



The
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Special Group in Coaching Psychology

The Coaching Psychologist



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Chair's update

Coaching psychology officially exists. Thank you for your support.

WELCOME TO THE first hardcopy issue of *The Coaching Psychologist* (TCP). The forerunner of the Society's Special Group in Coaching Psychology (SGCP), the Coaching Psychology Forum (CPF) had an online version which we formally took over on 15 December 2004. We still intend making each issue of TCP available online, which I hope will help to promote coaching psychology.

Although our journey from 2002 as an internet forum to the formation of a BPS Special Group had its moments, we exist today due to the hard work and on-going support of hundreds of psychologists and that all-important vote last year when over 4000 Society members ticked the 'Yes' box! The Society staff were always helpful and supportive of our quest. I realise that it may be against convention, but I would like to dedicate this first issue of *The Coaching Psychologist* to everybody who has contributed to the UK coaching psychology movement both within and outside of the BPS – and that includes your membership.

The SGCP inaugural meeting and conference held on 15 December 2004 had 360 SGCP members in attendance, with almost 100 more on the waiting list. Dr Tony Grant, the originator of coaching psychology, gave an enlightening and entertaining keynote paper. The round table discussion was a very lively affair and there were numerous issues and questions from our membership.

Our membership, which is fast approaching 1900, highlights the growing interest in coaching psychology. To support this interest we are running workshops throughout the year and are arranging a combined two-day national conference and workshops event on 19–20 December 2005. For those of you who may be down on your CPD hours for 2005, this event could provide the hours you need.

A lot of time has been spent working on suitable publications to support the interest in coaching psychology. *The Coaching Psychologist* is our in-house publication which will include news items, details about our SGCP events, your views, book reviews, letters, reports from SGCP Officers, and short articles up to approximately 1500 words. Full members can advertise in this too, subject to acceptance by the editor.

However, to develop the theory, practice and research of coaching psychology through published papers, my idea has always been to have an international publication dedicated to coaching psychology and not just coaching. For many months we have been working closely on this project with the Interest Group Coaching Psychology (IGCP) of the Australian Psychology Society. The IGCP convenor, Michael Cavanagh, and his colleague Tony Grant have been key players in supporting this project. We are about to sign a Memorandum of Agreement to jointly publish *The International Coaching Psychology Review* (ICPR). The Society office has been very supportive of this project, too, and has given us guidance regarding the Memorandum of Understanding.

The ICPR will be peer reviewed and have UK and Australian co-editors and an international editorial board. We are still developing submission guidelines, so if you have an academic paper on the theory, practice or research of any aspect of coaching psychology you wish to submit, please contact me directly by e-mail (dr.palmer@btinternet.com). Articles should be 3000–6000 words although extended papers may be accepted with prior agreement. In-depth book reviews will also be included. Advertisements will not generally be accepted unless they are BPS or APS events. Of course, until we have tied up all the loose ends, the ICPR may still be a pipedream but I remain very optimistic.

It is hoped that *TCP* will be published two or three times a year and the *ICPR* will come out twice a year. This will mean that we will receive coaching psychology publications on a regular basis once they are both up and running.

Currently, we still have draft rules for the Special Group. We submitted revised rules to the Society's Board of Trustees but they were not approved. The trustees decided that the Special Group should consider submitting changes to its rules that were more appropriate to its Special Group status or to apply for Divisional status in the usual manner.

Their comments need careful consideration. Your thoughts are welcome, too.

Certainly, our immediate issue is having more committee members to support our work and the existing draft rules do set a lower limit on members.

Finally, on a personal note, it is a privilege to be the first Chair of the Special Group in Coaching Psychology. I recall back in 2001 hoping to set up a Special Interest Group within the Division of Counselling Psychology (DCoP), but it was not possible then because of the Division's rules. I never imagined that we would end up being a large Special Group. Thank you for making it possible.

Professor Stephen Palmer

The British Psychological Society Press Committee

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A one-day intensive immersion in the media – with lots of hands-on experience.

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Venue: Methodist Church House, Marylebone Road, London NW1.

For a registration form and further details contact:

Dawn Schubert, The British Psychological Society, St Andrews House,
48 Princess Road East, Leicester LE1 7DR;

Tel: 0116 252 9581; e-mail: mediatraining@bps.org.uk

Editorial

WELCOME TO THE very first edition of *The Coaching Psychologist!* Our aim is to promote the uniqueness of coaching psychology, to encourage its growth within the UK and to forge links with our international coaching psychology colleagues.

We cannot do this without the support of our members, so to reiterate Stephen Palmer's Chair's letter, we need articles and news items on all aspects of coaching psychology. Articles of a 1000 words and news items can be e-mailed directly to me at kasia.s@tinyonline.co.uk as can letters to the Editor. We would also like to include book reviews, and members interested in reviewing books should contact me and I will e-mail or send you guidelines outlining the process. Don't forget, all reviewers get to keep the book they reviewed!

In addition, Jennifer Liston-Smith has kindly agreed to be the Special Group's Conference and Events Correspondent and to compile a conference diary for *The Coaching Psychologist*. So if you know of any events that would be of interest to coaching psychologists please e-mail Jennifer directly at SGCPEvents@pip.co.uk. We are keen to hear your views about coaching psychology and comments about *The Coaching Psychologist*, so please write in.

Now to the contents of this edition. In the first paper Stephen Palmer and Alison Whybrow, the co-proposers of the Special Group in Coaching Psychology, present the original Special Group proposal which was

submitted to the BPS and which outlines the reasons why the Society needed a Special Group. The second article, by Alex Linley and Susan Harrington, highlights the links between positive psychology and coaching psychology. The third, by Kristina Gyllensten and Stephen Palmer, focuses on the ubiquitous issue of stress and the part that coaching psychologists can play in its reduction. Then committee member Ho Law discusses the role of ethics in coaching psychology. In the final article John Groom, our first international contributor, outlines the strategies used to improve our listening skills.

In the next part of *The Coaching Psychologist*, Alanna O'Broin and Alison Whybrow report on their vital roles as Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, and Douglas Young outlines his role as our Scottish Regional Representative. Then Siobhan O'Riordan presents a detailed outline of the Special Group's Events Programme and information about our Netiquette guidelines before going on to list, with Alanna O'Broin, some of the most frequently asked questions about Coaching Psychology. We include the Special Group's draft strategic plan to highlight the key areas we are focusing on. In the final paper Jennifer Liston-Smith reports on a workshop run by Bruce Grimley.

Don't forget our 2nd National Coaching Psychology Conference is taking place at City University on 19–20 December. I hope to see you all there.

Happy reading!

Kasia Szymanska



Special Group in
Coaching Psychology (SGCP)

2nd National Coaching Psychology Conference

Monday 19 and Tuesday 20 December, 2005

Venue: City University, London

The two-day conference will include a main conference, workshops and Annual General Meeting.

Speakers and workshop facilitators include

- ◆ Dr Michael Cavanagh (APS IGCP National Convenor)
- ◆ Professor David Lane
- ◆ Professor Stephen Palmer

Further information about the conference will be announced via the SGCP e-mail discussion group (sgcp-discuss@lists.bps.org.uk)

as it becomes available, and on the SGCP website,

<http://www.coachingpsychologyforum.org.uk>

The proposal to establish a Special Group in Coaching Psychology¹

Professor Stephen Palmer & Dr Alison Whybrow²

A large majority of Society members who voted for or against the proposal to set up a Special Group in Coaching Psychology (SGCP) did not actually see the proposal on which they were voting. This is just an anomaly of the way subsystems are set up within the Society. We have 14 versions of the working document which gradually changed as it went through different committees. Although rather late in the day, in an attempt to address this issue, we are publishing the final version below.

It is dated March 2004 but in reality had various footnotes added to it during the spring and early summer of 2004, thus ensuring that the document remained unaltered but up to date as it went through the BPS system. We have edited out a couple of sentences due to the sensitive areas they relate to and not included the draft rules which have been available on our SGCP website.

We hope that publishing the proposal provides insight into what is coaching psychology from a UK and BPS perspective as well having the proposal on the record, in the first hardcopy edition of The Coaching Psychologist.

Overview

To promote the development of coaching psychology at an academic and practitioner level, to develop ethical standards, and to foster a voice for psychology within the broader coaching arena, we propose a Special Group in Coaching Psychology be formed within the British Psychological Society (BPS).

Against the background of increased application of coaching in personal, training and organisational contexts (e.g. Cockerill, 2002; Fournies, 2000; Neenan and Dryden, 2002), we believe the members of the BPS, their clients and the public at large would benefit from a Special Group in Coaching Psychology within the BPS.

Our rationale is laid out below. In addition, we have attached a proposed set of draft rules and application form for mem-

bership. Key articles can be supplied as requested (e.g. Grant, 2001).

Background and context

The practice of life/personal and executive coaching has grown substantially since the early 1990s. Coaching as a term has been borrowed as a metaphor from sport, and is now commonly being applied to the personal and work contexts, with terms such as 'life coach' and 'executive coach' having widespread currency. In fact, coaching associated with sporting activities has been in existence for decades, if not longer (e.g. Gallwey, 1975, 1979). It has moved from being a highly marginalized activity to being a mainstream interest for people involved in teaching, policy development and people development (Parsloe and Wray, 2000).

There are many voices influencing the

¹ This version was revised in March 2004. This is the proposal that was first submitted to PPB (6 June 2003) and MPTB (20 June 2003). However, in the light of feedback, recent events and new CPF members, additional footnotes and references have been included to update the document. In addition, alterations have been made to illustrate the domain of Coaching Psychology, and to change the rules following specific input from the BPS Council (18 October 2003), and the nominated representatives of PPB & MPTB.

² Proposers of the BPS Special Group in Coaching Psychology.

development of coaching practice and a number of coaching bodies have developed such as the Association for Coaching, the European Mentoring and Coaching Council and the International Coach Federation (UK chapter). Despite this, there is no unified psychological voice informing the current development of the coaching arena. Psychologists have raised their concerns about the coaching profession being unregulated in the UK (e.g. Williams & Irving 2001).

In addition, a range of courses have been developed providing training for people who want to become coaches. Unregulated coaching training has been in operation since the early 1990s, which is not explicitly grounded in psychological science (Grant, 2001). One of the main influential advocates of coaching, Sir John Whitmore states (1999:2):

In too many cases they (coaches) have not fully understood the performance-related, psychological principles on which coaching is based. Without this understanding, they may go through the motions of coaching, or use the behaviours associated with coaching, such as questioning, but fail to achieve the intended results.

Whilst Whitmore appreciates the importance of psychological principles, he then minimises the acquisition of them (Whitmore, 1999:2):

I hasten to reassure the potential coach, however, that the beauty of coaching lies in its depth and impact, and that you don't need a degree in psychology in order to practice (sic) it.

