What is emotional labour for coaches?

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Abstract

Emotional labour (EL) is the activity of maintaining an appropriate outward demeanour at work. Whilst EL studies proliferate in many sectors and roles, no such work has been conducted in the field of coaching to identify the role of EL. The aim of this research is to explore the presence, experience and effects of EL from the perspective of the coach in their practice.

The study employed a phenomenological approach, using Conceptual Encounter methodology. One-to-one interviews and group discussions with 15 coaches and supervisors of coaching surfaced instances of EL both in and out of the coaching 'room'. Coaches described their experiences and contexts where EL was present, and the 'display rules' to which they were striving to adhere. EL in coaching presented as the drive to display an acceptable 'face', to both coachees and those around coaching, which satisfied the coach's own perceptions of professional coaching.

This study found disparate and varied perceptions of display rules in coaching practice, a weak influence of professional standards, and a disconnect between the presentation of coaching to stakeholders / payers and the act of coaching itself. Coaches' experiences of EL had high commonality with outcomes in other fields and roles, such as impacts on authenticity, detachment, resource drain and 'burnout'. Other themes of the study include coaching as a maturing profession in relation to behavioural norms, and a questionable approach to organisational contracting from coaches. In addition, those coaches who employed 'use of self' as the primary instrument of coaching experienced less EL in the coaching dyad. This empirical study contributes to the coaching literature by surfacing the presence of EL in coaching, and the emergence and naming of *commercial* EL in the contracting dynamic may contribute to the EL literature overall.

These findings have implications for coaches, along with supervisors, educators and trainers of coaches, and professional associations for the preservation and well-being of the coach. In addition, organisational contractors of coaching may benefit from a better understanding of the EL dynamic (particularly commercial EL), and how external coaches may 'fit' within their contexts.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Research focus and context

The spark of interest for this research originated from a professional experience of one-to-one coaching. Whilst meeting with a client I became acutely aware of the differences in how we were arriving at coaching, and that I felt the need to actively manage myself to account for this perceived difference; to adapt my behaviour. That perceived need to actively manage myself began a process of thinking about the nature of that management more generally: what was being managed, and what were the potential benefits and consequences of doing so? What were the norms with which I felt the need to comply, and whose norms were these?

In exploring the general theme of the self-management of the coach and reading around other professional contexts, the idea of 'display rules' emerged as a concept which I recognised from my own coaching practice. Display rules are outward displays intended to produce, as Arlie Russell Hochschild (1983, p.7) claimed, "the proper state of mind in others". I became highly curious about what the proper state of mind for coachees is, what coaches do to induce or aid that state, and how coaches manage themselves towards doing so?

The literature around emotional labour (EL), originated by the American sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild, became a rich source of information since it seemed highly relevant to coaching. My original experience which made me curious about what was happening for me as a coach soon met the rich vein of studies in EL in other fields, and the idea of the emotional management of the coach captured my interest.

EL was named in 1983 when Hochschild wrote *The Managed Heart*. She described EL as that which we do in the workplace, for monetary return, to "induce or suppress feeling…" (p.7) in order to play our expected part within our job role.

Whilst there are numerous studies of EL spanning four decades, none of these attends to the EL of the coach or considers EL in coaching, although there are studies which may hint at the EL of the coach, which will be considered in the literature review. I have been a full-time coach for a decade and a half, and I wondered why this gap persisted, why I had not heard of EL in the coaching context, and why self-management of the coach was not a topic of discussion. In professional training, academic studies and professional development activities over fifteen years or so I had not encountered any mention, let alone empirical work, which referenced EL or the ideas around the concept. Whilst there are some embryonic references to Hochschild's work in the coaching sphere, such as Bachkirova in 'The self of the coach' (2016), there have been no specific studies on the EL of the coach. In *The SAGE Handbook of Coaching,* Cox also devotes some space to EL and notes the lack of empirical work in the field (2016).

As with any increasing interest and attentional focus in one area, the idea of EL in coaching has become central to my thinking about the role of the coach - to the extent that it is the sole area of focus for this thesis, resulting in the research question: what is emotional labour for coaches?

1.1.1 Background and context of the problem

Whilst it is the case that no empirical research exists on EL from a coach perspective, as will be described in the literature review, there are other important reasons to conduct this work other than the gap itself. The effects of EL in other fields outside of coaching demonstrate some highly undesirable outcomes for role holders who labour in the inward and outward management of emotions towards an expected display. It would seem unlikely that EL has no presence in the coaching sphere, given the prevalence of EL research in associated fields, but in coaching we do not have a clear sense of what these display rules are, from where they emanate, and the strength of

influence they may have on coach behaviour. To understand what display rules (acceptable demeanour) are for coaches, then, will be critical to this study - as without them there is no EL. Further, very little has been written and studied from a coach perspective about the nature of the work they do, and how it may have both potential positive and negative outcomes for the coach themselves. It is important to consider how the potentially damaging effects of EL impact on coaches, and to strengthen the thread of work in coaching research around what good coach care is. Bachkirova (2016) places attention and focus on 'care for the instrument' (meaning the coach) and outlines ways of both understanding and caring for that instrument, but research attention on this aspect of care is very light in the literature overall. In addition, if there are ways in which coaches might minimise the negative impacts of EL, then that knowledge will have implications for coaches themselves, for training, supervisors, frameworks and for accreditation in pursuit of protecting and preserving the coach.

The focus of this research, then, is the lived experiences of coaches and coach supervisors in relation to EL. Whilst it is likely that research participants may not recognise the terms and language of EL, as was the case for me at first, they will have experienced the management of their emotions in coaching - and it is these experiences of emotional management which are core to the concept of EL which I intend to study.

The context of this research is very different from Hochschild's original study work in several respects. Firstly, the nature of the serving relationship between Hochschild's air hostesses (with whom she conducted her original research) and their clients differs from that of the coach and coachee. The coach is there to serve in one sense, but is also seen as an equal partner, and not subservient. Secondly, the purpose of coaching differs in that it is not wholly a needs satisfaction exercise, but one in which appropriate challenge and discomfort are common. Finally, the social context in which coaching happens makes this study distinct from Hochschild's original work, including

the passing of four decades and changing wider societal norms, and views on the nature of work.

1.2 Research aims and objectives

The aim of this study is to explore the concept of EL in coaching, and to explore its role for coaches from their experiences and perspectives. In doing this, a concept which was originally developed in other fields will be explored in coaching, contributing to greater understanding of EL in the specific context of coaching practice.

The study will fulfil the following objectives:

1. To critically evaluate existing academic research in fields where EL research is prolific, such as service industries, the nursing and healthcare field, education and other professional settings.

2. To explore EL in the context of coaching from the perspective of the coach, and with the additional insights of supervisors of coaching.

3. To develop a conceptual framework of how coaches experience EL.

4. To make a contribution to the coaching discipline by gaining an understanding of experiences of EL, and to contribute to coaching practice by gaining further insight into the ways that EL of coaches can be managed and supported.

Furthermore, several decades have elapsed since Hochschild's original conceptualisation of EL. Exploration of the development of the field of EL over time, through literature search and critical review, will be required to explore both the support for, and challenges to, Hochschild's ideas in *The Managed Heart* (1983). Therefore, the intention of this study is to take a fresh research-based approach to explore the concept of EL in coaching, and to evaluate its role for coaches, from their experiences

and perspectives. In doing so, there is potential to contribute to a better understanding of EL overall, as well as in the specific context of coaches.

1.3 Literature and definitions

The most influential research in the field of EL is by Hochschild herself, as the originator of the concept (1983), but many followed her over the decades. Notable, and most cited, is the work of Ashforth and Humphrey (1993), who examined EL in service roles, and also Morris and Feldman (1996) who researched the 'dimensions, antecedents, and consequences of emotional labour'. In the field of healthcare and nursing, a rich source of EL literature, James (1989) investigated EL in the regulation of feelings. Brotheridge and Grandey (2000) researched EL specifically in relation to burnout as a potential outcome of the experience of EL. These studies are the most highly cited in EL work, with academic citations in their thousands, and they are also of high relevance to this study; they explore the experiences of EL, what causes EL, and the effects on workers and role holders. The literature review will bring these studies and many others into view in order to understand what EL is, what it does (impacts), the debates and controversies in the field, and the literature in the coaching arena which may relate to EL overall.

Hochschild (2018) in an interview for The Atlantic, reported by Beck (2018) refers to her 1983 work to define EL:

> "Emotional labor, as I introduced the term in *The Managed Heart,* is the work, for which you're paid, which centrally involves trying to feel the right feeling for the job. This involves evoking and suppressing feelings. Some jobs require a lot of it, some a little of it. From the flight attendant whose job it is to be nicer than natural to the bill collector whose job it is

> to be, if necessary, harsher than natural, there are a variety of jobs that call for this. Teachers, nursing-home attendants, and child-care workers are examples. The point is that while you may also be doing physical labor and mental labor, you are crucially being hired and monitored for your capacity to manage and produce a feeling."

The literature on EL is prolific and burgeoning, and research work is continuing in the present day on EL and its components from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives. Whilst some debate and disagreements persist, overall, there is a high level of agreement on the existence of EL, its components, drivers, and outcomes. The main debates around EL hinge upon the degree to which 'acting' is seen as detrimental. The need to regulate outward demeanour through simple pretence (which is termed *surface acting*) is almost universally seen as damaging, with some debate on the effects of thought-modifying strategies (which are termed *deep acting*) as a means to modify outward display. The weight of evidence, though, lies with the numerous studies which describe the experience and outcomes of emotional labourers and the detrimental effects that it has on authenticity, role commitment, stress, and even potentially burnout.

The literature at large provides varied contexts and insights which are of relevance and use to this study, and these will be harnessed to address the research question, informing both a conceptual model and the interview questions posed to participants.

1.4 Research design and methodology

In pursuit of understanding what EL is for coaches, a number of methodological choices present themselves. My desire to access the lived experience of coaches requires an approach which enables the generation of that kind of knowledge. This

immediately discounts methodologies which generate quantitative data, and also immediately discounted are grounded approaches which seek to build knowledge from a low base - given the wealth of understanding we have about EL already in other fields of work. Phenomenological approaches, though, are a close fit with the research question in that they seek to understand phenomena through the eyes of those experiencing them. Amongst the choices and routes to knowledge, I was highly attracted to de Rivera's (1981) Conceptual Encounter (CE) methodology, which is designed to explore the lived experience of research participants. Given my own professional interest in the topic, and my experiences which generated the research question, this methodology was a closer fit than other methodologies which seek to separate the researcher's own experience from the research in some way. I want to harness my experience and play an integral and central role in the research process, and CE allows me the opportunity to do just that.

With CE, I am the creator of the concept to be researched, which is built from the literature in the field and from my professional experience. The creation of a starting *model* or *map* is one method within CE: a synthesis of my personal experience as a coach and my response to the literature on EL. The model acts as both a catalyst to participants' thinking during research interviews, and a structure to adapt based on participants' recounted experiences. I act on these contributions to make meaning, take meaning, and re-make meaning - which is then carried forward, iteratively, to the next exposure:

> "Constructing a map is an interesting technique that may be used as part of a conceptual encounter. It forces us to make choices about how concepts are related to each other." (de Rivera, 1981, p.76)

In conjunction with supervision, the model or map of experience becomes honed and developed to the point where the *structure of those experiences* (de Rivera, 1981)

becomes recognisable, firstly to participants themselves, and ultimately to the wider audiences for research. Quality criteria for qualitative research will necessarily be a focus throughout this work and these are addressed specifically within the methodology chapter of this thesis.

Participants, or research partners, were recruited through purposive selection using professional networks and associations, and these partners engaged in the interview and model presentation process, which is consistent with recent CE practice (Noon, 2018). In addition, two focus groups were conducted, following initial interviews. Through this work, the conceptual model was evolved, changed and adapted to reflect the experiences which were recounted, and the responses of participants to the model itself. In addition, the transcribed words of all interviews were analysed to draw out emergent themes. In this implementation of CE, both the model/map itself and the emergent themes built from participants' words form the final concept together.

1.5 Thesis overview

Chapter One sets out the focus of the research, its context, its literature and definitions, theoretical background, and an overview of the research.

Chapter Two reviews the literature in the EL field, including relevant and associated coaching literature. The chapter focuses on the EL studies since Hochschild's original work, through three decades and many sectors. Coaching studies which relate to EL will also be reviewed.

Chapter Three considers the philosophical position taken, and the resultant methodological choice made.

Chapter Four details findings of the research work, which emerge from the methods employed: the conceptual model in final form; and the inputs which interviews and focus groups contributed to the model.

Chapter Five is a discussion of the findings, and exploration of the conceptual model.

Chapter Six concludes the thesis, with implications, impacts and contribution, and potential further research areas identified.

2 Literature Review

Emotional labour (EL) is the labour we expend in managing ourselves in work, in order to create the proper state of mind in others, and to meet the expectations of our roles in relation to external display. This concept has been researched across time, from multiple perspectives and through various methodological lenses, and the literature available in the field is plentiful. The aim of this literature review is to clarify from the literature what EL *is*, and how it has been studied to understand its nature. The effects of EL in terms of the impacts on emotional labourers are then explored in multiple fields of study. Debates and controversies around EL will then be highlighted.

The relationship between EL and coaching will be drawn out from the literature, and the relevance to my research question will be considered. Whilst no direct empirical work exists in the coaching field, the literature that has relevance to EL and work which highlights the EL of the coach is considered, which gives rise to the structure of this review:

- What is emotional labour?
- What are the effects or impacts for emotional labourers?
- What debates and controversies exist around EL?
- EL and coaching: relevant concepts and studies.

2.1 What is Emotional Labour?

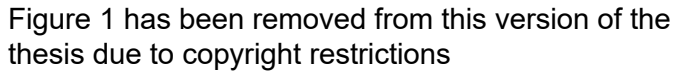
EL is a concept which has flourished since Arlie Russell Hochschild identified and named it in *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* in 1983. The proliferation of Hochschild 's ideas has spanned the decades since the first edition of the work, and as an illustration of Hochschild's influence, an internet search using Google for the exact term "the managed heart" returns circa 150,000 results, and almost 19,000 on the Google Scholar platform. The online presence of Hochschild's work is an indication of long-standing interest from the research community. So what is emotional labour exactly?

Researching stewardess training at Delta Airlines in the United States in the early 1980s, Hochschild noticed how much trainers and supervisors stressed the importance of smiling to customers - and how much smiling was part of the brand identity of the organisation. Smiling was core to Delta's promotional and marketing efforts to attract and keep passengers:

> "(…) go out there and really smile. Your smile is your biggest asset. I want you to go out there and use it. Smile. Really smile. Really lay it on?" Hochschild (1983, p.4)

Hochschild (1983, p.22) noticed that "…the emotional style of offering the service is part of the service itself…" and as such it was part of the job requirement for stewardesses.

Figure 1: An advertisement for Delta Airlines (1969)



Magazine and newspaper advertisements of the times feature the smile as a central characteristic of the Delta stewardess, and as this promotional advert describes - Delta has ‘no put-on smiles’ (even though that was what both training and expectation

encouraged people to do - go out there and smile). Hochschild also explained EL as distinct from emotion work or emotion management in a non-work context:

> "* I use the term emotional labor to mean the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value." (1983, p.35)

Hochschild's study and observation extended beyond airline service workers into examining numerous other work roles and contexts by the time the 2012 edition of *The Managed Heart* was published. Hochschild's descriptions offer insight into how she defines EL:

> "This [emotional] labor requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (2012, p.23)

In the case of stewardesses, that meant displaying a certain demeanour, a precise physical appearance, and smiling; in the case of debt collectors, it meant something quite different - maintaining, perhaps, a stern and threatening countenance. The "proper state of mind in others" is clearly highly role- and context-dependent.

2.1.1 Display rules, surface acting and deep acting

Hochschild described some important elements in EL, including the ideas of *display rules, surface acting* and *deep acting,* which are all central to the understanding of the concept.

Display rules refer to the accepted or prescribed demeanour required by the role (Hochschild, 2012, p.56); the way in which we are supposed to behave in work roles - which, as we have already touched upon, varies depending on the role in question. In fact, Hochschild referred to 'feeling rules' rather than 'display rules' in her original work

- and only used the term 'display rules' on two occasions (in footnotes) in *The Managed Heart*, (1983), but used the phrase 'feeling rules' on well over a hundred occasions. Ashforth and Humphrey (1993, pp.89-90) stated that:

> "…we prefer the term display rules (Ekman, 1993) to feeling rules because the former refers to what emotions ought to be publicly expressed rather than to what emotions are actually felt" (McClure and Murphy, 2007).

Whilst some researchers, such as McClure and Murphy (2007), noted Hochschild's original terminology, others such as Morris and Feldman (1996) simply adopt 'display rules' in describing this dimension of EL. The term 'display rules' has superseded Hochschild's original terminology and appears to be universally accepted as a replacement term in research. As such, I adopt the term 'display rules' in this work.

Hochschild described her understanding around surface acting and deep acting:

> "In surface acting we deceive others about what we really feel, but we do not deceive ourselves. Diplomats and actors do this best, and very small children do it worst (it is part of their charm). In deep acting we make feigning easy by making it unnecessary." (1983, p.42)

Surface acting is the functional smile, behind which there is no sincerity; deep acting is the genuine attempt to identify with the role requirement and to find ways to connect with the smile or deliver whatever behaviour is expected. Gray and Smith (2009) highlighted the varied contexts in which EL presents, but also pointed to the same labour experienced:

> "There is, of course, a vast difference between the bank teller who manufactures a smile because it is socially expected and the teacher

> who contends with the real dilemmas faced by students (...). However, the bottom line in both cases is that individuals may have to regulate their emotions in the workplace to express something different from the emotions that are felt." (Isenbarger and Zembylas 2006, p.123)

Having defined EL from its origins, the following literature carries forward Hochschild's original conceptualisation in research work from which we may further understand how EL presents in the varied contexts in which it has been studied.

In reviewing EL literature, it becomes immediately apparent that the service industries and nursing are both rich sources of study; in fact, together these sectors account for approximately half of the most cited work in the EL field. The expansion of the sectors and roles in EL research also expands the ideas around EL itself, for instance:

> "Theodosius (2008) (…) identified three types of emotional labour in nursing; therapeutic, collegial and instrumental." (Delgado et al 2017, p.72)

Therapeutic EL relates to the caring involved in nursing, the *collegial* to working with others, and the *instrumental* in the performing of duties, tasks, and procedures of nursing. In further expansion of the EL concept, Smith and Cowie (2010), relying heavily upon Bolton (2000; 2003) and Bolton and Boyd's (2003) reconceptualisation of EL, supported the view that there are different drivers (not *just* contexts) for EL:

> "…**presentational** (where emotions are managed according to social rules); **philanthropic** (where emotion management is offered as a gift); **prescriptive** (where emotions are managed in line with organisational or professional codes of conduct); **pecuniary** (where emotions are managed for commercial gain)." (Smith and Cowie, 2010, p.3) (bolding added)

Smith and Cowie (2010) suggested that *presentational* and *philanthropic* EL are presented by Bolton and Boyd as positive, and *prescriptive* and *pecuniary* EL as negative experiences of EL, but with little specificity of what that might mean - positive in what ways, for who, and with what outcomes?

Whilst Theodosius (2008) identified the relationships and situations in which EL is evident, Bolton and Boyd (2003) identified the motivations for that EL. Theodosius (2008) described further how Hochschild's ideas of EL relate to nurses and nursing, and these experiences are highly reminiscent of Goffman's ideas of on-stage and offstage / backstage presentations of self (1978), and the metaphor of stage acting. Theodosius connected EL in nursing directly to the same labour which was described in *The Managed Heart* (1983) and identified the strength of the drivers of display rules in nursing which are culturally ingrained and pervasive (Munro, 2010; Ellis, 2019), accentuating the strength of EL experienced in the profession.

The strength of cultural rules, or expected display, impacting on EL is also borne out in other fields of work. For instance, EL studies in law (barristers and solicitors), position the roles as status professions where there is a high public expectation of display rules. Harris (2002) makes a point of differentiating EL in the context of barristers, noting the extreme nature of some of the role expectations in the law - such as historical garb of wigs and gowns, a form of aesthetic labour (Warhurst and Nickson, 2020), and the behavioural expectations of the role; however, these are the same drivers of EL that we have seen in other professions and are more a matter of degree, than a degree of difference.

The experiences of EL, surface acting and deep acting are also prevalent in the research in service industries. Liu, Prati and Perrewe (2008) found that surface acting was prevalent in their participants and Fineman (2000), in his study of service workers,

found that surface acting impacted negatively on experiences of work. In the tourism trade (Van Dijk, Smith and Cooper, 2011), including the roles of tour guides and tour leaders (Wong and Wang, 2009), holiday 'reps' (Constanti and Gibbs, 2005), and heritage site workers (Van Dijk and Kirk, 2007), EL is experienced in a way which align closely with Hochschild's original work. Fast food workers (Seymore, 2000), and beauty salon workers (Sharma and Black, 2001; Toerien and Kitzinger, 2007; Cohen 2010) also receive attention from EL researchers, with a similar high degree of commonality around describing EL, surface acting and deep acting. People in all these roles emotionally labour and do so by either surface acting (feigning / acting) or by attempting to connect emotionally with the required display (feeling / connecting) in relation to display rules.

Hochschild (2003, p.102) referred to another sort of service in the EL of prostitutes, and the research in the EL of sex workers, body work, and prostitution explores these contexts (Sanders, 2005; Kong, 2008; Kontula, 2008; Wolkowitz, Cohen, Sanders and Hardy, 2013). The idea of emotional faking (surface acting) is a strong theme in these research papers; the idea that basic competence in the process of providing sexual services is intrinsically bound up with the emotional faking or the surface acting that is required by the role. The examples of EL in sex work relate to the experiences of EL in the literature at large, but the importance of the display rule as part of the service is well illustrated by this context.

In many fields the experience of EL is expressed as frequent and common. In researching University Lecturers for instance, Ogbonna and Harris (2004) found that role incumbents noted instances of EL as an 'everyday occurrence'. Despite this reported commonality, though, there is a surprising lack of rich description in the literature around what EL actually feels like for the labourer. An insight into some of that experience of EL is provided in Iszatt-White and Lenney's (2020) work. As an

example of ‘professional emotional labour’, this work attempts to illuminate how EL is enacted. This study examines the experience of a business consultant in interaction with a client. Juxtaposing what was actually said (from transcript and recording) with the re-experiencing of the event through memory, we see the acting that is being done; and this commentary adds some understanding around the internal world of the labourer, and the external world of his expression.

When considering the literature on what EL is, it is also important to understand what EL is not, for the purposes of this research. Despite relatively widespread usage of the term EL, its nature is often misunderstood as a synonym for emotion, or anything emotional that is difficult or requires emotional effort. Whilst there is clearly a debate to be had on ‘who gets to decide what a term means’, the definition of EL is well-established through empirical research, and so it is noticeable when the term is misused in common parlance and in the academic field. An internet search on EL exposes a plethora of misuses of the term - such as ‘7 Signs You're Doing All Of The Emotional Labor In Your Relationship’, which defines EL as “…the time and energy that you spend” (Emery on Bustle.com, 2018). EL has pervaded into popular culture with a set of meanings which are distant from the original intention, and unaligned with how the research community conceptualises EL. Whilst some of this misunderstanding of EL may be due to a lack of depth and familiarity with the original work or its specific meaning from non-academics, there is also some academic lack of specificity and clarity around EL. Hunter and Smith (2007) highlighted the proliferation of EL studies, and some concerns over language:

> “…there is a danger that terminologies become blurred, resulting in a degree of semantic slippage. For example, emotional labour may be used to describe any work that has an emotional content.” (Hunter and Smith, 2007, p.860)

There is certainly a tendency at times in the literature to conflate general emotion or emotional experiences in work and EL, and there are numerous examples where this is the case (Staden, 1998; Smith, 1992; 2008; Henderson, 2001; Taggart, 2007; Lorentzon and Smith, 2008; Gray, 2009). It is important to recognise the specific elements of EL, and the concepts of display rules, surface acting and deep acting, and not to use EL as a 'catch all' for any emotional experience. This research is careful to exclude general emotional experiences in favour of the more specific meaning of EL which Hochschild originated, and legions follow. The examples of exposure to emotional or extreme content in job roles is typified by Harris's (2002) study of barristers exploring EL. The idea of occupational 'numbing', or desensitisation, was a stated outcome in this study of the performance of EL, and Harris recounted a study participant's words:

> "I think that barristers become emotionally desensitized to violence, to language, to what is 'normal'. I know that Fred [her husband] is slowly losing perspective: he has difficulties knowing what is polite dinner-table conversation ... umm… Last week he started telling my mother a story that I know ended with the cat being buggered: I had to kick him under the table - hard!!! (Solicitor of ten years' experience)." (Harris, 2002, p.574)

This desensitisation, though, appears more to do with frequent exposure to the abnormal, and no real case is made for it being related to the experience of EL, despite that being the focus of the research.

It is clear from the literature that EL itself and its components have been well recognised and studied, from multiple perspectives across time. Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp (2013) described the EL field as being viewed from three primary

perspectives: those of sociology, psychology, and organisational behaviour - which they term ‘focal lenses’. There is a recognisable chronology, from early qualitative research which sought to understand the nature of the experience and the concept within context, to later entrants towards and around the turn of the century from researching psychologists, and those interested in organisational dynamics and impacts.

From Hochschild’s early work examining the experiences of service workers, we see a sectoral and job role expansion which essentially looks at the same phenomena in differing circumstances and arrives at the same conclusions. There remains no serious challenge to Hochschild’s ideas here, and the concept and its components are ingrained in numerous works of study.

From the quantitative researching field, we see work to analyse, isolate, measure, scale and validate elements of EL. These are useful additions to furthering our knowledge of EL; of course, they can do little to inform the experience of EL for labourers and nor are they designed to do that. There is certainly benefit in being able to make some quantification of EL in order to do things like compare contexts, but by the same token this quantification may serve to shift focus from the lived experience of EL to its scientific components - which is potentially unhelpful given the nature *of the thing being studied*. The Emotional Labour Scale (Brotheridge and Lee, 2003), the Discrete Emotions Emotional Labor Scale (Glomb and Tews, 2004) and the Display Rule Perceptions Scale (Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand, 2005) are all notable examples. These works overall meet good quality criteria in identifying elements of EL, and importantly generally support the EL concept - though controversy and disagreements do exist as we shall examine.

In considering the maturity of a field of research, Reichers and Schneider's (1990) work describes the developmental stages of theory which might be applied to the state of EL in this respect - and Bono and Vey (2005) describe the final stage:

> "By this last stage, one or two key definitions and operationalizations have garnered common acceptance, and there is consensus as to the predictors and outcomes of the construct. During this stage, comprehensive meta-analyses are conducted and research efforts focused on the concept abate." (Bono and Vey in Härtel, Ashkanasy and Zerbe, 2005, p.214-215).

EL research can be seen as mature and developed when measured against this description - even if there are still some controversial and disputed areas. In essence, the central concept of EL has been largely unchallenged by any position of research, with a good deal of support garnered from differing perceptual positions.

Returning to my research question, the literature to this point supports the experience of EL in many and differing roles - and it would seem extraordinary if coaches were somehow immune or exempt from EL given the interactional nature of the activity of coaching. In order to start to understand what EL is for coaches though, we need to understand what coaching norms are, given that the literature tells us that these norms and cultures are the powerful drivers of EL. What are coaching display rules, and where do they come from? Further to that, we need an understanding of if, and how, coaches attempt to create that accepted demeanour - through surface acting and pretence, or by identification and deep acting? In considering EL in the wider literature, the separation of general emotional content from EL will be important, as coaches often experience emotion in coaching, but the foundational elements of EL need to be present to be within scope of this study; emotional content is not synonymous with EL.

Further, the literature raises some questions around both the contexts and drivers for EL which arise from Theodosius, (2017), Smith and Cowie (2010) and Bolton and Boyd (2003). In what situations might coaches experience EL, and do motives play a role? EL is described as frequent and common in the research, and is this so for coaches? The literature guides some thinking and questioning in pursuit of answering the research question.

2.2 What are the effects or impacts for emotional labourers?

EL has already been described as generally having some deleterious effects or outcomes, and the literature specifically points to some key areas where the experience of EL is associated with negative outcomes for labourers. The areas which emerge from studies are: the impact on feelings of authenticity, that EL can engender feelings of alienation in a role, that stress and emotional exhaustion can ensue, and that burnout can follow. These areas all have overlap and are interrelated in some ways, and all point to negative outcomes. There are also some few, but notable, examples of work which claim some increases in well-being through experiencing EL - through engaging with deep acting strategies, which will be addressed further in considering controversies and debates in the literature.

The act of compliance to display rules can impact on feelings of being authentic. Within studies in the service sector and call centres, such as D'Cruz and Noronha (2008), authors have observed mandated inauthenticity, such as using westernised names instead of real names, keeping the true geographical location of the call centre secret from the customer, and under no circumstances ever reacting to hostility with anything other than politeness. Ogbonna and Harris (2004) reported that adhering to display rules was part of the coping strategy for educational lecturers, in what they

called ‘professional detachment’. This plays to authenticity, and whilst some found it easy,

> “I have no problem with faking concern about students if it gets me another increment [point].” (Ogbonna and Harris, 2004),

others found it detrimental, leading to guilt, stress and feelings of being a fraud, and prompting incumbents to seek roles where these emotions were not present (which clearly relates to quitting intentions). Turnbull (1999) examined EL in corporate change programmes and the role of the middle manager, focussing on the costs highlighted by Hochschild:

> “One of the greatest costs of emotional labour identified by Hochschild is the fact that emotional work affects the degree to which we listen to feeling and sometimes our very capacity to feel'.” (Hochschild, 1983, cited in Turnbull, 1999, p.138)

Turnbull examined the emotionally numbing effect of EL, and the consequences for actors who can no longer fulfil their parts. Näring, Briët, and Brouwers (2006) supported the previous study outcomes of Brotheridge and Lee (2002) in the effect of surface acting upon depersonalisation. Brotheridge and Lee (2002) also linked the loss of resources through EL and the resultant exhaustion with worker turnover, and Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) identified surface acting as significantly related to emotional exhaustion. Brotheridge and Lee (2003, p.375) describe the outcomes or effects of EL:

> “Surface acting was significantly associated with higher levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, the requirement to hide and control one's emotions, self-monitoring of expressive behaviour, and negative affectivity.”

The nursing literature describes the presence of EL in job stress, and ultimately in burnout - and this is a strong theme around the undesirable outcomes of EL. Delgado *et al*. (2017) reviewed the literature in nursing around resilience and burnout. Their comprehensive review identified surface acting as a significant factor in negative outcomes (as also in Mann and Cowburn, 2005). The longer-term consequences around stress, authenticity, and potentially even burnout (Park, 2009) of those occupying 'acting' positions were described by Hochschild:

> "Maintaining a difference between feeling and feigning over the long run leads to strain. We try to reduce this strain by pulling the two closer together either by changing what we feel or by changing what we feign. When display is required by the job, it is usually feeling that has to change; and when conditions estrange us from our face, they sometimes estrange us from feeling as well." (2012, p.90)

Kruml and Geddes (2000) published 'Catching fire without burning out: Is there an ideal way to perform emotional labor?' Overall, their conclusions were that those at work who show felt emotions were much 'healthier' than those who did not, that is those who laboured emotionally to perform outward displays.

The balance of evidence from research suggests that, overall, there are primarily negative outcomes from the performance of EL. These relate to authenticity, feelings of alienation or detachment in a role, stress and emotional exhaustion which impacts on well-being, and burnout. If and when coaches emotionally labour, do they experience challenges to their authenticity? Are there elements of the coaching role and relationship which cause coaches to feel detached or alienated, and are there impacts on the well-being of the coach? At the extremes of EL in coaching, does burnout happen? These experiences are well documented and researched in fields

other than coaching and must be considered when asking what EL is for coaches - this is of high importance to the areas of coach care, coach well-being and the profession at large.

2.3 What debates and controversies exist around EL?

Within the literature, whilst there is a high degree of commonality overall, there are controversies and debates which persist - starting with criticism of the overall EL concept which will be outlined. Secondly, the departure from Hochschild's original limitation of the scope and roles of EL is described, to illustrate the widening of focus in the field. The disagreements and contradictions around the roles of surface acting and deep acting are then discussed. Finally, the factors which are debated to have impacts on the experience of EL are described, and the differing views and positions compared. All of this is considered in light of the relevance to the research question.

2.3.1 Concept criticism

Despite the volume of research attention, the central EL concept is not immune to criticism. Bono and Vey (2005) in *Emotions in Organizational Behavior* (edited by Härtel, Zerbe, Ashkanasy and Neal, 2005) reviewed the quantitative literature in EL, and performed a meta-analytical study examining EL. In their results, the authors reported that:

> "Perhaps the most striking conclusion that can be reached from our analysis is that the variables studied by emotional labor researchers do not have strong associations with perceptions of emotional labor" (Bono and Vey, 2005, p.226).

This criticism of quantitative EL research casts some shade on the central idea of EL itself but does not seem to have dulled enthusiasm for researching the concept in any significant way. In the decade following the year 2000, a debate ignited challenging Hochschild's original conceptualisation of EL. Firstly Bolton (2000) and subsequently Bolton and Boyd (2003) published their criticisms of Hochschild's work. In response to those criticisms, Brook (2009) published in defence of Hochschild, to which Bolton further replied (2009). This exchange focusses on several key areas. Brook (2009, p.532) identified that "Bolton is rare in arguing for the abandonment of the emotional labour concept", but goes on to highlight the key criticisms levelled at Hochschild:

- The distinction Hochschild draws between private self and public self (emotion management versus commercialisation of feeling).
- The extent to which Hochschild portrays managers and supervisors as owners and controller of employee emotions.
- Challenge to the Marxist view of wage-labour that the commodification of feeling is intrinsically alienating.

Brook (2009) proceeded to support, through argument, Hochschild's origination of EL, though also lent some support to Bolton (2000) and Bolton and Boyd's (2003) criticisms:

> "Bolton's critique is not without some justification, as Hochschild's thesis is over-simplistic in its dichotomizing of private and public sphere emotions inadequately captures the complex and contradictory nature of emotion work; and over-focuses on individual experiences at the cost of workplace social relations." (Brook, 2009, p.533)

Again, this debate - whilst high profile - has seemingly done little to blunt enthusiasm for the EL concept and has certainly not caused an 'abandonment' of Hochschild, as Brook put it. Overall, the volume of work which supports EL and Hochschild's ideas vastly outweighs these criticisms, even though they are important to note because of their profile and presence in the literature.

2.3.2 Role expansion

It is clear from subsequent studies and research that Hochschild's own tests of which roles are subject to EL have been superseded. Hochschild's view seems to exclude the idea that we all work in the social structures, cultures and expectations of our organisations, clients, co-workers, and society at large - not just in the presence of a physical, present supervisor, or a brand which dictates a way of being. Further to this, in fact some of the roles she cited *do* indeed have supervision 'on hand'; the junior doctor, the social worker, in fact any of these roles could indeed meet Hochschild's criteria, but nonetheless Hochshild's conditions seem to unnecessarily narrow the scope of EL. Fineman (2000), in *Emotion in Organizations,* claimed that EL is not restricted to 'low-skill service work', but includes:

> "…doctors, psychiatrists, managers, teachers, nurses, police officers, professional carers, academic professors and paralegals." (p.5)

The progression of that debate has given rise to EL studies in multiple sectors, contexts and roles, though not yet in the EL of coaches, which is where my research focusses.

2.3.3 Surface acting and deep acting effects

Arguably the biggest debate in the field of EL centres around the roles of surface acting and deep acting. Some researchers claim that both expressions of EL are negative

and contribute to the outcomes that have been described. Others, though, claim either a neutral or even a positive impact for deep acting. Some researchers go further still in claiming no negative impacts for the experience of EL overall. Yang and Chang (2008, p.880) stepped into this debate based on what they saw as contradictory empirical evidence:

> "Previous theoretical work on emotional labour suggested a negative relationship between emotional labour and job satisfaction. However, two empirical tests of this relationship (Adelmann, 1989, Wharton, 1993) contradicted the above view."

Though aiming to provide clarity, Yang and Chang's (2008) work actually adds further contradictory evidence around the outcomes of EL. For example, they rejected the idea that surface acting has negative consequences for job satisfaction and supported the idea that deep acting has positive outcomes for job satisfaction. Maxwell and Riley (2017) study school principals, and in their quantitative work they determine that only surface-acting (feigning) was associated with burnout and stress, and low job satisfaction. Deep acting, on the other hand, was found to have no or little impact on those variables. Yin (2015) went further, again using quantitative analysis in their study of Chinese teachers, claiming that deep acting and expressing naturally felt emotions had a positive effect on the satisfaction of teachers. Hülsheger and Schewe (2011) utilised a detailed and thorough meta-analysis of 30 years of EL research to come to the following conclusions:

> "Summing up, results of the present quantitative review suggest that emotion-rule dissonance and surface acting are detrimental to both well-being and performance outcomes. In comparison, deep acting seems

> to be the better alternative. It is largely unrelated to well-being and even displays positive associations with performance." (2011, p.383)

Holman Martinez-Iñigo and Totterdell (2008) noticed that the theme of 'resource gain' has steadily made traction in the literature. They stated:

> "In short, developments in the field of emotional labour indicate that its effects are dependent upon the extent to which the processes occurring during emotional labour either promote resource gain (e.g., social support, self-efficacy) or act as a demand and prompt resource loss. Resource gains improve well-being and resource losses decrease well-being." (2008, p.301)

Philipp and Schüpbach (2010) engaged in a longitudinal study of EL in teachers over time, citing surface acting as leading to emotional exhaustion, and deep acting leading to less emotional exhaustion. Their claim of deep acting being health *beneficial* may be a step too far, though, based on 'less emotional exhaustion' - being 'less detrimental' may be a more supported stance. Delgado *et al.* (2017), in contrast with other studies such as Yang and Chang (2008), did not identify deep acting as a protective element, which has been claimed.

The debate over the impacts of EL overall, and around the effects of the components of surface acting and deep acting, are very much live and unresolved. From the overview of this debate, the following assumption can be reached, that is particularly interesting to explore in this study: those who emotionally labour can be subject to some undesirable effects and outcomes, particularly those who employ a surface acting strategy of feigning their outward display. It may also be the case that those who employ a deep acting strategy to adapt the way they feel may also experience some unwanted outcomes, but this approach seems preferential particularly in relation

to authenticity. This summary feels well supported by the balance of the literature and research conducted in EL and seems to reflect where the overall balance of research outcomes rest.

2.3.4 Authenticity

Concerning authenticity, there is a lack of focus in the EL literature for the role of genuinely felt and expressed emotion, but that which is misaligned with role expectations. It is easy to envisage one who behaves genuinely, and when that genuine behaviour is aligned with role expectation - which might be described as being 'a round peg, in a round hole' - no behavioural or display management is required, as in Hülsheger and Schewe (2011). Some, such as Tews (2004), note authentic behaviour which is 'deviant' and unaligned with role requirements in their research, but overall, there is a general absence of focus on authentic behaviour, either positive or negative, in EL research. Rather than this being a debate or controversy, it is more of a puzzling omission. It may be the case that it is taken as a given that authenticity and authentic being is the antithesis of EL, but the lack of description of that in the literature is curious, given the nature of EL and the debate. In addition, there is an inherent challenge in considering authenticity: what is meant by authenticity? How do we define the authentic self, and how might self-deception relate to authenticity (Bachkirova, 2015)? These questions relate directly to the potential experiences of the EL of the coach, and from an EL perspective they are important to consider.

2.4 What does and doesn't make a difference with EL?

Reminiscent of the state of the literature around surface acting and deep acting, there are researchers in the EL field who hold diametrically opposite positions in relation to

the impacts of certain characteristics of importance to EL such as gender, age, and personality.

2.4.1 Gender and age

A debate on the impact or importance of gender in EL was inevitable, given both its origins and the prevalence of work in service industries and nursing, both sectors predominantly staffed by female employees. On one side of the debate are those such as Bhave and Glomb (2009) and Erickson and Ritter (2001) who claim gender neutrality in EL - that EL is equally experienced by men and women and that gender is not a factor. On the opposing end of the scale are Syed, Ali and Winstanley (2005) who addressed the concept of modesty for working women in Islamic society. The 'display rules' in the culture described carry some very specific sets of expectations. This research on the EL which Muslim women experience in the workplace focusses on "the tension between work role, managerial culture, gender identity and wider social and religious contexts." (p.164) In contrast to Bhave and Glomb's (2009) assertion of gender neutrality in EL, Syed, Ali and Winstanley make a strong case for a very real difference in some contexts. They wrote:

> "We have concentrated on Islamic female modesty to alert researchers to salient comparative difference. However researchers might find many other intersections between culture, work and gender." (2005, p.164)

Some authors have reported that gender was a significant moderator of the impacts of EL. Johnson and Spector (2007) examined gender in relation to the EL process. They claimed that female employees were more likely to experience the negative effects of surface acting. To the contrary, Walsh and Bartikowski (2011) combined both gender and age in their EL study which concluded that "the management and deployment of emotions (….) [were] more draining for male employees" (2011).

Authors found differences in the experiences of surface acting and deep acting for male and female employees, and differences in the experience of both for younger and older service workers.

Considering the evidence from literature we could take a position at any point: gender is irrelevant to EL or gender is relevant to EL, but depending on whose evidence one gives more credence to, either men or women experience more EL. It is very unclear from the literature what role gender (or age) has in EL. Whether this debate has any relevance for the research question at hand is not known, but it is worth noting that over 60% (of executive coaches) are women and that coaches are often mature professionals (Sherpa Coaching, 2019).

2.4.2 Personality

Finally, in reviewing debates in the EL literature, the role of personality in the experience of EL has become a focus of research work. Sohn and Lee's (2012) study investigated the relationship between personality type and Emotional Labour in the service sector. Using the HEXACO model of personality (Ashton and Lee, 2007), Sohn and Lee claimed some protective effects of certain personality types, suggesting that it may be the interaction of context *and personality* that is predictive of how much EL is experienced. Jeung, Kim and Chang (2018) highlighted self-efficacy, and personality type (type A behaviour pattern - TABP) as implicated in the degree to which people succumb to the negative impacts of EL. Bono and Vey (2005) considered the detrimental effects on health and well-being in EL and postulated that the relationship between EL and negative outcomes is not causal, but in fact only correlated relatively weakly with the influence of differing personalities.

The concept of emotional intelligence (Mayer, Salovey and Caruso, 2002) is explored by Austin, Dore and O'Donovan (2008). Using emotional intelligence, the Five Factor

Model of personality (Goldberg, 1980), and a display rule perception scale (Diefendorff, Croyle, and Gosserand, 2005), Austin, Dore and O'Donovan (2008, p.679) concluded that:

> "For EI [Emotional Intelligence] it appears that high-EI individuals are less likely to make use of the emotionally superficial SA [surface acting] strategy; this may be related to their superior emotion regulation capabilities."

