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Editorial

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Following the tradition of previous special issues of the International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring (IJEBCM), this special issue provides a publication platform for post-graduate students who recently completed their MA and Doctorate in Coaching/Mentoring at Oxford Brookes University, and consequently presented their research at the annual Coaching and Mentoring Research conference that was held in Oxford Brookes on Thursday 18 January 2018. Additionally, this year's conference benefitted from contributions from graduates from other Universities, who have also been invited to contribute to this special issue. In consequence, and similarly to previous special issues, this issue provides conference participants with the opportunity to share their research methodologies and findings with IJEBCM readers around the world.

The issue comprises twelve papers. The first six papers discuss – in one way or another – coaching issues that are prevalent in organisational settings. The first two of those focus on executive coaching. The following two discuss coaching from a manager's perspective, while the latter two explore the value of coaching for 'high potential' employees in an organisation, and the lived experience of internal coaches in a Higher Education institution. Moving away from organisational settings, the seventh and eighth papers discuss coaching from the perspective of clients, the former focusing on MBA students and the latter on the distinct theme of the autonomy of the client. Our ninth paper places emphasis on leadership development via the vehicle of team coaching, while the tenth paper explores the professional development of coach supervisors. The eleventh paper discusses the practical and ethical implications of coach reflexivity through the medium of poetry. The special issue concludes with the sole article in this publication on the effectiveness of mentoring.

Roger Noon's paper is the first of a series of articles on the use of coaching in organisational contexts. Moving beyond conventional research on the outcomes of executive coaching, Noon's article focuses on the under-researched phenomenon of presence in executive coaching. Adopting a constructivist stance, the methodology of conceptual encounter is combined with the novel extension of a focus group to map the structure and nature of presence in executive coaching. The article introduces the "C² Model", which highlights the importance of client presence, emphasises a dynamic nature, and suggests a link to wellbeing and moments of insight. The article also reports conditions for presence, assessing its utility. The study concludes by postulating presence as a way of being that plays a significant role in effective coaching, both for the client and the coach.

Within the same context of executive coaching, our second paper focuses on the leadership behaviours that executive coaching influences and moulds. Using



qualitative research and case studies of coachee/manager dyads, Fenella Mary Herries Trevillion explores who defines the coaching agenda, the outcomes, and the potential effectiveness of executive coaching. She also places due attention to the coaching contract. The article concludes by inviting further research to investigate the transformational impacts of coaching at the deep emotional level.

The third and fourth papers of this special issue move to the specific arena of managerial coaching. Using a mixed methods methodological approach, Tamsin Webster explores the effectiveness on the outcomes of coaching, as perceived by coachees, managers, and practitioners within the field. The study's findings show that those approaches that required discretionary effort as opposed to prescribed involvement were perceived to have a greater impact on coaching outcomes. Discussing what she terms a 'hostile' culture, Sally Smith uses Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to provide insights into how a group of managers make sense of their experience of managerial coaching, with data gathered from six purposely selected face-to-face interviews. Through a thematic analysis approach, she argues that when managers adopt coaching in a toxic culture, they overcome the surrounding negative forces by creating a sub-culture conducive to, and supportive of coaching. As a result, an unfriendly culture can have a secondary effect and become a motivator that reinforces a manager's determination to follow a coaching approach.

The final two papers in the theme of coaching in organisational settings explore two distinct issues. Using a case study methodology, Maaïke Taconis explores the value of coaching 'high potential' employees as part of a leadership development programme, taking into consideration the perspectives of both the organisation and the coaching participants. Her findings show that the coaching readiness of participants could be influenced both by the organisation and the relationship with the coach and that both the organisation and the participants valued personal realisations, increased effectiveness and career moves, even though they played emphasis on different elements of coaching.

Jo Feehily's paper closes the section on coaching in organisational settings by shifting our attention to the lived experience of internal coaches in a large, UK-based Higher Education Institution. Employing Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, her paper seeks to understand the sense that internal coaches make of their experience and discusses three types of sense-making: reactive sense-making, through which coaches experience self-efficacy to address work related issues, align work with personal values, and impact the way others behave towards them; embodied sense-making, via which coaching is seen to impact internal coaches positively via self-care and self-management skills; and experiential sense-making, that is presented as a personal development process, which appears to contribute to altruism in those coaches who demonstrate concern for the wellbeing of others.

The following two papers explore coaching from the perspective of the client in two distinct settings. Maria Smith's study also deploys Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to explore how five full time Master of Business Administration (FTMBA) students experienced coaching during their studies. Life stage transition was apparent for all five students and coaching seems to have enabled them to deepen their self-awareness and develop a more empowered sense of self. The article highlights the safe holding space provided by coaching as the basis for dealing with



the psychological adjustments inherent in transition and for developing new strategies to realise future vision.

In the eighth paper of this special issue, Sandra Schiemann, Christina Mühlberger, and Eva Jonas explore the autonomy of clients in coaching, based on the overview of three research studies. The first one focuses on the clients' basic psychological needs within the context of coaching and found that coaching was expected to fulfil the client's need for autonomy, mainly. The second showed that, if a client had a high need for autonomy, this need could be fulfilled by coaching, which further increased the client's satisfaction with the coaching process. In the third study, the coach's empathy seemed to contribute to supporting clients in their autonomy. The paper concludes by discussing theoretical and practical implications regarding the importance of autonomy and its support within coaching.

The ninth paper in this special issue discusses the topical theme of team coaching. Sue Fontannaz highlights the multiple perspectives on coaching, which are influenced by perceptions, expectations and experiences of the discipline. The article draws on an instrumental case study situated in a team context to offer a temporal, multi-stakeholder perspective on the perceptions, expectations and experiences of coaching. It also contributes to broadening our understanding of the relationship between coaching perspectives and engagement with the coaching process.

The tenth paper shifts our attention to the important issue of coaching supervision and, in particular, the topic of the development of coaching supervisors past their training. Employing a narrative interpretivist methodology, Natalia de Estevan-Ubeda interviewed seven highly experienced coach supervisors in order to gain a deeper insight into their developmental trajectory. The study's findings suggest that experiential learning is the main source of these supervisors' development. The article concludes by offering practical recommendations for training and accrediting bodies, and by proposing joint research with other helping professions.

The penultimate article in this special issue explores the significant topic of reflexivity through the medium of poetry. Reflexivity, Jacki McCartney argues, is a core enabler of an ethical coaching practice and personal and professional growth. In her paper, she attempts to offer a more clear appreciation of the term, its application, its benefits and its practice which, she claims, might be misperceived. Through a heuristic analysis approach, she explores the possible benefits of using poetry in supporting reflexive engagement for the professional coaching practitioner.

Finally, this special issue concludes with a thought-provoking paper on mentoring. In her study, Catherine Evans explores the significance of trust between mentors and mentees. Utilising a case study methodology, her article considers how trust can be generated in a formal mentoring scheme in a third-sector organisation, the NCT. Her findings show that trust develops in a complex manner, through several layers that include multi-faceted connections between mentees and mentors, plus organisational features promoting support and expectations of behaviour. The paper's core recommendation is that formal mentoring schemes should match mentees and mentors with connections in mind. Mentors might endeavour to enhance these connections, but mentees need to be engaged for this to be effective.