If the putative 'profession' requires psychological input in training programmes, we believe that there is an active role for psychologists to take. Indeed, psychology has a long history in this area, as Grant (2001, p.2) points out:

The notion of using validated psychological principles to enhance life experience and work

performance in normal, non-clinical populations goes back at least to Parkes (1955).

Currently, many psychologists are involved in this growing field. Some have associations with different coaching bodies that are external to the BPS. Psychologists, our clients and the public in general are looking for guidance in this area to understand what an individual coach has to offer, to understand what expertise particular training provides and students are looking for clarification as to what coaching programmes will really equip them to become professional coaches, (Carter 2001).

History of existing Coaching Psychology Forum

Stephen Palmer's involvement with the field of coaching had highlighted some of the problems of untrained or poorly trained 'coaches' working with members of the public. He had noted their lack of understanding of the psychology of coaching, and the need for a voice for psychology in this growing arena. The BPS office advised that setting up an interest group within an existing BPS Division would be easier than setting up a subsystem in Coaching Psychology.

At the British Psychological Society, Division of Counselling Psychology (DCoP) Annual Conference held in Torquay during May 17–19, 2002, on 18 May, a meeting was convened by Stephen Palmer for BPS members interested in learning more about coaching psychology and forming a Coaching Psychology Special Interest Group within DCoP.³ Out of 29 members attending, 28 were supportive of the motion. Although DCoP at that time did not have a constitution that allowed the formation of a Special Interest Group (SIG), the interest generated at the meeting was sufficient to launch an internet Coaching Psychology Forum as a platform for discussion and continuing professional development. It was decided that membership would be restricted to BPS

³ The meeting had been agreed at the 2002 DCoP AGM under Any Other Business and is noted in the AGM minutes.

members, student subscribers and affiliates. Non-BPS members who wished to join were encouraged to become members or affiliates of the BPS, otherwise they would not be permitted to join the forum.

An article (Law, 2002) on coaching psychology and the internet Coaching Psychology Forum was published in *The Occupational Psychologist*. This generated a further surge in membership. This article was part of the cross-psychology development that was initially agreed at the DCoP conference.

During 2002, about 70 BPS members from different BPS subsystems joined the internet Coaching Psychology Forum.⁴ This breadth of membership meant that if a SIG was finally set up within any one BPS Division, many members would be alienated, i.e. would not be allowed full membership of the SIG unless they were also full members of the said BPS Division. Further advice was sought from the BPS office and at a Coaching Psychology Forum seminar and meeting held in London on 21 February 2003, it was decided to submit a proposal to the BPS for the setting up of a Special Group in Coaching Psychology. Currently the forum has over 100 BPS members including student subscribers and affiliates.⁵

A conference facilitated by the Coaching Psychology Forum on The Psychology of Coaching, that was held in London on 6 June 2003 has created a lot of interest and was fully booked over a month in advance of the event. It is anticipated that it will be repeated later this year.⁶

Definitions

The generally accepted definitions of coaching illustrate the difference between coaching and coaching psychology:

- Coaching is unlocking a person's

potential to maximise their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them – a facilitation approach (Whitmore, 1992, based on Gallwey, a tennis expert).

- Coaching – Directly concerned with the immediate improvement of performance and development of skills by a form of tutoring or instruction – an instructional approach (Parsloe, 1995).
- Coaching – The art of facilitating the performance, learning and development of another – a facilitation approach (Downey, 1999).

Whereas coaching psychology focuses on the psychological theory and practice:

- Coaching psychology is for enhancing performance in work and personal life domains with normal, non-clinical populations, underpinned by models of coaching grounded in established therapeutic approaches (Grant and Palmer, 2002).

The definition for coaching psychology has evolved in the UK as psychologists from a variety of BPS sub-systems have become involved with the coaching psychology forum:

- Coaching psychology is for enhancing well-being and performance in personal life and work domains underpinned by models of coaching grounded in established adult learning or psychological approaches (adapted Grant & Palmer, 2002).

Coaching Psychology is firmly rooted in the discipline of Psychology, whilst focusing on understanding the skills, approaches and models that benefit well-being and performance in personal life and work domains.

Coaching Psychology is a domain of practice for psychologists concerned with the integration of psychological theory and

⁴ A Coaching Psychology Forum website was established, <http://www.coachingpsychologyforum.org.uk>

⁵ By 8 March the Coaching Psychology Forum had over 370 members, all of whom were BPS members, students or affiliates; 70 per cent are Chartered members.

⁶ The second and third conferences were run at the Society offices on 15 September 2003 and 2 February 2004. Over 100 delegates attended.

research promoting individual well-being and performance, as well as group and organisational performance.

The practice of Coaching Psychology requires a high level of understanding of individual and group development established in psychological and adult learning theory and the application of this understanding to the individual context.

Coaching Psychology practice is grounded in values that aim to empower those who use their services, and is grounded in ethical practice. Psychologists practicing as coaches are bound by the Code of Conduct of the British Psychological Society.

Examples of the application of coaching psychology

The following examples of the application of Coaching Psychology are intended to illuminate areas of practice, they are not exhaustive and include:

- Supporting people to develop effective strategies for dealing with concerns about specific areas of performance, for example giving presentations.
- Providing 1:1 support to facilitate people in achieving their life and/or work goals.
- Facilitating the achievement of group goals.
- Supporting the development of effective coaching programmes in organisations.
- Supervising non-psychologists practicing as coaches in the personal life and work domains.
- Offering training programmes in coaching.

Rationale

In the light of the issues raised in the previous sections, we believe it is a matter of urgency to promote the development of coaching psychology at an academic and practitioner level, to develop ethical standards, and to foster the influence of psycho-

logy within the broader coaching field beyond the BPS. As such, we propose the formation of a Special Group in Coaching Psychology. We believe this will be beneficial to psychologists⁷, their clients (both individual and organisational), professional bodies involved in coaching, and the public at large.

The Special Group will actively promote a systemised body of psychological theory and practice. This will support the growth of a substantive evidence base on which the practice of Coaching Psychology can build. Although there has been considerable interest in coaching, there is a lack of empirical research validating its effectiveness especially with the adaptation of therapeutic approaches to coaching. Promoting research in this area is essential to sustainable coaching practice. Developing a clear body of knowledge will support the practice of Coaching Psychology and engage psychologists in the wider growth of the profession.

The principles of Coaching Psychology, i.e. the application of psychological principles and theories to underpin the practice of coaching, are practised across the membership of the BPS and have been developed in different areas of professional practice in the BPS. The Special Group will provide a focus for discussion of issues relating to coaching psychology from all BPS members and a range of sub-systems within the BPS, most notably, but not exclusively, the Section of Sports Psychology, the Division of Clinical Psychology, the Division of Occupational Psychology, the Division of Counselling Psychology and the Division of Educational Psychology. The Special Group will foster cross-fertilisation within the BPS, and facilitate the sharing of best practice and dissemination of research findings through a variety of media. The Special Group will ensure that it maintains an inclusive approach to the knowledge and practice of Coaching Psychology from across the BPS.

⁷ The Coaching Psychology Forum undertook a survey of 90 members. The vast majority responded that they found that neither the BPS nor other professional bodies currently supported their interest in coaching psychology.

The Special Group will enable the regulation of study and practice of coaching to be supported. This will begin to challenge the current lack of regulation in these areas within the coaching generally. By establishing the psychological theory underpinning the practice of coaching, and creating standards for study and practice, the Special Group will enable psychologists, clients and the public generally to identify a clearer sense of what constitutes good coaching from a psychological perspective.

The Special Group will provide a focus within the BPS for engaging external bodies concerned with effective coaching practice. Already, the development of coaching has moved rapidly from a marginalized to a mainstream activity. Many influential voices such as the Association for Coaching, the European Mentoring and Coaching Council, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, have shaped or are currently shaping this development and will continue to influence the development regardless of the role that psychologists may have historically had in this area. The Special Group will enable psychology to develop and maintain an influential voice as coaching grows and develops at this critical time.

Already Coaching Psychology Forum members are influencing the development of coaching with external professional bodies. It is envisaged that if the Special Group is formed then it will continue the close relationship that has developed over the past 12 months between the Coaching Psychology Forum and the Australian Psychological Society Interest Group in Coaching Psychology. There is interest in their members joining the Special Group⁹.

Aims

The aims of the Special Group shall be as follows:

To promote the development of coaching psychology
The Special Group will focus on increasing

the knowledge and skills base of its members in this field of work.

To encourage the research and study of coaching psychology in a variety of personal, organisational and training contexts.

More research is required into the psychology of coaching (see Grant, 2001). For example, how effective are the facilitation or instructional models of coaching? Another possible area of research relates to intervention adherence or compliance in executive coaching as there is hardly any paper published on this topic (Kilburg, 2001). An EMCC document (Bluckert, 2003) identifies nine types of coaching and an additional number of therapeutic approaches that have been adapted to coaching such as cognitive-behavioural therapy, NLP, and Transpersonal. Psychologists can help to develop evidenced-based coaching in which the theory, skills and techniques have been proven to be effective. In addition, Peltier (2001) has written on a range of therapeutic approaches being adapted to coaching practice including psychodynamic, person-centred and family therapy. The use of these therapeutic approaches adapted to coaching within personal, group, organisational and training contexts opens up new and important areas of research. Although the theory and practice of the cognitive-behavioural, problem-solving, and multi-modal coaching approaches have been illustrated (see Neenan and Palmer, 2001; Palmer, Cooper and Thomas, 2003; Richard, 1999) there is a lack of research into their effectiveness with non-clinical populations. This is an area of work that needs urgent attention which the Special Group will encourage.

To promote the application of appropriate ethical standards and guidelines for the practice of coaching psychology

As psychologists practicing coaching psychology work in a variety of settings, it is important that ethical standards and guide-

⁹With the amount of interest the Coaching Psychology Forum has created, it is likely that if a Special Group is formed there will be non-psychologists in the UK and overseas psychologists who will want to join it. This has already increased the number of BPS affiliates.

lines are promoted and upheld to cater for the different issues that can arise.

To encourage the development of coaching psychology by facilitating workshops, symposia, conferences and publications.

Already the Coaching Psychology Forum has run a workshop (The Future of Coaching Psychology in the UK) and is holding a conference on 6 June, 2003 (The Psychology of Coaching) both sponsored by IBM⁹. It is currently arranging a number of CPD events for members¹⁰. It is proposed that the Special Group would continue to run regular events for its members. In addition, non-BPS members who either practise or employ coaches will be invited to the events so that the profile of coaching psychology will be raised. It is proposed that the Special Group will publish a newsletter containing research and practice papers plus news items, and Occasional Papers on particular topics.

