

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES TO BE AN EXCELLENT MENTOR COACH

A mentor coach does regular assessment of core coaching competency skills. As a part of this process, a mentor contributes clearly to a mentee's ability to see them selves in the coaching process (via the lens of coaching presence, active listening, etc). In order for a mentor to be proficient at this, and to continue to evolve in their own competency, it is suggested that the following points are important. *(Please note that these are derived from a survey related to the assessment of coaching skills, contributed to by Mentor Coaches and ICF coaching competency assessors from around the world).*

YOUR 'NOVICE TO MASTERY' JOURNEY

- ❖ Regularly, realistically, and truthfully recall, reclaim, and talk about your coaching skill at the various stages of your journey. What were you like as a beginning coach, a middle coach, and today? What were your strengths and your areas for growth at each level? What are your patterns and habits today?

PERFECTION ISN'T NECESSARY

- ❖ Give up any need to see perfect coaching (and yes, we all want that and it impacts the way we listen).

CONTINUE YOUR OWN SKILL ASSESSMENT JOURNEY

- ❖ Regularly have your coaching assessed by another master coach who you respect, who is masterful in evaluating coaching, who will be direct and honest with you, and who will call you on your "stuff". It is preferable that this person be outside your training background. It is also preferable that the evaluation be for multiple sessions rather than just one. It is mandatory that you listen to the recordings of your sessions as well. This practice will both help you empathize more fully with being evaluated, help you see patterns more clearly, and most importantly, will help you realize that even you are not the perfect coach.

CHALLENGE YOUR THINKING

- ❖ Reflect on, and regularly engage in dialogue with a fellow coaching colleague. Examine openly how you can challenge even your own conclusions or perspectives.

UNCOVER YOUR BIASES

- ❖ Regularly, realistically, and truthfully talk about your biases, values, dogma, and decision markers around coaching and how they might

interfere or cloud your complete listening to an applicant and your fair assessment of them.

YOUR PRESENCE MATTERS

- ❖ Engage in presence and centering exercises consistently.

COACHING AT ALL LEVELS

- ❖ Create structures for regularly listening to and discussing coaching at all levels.

WALK IN THE SHOES OF YOUR MENTEE AS YOU DO YOUR ASSESSMENTS

- ❖ After every assessment of skill competency and before you finalize an evaluation document, reread your language standing in the shoes of the mentee. Are you clear in your feedback and is it competency based? Do you use specific examples from the coaching? Will the mentee know what level skill they are demonstrating for each competency and overall? Do you cover both strengths and areas for growth? Is your language direct, but also kind, respectful, and encouraging? Does it recognize some greatness in the mentee, even when the coaching was not so great? Will it encourage the mentee to continue their growth?

CONDUCT AN INVENTORY OF SELF

- ❖ Regularly access all aspects of yourself (intellect, emotions, physical, intuitive) and see how your ways of being might impact how you evaluate. How will your way of being help you to evaluate fairly and accurately and where might it interfere?

PARTNERING WITH YOUR MENTEE

- ❖ Define clearly how you will partner with your mentee during an evaluation session and in your debrief process. Also, define clearly for yourself the presence you want to have during the evaluation process, how you will maintain that presence, and how you will evidence that presence.

BUILD YOUR CURIOSITY

- ❖ Regularly practice openness and curiosity in all aspects of your life, particularly in stressful situations or with people who are not your favorites. This will help keep you open and curious even when the coaching is not very good.