



Photo credit: Joshua Ness

Coaching: From GROW to Gestalt

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The GROW Model of Coaching

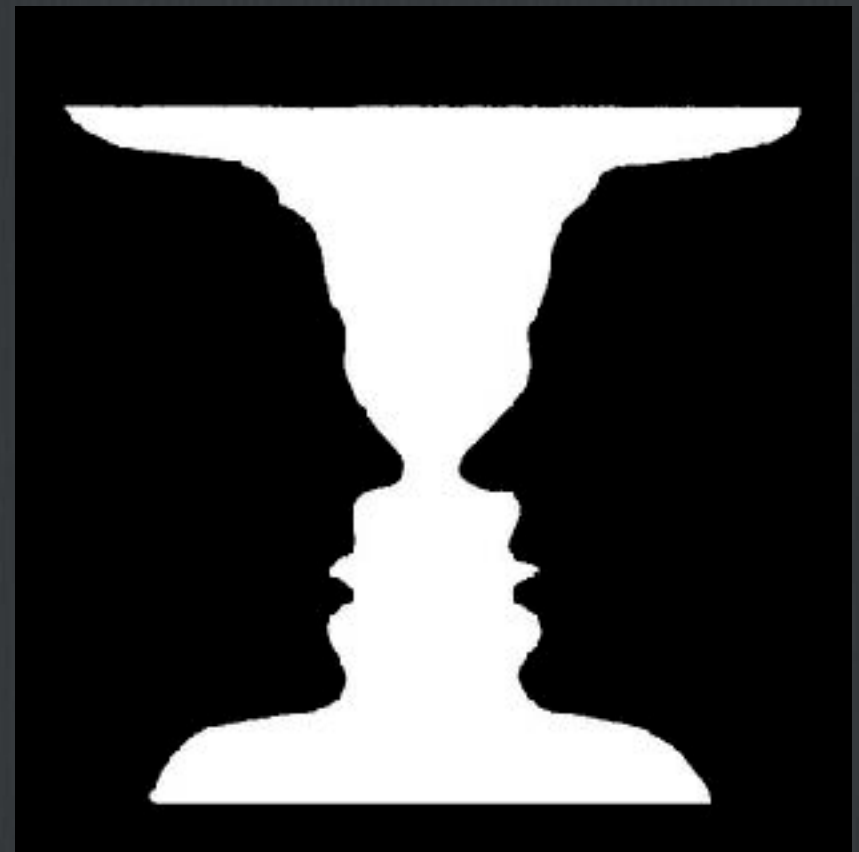
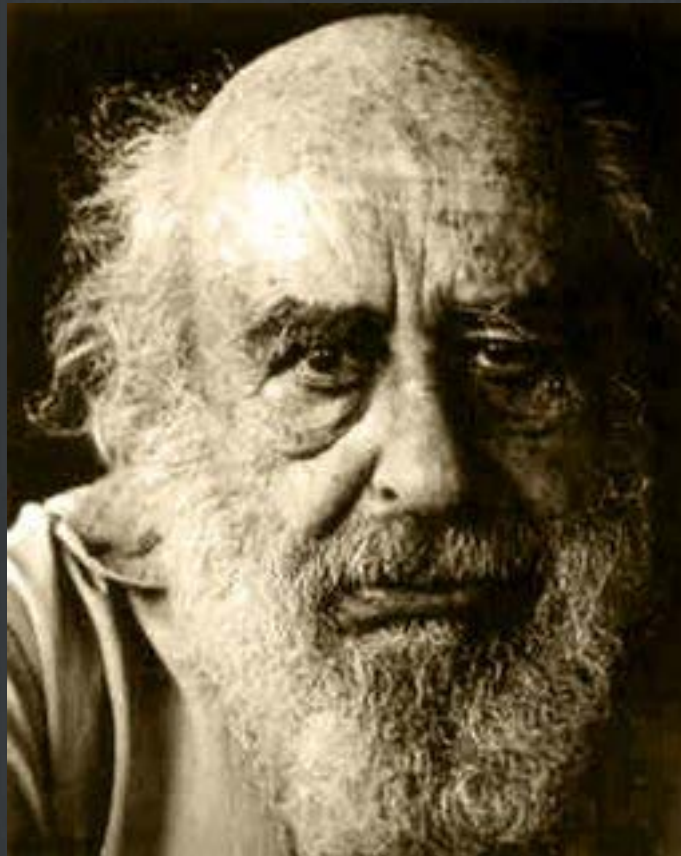
- ☐ **Goals - What do you want to achieve from this session?**
- ☐ **Reality - What is stopping you currently?**
- ☐ **Options - What could you do as a first step?**
- ☐ **Will - What will you achieve before the next session?**

Sir John Whitmore, *Coaching for Performance: GROWing People, Performance and Purpose* (Nicholas Brealey, 2002).