To develop public awareness of the nature, aims and practical applications of coaching psychology. Currently the BPS is asked to make comments to the media about coaching-related issues. There is a fair amount of misunderstanding about what coaching involves. Television and radio programmes show 'coaches' being not just active and directive, but very prescriptive. In addition, issues related to confidentiality and ethics are difficult for members of the public to understand when they read in newspapers about well known people and their 'coaches' talking to others about personal information.

To add to this, there is a whole host of coaching derivatives, and Coaching Psychology needs to work to establish what and how Psychology adds to the coaching arena and how this complements and differs from some of the other forms of 'coaching' that are present.

The Special Group would have a pool of members willing to speak to the media on coaching psychology and coaching-related issues.

To work closely with Sections, Special Groups and Divisions of the Society in pursuit of these aims and, to collaborate appropriately with external agencies and organisations.

Other BPS Sections, Special Groups and Divisions already have members applying coaching theory and skills such as sports psychologists, educational psychologists, clinical psychologists, occupational psychologists and counselling psychologists. This is similar to how counselling theory and practice is used by psychologists across the board. However, the proposed Special Group will focus all of its attention to coaching psychology and will benefit from the support of other subsystems of the BPS.

Members of the existing coaching psychology forum are already actively involved with external organisations and collaboration with the Australian Psychological Society, Interest Group in Coaching Psychology could lead to the hosting of international conferences.

To promote the interests of members of the Special Group in their activities in coaching psychology.

By ensuring that the public become aware of coaching psychology as a branch of psychology, then the interests of the members can be promoted externally. Also by educating other psychologists about coaching psychology through publications such as *The Psychologist*, their interests will be promoted within the BPS. (*The Occupational Psychologist* has commissioned a special edition on coaching psychology to be published later this year.)

⁹ Delegates fees are currently being paid into a BPS bank account. If the proposed Special Group is formed, then these fees will be transferred to a relevant BPS bank account.

¹⁰ We recently made a presentation on Coaching Psychology at the DOP conference, and attracted an audience of well over 100 people. In addition to the three events we have run so far, we are planning our conferences schedule for 2004/5.

To carry on all such activities as may be conducive to the foregoing aims.

Conclusion

There is a growing demand for a BPS Special Group in Coaching Psychology to support BPS members who have an interest in or practice coaching within a psychological framework.

The proposed Special Group will facilitate sharing of research, best practice and knowledge in this field of work through meetings, conferences, workshops, seminars

and a regular newsletter.

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VACANCY

To be part of a dynamic team

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including a recent CV/biography and short overview of the unique contribution which you can make to SGCP.

Positive Psychology and Coaching Psychology: Perspectives on integration

P. Alex Linley & Susan Harrington

SUPERFICIALLY, at least, positive psychology and coaching psychology would seem to have a lot in common. They have both captured the popular psychological imagination, and are both concerned with the improvement of performance and well-being. In this short article, we will try and identify what we see as some of the deeper convergences between positive psychology and coaching psychology, and briefly explore their implications for coaching psychology practice.

Positive psychology was christened in Martin Seligman's 1998 Presidential Address to the American Psychological Association, and a seminal issue of the flagship *American Psychologist* (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) swiftly followed. In the UK, a special edition of *The Psychologist* (Linley, Joseph & Boniwell, 2003) was devoted to the topic, and the First European Positive Psychology Conference was held in Winchester in June 2002. Positive psychology may be defined as the scientific study of optimal functioning, focusing on aspects of the human condition that lead to happiness, fulfilment, and flourishing, with core positive psychology research topics including happiness, wisdom, creativity, and human strengths. More recently, interest has begun to emerge in what has become known as applied positive psychology ('the application of positive psychology research to the facilitation of optimal functioning,' Linley & Joseph, 2004a, p.4), and coaching is increasingly being understood from the positive psychological perspective (Kauffman & Scoular, 2004; Linley, 2004). Why is it that these two approaches seem to have dovetailed so neatly? We suggest there are three primary reasons for this powerful integration, which we elucidate below.

First, both positive psychology and coaching psychology are explicitly concerned with the enhancement of performance and well-being, beginning at the level of the individual. Arguably, one may suggest that this definition applies to the whole of psychology. In practice, however, most psychologists may have traditionally considered their job to be done when the 'client' was free of psychological problems and difficulties. To the positive psychologist and the coaching psychologist, that is to stop at only half way. Psychology has as much, if not more, to offer in facilitating people to achieve higher levels of performance and well-being, and it sells itself short in focusing only on the alleviation of psychopathology. Positive psychology and coaching psychology recognise this, and strive 'to promote optimal functioning across the full range of human functioning, from disorder and distress to health and fulfilment' (Linley & Joseph, 2004a, p.4).

Second, in focusing on the plus side of human nature rather than only on its failings and weaknesses, both positive psychology and coaching psychology have implicitly challenged practitioners to question the fundamental assumptions which they hold about human nature (Linley & Joseph, 2004b). In a nutshell, there are three possible assumptions: we may believe that people are by nature destructive, and thus need to be controlled. Or we may believe that people have the propensity for both good and evil, and thus we need to keep down the evil and promote the good. Or we may believe that people are motivated by socially constructive directional forces, and that we need therefore to provide the right environmental conditions to allow them to flourish. It has been

argued elsewhere (Joseph & Linley, 2004) that positive psychology has implicitly adopted this third fundamental assumption about human nature. Here, we would argue that coaching psychology raises these same questions, and that by considering their own fundamental assumptions, coaching psychologists may gain a greater insight on how these assumptions impact on their practice.

Third, positive psychology has infused an interest in the psychology of human strengths, and we argue that this is an area that provides significant potential for development and benefit to coaching psychologists. Traditionally, psychological research into human strengths has been fragmented and disparate: Psychologists have studied individual strengths (e.g. creativity, hope, optimism, gratitude), but have not developed classification systems or taxonomies to provide a framework for understanding the family of psychological strengths as a whole: Indeed, it is likely that not all psychological strengths have yet been empirically identified.

However, a major enterprise within positive psychology has been the development of the VIA Classification of Strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), which attempts, for the first time, to provide a way of understanding human strengths at a meta-level of analysis. In our own work, we have proposed a more

integrative definition of a strength as 'a natural capacity for behaving, thinking, or feeling in a way that allows optimal functioning and performance in the pursuit of valued outcomes' (Linley & Harrington, in press), and we are currently working to validate new measures of a range of psychological strengths that our research has identified (see www.personalitystrengths.com). While still in its infancy, these approaches represent a major advance in the psychological understanding of strengths, and one that has many implications for the practice of coaching psychologists.

Overall, then, we argue that positive psychology and coaching psychology are natural partners in applied psychology. Both are concerned with the facilitation and promotion of optimal human functioning, and both challenge traditional fundamental assumptions about human nature. However, the most exciting potential for their further integration may lie in the application of strengths within coaching psychology, and we look forward eagerly to what the future may hold.

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Can coaching reduce workplace stress?

Kristina Gyllensten & Stephen Palmer

Abstract

Work related stress is causing concern and is having negative effects on individuals and organisations (HSE, 2001). Various interventions are used to reduce workplace stress but this paper proposes that coaching can be effective in tackling stress. Coaching is becoming increasingly popular and is viewed positively within the corporate world (Peltier, 2002) yet there is a lack of relevant published research demonstrating the link between coaching and stress reduction, management or prevention. This article highlights literature that indicates coaching can be effective in reducing stress.

Keywords: work related stress, coaching, coaching psychologists, research into effectiveness, counselling

WORK-RELATED stress is a serious problem and the Health and Safety Executive's (2003/04) survey of self-reported work-related illness indicated that more than half a million individuals in Britain were experiencing work stress at a level that was causing them ill-health. It was also found that, behind musculoskeletal disorders, stress related conditions were the most frequently reported group of work-related ill-health conditions. Stress has been defined as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them' (HSE, 2001). The relationship between hazards, symptoms and outcomes of stress is illustrated in 'Model of Work Stress' (Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2004).

Counselling and stress

Workplace counselling services and Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) are becoming increasingly common (Hill, 2000), and it has been suggested that the main rationale for providing these services is to deal with work related stress (Briner, 1997) even though counselling may not directly tackle hazards such as work overload or lack of control. There are mixed reports regarding the effectiveness of counselling in reducing work-related stress. Briner (1997) claims that there is little sound evidence for the effectiveness of stress management interventions including counselling, whereas Hill

(2000) suggests that there is plenty of evidence supporting the value of counselling in reducing stress. However, research has found that certain organisations are reluctant towards the use of counselling to tackle work stress due to the stigma and negative perceptions associated with counselling (Gyllensten, Palmer & Farrants, 2005). Similarly, Peltier (2002) reports that counselling carries a stigma within the corporate world. Coaching on the other hand is viewed very differently and has positive connotations within the corporate arena (Gyllensten *et al.*, 2005; Peltier, 2002).

Coaching and stress

Grant (2001, p.8) defines workplace coaching as '...a solution-focused, result-orientated systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of work performance and the self-directed learning and personal growth of the coachee.' According to Palmer, Tubbs and Whybrow (2003) coaching has become acceptable to organisations to manage stress, improve performance and achieve goals. Likewise, Hearn (2001) suggests that coaching can be useful in tackling stress as it can help individuals to identify stressors, find permanent solutions and maintain changes (also see Neenan & Palmer, 2001; Skiffington & Zeus, 2003).

Interestingly, for all the hyperbole that is endemic in the field of coaching regarding its benefits, typified by advertisements and

coaching service provider websites, there is still a lack of research on the effectiveness of coaching (see Grant, 2001 for an in-depth review of the existing research). However, the Association for Coaching (2004) conducted a web-based survey investigating the return on investment (ROI) from corporate coaching with participants from various business sectors. Participants reported that benefits of coaching included improved productivity, job motivation, people management skills and work life balance.

As well as there being a lack of research on coaching effectiveness in general there appears to be a lack of research investigating coaching and stress. Nevertheless, the effects of coaching on stress and burnout were investigated in The Executive Coaching Project (CompassPoint Nonprofit Services, 2003). Twenty-four executive directors participated in the study and received 40 hours of coaching. Survey results showed no statistical differences between the baseline and the final post-test regarding perceived levels of work-related stress and burnout (positive changes were found in other areas). However, in interviews several participants reported that coaching had helped them to reduce stress and burnout. Wales (2003) conducted a qualitative study exploring 16 managers' experiences of coaching, and two of the themes that emerged were stress management and work/life balance. Many of the participants reported that coaching had helped them to reduce their high stress levels and that they felt calmer and more able to deal with pressure following coaching. Regarding work/life balance the managers reported that coaching had helped them to be more proactive in the management of the different roles in their lives. In addition, several case studies have reported that coaching was effective in tackling work related stress (Ascentia, 2005; Richard, 1999).

