



REFLECTIONS ON COACHING

AN ANTHOLOGY

*A Tribute to the Coaching Profession
by Master Coaches
On Coacharya's 10th Anniversary*

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Generative Wholeness

“The human race is in the midst of making an evolutionary leap. Whether or not we succeed in that leap is your personal responsibility.”

– SCOTT PECK

When was the last time you visibly and boldly challenged the status quo? If you are like most people, it is a tricky question to answer. Leaders and their teams I have engaged with over the past three decades start by sharing their historical experiences, knowledge, and ability strengths. In other words, their professional status quo defined their identity and what they perceived was valuable and essential for the team. While experience is always useful to performance, more is needed when facing accelerated and complex change. What always emerged that everyone found useful and effective arose from something other than the certainty of their history. Success emerged from tapping into underutilised, innate creativity that permitted the inner aspects of each team member to interact and influence the dialogue in fresh, emergent ways. These words begin to describe being generative. That way of engaging allows wholeness to arise individually and then collectively. Being generative together is the formula for making the whole bigger than the sum of the parts.

Uncertainty about what is on the other side of our familiar and comfortable daily lives stops most of us from challenging the status quo. Knowing, knowledge, expertise, and evidence-based approaches are a protective shield that maintains normalcy until it does not. Metaphorically, the rubber band we use to bind our known lives together loses its elasticity. Overstretched, the rubber band becomes brittle and then fragile. When that rubber band breaks, we

experience plenty of contagious stressors. Those stressors are the seeds for scepticism, doubt, blame, shame, and some conspiracy theories to project responsibility onto something or someone else. Circumstances and the environment that construct fuel fear that provokes attachment to an idea of normal that does not include those uncomfortable situations. Yet even these contagious and seemingly negative consequences are part of our wholeness, individually and collectively, in our family, workplace, and community.

The purpose of this chapter is to challenge what we recognise as our status quo so we can catch up with the forever-changed reality of professional life today. Our new virtual workplace creates a timeless workday rhythm. We operate in a zero geography and technology-enabled, multiple-team matrix. All these factors require management and leadership capability that enthusiastically shares responsibility for outcomes and places a premium on teaming our way through continuous change. Artificial intelligence and augmented reality disrupt workplace relationships and dynamics even further. We already see heightened importance and value for human relating capacities. As work becomes more focused on originating new ideas and experimenting quickly, we perceive the requirement to learn throughout the creative process. A fundamental change in focus from transactional activity that produces products and services occurs because automation produces far more effective and consistent quality.

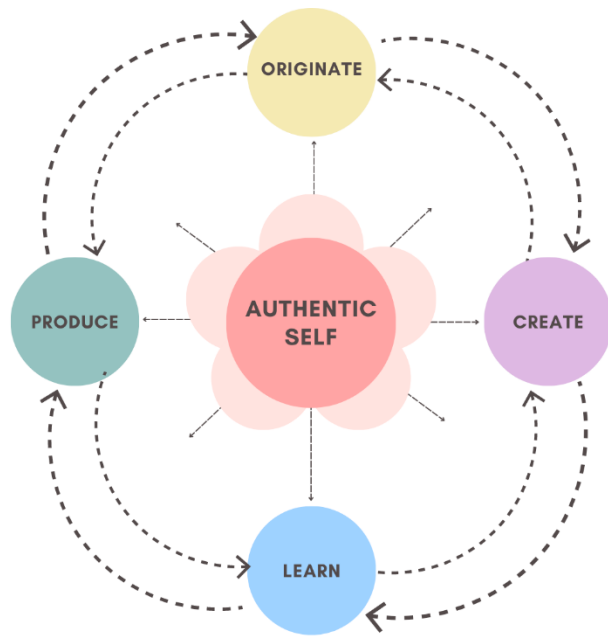
I feel the deepest gratitude for the coaching profession when a client allows the vulnerability of not knowing. Read these pages as if you are a client talking with a coach. Notice the pain from tolerating the mirage of a life built on the idea of security. Become aware of an inner tension building where we no longer accept the way of living that places safety and security above our innately creative life force. Even the most prideful C-Suite executive or a delighted and successful parent, or college graduate, or, truthfully, any human being, awakens to the hollowness of achievements that, all too often, are void of enlivening relationships.

