

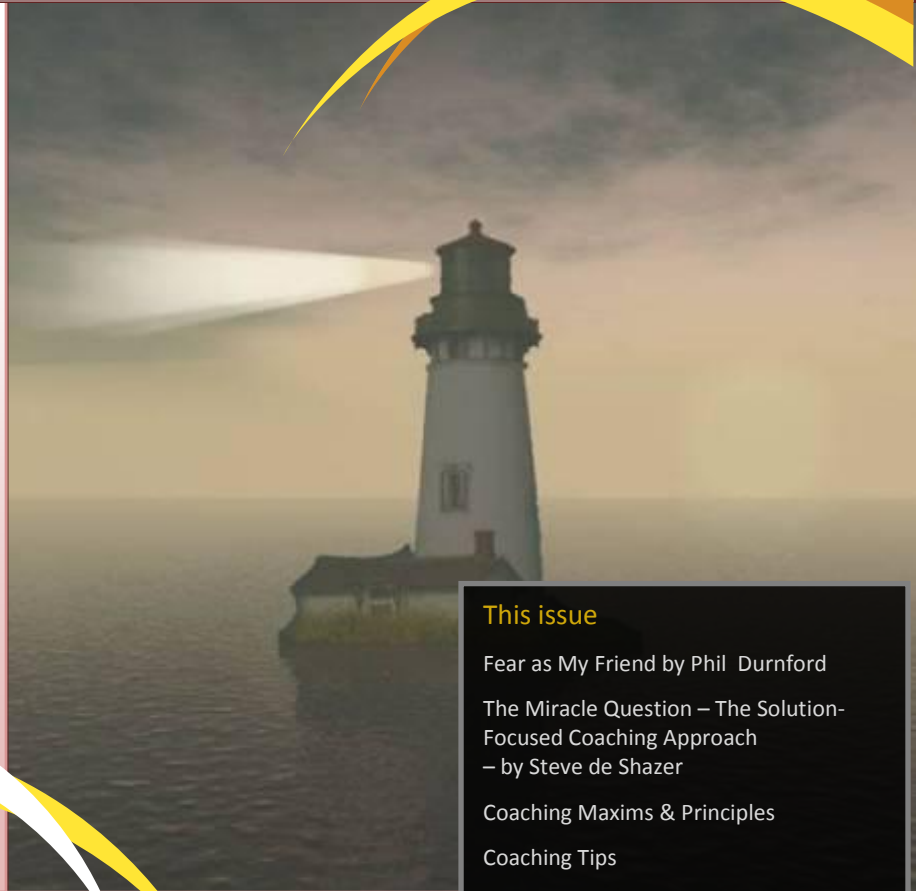
A metaphor.....

*A Coach is a Lighthouse.*

*In a life journey, different time one may have different coaches to give feedback and guidance. Just like a ship sailing in the blue ocean, it relies on the Lighthouse's signal for directions.*

*The Lighthouse stands still; it just gives out signals to guide the ship. Whether the ship follows the signal or how the ship navigates the direction is the choice of the ship. The Lighthouse will never express its own view for the choice made by the ship.*

*A coach may have different coaching style & method, yet a true coach's starting point is always to support the coachee, all the way through and be the The Light That Never Goes Out; No Matter How Strong The Wind or How Big the Wave.*



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## Fear as My Friend by Phil Durnford CPCC, BSc

In writing my first article for this publication, about overcoming a fear in order to become a better coach, I am noticing my hesitance to commit finger to keyboard. Notes are scribbled furiously on a pad, but they add to the maelstrom of noise that is the war of ideas in my head. I am locked down in fierce internal competition, the only outer sign of which is my frown. In all other respects you wouldn't know there was anything happening. Nothing. No progress. My story goes that it is "writer's block". I am great at stories; excuses, that is. So great am I that I can keep myself excused by talking much and doing nothing until the dawn's creeping rays.

Let's be honest: I am afraid. Here is my fear, and this is a good one: This article flops. I lose massive face and get exposed as a charlatan; my reputation plummets. I become reclusive, my wife divorces, my daughter despises me and I die slowly, in impoverished, unloved obscurity, to be discovered three months later, partly eaten by the neighborhood cats. "He was OK", they'll say, "but he never really amounted to much."