Ehigie *et al*. (2012) also proposed that emotional intelligence predicted deep acting and reduced EL overall. The study of personality and its connections with EL are interesting and relevant, however it is not the intention of this study to enter into the technical aspects of the subject. Whilst it is useful to understand that there may be some interaction of context, personality and EL, the area does little to inform the research question in this study. It is worth noting, though, that emotional adeptness and intelligence are seen as assets in managing EL, given the nature of the coaching role and those who are attracted to the profession.

In conclusion to reviewing debates and controversies in the EL field, overall, whilst some challenges to the key concepts of EL exist, they are minor in comparison with the vast canon of work which rest on Hochschild's ideas. The roles in which Hochschild originally envisaged EL have been widely expanded through both logical challenge and empirical work, and general acceptance that her originally stated role limitations were too narrow. The role of gender in EL remains in question, given a lack of consensus, and this may or may not arise and have relevance for this study. The knotty issue of the relationships of surface acting and deep acting to outcomes may have resonance for this research work, and coaches differing use of acting strategies is explored in the findings and discussion chapters which follow. The role of personality in EL, whilst interesting, does not present as central to the question of what

EL is for coaches, though emotional regulation and adeptness may potentially be factors in understanding what EL is for coaches.

In summary, the central concepts of EL - display rules, surface acting and deep acting - remain relatively unchallenged in the literature, and this is useful for this research work in developing avenues for inquiry with participants in the research process based on the principles of EL, display rules, surface acting and deep acting.

2.5 EL and coaching: relevant concepts and studies

A large swathe of literature is devoted to EL in many fields, but not yet applied to the coaching context. What then exists in the coaching literature, or in relation to existing literature that may suggest that EL is relevant to the field? Initially, fields related to coaching are examined from an EL perspective, and subsequently the themes of EL and how they may relate to coaching will be illustrated and discussed with reference directly to the coaching literature.

2.5.1 Similar fields of work

Looking to research in associated or similar fields may reveal some connections with coaching. Literature in educational contexts is already included in this review and searching for proxies or other similar professions to coaching in general reveals a few associated roles. George's (2008) research studied 'expert service work' and identifies and relates EL directly to coaching and similar activities. EL is certainly evident in George's expert service work contexts. Whilst psychotherapy or counselling literature might be sought for similarities to coaching, in fact the literature around EL in those fields is similarly scarce, and all but absent. In a similar way to this review, Clarke *et al*. (2020) noticed the lack of attention to their field from an EL perspective:

> "Existing literature examining burnout in psychotherapists has not adequately considered the contributing role of emotional labor." (2020, p.1)

Sports coaching is another potentially similar role; while distinct from non-sports coaching in purpose, tools, and approaches, it does share some common ground (Gordon, 2007; Loehr and Schwartz, 2001). However, whilst there is some relatively recent work on EL in sports coaching (Lee and Chelladurai, 2016; 2018), the work is embryonic. Gordon (2007), a sports psychologist, noted the lack of EL research in sports coaching and directly linked stress and burnout to EL. He then cited the impacts of burnout, including:

> "…decreased performance, low motivation, impaired health, personal dysfunction, insomnia, increased use of alcohol and drugs as well as marital and family problems." (2007, p.276)

There is certainly enough interest in EL from fields associated with coaching to indicate that this is a worthy area for investigation. Further to that interest, there is also more than enough similarity in the relational dynamics of coaching to the fields which have already been well studied to justify research. Those dynamics will be examined later in the chapter after considering the central role of display rules. Without accepted norms and professional rules of demeanour, any role or profession is a 'free for all', and EL cannot exist, as it is the attempt at compliance or commitment to these display rules which creates labour.

2.5.2 Professional norms and display rules

So, what does the literature tell us about the display rules / rules for coaching - and where do they come from? Fineman (2000, p.5) stated that:

> "Professional and organisational norms underpin what people in such roles should and should not display or feel."

Coaches, though, are unlike many of the roles studied in EL, in that most often coaches have independence from organisations (unless internal) and so they are distant from the norms of the organisations they work in - so what then of professional norms of coaching, the display rules to which coaches are supposed to adhere?

Professional organisations, or governing bodies, have published frameworks of competence to practice as a coach, and will accredit those who submit to and meet those organisations' criteria (EMCC / ICF, 2020). These, then may form part of the basis for what display rules look like for coaches. From the literature, though, apart from these frameworks, it is unclear what display rules exist for coaches; how are coaches meant to look and behave?

This research will seek to understand how coaches perceive the rules of coaching from a behavioural and display perspective, and what impacts and influences their perceptions.

2.5.3 EL in coaching

In considering the nature of those areas already studied in EL, there are elements which have been noticed by select researchers in the coaching sphere. Whilst direct references to EL are rare in coaching research, Bachkirova (2016) argued for 'the self of the coach' as the primary instrument and mechanism of coaching - above and beyond models, theoretical constructs or underpinnings of work, or knowledge. Bachkirova went on to make one of the few references to Hochschild's work within the coaching literature:

> "On this basis, it is possible to say that the coach is the main instrument of coaching. Such a claim potentially attracts both criticism and support. It may, for example, be considered too demanding for professional coaches because it requires greater emotional labor (Hoschild, 2012) than a more technical approach (Schön, 1983)." (2016, p.144)

2.5.4 The coach as primary instrument, emotion and relationships

The nature of the relational dynamic and the coach themselves as the primary instrument may impact on the coach's experience of EL. In the *Sage Handbook of Coaching,* Cox (2017) explored 'working with emotions in coaching' in more general terms, and referred specifically to EL. Cox (2017, p.283) stated:

> "Interestingly, Hochschild included coaching in her list of examples of emotional outsourcing and commodification (2005) and indeed some organisations may see coaching as a form of emotional labour."

Whilst the preceding references to EL and to Hochschild are rare and solitary in the coaching literature, there are sources of relevant literature which, whilst not directly citing Hochschild's work, have connection with themes outlined previously from the EL literature.

The theme of emotional content, emotionality, and how coaches deal with emotion receives some attention from coaching researchers - though, perhaps, given the nature of coaching relationships, less than might be expected. Cox and Bachkirova (2007) examined emotions that give coaches a 'bad feeling', or make the coach feel uncomfortable in some way. In terms of dealing with 'difficult' emotions from clients, coaches have a range of responses or strategies. Where client emotions impacted on the coach's emotions (when clients had strong, or what were perceived as

inappropriate emotions), the coach reactions were often to either identify or empathise. Although one of the potential strategies for coaches in these scenarios was to talk with the clients about the emotion, the remaining strategies identified did not involve disclosure to the coachee. In instances where coaches do not disclose their authentic emotions, do they emotionally feign, or do they do they attempt to modify their feelings? How do coaches deal with the scenarios where they are not externalising what is happening for them emotionally?

Others identify the coach, and the emotions of the coach, as central to the coaching relationship (de Haan, 2011; O'Neill, 2011), whilst not addressing how this works behaviourally, or the potential impacts on coaches. O'Neill (2011), for example, despite using 'heart' in the title of her book (*Coaching with Backbone and Heart*), wrote surprisingly little about the heart of the coach. When the coach's emotions are raised, there is a sense that coaches should use their emotions to create emotional equality (as O'Neill described it) - but no sense of what might be required to create that equality. The work is very much centred on what the client needs for successful outcomes, rather than the process, challenges, and any costs which coaches may experience in the service of that aim.

In EL research in other fields, relationships feature prominently: relationships with customers, patients, clients, co-workers, and managers. In coaching, whilst there are also other important relationships, the central relationship is between coach and coachee. De Haan (2011) used models, frameworks and research from psychotherapy to describe the ideal composition of that central relationship. Whilst he said that this specific publication may be no more than a 'thought experiment', he nevertheless identified the relationship as central to coaching. De Haan (2007, p.53) warned of things that might hinder that relationship:

"Be careful with interventions that jeopardise the working alliance."

A dilemma is apparent in de Haan's view - between truth, as the coach authentically sees it, and the working alliance. What, then, is the balance between the expression of genuinely felt emotions by the coach, and the potential to impact the working alliance? In search of what de Haan (2008) termed 'critical moments' in coaching, he argued, coaches experience a hierarchy of tension: instrumental, relational and existential. Essentially these tensions relate to process, relationship and meaning. Whilst de Hann argued that tensions give rise to critical moments (and are therefore, desirable), the balance of seeking tension and moving away from tension are overshadowed by the idea that the relationship is central, and anything that negatively impacts on that relationship is jeopardising. Other than suggesting that coaches make these tensions as manageable as possible for coachees, he did not describe what that involves practically, nor how coaches manage themselves in relation to felt and expressed emotions; in fact, the shackle of the working alliance seems to somewhat imprison the emotions of the coach as subservient to the those of coachee. In addition, de Haan proclaimed 10 Commandments for coaches, the fourth of which is to 'Feed the hope of the coachee'. This plays rather into the positive psychology discourse identified by Bachkirova (2015) in her work on self-deception. Should a coach feed the hope of a wildly over-reaching client approach or over-optimism, where risk is clear and present, or even delusional? To do so would presumably breach de Haan's first Commandment - 'Do no harm'. To advocate for feeding hope in all situations places the coach in the uncomfortable position of potentially contravening their own values, sense of moral rightness, and may lead to acting, inauthenticity, and all the other associated negative impacts surfaced by research into display rules and EL. At the same time, de Haan told coaches not to worry too much about the specific things they are doing:

> "On behalf of coaches, therefore, I adopt the well-known motto of the province of Zeeland, "I struggle and emerge" (luctor et emergo), and encourage coaches to coach with devoted attention to that ongoing and deliberately maintained struggle." (2008, p.131)

The nature of that struggle, and the associated cost of deliberately maintaining it, which may be viewed through the lens of EL, are yet to be determined.

De Haan (2007, p.53) recounted the basis of good coaching relations as he saw them, transferred from psychotherapy into coaching: "empathy, acceptance, warmth and authenticity". The crux of the problem is the relationship of the latter, with all the former. What is not explored, though, is how coaches behave and deal with these tensions, by what guidance do they steer, and what are their investments in doing so?

The role of empathy, and orientation towards being empathetic in coaching, is seen as central to competence (EMCC Competency Framework, 2020) but, as with the research in the nursing literature, there is little discussion of what empathy is, how it might be developed, and the role of EL in that dynamic. The ICF (2020) refer to emotions and working with emotions - and that the coach must manage both their own emotion, and emotion from clients:

> "Demonstrates confidence in working with strong emotions and can self-manage and not be overpowered or enmeshed by client's emotions." (2020)

The nature of that self-management, and the route to achieving such, though, is not clearly explored or stated; what is it to be *enmeshed* in a client's emotions, and how does one un-enmesh oneself?

From professional bodies, and from key researchers in the coaching literature, we see inconsistency, incompleteness, and lack of guidance for coaches on how they might behave, what is expected of them, and the actual routes to meeting expectations. It is also unsurprising that the coaching literature does not address the ideas of surface acting and deep acting, given the lack of overall attention to EL, and the overall contradictions in how the field approaches the emotion of the coach.

2.5.5 Negative outcomes or experiences for the coach

In the EL literature at large the negative outcomes for emotional labourers are well researched, but within coaching, negative outcomes (of any sort) have only received a small amount of research attention, most notably by Schermuly and co-authors, and potential negative outcomes have also been raised as an issue of coach welfare by researchers such as Bachkirova, and Cox. The terms 'coach *c*are' or 'coach welfare' do not feature in any significant way in the literature outside of sports coaching literature, and within the sporting literature, coach care is not a prevalent theme, though examples do exist (Poczwardowski *et al.*, 2002). There is some coverage of coach burnout (Price and Weiss, 2000; Raedeke *et al.*, 2000; Price, 2001).

Schermuly (2014, p.165) asserted "There exists only scarce knowledge regarding what negative effects can occur to business coaches as a result of their work." He found a very high incidence of negative effects for coaches, both in their most recent coaching assignment, and across careers - with 99% of coaches experiencing negative effects during their careers. The intensity of those experiences seems generally low - with coaches rating the intensity as extreme only very infrequently. However, the impact of lower intensity negative effects over time requires further study, as noted by Schermuly (2014). His work is helpful in raising the profile of negative experiences for coaches - but focusses on the cause of the negative

experience, rather than the way in which coaches deal with those negative effects in coaching and how they might behave.

Graßmann, Schermuly and Wach's (2019) work built on Schermuly's (2014) study. Whilst exploring the drivers of negative effects in coaching, the authors claimed that focussing on the coaching relationship is protective against negative effects for coaches - but this only becomes useful only if we know what defines a good relationship, specifically thinking back to de Haan's criteria. Notably also, coaches under supervision experienced fewer negative effects from coaching in this work. Schermuly and Graßmann (2019) presented a literature review on negative effects of coaching. This comprehensive work on the literature to date highlights areas for coach, coachee and organisation. It is a small part of the overall picture of negative effects that has most interest for this literature review of EL, that of the psychological well-being of coaches, but Schermuly and Graßmann's (2019) work only really serves to identify an issue.

2.6 Summary

It is clear from the literature, or lack thereof, that EL overall is mainly unrecognised in coaching, and that negative outcomes for coaches is an underdeveloped research area in the field.

Turning attention to the debates and controversies in EL, and how they may relate to coaching, the work on negative outcomes may have some relevance in considering negative outcomes for emotional labourers. Those debates also include the area of gender, age and personality in the experience of EL. There is little in the coaching literature that helps to contextualise those debates, and what there is of a similarly split nature. Researchers such as Bozer, Joo and Santora (2015) claim that gender is not something that should be worthy of attention in coach / coachee matching,

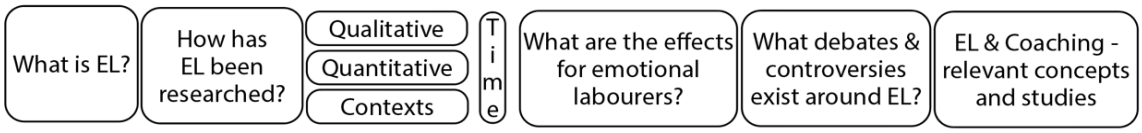
whereas Passmore (2008) highlights systematic thinking, competition, and micro-inequalities as clear areas of difference between genders in coaching.

The empirical work reviewed concerning personality type, whilst in early stages, identified potential links with personality type and EL. Further, the idea of person-role fit being important to the experience of EL was thematically strong in the literature. Passmore, Holloway, and Rawle-Cope (2010) explored personality type in coaching, and whether there were differences in those choosing professional coaching work as opposed to professional counselling work. Whilst no real firm conclusions were stated in this work, the study does represent "…the first attempt to begin to explore the nature of the coach." (2010, p.14)

This research aims to answer the question of what EL is for coaches, and there is potential for some aspects to emerge from participants' contributions which relate to personality or gender, for example - but the primary purpose of the work is to understand the lived experience of EL for coaches, if and where it exists, and the impacts that it has on coaches themselves.

In reviewing the literature around EL, I adopted the following structure:

Figure 1: Structure of the literature review

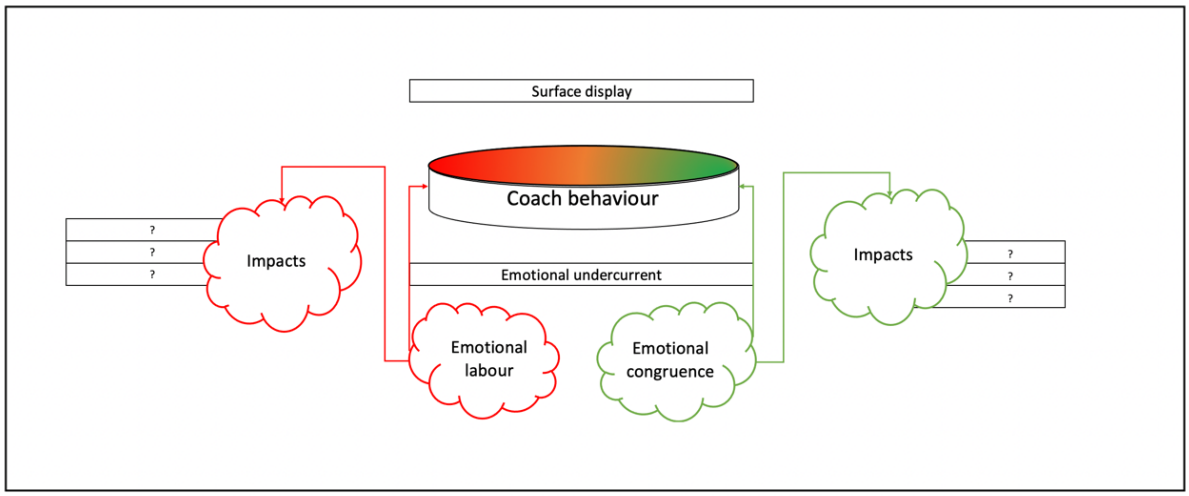


Firstly, I explored the EL concept and its definitions from a quantitative and qualitative perspective, starting with Hochschild's own definitions and subsequent treatments over time - finding that her seminal work had undergone little change, and that the core concepts persisted through decades of work. Subsequently, I looked directly at the effects of EL for labourers. Further, the controversies and unresolved issues around EL were explored - and whilst noticing these elements, I concluded that those

disagreements were outweighed by general alignment on the concept and components of EL. Finally, I reviewed coaching literature which either made direct reference to EL, negative outcomes for coaches, or other elements of coaching research which seem related to the concept of EL.

In summary, whilst there are a number of areas from the coaching which are of interest to the research question, including the few references directly to EL, in general the literature is at a tangent to the central concept. Whilst links and associations have been made with the key literature which might inform understanding of display rules, relationships and emotion, and negative outcomes in coaching, there is a clear need to approach this subject directly and address the central question: what is EL for coaches? In order to do this, we need a better understanding of what display rules are in coaching, where their rules come from, what coaches do to manage those expectations (internally and externally), and how experiences of EL might impact on the coach? In order to explore those questions, a starting model was developed to introduce to participants during research interviews:

Figure 2: Initial conceptual model of EL in coaching



This concept of EL in coaching (for coaches) is adapted from the EL literature to address the important areas for EL - and crucially the central element of the difference

between outward display and inner experience. Coupled with the interview schedule (questions), these two elements formed the basis of participant interviews. The model itself places focus on the experience of EL for coaches, whilst the interview schedule questions placed focus on where the display rules come from (as well as the experience of EL); together they form the basis of the final concept and findings in this research. The approach described is consistent with the methodology and methods of Conceptual Encounter (de Rivera and Kreilkamp, 1981) which will be described in the ensuing chapter concerning the research methodology.

3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, which outlined the forty years of research inspired by Hochschild, the need to research the concept in the coaching field becomes clear. Whilst there is some attention given to EL in coaching by leading academics, there is a lack of empirical work to underpin these views. It is this research gap which this work is intended to address; to make a contribution to furthering understanding of the work of the coach specifically in relation to EL.

In this chapter, the research strategy and theoretical framework will be outlined, situated and justified. The research design will be explained, and then the research stages and process will be detailed, including design, data collection and data analysis, for both one-to-one interviews and group discussions. The elements of quality and rigour, reflexivity, and ethics will also be considered.

3.2 The literature search strategy

First, the search strategy which gave rise to the previous literature review is detailed. Using the term 'emotional labour' returns very large numbers of results from internet search engines, which makes focussing down on the most influential work in the field challenging. For this reason, I used the volume of citations for each work to understand the impacts or reverberations that academic publications have had on the field. Google Scholar has functionality such that searches can be limited to certain criteria, such as date of publication, or adapted in certain ways - but sorting searches purely by volume of citations is not yet a feature of the search engine. Utilising the functionality for 'most relevant' results on Scholar often returns the most cited papers

at the head of the list, but not consistently. I utilised software from Tarma Software Research Ltd (Publish or Perish (PoP), https://harzing.com/resources/publish-or-perish) which can be used to extract information from Google Scholar, including numbers of citations - which I was then able to rank, most cited to least, by exporting data to MS Excel. With this approach I was able to isolate over 100 studies which had attracted the most attention within the research field. Once this had been achieved, I used both the Oxford Brookes Library Search tool, as well as accessing individual databases (such as PsychInfo) to ensure that important works had not been overlooked.

Using Google Scholar searches for 'The Managed Heart' naturally returns Hochschild herself as the dominant voice - but changing that term to "emotional labour" returns a much wider field of interest and study work. Care was also taken to search with the American spelling of 'labor' as well as the anglicised 'labour', which does affect search returns. In addition to using citations as a way of identifying the most relevant literature, I also used less referenced works based on their relevance to the discussion; these papers and studies were uncovered by following the references, bibliographies, and sources from within the most cited works. When these sources had been identified, I read each of the studies, articles, or books and made notes on their content. These notes were then expanded over time and form the key areas of the literature review. Finally, in addition to the original search strategy and tactics, I created an alert for all the key search terms on Google Scholar, so that new and emerging work would also be considered over the study period. This alert generated, on average, around four or five new publications per month. Some of these alerts were empirical work, some articles, and some full book publications - and based on relevance, some were included in the preceding review.

3.3 Theoretical framework

The chronology of EL research originates in the qualitative domain, but soon extends to the use of 'scientific', positivistic, quantitative methods, and there are numerous examples of both approaches. The terms and concepts for EL were defined through qualitative study and subsequently, through the decades, have been subjected to testing - often to answer the question of whether EL 'exists' and can be measured, to what extent it is experienced, in what contexts, and to what ends or outcomes? Indeed, both qualitative and quantitative studies of EL are still being conducted today; an alert on Google Scholar for newly published papers relating to EL for the whole of 2020 reveals around four papers per month with EL as the primary topic, and an even mix of qualitative and quantitative publications. The research positions of both qualitative and quantitative approaches make different assumptions about the nature of knowledge, and how it might be known. The methods, then, of seeking that knowledge vary with that changing position. My overall position is closely aligned with the philosophy of pragmatism, both in general, and in relation to the EL literature canon; there is great value in understanding how people experience phenomena, and there is also great value in studying those effects in a way which allows some generalised evidence through hypothesis testing and a deductive approach.

As EL has not been researched in coaching, neither qualitative nor quantitative evidence exists. Circling back to the specific research question of 'what is emotional labour for coaches?' necessitates that we attend to the lived experience of coaches in their practice. This does not preclude further study of a quantitative nature, or mixed methods approaches, nor make any judgement on the relative value of that knowledge - but to answer the research question *in the way that it has been posed* necessitates a qualitative, constructivist epistemology position. According to Fosnot (2005, preface, p.1):

> “Constructivism is a theory about knowledge and learning; it describes both what "knowing" is and how one "comes to know." Based on work in psychology, philosophy, science, and biology, the theory describes knowledge not as truths to be transmitted or discovered, but as emergent, developmental, nonobjective, viable constructed explanations by humans engaged in meaning-making in cultural and social communities of discourse.”

To know what EL is for coaches requires meaning making from their experiences in an inductive way and accessing their *knowing* in order to ‘tap into’ the kind of knowledge that the research question implies.

3.3.1 Qualitative methodologies

There are a number of options for qualitative methodologies rooted in phenomenology which make meaning in this way. An heuristic approach (Moustakas, 1990) contains many of the elements which would enable consideration of the research question, and holds the researcher’s experiences as important to the study, however the nature of that presence differs in other methodologies. In Heuristic Inquiry, the holding of openness is necessary to generate insight (Sultan, 2018), whereas in Conceptual Encounter (CE), (de Rivera and Kreilkamp, 1981) the researcher uses literature and experience to make a starting point for inquiry using a conceptual model. Whilst openness is most certainly important in CE, this methodology places the researcher’s experience as central *at the outset* (though this position changes throughout the research when working with research participants).

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009) was also considered as a potential option for this research, but it is primarily the role or positionality of the researcher within Conceptual Encounter (de Rivera and Kreilkamp, 1981) which makes for a close fit of purpose and method. In IPA studies, the researcher is often experienced in the field being researched, and there is a sense

that this experience needs to be separated from the research - as it presents as bias, rather than as an asset:

> "IPA involves a 'double hermeneutic' (Smith & Osborn, 2003). The researcher is making sense of the participant, who is making sense of x. And this usefully illustrates the dual role of the researcher as both like and unlike the participant. In one sense, the researcher is like the participant, is a human being drawing on everyday human resources in order to make sense of the world. On the other hand, the researcher is not the participant, she/he only has access to the participant's experience through what the participant reports about it, and is also seeing this through the researcher's own, experientially-informed lens. So, in that sense, the participant's meaning-making is first-order, while the researcher's sense-making is second-order." (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009, p.35)

3.3.2 Conceptual Encounter

In Conceptual Encounter (CE), my experience is both first-order and second-order, both direct and indirect. As a practicing coach of fifteen years I have experiences, views, and frames of reference built over time which inherently impact on my ability to come afresh to a piece of research without preconception - whether it is even possible to unknow what is known, or somehow separate past experiences from current experiences, is not certain. Whilst this might be seen as a limitation in some respects (to be discussed further within the chapter), it is also an asset if mobilised in the right way. Rather than opting for a methodology which prefers the path of supposed separation of researcher from research, attempting to create a beginner's mind, or 'bracketing off' experience (LeVasseur, 2003), Conceptual Encounter (CE) harnesses those experiences of the researcher to partner with others who are also experienced, in order to create meaning. This use of the researcher is accentuated in CE, as he or

she is present at each stage of the research process, fully and interactively: firstly, with the idea in which they are interested and the question they want to research, next in the literature review which informs the original model or map of experience which the researcher creates, in the interviews (sharing of the model and adaptation) data collection, and of course in making meaning and the findings. At no point in the process of research is the researcher distant from the work, nor are they attempting to be so:

> "…the development and testing of the conceptualization is ultimately dependent on the nature of the encounter between investigator and research partners." (de Rivera, 1981, p8)

Not only is that synthesis a critical part of CE, but that encounter itself is based on the frames of reference built from the researcher's view of the literature, and their experience of the phenomena. The researcher's views are inextricably entangled with the content, the partners, and the topic. It was this very relationship to the research which made CE the natural fit from the options available within constructivist research, both from a theoretical perspective of positionality and a practical perspective.

In addition, the idea of a map, which de Rivera outlines as a way of working with abstractions of experience, was highly attractive:

> "Constructing a map is an interesting technique that may be used as part of a conceptual encounter. It forces us to make choices about how concepts are related to each other. It makes us realize specific deficiencies in our knowledge, sends us back to concrete experience with specific questions that we previously failed to ask." (1981, p.74)

The combination of the verbal and the visual appealed to the idea that in order to answer the research question and understand what EL is for coaches, a map of the territory would be a positive starting place for exploration. In addition,

phenomenological approaches are often critiqued for their reliance upon language, and indeed de Rivera himself highlighted the need for articulate participants:

> "The partner attempts to get back into the experience and communicate it to the investigator, but can only narrate what he or she can articulate about the experience." (1981, p.11)

In discussing phenomenological approaches, Bachkirova, Rose and Noon (2020) note "It is interesting therefore that one of the most serious critiques of phenomenology is that language precedes and therefore shapes experience and, in some way, prescribes what we can think and feel" (in Willig, 2006: 89). The use of a visual map in CE adds an element which is not so heavily reliant on language and may access routes to the concept other than purely linguistic ones (albeit the participants were highly experienced and articulate).

In terms of fit, form and function, CE was selected as the most suitable methodology to gain the kind of knowledge required by the investigatory question, accounting for the researcher's own (my) position, and the inherent critique of language in phenomenological approaches.

3.4 Research design of the Conceptual Encounter process

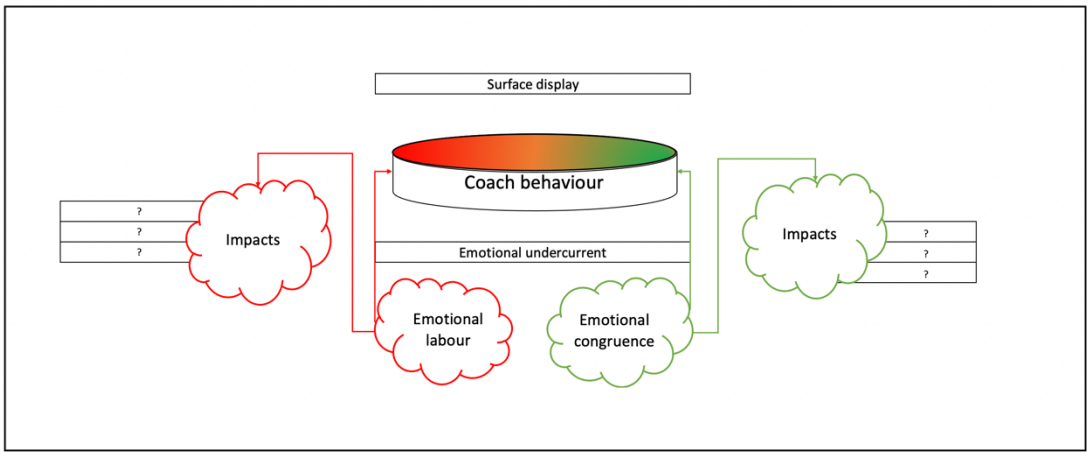
Unlike other phenomenological approaches, CE requires that the researcher develops a starting concept, which is then utilised for co-creation to develop, change, and iterate with research partners (participants). In direct opposition to, say, grounded approaches which have little, no, or light literature search and review at this point, CE deliberately creates a model or concept on which to work. This allows the focus to be pointed at the area of interest from the outset and bounds that focus, whilst also allowing for both the unexpected and the contrary. De Rivera (1981, p.6) explained

both the focus and the expanse with CE: “It must be broad enough to include all the instances of the phenomenon yet narrow enough to exclude related phenomena”.

Whilst the starting model / map is unlikely to fulfil de Rivera’s criteria, the finished model should do so and be both simple and elegant, recognisable and fitting of the concept researched. My starting model, in the form of a map or diagram, originates both from my own experiences of EL and a wide literature search across sectors and time. Necessarily this literature review phase of research was in-depth and over a period of six months, which allowed immersion into the vast array of empirical work in EL.

Subsequently, I prepared various starting models which reflected both literature and experience. This process was both cognitive and creative - and in seeking feedback on the models from both academic supervisors and colleagues, it was noticed that the starting models all had a good deal of detail and were advanced in thinking. This is a natural tendency after a long period immersed in the EL field, but overly complex starting models are not helpful for allowing partners into the process, and prompting them to do the thinking and exploration required. My Director of Studies noticed and commented that I had ‘done a lot of the thinking’ for my participants. As a result, I stripped back one model to basic components as a starting point, which described just the basic elements of EL as potentially present in coaching:

Figure 2: Initial model of EL in coaching



It was from this starting model that the developing concept and final concept emerged - and as will be discussed in the findings of this work, that model progression was significant from start to finish.

The model represents some of the key features of EL from the literature, primarily the potential difference between the surface display and the emotions felt; which was a concept all coaches identified with, but often had no label or language to describe; the model then formed a useful way of visualising what those elements represented for coaches.

3.5 Data collection

3.5.1 One-to-one interviews

The model I had created received focus and attention in the latter half of both interviews and group discussions. I conducted seven 'one-to-one' interviews, for up to an hour and a half (all lasted over an hour) and the participants in this research are described further in the following section (Participants / Research Partners). The structure of these interviews was based on de Rivera's CE process, where participants were encouraged to talk about examples of the area of interest, which might take 15 minutes or "perhaps an hour or two has elapsed" (1981, p.3). In each case around

half the allotted time was spent in discussion, and half the time looking at, modifying and discussing the model, which went through an iteration during and after the interviews. The interviews were all performed through an online platform (as this research was conducted during the 2020 pandemic lockdown), audio recorded, and transcribed. In addition, work on the model / map was done both in real-time with participants using a graphics package (Adobe Photoshop) and a shared screen - such that words, images and anything else in the model could be adapted 'on the fly', and in the moment.

The first half of the semi-structured interview (appendix A) commenced with the question of what gave participants energy and value in coaching - this was for two reasons. firstly, this gave a positive entry point into the interviews, and partners would talk about the value they saw in coaching, the value they bring, and the value coaching brings to them. Secondly, it formed a backdrop to the antithesis - when coaching is difficult, draining, and lacks energy - as an entry point to the concepts of EL. The process was reminiscent of a funnelling approach, moving from a) what energises, b) to what drains and depletes, and then c) into the specific concepts or areas of interest to EL. – and d) the model or map.

3.5.2 Group discussions

Following the one-to-one interviews, two focus groups or group discussions were held with additional participants (who had not been interviewed before) - one exclusively with coaches and one exclusively with supervisors of coaching. These group discussions both exceeded two hours of discussion. Again, these groups were conducted online due to physical distancing mandated by pandemic protection rules. The coach focus group contained five participants, and the supervisor group three participants (the fourth, planned, participant was unwell and had been advised to go to hospital the previous evening). The nature of online / virtual interactions worked

well with fewer participants in terms of factors like managing the technology involved, managing participation and ensuring voice for attendees.

The purpose of utilising focus groups is to harness the power of group interaction ('more than a sum of its parts') in a way that individual interviewing cannot (Krueger and Casey, 2015); secondly, it includes participants with unique insights into coaches' experiences; and thirdly, it may have the benefit of distancing the researcher by including other interactive voices. The rationale for holding a focus group with coaching supervisors is both for their experience as coaches and of working with coaches in the normative, formative and particularly restorative areas of supervision (Hay, 2007; de Haan, 2012) - which are all highly relevant to the topic of EL (some of the instances of EL may well end up in supervisory discussions and sessions).

The process of running the focus groups was similar to the one-to-one interviews (see interview schedule, appendix A). The rich discussion between participants was audio recorded and transcribed, and the model was worked with *interactively* in the same way as with individual interviews. The anticipated benefit of group interaction and collaborative work on the ideas and the model / map certainly was attained in the interactional nature of a group discussion.

3.6 Participants / Research Partners

The profiles of the research partners, who were all full-time coaches / coach supervisors, are detailed below:

Figure 3: Participants' profiles

Participant	Male / Female	Role	Experience Coach	Experience Supervisor
#1	Female	External Coach	15+ years	n/a
#2	Female	Internal Coach	8+ years	n/a
#3	Female	Internal Coach	6+ years	n/a
#4	Male	External Coach	7+ years	n/a
#5	Female	External Coach	10+ years	n/a
#6	Male	Internal Coach	5+ years	n/a
#7	Male	Internal Coach	5+ years	n/a
#Coach FG 1	Female	External Coach	5+ years	2+ years
#Coach FG 2	Female	External Coach	7+ years	n/a
#Coach FG 3	Male	Internal Coach	14+ years	n/a
#Coach FG 4	Female	External Coach	8+ years	n/a
#Coach FG 5	Female	External Coach	5+ years	n/a
#SV FG 1	Female	External Coach / SV	15+	2+
#SV FG 2	Female	External Coach / SV	12+	3+
#SV FG 3	Female	External Coach / SV	17+	7+

(# - individual 1:1, # Coach FG - Coach Focus Group, #SV FG - Supervisor Focus Group). "Internal" means employed by the organisation in which they are coaching, external means not employed, but contracted to supply coaching services.

The balance of gender was in favour of females, with the supervisor group being exclusively so. The vast majority of participants had academic qualifications in excess of ILM 5, and through to Doctoral researchers. In addition, four had accreditations through either the European Mentoring & Coaching Council, to Master Practitioner level, or through the ICF. The supervisor group all held either academic qualifications or accreditation as supervisors. One coach participant had neither qualification nor accreditation but had over a decade of practice. In general terms, the selected participants were experienced coaches or supervisors with a good deal of professional practice, and mostly highly-qualified or accredited as coaches and supervisors.

Research participants were selected through purposive sampling utilising social media (LinkedIn), both through the researcher's personal network and the EMCC UK national network. By responding to an approved form of words (accepted by the University Research Ethics Committee for social media calls for participants), coaches and supervisors who met the criteria explained in the wording of the notice offered their time to the research project. The requirements were: a significant amount of coaching practice (upwards of five years, and potentially with a qualification, though that was not a barrier to entry), ability to articulate their experience, and for supervisors an additional two years of supervisory experience as a minimum on top of their experience as coaches.

Perhaps because of the timing of my call to participants, in the early days of the 2020 pandemic lock-down, I received a good response to the call in a short space of time, circa twenty respondents, and soon secured seven one-to-one participants, five coach group discussion participants, and four supervisors. Over the ensuing six-week period the data collection was conducted and completed.

3.7 Data analysis

As discussed, CE is iterative in nature and data comes in two forms: work on the model and verbal discussion during one-to-one interviews and group discussions. The model or map itself is data, and the process of working on, reviewing, adapting and reflecting on the model changes, the added words or images, and participants' responses to the model are all forms of data. Part of that process is co-created work, and part is my own work in the role of concept holder:

> "(…) the formation of a good conceptualization is a continual making process as the researcher moves back and forth between interviews, observations, literature and reflection, gradually becoming more alert to the nuances and patterns of the phenomenon." (de Rivera, 1981, p.7)

Whilst that process is both iterative, and somewhat intuitive, the process of analysis of the spoken work, and the audio I transcribed from recorded interviews, followed a more formal structure which involved coding themes from the text using NVivo (QSR International's qualitative data analysis software).

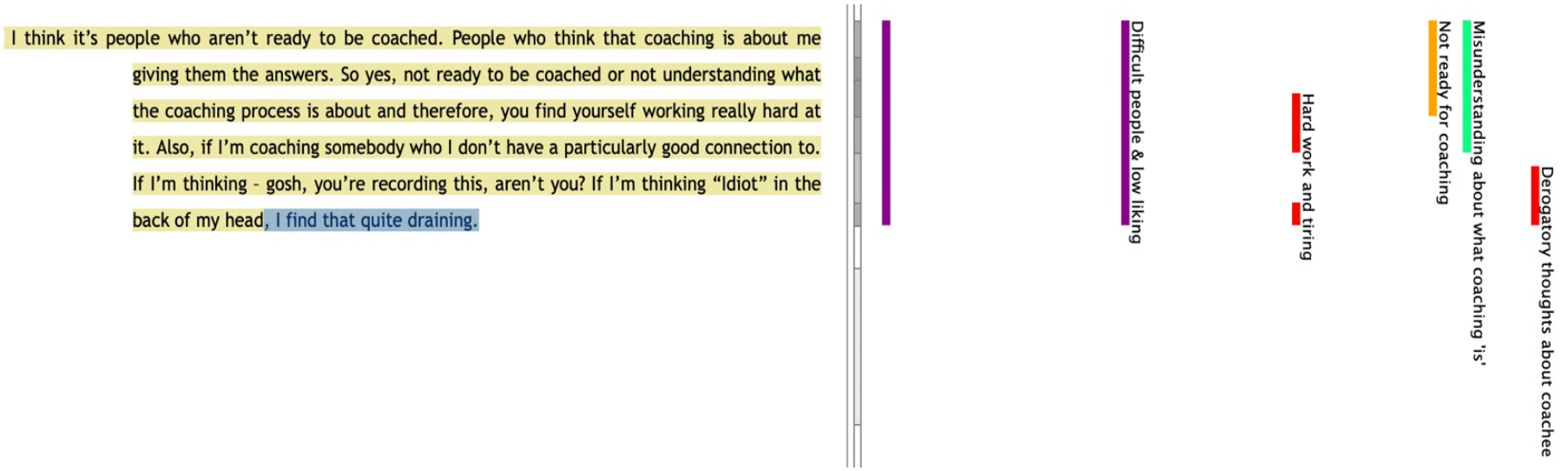
3.7.1 Coding

The process of transcribing, hearing and re-reading interviews enabled me to gain good familiarity with the contributions that participants had made. The next step in the data analysis process was to code each transcription to both themes from the model, and emergent themes. This coding was performed by reading the answers to each question, and each phase of participants' words, and assigning a relevant code (node) to those words if relevant to the subject. An example of this from NVivo follows:

Figure 4: NVivo coding example

Researcher: "So conversely, what are the things in coaching that tend to drain you of energy? What drains you about coaching?"

Respondent:

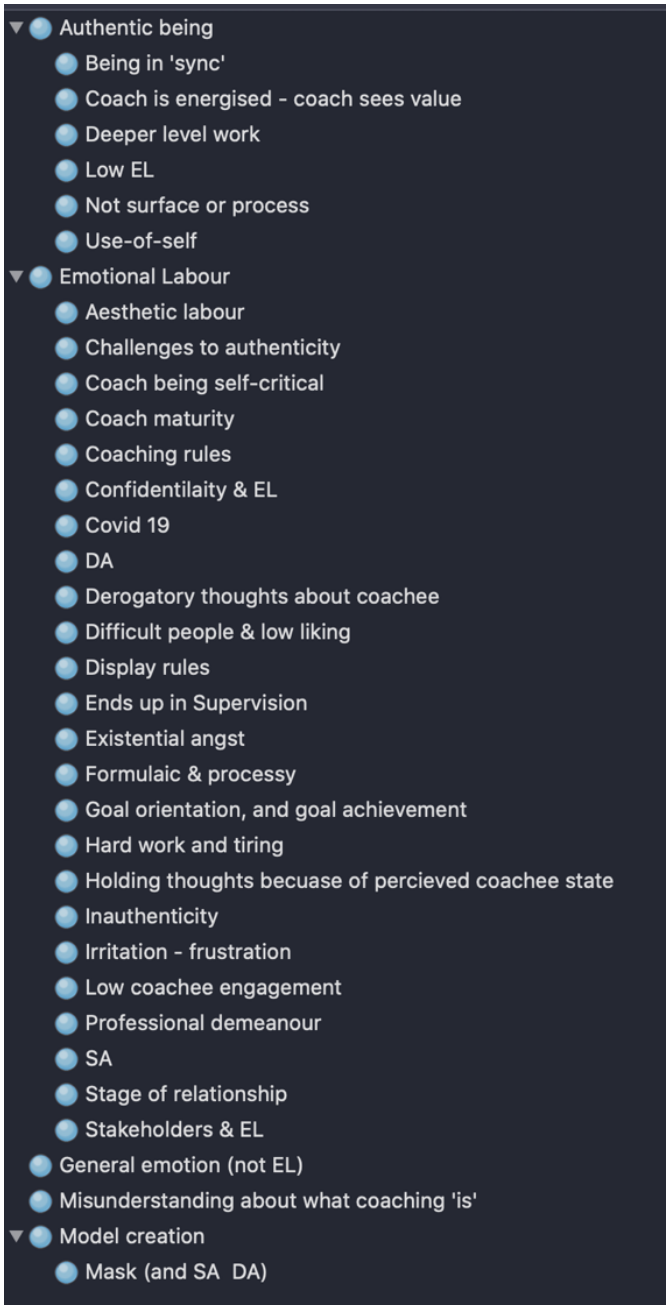


This section of text contains several codes: 'Not ready for coaching', 'Misunderstanding about what coaching 'is'', 'Difficult people & low liking', 'Derogatory thoughts about coachee' and 'Hard work and tiring'.