We must each learn to see beyond our comfortable preferences and biases as the only way we learn, grow, and transform. Learning to notice is a living paradox between your nature and what you nurture, between what is intrinsic and extrinsic in your self-awareness. Extrinsic growth builds capacity that empowers a new relationship with your circumstances. Intrinsic growth begins when we expand awareness of the traits that make up our authentic selves. These unique traits form your nature. We nurture our essence to expand as our capacity to meet life

grows. Science has produced neurobiological evidence for long-held spiritual principles that connection with others and feeling belonging is essential for living. Connection and belonging that arise from our authentic self are linked to our experience of meaning and shape our mindset, shaping our lived experience, breath by breath, in every context.

When I refer to the term mindset, this includes our frame of reference, attitude, thoughts, beliefs, values, habits, and routine actions. All these elements influence, usually unconsciously, how we show up in the world, our approach to making decisions, and our interactions with others. That mindset often operates unconsciously or subconsciously in the form of habit and routine. The body prefers habits and routines for energy conservation. We are often slow to recognise much has changed around us, and we have forgotten that there is so much more to us than our circumstances. That means being whole goes unrecognised. It does not negate that wholeness is the state of all human beings. Iteration of our conscious awareness through deliberate noticing and choosing becomes the path to growing into all of yourself, accessing an integrated self, and operating from wholeness.

Being generative operates as a double helix. One strand builds and empowers four capacities: to originate new thinking, create something tangible from that imagination, experiment to learn what is most valuable, and ultimately, how to produce outcomes for self and others that contribute to success, well-being, and a thriving life. The second strand radiates from the inside out, honouring the unique soul of each person. As we claim and embody the authentic self, others experience this and feel permission to do the same. We cannot see in another what we have not claimed within ourselves. Maximising potential in life requires every person to remember, claim, and embody their essence. By being generative, we collectively produce the conditions by which each person enthusiastically accepts responsibility to live in wholeness



GENERATIVE WHOLENESS

Adopting the dynamic capacities to originate, create, learn, and produce results, so we **live** sovereign, the freedom to express personally and professionally from our authentic self.

So many myths and stories express this journey from knowing to not knowing, from proving to accepting, and from apathy to inspiration because it is the human development journey. It is an archetypal path that does not discriminate based on gender, culture, economic status, or any other criteria you identify. Instead, the experience is inclusive in the same way that individual wholeness embraces all the inner selves unconditionally. The term "dynamic" is key to inviting change rather than being at the effect of change, passive and sometimes feeling powerless. When we exercise our generative capacities to be sovereign, we become free to express and choose personally and professionally from our authentic selves. That way of choosing is wholeness. We believe, trust, and honour our truth that we can adapt and adjust our practices of personal sovereignty at any moment. As human beings, we have an innate capacity to originate and to create. When we originate, we use our imagination, which naturally activates creativity to bring an idea into form.

Perhaps you are asking, *"Living through my wholeness is so obviously a good choice; why is it so darn hard to do it?"* A short answer is fear. The fear that stops us is an illusion yet so very palpable, present, and real in our minds, bodies, and hearts. Advertisers and the media know all too well how to engage us and sustain our attention on fear in various forms. Leading well means seeing the whole of each person and the interconnections among people. When we perceive and relate with each person as equally resourceful, capable, and creative, we see more

than the situation. We see the impossible as possible well beyond our desire to fulfil what is needed. We want to discover and then use our unique genius. To do so, we must remove the layers of belief and learning that imbue our life reactions motivated by security from what scares us.

Awareness practices open the door to rooms in ourselves we may never have visited and now have the power of choice to consider entering. As we examine what is possible by tapping into more of who we are, a sense of unity emerges. Longing for a more genuine and more in-depth experience of engaging with life is familiar to every level of human development. However, the pathway to wholeness is internal and requires attention to learning about our essence. Essence is a synonym for the core or true self, stripped of the convenience of personality.