## ANNOUNCEMENT

We are happy to introduce to you "International Coaching Federation Malaysia" (ICF Malaysia) chapter, as per our new website:

<http://www.icfmalaysia.org/>

## UP COMING EVENT

Coaching Learning Activity:

### "Leader as Coach Workshop"

Date: July 31 2010

Time: 9 am – 1 pm

For details please refer to

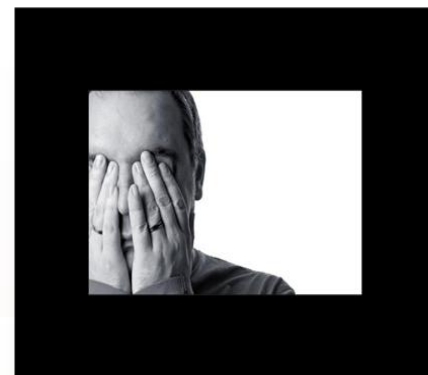
[http://www.icfmalaysia.org/pub/Leader\\_as\\_coach.pdf](http://www.icfmalaysia.org/pub/Leader_as_coach.pdf)

You might have noticed what I just did: I noticed my fear then I voiced it, allowing my irrational self to take it as far as it wanted to go, but knowing that my rational self would have the last word. Very importantly I did not take myself seriously, nor did I shy away from my fear. Actually, I did the opposite because I unfolded my drama with a smile, embracing my fear like an old friend. At the same time I allowed myself to just write, with no plan other than to write. I notice that this fear is still with me but I own it now; its energy is now powering my writing muscles. Unblocked, I am writing my introductory article for *Voice of Coaching*, having thrown away the notes.

As a starting-up coach, I believed I was extremely talented, but I knew I was incompetent. I was afraid to my core of being found out as an impostor and ridiculed, like a boy peeing his pants in front of class. So in order to conceal my ineptitude, I did what everyone else appeared to be doing: being extra positive, doing lots of networking, spending my cash on marketing ideas, being very conscientious to take notes and appear professional in my coaching. What I didn't do was close much business. I didn't often manage to ask the question "will you be my client?" My later realization was that to do so would increase the chance of being exposed.

I did have a few clients and I became desperate to keep them. I needed the money, I needed the hours and I needed the experience. What I didn't need, above all else, was to get fired because then my charade would be revealed. My desperation to not get fired became the agenda which subtly underlined all my coaching. I was not very challenging, never confrontational, never too loving, totally playing safe. It wasn't too long before I got fired. It happened during a call I was recording for a supervision as a part of my training. It felt awful. She was my first ever paying client, too. Her reason for sacking me: "You are just not challenging me in the way that I want". It stung, my cheeks were flushed, I didn't challenge it or seek to discover the learning, I behaved like the wimp that I had been as a pretend coach. After a few days I realized that getting fired was maybe a gift, so I chose to bring the tape of this session to my supervision call.

My coaching supervisor gave me a very low score for my coaching impact; my coaching had been BAD, but along with that I got great feedback technically and emotionally. This coach showed me specifically where I could have pushed back, challenged my client and even turned the call around, all in service of my client's highest agenda. I even realized I was strong enough to get fired all over again. Getting fired set me free; free to be as naturally passionate and expressive as necessary for my clients' biggest agenda. I developed a "power phrase" as a structure for myself, which helps me remember my relationship with fear and captures the essence of my attitude while I am coaching: "I don't give a sh#t, for the sake of my clients", (the comma is very important).



Paradoxically I am still fearful, but now I use it in service of my clients; when fear starts to show up as sensations or dialogue within me, it is always a good sign to say or do that thing that I was holding back on. My fear is my friend.

If you sense that you are holding something back in your coaching or if you are experiencing "flat" conversations with your clients, these are probably symptoms that your fear is driving the coaching agenda. Firstly come clean; talk to your coach about it. Secondly, be willing to accept your fear as a friend and get excited for the opportunity it presents. If, like me, you are afraid of getting fired - coach like you want to get outrageously fired. If you are afraid of rejection, add 50% to the fee you quote. If you are afraid of not being the industry expert in front of your important client, know that your expertise is in the process of coaching and design a powerful alliance which leverages your ignorance. Above all else, lighten up; a fear loved is a fear used well.

***Phil Durnford is a Director of Winning Attitude Sdn Bhd***



## The Miracle Question – The Solution-Focused Coaching Approach

by Steve de Shazer

*If you woke up tomorrow and your problems were gone, what would be different?*

The miracle question was developed beginning in the early 80s and I have been using it in almost every first session ever since. I think my (our) initial mistake was to call it “the miracle question” when it has never been just a simple question. Rather, its purpose was to shift the conversation quickly and easily into the future when the problems (that brought the client to therapy) were gone. That is to say, the “question” itself was never as important as the client’s response. Over the years of dealing with the wide variety of client responses I have somehow sort of learned how best to respond to their responses. In part, I learned this from watching how Insoo Kim Berg responds to her clients’ responses. Further, I learned this from watching how other coaches’ responsive behavior did not lead to the kind of miracle picture Insoo’s clients were able to develop. So here is a sketch of the pattern that I have worked out.

