

# The 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.

Learning Moments begins this edition with an exploration of thinking versus reflecting. Three coaching related articles are featured in Did You Know? Next is a testimonial from a Learning Retreat client. Our Good Read is a text on how to be happy, and the collaboration between science and spirituality in this book, is our AnD Story. We end this edition with a quote from the Tao The Ching – on how to be a great leader.

## LEARNING MOMENTS

Kate writes: "What's the difference between thinking and reflecting?" a client asked at a recent coaching session. Good question, I thought, as I grappled for a response. We agreed to begin by having a look at a couple of dictionary definitions. One told us that to reflect means: "To think carefully, meditate upon," and another, "To think, ponder or meditate". From this we agreed that reflection is a particular way of thinking.

Next I offered the idea that analytical thinking and problem solving type thinking are left-brain activities, whereas to ponder and meditate are creative processes and will therefore require the use of our right brain. Given that left brain thinking dominates our daily lives we both then agreed that, in order to be reflective, we need to consciously step back from the hurly burly and give our right brains the time and space to ponder and meditate.

"That's what my coaching time gives me," my client declared. "Yes, indeed!" I beamed in response.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Three articles that landed on my desktop during 2007 particularly caught my attention. One was headed Coaching: The Fad that Won't go Away, the second posed the question Does executive coaching work?, and the third described the elements that make for a team that has a high level of emotional intelligence.

The first article summarised a US study that surveyed 48 organizations and 86 leaders who had been coached. The study found that:

- 43% of CEOs and 71% of senior executives had worked with a coach.
- 63% of organizations said they plan to increase their use of coaching over the next five years.
- 93% of leaders being coached said they plan to use a coach again.

The second article, from the May edition of HR Monthly, asked three executives whether their coaching had been of value to them.

One executive said that coaching had given him a link between what was expected of him in his organization and his own personal change. He also said:

*Coaching allows you to openly discuss your abilities in a non-threatening environment, and then work on them in a targeted manner.*

Another described a flow on effect from his coaching:

*I'm also finding that my external coaching is turning me into a coach... In the past... I would offer guidance based on my experience. Now, I ask what people want to achieve and attempt to draw the best options out of them. Often I am biting my tongue, wanting to provide them with a ready solution, but I know that it's more valuable for them to find their own way.*

The third was an article by Daniel Goleman called The Emotional Intelligence of Leaders in which he described the power of a team in synergy. Goleman:

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A superlative team produces results that are better than what even the most gifted member of the group is capable of. ... And the strongest predictor of such performance is the harmony of the group, the trust of the group, the sense of team identification. It is the group's emotional intelligence.

Teams do not magically reach this level of emotional intelligence. So, just as it seems from the first two of these articles that more and more individuals are now getting value from coaching, teams can also get similar value. And the good news is that AnD Consulting offers a team coaching service. (See attached document.)

## LEARNING RETREAT TESTIMONIAL

Helen Davis, a CEO from South Australia, took a break between roles for a Learning Retreat in the hills inland from Byron Bay ([www.andconsulting.org](http://www.andconsulting.org)). She had this to say about her experience:

*Thank you, Kate, for the coaching and the space to relax and reenergize. This is a beautiful tranquil place to be still and observe with all senses. You have given me a completed ending and the possibilities of beginnings. A special mention goes to \*Ruby and her joyful persistence in sharing the pleasures of 'being'.*

\*Ruby, a golden Labrador dog, co-hosts the Learning Retreats with Kate Ramsay. Be kind to yourself this year by planning some time to relax and reenergize at a Learning Retreat.

## A GOOD READ

Kate writes: I read a review of Happiness – A Guide to Developing Life's Most Important Skill (Atlantic Books London 2007) that said that the author, Matthieu Ricard, has been scientifically tested to be the happiest man in the world. I knew I had to get this book but there was a long delay before it was available at my local bookshop. The book-seller and I would joke about how I would just have to stay miserable for a bit longer each time it had not yet come in!

It was worth the wait because, as promised in the title, the book is a practical guide to achieving true and lasting happiness. Ricard says he wrote it for those who aspire to a little more joie de vivre in their lives and he begins with his definition of happiness: *By happiness I mean a deep sense of flourishing that arises from an*

*exceptionally healthy mind. This is not a mere pleasurable feeling, a fleeting emotion, or a mood, but an optimal state of being. Happiness is also a way of interpreting the world, since while it may be difficult to change the world, it is always possible to change the way we look at it.*

To help the reader learn the skill of happiness there are exercises at the end of each chapter in how to train the mind through a range of different meditation practices, and Ricard also brings altruism into his message by asking:

*Of what use is a "great session" of meditation if it doesn't translate into improvement of our whole being, which can then place itself at the service of others?*

With chapter headings such as:

- A Two-Way Mirror: Looking Within, Looking Without, and
- Happiness and Altruism: Does Happiness Make Us Kind or Does Being Kind Make Us Happy?,

I hope you can see that this book is indeed a good read at a time where the advertisers would have us believe that happiness lies in a second flat-screen television!

## AN AND STORY

Our AnD Story in this edition is about this book on happiness because it brings together scientific studies and the wisdom traditions of Buddhism.

Matthieu Ricard is a Buddhist monk who lives and works on humanitarian projects in Tibet and Nepal having left a promising career as a cellular geneticist in France to study Buddhism over thirty five years ago.

Ricard is also an active participant in the current scientific research on the effects of meditation on the brain and he believes that the collaboration between the cognitive sciences and Buddhist contemplatives holds huge potential for understanding the human mind. It was during his participation in this research that Ricard's brain was connected to electrodes while meditating. The data that was generated from this process was what resulted in the scientists involved to declare him the happiest man in the world.

## THE TAO ON GREAT LEADERS

To conclude this edition here is what the Tao The Ching has to say about what makes for a great leader:

*When the best leaders' work is done the people say:  
"We did it ourselves!"*