Within Nvivo, then, all the instances which have been coded as, say, 'Hard work and tiring' are collated under one node, and viewable either in context, or as a list of all codes relating to that specific node.

I chose to conduct the first pass coding from first to last interview, in line with the chronology of model creation. The second pass was reversed, with the final group discussion viewed first (as I had noticed a tendency for more detailed coding at the start of a pass through the data - so to ensure the same level of attention to each piece of text, I reversed the process). Finally, I re-ran through the interviews again, in the original sequence. As the coding progressed, themes were refined, and renamed, amalgamated and split, in order to reflect the developing concepts and instances. The following codes were assigned.

Figure 5: NVivo codes



(NVivo Codebook in appendix E.)

3.7.2 Data analysis

Castleberry and Nolen (2018) note some distinct phases of qualitative data analysis. Firstly, in relation to 'compiling' the data into a usable form, they point out the benefits of transcribing and reviewing text, and immersion in the data. I reviewed consistently, throughout the process - which is also consistent with the CE approach as de Rivera (1981) described it: cycling through literature, data, observations and reflections. Castleberry and Nolen's (2018) work adds process and rigour to the analysis of data and serves as both a guide and a checkpoint for something which could be seen as haphazard or lacking in discipline.

Secondly, the process of 'disassembling' data is described as "taking the data apart and creating meaningful groupings" (Castleberry and Nolen, 2018, p.808). In the instance of this research there were already some clear concepts discussed and areas of the model which formed some initial groupings, with others becoming emergent on reviewing and disassembling. NVivo was helpful in enabling me to code simply, even in situations where I was uncertain or unclear. Where I found that something might be coded, it could be coded in one or several places (or nodes); then, on further refinement, I made a more final decision on where sections or words were most fittingly coded, or indeed left them coded in several ways.

Thirdly, 'reassembling' requires the creation of themes or nodes which represent the meaning, or at least the classification of the data into a structure. Castleberry and Nolen (2018) asked useful questions of the data - such as is it 'thick' or 'thin'?; is there a wealth or a paucity of that theme or node? I found this useful for checking whether my 'lens' was impacting on the data, and this aided in my detachment from the danger of *seeing what I wanted to see.*

‘Interpreting’ the data is the next step in this process, and one which the authors highlight as crucial. No software, NVivo included, would interpret the data for me. These are the judgements based on the previous phases of the thematic analysis, and these interpretations should: “… arise easily from your data and become the foundations for your conclusions.” (Castleberry and Nolen, 2018, p.812)

With the CE process and model / map there is an extra layer of both complexity and richness. Firstly, from the literature review there are some key concepts which were highlighted in my starting model or concept, and towards which participants’ attentions have been turned. This starting model brings forward the elements from the literature which I believe are justified based on the empirical work already done in the field, and the research question itself. Secondly the map, which is already an interpretation, has a place in this phase - along with the words spoken. My interpretation has been happening throughout the research process in CE, and so a watchful eye and careful attention to detail were employed to look for data that was anomalous, or interesting for its variance from that which ‘easily arises’.

Finally, “Conclusions are the response to the research questions or purpose of the study.” (Castleberry and Nolen, 2018, p.812). The authors asserted that the process of coming to a final response to the research question must be transparent, and that: “Research must yield results that are open for careful scrutiny into the researchers’ decision making throughout the analysis process. This can be accomplished with a detailed description of coding procedures and criteria, detailed description of how codes and patterns of codes led to themes and resulting interpretation” (2018, p.812). This speaks to reflexivity and rigour, as well as the technical aspect of specifically how the coding was performed. The whole process of coding, re-coding, refining and adding codes was fully digital, and fully created and completed within NVivo. Whilst a manual process - using mind-mapping, paper-based systems, ‘idea walls’ (and the like) - is often utilised in coding and thematic analysis, this was not the case for my

process. Whilst some may perceive this approach as lacking creativity by relying on a digital tool, my experience felt highly creative, and I felt fully able to utilise this digital process to enable my thinking. As a result of this fully digital process, there may be an appearance of order, or fully-formedness, in the coding tables shown from NVivo - but that was not always the case; at the start of the process there were no codes, then codes were added, then codes were re-named, then codes were combined, and renamed - it is simply that the tool used for this work appears less 'messy' than a manual paper-based approach, but that does not mean using NVivo was any less iterative, or adaptive, or creative than a manual process.

Castleberry and Nolen (2018) then described their recommendations for thematic analysis in qualitative research, which include the advice to make your biases known to readers of research. This point is important and relevant to the CE process particularly because of the central role that I have played in the research process. It is through utilising a process and making it transparent that readers gain trust in the research work, as well as through attendance to other aspects of quality, ethics and reflexivity, to which this chapter now turns.

3.8 Criteria of quality

Seeing our own work as of 'good quality' is important to many, and important to me in this research work. This drive has permeated though everything I have done in this endeavour. It is difficult to demonstrate care and attention, though, as general intent. Reviewing de Rivera's (1981) quality criteria and referring to those of Tracy (2010) allows some structure and framework to address questions of quality in this research.

Tracy (2010) presented a model of quality in qualitative research which has received support for its comprehensive and flexible approach (Gordon and Patterson, 2013),

and others outline positions which resist predetermined criteria for assessing quality (Cameron, 2011). Whilst Gordon and Patterson (2013) were in favour of Tracy's approach, they had some criticism that ethics needs to be seen as a thread throughout research, rather than a category which is stand-alone. Certainly, though, Tracy addressed the need to judge qualitative research in a language which is consistent with qualitative research, rather than a poor translation from positivistic paradigms; this makes it a very attractive way in which to view and discuss my research.

Also, in terms of quality, de Rivera (1981) highlighted some elements from the original CE work which resonate with Tracy's criteria, though in a way which is less named, or categorised, than in Tracy's work.

3.8.1 Worthy topic

Tracy (2010) highlighted '**Worthy topic**' as her first criterion. De Rivera (1981) is less specific around what constitutes a worthy topic, but focussed on some universally recognised emotions, such as love or anger. He said: "The topic of inquiry may involve any experience, behavioural pattern, or psychological phenomenon for which the investigator and research partners have a common name." (p.4)

One emergent challenge for this research was that 'emotional labour' is not a well-known, well understood, or well considered term in the coaching field - compared with, say, nursing, where there has been a good deal of work, and where the terminology is well used and recognised. This necessitated explanations of EL in common terms or by using questions which elicited instances of the phenomenon. An example of this is where I questioned what coaches 'are supposed to look like, and be like', and prompted a discussion of where those 'rules' come from for coaches. Technically I was asking about display rules or feeling rules - but without necessarily using the terms.

The topic of EL for coaches is worthy and significant, given that the canon of literature on EL is plentiful and developed in in other fields, but not so in coaching - indeed the previous discussion around terms is evidence, in and of itself, of the need for research work. The deleterious effects of EL, such as emotional exhaustion or burnout, make this a significant area to explore for coaches. Certainly, as a practitioner it is interesting to look into both my own experience and the experiences of others in relation to the concept or phenomenon. Tracy asks whether the research is 'timely' - in fact it is overdue, given four decades of EL research in other fields. The other dimension which makes this research timely is the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic which has necessitated a change in the way that coaches predominantly work. The coaching space has shifted from one which was often a face-to-face encounter, to one with physical separation, which also adds a dimension to the inquiry which was neither expected nor planned.

Participants must have been interested enough to volunteer and to have seen the research as *worthy* - but the full significance for them personally only became apparent through the process, as will be discussed further.

3.8.2 Rich rigor

Tracy (2010) next described '**Rich rigor**'; attention to the theoretical construct of research, the data collection and contexts, and the analytical process of organising and making meaning from data collected. De Rivera (1981) described the CE process from literature search, through individual interview, to model construction, collaboration, and final creation. De Rivera (1981) also discussed, at some length, the nature of 'ways of being', experience, and the process of accessing that experience as a researcher. Whilst this is not posed explicitly as a *theoretical construct*, he did examine both the opportunities and challenges of "describ[ing] precise structures for different ways of being" (p.1). The rationale for this particular methodology, and the

methods utilised, are laid out within this chapter. The addition of modern technology which I used (such as NVivo) for capture and analysis of data is a world apart from de Rivera's original description; in fact, he was not specific about how data is recorded, other than the introduction of the idea of a visual map. What is clear, though, is that the analysis process is an iterative cycle between literature, researcher, research partner, and concept (pp.3-4); modern technology may simply add some efficiency in that process - in the same way that the process by which de Rivera's original type-set book was compiled and printed would be very different now, but the final result is still a book. The steps in the process I have described - the preparation of the model from the literature, the collection of data, the way in which I approached this data, and the iterations of the model/map - all relate to rigour in the process.

3.8.3 Sincerity

Tracy (2010) next addressed '**Sincerity**'. This concept is embedded in de Rivera's (1981) work, particularly in reflexivity and the role of researcher, with all their inherent experience - which he calls an "intensely personal encounter" (p.8). De Rivera speaks of the honesty required, and the flexibility needed on both sides of the relationship; where the researcher may have to adapt the concept, and where a research partner's view of events might change as a result of exposure to the model. These descriptions (p.10) are an earnest affair where real investigation is performed. In *this* research the tension between being the gatekeeper of the concept and an inquirer was keenly felt, and the sincere judgement required at each phase of the process was ever-present. My inherent bias is both blessing and curse to the work; without a position, an interest, and a desire to answer an important question there is no research, but conversely without an ability to let go, and adopt change, then there is no concept development. I felt this tension most keenly during the data collection and model development phase, and from my reflective journal this quote is pertinent:

> "I am feeling tension around what to change and what to keep in the visual model, and I have to become comfortable with discomfort - which is contradictory, of course. I feel tension when I do not include something because one person has said, or observed it, and then feel myself looking for other instances to validate."

This tension was held with sincerity, and one research participant (Coach 2) was heard to say, "Don't change it all!" - in reference to the model / map; this interview was compelling and formed the basis for the final model (key elements persisted from this iteration through the remaining interviews, and through both group discussions).

Finally, whilst discussing Sincerity, Tracy (2010) referred to researchers who attend to the needs of their participants, not just their own needs. An example of where this has played a part in this research is in the way I constructed the Interview Schedule (appendix A). The start of the interview focussed on values, drivers, and enjoyment / energisation for the Coach; this was for two primary reasons. Firstly, EL may present as the opposite of what energises coaches, and so this contrast was useful for discussion and information - but secondly, I intended that the process of partnering would be a positive one. When we talk about our drivers, values, and enjoyment - it is often a positive experience. The middle section of the interview was then about examples of challenges, and the final part of the interview was around the concept model. I designed the interviews this way to make discussing a potentially sensitive topic more palatable. Participants reported having enjoyed the process, and that it has made them 'think differently' about their coaching experience; but the point of Sincerity is demonstrated in designing the process to meet the participant's needs as well as my own.

3.8.4 Credibility

Tracy's (2010) fourth criterion for qualitative quality is '**Credibility**'. The trustworthiness of the research is found in 'rich description' and detail, which in *this* research is presented in the Findings chapter, where the detail of what was said, and how the model was adapted, appears. CE has the goal of creation of an elegant and 'parsimonious' model of concept. De Rivera (1981, pp.7-8) described the intended outcome of CE research having these ends: it brings the implicit out, to become explicit. The way in which I adapted the model during interviews to reflect the feedback and thoughts which participants were sharing adds to the credibility of this work, and the thematic work in data analysis is, I believe, congruent with that model. The rich description and detail, then, will be presented in findings as a synthesis of the spoken word, the themes that have arisen, and the model - as adapted.

3.8.5 Resonance

Similarly, '**Resonance**' (the fifth quality criterion) features highly in CE research. It is this resonance which I seek from turning particular experience(s) into generalised abstractions which should reverberate with readers of the research. Practitioners should be able to see what has been created and recognise those elements in their work to a greater or lesser degree. Supervisors of coaching should recognise the dynamics and tensions inherent in coaching work, which coaches bring to them in supervision, and a more general audience should be able to gain some insight and understanding, even without direct experience. One dimension of the interviews was to attempt to raise EL into the coaches' vision, by asking questions around experiences where they felt compelled or practiced in hiding their emotions - and when those instances had been drawn out, to name them. It was a common occurrence for participants to say at the end of the interview that they had 'never thought about' their experiences in this way before, but now that they had, they saw it as an important

element to reflect upon; in other words, that it has resonance. It is this resonance on an individual and group level that I hope to offer to others as a new way of looking at coaching practice.

3.8.6 Significant contribution

Research should make a '**Significant contribution'** (the sixth quality criterion), in one or a number of ways. This research on EL intends to take a well-researched concept, which is hitherto unresearched in coaching, and address the question 'What is Emotional Labour for coaches?'. The contribution is in the originality of the question. Whilst CE is a lesser known and used methodology, its processes are fairly clearly defined, but there is a good deal of scope for innovating around CE research; that was not the goal of this research work, but rather to stand upon work which has already been done in the methodology, with sound methods and a history of use back to de Rivera and Kreilkamp in 1981. My aim is to take the cues from those significant academic voices pointing towards EL in coaching and contribute empirical work that has yet to be done.

3.8.7 Ethics

The penultimate category which Tracy (2010) described is '**Ethics**'. As discussed, commentators have identified ethics as a thread throughout research, rather than a stand-alone item; nevertheless, Ethics will be discussed further in this chapter. Other than the sincerity and honesty present in de Rivera's writing, Ethics is not highly featured in the original CE work. Indeed, there are examples of power dynamics and use of data which would raise ethical eyebrows today in terms of consensual and power-free involvement ("I asked students in my classes to write short (3-5 page) papers…") (1981, p.51). The section on Ethical considerations which follows in this Chapter will detail my specific approach and attention to questions of Ethics.

3.8.8 Meaningful coherence

Finally, Tracy (2010) highlighted '**Meaningful coherence'**: Does the study achieve what it set out to? Is there a methodological and methods fit? And does it connect literature with questions, findings and discussion or interpretations meaningfully? My choice of CE has a strength here which, similarly to some other areas of the 'big tent' eight criteria, align well with Tracy (2010). This chapter outlines why CE was a close methodological fit with the topic and research question and, circling back to de Rivera's own work, we see the process outlined from the formation of a question, through literature review and reflection - in iterative cycles to the end point of model or developed concept which performs all the functions he sets out for his own quality criteria (1981, pp.7-8). It is that coherence which I attempt to achieve through the choices made around approach and in the performance of the steps which make up the whole.

By using Tracy's 'Big Tent' Eight criteria for quality in qualitative research (2010), as well as considering de Rivera's writing on CE, I have considered the degree to which this study demonstrates quality in approach and execution, which is summarised in the following table:

Figure 6: Summary of how this research addresses quality criteria

Tracy's Quality Criteria (2010)	How this research meets Tracy's criteria					
(a) worthy topic	Research gap for EL in coaching	Negative outcomes of EL	Timely, as research on negative outcomes for coaches emerges	Covid19's impact on coaching		
(b) rich rigor	Attention to the CE process	Use of technology	Detailed coding and transcription			
(c) sincerity	Prescence as both gatekeeper and researcher	Reflective research	Adaptability and response to change	Seeking to attend to needs of participants / care of		
(d) credibility	Rich in description and detail	Model development and adaptation	Model, themes and participant's words in unison			
(e) resonance	Model recognition	Concept recognition	Rich examples of EL			
(f) significant contribution	Novel research area for EL	Focussed on coach care, and preservation	Novel research area for professional display rules			
(g) ethics	Ethics as ongoing, not a point in time	Voluntary participation	Mitigating for risk or harm	Confidentiality protected	Informed consent sought and given	Supervised and advised
(h) meaningful coherence	Methodology and methods close fit for question	Close fit of literature to interviews questions and model	Close fit of interviews to finding			

3.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations underpin this research study, and whilst included as a stand-alone section in this chapter, I take the approach, in line with the ideas of Gordon and Patterson (2013), that ethics run throughout research. Gray (2004) provides a practical checklist of ethical issues to which the researcher should pay attention.

3.9.1 Participants' rights

The **right not to participate**, and the **right to withdraw** were clearly stated both verbally and in writing in participant information and consent forms (appendix, B and C) which were read and signed and returned by research partners.

I employed no coercion or offers of reciprocity. I used an approved form of words for social media (appendix D) and respondents highlighted their interest in participating. On the signalling of that interest, respondents were provided with information to read, and if they wanted to progress, they signed and returned their consent to me.

3.9.2 Risk assessment

Gray (2004) advises a **risk assessment** for the potential to cause harm through research. The potential sensitivities or potential for negative consequences of thinking about and recalling instances of emotional labour were considered and mitigated through information provided on the Participant Information Sheets. These highlighted both the potential for negative consequences to arise, though care would be taken to deal with the subject sensitively, and that negative effects were not expected. Finally, a signpost towards help and support was provided if participants were negatively affected. No participant was negatively affected, and many reported enjoyment and value from the process, including both the one-to-one interviews and the group discussions.

3.9.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality and anonymity were explained in the accompanying documentation to the study, and all attempts have been made to preserve that. Whilst absolute anonymity is a challenge, all reasonable efforts were made to make participation anonymous; one challenge to that intention was that individuals were prone to making contact to express their interest in a public way, on the post which I had published on social media (and so available for all to view). Despite asking for private messages in the instructions, several individuals made their offers publicly, but I was able to mitigate that by publicly thanking each respondent for their interest but following up privately. It was not, then, possible to identify who had indeed proceeded to consent and ultimately to contribute. This is an example of how the ethical approach was highly present as a thread throughout the work, with constant attention being paid to ethics. A second challenge to anonymity is with the use of group discussion, where what is said is in a social space; indeed, that is the purpose of utilising a group - to benefit from the dynamic of interaction. I made clear at the outset of the invitation that group discussion would be with other coaches or supervisors, and that participation could be withdrawn at any time. In practice, coaches and supervisors are highly social people and wanted to make connection with each other beyond the work - so rather than seeking confidentiality and anonymity they sought connection, disclosure and sharing. Given the nature of group discussion, the consent of the participants was at least informed - they were clear about what their participation meant, and the implications of that on confidentiality and anonymity.

3.9.4 Informed consent and data ownership

Informed consent was a requirement of participation, and written consents and permissions were collated and kept in accordance with what Gray called **Data access and ownership***.* This concept had been superseded by UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), currently under EU regulation (EU) 2016/679, and the particular application of those rules to

data collected was clearly stated on participant documentation for clarity of purpose and process (privacy notice, appendix F).

3.9.5 Researcher mental health

Researcher mental health - the possibility of harm being done to the researcher by conducting research was considered, and whilst possible, considered to be very unlikely. In addition, I structured the interviews in such a way as to give a balance of both potentially positive and potentially negative topic areas - and in practice nothing untoward occurred. I enjoyed hearing about the experiences of other coaches, and this has been a highlight of the research work for me.

3.9.6 Advice

Finally, Gray considered **Advice** - who will the researcher turn to for ethical advice during the research? I was fortunate to have strong academic supervision and strong ethical supervision, both through the Director of Studies and the Ethics Officer at Oxford Brookes University. It was through this supervision and advice that the process of gaining Ethics approval for research was attained for this work. The Ethics approval process provided the opportunity to develop the detail which relates closely to Gray's checklist, though requires a level of information and consideration far in excess of it. Participant information and recruitment methods, particulars of data capture and storage, dependent relationships, risk management and mitigation, and all of the research documentation (for a full list of requirements see Oxford Brookes Research Ethics Code of Practice, approved March 2016) were reviewed first internally, and then by the University Research Ethics Committee which is formed of professionals independent from the research. Research could only commence once these approvals had been granted following clarification, addition, or amendment of the proposal. In this research, provisional approval was given subject to the Committee's comments - and approval was granted when those points had been satisfactorily addressed. This was an

intensive and robust process to ensure that ethical standards were in place before, during and after research - and critically that the researcher was aware and alert to ethical considerations as an ethos, rather than a point in time or a process to be overcome.

3.10 Reflexivity

Reflexivity requires overt disclosure of the researcher's positionality, the researcher's previous experience, and their lens of seeing - and a constant presence during the research of that knowledge (Berger, 2015, Dowling, 2006, Haynes, 2012, Macbeth, 2001, Palaganas *et al*., 2017). Whilst this disclosure helps the reader of research work gain some insight and understanding of what impact the presence of position has made upon the work, there is an obvious and plain issue with reflexivity itself; that what is not known by the researcher, is not known by the researcher (Roulston and Shelton, 2015).

The idea of neutrality, or value-free qualitative research, assumes that the researcher can somehow transcend who they are into an observer of phenomena with a beginner's mind - a challenging concept. In other phenomenological approaches we see attempts to address some of those issues with approaches such as 'bracketing'" "…an attempt to hold prior knowledge or belief about the phenomena under study in suspension in order to perceive it more clearly." (LeVasseur, 2003, p.409), which again assumes that a researcher is able to put aside positionality, and simply neutrally address data. This process is not problem free, or without criticism (see LeVasseur, 2003). This is reminiscent of the debate in coaching itself that coaches can maintain an 'unconditional positive regard' in the Rogerian tradition (Rogers, 1957). What then of the times, such as will be seen in this research, when coaches do not have positive regard - when coaches have derogatory thoughts towards coachees, and certainly do not have neutrality? How does one put aside those positions, thoughts, responses and feelings? The same is true of qualitative research, that knowledge is not separate from

the knower. As Putnam (1981, preface, xi) asserted: “The mind and the world jointly make up the mind and the world.”

Rather than seeing experience as bias, CE sees it as essential to meaning-making, in partnership with participants (de Rivera, 1981) - which is my primary reason for selecting CE. Whilst no less rigour is applied to the process, as previously discussed when considering quality, the methodology accepts and utilises my being and my experience. I am a coach of fifteen years’ experience in organisational environments of varied contexts: life sciences, small, medium and large companies, higher education, business growth contexts and varied public sector organisations. Working mainly in the UK, though also with Chinese and Malaysian universities, I have worked as an external coach, an internal coach and a scheme leader. I come to this research with a series of experiences and some formed views - and yet this is research because it seeks the views and experiences of others. If I had wanted to simply propagate my own views, there are easier, quicker and more effective methods of doing so.

In being reflexive in this work, I hold all of those experiences, but also utilise the ability to learn and discover. Through the use of a reflexive diary, I have captured important thoughts, experiences and reflections about the work. These reflections also take the form of notes, and even pictures and images which have resonated with me around the subject matter, the research process, and my own personal journey.

There is a potential danger in my tendency to want to make things clear cut (and indeed CE is seeking cogence, coherence, and elegance) and exclude data which does not conform. The process of iterative cycles of research requires that I both attach and detach with / from the model in order to see it develop. My gatekeeper role is subject to all of the influences which make up my experience and knowledge. There is a clear danger of simply reconstructing and conforming the research to my views, and simply overlaying a pre-determined frame across the work (which is multiplied by having a model to start research

with). This danger is also a potential area for vigilance in looking at what is known about EL in general - that this in itself simply becomes a frame into which we can place coach experience.

Keeping vigilant and reflexive is aided by a journal and notes, but more significant is an attitude towards inquiry, an awareness that I am a product of my experience and that will impact on what I see and the judgements that I make. Finally, a willingness to review, be open minded, take time and perform repetitions to view the data - to be vigilant to my own processes - is critical in this research.

As one way of challenging myself out of my own frame of reference, one full anonymised transcript was shared with a Doctoral student colleague, who coded the text from their perspective. Multiple coders are often cited as a way of increasing quality (Berends and Johnston, 2005; Barbour, 2001; Church *et al*., 2019; Gray, 2004). In this instance it was a way of generating a challenge to my way of seeing and allowing a fresh interpretation.

Overall, considering my closeness to the research, my experiential frame, and the nature of the methodology, the purpose of being reflexive in CE work is not to remove the researcher from the research - but to acknowledge, harness and utilise that presence to further the research question.

3.11 Summary

This chapter first presented the theoretical framework and approach chosen to research EL in coaching; using a qualitative, constructivist paradigm with the researcher at a central position, CE was selected as the methodology. The research participants were detailed, and the methods employed - one-to-one interviews and group discussion - were described. The way in which data was recorded and transcribed and the development of the model or map were also outlined, including the starting model. Attention was given to how this research relates to quality criteria in qualitative research, including role of reflexivity, and ethics.

The following chapter presents the findings and outcomes of the research process detailed within the Methodology.

4 Findings

In these findings, I present, firstly, the conceptual model or map of EL which was developed through the Conceptual Encounter process. This model was co-created with research partners through progressive iterations towards the final version. Secondly, I present the emergent themes and findings, both from the model itself and from the words spoken during interviews and group discussions.

It is important to re-state my own position in the research at this point. Whilst I am central to the research in Conceptual Encounter, not least as the originator of the initial conceptual model and took on ownership of the concept in these interviews, I also needed to be objective enough to be able to see and hear what I had not expected. My reading of the literature naturally informed me about areas of interest in relation to EL, and because of the commonality of findings across many roles, sectors and contexts I was able to predict the emergence of these themes in the interviews. However, the listening and observation, as well as the treatment of the data in the coding process, required an effort to be objective, which allowed new, unexpected, and even surprising themes to emerge. It is a finely balanced position which I worked to inhabit; my knowledge around EL, gained through the detailed process of literature review and the subsequent production of an initial conceptual model, needed to be held both in focus and in abeyance. To relinquish either detailed knowledge or a 'beginner's mind' would have impoverished both the process and the outcomes of this research. In practice this felt like a constant shifting of focal lenses, rather than truly holding two polar positions – knowing and not knowing required equal focus, which is naturally difficult to achieve. It is a sign of that duality - being in and being out of the research and knowing and not knowing - that what I thought what *may* emerge from the research was only a small proportion of what was found. The way in which these themes and findings were derived is described in the methodology of this study, including the use of NVivo to code and recode (both forwards and backwards, chronologically) in an iterative process to notice commonalities and differences in participants'

words and distil them into themes, which also reflected the dynamic of the focal positions described. This process of themes emerging involved noticing what participants were saying in response to questions and the conceptual model and creating codes within NVivo to represent their ideas. These codes were refined and consolidated over time, wholly within NVivo, so that the ultimate list of themes emerged. As described in the methodology of this research, a transcript was also shared with another researcher for them to code independently; this added a view on participants' responses which was free from pre-conception and detailed knowledge of EL, in either what was observed, or perhaps unobserved. This independent coding by another researcher provided reassurance concerning the accuracy of the overall coding and supported what I had derived from participants' words, whilst encouraging me to look carefully at what they had noticed in the data - which had a high degree of alignment with my interpretations.

Relevant literature which relates to these findings will be drawn out in the subsequent discussion chapter in order to maintain focus here on what coaches contributed, rather than how it relates to extant literature.

When I use the terms 'coaches' or 'supervisors' in these findings I am referring to this group of research participants rather than making claims about coaches or supervisors in general. Necessarily these findings represent the views, experiences, and thinking of the chosen partners, in collaboration with me. These findings form the developed model and address the following themes:

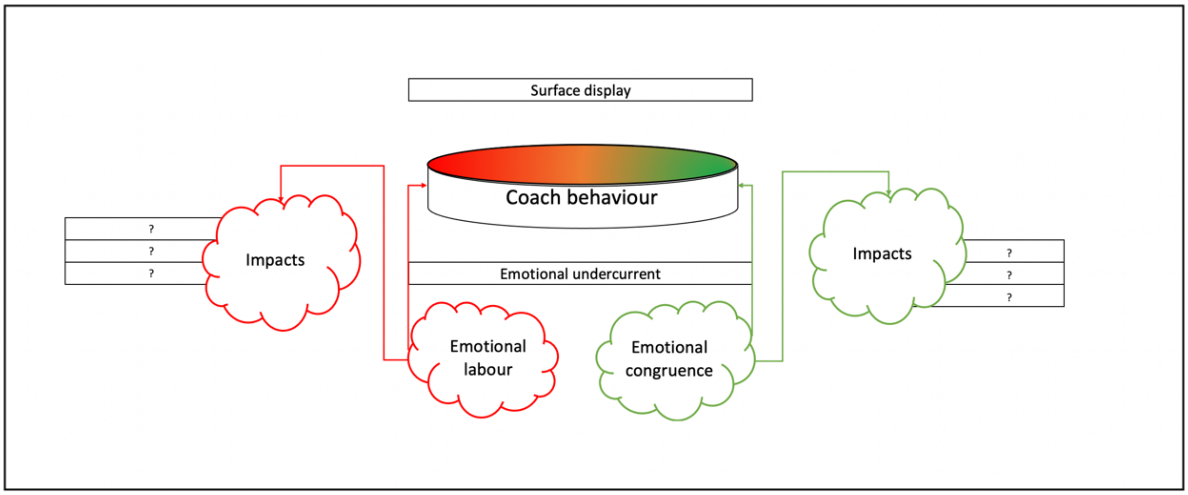
1. Coaching rules and display rules in relation to EL
2. EL with clients 'in the room'
3. EL with others 'outside the room'
4. The effects of EL in the coaching context.

The conceptual model is an outcome of this Conceptual Encounter research, and that model will be considered first, in relation to the findings, followed by a discussion of the four areas identified above.

4.1 The conceptual model / map

The primary purpose of utilising a conceptual model within the methodology is to act as a catalyst to thinking; this applies to me, the researcher, and to research partners. Both from the literature which had emerged from searching, and from my experience as a practitioner of coaching, I created a model intended as a starting place. Progressive exposures and adaptations led to the final iteration. De Rivera (1981) suggested that the model becomes refined to a point of recognition and simplicity which represents the underlying concept. As I have described previously, my starting model went through its own iterations and versions before interviews and group discussions, aiming towards this simplicity, until I had something suitable on which further collaborative work could begin.

Figure 7: Initial model of EL in coaching



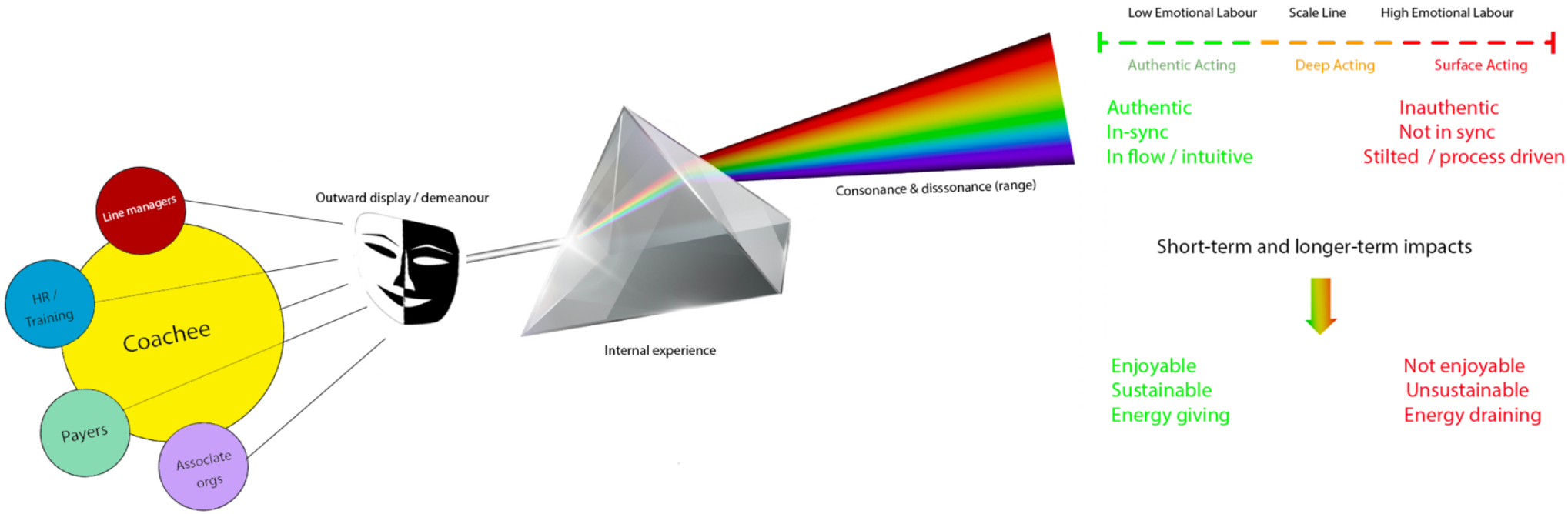
This model represented several key areas for exploration. Firstly, it focussed on coaches' behaviour, their outward demeanour. It also highlighted the potential distance between the emotional undercurrent and surface display as experienced and exhibited by coaches. Finally, the model was designed to signify that there were some effects or impacts for both EL and what was termed 'emotional congruence'. Simply stated, I suggested through the model that what is going on inside for the coach may not be what is seen outside – and that may have impacts or effects. Other elements of interest to EL (such as rule derivation, display rules, surface acting and deep acting) were brought into discussion by the questions posed in the interviews and group sessions (see appendix A).

This model was introduced in the second half of interviews and group discussions, after the scheduled questions had been asked and answered. The model acted as a catalyst to thinking, and as a basis from which to think which relied less on the spoken word and more on pictures, images and position. The model offered another way to approach the content of interviews and group sessions in the context of the discussions which had just taken place. For some, the model was immediately attractive, understandable, and comfortable to work with, and for others the images did not resonate as strongly as the spoken word. Whilst some participants wanted to engage with the images and their relationships, others wanted to talk about the concepts with a reliance on language. Overall, though, there were moments of recognition in both approaches to the topic – and whether participants wanted to engage with model adaptation or concept adaptation verbally, all ways of contributing proved useful. An example of the 'recognition' in the model relates to a mature iteration which contains the image of an actor's mask to represent demeanour and outward display for coaches:

> "It's when you said hard work, I thought, "Where have I heard that?" It's when people are in training, they say, "Oh, this is really hard work, isn't it?" They say things like, "I'm like the swan. I look serene on the front." That's really resonating in your model of the surface mask. I'd never thought of it as emotional labour before, for those people, so it's really helped me." (Claudine)

The model to which this participant was referring was the final iteration (which is shown below), as these comments were from the group discussion for coaches which came immediately after one-to-one interviews were completed.

Figure 8: Final model iteration with participants



Returning to language for description, the key parts of this final participant model are:

- To the left of the model - the coachee as the most significant relationship for the coach, with stakeholders, organisational departments / people, and associate organisations through which coaches may be working, circling around that central relationship. The size of the coachee circle emphasises the importance of that relationship for coaches in comparison with the other, smaller circles around the central relationship.

- Moving towards the right – the 'actor's mask', representing the outward display of the coach by employing the metaphor of 'acting'. In relation to EL, the mask denotes both behaviour / demeanour and display rules (the expected behaviours for coaches).

- The prism, which represents the fractured internal experience of the coach (which in the original model was termed 'emotional undercurrent'). The prism represents the variety of internal experiences which coaches describe, and is important because of the varied experiences of coaches in relation to their internal state and EL.

- The refracted light from the prism represents the spectrum of experiences from consonance to dissonance, those which cause comfort and discomfort.

- The continuum of low EL to high EL depicts a range from Authentic Acting (being), through to Surface Acting, which is described as detrimental. In the centre of that continuum is Deep Acting, the space where coaches are working on themselves in order to feel, and in turn display, congruently.

- Finally, to the right - words are used to describe the effects of being at the extremes of the continuum.

Whilst individual participants had a range of affinities with the model (perhaps partially based on their affinity to visual objects generally), overall, there was a high degree of recognition of the experience from left to right, particularly as the model was refined. Whilst the final model is certainly made by many contributors, and is wholly different from the starting model, one participant in particular had insights and suggestions which had more bearing on the final look and content of the model than the sum of all other contributions. This participant (Crystal) shaped the second iteration of the model early in the data collection stage of research. Whilst in one sense it would be positive, or at least 'neat', to see gradual iterations of the original model with each participant contributing equally, in reality the contribution of the second one-to-one research partner was the most significant in both prompting a departure from the starting model and offering novel images and perspectives which set the direction of the final model. This was a significant and welcome contribution, suggesting a way of re-drawing what I had originally produced. This participant commented during model adaptation, "Don't change it all!" as we worked together on the model; but I did just that, as the contribution was insightful and capturing her mental images of EL enhanced and accelerated development of the model (model iterations in appendix G and a full transcript of Crystal's interview in appendix H).

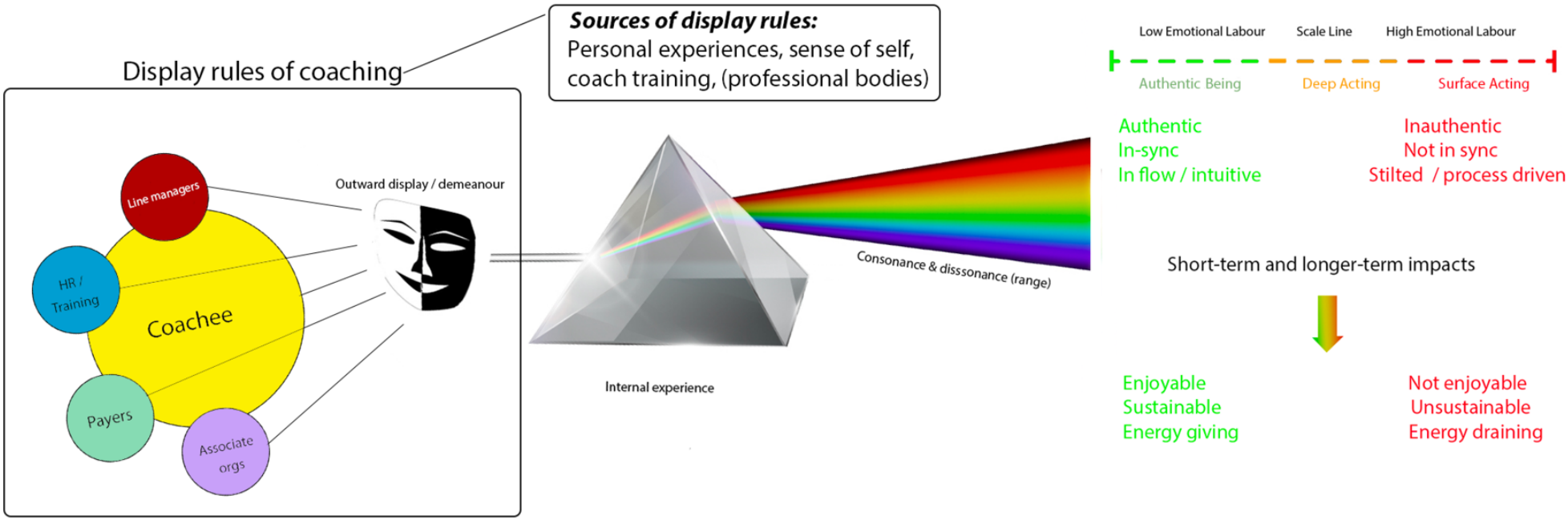
At the time of creation, I did not know how others might respond to the model, or what elements might persist or be subject to change – but, trusting in the method, I was allowing whatever changed to change, and whatever emerged to emerge. Whilst in one sense I could have felt a need to adhere to my starting model of the concept, in fact I saw my model as the impetus for ideas, rather than thinking that my starting model might persist – so, the model served its intended purpose as a catalyst. Subsequently, the changes made in the second participant iteration were exposed to many others who helped tune, refine, and adapt the evolving model. My willingness to move away from my initial conceptualisation is another element of *being in and out*

of the research – without the ability to draw the experiences of others into the model, it would simply be my own observations and so not meet any quality criteria for research.

Both the process of model adaptation (in suggesting changes, additions, movements, or deletions of the visual image) and the discussion around the model and concepts (more akin to the first half of the Conceptual Encounter interviews and discussions) together contributed to the creation of the model or conceptual map. It was the synthesis of words and pictures which created the overall meaning, in a symbiotic, adaptive interaction with each other. The model and the themes which emerged were strongly aligned with each other. Whilst the model also aligns well with literature in other fields, there are some very interesting and significant differences around where and how EL happens for coaches, the operating styles of coaches and the experience of EL, and the views of coaches around display rules and coaching rules - which were both unexpected and important to understand.

After the last iteration of the model with supervisors of coaching, and after discussion with my Director of Studies in supervision, I made a final addition to the image. Display rules, and coaching rules in general, did not appear anywhere on the conceptual model (nor in my starting model). Without rules of display there is no EL (if there is nothing to adhere to, no display rules for coaching, then coaches cannot be in contravention of these) and whilst the source of those rules will be discussed further, the model appeared incomplete without signifying that element.

Figure 9: Final model of EL in coaching



The box which now bounds the coaches' relationships highlights the display rules which 'exist' in and around coaching, and further findings will describe the four areas which appear important in creating coaching display rules (and which appear as sections describing sources of coach display rules later in this chapter). The conceptual model now reflects the key concepts of EL which emanate from definitions of EL, and literature around EL in other contexts. The labour itself is captured in the internal experience and in dissonance between demeanour and display. Display rules are represented by the bounding box around relationships, with sources of those rules labelled. Surface acting and deep acting are noted, with surface acting particularly being associated with some undesirable effects, and overall outcomes are described from no/low EL to high EL.

The following sections of these findings now focus on the words used in interviews and group discussions: of the rules in relation to EL, of EL within and without the coaching 'room', and finally of the effects of EL on coaches.

4.2 Coaching rules and display rules in relation to EL

The presence of display rules and coach perceptions of display rules are central to understanding EL in coaching; without display rules to adhere to, there is no EL. Understanding how coaches perceive professional demeanour is key. It is also important to understand where these rules derive from – who holds the power to create rules, and how are these power holders perceived by coaches in terms of the ability to influence coach behaviour? What are display rules for coaches, and who defines them?

In response to questions around display rules during interviews and group discussions *('How are coaches supposed to look, be, behave?'*) and to the rule creation *('Who makes the rules?*') several key sources emerged for consideration:

- Professional bodies, and their associated frameworks of competence and ethics
- Coach training
- Personal experiences of coaching
- Sense of self.

These areas are discussed in turn, with a representative sample of participants' comments and responses reported verbatim and used to represent the overall themes derived.