### Part one

“I have a strange, perhaps unusual question, a question that takes some imagination ...

[Pause... Wait for some sort of signal to go ahead with the question.]

Suppose . . .

[Pause... The pause allows clients to wonder what strange and difficult thing I might ask them to suppose.]

After we finish here, you go home tonight, watch TV, do your usual chores, etc., and then go to bed and to sleep . . .

[Pause... Pretty normal, everyday stuff. Not so strange after all.]

And, while you are sleeping, a miracle happens . . .

[Pause... The context for this miracle is the client’s normal, everyday life. This construction allows for any kind of fantastic wishing.]

And, the problems that brought you here are solved, just like that! . . .

[Pause. Now the focus is on one particular miracle that is in line with his or her coming to coaching.]

But, this happens while you are sleeping, so you cannot know that it has happened.”

[Pause. This is designed to allow the client to construct his or her miracle without any consideration of the problem and without any consideration of the steps that be or might have been involved.]

“Once you wake up in the morning, a) how will you go about discovering that this miracle has happened to you?” OR, b) “how will your best friend know that this miracle happened to you?”

[Wait. The coach should not interrupt this silence; it is the client’s turn to talk, to answer the question. In fact, when the client’s response is “un-reasonable” (in the coach’s view) the coach’s most useful response is to continue his/her silence which gives the client a change to “fix” the response, to make it more reasonable.]

[Many clients, particularly adolescents, find it easier to describe the day-after-the-miracle from the perspective of other people. The individual’s perspective is then dealt with in Part Two.]

## Part two

“A) How will your best friend discover that this miracle happened to you?” OR, b) “how will you discover that this miracle has happened to you?”

## Part three

“When was the most recent time (perhaps days, hours, weeks) that you can remember when things were sort of like this day after the miracle?”

## Part four

“On a scale from 0 to 10, with 10 standing for how things are the day after the miracle and 0 standing for how things were at the point you called to arrange this appointment, where — between 0 and 10 — are you at this point?”

[This “progress scale” is designed to help both coach and client figure out where the client is in relation to his/her goal(s) for therapy.]

“On the same scale, where do you think your best friend would say you are?”

“On the same scale, where would you say things were when things were sort of like this miracle day?”

## Part five

(The opening question in second and later sessions.)

“So, what is better?”

[“Better” is a construction and this is designed to remind both coach and client that one of the goals in these subsequent sessions is to help the client describe things as “better.” Failure to begin the subsequent sessions with this question undermines the value of the other four parts.]

## Part six

(The “progress scale.”)

“Remember that scale where 10 stands for the day after the miracle? Where would you say you are today on that scale?”

[It seems more useful to ask about this without reminding the client of his/her previous rating. If the question is asked this way: “Last time you were at 3, where are you now?” Clients tend to respond with “3” and they tend to respond to the open version with a rating “higher” than that they gave in the previous session.]

*Steve de Shazer who, along with Insoo Kim Berg, his wife, co-founded the Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) approach, recently passed away. Steve was a pioneer in the field of family therapy, and was in fact often referred to in his later years as the "Grand Old Man of Family Therapy." An iconoclast and creative genius known for his minimalist philosophy and view of the process of change as an inevitable and dynamic part of everyday life, he was known for reversing the traditional psychotherapy interview process by asking clients to describe a detailed resolution of the problem that brought them into therapy, thereby shifting the focus of treatment from problems to solutions.*



## Coaching Maxims & Principles

<http://www.businessballs.com/lifecoaching.htm>

Typically good coaches will use and follow these principles:

- Listening is more important than talking
- What motivates people must be understood
- Everyone is capable of achieving more
- A person's past is no indication of their future
- People's beliefs about what is possible for themselves are their only limits
- A coach must always provide full support
- Coaches don't provide the answers
- Coaching does not include criticizing people
- All coaching is completely confidential
- Some people's needs cannot be met by coaching, and coaches recognise clients with these needs



## **Coaching Tips** From: [http://www.trainingreference.co.uk/skills/coaching/coaching\\_tips.htm](http://www.trainingreference.co.uk/skills/coaching/coaching_tips.htm)

### **(a). Coachable moments**

Formal coaching isn't the only way to bring people forward. The day is full of coachable moments when something happens that gives an opportunity for learning. Watch out for these, and use them for a quick bit of coaching

### **(b). Value coaching**

Sometimes it may seem as though there really isn't time to pause to bring somebody on. If you give the impression that this is something you're rushing through to get it done, the person may feel debased. If you want them to feel enthused and give of their best, recognize that coaching is a valuable use of time. Arrive in good time, proceed in a relaxed way, and make it clear that this time is for them.