Why would coaching reduce work related stress?

Coaching may help to reduce stress directly if an individual is seeking coaching in order to deal with stress (Hearn, 2001) and an appropriate coaching intervention is focused on tackling its causes, whether internal (i.e. perceptions or unhelpful core beliefs) or external (organisational). However, coaching could also help to reduce stress indirectly. In this scenario an individual may seek coaching for a variety of reasons, for example to improve performance, increase efficiency, achieve work related goals, or improve communication skills. When the coachee improves in the area targeted by coaching intervention, it is possible that they will become less stressed or pressured.

Coaching could be used at all three levels of organisational intervention, i.e. primary, secondary and tertiary, although at the tertiary level the practitioners may be coaching psychologists also qualified in other areas of psychology such as counselling or clinical psychology or with the relevant continuing professional development and on-going supervision.

Further research

We are conducting a research study investigating whether or not coaching can reduce workplace stress. Two large organisations, with more than 3,000 employees, are participating in the study and both qualitative and quantitative methodologies are being used. We intend publishing the results from the research in a coaching psychology and/or health-related journal within the next 12 months.

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Executive Coaching Psychology Research

The BPS Special Group in Coaching Psychology is supporting research into coaching psychology practice. One of the major projects underway is a research project led by Jonathan Passmore. Jonathan, who was active in the Coaching Psychology Forum at its formative period during 2003, is researching coaches' and coaches' perceptions of the executive coaching experience. Jonathan has already completed the first phase of the research involving interviews with a sample of senior executives who have used coaching. The second part of the project is a major survey of some 3000 executive/business coaches, which is due to be launched in September. As a member of the SGCP e-mail discussion list forum you will receive an e-mail invitation to participate. You can check out further details about the survey on the survey web page: <http://www.opm.co.uk/survey/coaching/coach.htm>. Save this as one of your favourites and you can link to the survey when it opens on 1 September. If you are interested in the results we will be carrying a piece later in the year and Jonathan is hoping to present findings at the BPS Occupational Psychology Conference in January 2006.

If you would like to e-mail Jonathan he can be reached on jonathanpassmore@yahoo.co.uk.

Jonathan Passmore

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Fees Early-bird fee: £100 + VAT if application received one month before event. Standard fee: £135 incl. VAT

Venue The British Psychological Society, London (8 July), The Gestalt Centre, London (20/28 September)

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The role of ethical principles in Coaching Psychology

Ho Law

I would like to take this opportunity in the first issue of *The Coaching Psychologist* to introduce myself as your founding committee member with a strategic responsibility in all ethical aspects of our Special Group.

I am a Chartered Occupational Psychologist with 20 years' experience in central government and private practice. I was instrumental in helping Professor Stephen Palmer to set up the former Coaching Psychology Forum by communicating the development to the Division of Occupational Psychology. I also contributed to the special edition on coaching psychology in *The Occupational Psychologist* (Law, 2003), and was the former Head of the Professional Forum for the Association for Coaching.

Being a member of the Association of Business Psychologists, Divisions of Counselling Psychology and Sport and Exercise Psychology, I advocate diversity in coaching. I have long been engaged in championing diversity and embedding ethical thinking in our profession. I was one of the first equality advisors to the Assistant Permanent Under Secretary of State in the Home Office, and the Deputy chair of the BPS Standing Committee for Promotion of Equal Opportunities. So my specific contribution to the Special Group is to develop ethical principles and its relationship between coaching and psychology. I regard these disciplines as two central pillars in coaching psychology as a discipline and a profession. Within this context, the development of ethical principles would have an important implication for the way we define and practise coaching psychology. Within this context this article aims to address two key questions:

- What forms should ethical thinking take?
- What is the impact of ethical principles on the practice of coaching psychology?

Ethical thinking and its principles are usually embedded in many professional bodies in the form of self-regulation. Members are required to commit to ethical standards and a code of practice. The main aim is to protect clients and the public from dangerous practice with the objectives to:

- benefit clients;
- ensure safety;
- protect clients;
- manage boundaries; and
- manage conflict.

Translating the above into a code of practice requires us as coaching psychologists to:

1. Do no harm.
2. Act in the best interest of our clients and their organisation.
3. Observe confidentiality.
4. Respect differences in culture.
5. Apply effectively the best practice in everything we do.
6. Help our clients make informed choices and take responsibility to improve their performance and well-being.
7. Recognise our role as a coaching psychologist.

There are many common aspects in the above objectives and code of practice across a wide range of professions such as counselling and psychotherapy (for example, see Barnes & Mudin, 2001; Hill & Jones 2003; and the BPS *Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines*). However, there are also many aspects that are unique in coaching psychology that distinguish it from many other disciplines. For example, a coaching psychologist is asked by a director (the budget holder) to coach a team of senior managers (the job holders) with an objective to improve their performance (see Law, 2003). In this case, the term 'client' within

such an organisational context is very different from those of counselling and psychotherapy. A number of questions would arise from such a coaching process:

- Who are the clients?
- Whose benefit has priority?
- Whose interests is the coaching psychologist serving?
- What is the coaching psychologist's ethical duty?
- What is the responsibility of the coaching psychologist to manage different values and interests between all the stakeholders?
- How the differences are managed?
- Is there potential for abuse of power?
- What are the issues of confidentiality?
- What are the implications of vicarious liability?

Managing the multiple boundaries, relationships and conflicts are particularly important in the above situation and in coaching psychology in general. Coaching psychology is a different practice from counselling and therapy. It requires us to have different attitudes, knowledge, skills and ethical thinking as part of our professional competence.

There is not enough space for me to answer all of the above questions here. To unpack the complexity in this area would require further research and development.

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The aims of this article are to introduce my role and open up this space for reflection and discussion about ethical principle in our profession. Clare Huffington and I are preparing a strategy for the working relationship with other organisations. I hope to have the opportunity in future issues to continue reporting on the development of the ethical aspects of coaching psychology. Future work may include:

1. Developing ethical principles in coaching psychology.
2. Identifying the ethical implications for supervision of coaching psychologists.
3. Developing quality control procedures.
4. Promoting diversity in coaching psychology.
5. Developing training in coaching psychology.
6. Embedding ethical principles as part of the core competence and continual development in our profession.

I would welcome any comments and contribution on these topics.

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Effective listening

John Groom

MOST of my coaching time is spent tripping over myself. I can hardly wait to explore the coachee's issues before I am rushing in to get them ready to set goals, or to analyse their lifestyle imbalance, do a cognitive checklist or evaluate their own self-care strategies. I am learning to slowdown.

Was that good for you?

One of the things that has slowed me down is to ask at the beginning of the second session: 'What did you get from our first session together?'

This is a humbling experience. Those wonderful gems and precious insights that I thought I was sharing are so rarely mentioned. On the other hand a session that I thought was simply me listening and writing down a thorough summary has so often helped the person to hear themselves more deeply and to identify their own themes.

Are you in balance?

It has been well over two decades since Egan wrote that wonderful book *The Skilled Helper*. He argued cogently that effective helping requires a mix of empathy and action. I sometimes wonder if coaching is a response to this perceived imbalance. None of us wants to be entirely and purely understanding; it is too tiring. To be totally surrounded by tea and sympathy sounds lovely but we all strive for a challenge. Coaching psychology is, and should be, ultimately present and future orientated and measured by its results. The main criticism that I hear of coaches, coaching psychologists and coaching programmes, however, is that they are too task oriented and superficial. In other words we have not listened effectively enough before moving into the action stage.

If you need a friend

I am arguing here for a fuller, deeper kind of listening. My own Australian mentor of many years' experience summarised for me just before his retirement his own changes. Nowadays I follow more and lead less.

The emphasis on change can blind us to the obvious needs. Maybe the coachee just wants to be listened to and is not yet ready to change. Maybe in their hectic life this is the only place for them to be and to be held. Maybe they lack a sense of sanctuary, are lonely or feel that there is no one there for them.

It is possible to sense all of these needs and to respond to them without going back into counselling.

If it don't fit

To go all the way back to Egan again, he suggested that we listen for a person's leverage point. This is a key motivator, theme or concern that is brought into the sessions. When I ask what people got from our first session I am really fishing for this leverage point. I might think that what I am hearing is a serious lifestyle imbalance, for example. The coachee's only concern, however, is losing their spouse, as they are so grumpy when they get home. I might be hearing from someone who is driven and in my mind needs to chill out. This leverage point, however, is how to enjoy their work more. I sometimes think that effective coaching psychology is like one of the gentler forms of the martial arts. We never stand against or push the other person. If they rush at things we simply point out where they might fall over. In the end it is about them standing firmly in the world.

This type of coaching can benefit from the addiction literature on motivational interviewing.

It's up to you.

Effective coaching does need to draw on known bodies of research and proven skills. I am simply making a plea that our focus on skills and knowledge does not stop us from recognising the other person's deepest needs. Before I shifted over to coaching I used to do a lot of work with men having sexual performance problems. In one way it was very satisfying and important work. It is an area where there has been plenty of research and hence a client can easily be slotted into a programme. It was the programme that became my downfall in that it became a mechanistic exercise lacking spontaneity and relationship. These qualities – spontaneity and relationship – were of course probably the same things that the clients had missing in their lives!

The answer is 42

It is important in coaching that we bring ourselves fully into the relationship; that we are free to be natural and creative including a child-like ignorance. Eric Berne once

exclaimed that we are on earth to explore the three big questions: Who am I? What am I doing here? Who the heck are these other people? Coaching psychology is a great way to explore these issues. As a coach when I move away from a coaching formula and walk alongside the other person I gain a sense of wonder. Rather than being overwhelmed by their struggles, I admire their resilience. Rather than attempting to pigeon-hole them, I become genuinely curious about what their next step will be.

Take a bow

Being fully present to a coachee is no easy task. It requires a high degree of self-awareness, lifestyle balance, self-care and effective supervision. The rewards are great.

The two bits of feedback that I treasure the most as a coach are: You are like a hiking guide and I didn't drive all this way to be in a room by myself.

Contact

www.johngroom.co.nz

BPS Book Award 2006: The Research Board invites nominations

Award – £500 annual award. The cheque and commemorative certificate will normally be presented at the Annual Conference at which the winner(s) will be invited to deliver a lecture.

Eligibility – Books published after 1 January 2003 that make a significant contribution to the advancement of psychology may be nominated, and the author or at least one co-author should be resident in the UK. Edited collections of papers are not eligible, nor are books published by the Society.