4.2.1 Professional bodies

All participants initially responded to the display rules questions *('How are coaches supposed to behave?'*) by referring to professional bodies, such as:

> "EMCC competencies, ICF competencies, everything else, and knowledge and skills, and use of models, use of frameworks. Contracting with your coachee, that brings in almost a way of being with your coachees or clients that becomes the norm." (Chandler)

However, the tone and content of the responses and conversations around professional bodies revealed a scepticism towards them, and their rules or frameworks. The phrases 'coaching police' (Sienna) and 'holy coaching' (Susan) were used to refer to the competency frameworks and ethics frameworks of the professional bodies in a dismissive or humorous way, but also with an element of defiance. Every participant was connected to one of the professional bodies in either membership or

accreditation, and yet there emerged an uneasy alliance which is well expressed by the tension which Claudine described:

> "Then the other thing I've got on my mind is that I've just become an assessor for the [*a professional association*] (…) For someone who doesn't believe in rules and frameworks and yet what do you do? You've got the experience. You go - that's a whole other piece." (Claudine)

Claudine openly states her lack of belief in frameworks, and yet raises the contradiction that she has worked to become accredited within a framework. This tension was replicated many times, and whilst participants overtly aligned with a professional body, their actual orientation was less aligned, or sometimes wholly opposed to the idea of coaching competency as defined by any of the organisations set up to professionally accredit coaches. Crystal states her position towards Governing Bodies as being simply concerned with continuing professional development (CPD), and not with rules at all:

> "I do not recognise that it ['the rules'] comes from anything professional body wise. I'm a member of say… I'm a senior practitioner of the [professional body]. I've gone through the competencies, all of them – renewing, and all of that malarkey. I know what I'm supposed to do. I subscribe to it all, but I don't really think about it. And the [professional body], fine. It's my body, but it doesn't really figure other than for CPD. So, I don't have that in my head from them." (Crystal)

Further to this distance (scepticism in some cases, or lack of conviction) around competencies, any demonstration of knowledge around what is actually *in* any of the frameworks was scant; one participant who trains coaches did make direct reference to one element of the EMCC competency framework, but in doing so couldn't remember what the competency was called:

> "I had a big conversation with a group of coaches yesterday, actually, in the light of what we were looking at, the competence of – blimey, I can't even remember the name of the blinking competency - but around sustaining growth or encouraging growth." (Susan)

The only coach or supervisor to mention a specific competency from any framework struggled with familiarity around the specifics, whilst all other participants simply referred to an Ethics Framework or Competency Framework, in an undefined way – but the naming of it was not followed by any detail of what was in it. Overall a lack of familiarity, coupled with a lack of commitment to the frameworks of practice, dominated responses. The frameworks seem to be perceived as something which come at a point in time, rather than something that coaches *live by*:

> "How are coaches supposed to behave? I think the rules are probably from the code of ethics that you signed up to. For me, the rules, I can't remember the last time I looked at a code of ethics…" (Claire)

So, whilst there was a point in time when Claire 'signed up' to an ethical framework, she can't remember the last time she looked at it, and given the lack of familiarity demonstrated by most, she is not alone. Sara aligns with the EMCC ethics framework in name, but very openly she says:

> "I hand every client or pass them the code of ethics as part of my contract. Absolutely. If you were to ask me, give me some key phrases out of that… I'd be really stuck." (Sara)

Passing or handing an ethics framework to each client, but having little familiarity with its content, describes some presumed utility for the framework in contracting but little practical use (in that if coaches have low recall of what is in the ethical contact, then it would be a stretch to think that is has any influence on how they behave). Three findings emerge from this consideration of professional bodies as rule-makers, then:

- Coaches espouse alignment with frameworks, but in practice have fundamental challenges with frameworks themselves.
- Coaches see an element of negative governance in these frameworks (policing).
- Coaches seem to have low familiarity with the content of those things to which they claim to adhere, and they are actually well aware of that dichotomy.

Whilst it appears that professional bodies have a low influence on coach behaviour, they do appear to have an impact on how coaches think about their practice being misaligned with those rules. This misalignment results in coaches naming themselves as 'maverick' (Susan); maverick, it seems, to the way in which professional bodies represent what should be done in coaching. Whilst Susan was the only coach to brand herself maverick (using that specific word), other coaches expressed their lack of adherence in varied ways, but to the same conclusion: that, behaviourally, there is a misalignment between practice and prescribed frameworks of practice.

If the professional bodies are not the main influence, or even a strong influence of display rules for the profession of coaching, then where do these rules come from?

4.2.2 Coach training as a driver of how coaches should behave

Respondents talked about their own initial training as coaches, as well as more advanced training or education, as rules and drivers of coach behaviour. The attitudes expressed towards 'basic training' or 'initial training' conveyed some interesting information in terms of rules, and how coaches are supposed to present. Many respondents related initial coach training to be something which was learned in order to satisfy entrance to the profession, but mainly only useful as rules for the inexperienced, and coaches acknowledged that inevitably those rules would be adapted or broken:

> "I remember initial training, you have to absorb the rules, you have to absorb your skills, you have to absorb the models and then you have to learn how to release them and let them drift to the edges, don't you?" (Sienna)

Susan states it in a slightly different way:

> "It's bloody hard work being a 'holy coach' but, at the same time, if you haven't actually got the skillset, you could be doing all sorts of weird and wonderful things. It's like trying to play the piano when you haven't actually had any lessons. You have to learn the rules before you can break them." (Susan)

Presumably the antithesis of being a holy coach is being an un-holy coach or being *maverick,* as Susan describes herself. Being 'holy' means different things in different faith traditions, but in the context spoken here it appears to relate to the meaning of operating within bounds and rules (the 'skillset'). Susan is not entirely specific about who creates the rules for holy coaching, but did speak about it in this way – identifying the 'coaching schools':

> "It's just even overlaying of the very detailed competence framework that, if you don't tick all the boxes, somehow you're a bad coach, whereas actually you're not, you're just the coach who you are - who may not tick those sorts of boxes. Some of those, the coaching schools may have - I would see it as falling into a trap, but they probably don't - of imposing something from the outside where it actually needs to be growing from the inside. Difference between training and education, difference between learning and being taught something, and the mismatch between who somebody is as a coach." (Susan)

The coaching schools of which Susan speaks are naturally informed by frameworks from the professional bodies as a basis for their training, and the degree to which these are examined or challenged may be variable. In my own master's level education in coaching and mentoring there were certainly challenges to both the ethical and competency frameworks presented by professional bodies, which undermined their position in terms of hard and fast 'rules', as the course leaders and the students highlighted inherent problems and inconsistencies in those frameworks as part of critical thinking about the profession. Whether coaching rules *drift to the edge* or they are *broken,* the extent to which coach training and education impacts on what coaches see as professional demeanour seems not wholly reliant on either that training (even though coaches do cite that as a source of rule derivation, in a similar way to professional bodies), or their professional bodies themselves, but more tangibly on coaches' personal experiences of coaching.

4.2.3 Personal experiences of coaching

In expressing what coaches and supervisors felt to be meaningful for their 'rules' of coaching, they described both positive and negative personal experiences of coaching. The examples provided related to coaching received, given, observed, or described, and their motivations were towards or away from the behaviour of other coaches (to be like, or not be like, others). These personal experiences presented as strong drivers of coaching behavioural rules.

Claire recounted an experience of a life coach who made a coachee feel 'uncomfortable' in a group coaching session, and immediately followed the description of what happened with "I wouldn't do that!" (Claire). The driver *away from* the type of coach behaviour which made a coachee feel uncomfortable was described with some passion by Claire. Inherent in Claire's thinking about coaching is that it is inappropriate for a coachee to feel uncomfortable, despite frameworks of competence for coaching

describing providing challenge to a coachee's thinking (which may very well result in discomfort).

Crystal spoke about a certain 'type' of coach who seemed culturally misaligned, through appearance and dress, and then explained how she ensured she aligns culturally, including attire and behaviour, with the organisations in which she works. The motivation not to be like other coaches, who Crystal perceives as presenting inappropriately, was strong. In Crystal's schema she seemed to have built a picture of the 'type' of coach that would arrive at a city office, and "a coach that doesn't belong in an organisation" (Crystal). In Crystal's descriptions she worked to be like her coachees and the organisation, recognisable by them as one of them, and in doing so felt that it was easier to form the relationship that she needed:

> "… the more acceptable you can be to the culture, the less... the easier it is than to have a conversation with them." (Crystal)

This is a strong driver of display rules in the contexts Crystal describes:

> "I have a sort of a 'Oh, my God'… it's the kind of coaches that will wear stuff that's… or just be a bit fluffy. I have such a fear of being seen as fluffy and it goes back to the 'What is this coaching thing, its bit fluffy'. So that impacts my dress sense and all of that. And I will be corporate and professional because I do not want them to become fluffy. And I will push my bio that talks about blue-chips, and nice educational background, because I know that will resonate. And that's - I think it is important for me." (Crystal)

The display rule for Crystal extends to dress/attire, credentialing, and seeming to be in the right place (as opposed to out of place, or countercultural), in order to 'resonate' and appear credible to the client organisation and the client themselves. The behavioural display rules meet with presentational display rules - aesthetic labour

(Karlsson, 2012) - in Crystal's examples. Celia also hints at the same influences around how coaches present:

> "If you're in the context of an organisation where everybody's really polished and you go along and, "God, I'm rocking up in my old car", which actually I don't really care about that sort of thing, but you might naturally feel a bit on the back foot…" (Celia)

Inherent in both Crystal and Celia's words are some constructions around how coaches are meant to *be*, and how they are meant to present, which have little to do with the act of coaching but everything to do with *how coaches perceive they are perceived*. These examples are partially about personal experiences of coaching, and they are also related to perceptions of the cultures and expectations with which they work – which are inseparable from their personal experiences. These examples of the rules that coaches hold cannot be said to come from frameworks of competence, or coach training, but instead personal constructions of what is good and not good in coaching; and critically, what is a rule for one coach may not be a rule for another coach. While comfort for coachees is sought by Claire, Sara says that she "…gives it to them!" in straight-talking dialogue that may well engender discomfort. Whilst Crystal does all she can not to appear 'fluffy', other coaches seem not to pay much attention to that, or at least do not have a sensitivity to it in the same way that Crystal does.

On the 'towards' side of aspiration, there were numerous examples of coaches whom participants had experienced in one way or another in the coaching context, who they admired, and would seek to emulate:

> "I'll hold my hand up to that and I really, really aspire to be the kind of coach he is. So, for me, I go, "Oh, if only I could just…" - that stripped back, just turning up in his shorts just kind of being this immense human

being and I suppose in my mind, that's what a great coach looks like. That's what I'm always, always aspiring to." (Sienna)

The variety of personal coaching and display rules is well illustrated by the juxtaposition of Crystal paying close attention to attire, whilst the admired coach described here by Sienna has no such rule. Sienna aspires to be the coach who *just turns up in shorts*, as an 'immense human being' – illustrating the differing attitudes towards external display and seeking to fit culturally. These are polar opposite display rules.

Whilst I acknowledge the aesthetic element, it is the behavioural element of the way in which coaches seek to present which is of most pertinence to this research around EL.

Courtney also speaks of how she views other coaches – both being attracted to an admired coach, and opposed to their opposite:

> "I always tend to think in my head a question of, "What would [name] do in this situation?" We've had many coaches over the years. I know exactly what sort of coach I don't want to be like, which is that "Let's help you be your better self. I'm all sorted, and I'm so spiritual and Zen-like," and all this crap, as opposed to [name's] way of doing it which is very real and appears effortless, but professional. It's like a fine balance, I think, between somebody forgetting that they're being coached and somebody having enough trust in you to be able to answer in a way that is worth their while." (Courtney)

Courtney dislikes Zen-like 'crap' and likes 'very real' coaching which engenders trust – her display rules are guided by what she perceives as good coaching. For other coaches, though, what is antithetical to Courtney is their *stock in trade*, describing their practice as 'existential' or in an 'exploratory framework' (Claudine). These preceding

examples illustrate the vast variety of orientations (often in juxtaposition) towards the rules of coaching, and coaching display rules, which emanate from different personal experiences and orientations.

Personal experiences and perceptions of other coaches, whether positive or negative, appear as strong drivers of what each coach sees as desirable in coaching, and form part of their basis for what coaches should be like. These perceptions of the display rules of the profession are described as much more powerful drivers of behaviour than either professional bodies or coach training. What these perceptions are for each coach, then, is a sum of both the positive and negative experiences that the coach has had, and their orientation and sense of self - which I will consider next. As our experiences as human beings are infinitely variable, so then our perceptions of what is desired demeanour in coaching are similarly varied. This view places the self of the coach as central to any question of display rules for the profession.

4.2.4 Sense of self

Personal experiences of coaching emerged as a source of coaching rules or aspirations – and this element contributes to the whole sense of self, as Celia described:

> "I think you are a sum of all your experiences and all the places you've been, all the people you've worked with in your own personal route into coaching I suppose, and then you find your kind of things that you're really into. I suppose each of us has got our own sort of preferences in things, so you naturally then explore and evolve in the nature, and it's a bit like that." (Celia)

This description of how coaches develop as a result of the sum of all our experiences makes for a potentially disparate community. By way of presenting one element of

this disparate community, Claudine's words relating to her sense of self in relation to coaching are both highly descriptive and powerful:

> "So, it's existential, exploratory and I work within a Gestalt framework so that turning up and being with someone in dialogue, even leaving aside what that's for - feels like being plugged into a socket. So, I feel completely - when you were saying the concept of surface acting, I was thinking I almost don't feel my surface. It feels completely porous (…) like there's no barrier. So, I suppose there's a kind of, maybe a sort of - I mean, not to be dramatic - but kind of addiction; like if you feel like that, then you do more of that, that this is just like something really delicious and rewarding to do." (Claudine)

This coaching is described as diametrically opposed to 'coaching as a process', and is all about coaching in authentic relationship, where acting is far from the agenda. The word 'authentic' features highly in coaches' descriptions when speaking about rules, of being true to oneself and not duplicitous. This, though, bears further examination, as all coaches and supervisors recognised times when they had felt something different internally from what they chose to express externally, and that they had actively managed that demeanour through either surface acting or deep acting. So what is authenticity for coaches, then, other than a 'beautiful idea' (Bachkirova and Borrington 2020)? I will highlight the findings around authenticity for coaches both inside and outside the room of coaching in the proceeding sections, as well as focusing on authenticity in the discussion of these findings.

Coaches speak about working out their rules, and who they are and their sense of self, in the supervisory space. Sara summarises one of her coaching rules, and describes where she feels they come from - one place being herself, and the other being the work she does in supervision:

> "I think it's two. It's certainly a "me" rule. It's definitely a "me" rule. One that I'm feeling my way through, but it also it comes out in supervision. The conversations I've had with my supervisor, we were talking about a particular situation the other day and we were just saying actually being clear of your boundaries is really important and being explicit about those boundaries so that everybody knows where you are. I think it's combination." (Claire)

In some cases, the coach's sense of self, and the rules, were being worked through in a supervisory relationship, but those references to a supervisor in considering EL were perhaps fewer than might have been expected. Only around a third of the participants brought up supervision in relation to rules spontaneously, which is curious given the normative function of that relationship, though Crystal was highly attuned to the role of supervision in rule creation:

> "The one thing we have to do is supervision as well. So, there's also the piece around the rules from supervision. I think that maybe… that my supervisor and I have talked over years about the way I do something or this particular thing, and I feel that sometimes that's with me too in my rules, I know I've got to report back, but I pull myself away and think if I was reporting this back in supervision, how would I be thinking about it? And that's there as well. It's like an extra watch over my ways of being and behaving and conducting." (Crystal)

When used, supervision can be a place in which coaches think about the rules, their sense of who they are, and how those fit into their coaching approach, behaviour and practice. Supervisory practice can impact on a coach's personal experience in terms of rule creation, when used in this way. Where, though, do those supervisors gain their perceptions of what is normative for the profession? In this research, supervisors

of coaching were no less varied in their views than coaches, making the supervisory discussion around display rules and EL as nebulous and disparate as that with coaches. In fact, the combination of a coaches' rules and sense of self combined with that of another - their supervisor (with likely differing constructions of the rules of coaching and sense of self) - makes for a complex dynamic in supervision for discussion of EL itself, and its associated concepts.

In summary of where coaching rules come from and what professional coaching is meant to look like (the display rules of coaching), the picture is very mixed. There is *some* influence of professional bodies, perhaps, and coach training and supervision are present; however, the influence of admired others (or the opposite), a coach's own sense of what works from personal experience, and a sense of self seem far more powerful drivers of coach behaviour than any industry standards. It appears, then, that display rules are disparate for coaches, and perceptions of good coaching are derived from varied and often personal sources. Given this highly personalised view of what coaches should be and how they should behave – because it is derived from infinitely variable experience and thought – display rules in coaching seem to have no unified standards or universals. What coaches are labouring towards (EL) is highly variable, as their sense of what coaching should be is highly variable – but there is evidence that emotional labour is experienced both inside and outside of the coaching room.

4.3 EL with clients 'in the room'

The conceptual model and the distillation of themes from participants' words highlighted a difference between the EL experienced with coachees 'in the room', and that experienced with related others who are important but 'outside the room' of coaching (the 'room' sometimes being metaphorical – denoting the dyad, as distinct

from stakeholders and contractors of coaching). The following section concentrates on the findings around EL 'in the room'.

4.3.1 Motivation

As a way of introducing the subject of EL, coaches and supervisors were asked about what motivated and energised them in coaching (interview schedule / appendix A). The purpose of approaching interviews in this way was to put participants at ease, and to have some positive coaching experiences to talk about as a backdrop, an antithesis of EL. With a very high degree of commonality, coaches firstly described their motivation as primarily altruistic, around helping other people succeed, as typified in this sentiment:

> "I just find it so rewarding that actually you can help people release that potential within themselves." (Celia)

When probed a little further, that espoused altruism had something additional behind it as a driver and motivator for coaches: the extent to which coaches felt that they had a positive impact and '*made a difference*':

> "So, there's something too about I'm getting energy from knowing that I'm making a difference." (Crystal)

Without exception, coaches and supervisors talked about both 'making a difference' for others, and *their role* in that process. When coaches felt they had made a difference, their energy was being derived from their facilitation of the difference making process. Whilst this may appear as peripheral to the research question, in fact it speaks to the primary driver of why coaches coach, and motivation is important when thinking about EL; without motivation to modify external display, there are no efforts made to do so. The feelings of efficacy and usefulness emerged as highly important to coaches. This question in the interview schedule was also useful for understanding

how coaches felt when they experienced that coaching was going well, which they described as moving “naturally”, in “flow”, “not process-y”, “intuitive”, and as Crystal described it, being in ‘a dance’ between coach and coachee. The following excerpt describes all those elements of benefitting others, benefitting coaches, and the energy that coaches feel when coaching is perceived to be going well:

> “The reason I love it is, I genuinely love sitting alongside people as they are doing their real honest thinking about themselves and seeing where that takes them. I just find that delightful, and I’m not even quite sure why but I love it. It does feel like sitting alongside and it is partly about them being on a journey and being able to be their witness that creates a space for them doing their best thinking. It feels really rich; it feels really rewarding. I learn too, I do. (…) Hopefully that then feeds back in in terms of us getting more effective as professionals that, again, re-energises.” (Sienna)

The motivation to coach is strongly linked with how coaches present themselves, and the desire to be seen as making a difference (being efficacious) has relevance for the experience of EL. As with people in service roles or nursing roles, the connection to purpose is important to notice when considering EL in coaching. The things that coaches care about are drivers of the way that they behave, which is not surprising, but the balance between altruism and self-efficacy, and how they interrelate, may have impacts on the experience of EL in the room. To some degree, then, the acting which is done ‘in the room’ may relate to the need and the motivation for coaches to make a difference; and as we have seen, presenting elements of self which coaches have formulated as being beneficial to coaching (their display rules) become important in that pursuit.

4.3.2 Not EL

In seeking to understand what EL is for coaches in the room, a number of examples of negative experiences for coaches which were distinct from EL also emerged. These experiences related to frequency / duration of coaching (Clive), subjects of high emotional content such as career crisis (Carol) or workplace / home issues (Chandler), and coaching as intrinsically tiring (Sara). Whilst these experiences were recounted as resource-draining, they do not relate specifically to EL as defined in the literature; as with any role, there are elements which may be tiring, but those mentioned do not necessarily contain any elements related to EL. High emotional content may relate to EL, but only in the circumstances where display rules feature, and where deep acting and surface acting are employed – simply having emotional content in coaching is not synonymous with EL. Participants came to their understanding of EL through the interviews and group discussions at differing rates, and on occasion in group discussion, participants challenged others on their examples:

> "So, when I go back to your original definition, I'm thinking, "Yes, but that wasn't quite what Rob was talking about" (…) – is it the energy that it takes if we're not congruent of our face and ourselves?" (Susan)

The instances of coaching work which were described as negative, tiring or difficult for participants, but not related to EL, are excluded from these findings and discussion, as they do nothing to illuminate the research question (although they are interesting, in their own right, when considering care of the coach).

4.3.3 The coaches' thoughts and feelings - unexpressed

It is apparent from the recounting of coaching experience that coaches have many dialogues at once in their internal world whilst coaching. Some of these dialogues relate to views of the coachee, some are around a coach's tensions with their

expression of themselves as coaches (their own display rules), and some relate to what is happening for the coach outside coaching presenting as interference in the moment.

Whilst the Rogerian principle of unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1957) is a popular idea in coaching, participants referred to their internal dialogue about coachees on many occasions when these thoughts were anything but unconditional or positive. These included thinking about coachees as 'idiots', seeing them as impotent to act, feeling resentful towards them or frustrated by them, believing that a coachee is game-playing, uncommitted or narcissistic, feeling that power is being used inappropriately, perceiving a lack of 'chemistry' in the relationship or simply disliking the coachee. All of these instances of negative thoughts towards coachees were surfaced by participants. Some of these experiences and thoughts lead to relatively extreme expressions of the way coaches feel towards their clients:

> "One lady I'm working with, she is probably the classic example of a fixed mindset. "It's somebody else's fault." We've done all sorts of things - and to be honest, today, I just wanted to bang her head against the wall. Obviously, I wasn't in the same room. So, I couldn't." (Celia)

The desire to bang a client's head against the wall was expressed in a humorous tone but also with an element of frustration – while this is a comical scenario, it nonetheless describes the way a coach experiences a coachee in the language of violence. Celia recognises what is happening for her:

> "I'm trying to stay very non-judgemental and all of this - but I'm finding myself getting really riled and then having to kind of really work on myself to not be." (Celia)

With many thoughts and feelings about coachees reverberating in coaches' internal dialogues, then, what do coaches do with these thoughts and feelings which relate to

EL and display rules? EL is about that which we invest to engender the proper state of mind in others, and to adhere to our professional display rules (howsoever derived). A highly interesting finding in this work relates to the degree to which coaches would either choose to feign outward countenance (for example to feign calmness when frustrated) and suppress the thoughts they have, versus choosing to externalise what they are feeling to the client. There were coaches and supervisors within this study group who were at the opposing ends of a continuum between keeping a 'professional face' and not disclosing any of their internal world, to the opposite extreme of those who would disclose almost everything about the way they were experiencing the client (and naturally those who fell somewhere in between in the management of their demeanour). An example of feigning (surface acting) and feeling (deep acting) is well described by Crystal:

> "So, I'm sitting there thinking they're looking at me thinking, what is this thing, this coaching thing? And is it a real job? And who is she? She looks a lot younger, and she can't possibly help me. I'm fighting all of that, whether they're thinking it or not, who knows - but I'm fighting it by trying to be even more professional and have gravitas and stuff." (Crystal)

Crystal's strategy towards the imagined and projected thoughts of the coachee around her adequacy meet her response of 'fighting' and 'trying to be' in relation to professionalism and gravitas (surface acting). Although surface acting appears to be an initial strategy for Crystal, and she understands it is part of the process, she also explained that '*deep down'* she has belief that if a client will engage with her, coaching can have positive impacts (deep acting):

> "But with all of that, I do believe that it's what has to happen and it's okay and I am leading them through a process that will work out. And it

> always does. And deep, deep down, I know that I can lead them somewhere really good, and really help them." (Crystal)

Despite having to fight for professionalism and gravitas, Crystal works with her deeply held beliefs that it is part of the process that leads to help. This example typifies both surface acting and deep acting, and also the EL for the coach in doing so – which she describes as a fight.

In other instances, feigning (surface acting) is common where no disclosure is made by the coach. Claire spoke about the struggle to suppress some of the negative feeling towards a coachee:

> "I do know my face does say an awful lot, but I don't necessarily think it always does when I'm coaching. I try very hard to remain objective." (Claire)

Claire spoke of 'trying very hard' to remain objective, however she described herself as partial (non-objective) when she disclosed some of her inner thoughts about coachees in the preceding interview (thinking 'idiot'). What Claire described is working to *appear* objective – whilst saying 'idiot' in her thoughts. Claire described the appearance of objectivity, not objectivity itself. Surface acting and feigning objectivity relates to the display rule which Claire appears to hold – 'coaches should appear objective'. The work for Claire in these instances is trying very hard to appear objective – which is an illustration of EL performed in order to create and maintain the proper state of mind in a coachee. A coach who externalised their thoughts that they thought a client was an idiot would not (in all likelihood) engender the proper state of mind for coaching in the coachee. One might also observe that this is not the proper state of mind for a coach, either - thinking about the Rogerian principle with which I introduced this theme

Numerous examples of coaches feeling some way towards coachees were unearthed where the inner dialogue was nuanced and modified for the coachee externally - '*of course you wouldn't say it like that*' (Celia). The management of message to meet an accepted demeanour was seen as partially context dependent:

> "I'm making a choice there about how much I'm going to be warm and fluffy with one set of clients and quite to the point. I think that's because of the emotional awareness of how I'm engaging with somebody in the language that they're using, and I'm sort of reflecting that which is now making me question my authenticity." (Clive)

The degree to which coaches described making an active choice about their demeanour was variable – and in this example there is the sense that the 'choice' is only discovered in being reflective after the event, not reflexively in the moment.

Clifford described situations he finds frustrating, and what he would like to say – but doesn't:

> "Sometimes those people seem to be turning up with a little clear idea of what they want to get out of it with almost empty emotions which I also find quite frustrating, and that links in with that efficacy piece we spoke about earlier in that emotional labour piece, because then that almost makes me feel like I'm going through the motions. I'm being complicit with that. Whereas really, what I want to do is stand up and say either "This is what this is about, this is what you should be doing and engaging with this." or "Let's not go through the motions at all." (Clifford)

This example highlights what is held back by the coach, and the EL involved in doing so. The key question, though, is why Clifford doesn't do what he 'wants' to do? In his example it may be that what stops him expressing his thoughts is something

around maintaining a professional demeanour. In Clifford's perception, expressing dissatisfaction or frustration is not an acceptable thing to do (which differs from how other coaches describe their work).

Coaches described the language they use, what they say, and how much of themselves and their own internal experience they bring to the relationship – which does indeed, as Clive notices, relate to authenticity. As coaches considered the EL concept and examined their practice with this new knowledge acquired through the interview process, they started to think more deeply about their coaching, and question some fundamentals, like authenticity, which were being informed by this new lens.

Another situation or instance where EL is experienced by coaches is where participants described that they were not in the right frame of mind or distracted from coaching – because of what was happening for them at the time. Examples included life events, tiredness, or feeling ill:

> "…something tricky is going on at home or I'm just not feeling well because I'm fighting something or whatever it might be. You know, it's pretty rare, but there are times when I'm just deeply knackered, and I really feel it as a gathering of 'here we go'." (Crystal)

In these situations, coaches both surface act, by just putting on an acceptable face, gathering themselves or galvanising themselves, or they deep act by focussing on the needs of the client and placing attentional focus on the other, rather than the self (Carol). Whilst not as dominant as the theme of holding derogatory thoughts about the coachee, there were still recounted instances where coaches just did not feel *in the right mood* for coaching because of various factors; no one coach described saying such to a coachee, though, instead employing coping strategies to get through this and into coaching.

In the words which feature in the conceptual model (Figure 9), coaches identify coaching which is overly process-driven and stilted. This sits in contrast to coaching which is described as in flow and intuitive. This dynamic appears to relate to views of coaching as process, or coaching as relationship, and the space coaches inhabit on that continuum. The characterisation of coaching as process or coaching as relationship (to draw the extremes) was highly noticeable in the orientation of coaches and how they interact with clients, and the resultant presence of EL in the relationship.

4.3.4 The coaches' thoughts and feelings - expressed

In noticeable contrast to feigning (surface acting) to various degrees, or seeking to feel (deep acting), were several coaches whose orientation was for disclosure of their internal experience in the coaching room. Claudine, Sienna, Susan, and Sara appeared to experience very little or even no EL within the coaching dyad. These coaches had the practice of using themselves and their internal world in service of the coaching relationship, and their own feelings as data or information which fed coaching. Interestingly this driver appears to come from slightly different places for all four of the coaches who I characterise as experiencing low EL within the researched group. Claudine and Susan openly identify themselves as operating within a Gestalt framework, Sara describes herself as 'straight talking' and direct, and Sienna as a coach who 'uses self' in coaching. These coaches used descriptions of externalising their inner world to clients, e.g.:

> "So, I feel completely - when you were saying the concept surface acting, I was thinking I almost don't feel my surface. It feels completely porous… I don't need to suppress or hide. So, when you were talking about surface acting, it's not like I have to keep a straight face while all of this other stuff is going on. That's what I mean about not having that surface." (Susan)

Sara described how her contracting prepares coachees for her approach to coaching:

> "It's like when we're contracting, I'm straight - not straight in there but I'm saying this is the kind of coaching that is my style. Part of it is giving feedback absolutely in the moment and I expect you to do the same. That's a mutual thing, right? So that we can understand what we're going to be, compatibly - be able to work together." (Sara)

The coaching rule which appears dominant for this group is authenticity, and the realness of the working alliance, even when that might mean discomfort:

> "… if I cannot be authentic with my clients and myself completely, or as completely as possible, I'm doing them a disservice and I'm doing myself a disservice. Now, it might mean I'm not the person for them. It might mean the level of discomfort that they feel is a lot deeper than they thought they would experience. It means that I have to be courageous and really be courageous and brave. [Pause] It also offers the possibility of transformational breakthroughs for people." (Sara)

The experiences of coaches who operate with 'porous' surface, who do not employ surface acting or deep acting strategies but instead externalise their experiences and describe no experience of EL in the coaching relationship, will be considered further in the discussion around these findings. Those same coaches do experience EL overall, though, with stakeholders of coaching. An unanticipated finding described by all coaches in this research, which emerged from the conceptual model and analysis of the spoken word, is around the EL which occurs outside of the coaching room. The tensions outside the coaching room, and the perceived need to act, are generated from several sources: the need to be selected, differing understanding around coaching and coaching purpose within the organisation, and confidentiality. It is to those areas, in the context of stakeholders, to which this discussion now turns.

4.4 EL with others 'outside the room'

The practices of surface acting, deep acting, and the presence of EL outside the coaching room were widely recognised and described by participants in this research. Rather than organisations and contractors of coaching (and interested others) being seen as partners in coaching as a whole, participants describe several dynamics at play which appear as detrimental overall to coaches and coaching. Organisations, of course, do not have views – only people do; the relationships that I characterise as 'with organisations' are more accurately relationships with those varied people within organisations who may request, contract, pay for, or have an interest in the initiation, practice and outcomes of coaching. These include senior managers, departmental heads, managers of coaches, HR professionals, training professionals, finance professionals, or any number of others who are both responsible for, and interested in, coaching within their organisation. For accuracy, the exact scenario which was discussed during research was (people within) an organisation contracting coaching services from external coaches. All coaches who participated in this research either were, or had been, external coaches in precisely this scenario, and it is one with which I also have high familiarity following many years as an external coach.

4.4.1 The 'need to be selected'

When meeting with organisational contractors of coaching, such as training departments, human resources, or contracting managers, coaches describe the EL in being seen as an *attractive option* amongst many in a competitive landscape. In this scenario, coaches describe that acting that is done to gain favour, and stay in favour, with the organisation and its people, in order to secure paid coaching work:

> "And yes, the work that I do in large part and I'm paid well to do in big organisations is very much bounded and reported back on. And that

> really gets what a) stresses me out quite a lot and b) makes me think there is an acting that goes on even between, a colluding sometimes, between me and the client, I just to have to do a lot of stroking…" (Crystal)

Crystal went further in describing how she keeps stakeholders happy:

> "But sometimes there's a sense of OK, ya, I'm playing a game. I've done it before, and I know I keep you happy. You - 'payer' - need to know that I've heard you. Maybe your line manager or the H.R. person. I've heard you. I've picked up everything you've told me about this person that we need to work on. I'm going to show you that I've heard that. And I'm going to give you answers to those areas. So, there's the acting or the kind of game playing of 'I'm smart enough to hear and to give you what you want'." (Crystal)

Crystal recognises her acting and game-playing as an intrinsic part of securing work in this organisational context, and sees nothing unusual in that; in fact, she appears to have a sense of achievement in being able to recognise and manage that dynamic.

Chris describes himself in "business owner" role when trying to secure work or deal with organisational contacts around coaching, and distinguishes this from his coach role; inherent in this assumption is that we can change our way of being in any moment to assume a role – which is the very definition of acting.

Carol describes when she uses her 'game face' in attempting to secure work, and how that differs from her coaching persona:

> "So, I've just done proposals for a piece of work for business - that does feel like a business owner, but it's the game face and then whilst I try to give them some suggestions of where I will go, but that feels very

different to how I will be when I sit with them in the room one-on-one." (Carol)

When considering what coaches have said about their experiences of EL, the culture of the organisation in which the coaching takes place (when it is the case that there is a paying organisation behind coaching) may impact on coach behaviour and display:

> "I know it works, right, because I get repeated work. I know because of the way they respond to me. They know I've come from a corporate background. And I can dress up and play - and we haven't talked about dress and look and all of that, but I can play that game. And I know in that moment that I've, I've ticked the box, and then I know because they give me more work and they put me forward." (Crystal)

Not only is Crystal acting to demonstrate her corporate credentials, but she is also donning the costume of the role in response to the culture in which she is seeking work. This appears as a clear area where coaches experience EL and utilise surface acting tactics in order to present as acceptable within the environments in which they seek to work. Coaches also recognise that the way that they display in these contexts is very different to how they work as coaches and their coaching personae. This whole area of *the need to be selected* relates to authenticity and role playing and will be considered further in the proceeding discussion chapter.

4.4.2 Differing understanding around coaching and coaching purpose within the organisation

The second area in which coaches act with stakeholders relates to the previous finding area, and is also different, in that it is not *just* about being seen as a good cultural fit. It is also about complicity with the way in which organisations perceive what coaching is, what coaching is for, and how it should be implemented. An example of this

complicity is revealed in how Crystal describes the paperwork and forms that some organisations require as an output of coaching, where a superficial agenda is documented, but in reality, the work is very different, perhaps around breakdown or around an individual feeling like they want to leave the organisation. There is an overt and a covert agenda around coaching… and in the covert agenda there is both acting and EL:

> "So, we've got kind of the real work or the real work that is about you having a breakdown that you haven't talked to anyone about or whatever it might be. And then there's the stuff that we put on this form that I talk to your boss about." (Crystal)

Crystal spoke of her perception of what she calls the 'real work' of coaching. An assignment has been set up for a purpose, and that is the explicit reason for coaching which is recorded on training and HR forms, or forms to be shared with the line manager of that individual. There is an overt agenda to which she, the coach, signs up. To all intents and purposes she is complicit with the organisation around this purpose and process; however, she disclosed that she does not see this as the *real work.*

This mismatch of understanding around what coaching 'is' and 'does' for Crystal, and importantly where the efforts should be focussed in coaching, means that she acts 'as if' with the payer or sponsor, with the intention of doing something different with the coachee. Crystal validates organisational views of coaching (what it is, and what it does) by acquiescing to an agenda which she has no intention of actually complying with – because for her, that is not the *real work* of coaching. This misalignment of perceptions around what coaching is, and what coaching does, is echoed by other coaches, and the dynamic of seeking and securing coaching work leads to a lack of challenge or questioning around those areas. Instead, coaches act and feign

compliance. Courtney, too, spoke about the 'stealth' in coaching around alignment with organisational objectives and a similar dynamic is at play, where the real work of coaching is done covertly:

> "I think the people who don't understand coaching, they will look at all of the coaching I've done over the years and said, "You're not benefiting this organisation," because I'm always on the side of the coachee. Actually, the changes in people may not be as explicit as the company's laid out, but the changes had still helped with their performance – which is what's important to them. I'm going to say… not necessarily go against the company… I think it is probably more stealth. I would like to think of it as a way of the company getting what it needs as opposed to the basic, "Follow these steps, do these goals, meet these objectives and these metrics and you'll succeed," because it's more individualised." (Courtney)

Cortney aligns herself with the coachee, and the assignment of goals, metrics and objectives achievement is approached by working with the individual on the coachee's agenda – which she sees as benefitting the organisation overall but is not fully focussed on what the organisation has asked her to do (the purpose of providing coaching, which was to enhance performance in this case). Whether it is termed as the 'real' work, covert, or stealth coaching, there is strong theme in participants' words which exposes the role-playing which is done in order to be selected, and the stealthy nature of the coaching actually given.

4.4.3 Opting out of being selected

The labour involved in this acting is cited as a reason for not doing corporate work by Claudine; her need for authenticity and her approach to coaching does not allow her to become complicit any more in this scene, which is played out by other coaches and,

at one time, by her. One such example of this pertains to organisations who require employees to be coached, which breaks a basic tenet which most coaches would hold, that coaching is consensual:

> "So, that thing about a client who doesn't really want to be there. I mean, I've kind of given up doing corporate work where people *get sent* exactly for that reason…" (italics added) (Claudine)

'Getting sent' or coerced into coaching speaks to a fundamental mismatch which contrasts coaching being consensual with coaching being positioned as primarily remedial in nature. Whilst some coaches accept *what is given* in favour of the covert 'real work' which they intend to do with coachees, others opt out of the work.

The same detachment or withdrawal was described by another coach (Sara) when speaking about associate organisations – those who hold a contract for work under which associated coaches provide coaching:

> "I'm virtually not associated with anybody else anymore. I did a project as an associate with the [public sector organisation] and as an associate with a very good company that, in theory, I'm still associated with but I'm not pursuing any sort of work actively with them at the moment, but it just didn't sit right with me at all. It was just so process-driven." (Sara)

In this instance, and as reflected in the conceptual model, there is the potential for another stakeholder in coaching between the organisation who ultimately pays for coaching services and the coach – and with that additional layer of accountability, there is an additional possibility of EL. Crystal also raised the scenario where she worked under an associate organisation (who were providing coaching services to other organisations) and found it a less than positive experience partly because of the perceived over-bearing nature of the leader of that organisation, who Crystal describes as "formidably overpowering and headmistress[-like]", and her practice, which Crystal

cited as “unethical”. Crystal, though, worked in this environment for around five years whilst attempting to comply with this way of doing coaching work, and presumably doing a good job at acting or being the part, given her tenure.

As a result of the dynamic that is at play in these exchanges between ‘payers’, contractors, and HR and Training people (and sometimes associate organisations), coaches in this research spoke about the corporate interface as something to be limited and handled, rather than as something to be embraced, and from which value might be derived. I also recognise that dynamic in my own practice, and the times when I have been complicit, or acted, in order to present an acceptable face to the paying client around the purpose of coaching. Whilst some coaches had opted out of the corporate scenario, most tended to comply with organisational demands around ways of doing coaching. Ultimately neither did they agree with the approach, nor did they challenge organisations on those processes, instead choosing to ‘stroke’ rather than challenge and to engage in *covert coaching* with an acceptable overt appearance - complying where necessary with organisational requirements and views of coaching. This complicity goes right to the heart of EL – portraying an acceptable external demeanour, whilst internally holding a different and sometimes opposing viewpoint, in order to engender the proper state of mind for those with the power to award paid coaching work. This finding has implications for coaches, and organisations – as well as for the wider training and supervision community. It also provides a potential contribution to EL theory in the specific context of coaching, as well as to the wider psychological literature, which will be discussed further in the proceeding chapter.

4.4.4 Confidentiality

A final element where coaches describe EL is in confidentiality in the corporate environment, where people in organisations want information on the coaching

provided which coaches are mostly unprepared to give. The coaching contract of confidentiality almost necessitates that acting is done, as Claire explained:

> "I'm just thinking of a couple of occasions where, for example, [a senior person] had asked me to coach certain people. I think there's the element of confidentiality, which colours it. They're obviously asking you questions, "How's it going?", and you're having to filter what you're saying through that. I've talked about confidentiality. So, there is that gloss or that filter that you put on when you're talking to the payer or the third-party and the contractor - and that's what I find quite difficult sometimes to say enough to satisfy them that the coaching is working without conflicting with the confidentiality, without saying, "*Why don't you bloody ask them*?" (Claire)

The EL is clear is in this instance where Claire, unfettered, might say 'Why don't you bloody ask them?' – but instead uses a filter, gloss and just saying 'enough' to satisfy the sponsor. In doing so, Claire is employing acting strategies – whether that be suppression of information, employing some 'spin' or simply acting. The tension between demonstrating value from coaching and breaching confidentiality is a line which coaches describe frequently, and not only in the relationships around coaching, but also with the coachee themselves, which goes back to the EL within the dyad:

> "The more we got into it, the more we started to realise, well, there's an expectation of us having to use a coaching tool to record all of these interactions which is accessible by the training manager, line manager. So, how confidential is this? Then, you start feeling as though what you're communicating in the contract with the client or coachee is not necessarily 100% true, and then you say, "It's confidential except in

> these situations." [Laughter] Which goes a little bit - it doesn't necessarily line up. So, that has been tricky." (Clifford)

Coaches are expected to keep confidentiality in several ways, with both commissioners of coaching and coachees, in both directions. This required confidentiality is stated in the core competencies published by governing bodies such as the European Mentoring & Coaching Council (EMCC) or the International Coaching Federation (ICF), which mandate for both honesty and openness, and client confidentiality. For example, those adhering to the ICF competencies are expected to:

> "Demonstrate[s] personal integrity and honesty in interactions with clients, sponsors and relevant stakeholders." (ICF, 2021)

Within the same ICF competency coaches are also expected to:

> "Maintain[s] confidentiality with client information per stakeholder agreements and pertinent laws." (ICF, 2021)

This tension between demonstrating personal integrity and honesty and maintaining confidentiality leaves coaches between a rock and a hard place. Which of these edicts is most important – confidentiality, or honesty? Leaving aside that we have already established that the details of these frameworks are not well-known by practitioners - and that even if they were, coaches have a somewhat flexible attitude to the rules - nonetheless the ICF position goes some way to describing the situations coaches find themselves in with regard to confidentiality. The situation they are left in almost mandates the use of acting strategies in order to keep confidentiality.

There are times, though, when coaches like Crystal step out of confidentiality with their coachee with a line manager; in Crystal's case, if she feels that it is in service of the person and that the line manager is to be trusted. Clifford, too, described the tension

in his context of contracting for confidentiality but discovering that what he promises clients may be compromised at an organisational level.

Coaches find themselves under pressure with regard to confidentiality from the organisational perspective, and at the very least feel required to 'gloss'. The need to present coaching as 'working' provides further challenge. Confidentiality is a complicated topic in coaching, but from an EL perspective it is an area where coaches feel the need to present something which differs from their perceived truth, and so requires acting. It is in that acting where EL presents, and also creates ethical challenges and challenges to authenticity.

The need to be selected, coaching purpose and use, and confidentiality all feature as areas in which EL is present when dealing with those outside of the coaching room. Some coaches had chosen not to work in corporate environments because of these perceived challenges, and some continued to work in these scenarios. Even though coaches did not yet have the language of EL in which to frame those decisions, these findings relate to EL, to acting, and to authenticity.

