

Editorial

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Following a packed itinerary at our 18th annual Coaching and Mentoring research conference in January 2022, we are delighted to introduce fifteen papers, which were presented at this event. These articles fall into three natural groupings: papers with a focus on diversity, equality and inclusivity issues; those with a focus on supporting particular clients and client issues; and the final group of articles all concentrate on various aspects of the coaches' role or experiences.

The first four papers address issues of coaching and mentoring in relation to concerns around inclusivity, equality and diversity. The first paper by **Belinda Van Zyl** examines the experiences of being mentored in the social work profession, specifically exploring ethnic heritage social worker mentees experiences of being mentored in a predominantly white-dominated profession. This paper challenges some of our notions of mentoring across cultures and ethnicities offering valuable insights to mentoring within professional settings. The second paper by **Paul Roberts** adopts a heuristic inquiry methodology to explore gay male coaches' experiences of coming out and the impact on their coaching practice. This study identifies how the personal insight and strengths recognised and developed through coming out about being gay can support the development of a positive gay identity and inform coaching identity and practice. In our third paper, **Marion Frostick** uses an exploratory action research methodology to investigate the process of coaching dyslexic clients. A model for coaching dyslexic clients is developed and tested to enhance coaching practice for neurodiversity. Our final paper in this first section, is from **Lou Chiu** who undertakes a critical interpretative synthesis of the existing literature to conceptualise allyship in coaching, as part of social change. By drawing on the fields of coaching, mentoring, social justice, social epistemology and allied helping profession, Lou argues for allyship-informed coaching as a way to advance social change.

In the second group of articles, we begin with **Jo Cartwright's** article on how coaching can support managers experiencing stress at work. By adopting a constructivist grounded theory approach, Jo is able to develop a Generative Scaffold which can inform coaching in situations of stress, and offers a critical inquiry into the role of coaches as agents for social change. The next paper comes from **Cristina Magro**, and focuses on coaching for imposter syndrome. While widely acknowledged, imposter syndrome has received less academic attention, and this article offers insights into the need to engage with this topic over the long term, so imposter feelings can be revisited. We then have a paper from **Andrea Kilpatrick** based on her doctoral study of how coaching supports senior leadership transitions and challenges to confidence. Andrea adopts a multi-perspective interpretive phenomenological approach to this investigation and arrives at a detailed, nuanced framework based on key components of clarity, ease and energy, vulnerability and control. The final paper in this grouping is from **Suzanne Dunn** who examines workplace

coaching for menopausal women. Adopting a descriptive phenomenological approach, Dunn undertook interviews with seven menopausal women to identify key issues around menopausal health changes and the ways coaching can support this group of workers.

In the final group of articles, we host a series of articles that focus on the coach's understanding and experience of various aspects of their role. Kicking off with the broader theme of 'Understanding', using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), **Anstey Thomas** explores how coaches understand and engage with client 'expressiveness'. Her rich qualitative data reveal that, engaging in a 'systematic and co-creative interplay', coach and client enable expressiveness to flourish in a way that allows for the connection with the 'self'. Moving on from expressiveness to presence, **Sebastian Fox** focuses on team coaching, investigating team coaches' understanding of their presence and the impact of that presence on the coaching relationship. Also using IPA, Fox argues that presence is multifaceted, it requires self-awareness, and is inherently rational. In a third IPA study, **Vicky Bennett** investigates how coaches understand the link between their self-awareness and the clients' A-ha moments. More specifically, Bennett shows how a deep understanding of the coach's psychology can facilitate client insight and, by extension, lead to successful coaching. Finally, in a fascinating autoethnographic study, **Mike Sailsman** explores the use of contemplative practices to acquire a deeper understanding of his development as a coach. Inspired by Western's (2017) notion of soul guide coaching, Sailsman uses both digital and non-digital contemplative practices to develop his own concept of a soul guide coach, as he experiences his own professional development. He also contributes to the slowly developing literature on the use of digital tools in coaching.

The next series of articles in the same group focus on the concept of 'Experience'. More specifically, in an absorbing heuristic study, **Kay Weijers** investigates coaches' experience of peak moments in coaching, arguing for five core conditions that can enhance the occurrence of peak moments in coaching sessions. Focusing on this specific aspect of a coach's role, Weijers presents coaching as a 'vitalising, aesthetic experience' which enriches the development of a connection in the coaching relationship. The actual theme of connection is explored in more detail by **Dorian Braun**. Using IPA, Braun reveals the ingredients of deep connections that coaches experience in their relationships with clients, which include warmth, intensity, intimacy, open heartedness and strong affective bodily sensations. He also offers some practical advice for coach educators who wish to emphasise sensitivity and ethical practice in their coach training sessions. Closing in this special issue is a fascinating phenomenological study by **Rob Kemp** on the coaches' experience of emotional labour. Employing conceptual encounter, Kemp presents a compelling analysis of the concept and experience of coaches' emotional labour inside and outside of the coaching space, offering valuable lessons learnt for the wellbeing of the coach. He also introduces the term 'commercial emotional labour' that has implications for organisations utilising coaching as a developmental tool.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy this special issue and that you relish the insightful research that emerges from these articles as much as we did.

With best wishes,

Dr Judie M. Gannon and Dr Ioanna Iordanou on behalf of the Editorial team
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