Nominations – Nominations should include:

- a letter giving the title of the book, name(s) of the author(s), publisher and date of publication;
- a short statement (not more than one side of A4) explaining why the author(s) should receive the award;
- copies of at least two published reviews of the book;
- supporting statements by up to three additional referees with expertise in that field;
- a copy of the book, whenever possible.

Nominators may be individuals, authors, publishers or their agents. Nominations should be sent to the Chair of the Research Board at the Society's office, to arrive no later than **Friday 30 September 2005**.

Further details from – Lisa Morrison Coulthard at the Society's Leicester office: lismor@bps.org.uk

Honorary Secretary's report

Alanna O'Broin

SINCE the Executive Committee was put in place at the Inaugural Meeting on 15 December 2004, the Special Group in Coaching Psychology (SGCP) Committee has expanded, with the appointment of four ordinary members, an ex-officio member and a co-opted member to active posts. Further new arrivals have included our regional representative for Scotland, conference reporter, e-mail co-administrator and an editorial board member. Two sub-committees have been convened to further many of the action points outlined in our Strategic Plan 2005–2006, a copy of which is included in this issue. The Plan will provide an important yardstick against which to measure our progress in the coming year.

A short report such as this cannot hope to describe all the activities undertaken by the Committee since election, but here are the highlights:

- A full and varied events programme for 2005 has been announced including eight London and regional events and a

national conference with conference workshops in December (see elsewhere in this newsletter).

- We have launched *The Coaching Psychologist*, our in-house publication.
- We are finalising talks to set up an international publication.
- Both an e-mail discussion list and e-mail announcement list have been implemented within the family of BPS lists for the use of SGCP members.

During the six months since the Inaugural Meeting, SGCP membership has continued to climb rapidly, from 1572 at inception to 1862 as at 12 May 2005, an increase of 290 (+18.4 per cent) over the period. Founder membership was available until 31 March 2005; those joining after that would become either Full (GBR) or Affiliate (Foreign Affiliates, Student Subscribers and Affiliates) Members of the Special Group.

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Honorary Treasurer's report

Alison Whybrow

THINKING about the role of the treasurer on a Society committee, you would be forgiven for assuming this is about signing a few cheques and making sure that the end of year accounts balance to some fashion before you send them off to the Accounts Office within the BPS.

I was under a similar illusion myself when it was suggested that I take up this role.

However, the Special Group is run pretty much like a business, and the role of treas-

urer is key. One of our main goals is to ensure that any subscriptions that we raise from our members are kept to a minimum. Rather than taking member subscriptions for granted, we want a range of revenue generating strategies in place that ensure we are able to reduce our reliance on our members' pockets. We started with a bank balance of a couple of thousand to finance a very busy and packed agenda over the next 12 to 24 months.

A financial strategy and some thoughtful budget planning is clearly required, planning a budget for the future when you have no 'past' to base it on and very limited financial experience is a bit of a challenge.

So far our costs are very low – this is in part due to the BPS office providing us with their substantial support for free over the first 12 months of our existence. Similarly, committee members have spent an awful lot of their time and energy to deliver the actions outlined in our strategic plan. Some of this will in time need to be outsourced as volunteers cannot be expected to continue to take on this work in the longer term. All this will increase the costs that we need to cover as we develop over the next few years.

Our one clear opportunity to raise some funds to deliver our strategic aims and meet member's interests is through our events

programme. So far, we've managed to balance the need to raise funds and the need to make our events as accessible as possible to members and non-members alike. The events that we've run to date have been a marked success as reports in other parts of this newsletter will confirm.

If this continues to be the case, we can be optimistic about keeping member fees to a minimum – Stephen Palmer and I are currently working on the budget and it seems that a membership fee of £3.50 per annum may be the final figure for 2006 – no more than a glass of wine! We hope to maintain the lowest subs for any BPS subsystem in the foreseeable future based on good financial budgeting.

Contact

Alison.Whybrow@btinternet.com

Society Award for Promoting Equality of Opportunity 2005



The
British
Psychological
Society

Call for Nominations

Do you know a member of the Society who has made a significant contribution to challenging social inequalities in the UK in relation to gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, disability or age?

Someone who has made:

- a personal commitment to equality issues;
- an impact on the psychology profession;
- an impact on other professionals or service providers;
- a positive difference to the lives of people from marginalised and oppressed social groups.

If so, could they be the next winner?

Contact the Secretary to the Standing Committee for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities (SCPEO) for further details about the award and how to nominate someone (felhec@bps.org.uk, Tel: 0116 252 9507). Closing date for receipt of nominations is

1 August 2005.

SGCP Regional Representative for Scotland

Douglas Young

MANY years ago, after completing my PhD on generalisation in learning, I embarked on a career in organisation development. Over the past two decades I have worked with a range of private and public sector organisations in Europe and the USA.

Most of my work involves running leadership programmes and building coaching capability in organisations. In addition, I have designed and launched an internet-based coaching support tool which is now being used by a number of clients to inform their performance development processes.

In almost every assignment I have been engaged in, whether about organisation change, performance management or leadership development, coaching has emerged as the key variable which unlocks the talent/capability of the organisation.

I have always been struck by the fact that, regardless of the clarity and appropriateness of the strategy, no matter how well engineered may be the processes within an organisation, and irrespective of the quality of the systems, without managers and executives who both value and practice effective coaching, organisations fail to deliver effectively. Coaching is the key.

Over the years, perhaps like many members of the BPS, I have not really engaged in the activities of the Society, sitting on the fringes and being satisfied with a regular read of the *The Psychologist*. Then I discovered the Special Group in Coaching

Psychology. It hasn't quite changed my life, but it's relevance engaged me in a way (refreshed the parts?) that other initiatives/journals had failed to achieve.

When the inaugural meeting in London was announced I decided to make the effort to attend. Being based in Scotland there is some effort involved – two flights and an overnight stay. I had expected a small band of like-minded coaches/psychologists to turn up at the event. I had not anticipated a very large auditorium filled to capacity with people from a very broad range of coaching interests and backgrounds. The level of attendance made it clear that coaching psychology had arrived and there is no doubt that psychology has a major role to play.

Being based in Scotland, I am always conscious that we live in a country which is often dominated by interest groups in SE England and under-represented elsewhere. Consequently, I was delighted to be asked to become Scottish Representative for the Special Group.

I would like to ask you to get in touch and have your say about what you want from the SGCP and how you might like to contribute to that vision. For example, would members in Scotland like to set up networking groups, to share ideas, contact details and practical experiences?

Contact

doug@coaching.uk.com

Events programme

Siobhain O'Riordan

7 JULY

Diagnostics in coaching
– A Leadership and Performance Audit
BPS London Office, John Street

This experiential workshop will introduce participants to SHL's Leadership tool (LPPA) which measures and differentiates between Performance and Potential, at both a transformational and transactional level – a unique proposition in the market. The workshop will provide brief details on the development of the tool, and how it has been used in business. Participants will then have the opportunity to work with the results to see how it is used in a coaching context.

Workshop facilitator: Shauna McVeigh has worked for SHL for five years in a number of roles, and currently heads the Management Development Practice within the UK. Shauna is a Chartered Occupational Psychologist and she has been coaching for three years.

7 SEPTEMBER 2005

Coaching for Strengths: Embracing a Positive Coaching Psychology Agenda
BPS London Office, John Street

This workshop provides an introductory grounding in positive psychology, presenting participants with opportunities to consider their fundamental assumptions about human nature and explore how this impacts on their professional practice as coaches. It introduces state-of-the-science research on the theory, measurement and application of psychological strengths, particularly in coaching settings. Participants will be invited to explore different ways of identifying their own strengths, as well as the strengths of their clients, and will consider how a positive psychological strengths approach may enhance and develop their coaching practice.

Workshop facilitator: Alex Linley completed his PhD at the University of Warwick, where he edited the international volume *Positive Psychology in Practice*, edited a special issue of *The Psychologist* on positive psychology, and chaired the European Network for Positive Psychology. He is now a psychology lecturer at the University of Leicester, and is an Associate Editor for the *Journal of Positive Psychology* and *The Psychologist*.

20 OCTOBER 2005

Stress Management in Coaching Psychology (workshop title and further details pending)

Workshop co-facilitator: Peter Kelly, Occupational Health Psychologist.

2 NOVEMBER 2005

Coaching Supervision
– Luxury or Necessity
BPS London Office, John Street

This workshop will present supervision as a forum for learning from practice and view the supervisor as one who facilitates a process of experiential learning. Coaching itself will be viewed as one of the tasks of supervision and coaching supervision will be considered as coaching for coaching psychologists. The time will be spent on a number of themes:

- What is coaching supervision and what is it trying to achieve?
- How to balance the paradoxes of supervision, e.g. development and learning versus accountability.
- How do supervisors set up supervision and help supervisees (coaches) make the best use of it?
- How to justify having supervision (or requiring it) as part of the professional

practice of coaching psychology.

Workshop facilitator: Michael Carroll, PhD is a Chartered Counselling Psychologist. He works as a counsellor, supervisor, trainer, coach and consultant to individuals, teams and organisations in both the public and private sectors, specialising in the area of employee wellbeing. Michael is an accredited Executive Coach and Executive Coach Supervisor with APECS.

6 September 2005

Getting Emotional about Goal-Setting

BPS London Office, John Street

This experiential workshop will illustrate the use of core psychological principles under the popular brand of 'Emotional Intelligence' to facilitate significant business and personal outcomes for clients in organisational settings. The workshop will demonstrate, using theory and practical exercises, how to help clients understand the important linkage between emotional inputs and effective goal setting and attainment.

Workshop facilitator: Bruce Grimley has been coaching since 1995. The key focus of his work is the need to understand and address the underlying emotional issues that influence the attainment of successful outcomes both in terms of working relationships and business performance. Bruce is a Chartered Occupational Psychologist and is committed to finding ways to make psychological principles accessible so people can be more effective at work.

14 October 2005

Personal Construct Psychology as a Resource for Coaching Psychologists

BPS London Office, John Street

This event will include brief sketches of the evolution of applications of PCP to coaching in the UK and Ireland. Participants will be introduced to applications of selected PCP concepts and techniques and will explore questions critical to coaching psychologists considering PCP as a resource:

- How to go about designing 'coaching' congruent with the phenomenological methodology of PCP and with needs of 'healthy' coaching clients.
- How well have the writings of the inventor of PCP, George Kelly, contributed to coaching congruent with PCP?
- Does any important part of his model of the psychology of personal constructs act more as a barrier than as a facilitator for applying PCP to coaching in the 'real world'?
- What psychological research has emerged since Kelly's death in 1966 that throws light on the question 'why draw on PCP?'

Workshop facilitator Kieran Duignan coaches for psychological fitness in challenging organisational and personal situations. A Chartered Occupational Psychologist, registered ergonomist and registered safety practitioner, Kieran has a diploma in counselling from the London Centre for Personal Construct Psychology and diplomas in management consultancy, career guidance and distance education and an MSc in ergonomics.

