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THE GUIDE TO COACHING
for teachers and supervisors

This guide aims at presenting values, general ideas and rules applied in coaching as well as showing some practical ways of using coach's tools in a teacher's job.

Being teachers our goals are as follows

Working as teachers our goals are: to help children start an adult life, prepare them to live their independent lives and make mature decisions, to find themselves in a labour market but the major target is to support them in getting to know who they are, what their potential is and what their way of life could be like.

In order to achieve self-fulfilment we, as people, need some basic competencies such as: the ability to discover, to explore and learn, social and civil competencies, entrepreneurship, and readiness to undertake an initiative. Additionally, as the reality of life in the 21st century changes so quickly, an important and very necessary competence is flexibility and willingness to adapt to changes. The philosophy of coaching supports the development of these competencies.

Introduction to coaching

Coaching as a discipline derives from the field of sport where it was used and developed by sports trainers. But coaching has penetrated a lot of various daily life areas such as: business, leadership, and recently – education.

This is mainly due to coaching that people are more personally effective, open to self-development and learning, achieve goals more effectively, enhance desired attitudes, skills and approaches, use their potential more skilfully and enhance the sense of responsibility.

From the Christian perspective of education it is crucial that coaching helps people discover their vocation and become ones who use their potential at the most.

In the area mentioned above coaching helps in finding an answer to the question: Who am I? What gifts and skills do I have? What makes me happy in life? What is my vocation?

What is coaching?

According to the Polish language dictionary coaching is an active cooperation between a boss and an employee in order to eliminate mistakes made at work and to support the employee's development.

It is a very bare-bones definition that presents coaching rather as a technique than a key that reveals the essence of its message.

John Whitmore – often regarded as an author of coaching for performance said: *'Coaching is unlocking people's potential to maximize their own performance'*.

Tony Stoltzfus claims that *'Coaching is a firm belief that each person is a uniquely valuable individual with distinct giftedness and potential for greatness that enables a change.'*

Coaching is about helping children further develop a grown mindset. The very process happens because a person uses the rules of successful motivation to learn while understanding and respecting the other person's identity, beliefs, values and skills. Educational coaching builds students' awareness and taking responsibility for their lives on the one hand and helps develop students' and teachers' competences on the other. Such a process results in improvement of

the general teaching quality. Educational coaching refers to people who have a direct impact on teaching such as: headmasters, teachers, students and their parents as well as the rest of the staff involved in an educational process (e.g. school administrative team).

The headmaster can implement coaching techniques while working with teachers and school staff and teachers can implement them while cooperating both with students and their parents.

Coaching in King David Christian Preschool, Primary School and Secondary School in Poznan

In King David Christian Schools where a major impact is made on students' development gained through Christian values arising from the Holy Bible, nonviolent communication, tutoring and coaching are of a great meaning. It is so because all of these values coexist with **dialogic pedagogy** based on **meetings and conversations** between two people. The core of such meetings are **trust and reliance.**

The aim of the guide: 'Be your student's coach'

The aim of this guide is getting to know and inspired by the coaching philosophy, helping to develop communication skills, including listening and asking open questions, helping to build students' awareness that leads to their responsibility and motivation.

Counselling vs. coaching

Coaching, mentoring and counselling are different concepts and philosophies of work but they all aim at a human being development. They all can be used in a very effective way while working with students, taking into consideration their varied needs.

If we compare coaching and counselling, the latter mainly focuses on an activity that results in a person's better stay of being. Then, coaching aims at raising student's awareness in case of their life improvement.

The example that presents the difference between coaching and counselling is a task for a teacher who learns how to talk and work based on the tenets of coaching.

There we present a sample talk between a student and a teacher – coach. Your task is to define which approach refers to coaching and which one refers to counselling. Define what is the main difference between the following conversations.

It is a conversation between a student who is raised by a foster family and who has problems with dreaming about future possibilities because of his previous experience. There are two examples of conversation – a coaching one and a counselling one.

APPROACH NO. 1

'What I have heard is the information that dreaming was unacceptable in your family.'

'My father disapproved those who were dreaming and wasting their time instead of learning and working hard.'

'What else did your father deny?'

'He commented on everything. It was hard for me to stay at home as my father didn't like my clothes, my ideas, my friends. He rejected everything that was related to me.'

'How did you feel about it?'

