COACHING AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

A WEBINAR HOSTED BY PROFESSOR PETER HAWKINS HONORARY PRESIDENT AND EVE TURNER CHAIR OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR PROFESSIONAL EXECUTIVE COACHING AND SUPERVISION (APECS)

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All I'm saying is simply this: that all life is interrelated, and in a real sense we are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. For some strange reason, I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. And you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.

Methodist Student Leadership Conference Address, delivered 1964, Lincoln, Nebraska
http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkmethodistyouthconference.htm
WHAT WE WILL COVER TODAY

• Some basic facts about COVID-19 and how this applies to us as coaches
• Exploring how the pandemic is impacting on us personally
• What new personal practices and work processes can help us
• Where can we use our coaching skills to be most helpful at this time
• What can we learn from the pandemic that will make us more future-fit
Most people who become infected experience mild illness and recover.

It can be more severe for others: those over 60, and those with cardio-vascular disease, diabetes or a chronic respiratory condition – hence these people need to avoid crowded places where they might interact with potential carriers.

We can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms and taking appropriate self-quarantine action (and taking medical advice if needed):

- Fever (sometimes accompanied by headaches)
- Dry cough (though now some reports of a productive cough)
- Shortness of breath/chest pains
- With younger people some suggestion now there might be anosmia or hyposmia, the loss of the sense of smell, and/or the loss of taste, with otherwise mild symptoms.

We need to be informed for ourselves and for any questions clients may have.
COVID-19: ADVICE (WHO)

Take care of our health, protect others and diminish our impact on collective resources by:

• Washing our hands frequently (for 20 seconds!) between every client visit and before every meal.

• Regularly and thoroughly cleaning our hands because washing our hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on our hands.

• Creating and maintaining space between us and our clients. WHO say we need at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between us and anyone who is coughing or sneezing because they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If we are too close, we and our clients can breathe these in, including the COVID-19 virus if they have the disease. However UK and other advice is now for 2 metres distance (6 feet).

• Avoid touching our eyes, nose and mouth because hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to our eyes, nose or mouth, and from there the virus can enter our body. Previous coronaviruses like SARS have been known to survive several days on metal, glass and plastic surfaces, 24 hours on cardboard and 3 hours in the air after someone coughs.

• With virtual sessions just notice how many times we touch our face! We all do it far more than we think.
Find ways of bringing respiratory hygiene to the attention of others, however difficult

• Make sure we, and the people around us, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering our mouth and nose with our bent elbow or tissue when we cough or sneeze, then disposing of the used tissue immediately. This is because the droplets spread Covid-19 and other viruses.

• If we, or those we are with, have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early.

• We need to self-isolate if we feel unwell, i.e. if we have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing. Advice will be country and region dependent and we need to follow local advice. This will often mean calling for advice in the first instance if we feel unwell rather than visiting a medical facility.

• Stay informed and follow the advice given by our healthcare providers and public health officials

• Mention travel history to other countries where appropriate – though as we stop travelling this will become irrelevant.
WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON US PERSONALLY?
BUT WHAT DOES THIS MEAN – BREAKOUT GROUPS?

• What is the impact on us personally?
• What about our family and loved ones?
• What about our work, income, pension schemes?
• What about the income and pension schemes of our clients?
• What about our coaching community?

10 minutes in small groups. 1-2 minutes each to share:
“My biggest concerns from Covid-19 are......” while the others in the group practice deep empathic listening.

Please keep to time so everyone has a chance to speak and be heard.
WHAT PRACTICES AND NEW WORK PROCESSES COULD HELP US RESOURCE OURSELVES?
Please put into the Chat Box examples of what you have been doing.
• We’ll share what we are experimenting with
• Share some of your comments from the Chat Box
• Invite some of you to open your mics and expand
WHAT CAN WE DO FOR OTHERS?
COVID-19: OUR CLIENTS – THEY MAY BE FAR MORE IMPACTED THAN US

• Companies will be updating their policies and practices to include:
  • Asking employees to stay at home if they have any sort of respiratory illness
  • Expecting home working as the norm where possible
  • Banning meetings with external people, including coaches
  • Cutting back on their spending as they face uncertainty

• Unprecedented losses and on a knife edge influencing actions – one example, Carnival Corporation (cruises) suffered 60% losses in their shares from 1st January until 12th March when it slightly rallied after the US $50bn aid package was announced

• Changing their conditions for customers – airlines allowing rebooking with no penalties while asking staff to take unpaid leave or laying some off: one estimate is the industry will lose $113bn this year

• The service/hospitality industry – in the UK a lobby group, Hospitality UK, claim the pandemic is “business critical” and warn thousands of jobs could go permanently as cafes, bars, hotels and dining chains may fold without help

• An unprecedented time – truly VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity)
COVID-19 AND COACHING: SOME IDEAS WE’VE GATHERED

• Some companies may be in crisis and trying to stay afloat and consider coaching an unnecessary expense. What could coaching do for businesses that cannot afford coaching support right now but would benefit from it to stay afloat? This could be for existing or new companies, or individuals. Pro bono v charging?