The fee to attend each workshop will be £45 for SGCP members/Association for Coaching members/DOP members, and £70 for non-members.* Fees include refreshments, a workshop attendance certificate for CPD Logbooks or Practitioner-in-Training Logbooks and any workshop materials provided by the facilitator.

For further details and to book any workshop contact the BPS Subsystems Department on 0116 252 9517, e-mail gwewar@bps.org.uk or see www.coachingpsychologyforum.org.uk. All workshops will run from 1.30–5pm. Registration from 1pm.

* Please note that non-members who submit a completed SGCP application form with their registration form (and who are eligible for SGCP membership) will be charged at the SGCP member rate.

Netiquette guidelines

Siobhain O'Riordan

The SGCP e-mail discussion list was created in January 2005 to allow SGCP members to be part of an online community of coaching psychologists and contribute to the development of coaching psychology. The list also helps members to keep up to date with current issues, events and workshops in coaching psychology. It is important that members are familiar with guidelines for using the discussion list before posting messages on the system or responding to e-mails. Here is the latest version of the Netiquette Guidelines.

1. Respectful and courteous exchanges to be undertaken.
2. Not to be used for advertising purposes, which includes the promotion of training courses and workshops.
3. Not to be used for self promotion or the promotion of goods and services.
4. Copyright material is not to be shared over the e-mail discussion list without permission of the publisher.
5. E-mail addresses should be provided if direct contact is invited on any topic, which includes requests by members for services such as supervision.
6. Don't use for personal messages – e-mail the person at their own e-mail address.
7. E-mail list messages should include the person's full name, i.e. not anonymous messages.
8. If responding to another member's e-mail, delete previous e-mails to avoid strings of messages overloading the system.
9. The subject heading line of e-mails should represent the topic and content of the message.
10. The content of messages should stay within the topic or a new thread should be started.
11. It is useful to provide some context in reply to a message to assist new readers with interpreting a response.
12. Information deemed as private should not be provided. The privacy rights of others must also be respected. This includes both organisational and individual clients.
13. Case studies should have the client's permission and protect their anonymity (i.e. identities should be disguised).
14. Members are considered to be representing their own views and the views of others should not be represented.
15. If an employer or organisation supplies an e-mail service then conditions of use for private e-mail should be determined.
16. No placing of unlawful information, use of abusive or objectionable language or sending of 'chain letters' and 'broadcast' messages.
17. Sentences or words should not be typed in upper case.
18. The use of sarcasm and humour should be carefully considered in relation to how it will be interpreted by the reader.
19. Delivery receipts should not be used.
20. The original subscription message should be saved as this contains information on how to unsubscribe from the list.
21. All members should observe the BPS Code of Conduct, which is applicable to the SGCP E-mail Discussion List.

We continue to welcome your input and feedback. However, to ensure that the system is not overloaded please contact me directly at siobhain.oriordan@iclway.co.uk with your comments.

Siobhain O'Riordan

Co-administrator of the E-mail Discussion List

Frequently asked questions

Siobhain O'Riordan and Alanna O'Broin

What is Coaching Psychology?

A working definition:

'Coaching Psychology is for enhancing well-being and performance in personal life and work domains, underpinned by models of coaching grounded in established adult learning or psychological approaches.' (adapted from Grant & Palmer, 2002).

How can SGCP members communicate by e-mail?

There are now two e-mail services available to SGCP members.

1. The new E-mail Announcement List provides an information-service keeping you up to date with SGCP and other coaching psychology-relevant events, sending you information and documents of interest to SGCP members.
2. The existing E-mail Discussion Forum provides both the information-service of the E-mail Announcement List and the facility for you to participate in and receive e-mails from other SGCP members, in real-time discussions on coaching psychology issues.

It is suggested that you join either the E-mail Announcement List or the E-mail Discussion List.

E-MAIL ANNOUNCEMENT LIST

1. How do I join the new SGCP E-mail Announcement list?

Once you are a member of SGCP, you can join our e-mail Announcement list and receive information about the Special Group, events and Coaching Psychology-specific issues. To join, see the SGCP website Join page (www.coachingpsychologyforum.org.uk) and submit your details via the online subscription form.

2. Can I post a message on the SGCP E-mail Announcement List?

The list is a one-way information communication medium to inform you about the Special Group and Coaching Psychology-related issues. If you wish to post messages, you may find it more appropriate to join the SGCP E-mail Discussion Forum.

E-MAIL DISCUSSION FORUM

1. How do I join the SGCP E-mail Discussion Forum?

Once you are a member of SGCP, you can also join our e-mail discussion forum and be part of an online community of coaching psychologists. To join, see the SGCP website Join page, on www.coachingpsychologyforum.org.uk and submit your details via the online subscription form.

2. How do I post a message on SGCP E-mail Discussion Forum?

To post a message on a new discussion topic this is most easily achieved by posting messages on the web interface. The list address is <http://lists.bps.org.uk/read/?forum=sgcp-discuss>

3. How do I view attachments on the system?

You can view attachments by visiting the SGCP discussion forum. The address list is <http://lists.bps.org.uk/read/?forum=sgcp-discuss>. If you click on the message you wish to view you will then find at the bottom right hand side of the message a blue link, which will take you to an attachment.

4. Why am I having problems viewing attachments in Digest Mode?

The introductory e-mail from the Lyris List Manager provides the following message 'Please note, some e-mail systems do not render attachments correctly in Digest Mode, if this is the case try setting your account to MimeDigest mode', which may explain the problem. To change

your settings log onto the Lists Web Interface and click on the 'My Account' button'.

The attachment you wish to view should appear correctly on the web interface. The list address is <http://lists.bps.org.uk/read/?forum=sgcp-discuss>

5. How do I reply to the sender directly on the forum?

It is possible to reply to the sender of the e-mail by visiting the web interface of the discussion list (the list address is <http://lists.bps.org.uk/read/?forum=sgcp-discuss>). On the web interface, click on the name of the author of the message and you will then go to a page that shows a box that allows you to e-mail the author directly. You will find your password and logon information in the introductory e-mail sent by the Lyriss Manager.

6. If I unsubscribe from the discussion forum how can I remain up to date with SGCP activities?

As a member of the SGCP who is not subscribed to the e-mail discussion list you will still be able to view details of forthcoming events and SGCP activities by visiting the SGCP website. We also send out literature about important information.

7. How do I adjust my settings?

The introductory e-mail sent to you by Lyriss List Manager includes instructions on how to adjust your settings. You can select MIME format, which will provide you with a summary of the e-mails posted on the forum each day (includes non textual information), digest mode (one daily e-mail with all messages posted for that day), or index (one daily e-mail with all the subject lines messages posted for that day). You can also post messages directly onto the system by visiting the list address and log on with your e-mail address and password <http://lists.bps.org.uk/read/?forum=sgcp-discuss>

Joining

1. Can I join the SGCP if I am not a BPS member?

To join the SGCP, you need to be a member of the British Psychological Society (BPS), as either a Graduate Member, a Student Subscriber, an Affiliate or Foreign Affiliate (see BPS website for eligibility details and downloadable application form). Once you are a BPS member, you can then apply for membership of SGCP. Alternatively, you can go to SGCP website on www.coachingpsychology-forum.org.uk Join page and join both the SGCP and then the SGCP e-mail discussion forum.

Please note that Membership of SGCP does not automatically confer SGCP e-mail forum membership. Once you are a member of SGCP you need to additionally join the e-mail forum.

2. How do I join the SGCP?

To join the SGCP you can download an application form from the BPS website on www.bps.org.uk (follow the path to the SGCP website by clicking on The Society, Network for Members, Special Groups and then SGCP), or contact BPS subsystems department on subsystems@bps.org.uk or phone 0116 254 9568.

Membership

There are two classes of membership of the SGCP.

Full Members: This class of membership is open to all members of the BPS who possess the Graduate Basis for Registration.

Affiliate Members: This class of membership is open to all contributors to the BPS (Foreign Affiliates, Student Subscribers and Affiliates).

Founder Membership of SGCP was available until 31st March 2005. Any new members of SGCP joining after this date will be Full or Affiliate members.

Should I be having Supervision?

If you are in coaching or coaching psychology training and have coaching clients, it is important that you obtain regular supervision. We would recommend that this is obtained from Chartered Psychologists who have relevant experience and training.

Experienced coaching psychologists may still benefit from regular supervision of their coaching work.

Training

Please note that the newly founded Special Group in Coaching Psychology does not recognise any specific training courses and cannot at this time make recommendations regarding individual training requirements.

However, in the UK, there are a wide range of courses, mostly involved with coaching and a few with coaching psychology. It is our understanding that some DPsych courses are BPS approved and permit research into a number of areas including coaching psychology.

If you are considering enrolling on a course, we suggest the questions you might ask are:

Is the course university accredited?

Are Chartered Psychologists actively involved in running and teaching on the course?

Over the coming months as the SGCP Committee focuses on these issues, these guidelines, as well as those regarding who can call themselves coaching psychologists may change. Our website will keep you updated on the details.

References

- Grant, A.M. & Palmer, S. (2002). Coaching Psychology. Meeting held at the Annual Conference of the Division of Counselling Psychology, British Psychological Society, Torquay, 18 May.

Website

For more information about the Special Group in Coaching Psychology and its activities, see our website on www.coachingpsychologyforum.org.uk.

Also see the BPS home page on www.bps.org.uk and click on Special Groups, or e-mail the BPS Subsystems Department (subsystems@bps.org.uk).

Who can call themselves coaching psychologists?

This guidance is specifically for SGCP members. The term coaching psychologist is not a restricted or specialist title and at the present time there is no intention for this title to be subject to statutory regulation. As such, the use of this descriptive term is left to the discretion of individual members.

In deciding whether to use this title or lay claim to specialist expertise in Coaching Psychology it is, therefore, important to bear in mind the general guidelines on competence as set out in the BPS Charter, Statutes and Code of Conduct.

In particular we would like to draw your attention to the following:

<http://www.bps.org.uk/the-society/ethics-rules-charter-code-of-conduct/code-of-conduct/descriptions.cfm>

As well as a psychology degree recognised by the BPS to confer Graduate Basis for Registration, relevant training and supervised experience, a coaching psychologist will be expected to have knowledge and relevant competencies that relate to our current definition of coaching psychology.

What is on the Events programme for 2005?

Details of our Events programme for 2005 can be found on the SGCP website on www.coachingpsychologyforum.org.uk/News and the SGCP e-mail discussion forum will also be publicising forthcoming events. Bookings queries can be answered by the BPS Subsystems Department by e-mail (gwear@bps.org.uk) or by telephone (0116 252 9517).

