

Pre-coaching ritual

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Purpose

The purpose of this strategy is to help you become clear and focused on your client prior to a coaching session.

Description

For some, a pre-coaching ritual may enhance listening ability and presence in a coaching session. In addition to your practical preparation (such as going over any notes, switching off your phone and ensuring you have all the necessary stationery, etc.), mental preparation is very important. It allows you, as a coach, to put aside your own ‘stuff’, feel calm and focused and be able to listen one hundred percent to the client. A personalized ritual that you perform before every session may be a good way of achieving this.

Process

This is not for use during a session but in advance of the session as part of your preparation:

- Think of an action or process which you enjoy that is likely to make you feel calm, energized or any other quality you want to enhance. Some suggestions: visualization, sitting quietly with a hot drink, writing a list of the things on your mind and then placing it in a drawer and closing it, a yoga posture, a mantra, a short meditation, dancing

madly to your favourite song or a symbolic gesture such as pouring your thoughts down the sink. As is the case with your clients, the most powerful ritual will be the one you come up with yourself.

- Repetition of your personal ritual is likely to increase its power. As your mind starts to recognize that this action means it is time for coaching, it will automatically begin to prepare.
- Try to find a way to incorporate this ritual into your coaching schedule that means you will always have time to do it and it will not be squeezed out by other events.

Pitfalls

This exercise may not be so effective at first until you become skilled at de-cluttering your mind as a matter of course. Persistence, however, will reap massive benefits.

Bibliography

O'Connor, J. and Seymour, J. (2003) *Introducing NLP Neuro-Linguistic Programming*, London: Thorsons.