### **(c). Value the person**

The purpose of coaching is to enhance the person's abilities. If you think in terms of correcting deficits, you can only hope for minor adjustments. If you think in terms of bringing out the best of person's potential, the sky's the limit.

### **(d). Ask what they want**

The best starting point for successful development is what the person hopes to achieve. Find that out first, then help them to strive towards that.

### **(e). Steer clear of negatives**

Avoid saying "you can't..." "I don't think..." etc. This closes off the options and puts the coachee in a position where they have to co-operate or resist. Instead, say "What could you do about that?" "Do you think...?" etc. That puts the ball back in their court.

### **(f). Encourage self-evaluation, including self-praise**

People can't improve unhelpful or inappropriate behaviour unless they recognise them for what they are. Encourage them to look for areas where they might improve. But don't let them belittle their efforts. Encourage them to recognise the things they do well.

### **(g). Have high expectations**

To some extent, expectations are self-fulfilling prophecies. If you think you can't, you probably can't. If you're sure you can, you're well on the way. When coaching, stretch them. They need to think beyond what they can easily gain. Discuss the next step after the next one, and further, to what they can eventually achieve.

### **(h). Keep the vision in mind**

The organisation will not reap the benefit of the person's enhanced capability if they are using it to pursue goals out of step with organisational objectives.

### **(i). Know your limits**

Coaching is not psychotherapy, a help line or specialist training. If you feel the coachee needs something you can't provide, refer them to someone who can, or encourage them to seek appropriate help for themselves.

### **(j). Get feedback**

You are developing human being just like the coachee. You need to know how you're doing to know how to progress. Ask the coachee how they thought the session went, and how you did.

### **Call Forth Questions - Extract from "Masterful Coaching" by Robert Hargrove**

Recall a time in your life when a parent, teacher, boss, or a friend showed up as being a total commitment to you. Recall what the person did that gave you the feeling of total caring about you and total believing in you. What did that feel like? What did he or she do to show support for you directly or with others that was "above and beyond" what was expected? Recall a time when you did the same for someone else in your life.





## Quotes by Brian D Brio

"Coaching is about helping others discover, believe in, and act upon what they know."

"When you truly listen, you let go of formulating your response while someone else is speaking. Then, you can easily slip into his or her shoes. "

## Editorial

The views and opinions expressed by contributors / authors in this eNewsletter are strictly their personal views and opinions. They do not reflect the views and opinions of ICF Malaysia Chapter.

We like to get your input and contributions to the following:

- Comments and suggestions for improvement
- Articles / data / info you like to be featured
- Themes for future issues

We will add a Members Column to incorporate your feedback and comments.

Please submit your comments, feedback and contributions to K K Ng,  
Email: [koonkow@streamyx.com](mailto:koonkow@streamyx.com)

Editorial Team: K K Ng and Tang Wee Hen

*Credit for the eNewsletter make-over: Tang Wee Hen*

## What People Say About Coaching

"I learn teaching from teachers. I learn golf from golfers. I learn winning from coaches." --- *Harvey Penick*

"Coaching is a profession of love. You can't coach people unless you love them." --- *Eddie Robinson*

"I never cease to be amazed at the power of the coaching process to draw out the skills or talent that was previously hidden within an individual, and which invariably finds a way to solve a problem previously thought unsolvable."  
--- *John Russell*

"Coaching is a conversation, a dialogue, whereby the coach and the individual interact in a dynamic exchange to achieve goals, enhance performance and move the individual forward to greater success."  
*Zeus and Skiffington*

"Coaching can lead you to all sorts of new places and situations."  
--- *Kevin Mansell*

"Moving to a coach from a manager is a huge change. Your ability to change your style and how you work will help build your adaption to change skills."  
*Byron & Catherine Pulsifer, from [More Benefits To Being A Coach](#)*

"Coaching is an action, not a title and actions result in successes!"  
--- *Byron & Catherine Pulsifer, from [To Manage or To Coach?](#)*

"The Coach does not play in the game, but the Coach helps the players identify areas to improve their game."  
*Byron & Catherine Pulsifer, from [What Does a Coach Do?](#)*