Events planned for 2005 are as follows:

Half-day Workshop Programme London

7th July 2005

Diagnostics in Coaching – A Leadership and Performance Audit.

Facilitated by Shauna McVeigh, C.Psychol.

7th September 2005

Coaching for Strengths: Embracing a Positive Coaching Psychology Agenda.

Facilitated by Dr Alex Linley, C.Psychol.

20th October 2005

Stress Management in Coaching Psychology (workshop title and further details pending).

Co-facilitated by Peter Kelly, Occupational Health Psychologist.

2nd November 2005

Coaching Supervision – Luxury or necessity.

Facilitated by Dr Michael Carroll, C.Psychol.

Half-day Workshop Programme, Leicester

6th September 2005

Getting emotional about goal setting.

Experiential workshop

Facilitated by Bruce Grimley, C. Psychol

14th October 2005

Personal Construct Psychology as a resource for coaching psychologists.

Facilitated by Kieran Duignan, C.Psychol.

National Conference – London

19th & 20th December 2005

With workshops

Note: the Conference schedule will be out soon on the SGCP website.

Fees or subscription for membership of SGCP.

No fee or subscription will be charged for the Special Group's inaugural year (2004/2005).

Draft Strategic Plan for 2005–2006

Strategic aims

- A. To promote the development of coaching psychology.
 - B. To encourage the research and study of coaching psychology in a variety of personal, organisational and training contexts.
 - C. To promote the application of appropriate ethical standards and guidelines for the practice of coaching psychology.
 - D. To encourage the development of coaching psychology by facilitating workshops, symposia, conferences and publications.
 - E. To develop public awareness of the nature, aims and practical applications of coaching psychology.
 - F. To work closely with Sections, Special Group and Divisions of the Society in pursuit of these aims and to collaborate appropriately with external agencies and organisations.
 - G. To promote the interests of the members of the Special Group in their activities in coaching psychology
 - H. To carry on all such activities as may be conducive to the foregoing aims.
6. To provide workshops and supervisor training courses as CPD activities.
 7. To set up two publications: an in-house newsletter to communicate with our membership and provide up-to-date information on SGCP news and events; and an international publication, in collaboration with the Australian Psychological Society Interest Group in Coaching Psychology, for the publication of high-quality theoretical research and practice articles on coaching psychology areas of interest.
 8. To develop a SGCP website, available to the general public and to SGCP members.
 9. To build communications with, and develop a transparent policy for, our relationship with external coaching, government and other salient professional bodies, including CIPD, Association for Coaching, APECS, EMCC and ENTO.
 10. To develop high and consistent coaching psychology competencies.
 11. To promote discussion and debate in the development of coaching psychology through the use of SGCP internet e-mail discussion groups.
 12. To promote the representation of coaching psychology within the BPS, in the first instance by contributing to the BPS quinquennial conference in 2005.
 13. To develop a regional representative network to promote and develop coaching psychology within the relevant geographical area

ACTIONS

1. To revise/update the Rules of the Special Group as appropriate.
2. To facilitate the creation of Faculties/Special Interest Groups within the Special Group.
3. To appoint an Officer/Committee responsible for Ethical standards to develop guidelines on appropriate ethical standards for the practice of coaching psychology.
4. To set up an Events function to organise coaching psychology workshops and seminars. Appoint SGCP Committee Members as Events Co-ordinator and National Conference Organiser.
5. To plan for an International Coaching Psychology Conference for 2006.

Progress towards our strategic aims will be detailed in the annual report.

SGCP Committee structure



SGCP Workshop report

Jennifer Liston-Smith

Getting Emotional about Goal Setting

Presented by Bruce Grimley, Chartered Occupational Psychologist and Director of Achieving Lives Ltd

Aim

To examine the coaching issue of goal setting and why it is essential to engage our 'emotional brain' when we set our goals.

Bruce began the workshop by envisaging the main outcome would be 'a sense of personal responsibility' and the hope, ultimately, for 'the ability to control your emotional response in any situation, so as to provide the appropriate framework for cognition, speech and behaviour which will take you toward your goals'.

Theoretical roots

Bruce defined emotion as: 'an unconscious visceral message mediated via our limbic system: painful messages passing via the thalamus-amygdala route, pleasant ones via the thalamus-nucleus accumbens route'. This message is 'a response to the equally unconscious patterning that helps create our maps through which we experience our lives.' Presumably this definition is most apt for instances of what Daniel Goleman called an 'amygdala hijacking' where neural messages bypass the cortical areas en route to and from the amygdala (Goleman, 1995).

Bruce Grimley then drew attention to the work of neuroscientist Benjamin Libet and others originating in the 1950s (Libet, 1990). This indicates that our sense organs detecting something in the world produce a spike of neuronal activity in the cortex, of which we are not 'consciously' aware. A half second later, if the stimulus was big or important enough to keep the relevant cortical neurons active, the stimulus reaches so-called neuronal adequacy and the conscious

mind becomes aware of it, cleverly also registering that it occurred at the time of the initial spike (half a second earlier). So, although we may eventually become conscious of the sensory stimulus we cannot use what we might term our conscious will to respond to it in anything less than half a second. This appears to leave our unconscious minds responsible for initiating any rapid reactions to the world.

Drawing together these ideas about the literally unconscious nature of our emotional responses to our own maps of the world, Bruce proposed we consider the value of the APET model of Joe Griffin and Ivan Tyrrell (2003). Griffin and Tyrrell compare APET with the more established rational-emotive-behavioural (REBT) model of Albert Ellis (e.g. Ellis, 1998). In Ellis' ABC model an Activating event triggers a Belief in the person which leads to Consequences, usually in the shape of an undesirable emotion, behaviour or thoughts. The therapeutic solution is: dispute and modify the Belief, and you change the outcome. Griffin and Tyrrell claim this model does not take account of the findings of neuro-physiology showing humans process data much more quickly emotionally than cognitively. It is posited that the unproductive emotional states are not so much the product of irrational thinking as their cause. Their preferred sequence is: Activating agent, Pattern matching, Emotional Arousal, Thinking process (distortion leading to inappropriate behaviour).

This served Bruce as a spur to suggest we attempt to modify our emotional stance to our goals at an unconscious level, drawing on techniques from Neuro-Linguistic Programming (e.g. Bandler & Grinder, 1982)

Practical applications in our coaching work

Our clients can define all the SMART (or SMARTER) goals they like and still not move toward them unless they have the desire to do so. Bruce suggests that ‘people develop behavioural flexibility in an organisational context as the rewards are high, and we take on appropriate cognitions to back up the behaviours so as not to seem “fake”; however we don’t usually go the extra emotional mile.’ It is proposed in this workshop that we might apply techniques which directly address the emotions, taking account of research in neuropsychology indicating the speed of emotional processing relative to more ‘conscious’ thought.

Experiential Elements of the Workshop: an example

To drive personal responsibility into our viscera and emotions, not simply our heads:

Process

- a) Think of a goal
- b) Think of something that’s MINE: I’d never give it away (e.g. toothbrush, home, partner!)
- c) Mime the posture that goes with MINE and register it
- d) Position the goal spatially in front of you in your imagination: look at it and consider each and every emotion it arouses for you. Imagine squashing those emotions together (in a visual/kinaesthetic sense) into the experience of MINE. Do the same with the thoughts it arouses: those thoughts are MINE. Recognise that your behaviour in relation to the goal is all MINE too.
- e) Whenever you consider the goal, remember your private powers of thought and emotion, your public powers of behaviour and speech and remember that you are the author of your own destiny.

One practical tool or idea you could take forward

To identify the goal, build emotion and take the first step

Process

- a) Name one goal for this year and rate your sense of it on scale of 1–10.
- b) Saturate the Goal: build the detail. Position the goal in one (or more) of the following eight dimensions (Grimley, in print).

Eight Dimensions:

1. Relationship with self
 2. Relationship with intimate others
 3. Relationship with work colleagues
 4. General interpersonal skills
 5. Money
 6. Career
 7. Health
 8. Relaxation, chilling out and enjoyment.
- c) Vitalise the Goal: imagine yourself achieving it and assess how it will benefit you along the chosen dimension(s).
 - d) Associate into the person of the future who has achieved that goal. Describe, using your five senses, what is going on when it’s a 10/10 success, who else is there, what type of interaction you are having, what behaviour is present, what activity will be taken forward, what are your beliefs about yourself now you’ve achieved it?
 - e) Look back at yourself now: what is the one critical piece of behaviour that person in the chair needs to do right now to facilitate better achievement of the goal?
 - f) Dissociate if necessary a third time into coach position and mediate between future, successful you and you in the chair to help communicate that.
 - g) Reassess the strength and clarity of your goal against your original measure.

Whatever our position on the theoretical basis of this workshop might have been, my working partner and I both found this and similar exercises enabled us to make notable shifts in relation to our respective goals.

Where next?

The workshop handout began: ‘Bruce is aware NLP in the psychology world is

regarded as Californian hype, generated in expressive days of the 1970s without a strong theoretical base or empirical evidence to back it up ... Bruce is hoping he can convince you that NLP is a useful constructivist/behaviourist framework within which to work for any psychologist interested in creating change through coaching.' Discuss!

It might also be worth questioning the theoretical supremacy of the APET model over the ABC on the basis that the 'thoughts'

and 'core beliefs' unearthed by the Socratic questioning of REBT may be more like Griffin and Tyrrell's unconscious patterns than they are like higher cognitions. This could offer a topic for debate on the SGCP Forum.

SGCP events will be reported regularly adopting a similar format, enabling readers to pick up on some of the essential elements conveyed. Feedback would be welcome to: SGCPevents@pip.co.uk

References

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- Benjamin, L. (1990) Time delays in conscious processes. *Behavioural and Brain Sciences*, 13.
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Conference Diary

Starting with the next issue, I will be compiling a diary of conferences of interest to Coaching Psychologists. I plan to list events that bring together a range of expert opinion and knowledge on a particular topic, rather than training seminars hosted by a single tutor or company.

Please help to make this a useful listing: send details of all appropriate conferences, well in advance, to me:

BY POST: People in Progress Ltd, 5 Rochester Mansions, Hove, East Sussex BN3 2HA
 BY FAX: +44 (0)8707 050 895
 BY E-MAIL: SGCPevents@pip.co.uk

I look forward to hearing from you.

Jennifer Liston-Smith

SGCP Conference & Events Correspondent

Statutory Regulation – SGCP response to the Public Consultation Document

To Emeritus Professor Ken Brown, CPsychol, FBPsS,
President, British Psychological Society, 29 April 2005

We are responding to your letter of 10 March 2005 seeking a single response from each of the subsystems that directly addresses the questions asked in the Department of Health public consultation document *Applied Psychology. Enhancing public protection: Proposals for the statutory regulation of applied psychologists*. We also note that you have requested that any other points or issues raised should be included as an appendix, which we have done (see Appendix 1).