'It's hard to say. I sometimes replied in a nasty way. Sometimes I was furious. Well, I am not quite sure. I used to run away from home. I don't remember too many things from that period of time. Everything is mixing in my head now.'

'Did your father treat you like that frequently?'

'Yes, he did. He also behaved in the same way towards other family members.'

'It seems that verbal violence occurred in your family ...'

APPROACH NO. 2:

'What I have heard is the information that dreaming was unacceptable in your family.'

'My father disapproved of people who were dreaming and wasting their time instead of learning and working hard.'

'What do you think? Is dreaming synonymous with a dishonest attitude towards learning and working during the day?'

'No. How is it possible that dreaming can have anything in common with my attitude towards learning?'

'I do agree with you. I have always seen you as a diligent student. Personally, I reckon that dreaming just increases our capacity of working and learning. What would you like to do with your thoughts and feeling?'

'It's a good question. I think I have to overcome them somehow ... My father is wrong. I guess he had the same point of view as his father did, but it is not true. I want to dream and make my dreams come true.

Approach A is …………………………, approach B is …………………………

What is the main difference between these two approaches?

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Please notice that coaching is not better than counselling and vice versa.

Each of these techniques are worthwhile, useful and different. The method you use depends on a type of a person you work with and on what you really want to achieve.

Coaching vs mentoring

Coaching and mentoring are both one-to-one relationships that use support and transparency – readiness to help student build better future.

This is an example of the difference between coaching and mentoring:

Example: A person has a job offer that will develop their career but they will have to move to another place. It will cause separation from family and friends.

Task:

Determine which of these approaches refers to coaching and which refers to mentoring.

Specify what is the main difference between these two approaches.

Approach A

'Being selected to represent your own country and playing as a member of a national team in such a competition sounds to be a great opportunity!'

'Yes, you are right. But to be honest, I really don't know what to do – it is so responsible.'

'When I was a primary school pupil I had two similar possibilities. One of my decisions was a good choice, the other one turned out to be a disaster.'

'What was the difference?'

„One of these decisions would lead to a total change of my lifestyle, friends and would limit my relations with my family.'

'What is your mother's opinion on that?'…

Approach B

'Being selected to represent your own country and playing as a member of a national team in such a competition sounds to be a great opportunity.'

'Yes, you are right. But to be honest, I really don't know what to do – it is so responsible.'

'How would this decision change your life?'

'Well… it would probably have the greatest impact on my relationship with parents and friends. We will miss our gatherings and the time we spend together.'

'How would this decision influence these relations?'

'We will have to make the most of the time between my trips for groupings, but I have an idea how we can manage.'

'That's interesting. Please, tell me something about it'…

Approach A is …………………………, approach B is ………………………….
What is the main difference?

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When we mentor a student - we teach him to use things that are in us or to learn from our experience.

When we coach a student - then we push him to use his resources or to learn from his experience.

Coaching at pre-school and primary or secondary schools is to help students learn instead of teaching them.

Coaching tools - asking questions

In the very essence of teacher coaching - meaning leadership coaching is the idea of helping students overcome their challenges (solving their problems) without telling them what to do. One of the most important things teachers should learn to train is to ask questions instead of giving advice.

Examples of giving a 'good'*) piece of advice:

- Would not it help you **if you were taking notes from the information you read from the book?**

- Maybe you could **go to your friend and say something honest to solve your problem?**

- Don't you think **it would be good to talk to your dad about what you think about it?**

The questions (statements) above are what we can call solution-oriented questions.

They are often used by teachers in their pedagogical work. Are they bad? Not necessarily, they finally teach proper attitudes by suggesting ready solutions to students.

However, there might be a better way to teach students how to react in the right way, solve tensions in relationships, or make wise choices.

The practical difference between the typical attitude of the teacher teaching children and the attitude of the teacher-coach is that **the first focuses on the solution, while the second one (coach) focuses on the students and on their development.**

<u>Solution-focused questions are a good illustration of what an attempt to change what you are doing might look like without changing who you are.</u>

In other words, what you say comes from who you are. '*For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.'*

What you say will not change until you change. Therefore, to change your behaviour, you have to be changed at the "being" level, not just at the "doing" level. (Based on the book: *Leadership Coaching*, Tony Stoltzfus).