4.5 The effects of EL in the coaching context

Coaches described their experiences of EL in both the conceptual model and the interview discussions, including effects or outcomes they perceived. A spectrum of experience of EL is suggested based on the orientation of the coach, and the context in which they operate. The following findings concentrate on what effects EL has for coaches in and out of the room.

Seeking to understand the effects of a concept for which most coaches had no reference was, naturally, challenging. Then, asking coaches to think about the impacts for them within a newly introduced frame required further stretch. Coaches,

though, were able to start to verbalise and use the conceptual model to do just that (it was surprising, and equally pleasing, for this research how adept coaches and supervisors were at acquiring, assimilating, and then quickly considering new knowledge). The words participants used to describe high EL in the conceptual model were: inauthenticity, not being in sync, and coaching that was stilted and process-driven. The effects of those conditions they described were that coaching was not enjoyable, that the coaching was unsustainable, and that coaching at this end of the spectrum was energy-draining, as opposed to low EL situations, where coaching was described as energy-giving.

The key areas that emerge as effects of EL for coaches are:

- Feelings of inauthenticity
- Frustration
- Loss of motivation and tiring
- Impact of EL in Reflective practice and supervision
- Withdrawal

Each of these areas will now receive focus to illustrate what was found in this research.

4.5.1 Feelings of inauthenticity

Feelings of inauthenticity featured highly in coach's descriptions of the effects of EL. Where they had been unable, or unwilling, to be open with their feelings with clients, for example, there was often recrimination around that:

> "Mostly not at all auth... Well, no, not at all authentic mostly, not as authentic as I would like to be. There was a lot inside that I wanted to say, and I was nervous about doing it…" (Crystal)

Clifford spoke about what he would have liked to have said to a client but didn't, which was described in the section on EL in the coaching room (around 'not doing coaching at all' rather than not committing to it) – leading to feelings of inauthenticity for him. Chandler similarly talked about "playing the game", and how that impacted on how he saw his role in those instances being inauthentic. The way in which coaches engage with corporate clients has already been detailed, but also certainly speaks to how authentic coaches feel in those circumstances. Authenticity was referred to frequently as a factor that motivated coaches to coach, and yet well-detailed examples emerged where coaches were being inauthentic with clients and those around coaching. The findings from both in and out of the coaching room contain examples of inauthenticity. The performance of EL seems highly associated with feelings of inauthenticity for coaches. These feelings of inauthenticity may have further effects – what impact does *feeling inauthentic* have on coaches? Indeed, what is the concept of authenticity in practice for coaches?

Rather than attempting to draw a straight line of cause and effect, the following findings instead highlight areas which coaches talked about as the results or effects of EL, and feelings of inauthenticity.

4.5.2 Frustration

Feeling frustrated in itself does not necessarily equate with EL in coaching, however when that frustration is as a result of the need to maintain an acceptable outward demeanour, it then relates strongly to EL. Whilst maintaining an acceptable demeanour Courtney has encountered a lack of engagement in coachees, and said,

> "I get frustrated. "I could be doing so much more with my time." [Laughter] Then, I get angry at myself, going, "I shouldn't be thinking like that." (Courtney)

Clifford talked about what he called ‘interference’ in coaching sessions, and the anxiety and frustration which this brings:

> “It often runs interference in the session for me because I’m worrying about it. So, it adds to anxiety or worries in there, if we talk about feelings, particularly, and I’m worrying about how I avoid an early answer or give a suggestion or give advice at that moment. Then, I start thinking about that other person and potentially getting frustrated, not getting what they want, and I may feel frustrated at myself if I then do. So, there’s a mixture of a little bit of anxiety and frustration.” (Clifford)

The EL involved in this example is both around trying to meet Clifford’s imagined or supposed client expectations of coaching and managing himself. Clifford speaks about maintaining a “professional image”, and this interference presents as his internal dialogue around maintaining that display, whilst inside he is anxious and frustrated.

Frustration may be a minor effect or outcome of managing demeanour and of EL, though the effect of experiencing frustration over time, and frequently, may have impacts.

4.5.3 Loss of motivation and tiring

Participants describe how feeling a lack of authenticity is draining, and impacts on their motivation in that coaching session:

> “It’s tiring and those are the sort of coaching sessions where I just think, “You know, if we do it in half an hour, I’m out of here.” ...which isn’t me. Those are the ones where I’m thinking, “Oh my god, I’m clock-watching”. I think it’s just really about just not feeling at flow, not feeling that authenticity is tiring and it makes the time go really slowly and I don’t like it. [Laughter]” (Claire)

The loss of motivation towards coachee outcomes is described by Courtney where there is low authenticity, as she describes it, in the relationship. When that is the case, Courtney loses motivation to make a difference with that client:

> "If you've got people who are just hard work and you feel, 'I'm doing this because I'm being paid to…' I lose that desire to have to see a difference." (Courtney)

Holding negative thoughts about coachees was also linked with being tiring:

> "If I'm thinking "idiot" in the back of my head, I find that quite draining." (Claire)

Susan used a term which describes the feigning tactic in EL, which is 'living in bad faith':

> "For me, that's a concept that sums it up, that if you're living in bad faith, sooner or later you exhaust yourself." (Susan)

She recognises the strain involved in projecting one thing and being another - and the inevitability that this way of being leads to exhaustion.

The conceptual model is in concert with the words spoken around the effects of EL in that where EL is high, it is described as "energy-draining", "not enjoyable" and "not sustainable". It is unsurprising that work which meets these criteria would lead to becoming depleted and resulting in a loss of motivation – what is new in these findings is the link between those outcomes and EL in the research context of coaching. These findings are very much reflective of the experiences in other research fields but have not, until this point, been seen in empirical work in coaching: EL in coaching is described by participants as tiring and leading to a loss of motivation.

4.5.4 Impact of EL on reflective practice and supervision

Unlike many of the other roles researched in the EL field, coaching has the feature of reflective practice, which is not as established or central in other roles - such as those in the service industries. This reflective practice takes several forms including self-reflection and reflection with others in supervisory relationships of various kinds. The thinking and reflection which coaches do either by themselves or with others contain some of the reverberations that the experience of EL has on their practice overall. How coaches think about their practice seems related to EL experiences - though the absence of EL language has not yet allowed for expression in those terms. This reflective practice around EL has impacts on coaches, being described as 'exhausting' and draining.

Examples such as working with clients who coaches find frustrating, which was raised many times by almost all coaches in interview discussions, appear as a focus of reflective practice:

> "For me, the exhausting bit of coaching is the self-work or the work I feel I should be doing with myself afterwards. It's the reflective practice, it's the "Thou shall do the reflective practice. Thou shall do triple deep learning. Thou shall go back into the system." I went through a whole load of ancient notes. I've got one box I put in the shredder. Looking at that, my reflective practice was forensic, and I was exhausted." (Sara)

The example Crystal refers to in her following words was one in which EL was highly present, in the frustration felt but not displayed with this client, and in the dislike which Crystal felt but did not express to her coachee:

> "I took her to supervision a lot. And my supervisor really showed me, and I think I knew really that I did help her a lot. But that didn't manifest itself in any significant change. And I felt deeply sad, really sad,

> because although I didn't like her and how she - I didn't not like her. I was so frustrated with her that she wasn't fundamentally willing to change anything about her totally awful life…" (Crystal)

Crystal had examined her examples of EL both in reflective practice and also in supervision – which helped her to contextualise the experiences. In this description of events, though, was still some regret, recrimination and longevity for Crystal. The written word does little to describe the emotions which Crystal re-experienced in recounting this scenario to me in interview, even though this occurred some years ago:

> "Ah, do you know - I was just going to go onto it to say it was awful, even thinking about it now." (Crystal)

Sara describes her reflective practice, and the exhaustion which she experienced by being her own *coaching police*, or in other words examining her practice in the light of perceived rules around what coaching 'should be':

> "Thinking back, actually the thing about the coach and the coaching police, as a coach, I used to get really exhausted by being my own coaching police person." (Sara)

Sienna, in thinking about her supervision and the supervision of others, is highly attuned to preserving energy, and the potential impacts on well-being. Given that EL is described by participants and in the model itself as energy depleting and draining, Sienna's thoughts have high relevance:

> "There is a bit of a balancing act. It doesn't always – it's not always energising me, if that makes sense, because sometimes it's depleting me, too. I'm really mindful of that from a well-being perspective. I'm also very mindful in supervision that that's happening to my coach clients too. A lot of what they want to reflect on is, "Hold on. Am I giving

too much? How do I stay resourceful and energised for my client?" (Sienna)

Participants' descriptions point to experiences of EL being tiring and depleting, as previously shown, and they also talk about the process of *thinking about their practice* as being similarly draining and tiring.

Whilst there are certainly things other than EL which are important to coach well-being, it is also the case that the absence of the EL concept, and the language around it, impoverishes self-reflection and supervision. In reflecting, and sometimes engaging in self-recrimination, familiarity with EL may add a dimension for coaches and supervisors that might deepen our understanding of both the dynamic and the experience of coaching. In this research, as coaches became more familiar with the EL concept, they started to recognise elements of their practice, reflective practice and supervision which were highly related to the EL concept, and began to re-examine some of that reflective practice with new ways of looking.

4.5.5 Withdrawal

In some instances, as we have already seen in these findings, coaches withdrew from specific contexts or types of work, and this has been associated with the pretence required in dealing with both organisational stakeholders and those who are 'sent' for coaching. This withdrawal relates both to the context of coaching, and also to the previous findings area of reflective practice. In one case, a coach had stopped coaching almost completely for a time, and said:

"It's been interesting actually because I had stopped. I'd actually just about stopped working because I've been doing so much stuff about 'self in service of client' I got to a point where I thought, 'Bugger this for a game of soldiers. How about 'self in service of self?'" (Susan)

It would be misattribution (and methodologically unwise) to name EL as *causal* in Susan stopping coaching work, but by the same token it would also be an omission to ignore the potential role of EL in coaches seeking 'self in service of self'.

The opposite of withdrawal is approach – and an important question begins to emerge of not only what coaches withdraw from, but what they approach and attach to, in terms of contexts of work in relation to EL. The role of EL in withdrawal appears clearly in some instances and with some coaches in this research, but less clearly or explicitly in others. For example, coaches seem to be aware of the dynamic where they employ acting when attempting to secure paid coaching work, but relatively few coaches withdrew from those situations. The corporate interface seemed to be viewed as a 'necessary evil' for most, rather than something that would stop coaches in their attempts to secure work.

4.6 Summary

EL is a common experience, evident as part of the coaching role but not yet fully named or explored. The process of this research - using interviews, group discussions and the process of creating a conceptual model - raised awareness of EL with coaches and supervisors for whom it was a new concept. Those who assumed prior knowledge around EL had little insight onto the concept, and took EL to mean emotional content, or hard emotional work. When coaches and supervisors understood EL (as I described it during the process) it had resonance for them, and they were able to relay their experiences and relate the concept to their practice. Experiences, when drawn out, ranged from the mild and transient to the serious and impactful. The degree to which coaches experience EL in the coaching room appears to relate closely to the coach's 'use of self' and the externalisation of coach emotions, with some using those as a source of nutrition for the coaching relationship. The lack of a perceived need for

pretence, and a lack of pretence in practice, negates the use of display as a means of concealment, and in turn the experience of EL. Coaches variably experience EL in the room (the dyad), and almost universally around stakeholders in the organisational context (outside of the room) – to the degree that some coaches had chosen to withdraw from the kind of work that requires organisation contact as the EL was too demanding, and too challenging to a sense of authenticity. The effects of EL are important to coach well-being, and coach care. These findings bear discussion in the light of extant literature in other fields, as the phenomenon of EL has clear and important ramifications for coaches, trainers, educators, supervisors, and organisations.

5 Discussion

In this chapter, four overarching themes are discussed whilst considering the implications of EL in coaching for coaches and other stakeholders. Participants raised many interesting topics, and while some fell outside the scope of this research, they would be valuable for future consideration. The findings of this research, distilled from the conceptual model and interviews / group discussions, were presented in four sections in the previous chapter: Coaching rules and display rules; EL with clients 'in the room'; EL with others 'outside the room'; and the effects of EL experienced in the coaching context. The following discussion develops those findings to consider potential implications for theory and practice. These discussions sometimes focus at a level which may be important to the individual practising within the coaching field, and sometimes at a level which is relevant to the profession. The four overarching topics for discussion here are:

- The term itself (EL) in coaching
- EL in relation to authenticity and the self of the coach
- EL effects in coaching
- What the notion of EL means to the profession of coaching.

There are several areas on which focus *might* be placed, given an abundance of findings in this research; however, these topics allow discussions of those most prominent. I recognise, though, that the choices made here are ones of judgement. Those judgements are made in the context of my knowledge of EL in general, gained from the literature review, and of my knowledge of EL in the coaching context developed both before and through this research process. It is entirely possible that a different researcher would make different choices around where to focus

discussions on findings, but my choices are methodologically justifiable by my central role in this research. There is no process to describe how I arrived at these discussion areas other than: thinking and reflection; trial and error; reviewing my thinking in academic supervision; and performing iterations and refinements of this discussion chapter, and so it might be said that this way of working was more intuitive than process-driven. The choices, though, are a faithful representation of what has emerged for me from the findings, and what contributions those findings may make for coaches, coaching and beyond.

I will discuss these topics in relation to what is known from research and literature in coaching and other field, and consider some implications of what the experience of EL might mean to coaches and others surrounding coaching - which may have contributions to make to the general coaching literature, to the literature in coaching psychology, to general business literature (in relation to coaching), and potentially to the EL literature in contribution to EL theory.

5.1 The term itself (EL) in coaching

The following sections focus on the central EL concept in coaching, noting the general absence of the term but also that EL has high recognisability once described. The lack of emphasis on coach care and perspectives of coach experience are then discussed. Similarities and differences with existing EL models are then explored.

5.1.1 Low presence, recognition, and 'misuse' of the term

The term EL has low presence in coaching literature, and subsequently almost no existence in the language that anyone involved in coaching uses about coaching. This is in contrast to very recognisable language which pervades coaching training,

accreditation and practice. Examples of the common language prevalent in frameworks for coach qualification include terms such as 'self-awareness', 'communication skills' or 'relationship management' (as in the Institute of Leadership and Management Coaching & Mentoring qualifications). It does not escape notice that these examples of coaching language relate strongly to the EL concept; nonetheless, EL is almost completely unrecognised in the coaching world. The following discussion focusses on EL as an unnamed concept in coaching and considers the conceptual model, which was developed with participants, as well as the instances of EL that emerged during research.

The terms and components of EL are not well recognised in coaching and even after a length of time with participants in the research (including descriptions of EL, of display rules and of surface acting and deep acting), some participants continued to refer to examples of experiences which were not EL. An instance of continued confusion over terms was a participant (Clifford) at the end of his interview, who stated that his drive home after seeing a coachee and the *thinking* he did about the coaching, was emotional labour. Thinking about coaching whilst alone in a car cannot meet any of the conditions or prerequisites for EL – which are the modification of external demeanour in order to engender the proper state of mind in others by using surface acting or deep acting strategies. Like other coaches, Clifford conflates EL with feeling emotional, having an emotional response, reflecting, or dealing with his own emotions.

My participants are not alone in this conflation, and examples were brought to the fore in the literature review in non-coaching scenarios. The emotionality and emotion in coaching have been discussed by coaching researchers but are not synonymous with EL; emotion, emotionality, and high emotional content are only tangentially related to EL, they are not EL itself. In common with other fields, lack of familiarity, semantic slippage, and the use of the term as a catch-all does the EL

concept a disservice and diminishes its utility. The lack of recognition in coaching does differ from highly researched fields such as service work and nursing, where the EL term is widely used and recognised - though even *they* suffer at times from a lack of specificity between general emotional content and EL. Coaching is more similar to other professional fields where the idea of EL is lightly present but both un-researched and underrepresented in the discourse around the roles. Psychotherapy was one example where the attention given to EL was *under done*, and in need of focus, with particular respect to burnout (Clarke *et al*., 2020).

This low presence, or recognition, and 'misuse' of the term EL limits the ability of coaches, supervisors, academics, trainers and professional bodies to more fully understand the relational aspects of coaching, the impacts EL may have, the nature of the self of the coach, and authenticity in coaching. Given the wealth of EL research in other fields, and this research in coaching, it is incumbent on individuals and the profession to first notice EL in this context, and then to work on representing the ideas at every level of coaching in order to recognise and mitigate the negative impacts of EL on coaches.

5.1.2 Recognisability of the concept, if not the term

Whilst the specific terms or common ideas of EL were not well understood by coaches in this research, once the dynamics at play were revealed - through interview, explanation, and the development of the conceptual model in the conceptual encounter process - there was high recognition of what EL is for coaches (accepting that *at times*, coaches also included non-EL examples). The ultimate recognition of the model of EL in coaching was so high for coaches that after the second iteration of the model only incremental changes were made to the model itself, rather than any re-design as happened in the second iteration. Coaches recognised and identified with the different 'faces' they use with coachees and

stakeholders, they identified with the acting metaphor denoted by the actor's mask, and they could give instances of where they had either decided to feign (surface act) or feel (deep act).

Depending on their orientation towards the use of self in coaching, participants could describe the tensions, feeling, effort required, and impacts of EL. Further, coaches could readily describe how it feels to have low EL, and how it feels to experience high EL; they could also see a continuum through to no or low EL, which happens when they are able to access authentic being. Coaches identified with the continuum through moderate EL with the use of deep acting strategies, when engaging with an internal dialogue which allows coaches to work with external display as more than simple pretence. Participants clearly recognised the high EL experienced when they feigned or surface acted, driven by what they perceived was expected. However, the absence (or sometime unspecific use, unconnected to key EL concepts) of the term EL outside of this research means that if coaches do not know what EL is, then they cannot recognise or attempt to manage it, or its effects. The practical absence of the EL term in coaching hampers efforts towards coach care, coach preservation, and in more general terms understanding the relational dynamics of coaching.

5.1.3 Coach and coach care as peripheral

This lack of familiarity, specificity and attention to the components of EL has implications for coaching. A lack of coach care, or *care for the instrument* as Bachkirova calls it (2016), is the primary area of concern which arises from the absence of understanding of EL in the field. The scant research on negative outcomes for coaches, which Schermuly and colleagues have started to explore (2014; 2019) is also not as prominent in coaching as it might be. The balance of coaching research weighs heavily towards the efficacy of coaching, coaches'

theoretical and practical approaches, and organisational and individual outcomes. Those studies which do look at coaching *from the perspective of the coach* are wholly eclipsed by those which look at the coachee and organisational perspectives. Passmore and Fillery-Travis (2011) typified this position in their review of coaching research, stating that the focus of coaching research is 'what works and how'. This stance attends to 'what' and 'how', but wholly ignores the 'who' of the coach, and what that coach experiences in coaching. This demotes the coach to one who implements coaching, rather than as the primary instrument. In coach training and professional development, in accreditation models and frameworks, and in coach education, there is a lack of focus on the central role of the coach, or where there is focus it is primarily around the skills of the coach required to deliver effective coaching in service of the coachee and the organisation. As an example, the Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM) Level 5 qualification in Coaching & Mentoring (2011) requires demonstration of knowledge and reflection in three key areas:

1. Understanding how management coaching and mentoring can benefit individuals and organisations
2. Reviewing own ability as a management coach or mentor
3. Undertaking management coaching or mentoring in the workplace

Whilst there are elements within this qualification framework which might pertain to the self of the coach, such as,

> "Review own ethical and moral views, beliefs, attitudes and values and their effect on own coaching and mentoring practice" (2011, p.11)

these are immediately followed by:

> "Review own ability to address poor or inappropriate attitudes, behaviours and workplace relationships and its effect on own coaching and mentoring practice." (2011, p.11)

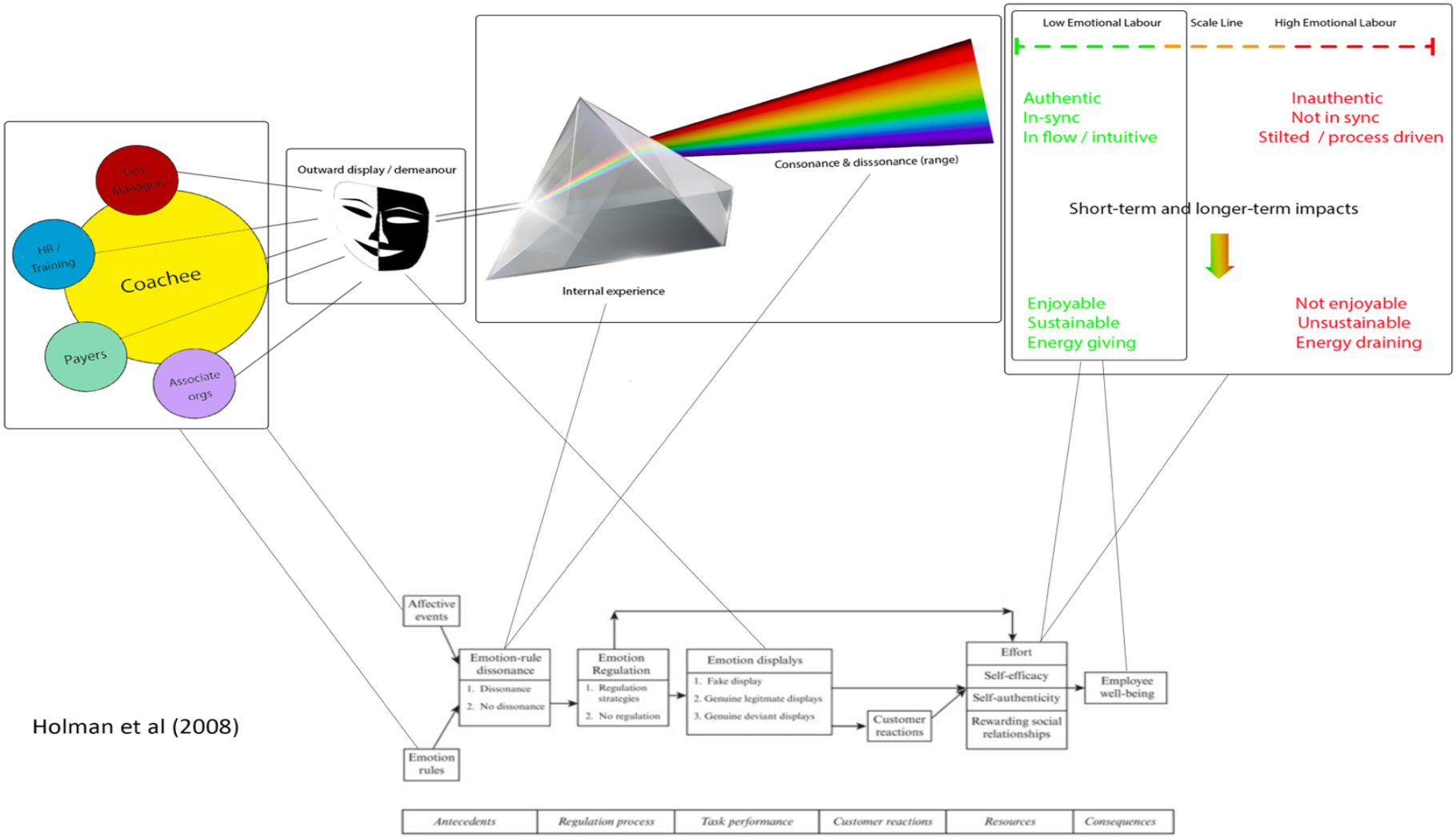
What may have appeared as useful in considering the *self of the coach* is seen in service of an "…ability to address poor or inappropriate attitudes…" in coachees. Ignoring the clashing philosophies of coaching in general, in the specific consideration of 'where is the coach in coach training?' this framework firmly indicates 'in service'.

The developed model in this research certainly places the coach centrally, both as a visual metaphor and in the perspectives on coaching; this is something to which future research might aspire, and which those responsible for qualification frameworks, such as the ILM, should thoughtfully consider. The implication for practice here is more than simply adding EL into a framework of education or competency; it is more about the balance of where the coach is positionally, and where the profession is in terms of care for the coach, as there is a clear imbalance of needs demonstrated - which speaks to the value that coaches are seen to bring. I am not advocating for prominence of coach above all, but I am highlighting the imbalance of the coach in service of coachee, in service of organisation, in service of outcomes, at the expense of, or the depletion of, the coach.

5.1.4 Similarities and differences in EL models

Looking at the model developed through this research reveals some resonances with existing visual models of EL outside coaching, and one in particular bears some similarity to the model developed through this CE process. Holman, Chissick and Totterdell (2008, p.302) presented a model of EL, and whilst the model is framed in a way which accentuates the positives of low EL, it does bear some resemblance to the model created with the participants in this research:

Figure 10: Holman et al. (2008) model - links with this research



Holman et al (2008)

Figure 18.1 A model of emotional labour and its outcomes

Whilst the context of the Holman *et al.* model (customer relations / service) differs from the coaching context, there are clear lines of relationship that can be drawn between the Holman model and that which has been created in this Conceptual Encounter process. Where they differ significantly is in the 'affective events' or antecedents which give rise to EL. The nature of the 'customer', and what the *proper state of mind* is for Holman's customers, is crucially different to both the coachees of coaches and the contractors of coaches. Louis and Diochon (2019, p.147) presented a case which highlights these differences:

> "But Paul further explained that it was in fact always touchy to wear both hats in coaching: the commercial hat and the coaching hat. Further, he felt like they contradicted one another. When he was wearing the commercial hat he had to please the client. When he was wearing the coaching hat, he was both empathetic and confrontational. And being confrontational is not always what the clients want."

The antecedents of EL differ greatly from Holman's service workers (and from many other contexts where the literature focusses, for example nursing or medicine in general). The aim of EL that coaches use with coachees (the challenge of being '*both empathetic and confrontational'*) is not the same as that in a service context, as the proper state of mind intended is significantly different. The EL experienced with organisational contractors and stakeholders of coaching is different again, based on perceptions of the proper state of mind for those individuals within organisations. What, then, do these similarities and differences mean to the research question, directly in relation to the EL model produced?

EL is recognisable (once described) and experienced in coaching as it is experienced in many roles. EL is experienced both 'in the room' and 'outside of the room' of coaching. The perceived need for behavioural modification and the creation of an

acceptable outward demeanour requires the use of surface acting and deep acting strategies. What differs in the model developed from this research is the balance of EL experienced within the primary relationship compared with that experienced with significant others, as well as the nature of the proper state of mind for either. In much of the EL research in service industries it is the EL of the worker in relation to their primary customer which is researched. Though examples do exist of collegial EL (EL experienced with colleagues) as in Theodosius (2017) and Timmons (2005), there is nothing very similar to the context of an external coach working with internal contractors of coaching; and the nature of the proper state of mind for a customer differs significantly from the proper state of mind for coachees as noted. A customer is one who requires to be kept happy, served and dealt with efficiently – a coachee is something quite different. Often coaches and coachees are exploring unhappiness, dissatisfaction, frustration and any number of negative emotions which would be extremely unhelpful if the coachee were a 'customer', as the case above describes (Louis and Diochon, 2019). The demeanour of coaches is then intended to produce an entirely different reaction, or state, from those instances in service - certainly within the dyad. Perhaps the relationships around coaching are more akin to the service dynamic, when coaches are 'selling' their services, but these relationships still contain differing dynamics. The display rules, or perceptions of acceptable demeanour, for coaches are the drivers of coach behaviour, and this demeanour changes depending on the recipient.

The implications for coaching practice of these differences from the mainstream EL literature are seen in the 'antecedents' of EL in coaching, which differ significantly, and in the proper states of mind for those inside and outside the room of coaching. Whilst EL is experienced in the primary relationship (in the room) by a majority of coaches in this research, it is almost universally experienced with stakeholders and contractors of coaching (outside of the room), which differs from EL research at large. EL

experienced in the dyad appears different from that which is experienced outside the dyad – it is still EL, but with different drivers, motives and purpose, which merits further discussion.

In the participant-developed model of EL in coaching, there is a circle represented alongside other stakeholders named 'Associate Orgs' (fig. 9) – which refers to situations where coaches work as 'associates' under another name or organisation. This is a common scenario, and one which I have experienced many times. Coaches describe the EL involved in working under an organisation when they feel the need for behavioural modification based on what the organisations expect from them. This circle which describes 'associate organisations' appears on the model because coaches talked about their influences from these organisations (display rules) in relation to EL. The nature of this relationship with associate organisations appears closely related to that of organisation stakeholders. I, too, have recognised that perceived need to modify my own behaviour to meet with practices and expectations which are not my own, when working as an associate. In summary, there are a number of sources of EL for coaching which are not prevalent in the general EL literature. This has implications for practice, for coaches and others.

The experience in this research suggests that, once surfaced through both the spoken word and through visual means, EL is highly recognisable to coaches. Coaches can describe the drivers, the experiences, and the outcomes of EL – and yet, the presence of the EL concept, the term itself and its ideas was very low before research interviews. It is of benefit to coaches themselves and other stakeholders that EL is more fully surfaced, present and discussed in coaching, coaching training, and coaching supervision. This benefit extends to having a fuller understanding of how coaches operate, and the potential for EL to be present in coaching, which in turn makes for more aware, reflective and conscious practitioners who are both serving clients, and serving themselves (or potentially preserving and protecting themselves). The nature

of the EL experienced in the dyad and that experienced with organisational contractors of coaching is important to name and notice – whilst there may be some recognition of the different 'hats' that are being worn, the different drivers of the EL experienced whilst wearing those differing hats has not yet been fully recognised. This research is not designed to understand how organisational contractors of coaching experience interaction with coaches, but from the coaches' 'side', all of the participants in the research described or recognised the EL in dealing with those circumstances and people. There are certainly benefits for coaches in naming and understanding the EL in these scenarios, for example while considering the conditions under which they seek and accept work, but there are also potential benefits for organisations in understanding the EL of the coach in these contexts. This research could encourage organisations to pay particular attention to good 'fit' and clarity around work which is contracted, and potentially lead to a closer working relationship for the benefit of all parties, through surfacing this unspoken and unnamed dynamic of EL.

Higher presence of the EL term itself in discussion and research around coaching may also mean that EL would be more fully named and surfaced in the supervision of coaching practice. This higher profile for EL would have implications for coach education and competency frameworks, to include and adopt the EL lens on coaching practice, as well as potential utility to organisational contractors of coaching.

A contribution to EL theory which emerges from the findings might first appear to be related to the *proper state of mind in others*, with the complexity of determining what is proper and for who, but Hochschild (1983) accounted for these differing intentions towards the state of others when she highlighted the difference between debt collectors and airline hostesses, whose work requires wholly different states to be engendered. The theoretical contribution to EL lies in the nature of the organisational antecedent, and the nature of the wage/labour exchange. To my knowledge there is nothing in the EL literature which comes close to this particular relational dynamic

where organisations (those within them) contract external coaching services. Bolton named *pecuniary* EL (2005, p.113), which is EL performed to "create the profitable product of customer satisfaction" and describes the "cynical" performances which ensue. Bolton related pecuniary EL to the performance of front-line service workers having brief and often 'one-off' exposure to customers. The nature of the coach's relationship with those in organisations is not like this; furthermore, the nature of pecuniary EL for one who works *for* an organisation, as opposed to seeking renumerated work as external to that organisation, describes a very different interrelation. The EL experienced by coaches in the organisational interface is distinct from pecuniary EL, or collegial EL - EL experienced with working colleagues, as described by Theodosius (2008) - and there appears to be no parallel or analogue for this EL in the literature considered or contexts studied. This EL relates to securing paid work and may not be unique to coaching; any similarly contracted external services where there is a financial gain for being selected shares this facet of EL. There are other elements of EL outside the coaching room which were surfaced in findings (such as that around confidentiality), but specifically here I am referring to the 'need to be selected'. Rather than pecuniary EL (which relates to the gain for an organisation of their worker performing EL), I propose that *commercial* EL would be a more fitting descriptor of this particular element of EL, which is experienced with those who have the authority to award paid work or contracts. This contribution to EL theory and the terminology, if adopted, has utility for coaching and many other scenarios where there is a need, and a financial gain, for being selected.

5.2 EL in relation to authenticity and the self of the coach

The nature of EL requires that acting is done, whether surface acting (feigning) or deep acting (feeling). Surface acting has the clearest potential to impact on the authenticity

of the coach, and how they feel in connection with others; this is supported by both the general EL literature and by what coaches reported in relation to surface acting. The extent to which coaches use acting tactics appears related to their coaching approach, and their way of being as coaches; this warrants further consideration in the following sections which focus on considerations of authenticity and on the self of the coach.

5.2.1 Authenticity

Numerous examples emerged from the research to show that coaches work to manage their outward display in varied circumstances. These examples were varied: being frustrated with a client, feeling intimidated but working to not seem so, feeling worried about doing a good job whilst working to appear competent, disliking clients and not saying so, believing clients to have narcissism, being complicit in game-playing and 'going through the motions', having and holding prior knowledge of coachees, feeling tired of listening, and being worried about giving advice but doing so in a confident manner. These varied examples show the internal world of coaches being at odds with the display which they create.

As well as these examples of surface acting, the research interviewees also raised some examples of deep acting – where coaches work with their feelings to convince themselves in a way that, again, enables them to exhibit an outward demeanour that they believe to be acceptable. When feeling under-confident, a coach reminded herself that the coaching process usually goes well for her and her coachees, and so any feelings of inadequacy that she might be experiencing would soon give way to feelings of efficacy. When another coach was experiencing what she perceived as low engagement from a coachee, she thought about other relationships that had started the same way but ended up being fruitful. A further example of working with feelings to manage outward demeanour was a coach managing her frustration by considering what else might be going on for a client who was struggling to engage.

Coaches sometimes work with re-framing internally to allow them to access their own confidence, connect with feelings of efficacy and times of success, and show compassion by considering a coachee's context. Whilst doing this internally, they are sometimes maintaining a demeanour which secretes the work going on beneath the surface.

Some of these examples of EL relate to giving impressions of being competent, some to suppressing worries and anxiety, and some to supressing the outward expression of negative feelings towards coachees. These are all examples of acting, which share similar dynamics to EL seen in other fields – the EL of working to engender or promote the proper state of mind in others. This work by coaches seems partly designed to engender feelings of confidence in the coach for the coachee, so that the coach is working to appear 'as if' to project that confidence. It is unclear the degree to which coaches are surface acting for their own sense of confidence, or to engender that confidence in others – in either case they are labouring to project a display which portrays confidence and competence, when participants have often reported that there are other internal dialogues which are quite the opposite. There are also occasions when coaches surface act in order to ensure that coaching is a safe space which has utility; coachees working with a coach who externalised that they had become *weary of listening* would probably not be in the proper state of mind towards coaching. It is particularly interesting to note the acting that happens around coach competence, and the need to be seen to be 'making a difference'. When looking at the findings around coach motivation it became clear that altruism played at least second fiddle to a coach seeking to feel agency, efficacy, success and self-esteem. It is unsurprising, then, that sometimes coaches act around the area of competence, whether that be feigning, or feeling. So, coaches surface act to create the impression that they are the person who *they believe* coachees expect, or that the coach would seek to project. Yet this acting being done was largely unexamined by coaches and played no part in coaches'

consideration of themselves as being ‘authentic’. Authenticity was described as almost sacrosanct by participants in interviews, and yet a clear and obvious challenge to being authentic lies beneath a stone, so far unturned.

The concept of authenticity in general has been a source of philosophical and academic consideration for some time, and certainly since the ancient Greek philosophers. What is authenticity? Is there such a thing as an authentic self? As Heidegger (1962) illuminates, both authenticity and inauthenticity are states of being – and ultimately both are ‘us’ (in the sense that being inauthentic is still ‘us’ in being ‘*Dasein*’):

> “As modes of Being, authenticity and inauthenticity (these expressions have been chosen terminologically in a strict sense) are both grounded in the fact that any Dasein whatsoever is characterized by mineness. But the inauthenticity of Dasein does not signify any 'less' Being or any 'lower' degree of Being. Rather it is the case that even in its fullest concretion Dasein can be characterized by inauthenticity -when busy, when excited, when interested, when ready for enjoyment.” (1962, p.68)

Heidegger’s expression rather suggests that all actions are authentic in a way, in that they belong to our being (*Dasein*); even incongruent actions are us acting out of ‘authentic’ motivations. The need to be seen as professional is an authentic motivation, owned by us, and representative of something fundamental to our self – in this way all action may be viewed as authentic – which is part of the problem of characterising what authenticity actually is.

Jongman-Sereno and Leary (2019, p.139) described the issues around the conceptualisation of authenticity, and in their conclusion to their review stated:

> “The extensive confusion and disagreement that surrounds the concept of authenticity has made work in this area difficult and the findings of

> much research suspect. Indeed, as typically construed and measured, authenticity may not be a viable scientific construct. Even so, we are not arguing that research on authenticity be abandoned. As noted, the subjective feelings that people interpret as authenticity and inauthenticity seem to be psychologically important, and people sometimes strive to be authentic and experience negative emotions when they believe that they have acted inauthentically (Lenton, Bruder *et al*., 2013)."

In contrast to philosophical or technical perspectives, a simpler expression of authenticity is described by those such as Ibarra (2015) who have pointed out the elements, the nuances, and the questions contained within their definitions of authenticity. For example, using the definition of being "true to yourself" raises the question of "which self?":

> "We have many selves depending on the different roles we play in life." (Ibarra, 2015, p.54)

Bachkirova explored the idea of situational authenticity (2020) and that of 'mini-selves' (2011); ideas which may relate to roles which coaches play, and which support Ibarra's (2015) expression of many selves:

> "So we will use this term 'a mini-self' for a combination of brain/mind states and processes that are involved in the whole organism's engagement with a certain task. (…) They may allow for adaptation to the internal state of the organism and external conditions (physical and social). Action also may not necessary[ily] be a physical act. It could be manifested in speech or even in restraining from action." (Bachkirova, 2011, p.64)

This idea of the mini-self, which facilitates modification (adaptation) of the 'internal state' and external physical / social conditions, is highly relatable to the EL concept in terms of both surface acting and deep acting. Whilst in the realm of conjecture, it might be that inhabiting a mini-self may reduce the dissonance experienced by coaches by reducing the distance between who coaches see themselves to be at the time, and who they portray themselves to be. Such a view on the mini-self may indeed facilitate the adoption of one role in one moment and another in another, as noted by Chris in defining 'business owner role' as distinct from 'coach role'. As Louis and Diochon (2019, p.135) described, there are multiple roles and skills which coaches require:

> "Coaches play different roles in their practice, and develop, in addition to coaching skills, secondary skills such as sales to get new customers…"

Which of these roles connect with coaches' authentic selves may be as variable as those selves, themselves! Clearly, authenticity and the use of self in coaching are concepts which are widely discussed by those in and around the profession and by participants in this research, and both are highly related to EL in coaching (not least in relation to insincere display), but only lightly considered. Coaches, supervisors of coaching, and coach training and qualification providers now have the opportunity to re-consider authenticity through the lens of EL, as there are some fundamental challenges to the use of the words and concepts in and out of the coaching room. These need to be surfaced, understood, and considered if we are to properly define what both 'use of self' and 'authenticity' mean for coaches and coaching. Overall, these views on authenticity very much point to a socially constructed phenomenon, but the issue in coaching relates to the lack of examination of those constructions and what they might mean for coaching practice in relation to EL.

5.2.2 Use of self and experience of EL in the room

Highly present in the words of participants in this study were genres of coaching that utilise the presence of the coach, and the self of the coach, in service of the coaching relationship. It is this use of self as the instrument of coaching on which I now focus this discussion.

Whilst the findings from this research indicate that coaches experience EL in coaching, and that they have both surface acting and deep acting strategies with regards to that experience, there was a notable difference in the way that coaches in the research group expressed their orientation towards their 'use of self'. As a result of this orientation, some coaches were far less likely to surface act within the relationship in the coaching room. Whilst some coaches referred to a theoretical orientation (Gestalt), others simply described themselves as being very 'direct'. The 'porous' relationship, as it was termed and described by Claudine in the findings, led to an openness about what was happening in the coach's internal world that was shared with the client or coachee.

Peter Bluckert (Bluckert, 2014, p.68) described the way of being for coaches who practice Gestalt:

> "Intrinsic in this approach is that the coach needs to focus on his/her own subjective experience and share this appropriately as part of an authentic dialogue. This sharing of the coach's interior and exterior world in the service of the client is known as the use of self."

Gestalt, as described by Bluckert, is the antithesis of EL, in that the sharing of the inner world of the coach is an intrinsic part of the coaching process. Feelings and thoughts in this approach are not to be suppressed, hidden or modified – but in fact are part of the process of coaching transformation. Bluckert states that this change is not around

future-focussed goals or objectives but rather change in the moment for both coach and coachee, in symbiosis.

The very idea of surface acting was spurned by Claudine, who identified her practice as Gestalt, saying lightly that the question I asked (which related to her internal world being different from her external demeanour) *"didn't even make sense"* to her. This coach went further to say that it was exactly this connection she felt with clients that was her goal of coaching. This coaching sounds and feels very different to the coaching which other coaches describe, where they sometimes struggle not to give advice at the coachees request, or the coaching that happens when clients fail to engage.

It is worth noticing the goals of differing coaching approaches, and how that difference impacts on the coach-coachee relationship. It makes logical sense that coaches who externalise their inner world in the coaching relationship would have no propensity or need to act – and so would not employ acting tactics, and so would not experience EL (though that 'logical connection' would not have been made without having been through the process of exploration of EL with coaches – what now seems obvious and reasoned was previously unexamined and obscured). Looking specifically at an approach which operates in contrast to Gestalt, such as Solution Focus (Greene and Grant, 2003), the opposite assumption is in play - it is not the *Gestalt* which this coaching seeks, but *ein kleiner Teil* (a small part) of action towards a desired future, without consideration of the whole; two opposing assumptions are at play which are 'change in the moment' or 'change in the future'. These two differing goals of coaching impact on the nature of coaching relationships and how coaches use themselves as an integral part of that change. In this research, only Gestalt, the use of self, and 'directness' were identified as protective against EL – though it is quite possible that different coaching approaches have different potential for EL and that may be an area for future consideration. The early approaches which look at personality type and EL

in the general literature may also inform a coach's orientation and likelihood to *act*, including the relationship between a coach selecting and operating within a theoretical framework which is reflective of their personality style or type ('round peg in round hole').

The preceding elements, relating to a coaches' way of being, sense of self and approach to coaching, impact on the relationships formed in coaching. De Haan (2011) warned against anything that would jeopardise the working alliance in coaching, which some might perceive as avoiding saying anything that might be perceived as critical or having anything other than an understanding and supportive demeanour - somewhat like the service dynamic. On the other hand, a coach who sees their use of self as integral to coaching might see that very *acting* as jeopardising the working alliance, as it works against authenticity and the elements which they believe impact on the potency of coaching.