• Linked to this is keeping in touch with companies we work for/have worked for, continuing relationships. Maybe offer a chance to chat or even bring people together for (mutual) support.

• Pre-empt cancellation of face-to-face sessions by suggesting a way to continue virtually – some firms are not aware of the latest technical capabilities such as using breakout rooms etc. Participants have the time in their diary booked, and it can save travel and hotel costs.

• Consider different payment terms.

• Use the time to catch up on other activity such as pro bono work, writing, administration (!), website updates, establishing new professional relationships appropriately (some companies will be in crisis, others may be twiddling their thumbs).

• Health service staff on the frontline: in the UK you can register to offer free support at https://www.aim-you.com/nhsstaff

• Supporting individuals, including coaches, who face losing their income in some countries where there is limited state support.
1. Where possible, start a team coaching relationship face to face, prior to transferring to a digital and virtual mode
2. Establish Virtual Team Protocols including staying fully present throughout - e.g. each day starting with a short team meeting
3. Make sure you have a good internet conferencing platform which is secure
4. There are often technical problems for someone on the call, so be prepared and you (and others) will avoid being flustered
5. Consider what people see behind you – is it appropriate, is it what you want to say about you?
6. Arrange screens at the best angle so you are as visible as possible; consider how natural light falls at different times of day
7. Contract around recording sessions
8. Learn how to use shared screen and other facilities such as breakout rooms and whiteboard; and with Zoom remind people about speaker and gallery views, about private and public chat, mute/unmute, how to save the chat box
9. Start meetings with personal and social bonding time; and ensure comfort breaks and time to get a drink
10. Then use an outcome based check-in
11. End with an agreement with what people are doing next
12. As team leader/facilitator scan the team and ensure everyone has a chance to contribute equally
AND WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS OUTBREAK? WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM COVID-19 THAT WILL MAKE US MORE FUTURE-FIT?
WHEN A STORM HITS A WOODLAND...
CRISIS CREATES THE HEAT IN WHICH NEW LEARNING IS FORGED
FINDING THE THIRD WAY IN A CRISIS

- Reactive: blame and anger
- Passive: waiting to be rescued and get to the other side
FINDING THE THIRD WAY IN A CRISIS

**React**
blame and anger

**Passive**
waiting to be rescued

Welcoming the Learning

Increasing our:

- Agility
- Resilience
- Resourcefulness

RESPOND - RECOVER - RENEW

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“Resilience is the capacity of any person, family, team or other system, to access and tap into unused and potential resources, both inside them and all around them.”

Peter Hawkins, 2018 (building on Michael Cavanagh)

“Let life do the work, you are there to assist.” Peter Hawkins, 2020
AND A POSITIVE IMPACT ON CLIMATE CHANGE: LEVELS OF NITROGEN DIOXIDE OVER CHINA (NASA)

The levels in China are lower (though now rising and are at 79% of 2019 levels)
The canals in Venice are the cleanest for 60 years
Carbon and methane levels in cities are falling due to reduced road and air travel
COVID-19 AND COACHING: SO WHAT CAN WE DO – BREAKOUT ROOMS?

“The one opportunity this crisis affords me is...”

“The 1 or 2 things I can do using my particular skills are...”
USEFUL RESOURCES

• BBC website on Coronavirus: [https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/explainers](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/explainers)

• CICERO (the Centre for International Climate Research, Oslo): How changes brought on by coronavirus could help tackle climate change. [https://cicero.oslo.no/en](https://cicero.oslo.no/en)

• European Space Agency: Coronavirus: nitrogen dioxide levels drop over Italy. [https://www.esa.int/](https://www.esa.int/)

• John Hopkins University website: [https://gisanddata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6](https://gisanddata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6)


• Worldometer: [https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/](https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/)


• World Map (reddit.com), including latest travel restrictions: [https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1yCPR-ukAgE55sROmBUFmtLN6riVLTu3&ll=6.004481718062104%2C-11.671528732349543&z=2](https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1yCPR-ukAgE55sROmBUFmtLN6riVLTu3&ll=6.004481718062104%2C-11.671528732349543&z=2)
THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Please feel free to get in touch

www.renewalassociates.co.uk
07802 887418
peter.hawkins@renewalassociates.co.uk
linkedin.com/in/professor-peter-hawkins-b27177

www.eve-turner.com
023 8051 0697 / 07768 070361
eve.turner@apecs.org
eve@eve-turner.com
linkedin.com/in/eveturner