If you have previously seen coaching as a way to change behaviour of students through certain tools and techniques, then this is not the coaching we introduce in our schools.

You cannot become a good teacher-coach by adding additional techniques and tools to your workshop.

Becoming a good teacher-coach is a project that changes your values, the way you look at people or the way you talk to them. Becoming a teacher-coach bringing transformation into the lives of students begins with the transformation of yourself.

Starting the development of students, we must start from ourselves and in particular from the coach's heart. Then all other skills get significance, because they cease to be just a technique and become a habit of believing in people.

Thus, the three questions above in the light of the coaching philosophy could be as follows:

- How could it help you if you took notes from what you read in the book?
- How could you solve the problem between you and your friend?
- How could you benefit from talking to your dad about what you thing about?

The values in coaching

Values are our deep convictions. They define our lives, decisions we make, the passions we live for and explain how we make decisions. Values determine who we really are.

1. The faith in students

Coaching approaches the students with respect and faith. It uses tools such as listening, asking questions, and keeps the responsibility on the pupils instead of giving them ready answers. These attitudes are a practical expression of faith in a student.

2. Life creates the possibilities of a change

The life creates opportunities that shape our growth, pushes us to move forward through real experiences in our lives. Change begins with openness in the student's heart and desire, which is why the coach is waiting to see what is going on in the student's life before he gets involved in solving problems and creating his plan.

Leaders take the responsibility

Coaches develop the leader attitudes through placing their students in the position of taking responsibilities and letting them solve their own problems. Taking away these responsibilities, stops their growth. That's why the coach helps them to set their plans, goals, solutions and actions, instead of doing it for them by 'spoon-feeding'.

Experience as the base of change

Learning through experience is one of the most efficient ways of educating. Things that shape us the most, come as experience and relation, not by given information. Because of that, coaching students focuses on involving their life experience that teaches clear relations, to create a permanent change.

Learning throughout the whole life

Life is an ongoing process taking place in the life of every student. This everyday life gives opportunities for growth and development. Coaching works because it takes seriously what brings life to introduce a valuable change in the student's life.

Therefore, teacher-coaches listen intensely and intuitively, because every event in the student's life is important and significant.

Service comes from being

Our behaviour is ultimately determined by who we are. This behaviour is a resultant of character. So what we do is a function of who we are. Identity, character and destiny result in a huge potential for change. This is why coaching focuses on changing what you do by changing who you are.

Learning in the school community

Maximized growth and fulfilment that result from destiny are possible only between the community of people that learn from each other. School is such a community. Coaching contributes irreplaceable input so that we can reach further and higher. Therefore, coaches intuitively invest in relationships as a vital part of the process of change.

Authentic relations of love and interest

The atmosphere of love and open relationships release us from the hidden fears that pull us down. They also give access to our lives in a deeper way to the experience of openness, unconditional acceptance and love. That is why coaches consciously foster the creation of a genuine atmosphere of acceptance that opens up students to a change.

Managing your own life

Similarly to us being responsible for our own lives, the students grow up to be fully responsible for their lives. Coaching is a process that helps them. We are

individually responsible for our choices, and for fulfilling the gift and the vocation that is given to the students. Teacher-coaches never deprive students of freedom of choice by telling them what to do, because free will is a gift given by the Creator.

Every student is exceptional

Every student is uniquely valuable with characteristic gifts, history and vocation. Coaching is an individualized process because people are individuals in themselves. That is why coaching follows the student's concept.

GROW MODEL

The GROW model is probably the most popular model in coaching. It is the acronym of the words: G - goal, R - reality, O - options, W - will. This model directs the client to define clear and understandable actions, which he is ready (he wants to) to undertake, by defining and understanding his current situation, through the analysis of all options and solutions,.

THE MAIN OBJECTIVE

Reaching the goal that the student wants to achieve is the key. The goal may be to hold one coaching meeting, or to hold a session of several meetings that aim to achieve a clear goal. The coaching goal should be stated at the beginning of the meeting, because that will help in the more effective implementation of the process and will bring a better result.

REALITY

We help the students determine the reality in which they are at the moment. This helps them to see the situation they are in, in a more objective way, and also helps them to see and take into account all factors that take place.

OPTIONS

At this stage we help the student to find and name various options, possibilities or ways of solutions. The point is to identify a few different possible ways from which he will choose in the future the one that seems best to him. It also matters that this stage is a creative work of the student (not a coach). He is the one who finds and chooses the best solutions for himself.