Review of GROW

- ☐ **Great simple, clear model to start coaching - client and outcome focused, practical**
- ☐ **Narrow view of the world - past and future focused - not focused on the NOW**
- ☐ **Coach asks neutral questions - no focus on the coach's experience in the session or on experimentation in the session**
- ☐ **No challenge of the client's reality**

Gestalt Psychology



Gestalt psychology studies the organisation of experience into patterns or configurations - the relationship between ground and figure

Perls, F., Gestalt Therapy Verbatim (1969)

I do my thing and you do your thing.

I am not in this world to live up to your expectations,

And you are not in this world to live up to mine.

You are you, and I am I,

and if by chance we find each other, it's beautiful.

If not, it can't be helped.

(Fritz Perls, "Gestalt Therapy Verbatim", 1969)(Fritz Perls, "Gestalt Therapy Verbatim", 1969)

Gestalt view of human nature

- ☐ **People can better deal with their problems if they become fully aware of what is happening within themselves and outside of themselves**
- ☐ **Change happens when the person can reintegrate a disowned part of the self back into their mix of identify**

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Characteristics of Gestalt Coaching

- 1. Inclusion:** Putting yourself fully into the experience of the client without judging or interpreting but retaining your own separateness - providing a safe place of the client's phenomenological world
- 2. Presence:** Regularly and sensitively expressing your own feelings and experience
- 3. Contact:** The special, powerful, healing moments in coaching that are allowed to happen rather than being directed by the coach
- 4. Dialogue:** Something active done together rather than being talked about - an experiment in the session that expresses or moves the awareness and energy

Case study

- ☐ **Senior military officer - experienced, capable, ambitious, urbane, polished**
- ☐ **Team 360 feedback was very mixed, high staff turnover**
- ☐ **Contact: the millisecond I noticed and commented on the tear in his eye**

ALL DOMAINS

Emotional Reactions



Calm, even-tempered,
relaxed; not easily upset
in stressful situations

Prone to worry,
becomes upset
in stressful situations

Interpersonal Patterns



Introverted, reserved, serious;
prefers working alone;
avoids direct leadership roles

Outgoing, active, assertive;
likes working with others;
enjoys direct leadership roles

Openness To Change



Down to earth, practical, conservative;
prefers traditional outlooks
and technical problem-solving

Open to new experiences, imaginative;
enjoys broad interests, prefers
creative, conceptual problem-solving

Agreeableness



Hard headed, skeptical,
proud, impersonal; prefers
competition over cooperation

Compassionate, good natured,
friendly; prefers cooperation
over competition and conflict

