



KATE RAMSAY AND THE AnD COACHES WELCOME YOU TO OUR STAYING IN TOUCH NEWSLETTER.

In **Learnable Moments** we explore the impact that a newish movement called positive psychology is having on the science and art of coaching. In **Did You Know?** we look at the power of vision and how a vision differs from purpose and goals, and we also share a Learning Retreat testimonial. In **Meet the AnD Coaches** we introduce you to a new AnD Associate Coach. We conclude with two **AnD Stories**, one that relates to coaching, the other to democracy.

## Learnable Moments

**Kate writes:** I felt perplexed a few years ago when psychology trained coaching colleagues began raving about a new concept called positive psychology. To me, coaching was already about supporting clients to be the best they could be by focusing on their strengths and being true to their vision and values. So, why the need for something new that, in my coaching practice anyway, already existed?

Carol Kauffman has enlightened me. In the [Evidence Based Coaching Handbook](#) (Stober and Grant. 2006), Kauffman wrote Chapter 8, titled [Positive Psychology: The Science at the Heart of Coaching](#). She explains that the purpose of most psychological assessment tools is to identify peoples' problems and that psychologists are trained to help people deal with these. The 'aha moment' happened for me when Kauffman went on to explain that the mission of positive psychology is to shift attention away from peoples' pathology and direct them toward a focus on their strengths, their vision and their dreams. Now I can see why coaches, whose earlier training was in the psychotherapeutic model, have needed to make this shift from working with peoples' pain to working with their greatness.

Kauffman makes the link between positive emotions and personal success: *Positive emotions are central to psychological flourishing and have been found to have a significant impact on increasing intuition and creativity, and widening scope of attention. 'They increase our capacity to use multiple social, cognitive, and*

*affective resources and to take in an integrated long-term perspective – crucial skills in today's complex world . . . Positive emotions foster the very kinds of skills corporations want in their leadership teams.*

As well as enlightening me on the need for a shift of focus for psychology trained coaches, Kauffman has also convinced me that positive psychology theory and research can provide the scientific "legs upon which the field of coaching can firmly stand".

Both my clients and I know coaching works: that regular time out for reflective practice and confidential support helps us be extraordinary. However, in a tough financial climate, data is needed to convince the budget holders of the value of investing in coaching support for their leaders. Kauffman cites several rigorous research projects that: *provide compelling, scientifically informed rationale with empirical support for why coaching, which clients often describe as a joyful experience, might have a very positive impact.*

Kauffman also tells the reader: *there are now assessment tools, interventions, and research methods to study human strengths and virtues .. such as "soft" phenomena as hope, optimism, and spirituality, .. and valid measures of levels of well-being, strengths, approaches to happiness, life satisfaction, and more. .. We can now "diagnose" strengths, hope, optimism, and love in as precise and reliable ways as we measure anxiety or depression.*

In fact you can register at [authentichappiness.org](http://authentichappiness.org) and score your key strengths on the free Values In Action (VIA) survey. I have and I found it validating.

## Did You Know?

### ■ The Power of Vision

One of my longest-term clients, a leader in the Victorian public health system, meets with me twice a year to review her vision. When we met for her **Vision Coaching** session (see attached) in early October she described extremely challenging issues at work and with one of her teenage children. Given all she was dealing with, I commented on her calmness and poise, to which she said, "Kate, my vision guides me every day to do what needs to be done and not worry about what can wait". Oh the power of vision, we both agreed!

During the session we spent time exploring vision versus purpose and goals. We came to the conclusion that a vision is the essence of how we want our world to be, that we also need a purpose to give us the focus for how and why we live our vision, and some goals for action. We found this all very helpful, and hope you do too.

### ■ Learning Retreat Testimonial

Here's what a recent client said about her time at a Learning Retreat in the hills inland from Byron Bay, during which she worked on her vision:

*Thank you for sharing your sanctuary with me. It was blissful and my insights, passions and vision are waiting to explode!*

If you find yourself craving some time out from your busy world or confused about where to from here in your life, go to the Learning Retreat pages of the AnD website at [andconsulting.org](http://andconsulting.org) and contact Kate at [kate@andconsulting.org](mailto:kate@andconsulting.org) or on 0418 164 260.

## Meet the AnD Coaches

We have a new AnD Associate Coach bringing the AnD Coaching group to a total of ten. They are based in Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra and northern NSW, while Kate Ramsay, the MD and lead coach, lives in the hills inland from Byron Bay and commutes to see city based clients in Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

Virginia Johnson is Sydney based and has added leadership coaching to a portfolio of services in her business, You too Can Be. She established this business after a long and prestigious career in the corporate sector in Quality Management, including leading an international team at Accenture. Virginia brings a wide range of skills and experience to the AnD Coaching group as well as a great sense of humour. See her bio and photograph in the About Us pages of AnD's website – as well as those of the rest of we AnD Coaches.

## AnD Stories

### ■ The Art and Science of Coaching

I'll leave this to Kauffman, from her chapter referenced on page 1, to tell because she expresses it so well:

*While coaching is an art, it is one that can be built on science. At each phase of growth as individuals and as a profession, there is an optimal dialectical tension of art and science as the art informs the science which in turn can inform the art. It is time to transcend the notion that it is one or the other, and for coach practitioners to become adept at both.*

### ■ And in Democracy

A highlight for me at this year's Byron Bay Writers Festival was an interview with John Keane about his book The Life and Death of Democracy. The book is said to "confront its readers with an entirely fresh and irreverent look at the past, present and future of democracy". I'll let you know if I agree when I've read its 887 pages.

Keane described a new trend called Monitory Democracy in which there are now more regulatory bodies, such as ASIC, and an increased opportunity for we voters to have our say through lobby groups such as GetUp!. Keane's book is timely given the tied result at the recent Federal Election has aroused the interest of at least some of the electorate in what democracy is about. I, for one, am cautiously optimistic about the changing face of democracy in Australia. However Keane cautions that change takes time in a Monitory Democracy and urges us to be both patient and impatient with our politicians.