WILL

This is the key step that makes it possible to translate the theoretically perceived opportunities or solutions into practical activities that are to be implemented in the future. It is important that the list of practical activities consists only of the ones that the students is convinced about.

Comments:

- Setting goals before determining the reality seems a bit strange. It might seem that first we should determine the reality and then set the goals. But this is not the case; by defining goals through the prism of reality, we will probably get the negative or impossible picture of the change we want to make. Reverse action gives the possibility of introducing a missing quality or a new feature taking into account and understanding the current situation. Also, sometimes looking at the good situation which is today we do not want what could be better for us tomorrow.

- The GROW model works in the space of a student with high self-awareness, as well as in cases of taking responsibility for studying, increasing its productivity, starting to exercise or managing your life in a better way,…

COACHING FUNNEL MODEL

This model starts with the answer to the question about the ultimate goal that the student wants to achieve. Then the coach broadens the scope of the conversation by external and internal aspects by asking a number of open questions. What follows is that based on the information obtained, the student has the opportunity to choose the right solution to the problem or challenge from

among the various options. The interaction ends when specific steps are taken to solve the problem.

STEP 1: OBJECTIVE

To develop a clear goal formula, you can use the SMART format in one brief sentence.

STEP 2: INVESTIGATION

After defining a clear goal, you need to investigate what exactly happened. It is possible to test both the external situation and internal relations that had an impact on the current situation. It is worth to capture the key phrase, the word, repeat it to the student and ask what he/she means, ask for more information.

SETP 3: OPTIONS

The conversation process leads the student to search for many potential answers or solutions. They often start with the solutions that have already been in the head of the coached person. The real potential of coaching occurs when the students begin to cross their boundaries when they open up and when they goes beyond their thinking patterns.

STEP 4: DECISION

Now the coach helps the client to decide which course of action will bring him closer to achieving the goal. At this point, one of many options is chosen and the decision is being made. The aim is to walk this path:

"I could> want> I will do". In order to effectively close the process, it is important that the student declares what they will do. It's about turning words into action.

STEP 5: OPERATION

At this stage, we translate the direction of the aspiration or the purpose of the student's actions into concrete steps that they will undertake, which they identify with. It is about clear articulation of what will be done at what stage.

The proofs of effectiveness of coaching

One of the teachers in our school, as a result of coaching training, changed the way of working with students, and introduced much more questions to their lessons in standard.
As a didactic teacher, he asks questions that build up responsibility for learning:
- what will it give you? what will you learn?

As an educator, he asks questions about the motivation that is needed to bring a change in life: - what motivates you? or what is important to you?
Working by the project method, the teacher-coach asks questions that build awareness: - who will work with you? - what will the achievement of this thing give you? - what will you achieve by achieving this goal?

In order to motivate students to finalize projects or complete the ones they have started, he asks questions like: - how do you know that you will achieve the goal? - how will you check it?

If the teacher sees the need of perseverance in achieving a goal, he asks: - who will celebrate with you when you finish the project? How will you celebrate? who will find out that you have accomplished such an amazing task?

Another teacher notices the value of developing listening skills and building an atmosphere of mutual respect, which leads to increased trust, creates space for asking questions and looking for different ways to solve given problems. It also encourages mutual cooperation in a team.

Research that confirms the value of coaching in education

Even though the application of coaching in education is relatively new, a database of works confirming the effectiveness of this methos is already being created. And so, they found out that*:

Coaching has a positive effect on the use of didactic methods in classes (research in the US: Brown, Reumann-Moore, Hugh, Christman, Roffer, 2008);

Individual coaching for students leads to a significant increase in the level of their psychological immunity (Green, Grant, Rynsa161616ard, 2007);

Coaching in relation to teachers is able to increase the student's involvement (research in the US: Brown, Reumann-Moore, Hugh, Christman, Roffer, 2008);

Professional coaching increases student involvement in achieving goals and the process of achieving goals itself (Green, Grant, Rynsaard, 2007);

Madden, Green, Grant (2011) found that the use of coaching solutions supports primary school students in finding and identifying their own strengths and resources.

∗ *Material taken from the study: "How to help young people to enter into adulthood", ed. Lilina Kupaj*