The implication for coaching practice of this finding on the use of self relates to minimising EL experienced in the dyad. If coaches seek to reduce the EL they experience in coaching, then externalising their internal world is a way to achieve that – though this does not come risk-free, and the manner in which coaches might choose to do that requires care and skill. The following discussion highlights some of the influences which may inhibit a coach's ability to externalise.

5.2.3 Social performances

It is unclear the extent to which wider societal norms play out in coaching, for coaches: the need to be seen as competent and efficacious, the tendency to hide anxieties and worries, and the avoidance of saying what we think in order to avoid discomfort or to break convention, as Goffman (1978) described. Looking for parallels in other helping professions, such as nursing or medicine, does little to inform the question of the impact of societal norms, since their display rules and ideas of professional

demeanour are established and strong. Whether societal norms of social performance are playing out in coaching is beyond the scope of this research, however it is interesting to note Goffman's dramaturgical representation of human behaviour coupled with Hochschild's references to the theatrical, specifically connecting her work to that of Constantin Stanislavsky of the Moscow Arts Theatre. The art of 'representation', as Stanislavsky (1979) described it, and the use of 'emotional memory', which attempts to connect with the essence of emotions in order to create truthful characters, have strong resonances with Hochschild's (1983) surface acting and deep acting strategies, as she noticed in her original writing. Donning the costumes, facial expressions and demeanour to feign is often referred to as working from 'outside in' in acting circles. This means that actors sometimes work from external representation to create character, and sometimes from accessing an inner life - which is then brought out externally. The similarities to surface acting and deep acting for coaches are worthy of note, particularly given the dramaturgical references within literature. Acting is highly associated with EL; the degree to which we act, and our awareness of doing so, is important if our goal is to reduce the EL experienced in coaching. Perhaps the role of the professional coach is closer to the role of professional actor than would give us comfort, even though the role of acting was not a central feature for all coaches. We might ask of coaches the same question that is often asked of actors: 'was it a credible and truthful performance?'

5.2.4 Stories we tell ourselves and others

There is certainly a difference between cynical performances (Bolton, 2005) and seeking to frame, adapt, or align our internal thoughts as coaches by the stories we tell ourselves (even when these stories are self-deceptive). Within the theoretical genre outlined by Cox, Bachkirova and Clutterbuck (2014), Narrative Coaching is

outlined and explored by Drake (2014, p.122). Exploring a coachee's narrative, and the described links between narrative and identity, are integral to this genre:

> "This narrative approach presumes that coachees are continually clarifying, claiming and convincing others of their identity through positioning (Davies & Harre, 1990) themselves in both their internal constructions and their external interactions."

Drake explored the purpose and process of narrative coaching, and the role of the coach within that, without ever focussing on the *coach* as a human being with their own historical and present narrative – which is symptomatic of the idea of *coachee as central, with coach in service*. This research clearly points to the narrative of the coach being critical in the construction of the rules of coaching, of the coach's individual approach, and of the stories we tell ourselves around being authentic, and indeed around the rules of the profession. The reason that this genre is interesting from an EL perspective is the way in which narrative, story, acting and internal and external worlds all inter-relate and connect, and how they all relate to the concept of authenticity. The relevance of the acting metaphor and the idea of narrative for coaches is in the potential for heightened awareness around what is happening for a coach, which can add further understanding to the inner world of the coach and their choices around external presentation or demeanour. To be able to bring what seems largely unconscious into conscious thought is the very aim of supervision and reflective practice (Hay, 2007), and by using the EL lens, the implication is that we enhance our ability to make discoveries about ourselves in our coaching practice, and about our own narratives as coaches: narratives around the rules of coaching, around our style and approach in coaching, and around authenticity.

5.3 EL effects in coaching

Having discussed the EL term itself, and considerations of authenticity and the use of self in coaching, I now consider the effects or impacts of EL in the coaching context.

The effects of experiencing EL for coaches, seen in the research findings, range from the mild and transient to the serious and lasting. The discussion on coaches who externalise their internal thoughts and feelings, through orientation or theoretical approach, explained why some coaches do not experience EL to any discernible degree in the primary coaching relationship, due to their lack of acting. This does not necessarily mean that these coaches never experience EL in the dyad, but may mean that coaches are not sufficiently aware or reflexive around EL to recognise it when it does appear. The self-identified Gestalt coaches spoke of elements of their practice which they chose not to externalise, as they considered them not in the service of the client (they called it 'their stuff'). That *holding* is also EL, and the labour needs to be recognised for what it is, and that choosing not to externalise also requires acting. It does, though, mean that coaches with this orientation are working with their emotions in their coaching, as part of coaching work. This may mean that coaching is challenging work, but mostly not work to surface act or deep act - and therefore mostly not subject to EL. This is unlike those coaches who described holding a great deal in coaching which was confined to their internal world, whilst striving for an external demeanour which betrayed nothing of their inward thoughts.

We understand from the wider EL literature the number of undesirable outcomes which may befall emotional labourers, and these range from dissatisfaction through to burnout (Hochschild, 1983; Turnbull,1999; Kruml and Geddes, 2000; Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002; Glomb and Tews, 2004; Mann and Cowburn, 2005; Näring, Briët, and Brouwers, 2006; Delgado *et al*., 2017). In the researched group, the experiences of EL are described from being 'tricky' through to examples of opting out of coaching in

some contexts or taking a break from coaching completely for a time. Turning to Schermuly and Graßmann's (2019) research, we know that coaches very frequently experience negative outcomes from coaching; however, despite the high incidence of negative outcomes, the authors characterised negative experiences as mainly low in seriousness. Schermuly (2020) questioned the impacts of minor negative impacts experienced over time, which is relevant here, but authors also detail the less prevalent but more impactful events of negative experience. As an example, nearly half of coaches in Schermuly's study felt emotionally impacted by the coaching topic and around a third felt insecure or stressed and that they would not fulfil their roles well. These are all areas that relate strongly to EL, if indeed coaches work to manage their external display around those issues.

We understand from the literature in both the wider EL field, and in coaching, that there are negative outcomes of both EL and coaching. Whilst this research is undertaken in pursuit of what EL *is* for coaches, and not fully focussed on its effects, nonetheless we have some concrete examples of the impacts of EL. These include a feeling of a lack of fit, finding coaching work unenjoyable, feeling inauthentic, detachment, opting out, and in one case stopping coaching for a time. I am not suggesting that EL is the *only* reason that coaches experience stress, exhaustion, depletion, and opting out – but I am suggesting that it is *a* reason. This view is unsurprising given the wealth of literature available which focusses on those areas; however, this is the first empirical work which explicitly makes the finding that coaches experience EL, and that coaches feel deleterious effects from experiencing EL. Certainly, further work needs to be done to understand this relationship between EL and coach well-being more deeply, but the role of EL in care for the instrument seems important for coaches, for supervisors of coaching, and for those who lead coaches and schemes of coaching. To ignore EL in this context would be to turn away from the mass of evidence in other fields, the

experiences of participants in this research, and the exploratory views of thought leaders in the coaching field.

Practically, this work adds to what is embryonic in the coaching literature, that coaches can experience negative outcomes from coaching. The inclusion of the EL concept in further research that identifies incidence and prevalence of negative outcomes for coaches would enhance our knowledge, and by doing so place appropriate focus on those things which have potential to damage or deplete coaches.

5.3.1 Coach care – and good use of self

Placing the self of the coach at the centre, as opposed to purely in service of coaching relationships, gives a different perspective on how to initiate and maintain quality coaching in the coaching dyad, and with stakeholders around coaching. This view also places the well-being of the coach as a critical element. As Bachkirova (2016, p.143) named the coach's self as the primary instrument of coaching, she also highlighted the implications of this viewpoint:

> "Three main conditions for the good use of self as an instrument are proposed: understanding the instrument, looking after the instrument, and checking the instrument for quality and sensitivity."

Furthering our understanding of EL in coaching relates to all of those three areas which Bachkirova identifies. In relation to *understanding the instrument*, Bachkirova identifies the purpose of insight to be "congruence between you and your approach" (2016, p.146) – which is another way of describing authenticity. Much of what has been found and discussed in this research is related to congruence, or as the developed model describes it, consonance (or the opposing dissonance). The differing approaches of coaches impact on how congruent they are internally and with their external demeanour, and indeed how congruent they feel in different contexts.

Whilst some coaches see the modification of display as a normal part of coaching, others see it as the opposite. What is interesting is the lack of thought and reflection about that modification of display, either with coachees or with others, and the lack of consideration about what impacts or effects that might have, as just discussed.

During the research interviews there were instances where participants started to reflect more deeply on their way of being, and those reflections made coaches question themselves and their approach. Examining and reflecting on *the way we are as coaches* is a critical element if we hold to the idea that the coach is the primary instrument of coaching, but for most coaches this felt like a new area of enquiry and one which had been scarcely addressed. In fact, the only coaches who did appear to have some pre considered thoughts relating area of EL (and their way of being) were those who identified with the Gestalt approach - which very much places the self of the coach in the centre of the coaching relationship, alongside the coachee.

Knowing the instrument in general terms - and more specifically, in this research, in relation to EL - can only further our effectiveness as coaches and highlight where our practice is not fully aligned, or not as connected as it might be with who we are (or who we are in that moment). Greater knowledge can also highlight inconsistencies which we have seen through this research, such as the inconsistency of espoused authenticity with the practice of pretence, for example the open and trusting relationship within coaching versus a mistrust of the organisation who funds the experience. The varying degrees of coach disclosure, or honesty about their experience in coaching, and the extent to which they can be themselves, again, can clash with the value of authenticity. Bachkirova (2016) identified the competent self and the dialogic self of the coach, and the degree to which sometimes those positions can be in conflict or incongruence; we know (from what coaches have spoken about in these interviews) the vagaries of what the competent self looks like to coaches, which is mostly self-created and formed. The EL perspective offers a lens which can

increase self-knowledge, self-awareness, context awareness, and awareness of others, to help coaches understand more about themselves and how they are operating within their professional systems – specifically, how coaches present themselves, and what is happening 'under the surface'. In turn, this increase in knowledge and awareness offers the opportunity for the coach to understand the instrument more fully, and practice in a more considered and intentional way.

In relation to looking after the instrument, Bachkirova (2016) exposed the lack of attention to coach well-being and burnout. In this discussion, Hochschild is directly referenced:

> "In coaching, burnout might be associated with the need to sustain positivity and a high level of optimism that has been called "emotional labour" (Hochschild, 2012)" (Bachkirova, 2016, p.14)

The need to sustain positivity and optimism, though, is different from the need to sustain the *appearance* of positivity and optimism. The example of coaches supressing negative thoughts towards coachees in coaching sessions is well documented in the findings of this research. Where a coach dislikes a coachee, and works with them over a period of time, what does *holding* that dislike, and feigning to hide the dislike, do to coaches? Where a coach is working in a corporate environment where they find the culture restrictive, or the processes around coaching tiresome – where they feel they cannot be themselves, and where they have to attend to administration in which they see no value for coaching… what does that do to coaches over time? It does that same as it does in any other profession: it leads to apathy, detachment, frustration, emotional cost, and potentially burnout.

Examples have been brought to the fore of coaches opting out of a particular type of work because of fit, and whilst there was not enough detail or insight into how that detachment happened (which is certainly an area for further investigation), the effect

was clear. Coaches opt out and detach in some circumstances. Another example was given where a coach had opted out of coaching fully for some time, which was related to the balance of needs in coaching and feeling exhausted and depleted. Where the EL literature suggests that good person-role fit reduces EL (Jeung, Kim and Chang, 2018), the same seems to be true of coaches. The selection of the type of work that coaches value, and feel comfortable in, and their own way of approaching coaching all relate to fit - and that coaches opt in and out of work is a sign of seeking that comfort.

Checking the instrument for quality and sensitivity, Bachkirova's (2016) third condition for good use of self, is highly relevant to this discussion and to EL. The discoveries that coaches in this research made about their practice indicate that they have not thought enough, at all, or deeply enough about any of the components or the totality of EL. The questions in interviews around where norms and rules came from were met with long pauses, silences, and stalling responses such as "That's a really interesting question…". In many instances, coaches worked their way through that question, adding detail and deepening thinking as they went through their sources (from where they derived a rule or norm) as this was the first time that they had fully considered the question.

In considering care of the instrument further, Bachkirova (2016) referred to self-deception in coaches. One area which emerges from this research is around the central theme of acting; whilst coaches use the word 'authenticity' very frequently (as we have considered), once questioned all coaches in this study recognised elements of acting in their work (if not in the dyad, then in surrounding relationships). This self-deception is central to the self of the coach – whilst we tell ourselves that authenticity is a cornerstone of our practice, in fact we display a wide variety of faces and projections of ourselves which could be considered as inauthentic. Whilst there is a large amount of literature around coaching *for* authenticity in clients, there is the

opposite for coaches. Clearly these areas are highly related to EL, and to the idea of creating the proper state of mind in others, which is the idea so highly prevalent in Hochschild's work – *but what of the proper state of mind for the coach?*

The implications for practice from these considerations relate to how coaches might re-consider both authenticity and EL in coaching. Firstly, to recognise those situations in which coaches act, and further to consider the nature of both self-deception and the nature of authenticity in the context of coaching (particularly the paradox of espoused authenticity and practiced EL in and outside the room). Such reflections by coaches and supervisors will enhance our reflective and reflexive understanding of the coaching and contracting that we do. In addition, the elements of use of self, authenticity, and EL should have presence and prominence in frameworks of coaching, and in the qualification and training of coaches.

The discussion around findings so far has been mainly focussed at the level of individual practitioners, primarily coaches and also supervisors. At times, the discussion has ranged to educators, framework owners and organisations. The preceding findings and discussion, though, prompt some important questions at the level of the profession of coaching.

5.4 What does the notion of EL mean to the profession of coaching?

The following discussion focusses on how an enhanced understanding around EL in coaching informs the state of the profession. The findings have illuminated the degree to which professional bodies impact on how coaches see the rules of the profession, the behavioural norms, and how coaches construct their own rules from various sources. I have observed the lack of familiarity with ethical and practice frameworks,

and a general scepticism of those frameworks. Further, the potential for contracts and fees in coaching to distort relationships in the organisational context has been noticed, and named *commercial* EL. These areas will be discussed after considering the claim to professional status for coaching overall.

5.4.1 Is coaching a profession at all?

The lack of examination of behavioural norms in coaching is a curiosity given the efforts of professional bodies to define and place coaching within frameworks of competence – even assigning levels to the degree in which coaches meet their defined standards (practitioner, senior practitioner, master practitioner and the like). In the data captured from interviews and group discussions, it was very clear that coaches do not have a unified sense of the behavioural rules of the profession, if indeed coaching meets the criteria for a profession at all. The lack of meaningful governance, coupled with coaches' own perceptions of coaching rules, certainly impacts on whether coaching might be seen as a profession. This was discussed at length by Astrid and Schmidt-Lellek (2017), who stated that coaching is not a profession in the traditional or "classical" sense. Drake (2008), considering the profession of coaching, referred to evidence of physicians in the medical field adhering to guidelines only around half of the time, and suggested that the same might be true for coaching:

> "A critical need in this new era is to deepen our understanding of what happens the other half of the time." (Drake, 2008, p.21)

Drake (2008, p.24) further added that:

> "If coaches thought of themselves as daring yet disciplined artists, it would free them to move more confidently in the direction of their dreams for their practice, their part of the profession, and what they can do in the world."

This view of coaches as artists, rather than professionals, is a challenging idea in the face of frameworks of competence and professional accreditations. Some of Pablo Picasso's work would not meet the test of recognisability of the human form, such as the *'Buste de femme*', in which the features of the subject are seemingly in the 'wrong' places for realism - but this work would pass the test for a masterpiece (achieving a sales price of over $67M USD at auction in 2015 at Christie's auction house, https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-5895969). What, then, of coaching - should it meet the test of recognisability, or mastery?

Bennet (2006) examined the profession of coaching, the lack of a full claim to professional status and, notably for this research, included no reference to the care or preservation of the coach in his suggestions for securing a future research base in the field.

The preceding views on the coaching profession were published at least a decade ago, and there has been little to supplement these views in the interim. In this context of a lack of clarity on professional rules, and the observation of varying degrees of compliance to those rules, it is unsurprising that the ways in which coaches are *supposed to behave* - their display rules - are similarly obscure. Coaches were very open and clear in this research around the rules being something to be understood at the entrance to coaching before these rules drifted to the edges of their practice, or the coaches simply broke the rules as defined by the professional bodies.

The interesting thing, though, is that none of the coaches interviewed had detailed knowledge of what the rules were, if we consider competency and ethics frameworks as the rules. 'Holy coaching', as it was described by Sara, is coaching that adheres to the rules from wherever they emanate. It is perhaps a linguistic coincidence that de Haan (2008) offered the profession ten commandments of coaching, but nonetheless the obviously Christian religious terminology invokes something around the

unbreakable rules of coaching. The issue here relates to who the giver of those rules is, with de Haan declaring those commandments and, if we follow the biblical parallel, taking the role of God, or Moses at the minimum.

To extend the analogy further, the supposed consequences of breaking the biblical Decalogue range from genocide, capital punishment, severe fines, slavery and being despised or scorned. In coaching, despite de Haan's commandments, there is only a general sense that there are some rules, which is not altogether clear when viewed from an independent perspective – are the elements that appear in the frameworks from professional bodies to be considered rules, guidelines, recommendations or something else? There is a sense that there are some enforcements for rules, inherent in the phrase 'coaching police', but *what they are* seems of less relevance to coaches. Again, taking an independent perspective, there are few sanctions for rule breaking, save being ejected from a professional body, which is low impact in an 'open shop' (membership is not a requirement to practice coaching). There might be a sense of being 'despised or scorned' in ejection from a professional body, but I am fairly certain that neither genocide nor capital punishment would ensue. There is a lack of clarity on what the rules are, who has the power to declare them, the power that they have, and the consequences of being a rule-breaker or maverick in coaching.

Perhaps there is some friction displayed here between practitioners and professional bodies that is worthy of more investigation as the coaching field considers professionalisation. Whatever the case, coaches describe their mix of influences around behaviour, which are both eclectic and personal, and that the mix of influences appears concocted by individual recipe, or indeed artistry, rather than by edict or commandment.

This personal recipe may not be unique to coaching, though the drivers of professional demeanour are stronger in other roles which emerged from the literature review. In

nursing for example, the image of Florence Nightingale as the 'Lady with the Lamp' reverberates in nursing practice (Munro, 2010; Ellis, 2019), and impacts on the perception of display rules in nursing. Coaching does not have these cultural icons in the perceptions of coaches or non-coaches, and instead coaches describe their *personal* icons and heroes of coaching, their personal experiences of coaching, and their training backgrounds as more powerful drivers of 'what coaches look like'. In the service industries icons are, as in coaching, similarly absent, though there is universal recognition of the idea of 'service with a smile' (Picard *et al.*, 2018). The ideal nature of customer service has been well described from the organisation's perspective since well before Hochschild described the experience of airline workers. We have a common sense of what good customer service looks like, and we are quick to recognise when we receive service which does not match that ideal. In 1920, Rappold and Forbes described some conditions in customer service, claiming:

> "Everything depends on WHAT YOU SAY and HOW YOU SAY IT."
> (1920, p.10)

Rappold and Forbes described the countenance and demeanour expected of service workers, and for at least a century the display rules for this group have been described to the smallest detail. Whilst cultural or professional icons do not exist in service roles to the extent that the Florence Nightingale figure does in nursing, nonetheless expected behaviour is well ingrained in the psyche of both server and customer. What then of coaching? What outward demeanour is expected of professional coaches?

Coaching has a much shorter duration of existence than either nursing or service roles, and so simply fewer people have experienced coaching than going to a shop to buy goods or receiving nursing care of some sort - both of which are almost universals in terms of human experience, certainly in the Western world. From the point of view of prevalence, coaching stands behind the most researched roles in basic familiarity with

what the role 'should be'. It was clear from this research's findings that coaches' own perceptions of norms were widely distributed, and perhaps the lack of iconic figures or common perceptions in the social psyche are contributors to the freedom for coaches to choose their own way. Universals in coach perception of coach behaviour and display rules are clearly lacking, indicating that the profession itself is disparate. Anyone may call themselves a coach, as it is not a protected term; this is the case whether you know that professional bodies for coaching exist, and have sight of the frameworks which they publish, or not.

It is the case that the coaches and supervisors partnered in this research were highly experienced and qualified for the role, and it would not be accurate to suggest that this group were representative of the general coaching population; the group of research partners were chosen specifically because of their length of experience and education in coaching. Potentially there is something to be understood about whether more experienced coaches are less rule-focussed than their less experienced counterparts – but I suggest that the lack of ability to clearly articulate what the rules are is evidence of a general lack of familiarity, which is different from intimately knowing the rules and actively choosing to bend or break them.

The role of supervision in coaching is well described as emanating from professional models of practice in medicine and psycho-therapeutic roles. Does this inheritance from those models do anything to shore up the professional status of coaches? Supervision is an area which should have an impact or have something to say about who we are as a profession, but which suffers from some of the same lack of clarity as coaching itself. Specifically, supervision has a normative function, or the supervisor acts a 'Gatekeeper' to the profession, as de Haan (2012) described it, and so it is puzzling why coaches are not more adept at describing rule formation if their supervision strongly relates to professional norms. Whilst de Haan named the Gatekeeper, he does not describe the gate, or indeed what is on the other side which

needs to be kept. This 'quality assurance' process was described by de Haan (2012, p.8), noting that the supervisor has some powers:

> "… the supervisor can declare the consultant/coach unfit to practice"

I find de Haan's characterisation of the supervisory relationship problematic in this instance because of a lack of specificity around what the normative function of supervision is. Whose norm? What norm? What professional standard? What deems someone fit or unfit to coach? It is vague and unhelpful to supervisors and coaches. In the light of this vagueness, it perhaps is less surprising that coaches cannot articulate their own sources of norm behaviour when thought leaders in the field of coaching and supervision are not helping them to do so in any meaningful way. It seems that the normative function of supervision also needs some careful thinking and attention. One very practical and concrete way in which this research can contribute to the coaching profession is to offer an addition to any supervisory model, to place the questions of norm behaviour and rule derivation at the start and heart of supervisory conversations. As it is impossible to discuss EL in coaching without considering what coaches are 'supposed' to look like and be like, this addition to supervision would not only aid in EL discussion and exploration, but also contribute to the consideration of, and formation of, a profession, through enhancing the effectiveness of supervisory relationships.

5.4.2 Do organisational requirements drive the profession of coaching?

In the absence of common coach or supervisor perceptions around what the coaching role should look like, we have seen that coaches adopt their own rules. There is another influence, though, which was hinted at by several coaches, and which may inform some of those expectations of how coaches should behave - the culture and contracting of organisational stakeholders. The process of organisational contracting may inform some of the basis for expected ways of behaving for coaches; these

contracts are informed by the perceptions of the coach around how coaching should be, in conjunction with the views of people on the organisation's side. Crystal, for instance, spoke about her organisational contracting and how she played the game to give the impression that the coaching would be done, recorded and measured in a certain way – and in doing so opening the door to her *real work*. Imagine contracting plumbing services (as an illustration of what is happening here) to fix a leaky tap, where the plumber accepted the work but decided that he or she could have most impact by working on the boiler; the plumber worked diligently on the boiler and left without attending to the tap for which we had contracted them. Maybe the plumber had done useful work, but it was not the work for which the contract and payment were agreed. *Is this what we do in coaching? Do we contract for one job, and do another?*

Now, one might argue that in coaching we do not know what the real work is until we get into relationship with clients, but sometimes we are contracted for specific reasons with specific outcomes detailed, and the reputation of the coaching profession may well be being impacted by 'us' coaches who do not want to stop the tap leaking when we have agreed to do so. I recognise the imperfection of the analogy, and the example situated in deficit on a remedial agenda, but this discussion is central to who we are as a profession. Until we are prepared to have more meaningful discussions with contractors of coaching, we expose ourselves to commercial EL in order to be selected - and end up disappointing and falling short of the expectations of those who invest in coaching intended to do something (which we have agreed to do, but do not intend to focus on). Bachkirova (2019) focussed on just this issue:

> "At the point of taking the contract with the organization, we commit ourselves to a certain standard of conduct. If what is asked of us does not fit with our principles then contracting is the point at which we must exercise our freedom to walk away or challenge these expectations." (2019, p.119)

Considering the professional agreements further, it is the monetary exchange for services which partly qualifies professional standing for coaches. The wage / labour exchange is what also defines the experiences described by participants as EL, but it is curious that coaches did not speak about this exchange in monetary terms; whilst there were some references to being paid for coaching, the whole topic of pay seems all but absent from what coaches spoke about in interview. Perhaps, though, that is my failure to introduce the monetary element into discussions around EL; even so, money was not a significant topic of discussion for coaches when asked to think about their motivations. Louis and Diochon (2019) considered 'money in coaching':

> "Money is "many-faceted", holding multiple roles in relation to all professions in general and to the coaching profession in particular. It feeds, it rewards and motivates, it overcomes barriers, and it opens doors, but it also distracts, vulgarizes and distorts (May, 1999). Given that coaching is a paid profession, money is definitely an unavoidable – even if often avoided – issue." (2019, p.134)

From personal experience, it is the potential to win or lose work which drives acting behaviour, though any descriptions of the organisational dynamic in relation to pay / fees / financial arrangements in this work are not significantly expressed. The subject of pay, remuneration and fees are also all but absent in coach training, ethical frameworks (which lightly touch upon *financial arrangements* as in the EMCC / ICF / AC Global Ethical Framework, 2021), or models of supervision. Some perspective on this 'pinch-point' in coaching may be gained through looking at other scenarios where businesses contract other services. A notorious example is that of financial audit, where businesses select auditors to perform necessary and legally required auditing of their financial accounts. The Enron scandal which came to light in 2001 highlighted the role of Arthur Anderson Consulting (then one of five big US Accounting firms), and their role in Enron's collapse. Companies have a choice of firms to work with in audit,

and the firms who receive the work hugely benefit financially from that appointment. The possibility for collusion, or for that financial benefit to impact on the behaviour of those auditors, is not only clear but so well demonstrated that these examples have become known almost universally. The potential for collusion, and the demonstrated collusion in Enron's case, has driven moves to legislate for mandatory audit firm rotation to avoid some of the inherent dangers in the scenario where there is a need to be selected, and a reward for being so (Cameran *et al*., 2005).

The provision of coaching services differs from the example of auditors in many ways: in scale, in professional accreditation required, in the range of choice available, and in necessity (coaching is not mandated); nonetheless, coaches, like accountants, need to be selected to secure paid work. Coaches need paid work to be coaching professionally, and so the potential drive to 'be' what the organisation wants and expects from coaches they contract is similarly high. Two main points emerge from these considerations. Firstly, the topic of pay and fees for coaches is not fully exposed, explored or common in coaching training, accreditation, frameworks, or supervision – which gives rise to the question: 'Why not?' In a field which is still striving for professionalisation, a basic requirement which defines a professional role (fees), and indeed defines EL (the wage / labour exchange), is not fully on the agenda.

In the context of EL, payment is a basis for the very definition of the term (Hochschild (1983) delineates EL from 'emotion work' on the basis of pay, and so it's lack of presence in discussion is conspicuous by absence. Secondly, the potential for both collusion and acting becomes very clear when we look to other examples of a dynamic in which services are given for a fee, such as financial auditing. In the literature, the extreme example of prostitution was also highlighted as an instance where a sex worker was simply playing an expected role in order to secure a financial payment. I am not suggesting that coaches are emotional prostitutes, but neither can we ignore the drivers which we see in other professions and fields, which have the potential to

distort and corrupt. On one hand we have evidence surfaced in this research around what the real work of coaching is seen to be by coaches, but on the other had we have the potential for coaches to collude, auditor-like, in the coaching relationships outside the room.

The issue is that articulating what coaching is and does (from the coach's perspective) requires a level of conversation which, in my own experience and that of participants in this research, does not happen. It does not happen because there is the potential for a mismatch of expectations, knowledge and experience of coaching, which may result in work being lost. Should a coach introduce their work as 'exploratory, existential, within a Gestalt framework' (as Claudine explains her work), it would not be language which most contractors of coaching would understand, and it is certainly not language upon which a return on investment is calculated. Both the coach and the organisational contractor should be aware of these dynamics, which are driven by money, as from both perspectives there is a very real danger that the relationship can be distorted. Coaches particularly need to pay attention to their presentation of self and their work in organisational contexts, and the role that coaching fees might play in how they (we) choose to do that. Until we deal with this unspoken issue, the profession itself will be open to justifiable criticism about the way we do business.

Organisational requirements may well have impacts on the profession of coaching, but perhaps not in the way that we might first conceive. What we may expect is that the coaching profession responds to the needs of organisations and adjusts and adapts accordingly. What we have seen in this research is that coaches commercially labour to receive coaching contracts and assignments, before going on to do what they see as the real work of coaching. This uneasy alliance may well have reputational impacts for coaching when we leave with the tap still dripping. The clear recommendation is that coaches seek work where they can be open about their approach, without capitulating to organisational demands or misplaced agendas and uses of coaching;

when this is the case, there is no commercial EL. From the organisational perspective, knowing that coaches collude and act in commercial EL in order to secure work may focus exploration and due diligence in coach selection. This knowledge may also enhance the conversation both ways in order to mitigate against the very real potential for confusion, lack of clarity, and failed outcomes. Contracting is key, but only when sincere actors are in play – otherwise we may fall into an oft-repeated scene with well-rehearsed dialogue, but little potential for a satisfying *denouement.*

In answer to the question 'Who are we as a profession?' in the context of EL, the only credible answer from the views represented in this research is: eclectic, diverse, largely undefined, largely unfettered, operating in a grey context of rules and governance, in an unclear and undesirable commercial exchange – but still labouring, in and out of the coaching room towards our personal perceptions of what 'good looks like' in coaching practice.

5.5 Summary

Having highlighted the EL term and its absence in coaching, I considered the impacts that this lack of attention has on coaches, and the opportunities for developing practice, aligning and comparing the developed model from this research with Holman's (2008) model in the service context. By doing so, I drew out the differences in the coaching context, and the emergence of organisational stakeholders as an important element in EL, including the role that the potential for fees and revenue may have in distorting relationships with those in organisations. Further to that, I discussed EL experienced in the coaching room and the potential for low EL based on a coach's use of self and disclosure in the dyad. The theme of *use of self* and its relationship to authenticity in the EL context accentuated the term 'authenticity' as a loosely used but dearly held concept for coaches - which requires further examination at an individual

level and beyond that. Next, I discussed the impacts of EL on coaches, and the potential deleterious effects of experiencing EL, and the concept of coach care and coach preservation in relation to EL. Finally, I discussed the coaching profession and the challenges seen with labelling coaching as such, including the elements related to EL which have an impact on who 'we' are, and how we are seen as a profession. The potential for EL to distort the interface between coach and organisation was discussed and recommendations made for coaches and organisations. In this discussion I highlight areas which are important for coaching practice at varying levels, from individual action to coaching *at large* - concerning professional bodies, educators, and the profession itself. In a contribution to EL theory I also introduced a term - *commercial* EL - to denote situations where EL is performed because of the potential for monetary exchange for services. This potential for commercial EL is seen both in the coaching scenario, and in wider contexts where this transaction also exists.

6 Conclusion

In conclusion to this research, I re-focus on the original intentions of this work, and describe how these were addressed and met. I will then consider the contribution made to new knowledge about coaching and EL theory, and the literature on which this may impact. Subsequently I will highlight and summarise implications for the practice of coaching from multiple perspectives. The areas which present as limitations of this work will then be identified and briefly discussed. Areas which arose from this research which prompt further consideration and potential areas for ongoing study will then be identified. Finally in this conclusion I will make some reflections on the process of research, my experience of it, and how the process has impacted on me as a researcher and practitioner.

6.1 Research focus and objectives, and how these were met

This research emerged from a personal experience of coaching, leading to an exploration of literature, and discussion with my academic supervisors, to find the concept of EL (Hochschild, 1983). The emergent question of 'What is EL in coaching?' was necessarily broad in a context where no EL research exists. The breadth of the research question of '*what is*…?' allowed for exploration which, whilst heavily informed by literature in other fields, also allowed for the particular circumstances of coaching and instances of EL to emerge. Using Conceptual Encounter as a methodology and creating a model of EL to which participants could respond, I used interviews and group discussions to build and iterate towards a final model of EL in coaching and create detail around the model from the words and contributions of participants. The emergent findings from this work were presented (after careful attention to the words used, and the creation of themes from coding and data analysis), and the most

pertinent were discussed further. The abundance of findings which emerged necessarily limited this discussion, and choices were made around what was *most relevant* to the answer the question of what EL is in coaching? Several areas of high relevance to EL and coaching, and EL itself, emerged as products of the research process. Some of these areas were highly predictable considering the well-researched experiences of emotional labourers in other contexts, and some were particular to the coaching context and so largely unexplored in the EL research field. One finding in particular around a *type* of EL, whilst found in the coaching context, has parallels in other fields but was as yet unnamed. I have named this *commercial* EL. I have illustrated that dynamic in the findings and discussion of this thesis, and I will refer specifically to this in considering contribution to theory. The other contributions, which are equally important to the research question and to coaching at large, will also be considered in summary and I will indicate what these findings contribute to both theory and practice in the following sections.

6.2 Contribution to literature

The general coaching literature has few references to the concept of EL, and no instances of empirical research using the concept of EL. This research connects the general coaching literature, as well as supervisory literature and coaching psychology, (and potentially general business literature), with the decades of EL literature. The key concepts of EL surfaced in this research have relevance to literature in the coaching field.

The presence of EL in the current research clearly provides initial recognition of the concept and represents the first time that EL has been specifically researched in coaching; as such, it is a novel contribution to coaching literature. Whilst I hope that more research follows in coaching with EL as the focus, this work provides a platform

for further exploration of EL in coaching contexts. This work contributes to the general coaching literature, and also to supervisory literature. The role of supervision is under-represented in the exploration and management of EL, and in defining individual coach behaviour and display rules. The emergence of this work contributes to that empty space. Research from a coaching psychology perspective displays an equal lack of acknowledgement of EL and, given the presence of psychologists in the general EL research field, this new exploration of EL in coaching may help to connect and develop literature with that specific focus.

This work also contributes to general business literature in terms of the utilisation of coaching and coaches within organisations. Several relevant key themes emerged, including the conceptualisation and use of coaching in organisations, the contracting process, and the commercial EL dynamic which has been shown to be in play within those scenarios.

The contribution to EL literature and theory is in the recognition and naming of 'commercial EL' – the EL performed by those who have a need to be selected, and who act to comply with organisational requirements at the point of contracting, with different intentions once 'hired'. This scenario, involving outside workers being contracted by organisations, is not unique to coaching, and this research contributes to the understanding of EL in similar scenarios; whether you are an auditor, an IT contractor, a contract cleaning company, or a coach – the need to be selected drives commercial EL.

6.3 Contribution to practice

The contribution to practice or, in some instances, the challenge to practice relates to four areas highlighted in the Discussion chapter of this thesis, which were: the term

itself (EL) in coaching, the self of the coach and authenticity, impacts and effects, and considering 'who we are' as a profession (plainly inherent in that question is my positionality as part of the 'we'). It is important to highlight those for whom this work should have impact and utility.

The following table names those for whom this work should have significance, what the significance is, and the actions they might take in response.

Figure 11: Significance and potential actions for coaches and others

Significance	Potential actions in response	Coaches	Supervisors	Trainers	Accreditors / Prof. Orgs	Organisational Contractors of coaching
EL is all but absent in coaching language, and mainly unrecognised in coaching						
	Consider the term itself in relation to practice	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Recognise where acting happens in and around coaching	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Re-consider what authenticity means in coaching	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Consider the use of self in coaching	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Re-evaluate position in regard to coaching rules	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Explore these areas in a supervisory context	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Understand the role of EL in coach care	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Understand the role of EL in coach 'fit'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

What is clear from this table is the potential implications that this research can have for coaching practice and coaching approaches across a range of interested parties. Whilst the individual actions of those within each group identified need much further thought and consideration, recognition is the first step. It may be, for example, that once professional associations review this work they may be able to make meaningful changes to the content of their frameworks of ethics and accreditation. The practical implications for individual coaches and supervisors of coaching are clearly a call to, firstly, understand the EL term and then to reflect on what that means for their clarity of rule derivation, rule adherence, display rules, surface acting and deep acting in coaching. Upon reflection, I would hope that coaches will be enabled to bring their practice closer to their intentions.

This work has asked what EL is in coaching. The potential reverberations are high for the recognition and management of EL at the micro level of the coach, the meso level of supervisors, trainers and contractors of coaching, and at the macro level of professional organisations for the understanding and representation of the coaching profession at large.

6.4 Limitations of this study

The selection of a methodology appropriate to answer a research question generates opportunities and implications. The choice of Conceptual Encounter in this research allowed me to bring my experience of coaching to the process, but with that experience also comes bias, perceptual filtering, preconception and the limitation of being a human being in the process. I have described my efforts towards using that position to further the research, and how I have endeavoured to remain open and receptive – but that does not fully mitigate for my positionality. This will have made an impact at every stage of this work: the formation of the research question, literature review, choice of methodology and method, the development of the model, interviews and group discussions led, findings seen, and discussions had. My intention is that my presence is benign and helpful, open and receptive, and in service of seeking knowledge – but intention is limited by my own fallibility. My presence and positionality within the research extend to what is not said as well as what is. The questions not asked explicitly (for example around money drivers, or around more rich descriptions of what EL *feels like* for coaches) influenced these findings.

The research interviews themselves created a good deal of data, and as a consequence there were choices made about what to present in the findings in

consideration of the research question; the same positionality as I have described may have affected those choices, and the subsequent discussion. The same point relates to the analysis and coding of the data itself. Whilst all reasonable steps were taken to remain objective, and to use another coder to view one transcript as a check on my objectivity, it is impossible to remove myself from the research, particularly in a methodology which utilises my prior knowledge and experience. My presence in the research and the potential to influence participants' thoughts and views is noted, and also a necessary part of guiding focus and attention onto the central question of the research.

Issues of participant memory also present as limitations in this work. It is quite possible that the reconstruction of events from memory has distorted participants' reports. An additional complexity in this research is the introduction of an unfamiliar concept, and the potential for re-attribution of events after the fact. This, though, is also a function of reflective practice.

Whilst the number of participants in this research (14) is certainly in line with recent conceptual encounter practice (e.g. Noon, 2019), and also with other methodologies in qualitative research where numbers of participants are low in comparison with quantitative methods, that number may be seen as a limitation. De Rivera (1981) defines the finish point of research as when the conceptual model has elegance (rather than stating an ideal number of participants in research). Elegance is a subjective idea; the model can be said to have been refined, even if it has not reached everyone's idea of elegance.

6.5 Suggestions for future research

With each discovery that is made through research, further questions then present themselves – and this was certainly the case as findings were formed in this study. The areas in which further research would enhance our understanding of EL in coaching (and beyond) are the qualities and attributes of coaches and their coaching style in relation to EL, coach care, coaching contexts and commercial EL.

An implication of the weak connection between published 'rules' for the profession and professional practice (whether that be in competence or ethics) is that practitioners treat these loosely and rely more on a personal sense of the rules and display rules in the profession. Part of this issue is related to the way in which frameworks are presented to coaches and others. In ethical frameworks and those describing competencies, there is an absence of connection to the principles, research, or evidence behind each individual part of the framework. When a framework of competence calls for a specific behavioural indicator, from where has this been derived? The EMCC (2021) framework of competence says:

> "The purpose of the competence framework is to provide a description of a mentor/coach at four distinct levels of development in order to help mentors/coaches understand their level of development and Training Providers evaluate the effectiveness of their programmes through the mentor/coaching performance of their students. The competence indicators are examples of behaviours or principles of the coaching profession that meet the eight competence categories." (2021)

However, is not explicit or obvious where any of these individual competencies or the overall competency categories emerge from. Neither is there any research which links use of these competencies with evidence or outcomes of coaching (does being adherent to, or being seeing as exemplary, in EMCC competencies make for 'better'

coaching?). The professional bodies need to be more explicit about their rule derivation, in order that these might be further evaluated and researched by others. Failure to do this will leave an unanswered question when coaches ask “who says?” in response to the rules. Part of this research was around perceptions of rules and rule derivation for coaches, but a step back from that is the consideration of both the presentation and the authority of those rules themselves. Research is overdue on the frameworks themselves, and the presentation of the frameworks should be thoughtfully considered in order that coaches might gain value from them, rather than the frameworks and the bodies being seen as the ‘coaching police’. If the origination of and research behind frameworks of practice and competence were more present and overt, at the very least coaches would be able to make some judgements around the quality or strength of the evidence; as it stands, the rationale is obscure and unexamined, and there are few compelling reasons for coaches to pay closer notice and attention to them.

Theoretical genres of practice, and specifically Gestalt coaching, was identified as a way in which the effects of EL might be avoided in the coaching dyad. Further examination of all the theoretic genres of coaching might expose some other relationships with EL which this research was not able to discern, and research which explored those elements would be most welcome.

Coaching style was identified as important in the experience of EL for coaches and in the degree to which they experienced EL. It would also be useful to extend this understanding by examining personality, social style, and perhaps emotional intelligence in coaches to see whether other elements might predict, contribute to, or protect coaches from EL. Some embryonic work on personality exists in the overall canon of EL literature, so coach-specific research would enable particular insights to be applied to the context of coaching. In addition, the extent to which social norms impact on coaching and EL was hinted at by this research, but not dealt with in any

meaningful way; further research around social, conversational and transactional norms may be of high interest to study, and if indeed societal norms do play out in coaching, then what happens in EL terms when the norms change – internationally and cross culturally?

Coach maturity was identified by some participants as meaningful in the experience of EL, particularly around the confidence to drift away from, or break, 'the rules', and where trainees report working very hard in coaching to appear competent and confident. Whilst not enough of that idea was represented for this to emerge as a full theme, it was present. Further, the research participants were mature in age and coaching experience, and so it would be interesting to see if researching new entrants to coaching, or those with less experience, might reveal differing experiences of EL (particularly in relation to credibility).

Coach care and negative outcomes for coaches have received some recent attention, as described in Shermuly's work (2019) and by others, but this element of coaching practice is under-developed. A call for more research in that area in general, though, may not enhance our understanding of EL in coaching. If the seminal work by those such as Shermuly and Bachkirova (2016) could also encompass the elements of EL described within this research, then both the quantitative and qualitative understanding of EL in coaching could be enhanced significantly in service of the care and preservation of coaches.

An important area which also calls for further research is related to contexts. The research work here focusses on external coaches who work with those internal to organisations, but that is not the only context for coaching. Internal coaches may have different drivers and experiences of EL, and indeed may not be subject to commercial EL in the same way as external coaches. This internal context (where coaches are employed by the organisations in which they coach) is an area where we should seek

further insight through research; it is a land of both potential danger and opportunity, populated by different drivers of norm behaviour, and in order to understand this landscape we need more insight into internal coaching.

