



The Big Blue Box Ltd

Finding The Real Issues

The coaching relationship is often a catalyst for significant change. Change often takes place outside the times of the coaching session – when the coachee has had time to reflect. Frequently, a coachee will come to the next session with a revised agenda, based upon the catalytic effect of the previous session. This could also be enhanced by the opportunity to ‘unload’ and discuss issues in a safe place, trusting the coach and the privacy, objectivity and independence that an external coach can offer.

Background

We’d had a very good first meeting, and had probed several issues around B’s performance, he’d written to say thank you and indicated that he was already working on his action plan. The first session had been ‘work focused’ but the second session found B very burdened by issues outside work, but had been clearly hinted at in the initial conversation. It was clear that his performance at work was now being impacted substantially.

The Process

It was now apparent that the first meeting had been necessary to set up the opportunity for B to really explore the key issues in a second session – B needed to have exceptional ‘trust’ as the issues he really needed to resolve were deep seated and very painful. B’s natural ‘pride’ was set aside as we discussed openly the powerful emotional issues within his close family unit.

We discussed how B’s role in the family and the structure of the family were changing as the children became independent; how B’s personal values were being challenged by this process over which he had no control. This was made more complex due to the cultural and social expectations that B’s wider family and community maintained.

The Outcomes

B is a key leader in his business whose life had been ‘charmed’ up to this point - nothing had gone wrong, yet suddenly the most important part of his life had taken an unexpected direction and he had been unprepared for it. B had been totally focused on ‘others’ to the detriment of ‘himself’ consequently he had no resources ‘to fall back on’ or distractions to occupy him except work and close relationships at home.

The coaching process was not able to resolve the family issues but it was able to provide B with a safe place to share the problem and examine it. It also explored alternative approaches to conflict situations. It helped B to realise that his performance was not independent of his wider ‘home’ life. He decided to improve the work / life balance and began to explore the options that this stage in his life could offer.

The action plan was revised and enhanced to include ‘challenges’ and ambitions for B himself to explore outside work.

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