Introduction

As a new subsystem within the BPS, the SGCP welcomes this opportunity to contribute to the consultation on the regulation of the profession of applied psychology. With a large cross-subsystem membership, we are concerned both about protection of the public regarding those psychologists who practise as coaching psychologists and of regulation of all applied psychologists.

We are disappointed that the timetable of the consultation process has not given us sufficient time to consult with our membership in depth about this important issue.

We wish to confirm that we are supportive of the principle of statutory regulation of applied psychologists. However, we also harbour serious concerns about a number of the HPC proposals.

Q1: Do you agree that applied psychologists currently registered with the BPS should transfer to the HPC register if they wish to continue to practise?

We are particularly concerned by the fundamental premise in the HPC proposal that it should assume both public protection and professional requirements roles in the applied psychology profession. Instead, we believe that the BPS should be allowed to

remain responsible for setting and maintaining standards for its own profession (i.e. professional requirements), whilst a separate body becomes responsible for regulation (i.e. public protection). Our difficulty with this basic premise of the HPC proposals overshadows our response to more specific difficulties with the proposals.

With the HPC proposals as stated, it is difficult to envisage where the boundaries will in practice lie between the BPS, which will continue to recognise chartered psychologists and accredit courses, and the HPC. We are concerned that the value of BPS membership will be eroded over time, as people will not need to remain BPS members.

Given these serious concerns about the premise upon which the proposal for HPC Statutory Registration in its current form is based, the SGCP cannot agree that applied psychologists currently registered with the BPS should transfer to the HPC register if they wish to practise. If the concerns noted in our response were resolved, the SGCP would support the HPC proposal.

Q2: Do you agree that the titles protected in law should be: clinical psychologist; counselling psychologist; educational psychologist; forensic psychologist; health psychologist; occupational psychologist; and sport and exercise psychologist?

We believe that protection of the title of 'psychologist' would more effectively protect the public, as the HPC is aiming to do, than protection of the seven adjectival titles. We are concerned that there is a real risk of misuse of the title 'psychologist' if it remains unprotected. Other professions, such as counselors and psychotherapists, intend to keep these titles, rather than specialist ones, and other countries, such as Australia, New

Zealand and the US, protect the title 'psychologist'. We also think that members of the public will become confused if psychology does not take the same straightforward approach and protect the title 'psychologist'.

If the key issue is public protection from misuse or malpractice of psychology then academics and teachers of psychology who are not applied psychologists in the sense that they are not delivering psychological services to the public, should not suffer from not being able to use this title.

HR professionals and others who use undergraduate psychology training to support other professional domains would, similarly, not be affected. This is for us a key difference between a coaching psychologist and a coach, with the latter being interested in applying psychological ideas and models in their coaching practice. If the proposed regulatory framework goes ahead then in the interest of public protection, we feel that it would be necessary to lobby for the title 'coaching psychologist' to be regulated as well.

Q3: Do you agree with the proposals for the standards of proficiency for applied psychology?

Our concern with the premise of HPC assuming both public protection and professional requirement rules impacts upon our response to this question. Setting standards of proficiency is a professional requirements function that we believe should remain with the BPS. We therefore cannot agree with this proposal for this reason.

More specifically, with representation of only a single registrant applied psychologist member on the Health Professions Council, we find it impossible to see how the HPC will be able to achieve standards of proficiency for seven different psychology professions effectively, given that the BPS's current post-graduate accrediting board (MPTB) operates with a large Board, as well as examining and training committees to achieve this. This task is made even more difficult by two factors – the fact that the seven different

applied psychology professions are disparate and not all directly connected with health, and that other professions regulated by HPC are rarely trained to the Doctoral level.

If HPC standards became the criteria for training courses, we have concerns as to how the HPC would guarantee profession-specific standards within psychology. If BPS approval is sought for verification of standards, where would chartering fit with regard to the HPC standards, and would some universities seek standards that require HPC registration, rather than those of the BPS. This could create a dual-standard system.

Q4: Do you agree to these grand-parenting agreements?

As a matter of professional requirements, we consider that this function should remain with the BPS. We therefore do not agree that the HPC should set the standards for grand-parenting.

Q5: Do you agree with these proposals for the transfer of responsibility for fitness to practise cases?

As a regulatory function, we agree that fitness to practise should be a role assumed by a separate organisation from that concerned with professional practice. However, because the HPC proposal intends transferral of both standards of proficiency (professional practice function) and fitness to practise, we cannot support this HPC proposal for the transfer of responsibility for fitness to practise.

Q6: Do you agree that the branches of applied psychologists should adopt the HPC Code of Conduct, Performance and Ethics?

The BPS states in the consultation document that it sees no conflict between its Code of Conduct and the HPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics. We would support the adoption of the HPC Code if their differences, such as the BPS Code's greater focus on applied psychology and the more generic nature of the HPC Code,

could be reconciled, and if ongoing consultation with BPS is maintained in the Code's future composition.

Q7: Do you agree with the proposed legislative changes, including the opening of a new part of the HPC register for applied psychologists and the resultant increase in membership of the HPC?

We cannot support the proposal in its current form to open a new part of the HPC register for applied psychologists, unless the register was opened to register the title of psychologist alone.

Q8: Do you agree with the provisions of the draft Order?

On the understanding that the seven adjectival titles remain, we do not agree with the provisions of the Draft Order.

Conclusions

Although we are very keen on protection of the title 'psychologist', as we see it as important in protection of the public, we do not believe that protection of the adjectival titles serves any purpose other than to confuse members of the public. We believe that the public will believe that the term 'psychologist' has become protected, when in fact it has not.

We reiterate our support for the concept of Statutory Regulation; however, our preference would be to retain the existing self-regulatory, voluntary arrangements in place for the profession of applied psychology rather than accept the HPC proposals in their current form.

Professor Stephen Palmer

Chair, Special Group in Coaching Psychology

Appendix 1

Issues raised by the Special Group in Coaching Psychology relating to the proposed Statutory Regulation of Applied Psychologists.

1. Additional rule changes on CPD

We do not agree that the HPC is the appropriate organisation to set the standards of CPD for applied psychologists, as we believe this is a function of professional requirements which should be undertaken by the body setting such standards, the BPS.

More specifically, the DOH *Applied Psychology: Enhancing public protection: Proposals for the statutory regulation of applied psychologists* document states only that 'The BPS system will need to merge with the HPC's system in due course.' As the CPD area is currently subject to a broader consultation by the HPC on standard-setting for CPD across the professions it regulates, we would require further information on how this would translate into the specific profession of psychology, particularly with regard to the assessment process, and standards required, before we could consider whether we agree with these rule changes.

2. Clarification sought on registration fees for psychologists registered with the BPS under more than one adjectival title

The DOH document states in point 108 regarding the transfer of names from the BPS to the HPC register, that this arrangement will include financial arrangements to ensure that registrants who transfer from BPS to the HPC are not required to pay registration fees in respect of professional regulation twice for the same registration period. We would additionally welcome confirmation regarding payment of registration fees for those psychologists who are currently registered with the BPS under more than one of the seven adjectival titles concurrently and would expect that registration fees would be payable once, or on the first registration only.

3. SGCP close to the HPC criteria for admission

Annex B of the DOH *Applied Psychology: Enhancing public protection: Proposals for the statutory regulation of applied psychologists* document outlines 10 criteria which any group applying to it for consideration for statutory regulation should have in place or otherwise meet.

An additional issue arising from our review of the consultation document is that we would welcome further details of the HPC criteria for admission as applied psychologists, as we are pleased to note that the Special Group in Coaching Psychology appears to be close to meeting these criteria for HPC registration status.

To Dr Graham Powell,

President of the British Psychological Society, 2 June 2005

Statutory Regulation – Further comments on Draft Response to the Department of Health Consultation Document

We are providing further comments on the draft response to the Department of Health Document, as requested in your letter posted to the BPS website on 27 May 2005.

Introduction

We have read the draft response and would first thank the Working Party for their achievement in drawing together the various inputs from within the BPS into a tangible, representative document for presentation to the Department of Health.

Rather than comment specifically on each individual point raised, we would confirm that SGCP are in full agreement with the overall position of the BPS draft response regarding commitment to the principle of statutory regulation, concerns about the means of proposed regulation by the HPC, as well as concerns about the proposed use of adjectival titles rather than protection of the title 'psychologist'.

We also welcome the consideration of different models, other than the HPC, for regulation. The Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence, for example, may well offer an alternative means for achieving regulation that can accommodate the diversity and complexity of practice of applied psychologists. Indeed, Sandy Forrest, in his Director's Report in the CHRE's Annual Report 2003–4 comments that 'regulation is too complex an activity to impose a one-size-fits-all approach'. Further discussion regarding this possibility of a super-ordinate regulator would seem appropriate

Conclusion

As concluded in the draft response, we agree that serious concerns about the proposal of statutory regulation by HPC require further discussions with the DH about how statutory regulation is implemented, in a way that encompasses the breadth of applied psychology.

Professor Stephen Palmer

Chair, Special Group in Coaching Psychology

VACANCY

*Co-Chair of Sub-Committee for Professional Training,
Development and Events Management
Special Group in Coaching Psychology*

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and include a recent CV/biographyP.



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Notes for Contributors

The Coaching Psychologist

Contributions on all aspects of research, theory, practice and case studies in the arena of coaching psychology are welcome. Manuscripts of approximately 1500 words excluding references, which may be extended with the permission of the Editor, should be typewritten and include the author's name, address and contact details. Included should be a statement stipulating that the paper is not under consideration elsewhere. All submissions, including book reviews should be sent directly to the Editor, Kasia.s@tinyonline.co.uk or to The Centre for Coaching, 156 Westcombe Hill, London SE3 7DH.

- Authors of all submissions should follow the Society's guidelines for the use of non-sexist language and all references must be presented in APA style (see the *Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines*, and the *Style Guide*, both available from the British Psychological Society).
- Graphs, diagrams, etc., should be in camera-ready form and must have titles. Written permission should be obtained by the author for the reproduction of tables, diagrams, etc., taken from other sources.
- Three hard copies of papers subject to refereeing should be supplied, together with a large s.a.e. and a copy of the submission on disk or CD-ROM (if possible save the document both in its original word-processing format and as an ASCII file, with diagrams in their original format and as a TIFF or an EPS). Two hard copies of other submissions should be supplied. Subject to prior agreement with the Editor, however, items may be submitted as e-mail attachments.
- Proofs of papers will be sent to authors for correction of typesetting errors, and will need to be returned promptly.

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