The idea of commercial EL itself, which I have named, needs to be researched in the coaching context and beyond. Do others observe the dynamics at play which I have drawn from my own and participants' experiences in this research, in organisational coaching contracting and other similar circumstances? More research to either support or oppose this idea will add richness to the finding and both qualitative and quantitative research would be welcomed in this area in the coaching field and beyond.

Demonstrably there is much more to be understood about EL in the coaching context, and in contribution to the theory of EL itself in other areas of research.

6.6 Reflections on the impact of this research on me

When entering into this professional doctorate programme at Oxford Brookes University I had some ideas about where I wanted to spend the next few years of my attention. The idea of 'state' in coaching was highly appealing, and through the programme those ideas focussed and concentrated on the area of EL. This can either be described as a happy accident, or the confluence of several streams of thought coming together at once. It was highly coincidental that EL was so relevant to my Director of Studies and her interest areas – and so the confluence grew, from tributaries to streams to rivers. I describe this process because the experience of coming to my subject was a big 'moment' for me; and that I had no real prior knowledge of the area of EL made it even more tantalising – the chance to learn and get deeply into something new, in a practical area where I had high levels of experience and

education, was a heady mix. What I failed to appreciate at the time was the impact that the EL topic would have on my views, experience, and practice of coaching.

I have felt changed by this research, firstly as a coach in my work. As my knowledge of EL increased, I began to notice the elements of my practice with individuals and organisations which related to EL. After my awareness was raised and I adopted an EL lens, that generated a responsibility in me to reflect on my way of being as a coach, on EL specifically, and in my interactions with those who have the power to award coaching work within organisations. All of the elements that I was researching started to have prominence in my own practice. Some of those reflections inform the writing within this thesis, as I made use of my realisation of my ways of being, and sometimes these reflections required confession (for example in the collusion I see in myself with corporate 'buyers' of coaching, or the acting done within the room of coaching). They were confessions that I was prepared to make and learning that I was (and am) prepared to do. I am much more cognisant, aware and reflexive in my behaviour as a coach after these experiences – more examining and inquiring about my behaviour, specifically in the areas of acting, intention towards authenticity, and the distorting influence that money has on me. I am more conscious of what I am holding in the moment with coachees – what I am not saying, and why? This in itself has been transformative in my practice. I have chosen to externalise thoughts and feelings where I would not have done so before, and I have chosen to bring more of my whole self to my relationships. Coincidentally or otherwise, I described my coaching during the time of the programme to my professional supervisor as being the best it has been and reaching a new level for me. I attribute this to the research that I have done, the personal reflection which has ensued, and the behavioural changes that have followed.

In terms of commercial EL I have probably had less *transformative* experiences, but I am much more mindful of what is happening in meetings with organisations and

stakeholders; I do not yet feel ready for either fully confronting the unspoken elements of commercial EL or opting out. It is entirely true that my best self does one or the other – but it is also good to know where I can grow in my practice. The element of seeking good fit, where I can do my best work, is still very much front of mind – but as yet unresolved. In that unresolvedness is the crux of the issue for others, too; those who are willing and able to pay for coaching are sometimes not those for who we would choose to work for, if we had the luxury of choice. The ethical element of coaching has come to the fore in several ways in this research – and in this final way. Where is my best work best employed? This question is ethical, existential, and difficult. The question is relevant to who I 'am', to EL, and to fit.

This research has also impacted on me personally in terms of stretching my thinking in many other ways - particularly in experiencing both the delight and the discomfort of having to form and account for my thoughts and represent the thoughts of others. This extends to tough questions such as my positionality in the research and what could be considered as bias, the nature of evidence, the research process itself (which as a novice requires constant stretch) and even my motivations for doing the doctorate in the first place. This is an arduous process, rightly so, and at times has been a stretch to my limits – but I have enjoyed that space of difficulty. I have found pleasure in the space of toughness, and getting it wrong, and not knowing what to do – and in some ways this mirrors my practical coaching life. Instinctively I know that this is the space out of which growth comes, and that has absolutely been my experience in this work. My enthusiasm for the question, the topic, and for the process of research and thesis writing has not waned even in the face of difficulty; my motivation to contribute has been galvanising and sustaining.

The process of 'data collection' (which seems a very impersonal way to describe it) was a high point of the research in several ways. Firstly, it is part of the process of research in which (in this case) I was with others in conversation and dialogue, which

I enjoy. This was in contrast to some of the solitary parts of research and allowed me to feel part a community, or multiple communities: one related to seeking insight into the research question, and beyond that a wider coaching community. The commonality that was felt between us around many areas was affirming, and the challenge that it provided gave interest and richness to the questions that we were asking. Finding that some of my experiences were also experienced by others - sometimes in similar ways and sometimes in dissimilar ways, around EL - was fascinating to be part of and has opened up my awareness to the variety of experiences of others, which feels like personal and professional growth.

In summary, this research has had a profound impact on me as a practising coach, and as one who is a visitor to academia; that there is so much yet to know about myself in my coaching context, and the context itself, is my motivation for 'keeping going'. The chance to contribute to something *for us all* has been exciting, motivating, a responsibility, and a privilege.

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Appendix A – Interview and focus group schedule

What energises you in coaching, why do you coach (motivation)?		
Introductory Questions	**Specific EL Questions**	**'Response to Model' questions**
What exhausts you / or makes you tired in coaching? – can you think of specific example or instance?	Is there a way that coaches are 'supposed' to behave (rules)? And can you think of a time when that was challenging for you?	What elements of this model of Emotional Labour in coaching resonate?
Are there times when you are 'going through the motions?" – can you think of a time when that was the case?	Where do the expectations on your role come from? – is there a time when that was made explicit? (Coaching rules, display rules)	What don't you recognise?
What are the times when coaching seems hard, and you have had to keep control of your emotions? – is there something you can talk me through?	Can you recall an example of where you were 'feigning' emotions (surface acting) to fit the situation in coaching?	What is missing?
	Can you think of a time when you had to 'convince yourself' of the right way to behave in coaching? (deep acting)	How can we adapt this model to more accurately reflect our time together -and the things we have discussed?
	What impact does either 'feigning' (explain) or 'feeling' (explain) have on you as a coach. Specific examples would help.	
	Do you feel authentic when you display one thing outwardly, but feel another inwardly in coaching? With examples.	
	In an example already discussed can we think about:	
	What that did to your energy?	
	What that did to your identity as a coach?	
	What impacts did this have?	
	Have you ever taken anything approaching this topic to Supervision – if so, what?	

Overall framing: I am looking for your descriptions of specific examples, or concrete experiences rather than views or opinions. So, I will be asking you to recall those examples.

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

What is Emotional labour in Coaching?

Robert Kemp, Student researcher Doctor of Coaching & Mentoring (DCaM)
rob.kemp-2018@brookes.ac.uk
(07881) 977292

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason. ☐
3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐
4. I understand that the interview will be audio-recorded ☐

Please initial box

	Yes	No
5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications	☐	☐

Name of Participant	Date	Signature

Name of Researcher	Date	Signature
R. M. Kemp	08/04/2020	

FOCUS GROUP CONSENT FORM

What is Emotional labour in Coaching?

Robert Kemp, Student researcher Doctor of Coaching & Mentoring (DCaM)
rob.kemp-2018@brookes.ac.uk
(07881) 977292

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason. ☐
3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐
4. I understand that the interview will be audio-recorded ☐

Please initial box

	Yes	No
5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications	☐	☐

Name of Participant	Date	Signature

Name of Researcher	Date	Signature
R. M. Kemp	08/04/2020	

Rob Kemp
Principal Coach, Purple Patch Coaching
1yr •

Calling all Coaches and Coach Supervisors on the LinkedIn network, I am seeking participants for my doctoral research project at Oxford Brookes. My research area is 'Emotional Labour'. Whilst there is a great deal of research on the general topic, there is no specific research in the coaching field – which is the reason for the research.

I need 6-8 Coaches for 1:1 interview - which will last around an hour and a half (conducted virtually).

I am also going to run two focus groups, (5-8 participants), one exclusively with Coaches and another exclusively with Supervisors of Coaching. These will take around two hours and will be held virtually.

The experience which would make you suitable for this research is detailed here:

· For coaches - Five years + of coaching experience (you may have qualifications or accreditations, but experience is the most important element here).
· Ability to articulate your coaching experience and engage in discussion.
· For Supervisors, at least two years of supervision practice in addition to coaching experience.

If you have an interest in exploring emotional labour in coaching – please get in touch!

#coaching #supervision #supervisors #research #emotionallabour

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Codebook

Nodes

Name	Description	Files	References
Authentic being		7	13
Being in 'sync'		1	5
Coach is energised - coach sees value		8	15
Deeper level work		2	3
Low EL		2	3
Not surface or process		3	3
Use-of-self		6	15
Emotional Labour		9	20
Aesthetic labour		2	2
Challenges to authenticity		7	14
Coach being self-critical		3	10
Coach maturity		2	3
Coaching rules		8	43
Confidentiality & EL		3	7
Covid 19		1	4
DA		4	9
Derogatory thoughts about coachee		4	8
Difficult people & low liking		5	15

Name	Description	Files	References
Display rules		9	17
Ends up in Supervision		4	4
Existential angst		2	3
Formulaic & processy		3	5
Goal orientation, and goal achievement		3	6
Hard work and tiring		7	27
Holding thoughts because of perceived coachee state		2	2
Inauthenticity		6	12
Irritation - frustration		8	18
Low coachee engagement		4	6
Misunderstanding about what coaching 'is'		4	12
Not ready for coaching		2	4
Professional demeanour		9	29
SA		7	15
Stage of relationship		2	7
Stakeholders & EL		9	39
General emotion (not EL)		6	18
Model creation		7	22
Mask (and SA DA)		7	13

Privacy notice for research participants

This privacy notice provides information on how Oxford Brookes University collects and uses your personal information when you take part in one of our research projects. Please refer to the research participant information sheet for further details about the study and what information will be collected about you and how it will be used.

Oxford Brookes University (OBU) will usually be the Data Controller of any data that you supply for this research. This means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The exception to this is joint research projects where you would be informed on the participant information sheet as to the other partner institution or institutions. This means that they will make the decisions on how your data is used and for what reasons. You can contact the University's Information Management Team on 01865 485420 or email info.sec@brookes.ac.uk.

Why do we need your data?
To conduct research on Emotional Labour in Coaching.

OBUs legal basis for collecting this data is:
- You are consenting to providing it to us; and / or,
- Processing is necessary for the performance of a task in the public interest such as research

What type of data will Oxford Brookes University use?
Transcripts of the spoken word from either one to one interviews or Focus Group participation.

Who will OBU share your data with?
Google Drive under the University policy for data.
Office productivity software, such as internal University email, and Microsoft Office Products.
NVivo research software (QSR Software) under University licence

Will OBU transfer my data outside of the UK?
No

What rights do I have regarding my data that OBU holds?
- You have the right to be informed about what data will be collected and how this will be used
- You have the right of access to your data
- You have the right to correct data if it is wrong
- You have the right to ask for your data to be deleted
- You have the right to restrict use of the data we hold about you
- You have the right to data portability
- You have the right to object to the university using your data
- You have rights in relation to using your data in automated decision making and profiling.

Where did OBU source my data from?
Your data is self-generated from interview or Focus Group under consent.

Are there any consequences of not providing the requested data?
There are no consequences of not providing data for this research. It is purely voluntary.

Will there be any automated decision making using my data?
There will be no use of automated decision making in scope of UK Data Protection and Privacy legislation."

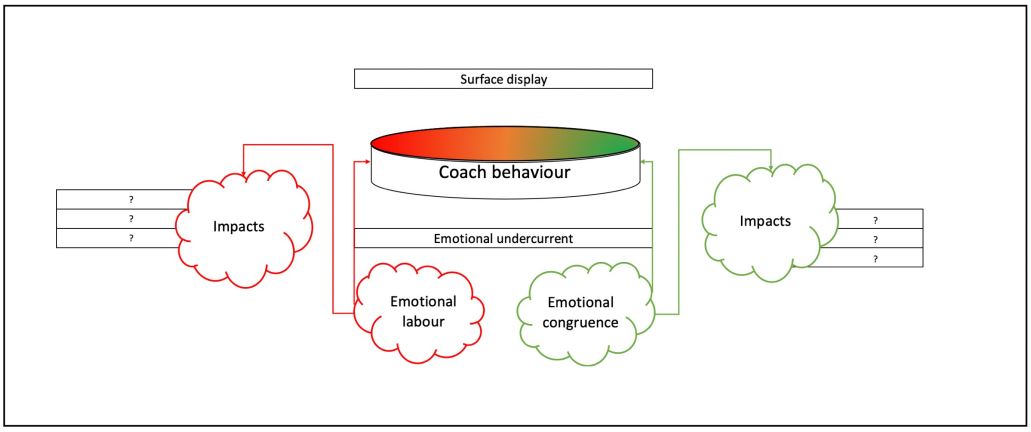
How long will OBU keep your data?
In line with Oxford Brookes policies data generated in the course of research must be kept securely in paper or electronic form for a period of time in accordance with the research funder or University policy.

Who can I contact if I have concerns?

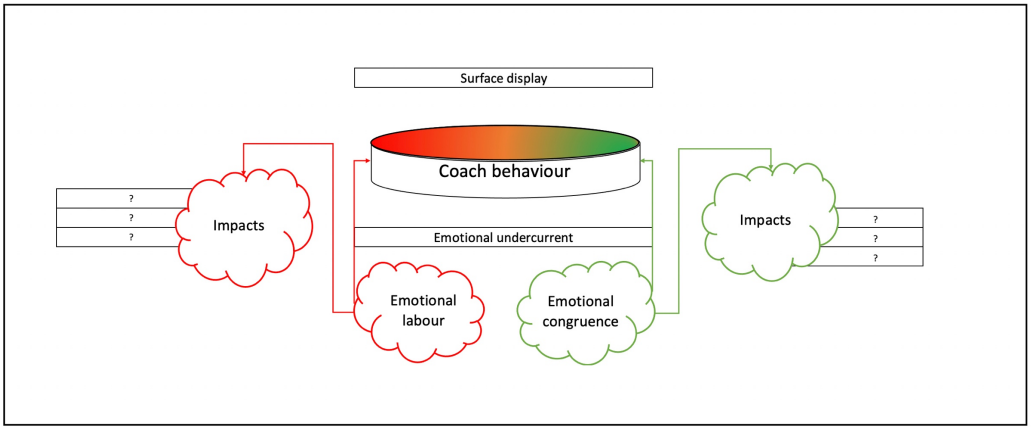
In the event of any questions about the research study, please contact the researchers in the first instance (contact details in the study participant information sheet). If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee at ethics@brookes.ac.uk. For further details about information security contact the Data Protection Officer at: brookesdpo@brookes.ac.uk or the Information Management team on info.sec@brookes.ac.uk

Appendix G – Model iterations from interviews and focus group

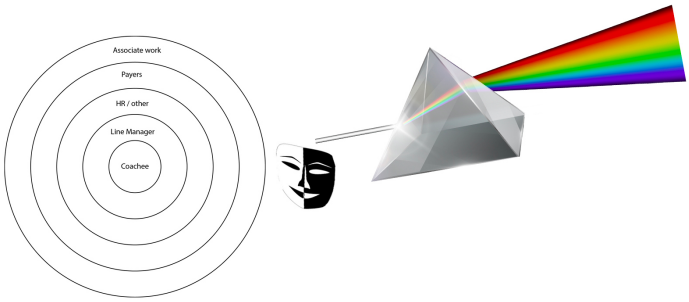
Initial model



First exposure (no change)



Second iteration



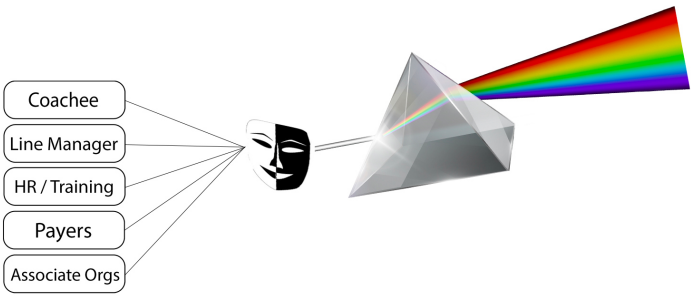
Low Emotional Labour — Scale Line — High Emotional Labour

Energising	De-energising
Being in sync	Something 'on my mind'
Dancing together	Low engagement
In Flow	Low trust
Responding	Low honesty
Listening	Unclear agendas
Making a difference	Low commitment
Authentic	Not making changes
Nothing to hide	Unwilling to be vulnerable
Able to be open	High focus on measures
Clear about confidentiality	Organisational agenda

Impacts

+ve for coach	-ve for coach
Affirming	Questioning purpose
Enjoyable	Questioning personal effectiveness
Valuable	Questioning context
Sustainable	Stressful
	Tiring
	Unsustainable

Third iteration



Low Emotional Labour — Scale Line — High Emotional Labour

Energising	De-energising
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Dancing together	Low engagement
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Responding	Low honesty
Listening	Unclear agendas
Making a difference	Low commitment
Authentic	Not making changes
Nothing to hide	Unwilling to be vulnerable
Able to be open	High focus on measures
Clear about confidentiality	Organisational agenda

Impacts

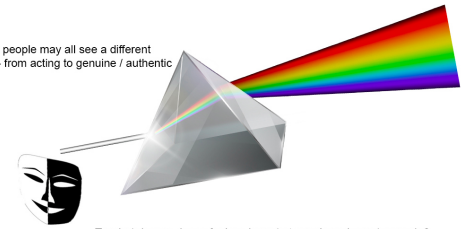
+ve for coach	-ve for coach
Affirming	Questioning purpose
Enjoyable	Questioning personal effectiveness
Valuable	Questioning context
Sustainable	Stressful
	or frustrating
	Not enjoyable!
	De-motivating
	Tiring
	Unsustainable

Supervision?

Fourth iteration

Coachees & stakeholders

These people may all see a different 'face' - from acting to genuine / authentic



Low Emotional Labour — Scale Line — High Emotional Labour

Energising	De-energising
Being in sync	Something 'on my mind'
Dancing together	Low engagement
In Flow	Low trust
Responding	Low honesty
Listening	Unclear agendas
Making a difference	Low commitment
Authentic	Not making changes
Nothing to hide	Unwilling to be vulnerable
Able to be open	High focus on measures
Clear about confidentiality	Organisational agenda

Impacts

+ve for coach	-ve for coach
Affirming	Questioning purpose
Enjoyable	Questioning personal effectiveness
Valuable	Questioning context
Sustainable	Stressful ???? or frustrating! Grrr.
	Not enjoyable!
	De-motivating
	Tiring
	Unsustainable

To what degree do we feel we have to 'prove' oursleves to people?
- at the outset of coaching, and those we don't relate to immediately.
- What about other stakeholders?? - what does proving yourself mean?

How practiced are we at 'acting' - based on the roles that we've done...?

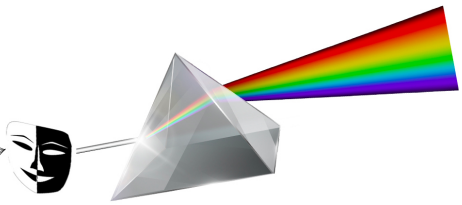
Supervision?

"Bang - coaching mode!" - putting my concerns, my life to one side, coachee as focus of attention.

Fifth iteration

Stages of the coaching process?
Stages in the coaching realtionship?

- Coachee
- Line Manager
- HR / Training
- Payers
- Associate Orgs



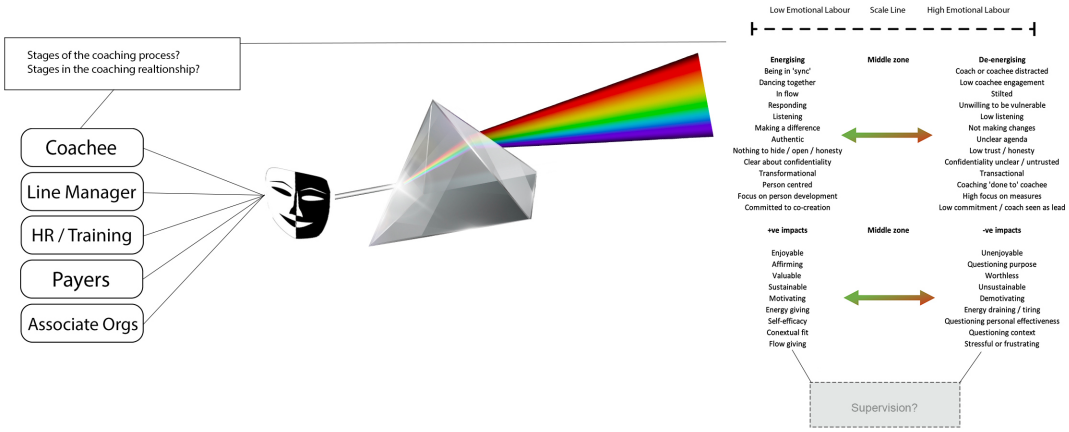
Low Emotional Labour — Scale Line — High Emotional Labour

Energising	Middle zone	De-energising
Being in 'sync'		Coach or coachee distracted
Dancing together		Low coachee engagement
In flow		Stilted
Responding		Unwilling to be vulnerable
Listening		Low listening
Making a difference		Not making changes
Authentic		Unclear agenda
Nothing to hide / open / honesty		Low trust / honesty
Clear about confidentiality		Confidentiality unclear / untrusted
Transformational		Transactional
Person centred		Coaching 'done to' coachee
Focus on person development		High focus on measures
Committed to co-creation		Low commitment / coach seen as lead

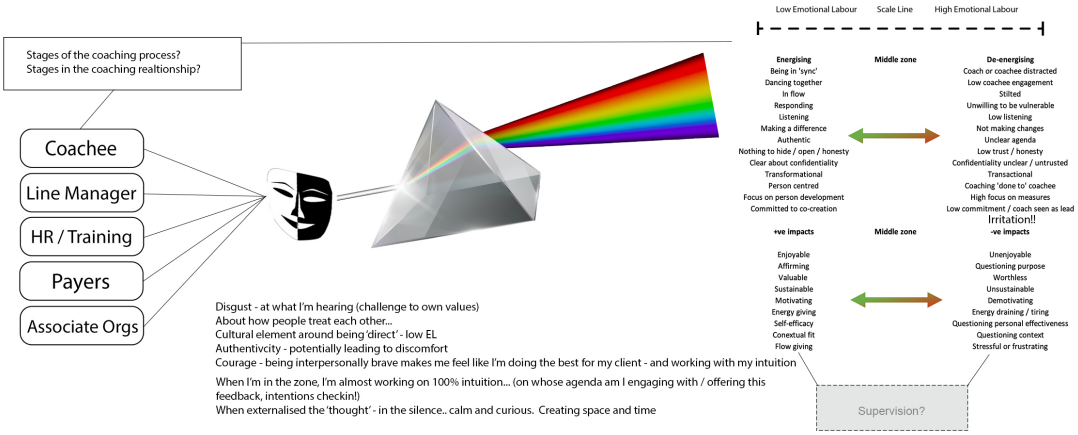
+ve impacts	Middle zone	-ve impacts
Enjoyable		Unenjoyable
Affirming		Questioning purpose
Valuable		Worthless
Sustainable		Unsustainable
Motivating		Demotivating
Energy giving		Energy draining / tiring
Self-efficacy		Questioning personal effectiveness
Conextual fit		Questioning context
Flow giving		Stressful or frustrating

Supervision?

Sixth iteration



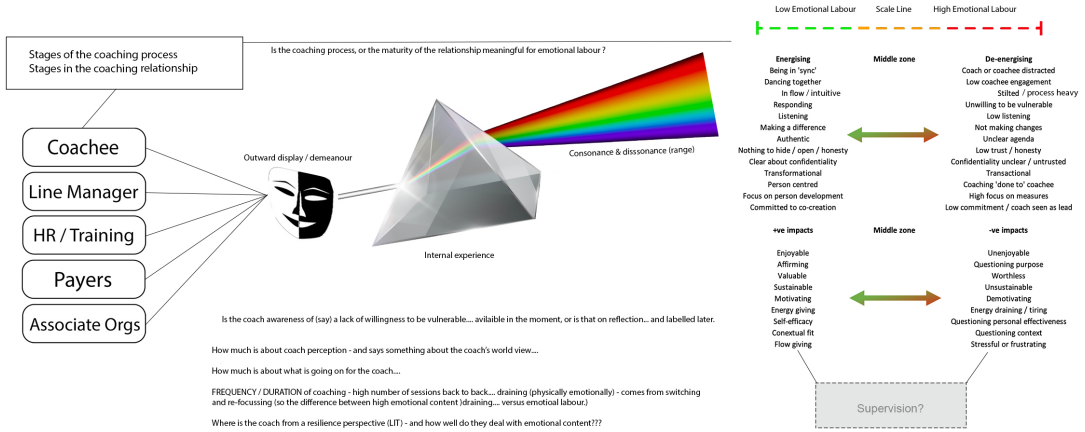
Seventh iteration



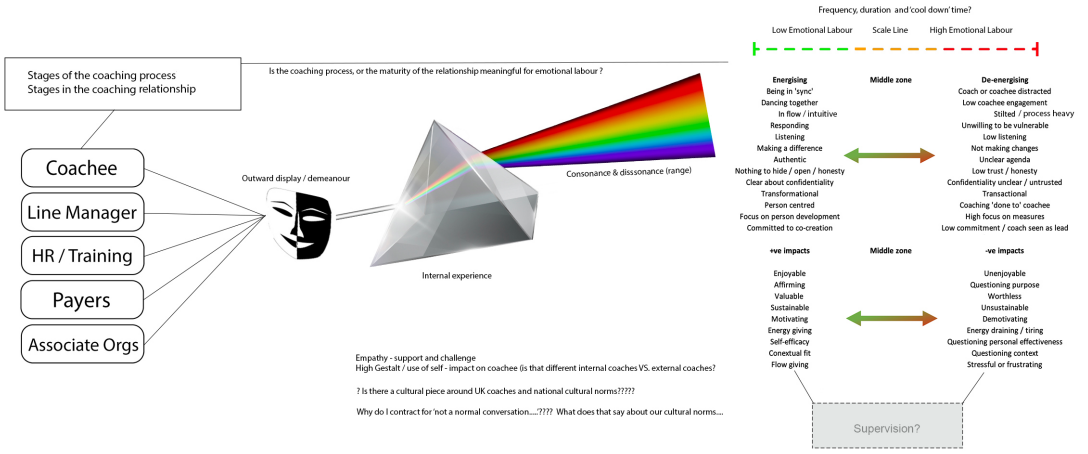
Disgust - at what I'm hearing (challenge to own values)
About how people treat each other...
Cultural element around being 'direct' - low EL
Authentivcity - potentially leading to discomfort
Courage - being interpersonally brave makes me feel like I'm doing the best for my client - and working with my intuition

When I'm in the zone, I'm almost working on 100% intuition... (on whose agenda am I engaging with / offering this feedback, intentions checkin!)
When externalised the 'thought' - in the silence.. calm and curious. Creating space and time

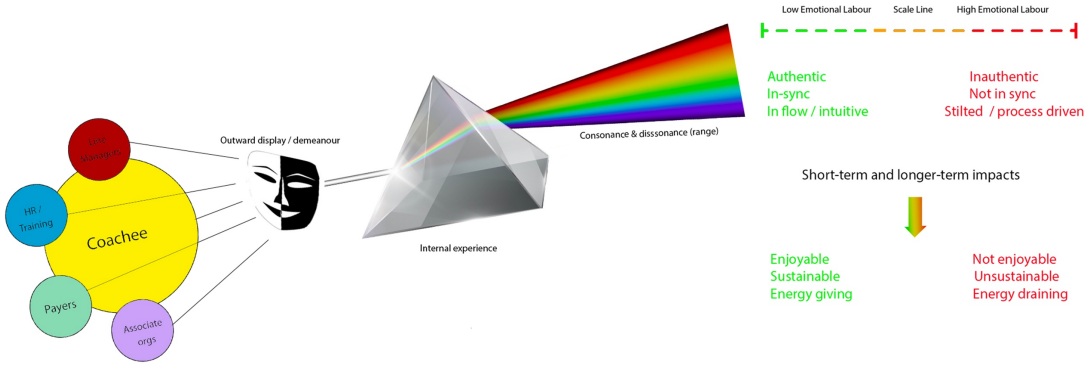
Eighth iteration



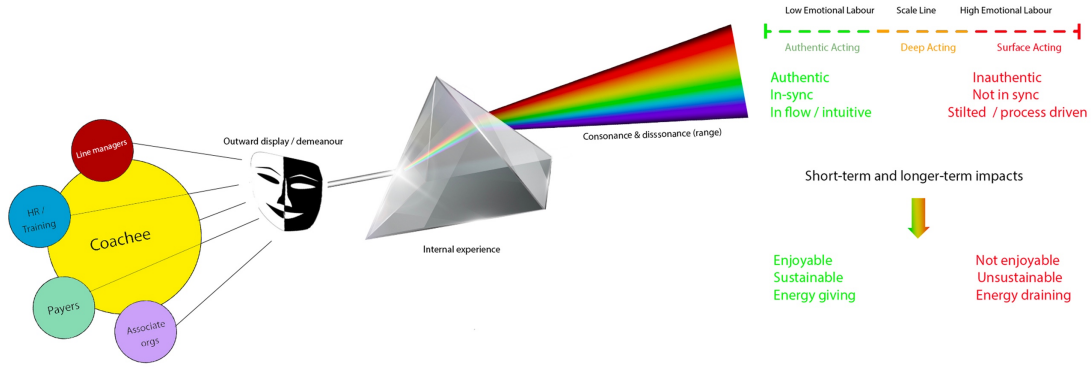
Ninth iteration



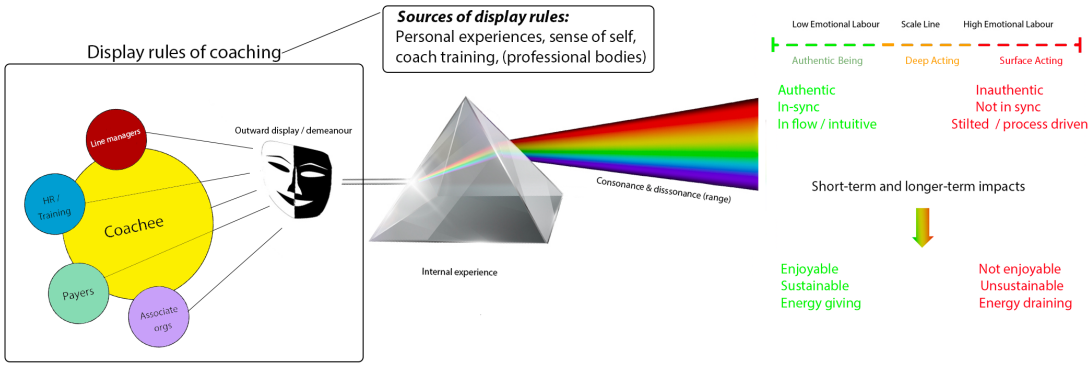
Tenth iteration



Eleventh iteration



Final additions to the model post interviews, data analysis, and findings



1 Interview ('Crystal') 30-04-2020

RK: So, this interview is about emotional labour, which we'll get into a little bit more in a while. But before we kind of dive into that, I was interested in in what are the things that give you energy about coaching. So, kind of - why do you do coaching what energises you about it?

C: I think there's something around being in sync with my coachee. Which inevitably can't happen in the first session or two. So, for me, the real energy, I think, is there a couple of sessions in when the rapport is there, and the trust is there. When I know really what we're doing, because actually sometimes you don't really know when you start out on a coaching assignment until you get going.

C: So, when I know what we're doing so it's also a confidence piece that gives me energy, probably.

C: So, you know, I know what we're doing. I feel quite confident. I feel confident. I've got that trust. We got a rapport. We're in sync.

C: And when they respond to being in sync thing is really important, they're really responding to me.

C: They're really with me, they're not just slightly paying lip service, which can happen that goes back to, you know, how the coaching kicked off, whether it is really something they wanted or was forced on them or whatever. But when I feel really energised, we are in sync. We're working properly together. They are with me. They're really engaged and they're making changes. So, there's something too about I'm getting energy from knowing that I'm making a difference. That's probably the biggest thing now I talk it through.

C: And then again, that can't happen in the first session or two apart from the holding space and then letting them get things out and all that good stuff you can do and you haven't really got going yet.

C: And they can't really make big changes in the first session or two.

RK: And that being in sync thing. What what's that about? Well, how does being. How do you know being in sync is happening?

C: Because we're kind of dancing together.

C: That's the image that has just come to mind. We we're aligned. And even when we're not aligned and they're questioning something or I'm not understanding what they're saying, we're just working in this. We're working together. They're really listening. I'm really listening to them. I'm adjusting and maybe challenging myself on what I thought we might be doing in that session. Because they're saying something else. So, I'm really listening. They're really listening.

C: And we're having a deeper level conversation, we're really getting to something crucial. So, we're not doing surface level stuff.

C: …and I don't know if that's one of your questions, but how do I know that I know when I leave the session? What does that mean? Feeling energised? I leave the session.

C: If I can tell from the notes I've written sometimes, too, if I've had it, I try and write notes as quick as I can afterwards. Sometimes, inevitably it's on the train, on the way home when I'm tired. But I can tell, even looking at my notes, the sessions where I thought really energized, they just feel written quickly and they flow and they're full of detail and something different about them too. When I don't have energy from.

RK: Yeah. Which is my next question really. And so, you know, the things that kind of drain you or make you tired and coaching, I'm guessing a lot of that is about the opposite of what you've just described.

C: Probably.

C: Yeah, I guess there's also. Yes. So all of that there must be times when I am also tired or not feeling great or have got something on my mind that is sort of low level there. And I'm pretty good, as you will be, at putting that aside. So that I'm in the moment. Definitely been times when I've you know, I've talked about it when I've gone into a session and I've sort of thought, right, here we go. I can't think of an example, but something tricky is going on at home or I'm just not feeling well because I'm fighting something or whatever it might be. You know, it's pretty rare, but there are times when just deeply knackered and I really feel as a gathering of here we go. But interestingly, I don't know if I ever feel that with the people I feel like I'm really in sync with...

RK: So that that thing of. Like the opposite of energy. So, feeling not in sync, or deep listening isn't going on. Or that they're not being responsive.

C: Yeah.

RK: Like how what is your response to that? I mean, how do you how do you work with that, with kind of knowing that things aren't so perfect?

C: Erm, it's hard. I don't like it. I feel more empty. I feel that my batteries are empty. I feel like I'm scrabbling around inside even when they're talking to me a bit thinking, okay, right. Shit, what are we doing? What are we going to do next? Where are we going? Oh, yeah. I need to ask this and then I've got something in my head and I quickly write a note remember to ask about this, remember to take it here. But it feels like a real effort. I'm working

much harder inside. And then, of course, I'm not listening to them in the same way. And I'm not being as natural as I would be.

RK: Yeah.

C: And I feel flat and then I've got the critical voice in me. This isn't good. I wonder what they're experiencing. They must think this is not good. They're looking at the clock. Maybe, you know, either real or not real assumptions that are going on in my head. I may be looking at the clock and I may sometimes be when we joked about this but thinking about my or what I've got to do when I get home or whatever. And then there's a whole cycle of berating myself for that and trying to get back in. It feels like I got sort of an image of, you know, when we're in sync, we're dancing together. When it's not happening, I'm in and out. In and out. In and out. And then berating myself and then trying to get back in again. And it feels. And God, almost as I talk about it, I have a sense of almost panic in my in my throat, on my neck. It's just so disjointed and so hard.

RK: And what does that do to you? How does that impact on the view of yourself as coach?

C: Oh, Awful. I mean, the whole spiral of critical. God, this is your, not why you're not very good at this. I think it's they can't be experiencing this as any good. You're gonna have to work really hard to make it better. And then and then, of course, you know. OK. Put yourself back sometimes. It's not about you why you're feeling this what's going on. Because they're not really responding. And let's get back to them quickly. Of course, my initial thoughts are, what am I not doing?

RK: I recognise that intimately. Do you, do you have the conversation you had about - is this thing that I do a real thing - is, you know...?

C: Yes, All the time! So, one thing when I was preparing this, I was thinking about, of course, about particular clients and if and when it is appropriate to go into detail. But generally, I was thinking to the…

C: The effort in the first session, I had one the other day and it was remote that I won a client through a chemistry meeting since all of this kicked off. So, I had the chemistry meeting remotely. Anyway, he's in Boston. So ironically, it was all going to be remote. And then I had the first session last week with him and I, I remember I went downstairs and said to Bruce, I'm really tired, the first sessions with a client, always really tiring. And I remember that explaining that to him. And so that thing around - is this thing I do this job. I do actually really a job? It's always in my mind and it's ever present in the first sessions because I'm thinking, they're thinking what is this coaching thing? Or this just feels like a bit of a discussion. And she's just asking me about, you know, in that first session your kind of trying to gather everything really aren't you. She's just asking me lots of stuff. So, I'm not getting the wow impact of coaching these are the assumptions I'm making. I'm not getting the wow impact of coaching. It's quite nice to talk through that. So, I'm thinking all of that and I'm working really hard against that.

RK: Yeah, I empathize. I remember reading. - I don't think it was DeHaan himself, but it was someone talking about DeHaan… who talks about existential angst for coaches and immediately it was almost top of, you know, top of mind, existential angst. Is this the real thing, you know? And even if it is, am I any good at it, you know? And so, in those first sessions where were you working really hard and you might be experiencing some of that stuff? I mean, what do you as coach look like? Because I guess you don't look like someone who's like not quite sure what I'm doing here or why I am. You know what? What is it that you are kind of doing in order to maintain the sort of 'I'm a coach!'

C: You know, yeah. I'm trying so hard that I'm trying to maintain this. Very professional. So, yeah, very professional. Knows what she's doing. Slightly more processy than I like to be. You know, lots of OK. The contracting stuff. I hate that I get that out the way. But that's still sticking to then over explaining in this first session, I hear myself say often in this first session, you may find it is typically, you know, me getting stuff out of you. You are talking a lot. And then I go on to say and other sessions, we'll really get stuck into something. I'll try and prove myself by saying this one's gonna be shit. This is what I'm thinking. And proving it. And I start saying it's in it's not as many words this one's gonna be a bit shit, but it's going to be amazing after this!

RK: Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely.

C: So, I'm doing that - what else am I doing? And just trying to sort of say, I want to come. I want to prove myself. I'm really trying quickly to prove myself and I'm trying to get alongside them quickly. And I'm trying to get them trust. I'm trying to do so much. I don't know how that comes across.

RK: And so because we're right into the meat of it way earlier than I expected. But when you when you're doing that piece of 'I'm trying to look like a professional, I'm like, I'm trying to manage their expectations. Yeah. Like, how much? Like the concepts of like surface acting, deep acting and emotional labour, which I don't need to explain to you because we've talked about it before. But you know how much of that is just faking it till you make it - or pretending. And how much of that is. I kind of do trust actually in this process, like I'm trying to get to get to. How much of it is literally just pretending and acting that everything will be okay. And how much of it is a kind of belief thing?

C: I think I do believe it actually, but interestingly; I think because I say it, it makes me feel more credible. If I didn't say and probably until relatively recently, I maybe just didn't. Then I'm I in risk my head them thinking it's

shit, whereas if I've said this might be shit. Of course, I don't say 'shit' just... a bit different to not like the real process when we get going. And inevitably, that's what's gonna happen. I sort of push away. You know? I don't let them have that thought of themselves. I've got there first. So, all of that that's a sort of protective thing, probably. But with all of that, I do believe that it's what has to happen and it's okay and I am leading them through a process that will work out. And it always does. And deep, deep down, I know that I can lead them some really good and really help them. So, it isn't deep, deep acting. I don't think it's a different thing when it's someone I don't know. I'm sure we'll come onto it or someone I just can't get on side.

RK: Right. Because what was pinging in my mind while you were talking about it was that that feels like the normal process. And I recognise that to process for somebody. And we share some similar thoughts about that. I wonder how when. For example, I know we talked about, for example, dealing with very senior people who might be intimidating or, difficult to deal with or that you find personally difficult. How does that play out? Because, you know, does it get easier as time goes on or do you find yourself having to manage yourself right the way through the process?

C: It gets easier with that person. If it's about if it's about seniority, so increasingly my clients are really senior, whether their board members or of a smaller organisation or ex-co reporting to that often maybe 10 years older than me. So I'm sitting there thinking they're looking at me thinking, what is this thing, this coaching thing? And is it a real job. And who is she? She looks a lot younger and she can't possibly help me. I'm fighting all of that, whether they're thinking it or not, who knows what I'm fighting it by trying to be even more professional and have gravitas and stuff. I don't know how I do it. And if I do, but that goes - that will definitely go. And they become a human, whatever age they are, quite quickly. And that's a real result. If that happens. When that doesn't happen is when someone's either still resistant to the coaching and just not in sync with me for

whatever reason. And I'm constantly trying to build the rapport and dance with them. Or and I've got an example of a couple of people I've just never really got along side. And fundamentally, I find them quite difficult, and I don't really enjoy their company and they're not taking it seriously. The double whammy of not really being in the processes and. And not really liking them. And then that's hard because that sort of stays throughout the whole thing. And it feels like there are moments of me breaking through by feeling quite natural, so the impact is that I just don't feel I can be natural. I can't be in the flow. I can't be in the moment. I'm constantly dragging myself up and thinking, right. What we're going to do now. How are we going to do this?

RK: And so, there's an interesting dynamic for me because there are people that we don't get on with socially and we don't enjoy that time and that company. We just we avoid them. We don't see them. And yet there are people within our coaching who we don't particularly like.

C: Yeah.

RK: And yet we do work with them.

RK: Yes.

RK: And so, I'm wondering what goes on in that sort of dynamic of. Because what are the reasons that we do that? What why would you continue to work with someone that you didn't like?

C: Because I'm paid, in some cases a lot of money to do it.

RK: Right.

C: And I don't want to fail. I should be able to allow every help everyone to come out of the coaching process of, say, 8 coaching sessions, having

moved forward in some way. Now I've got better at realizing that somebody who's not really involved, not really engaged and never going to be very reflective can go from a tiny part of sort of A to B. And that might be enough for them to be significant but actually if I can get them from a to w to z. Of course, that would be amazing, but I'm much better at realizing I can only get them that far. So there's the that's why I keep working with them, I can't give up halfway through a coaching program, of course, unless they're really not engaged. And it's a waste of the organisation's money. And I and I call it much quicker.

RK: Do you do you still care about the outcomes for people who you actually don't like? Who aren't taking this seriously?

