients might be feeling. Accept if they agree or not. Your guess could help them name the emotions they are feeling.

3

Let go of knowing. Instead of thinking you know how your clients will react, try believing anything can happen. Be curious and ask questions to understand your clients' perspective. When you share an observation or sensation, let go of the need to be right. They may need time and space to think about what they feel.

More coaching strategies and approaches at <https://covisioning.com>

“We are all judgmental people by human nature.”

The most common lie coaches tell themselves is “I am not judgmental.” Judgment is wired into our brains to help us be safe. What you believe is important, what you value as right, and how you believe others should act lead to judgment. Although you may be trained to use emotional intelligence, you can’t help being biased. One of the most detrimental yet overlooked emotions you experience is judgment.

Judgments Are Protective Mechanisms

Judgment occurs when the brain determines what was said or done conflicts with who you think you are (identity) and how the world should work (reality). Out of survival, your brain is always on the look out for attacks on what you think is right, wrong, good, and bad, real or not.

You also have a natural negativity bias that causes you to register even innocent expressions as negative instead of neutral or positive. You will exaggerate how your beliefs differ from others out of self-protection. The words you then speak, including the questions you ask, are slanted by your negative interpretations.

Accept You Are Judgmental to Free Your Mind

Left unchecked, even slight judgmental reactions affect the power dynamic in a relationship, impairing the trust and safety vital to effectively coach the person in front of you. When your judgment seeps through, partnership is lost.

Because unconscious biases are difficult to uncover, allowing someone else to reveal them to you is helpful. You might ask a friend you trust or hire a coach to point out when one of your biases appears.

It is also common to negatively react to your clients’ emotional reactions. Even your small show of displeasure with their emotional state will affect the progress of the session.

In addition to reacting to clients’ emotions or beliefs, you are judging your clients as inadequate when you give them unsolicited advice. Can you give up being the expert in order to be the coach?

To help you discern where you feel judgement, intentionally trigger yourself to recognize where the tension shows up in your body. Watch or read the news, read Facebook posts, or try to navigate crowded environments like airports to willfully activate your judgment. Notice the sensation in your body and then release the tension to clear your mind.

Judgment is an emotion you can shift before it reaches your lips.

THREE TIPS FOR CATCHING AND RELEASING YOUR JUDGEMENTS

1

Notice when judgment shows up in your body so you can catch it before it infects your thoughts. Don’t criticize yourself for judging; you have instinctual reactions due to their looks, views, behavior, and criticism of you. What you choose to do once you notice your judgment is more important than trying to be judgment free.

2

Question your assumptions and opinions. What beliefs are driving your reactions? Don’t rationalize your reactions; wonder where they came from. If you think a client choice will be more destructive than helpful, ask them to restate what they want to achieve and if their choice will help or hinder getting what they want in the end.

3

Strive to be more curious about people every day. Enjoy looking beyond what you think so you can discover something new. Remember, people are acting out of their frames. You don’t have to agree with their points of view, but you can openly listen to understand their perspective. You will gain peace of mind and improve your interactions.

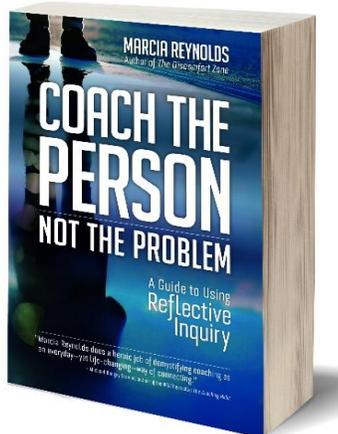
More coaching strategies and approaches at <https://covisioning.com>



I hope these tools helped you elevate your knowledge and skills in using reflective inquiry to create breakthroughs in thoughts and actions when coaching.

If you purchased *Coach the Person, Not the Problem*, would you mind leaving a review on or after launch day, June 2nd?

Your review will help me spread the word about the power of coaching. I value your support as I work to provide insights and tools for coaches around the world.



Thank you!

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