When we focus our attention externally on becoming someone the world expects or wants, we eventually feel disappointed. We notice a void and realise our choices do not generate the harmony and unity we imagine. For many people, this occurs as internal noticing only, invisible from day-to-day living. A coaching partnership offers a safe environment and process to reveal the hidden in an honourable and respectful way. Our dialogue with a coach opens a path to transforming our relationship with life. Our next choice is to surrender our practised identity and invite our innate capacity for change. Accept ourselves, and every other person, as already whole anytime, anywhere with anyone, no matter the circumstances.

Making life choices that liberate our essential self produces many benefits: effortless vitality, freedom to express our authenticity, ease in learning, and access to a sense of wonder about life. These are all qualities of generative living and the path to leading well. A favourite colleague shared a question that made me laugh out loud, "*Are you watering the weeds?*" Most of us focus on what's not working, what's causing suffering, and what is not yet part of our life. While it is undoubtedly valuable for us to define problems entirely and with specificity, we do this to ensure a robust solution emerges that addresses the root causes of the pain. We benefit by reframing issues away from characteristics as symptoms toward a statement of what is factually occurring beyond our assumptions, biases, and preferences.

When we look in the rear-view mirror, it's easy to see that optimising stability and becoming knowledge experts are two high-value leadership outcomes. However, today's business environment produces continuous disruption that makes knowledge extinct at a pace

and scale never experienced. So here are three activities leaders, teams, and their coaches may explore over time to strengthen wholeness and our agency to lead well, do good and drive change:

- 1. Face your patterns of being and relating with a beginner's mind; the generative capacity to learn about you:** become aware of your patterns of interaction. Choose a body-based grounding method that supports listening deeply within, e.g., hiking in nature, singing in a choir, or kayaking on a lake. Reflect on your daily journey by asking yourself about habits, preferences, assumptions, and biases that may be the source of disruption for you. Journal your insights, without censorship, for the wonder of learning about and knowing you. Question the source of your patterns. Receive reflections from trusted peers about their experience of you and consider what calls you to engage through those patterns. Experiment with suspending the patterns. Be in an ongoing practice of noticing what shifts around you as you move your mindset and the associated actions. Observe how others respond. Choose intentional shifts toward optimism with change, use of imagination, encouragement of collaboration, and notice what transforms your relationship with change.
- 2. Act by experimenting and engaging with insight versus intellect, the generative capacities to originate and create a new way to show up and interact:** notice and acknowledge your listening habits, e.g., do you rush to reply, always initiate, and speak first or form answers while another is still talking? Surrender the inner chatter that wants to fix, guide, advise, or demonstrate your expert status. Let what others say with you land and be taken in fully. Allow an open exchange to occur that creates what is shared in the moment. Slow down the pace with people who matter. Practice silence after someone speaks to you to allow emotion and a sensation to arise in your awareness. Name the meaning internally you experience and then invite curiosity, forming a question to ask to share even more.
- 3. Exercise deep honesty to believe there is always more than now; the generative capacity to produce a trusting relationship with yourself that you are always whole**

no matter the circumstance: connect with your wholeness daily. Start where you start, sixty seconds a day for a week. Then two minutes, five minutes, and when you feel the joy of this, settle into your daily routine for whatever time serves you. Continuously seek what else is available in the field of exchange with others. Be available for surprise and reciprocity from an unconditional connection. Be willing to be disturbed by what you hear, experience, and receive in the spirit of learning, growth, and expansion of your natural rhythms.

Change can be instant, and we lose nothing. Yet, a narrative continues that change is hard and takes a long time. Wholeness arises from being generative, supporting us to change, and stepping into life in new ways consciously. Living in the state of being that is Generative Wholeness™; we can consistently choose the change that sustains excellence, connection to effortless vitality, and belonging with all that is.

About the Author

Janet M. Harvey is a bestselling author, speaker, leader, and an ICF master certified coach and accredited educator who has engaged leaders, teams, and global enterprises for nearly thirty years to invite change that sustains well-being and excellence. Visionary CEO of inviteCHANGE, a coaching and human development organisation, Janet Harvey, uses her executive and entrepreneurial experience to cultivate leaders in sustainable excellence through **Generative Wholeness™**, a signature coaching and learning process. As Janet shares, “*coaching in its many forms has at its root the effect of awakening consciousness and doing so in a highly accelerated fashion that sustains.*” She can be reached at www.linkedin.com/in/janetharvey