C: And funnily enough that's a good question. I care for the organisation

RK: Right...

C: I don't care for them. And I get increasingly so cross that they're not taking this opportunity that I don't care for them at all. If they've not been if they're all really intelligent people and successful already. If they're not smart enough to realise that this is a great opportunity, then I don't care for them, especially when I mean in the worst of all, you've had it I'm sure - but, I'm sure, but they messed me around repeatedly. They e-mail me at the last minute. No consideration for cancellation policy. They turned up late. They expect me to go on an extra half hour. All of that. I don't care for them at all, though, occasionally. So, I. Can I give you an example of a client?

RK: Love you to... Yeah....Of course…

C: So, one I found really hard. I finished working with in the autumn. [redacted] female, couple of years older than me. Very brittle. Single. Never had family, prioritised career …came to coaching

because she'd had an annual review, er, the summer before where she'd broken down and just said, I can't keep going like this. Erm. And coaching had come up then through her line manager. I thought she'd reached a sort of crisis point and would be able to see that coaching could really help her to be different and to work differently, because at 40, whatever she was then, 46 just couldn't carry on. But increasingly it became obvious, she just wasn't prepared to make the changes. And increasingly treated me as she could never keep a P.A. her P.A's all left after a couple of months. Her team members all left quite frequently all the things she was doing with other people. And we were trying to talk about I was trying to help her realise she was doing them with me, cancelling, turning up late. One day she came and said, I'm really sorry, but I've got an interview with Radio [redacted] some radio station, but it's quite important radio station. And it's the only time I could do so. I sort of heard myself say, fine, I'll put you in the room. We do that for ten minutes and then we'll start. And all these things just felt a) symptomatic of her not being able to manage her time or prioritise herself and her development and b) disrespectful for me. And so, with her over time, there were moments when she would let her guard down and she'd sort of collapse, and we'd have tears and she'd be really upset, and I'd feel sorry for her and think she's a human and I can help her. I want to help her. And then most of the time, that was sort of 10 percent of the time, 90 percent of the time, I was just frustrated - because I was trying so hard to help her fundamentally change when she really needed it. And she just wasn't taking the opportunity and she never was going to change. So, in terms of me and my sort of response to that, I think I felt like I was going through the motions with stuff. And then there were times when I genuinely, really wanted to and felt I could help her. But that was such a small percentage of the time.

RK: That's really funny. It's the next thing I got written down is 'are there times when you felt like you you've been going through the motions'?

C: Yeah. Yeah, exactly. That's like saying things to had I, you know, just I know this will help you. Let's talk about let's think about this. Let's do that. Because she never got in sync with me and she never really took it. It felt like I was sort of teacher telling her what to do. It wasn't a construct co-construction. It wasn't us working together. It was just me on the surface, her half listening and then saying, like, I've got. Oh, by the way, got to finish today an hour and seven hour and a half and constantly fighting. I mean, of course, you know, psychodynamically there's' a whole load of stuff that I could have done and tried to do. But I soon realised that just I couldn't change her.

C: So in in the realisation of that and in trying to work out the relationship, you know that I am guessing that there are some things that you felt that you didn't externalise about her.

C: Yeah.

RK: Like, yeah. You know, I'm frustrated that you won't come alongside me. I'm frustrated that you can't see that. And I'm wondering whether that frustration was ever externalised with her or whether it was kept internal. Did you suppress that, or did you express it?

C: Sometimes I did. But interestingly, the stuff I did share was the - I'm frustrated that you do this at the last minute. I'm trying to make parallels with what she was doing to me with others, but I felt really nervous about it. So, it was one time when I really wanted to make that point. You know, we've talked about how you treat others and how they don't stand around and support you because they don't feel well treated. Well, here's how I feel. You know, this is but I struggled with it because I felt like as a teacher telling her off. And also, because I just knew that she was never going to stop and be reflective enough to go, oh, my God, you've just given me the most helpful piece of insight that you could ever have given me. She just wasn't. So, I felt constantly that this teacher was sort of on the edge of

turning her off. And I didn't like that at all. So, I was sort of teetering between what can I share with her? And feeling really nervous about doing it because she was so brittle and difficult.

RK: It would be great to think about that specific example when we look at the model a bit a little bit later. Yes, I think that's a great example of where… because… so in the short term, how were you like ..straight after sessions or in sessions, you know, how is that relationship making you feel?

C: Ah, do you know I was just going to go onto it to say awful, even thinking about it? Just used. Just another resource for her, not a partner, not a real supporter, not no supporter. I knew what I was to her. Even despite all of that, I knew that she valued the space and the time to come and just off load. But I felt sort of powerless because she wasn't moving forward at all. She wasn't doing anything differently. I felt useless because I felt like I can't help her. I must be able to help her somehow. Actually, I held her. I said, you know, I took her to supervision a lot. And my supervisor really showed me, and I think I knew really that I did help her a lot. But that didn't manifest itself in any significant change. And I felt deeply sad, really sad, because although I didn't like her and how she - I didn't not like her. I was so frustrated with her that she wasn't fundamentally willing to change anything about her totally awful life despite the fact that she was so successful professionally. I felt deeply sad that this was someone who couldn't change. So, all of those things - sad for her, really. But that still didn't allow me to really get alongside her and use that with others, I might say. And I did a lot. I would often externalise 'I feel really sad that this is how you are'. And I'm, you know, what can we do? How can I help you? What? We talked before about this. What have you done since then? All of those things. Yeah, sort of impotent somehow, I think,

RK: And in terms of how authentic you felt able to be with her, you know, did you feel like you're able to be authentic in yourself? Or did you feel constrained? And you talked about being worried about saying stuff?

C: Yeah. No, not. Mostly not at all auth.... Well, no, not at all authentic mostly, not as authentic as I would like to be. There was a lot inside that I wanted to say, and I was nervous about doing it and I didn't think it making any difference. And I was worried about being the teacher, telling her off. That stopped me feeling, there's definitely something interesting around... and I wrote it down when I was thinking about other clients in preparation. When they're not engaged in the process and when it's not going well, I cannot be my authentic self because I'm holding on to so much. There's something about flow and authenticity, I think, you know, when I'm in flow, when we're in sync and we're and I'm in flow, I'm really authentic. I'm not stopping to think about things they're just happening. I'm using my intuition a lot more. I suddenly think halfway through. Oh, well, let's look at this. Let's do this or let's explore this. I'm not having to think about it. It just comes out and it's the right thing in that moment for us to have done. And when I'm not in flow and not authentic, I'm having to stop and think and work much, much harder to get through that session.

RK: I'm a hearing, a dynamic of when you're in flow and in sync, you don't need to manage yourself and the way you are because it's authentic. It's just you, you know, when you're not in flow and in sync and are they're not up for the dance, then you're putting a lot more mental effort and energy into. Your display.

C: Yes.

RK: How you are. how your perceived and seen.

C: Yep. What I say, what we do.

C: There is a. There is a slight caveat to the first one, though, when I'm in flow and authentic, and you and I talked about this before. There's a guard that I still have to put on somewhere. So it's not limitless that I can't. I don't

think I can be completely. Ah, it's a really good question. Can I be completely in flow and authentic? Or is there a slight risk that we get to that I have to check myself and say are we, is this just too matey friendly? conversational? Do we need to pull back to the sort of the structure and process? Of course, you're looking at the clock and all of those things. So there's a I guess I'm not trying to 'cos It's not right. I'm not equating authenticity and flow with ease and conversational and pallyness and friendliness. I'm not - it's not so much more than that. But there is a part of it that feels like that, and then you have to keep yourself in check.

RK: So quite naturally, what kind of onto to the next place I was interested in, which is - so there's not Coach's brain that sits there about, you know. Oh, are we getting too matey? Or is this just the conversation? And I'm like, where do those rules come from about what a coach is and who are coaches? Whose rules are they and why?

C: I thought about this a bit. There's something so firstly and I do not recognise that it comes from anything professional body wise. I'm a member of say I'm a senior petitioner, EMCC. I've gone through the competencies, all of them renewing all of that malarkey. I know what I'm supposed to do. I subscribe to it all, but I don't really think about it. And the EMCC, fine. It's my body, but it doesn't really figure other than for CPD. So, I don't have that in my head from them. There's not that. There's something about my own standards. Really high standards of professionalism and what I hold in my head as being a good coach. And I do so the high standards, this is just me. He's not nothing to do with a standard of coaching. Where have I got my own set of standards as a coach from? I think it's just come from different things over the years. A big influence on me and a negative one in large part was I When I first started working as a I. So, I trained as a coach through my [redacted]masters. But that was quite counselling heavy. And I knew immediately I wanted to move away from sort of softer counselling to something more like coaching. And I worked at [redacted] as an in-house coach for four years. When the girls were babies and growing

up. And that was a great way to start coaching. But is very career transition CV career sort of short-term discussion. So that was great. But I knew I wanted the deeper coaching and I got lucky and started working as an associate with a practice called [redacted] which was across the road from [redacted]. And that really allowed me to focus on leadership coaching. I did all my work as an associate, but I was a junior gimp for the practice - the founder, and the owner is a super strong character. [redacted], who just makes me shiver when I sort of see pictures of her and she's a daughter of two therapists, she's very psychodynamic. She helped me so much. I mean, I'm so grateful. I learned so much as her young associate. But she was formidably overpowering and headmistress. And so, the rules and she unethically supervised me as well as gave me the work. So, she was a huge influence on my life, sort of from - I don't know 2008 or 10 to 2015 Something like that. So, I think my rules of how you behave as a coach, including things like. Getting alongside of a client, and you must find a way to like them, as all therapists do. So, a lot of the psychodynamic concepts in terms of how you behave as a coach came from her and that one in particular. You know, I still have it really ringing in my head. You should not be working. It's pretty rare. I come into the wording, but she always gave that sense of you've got to find a way to get alongside them. And if you're still not finding a way to like them and genuinely see that vulnerable part of them that you can work with and you can't work with them. So, I certainly have some things that ring that in my head about how I should behave. And then and then and that gets in the way because I know I'm doing a sort of a... Because it wasn't always a positive experience. It kind of pops up sometimes in the middle of these moments. And I'm pushing that away. So, I'm thinking then I got to I've got to do this by myself. Now, I'm grown up and I've been doing it on my own for several years. So there's a good thing about rules and where they came from. And then this is sort of a pushing away and a desire to have my own rules and they sort of all blend together.

RK: And where does the rule come from or how do you how do you think about the rule that says - we're having this great conversation and I'm being authentic, I in flow in and it's great and it's a really good conversation. Where does the rule come from that says, oh actually no, I need to step back and be a little processy about this.

C: You know I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. That's really interesting. I mean, I've always been professional and had high integrity. That's always been there. So maybe it's just a sort of a genuine natural value that kicks in. You've got to be helping them. You've got to have outcomes, so the other rule is you've got to have some outcomes. And the fight between having the genuine, authentic, natural conversation that actually could be helping them more than anything, you know, versus the - is this an outcome? Is quite tough. So, they. So, they. Yeah. The rule about. You've got to do it professionally and you can't just chat, et cetera, et cetera. I don't know where that comes from, really the rule about outcomes. Probably goes back to [redacted]. You always got to be having some tangible outcomes from the process.

RK: They're interesting rules, aren't they? No. I mean, and I' have a similar set of rules in my head about what it's all about. And yet, by the same token, I remember coaching that I had twenty-five years ago, that is that that the outcomes are only just becoming real for me now...

C: Oh, really..?

RK: I remember conversations that I had a couple of decades ago and things that people said that are now meaningful for me in this moment, that are changing the way that I'm doing things. And it's just that thing of like that, the immediacy and the kind of, proximal kind of real, tangible goal related outcomes are for me, quite, quite reductionist in the whole piece around coaching , 'cos I can think of relationships that I've had that still persist, though, over decades. And I just wonder sometimes whether we we're

adhering to a set of rules about what coaching is....(technology break / Zoom failure)

C: You asked me where I had some thoughts on actually in the break room where the rules come from. The ones around outcomes and stuff. And I had, of course, a big influence on that is to me, when you're doing organisational work be the pull that they need to report back the depending on the organisation, but the process stuff around. So, for example, I'm working with a financial services company at the moment. They're very processey.So we have to do sort of kick-off templates that we have to send back to the L&D. folk. We do mid templates and discussions and then end ones. And so, of course, for that you have to show outcomes to some extent, the deeper stuff that still with you after 25 years and I've had clients to say to me even a couple of years, I'm sort of. Now I realize what you were trying to help me with. And that's really kicking in now. So great. I know that's there. But that's not so easy to report back from. And actually, I feel that very strongly, I have such. Oh, my God. This is your area. But that's such a concept. The return on investment, that although, I know there's some stuff that I just and I find to say that then I just can't measure and quantify. I feel the pull to quantify through behavioural changes that are observable and external, really keenly.

RK: Because I have a little theory. I had a hunch. That actually a lot of the emotional labouring coaching is in managing the relationships around coaching. So organisational stakeholders, line managers, responsible people HR, training, whatever... And I'm wondering about the dynamic that you just discussed of, you know, does the contracting that you do with the organisation about what coaching is meant to do. Does that sit well with your belief about what coaching is?

C: No, no as completely no as no, but not in large part.

RK: Right.

C: Because if because, because my background and my influence earlier on as a coach is more psychodynamic, of course I'm in , you know, that fits with longer term deep seated coaching work that you can't tie up in six or eight sessions with obvious outcomes that are observable externally. And yes, the work that I do in large part and I'm paid well to do in big organisations is very much bounded and reported back on. And that really gets what a) stresses me out quite a lot. And b), makes me think there is an acting that goes on even between a colluding sometimes between me and the client, just to have to do a lot of stroking them to say, look, now I need to do this reporting back. You need to know that I'm not reporting back on anything that that we haven't discussed. So, let's talk about it. And the surfacing it and the checking on the progress is already helpful. But I hear myself often doing the kind of - we want also had this important discussion about... you may be leaving this organisation, of course, that is not going to go into this. So, we've got kind of the real work or the real work that is about you having a breakdown that you haven't talked to anyone about or whatever it might be. And then there's the stuff that we put on this form that I talk to your boss about. I mean, sometimes they absolutely are transparent. Sometimes they're not. So, there's also something about the acting I did this far. And then the acting that we do as a team.

RK: Yeah, I recognize that intimately. And so. What do those interactions with the payers of coaching, you know, how do those interactions feel when. Excuse me? When you're contracted to do a piece of work that you don't particularly...that isn't described in a way that is really satisfying for you as a coach. And yet you still take the work. There's some play acting going on, right. There's some presentation of coach. How did those interactions feel with those organisational stakeholders when there's that sense of misalignment?

C: But sometimes there's a sense of OK, ya, I'm playing a game. But I've done it before and I know I keep you happy. You 'payer' need to know that I've

heard you. Maybe your line manager or the H.R. person. I've heard you, I've picked up everything you've told me about this person that we need to work on. I'm going to show you that I've had that. And I'm going to give you answers to those areas. So there's the acting or the kind of game playing of I'm smart enough to hear and to give you what you want. Then underneath, there's a sort of slightly - I was going to use the word smug. And that's not at all me. And I don't really mean it. I don't know what the word is. That's the one that came to mind, a slightly happier place of. But I know that the real work is over here with that person. And worry because I don't need to tell you. That's cause you don't care anyway. Really, because you're a HR person is ticking boxes or a line manager. But a manager should care. Sometimes they don't. But it does mean matter because I'm ticking your boxes. But actually, I'm also ticking the boxes at the super real work here with this person that I've realized is what they really, really need from me. If I can keep them happy and you happy, then I'm happy. And of course, I really like this stuff here and I can do this stuff with you. It doesn't really drain me, but it's just a part of it, really. That's not always every session, every coaching program, of course, but it does happen.

RK: It just strikes me as a really interesting dynamic where within coaching we value authenticity very highly. The surfacing when we when we kind of when we're comfortable of the use of self as coach. Yeah. And yet it's that standard that we apply to coaching is not one that we always apply to organisational contracting. And I just I just see a tension there.

C: Yeah, it's definitely there. But there's a there are times though, when I make a call as the coach to say something or to step out of that and to be authentic. When I'm talking to, say, the line manager. If I've trust. If I trust them and I have a good sense for them that they really care about the person. And sometimes I might just say, look, you know, what we're really working on is this or, you know, treading that line of giving too much away or not having checked it with a client confidentiality. Sometimes I say this is is what I'm noticing about the person and this is what's really important.

This isn't what we originally set out to do, but I really think it's helpful for us to be doing this right. Just because I know that somehow I've got a sense from them that they, I can trust them that they need to know that. And I want to show them that I'm. I want to be authentic with them. And that then often precipitates a really good discussion from them about. Yes, absolutely, I've been wondering that for years or that's the thing that I've noticed. And then I get more feedback from them and it really helps. I don't hold back always from doing that in those sort of situations....

RK: No, that's really useful, and interesting. Thinking, well where does emotional labour show up in coaching emotional labour should be coaching? Yep, It probably shows up in our relationships, but it probably also shows up in other places as well. When we you know when, when we behave in a way that we know is acceptable to corporate buyers of coaching, for example, that isn't necessarily the way that we would, um, if there were no consequences...

RK: Yeah, we wouldn't naturally be. And I see a tension in that. I dunno, be interesting to see what other people think?

RK: You know, you're used to working in that dynamic where it's not always the individual who's choosing their coaching and their coaches. Sometimes it's an organisation. I think that's another interesting part of the emotional labour. You know what the coaches look like. How should coaches present, you know, how to coaches take a take a project from HR or from a senior manager. And so there's something in there is.

C: And I just thinking out, as you're saying, I think there are layers then of our interactions. So I gave you the example of that time stepping out to breach and feeling that I can offer more and be more authentic with the line manager. So, if I think of that as a layer, that's the sort of the next one I can trust next to the coachee. And I judge that as safe. If I do judge that and safe that, that's okay. And I have a sense in doing so that this shows me

as a real professional. So that is that's also okay for me and natural. But the outer layer in a big bank, say a big organisation, is the separate box ticking HR person who is setting it all up They've set out the chemistry process. They've got you to fill out the forms. They just need the forms being filled. That is the biggest game playing and the box ticking things. And I don't feel conflicted about that. I feel quite comfortable playing that game with them.

RK: And to what extent? So, for example, you know, we take on many clients whose major issue is the way they interact with their direct line manager. You know, it's often a topic, isn't it? You know, I'm not appreciated or there's conflicts or whatever it is. And I just wonder in those situations where the relationship with co-workers, with line manager, et cetera, where that's where that's a big theme or a key thing in the coaching that we do, how that then puts the person who's in your middle circle, the line manager. How does that play out then in terms of authenticity and kind of acting out and just saying the right things?

C: Is a good...It's it good... Question. In fact I had this the other day, some I'm someone, a [redacted] is going out to work for a big company in [redacted] and her boss is based in [redacted] because of coronavirus is in [redacted] at the moment. So I had a phone call late at night with the boss for the first time in [redacted] So they are quite apart from coronavirus. They think they have a very physically distant direct reports and they physically come together I dunno every month in [redacted] maybe every six weeks. So my coachee, she is really, really struggling to get time with her boss and she finds her boss ineffectual and just not there for her. When she does get her, she doesn't really get what she needs. So there's a real lack there. And we just just the boss and I have the phone call the other day and she said, I get a sense that she picked up on it, that your coachee. The person is is not I'm not giving her what she wants and she's not satisfied with me. So in that situation, I heard myself say. I went through a whole. I remember sitting here late at night up here thinking, God, this is so important. If the three...

My preference is always to have a three way anyway, this organisation didn't want for whatever reason either. Well, the boss just wanted to speak to me on her own. And I respected that. But if the coachee had been there, it would have been a great conversation. I would have helped facilitate it. It wasn't so I thought I went through this whole. This is so frustrating because I want to say, yeah, this is what I'm hearing from her, this and the physicality and all. So I do a sort of half measure, which was I had a real sense of I have to say something. She wasn't really asking me to, but she started with that, with her (?) thing. And I knew that she wanted something from me. And I said, well, I get the sense that it's very difficult for coachee because, of course, physically, you're not together very often and you're very busy and she doesn't get a lot of time with you. So I did a sort of a on her behalf. I offered something which I knew you. I checked in quick myself. I thought if if I get back to my coachee and say this is what I shared with her, which I will do, that will be fine, because it was helpful and it facilitated a more open and honest discussion. I was sitting there. You are holding onto a lot of things so often and that sort of situation. And in a way, I try. And I was just thinking to for example, when I do quite a lot of 360 feedback through phone calls with 10 stakeholders and I've got some just kicking off with someone in America, my new client, and. And then I put together a qualitative report with themes. Though, of course, I judge very, very carefully because the written report, how I say things, what I say, what I judge to be a theme to make sure I don't use any verbatim language so no one voice can be identified to have to work really hard on that. And then when I gives the feedback and go through it, I'm sitting holding on to who said what exactly what they said. The examples they gave and I can't share those, as I've made a commitment to the people who gave me the feedback. I can't share them, but I know in my head what they are and I try and work with them over time because it's really helpful data that I want to work with the client on without talking about it. That's and that's a real sense of holding stuff. And I don't know what that does to me or how that comes across to the client.

RK: So while you're raising for me, which I hadn't thought about before, is the labour, the emotional labour within confidentiality?

C: Yes.

RK: So there are times when you know that you cannot disclose something and it would be detrimental to do so, and you just hold that and there are times when you go a halfway house, which is I understand it's difficult. And there are probably times when you when you go whole hog with permission. So that the management's in the holding of that. Is kind of emotional labour is either feeling or or feigning. Pretending there's no problem. Not get involved in it. Avoiding it or whatever. Suppressing it or somehow finding a way to express that in a way that's congruent for you.

C: Yeah. And sometimes it's a - so there's a reconciling that goes on with me, which is a in this very moment. So what often happens? You recognize that someone will say this feedback is really helpful. I recognize this this bit but what I don't recognise is this. And I'm sitting there thinking, if I could give you the examples of the people gave me. And who said it's because you could identify them it's difficult to identify them. If I could do that, it would really help you. But I made a commitment to that person and they often say, please do not mention this because I know and it's very difficult. So I try and recognize that, A, I'm feeling a little bit professional in that moment because I'm thinking I must stick a bit flaky, or. I over-justifying why I can't say it or I might be saying, yeah, look, I need you to think more about that and think what the possible examples might be. I cannot share it and I've made that commitment. But there's something there that's helpful. Let's see. And and if there's nothing that goes on, I kind of shut it down and move away. But I reconcile it in my head with the okay, there is something there. And I had two people say it. And there's a very clear example. My client doesn't get it. There's a blindness us there. So now I need to work with that at some point. How I do that, I know, but it will come up again and I need to try and come back because that's quite important.

RK: I think I'm a bit of a coward in this respect because I used to use the the rule and the adage no conversation about you without it. If a boss wants a conversation about an individual, they've got to be there. Like so my commitments, to my coaches must know I've never discussed them with a manager without them being there.

C: Yeah, I do. I do the We'll never share anything without you knowing it. And I push all the time. If someone wants to have a conversation without them, I will push and ask why and I will push for it. But sometimes I feel that you just can't push anymore. You just gotta go with it. So I feel it's interesting. Then the pressure is much more on me to hold all of that and to manage all of those parties, maybe coward is the wrong word, but you go for the easier option and probably more. Important or more on that yields better results because you facilitate that discussion, which is what we aim. But sometimes I feel I can't be that man. I mean me.

RK: Yeah, I guess part of that about trusting yourself to be able to manage in the moment what's appropriate, what's not appropriate. I think, you know, I'm not sure I trust myself to do that. I imagine myself getting it wrong. And so I probably avoid it.

C: Yeah, but there is a real risk with that and there is a risk. There have been times where I stepped out and said, look, I made a commitment to that person. But it's more important to me now that I share something more with you or something. And I don't know if I judge. So the risk isn't so great, but it's more helpful to that person that they understand more than I. I guess I will. But then I that's a real conflict to me that I'm letting down of a guard with an immediate red flag in my head thinking shit should I have done that I kind of know I judge that that was the right thing to do.

RK: Well, what is it? It all seems very simple coaching, doesn't it? And then you think about the responsibility and the power that we have as coaches. It's

just incredible, isn't it? You know. You know, how, how and where it can go wrong for us. And they're all matters of judgment and that's the difficult thing, is it? You know, you like my rules don't come from EMCC or from the ICF, you know, they're actually rules in my head or about practice that I've experienced or people I've experienced this I've got this set of what coach should be, should look like, should behave like. And I'm trying to manage that with multiple stakeholders, with multiple coachees. It's you know, people think coaches have a nice chat and then you get into what it really is and you go, oh, my goodness, this is this has so much complexity at every level.

C: Yeah. It goes back the original question of whether is this a proper job? I mean, yes, it is. The one thing we have to do is supervision as well. So there's also the piece around the rules from supervision. I think that maybe. That my supervisor and I have talked over years about the way I do something or this particular thing, and I feel that sometimes that's with me too in my rules, I know I've got to not report back, but I pull myself away and think if I was reporting this back in supervision, how would I be thinking about it? And that's that's there as well. It's like an extra watch over my ways of being and behaving and conducting.

RK: Yeah. Because you can imagine the question that your supervisor might ask you about what you've done then, you know, not that they are being judgmental, but they are exploring your practice. And so. Yeah. So. That's interesting. Which which, in turn, again, shape, shape what we do and how we do it. Yeah. Let me. If we were physically together, I would whip out a piece of paper now with a model here. But why not? So I'm gonna just pop up on the screen.

RK: Let's have a look. So I should be sharing my screen at the moment. Yeah. Is my model here? I'm going to open it in Photoshop so that we can mess with it.

RK: Excuse me. So this is a very this is the starting model based on my reading around emotional labour and my experience as a coach. And I'm hoping that we can pull this around a little bit and see whether it resonates with you. If it doesn't resonate what what it has and what it doesn't have. And there's already a few a few elements that we've talked about that it doesn't have like supervision, like organisational stakeholders, for example. But let me quickly explain the model. So we've got the colour yellow, green, the greeny redddy bits at the top, which is coach behaviour. And that's our sort of display, more of an emotional labour terms they would call display rules or feeling rules, the way that we outwardly demeanour the way that we present ourselves to the world. The surface. And then we've got the stuff that we're really feeling underneath, you know, the emotional undercurrent. So a good example might be I'm working with a very senior first or second meeting with them. I'm struggling with that seniority, but I'm not showing its - my surface display is competence and confidence, my emotional undercurrent is in doubt, self-criticism, and all the things that are going on underneath. And that is the difference in those two things, how we actually feel and how we display that. Yeah. That's where the labour happens. And so when you describe your dance and what I've called in this model, emotional congruence for want of a better term, which we can change, you know, for you, you've described that half a model as being kind of where you're in sync, where you're responding, whether you feel like you make a difference, where you're dancing together, where you you know, you're really connecting, where you are in flow. So that can make some of the things that might appear on on the kind of positive green impact side. And some of the things that we've talked about on the other side might be, I don't know, stress, exhaustion, tiredness, you know, whatever it is. So that's the starting model. And it's very simple. I just want to kind of did does that resonate with you? Is there something we should change and some words that we should add? What can we do with it to sort of make it more resonant and recognizable for you?

C: Funnily enough, do you know the first thig I was thinking. I don't know if this is the sort of thing you're looking for, but would be the disc, you know, coach behaviour. That's the middle of it doesn't it doesn't feel right. I almost feel like it should be the first thing that came to mind just in terms of how I would visualize it.

RK: Yeah.

C: Almost a mask that sort of on its side so the front of the mask is the it's just the it does not to have to be a mask, but something that's got to sort of a front and then a depth of a prism behind it the prism is all the stuff that's going on behind. Even it's a head or something, I don't know. Because I don't think for me, the left and the right. Somehow doesn't quite feel .. it's almost a front and a behind. Now, how you could do that? I don't know.

RK: That's really interesting. I've seen an image. I saw an image when I was in college. So wrong color coding. The how I saw it, I saw on the Internet and try and find it for you. It was all I could show you the actual image because I've got it anyway. This image made me think about emotional labour. It made me think about the mask and the stuff that some.

C: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

RK: The mask that we take off and the masks we put on. I thought about the actors as masks as well. You know like the.

C: That’s exactly. That's what I was thinking.

RK: Happy / sad actors masks. That's right. That's great. And you're right. It doesn't say so.

C: So there's something. But how then you show the depth. There's a front and a back. There's a there's a there's a front. And the mask and all the stuff that's going on behind at the red side...

RK: So I'm going to make a little note on the side. Yeah. So that was a mask and that was something like that. Thank you. What a funny font. Let's just deal with - that'll do

C: And then why would that make a difference here? Then the. Not left and right. It's how you do the depth on something like this, I don't know, but I'm just thinking for a prism of behind it.

RK: So some image that kind of describes what's going on in the background.

C: Yeah. So they're almost like that. If there is a mask and it had a prism coming out the back with the sort of the lines going into it that showed a kind of a depth of a prismy shape. That would make me feel that there's a lot if I could put in picture, if I had that as a diagram. If I were writing on that, I'd stick so much in the depth that I know them at the front that the mask is important. But the depths having their actual depths would allow me to put stuff on it

RK: Those masks, I can't remember what they're called, oh they're like the sorts of happy, that sort of thing.

C: Yeah. So if it was sort of like that, slightly turned on its side and then behind it was a prism attached to it so you have or something that just showed lines going to something. I don't think it needs to be an actual head behind it.

RK: But a box or something?

C: Yeah, yeah.

C: Yeah, that's already so much better.

RK: And then behind that, some sort of...

RK: What's a prism? What is a prism?

C: They just put it into Google and do a copy and paste....

RK: Prizm, prism, prism not a car. Yes, it is an S. That's an American spelling. Probably has a prison. That's. Ha, ha. OK, that's interesting.

Like a prism. Like a prism.

C: Try PRISM

C: I'm so sorry you changed it, mine's a bit slow

C: Can I can I put my cursor on as well. Can you see that?

RK: I can't, no. What what are you looking at?

C: So it's almost been prism turned on its sides, so Instead of the triangle...

RK: Try and find just a prism. I can see if I can just find a.....

C: Now it's telling me I'm unstable.

RK: Yeah, you're unstable, ha ha.

RK: Just find something that we can just put in and play with. That'll do for now. We'll just play with that because it does not be perfect for now. But just to give us an idea of the. Come on, friend....

C: There's something in my head about multifaceted depth that comes behind the mask. Yeah. That's better....

RK: So something like that...

C: That would be kind of coming into the mask from the left hand side.

RK: Like that....

C: So, yeah, so the fat bit of the prism would be close to the mask coming out, if you could slightly turn a mask, and then you have you can see my hands. They had a kind of prism coming off the back of it. That was the strong image I have.

RK: Sort of sort of like, for example, but better

C: Yeah, with the fat bit of the prism directly behind the mask. Yeah, like that.

RK: Something like that.

C: Yeah. But that would be then much bigger. And then that would allow you to kind of get into the prison. All the stuff.

RK: Ah, I see. So you could put all the stuff in here.

C: Yeah. Yeah, that might be on the left hand side of the image for the rest of the left hand side of the page and on in it, right to say that's the depth. That's the yeah, that sort of thing is there's something about showing depth of what's going on behind.

RK: So, in fact, the whole image could probably change, couldn't it, so that these these two bits comes out of that. So. So the impacts, both positive and negative, could come out of this prism? Sort of,

C: Yeah.

C: And you wouldn't need necessarily the two masks I don't think you need a happy and a sad - one mask that the kind of the front front mask. And then behind which is the depth of all the other stuff that's going on.

RK: Yeah, I'm with you.

C: Now, though, would that allow. Because what your disc was doing, of course, was showing the surface. Well, that didn't work for me because I didn't have the depth. It did. This of the shiny flat surface. But I think the mask covers the surface stuff, doesn't it?

RK: I think so. yeah....

RK: So that's better, just one of these masks.

C: Yeah. Perfect

RK: That'll do for now, I'll tidy that up later, but if that were the mask and then..

C: Good job you're so good at techie stuff, I'd never be able to do this in the moment directly

RK: Ha ha, there we go, and then the prism kind of....

C: Swings round and comes the other etc....

C: Yes. Yes. Or stays. That's right.

RK: All right, let's get rid of this stuff for now. This prism sort of comes...

C: And I think why that's important to me, why it came to me, the stuff we were talking about right at the beginning and throughout about. Is this a proper job and is this really good? It is not is this good? Isn't this a proper job, this coaching stuff? And actually, it turns out what we could be to about. And of course, we know really it is tremendously complex and deep and requires a real skill. And so I think in a way, I want to show that visually. And that's why I thought of the depth in the prism, something I want to show about about the depth and the complexity. Maybe that doesn't actually show complexity but something that could show the complexity of the behind.

RK: I wonder whether, you know, you look at some prism images and you've got this idea of a spectrum behind the image like lights. I wonder whether something like that, whether.

C: Yes.

RK: You know, here's the stuff that's coming in. And the strands could then be the, you know, the potential positive and potential negative impacts of emotional labour. Let's just see if that makes sense.

C: When I first had the image, there was the the the shininess, the colours, the refracted light,

RK: Refractivity or whatever... reflectivity.

C: That's it turn it....

RK: If it was something like that. And then out of all these. But in fact, potentially you don't need any of this stuff. We could see we could strip all this away just for fun.

C: There's something when when I look at what you've originally done, there's two linear left side. Right side is not. It's not that. It's front side. Stuff churning away behind. And the sort of refraction that comes out.

RK: I like that

C: Crikey, Rob, don't get rid of all of it...(something about the original)

RK: Well, why not. I mean, you know, you've seen at least five iterations of this model so ,you know, so if we started off with something that was like that, if graphics were better and stripped away all the stuff all the stuff. But it's just that...

C: Yeah. Yeah.

RK: And so then so then we could use these colours or lines or whatever, to describe some of the things that are going on. I wonder where we might be able to describe. I wonder whether. There's a mask and a prism for each. Part of the coaching relationship for the for the coachee, for the line manager, for the organisational stakeholder or just for the coachee and for others around coaching.

C: Yeah, I don't think it's separate ones. That feels to you. Right. Maybe for the coach. He and then something that shows me when I described it to you, I said it's like a series of circles. It's sort of the closer layer of the direct manager and then the outer layer. And actually, if you followed that, by extension, there must be other stakeholders that we're not thinking about involved in the process.

RK: Yeah. Because

C: Including supervisor. Well, that's not stakeholder, but other people involved in the process.

RK: Yeah, you sort of describe it like a.

C: ...Series of concentric circles.

C: Yeah. I've got an image of it written down here about coachee. You had kind of. That's not gonna work (on graphics)

C: That's not a word, because, of course, in my old way of working, I talked about the influence of [redacted]. She and I not in. That's all I am in that situation in one case. No, I've never done any associate work since then. Scarred. But of course, that was another circle because she was my provider of work and I had to report to her and I had to give her updates. Now, she's not sure that I am now working into one assignment with someone, but it's a very different and much nicer relationship, so I don't see it in the same way. Of course, he's still in there in the process and I have to update him and. That's an interesting one.

C: Very interesting if I compare the two. Can I talk about this? Is it relevant?

RK: Yeah, great go for it.

C: Because with her, it was difficult. I mean, I had a difficult relationship with her and I felt very judged. And she was checking out the whole time. So I had to act and display and. I felt quite inauthentic and at times with her and I was much more junior with the person who is giving me work now is a very different relationship and I'm much more skilled and mature and confident. So I am totally open with him almost about everything. I'm not acting as much apart from still, knowing that I'm holding some stuff that I

shouldn't share with him that my coachee is telling me about. And I don't want him to pass on to the organisation. So there's a care for a care and a labour that feels that is there. But it is not a huge effort. It doesn't care. So maybe there's something about labour and care that's slightly different, that's come up a bit in some of my work with leaders. You know, they take more care over things that some form of labour, but real labour is much more deep.

RK: Yeah, there is. So, James, she's written quite a lot of emotional labour in nursing. And she's got this equation, which is care equals physical labour, plus emotional labour, which is quite interesting in palliative care settings or nursing settings.

C: Yeah, I don't know if it's the right word, then. It almost was like a spectrum of just a spectrum of labour. Care or if that's not the right word. Some effort, small effort, isn't it, the small end of the spectrum and real deep labour real acting the real holding on to stuff real incongruence is at the other end.

RK: That's really interesting. Let's ... Let's put scale in some so you know the kind of. That's really interesting. Let's get a scale in here. How do we do that? Let's just find a.....

C: And the scale which somehow fit with or become the same thing, the concentric circles, wouldn't it? Yes. It's my level if labour is different with all of those.

RK: I'm just going to write down Concentric rather than do it now, because it's so I say.

RK: A from whites... (just mumbling a bit)

RK: So we've got concentric. Oh, can't spell and scale scales.

C: Yeah. And care, if care is the right word. But somewhere in that question mark, care...

RK: So I've got Coachee in the middle, say line manager, corporate buyers, people who give us work as associates of coaching.. there's kind that, that those concentric circles and then small, small bits of labour. I wonder what there's something because there's lot in literature about time. Whether whether. Whether it's whether emotional labour is related to the time exposure to. So if you're in if you're in a call centre in India and you got to smile at people ... oh lost you!

C: I'm back.

RK: Yeah. So if you are having to spend a lot of every day doing doing the smiley customer service person, you know, and just maybe think about, we probably have much less contact with those people who aren't in the centre of our concentric circle.

C: Yes.

RK: And much more with the coat check. You know, we might spend six, eight, 10 hours with a coachee. We might spend an hour with people outside of the middle.

RK: And I just wonder whether whether the the degree to which we experience the negative effects of emotional labour like stress or inauthenticity, all that stuff, whether in fact that's manageable because it's small labour, small exposure, and we can deal with that.

C: Yeah.

C: Yeah. Which is maybe why I said when I feel I can playing a game, I feel I care about it because. Perhaps actually, because I know it's any one meeting or maybe two meetings, one at the beginning, one at the end, maximum an hour.

C: And I know that they have less importance in the relationship.

C: It or less importance in the quality of the overall work.

RK: Right.

C: They can still make it make or break the outcome. They could me. They could stop me. They could put in a good word for me or whatever it might be. But they the quality and the importance of the relationship isn't with them. Right.

RK: So I'm the reason I love your idea of a prisms because the original model was very binary, like emotional labour, emotional congruence, actually. The spectrum.

C: Yes.

RK: Describe exactly what you've described, which is there might be more or less of these, depending on the context in many different relationships. And so that to me is much more, much more of a rich description of how emotional labour might be experienced in coaching.

C: Yeah.

RK: You know, is it or isn't it? Is probably a false binary.

C: Yeah, that makes sense. And it doesn't then that that feeling I had when I sort of left him right back away and then that way it just just didn't didn't spatially work for me.

RK: No, no. Well, I'll go and try and make that more beautiful from an aesthetic points of view to take forward to the next interview. But that is kind of making a lot more sense to me. I just need to make my graphical sense and just get some images.

C: Brilliant.

RK: But that's really, really helpful. And I think. I think your examples of like. How you manage yourself in coaching, and the kind of internal dialogue that goes on and that the sort of internal struggle you have with maintaining an external professional, what... You know... What you perceive as a professional demeanour, and that's the stuff I think that I'm interested in, because if I'm like you and if other coaches are like you, we've all got our own perceptions of what professional looks like in coaching, then that's quite interesting piece, isn't it, because we're all trying to meet and adhere to a standard that..

C: That comes from where...?

RK: ...of our own creation.

C: And yet.... I know it works, right, because I get repeated work. I know because of the way they respond to me. I know I've come from a corporate background. And I can dress up and play - and we haven't talked about dress and look and all of that, but I can play that game. And I know in that moment that I've I've ticked the box, and then I know because they give me more work and they put me forward. So although they standards wherever they come from, might be a bit spurious. I'm always doing a sort of. Is this working checking thing? I'm not airy fairy enough just to sort of have my

own standards and put them out there. I'm always slightly adjusting or checking in.

RK: No, we haven't thought about dress or appearance or anything like that. But does that occur to you? Do you do you do you dress? You dress up and dress down?

C: Yeah, definitely. Although, of course, now this is really interesting. Times are changing and. Well, this is you and me so it's different. I'm happy in here in my big thick cardi. But I've deliberately not dressed up for coaching sessions, including meeting line managers. I just want to be authentic and I want to be myself and everyone's doing it. It's a fascinating change all around. But it's relevant to you. I think, too. But yes, in London and face to face, I will put on my best toggs that I feel suit the place and that may or may not be the right call, but normally its the right call.

RK: 'Cos that's the other bit that we haven't really touched on...much like where where do the display rules come from for a coach? We haven't touched on the context of the organisation. You know, so how much to how much of what we do as coaches is a is a. In exactly the way you just described that I will dress appropriately organisation. You know, like how does the organisation that we're working in affect us as coach? How much do we have to then flex our our style in order to meet with those people?

C: And kind of I wonder and I wonder if it's individual, actually, because I've seen other coaches going in and out of organisations that... that look much more like a coach that doesn't belong in an organisation that's more individual. Personally, I feel very strongly that I need to fit in. They need to recognise in me this I'm a professional that has the skill sets that maybe none of them have, which is why they brought me in, but that I fit in and I'm recognisable within the organisation. And I know in my bio, when I send a bio in that I need to put all those good things in there that will resonate. I know. I know that I need to resonate with them somehow. But then again,

that might be my individual view. I have a sort of a oh, my God is the kind of coaches that will wear stuff that's or just be a bit fluffy. I have such a fear of being seen as fluffy and it goes back to the 'What is this coaching thing is bit fluffy'. So that impacts my dress sense and all of that. And I will be corporate and professional because I do not want them to become fluffy. And I will push my bio that talks about blue-chip this and nice educational background because I know that will resonate. And that's I think it is important for me.

RK: It's the ultimate display rule, isn't it And yet you could ask yourself if a coach wears a grandad shirt and a pair of jeans or a, you know, whatever. I don't know what the female equivalent of a grandad shirt and jeans is?

C: Long skirts and bangles..

RK: There you go... Who cares? Because does it matter what they look like? It matters what they do and what their relationship is like. And I guess what. What you're describing is that the more acceptable you can be to the culture, the less... The easier it is than to have a conversation with them.

C: I think so..I think there's something about recognising like for like recognising themselves in me. And I see it with coachees when they sit down, there's a oh, great. You you've got a good educational background or you speak nicely or non that stuff I'm making up. But I know that they they need to feel some sort of resonance. I think.

RK: And then we could be into a whole other conversation about sameness and difference and a creative dissonance and all that stuff. It's very interesting. And it's still on the topic of the fact that we are managing our demeanour, our display, our look, our presentation of self all the time, in context. And that has to have an impact of some sort. Sometimes it's a good impact because we've managed our demeanour we get work. Yes. Sometimes it's

probably more difficult for us when we're trying to adhere to rules that are less.. congruent with the way that we actually are.

C: Yeah.

Wrap up and thank you from RK to Crystal