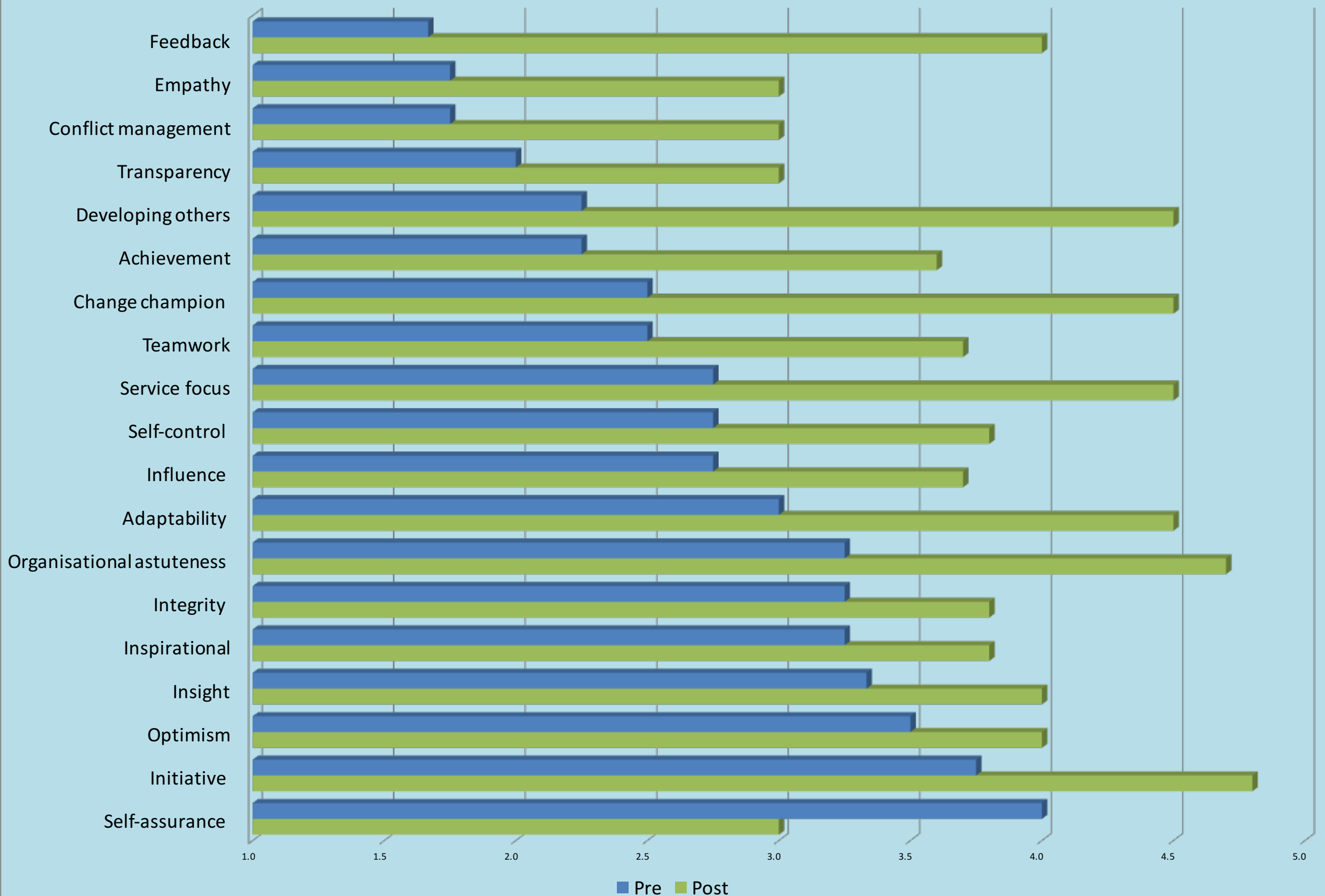
Work Ethic



Spontaneous, disorganized, lacededical;
prefers flexible plans, unmethodical
procedures; dislikes precise detail

Conscientious, efficient, well-organized,
reliable; likes precise detail, routine,
predictable procedures; strong sense of duty

Pre and Post Coaching Leadership Assessment



Post session email

“The team seem to be coming to me for advice more now, the paradox being that the more I give them rope, the more they use it but respect my role as leader too and ask for guidance/direction.”

Gestalt coaching experiments

- ☐ Internal dialogue exercise: What is your inner critic saying?
- ☐ Empty-chair work: Three chairs - self, inner critic and inner coach
- ☐ Staying with the feeling: to explore and make sense of the pain
- ☐ "I take responsibility for ..."
- ☐ Rehearsal out loud with the coach
- ☐ Reversal - asking the client to do the opposite thing
- ☐ Playing the projection - client plays the role of the disconnected other

Case study

- ☐ Senior Partner in professional services firm, warm, very engaging, impressively intelligent and articulate, hugely successful
- ☐ Initial series of very successful coaching sessions to deal with family crisis but sudden relapse a year later
- ☐ Undertook inner critic inner coach three chair work in an extended session - the client became totally stuck when playing the inner critic
- ☐ Long delay to next session
- ☐ Follow up sessions with profound realisation about 'be perfect, be positive, always achieve'

Starting to use this approach

- ☐ Read about Gestalt Therapy e.g. Perls, Gaffney etc.
- ☐ Find a Gestalt Therapist or coach and work on yourself
- ☐ Also watch Amy Cuddy's TED Talk and read her book on presence which is the state of being attuned to and able to comfortably express our true thoughts, feelings, values and potential

Reading list

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