

VALUE ADDING

How coaching adds value to business and life!

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Kate Ramsay and the AnD Coaches welcome you to our staying in touch newsletter.

The theme of this edition is learning. In **Learning Moments** a colleague of AnD's explores how coaching can support people in transformational learning. In **Did You Know?** a client shares the value she has gained from two learning retreats and gives a gift idea with a learning theme. A **Good Read** and **An AnD Story** reference a thought-provoking book that contrasts left brain, analytical and right brain, intuitive learning.

Learning Moments

Liza Foster of Soul-Directions undertook AnD's Coach the Coach in Leadership Coaching process earlier this year and, on accreditation, she chose to write the following article to help her explore how coaching can aid personal transformation:

The journey of transformation is an exciting one, if not always easy. It is an ongoing process of learning, change and more learning. Recently, through my own journey of change, I have had some insights that have shifted my perspective on how coaching can help those who are seeking personal transformation.

Why do people seek out the help of a coach? Many people want guidance or a sounding board to talk through particular issues. Others are seeking clarity about their life purpose, and how they can achieve their dreams. The reasons are varied, and yet at the core, I believe we are all searching for what makes us feel happy and secure about our place in the world.

We human beings are extremely resourceful. We are imaginative and intelligent: we build empires, we create works of art, we adapt our environment to suit our needs and we have launched ourselves into space. So why is it that we find ourselves so often stuck in our problems, or unable to see the way forward? Why do we keep experiencing

similar problems, and often find it difficult to change our behaviour?

Religions and philosophies across time have looked at these questions. The Buddhist traditions teach that the ego is at the root of all human suffering. Indian Hindu philosophies tell us to go beyond the mind and the ego to end our suffering. Other teachers remind us to become aware of the observer, the watcher, behind our thoughts.

So how do we take these teachings, which sound so good in theory, and turn them into practice? How can we, while juggling careers, families, personal aspirations and commitments, find the peace and sense of self that philosophers and sages espouse?

I believe that gaining greater self-awareness is a way to achieving happiness, clarity and personal success. We are often not conscious of what is causing us to behave in a particular way, and there are many tools and techniques available to help us increase our self awareness.

One simple tool in the AnD coaching tool kit is the Slipped DISC. Based on cognitive behavioural principles, its purpose is to help us become aware of how our thoughts affect our feelings and our behaviours. The Slipped DISC can help us become aware of what thoughts may be causing us to feel some negative emotion. We can then choose to challenge those thoughts, and recognize that they are illusions. Next, by creating more useful thoughts, we can generate positive feelings which more closely reflect our true nature of joy, peace and optimism. We can then choose to act in new ways that are congruent with our purpose.

In reflecting upon the teachings referred to above in relation to my role as a coach, I have come to realize that coaching tools can be used to take people more deeply than simply helping them solve a work related problem or achieve their goals. The coach can play a part in helping clients become

aware of their thought patterns - and this is surely the first step towards personal transformation.

Did You Know?

- Learning Retreat Testimonial

Dianne Lissner of Lissner Consulting writes:

Ten years ago I was fortunate enough to be selected to attend an And Consulting leadership retreat in Bali, where I met my coach Kate Ramsay. This year Kate was my choice to facilitate decisions regarding new directions for my business. A Learning Retreat at Byrongerry, in an environment free of the distractions of city life, made it easier for me to identify business opportunities and to align my values and business interests. Kate and I will meet again soon to review progress and I am looking forward to this.

(See www.andconsulting.org)

- Christmas or Birthday Gift Idea

Treat someone you love to a learning experience by giving them the attached Gift Voucher as a Christmas or birthday gift. The voucher is for a one hour Vision or Leadership Coaching session with Kate Ramsay and costs \$225. To activate (pay for) the voucher please contact Kate on 0418 164 260 or at kate@andconsulting.org.

A Good Read

Kate writes: Hare Brain Tortoise Mind – Why Intelligence Increases When You Think Less by Guy Claxton (Fourth Estate. London. 1998) took me months to read, yet I am glad I persisted because the rewards have been enormous.

Claxton has an international reputation for his work on learning and the mind and he uses the well known story of the race between the hare and the tortoise to illustrate the need for us to honour the intuition of our ‘tortoise mind’ in this world of the rapid businesslike thinking of the ‘hare brain’. In fact having written that, I have realised that one reason this book took me so long to read, was that I needed to ingest its content through my ‘tortoise mind’ – and this takes time!

Claxton provides fascinating case studies and diagrams to illustrate his arguments and he does not lack humour. For example, one chapter is

called *Premature Articulation: How Thinking Gets in the Way of Learning*.

So why is this an important read for leaders? I’ll leave the answer to this question to Edgar Schein who Claxton quotes as having said, in 2002:

.... Unless leaders become learners themselves – unless they can acknowledge their own vulnerabilities and uncertainties – then transformational learning will never take place. When leaders become genuine learners, they set a good example and help to create a psychologically safe environment for others.

Claxton illustrates through theory and examples that transformational learning involves creative thought and intuition. This can take time and it happens in what he calls our ‘tortoise mind’.

We at AnD Consulting are passionate about providing people with regular reflection time through our Leadership Coaching services because this supports our clients’ transformational learning.

An AnD Story

Of course this is not to suggest that we should stop using our ‘hare brain’, but rather that we need to restore the balance between these two different styles of learning.

Indeed the brain is set up to provide this balance between sound decision making and what we might call ‘navel gazing’. As Claxton explains in Hare Brain Tortoise Mind:

The creative mind possesses a dynamic, integrated balance between deliberation and contemplation. It is able to swing flexibly between its focused, analytical, articulated mode of conscious thought, and its diffused, synthetic, shadowy mode of intuition. (The underlining is mine – ed.)

Claxton makes a compelling argument for the need to honour and trust our ‘tortoise mind’ in order to restore this balance. As he says in the last sentence of the book: *The hare has had a good run for its money. It is time to give the tortoise mind its due.*

Do yourself a favour – make time to do some ‘tortoise thinking’ over the Festive Season – and enjoy!