

TRANSCENDING AND INCLUDING OUR CURRENT WAY OF BEING

An Introduction to Integral Coaching®

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ABSTRACT This article provides an introduction to the Integral Coaching® method developed by Joanne Hunt and Laura Divine, founders of Integral Coaching Canada, Inc. A brief introduction to the field of coaching is offered using the four quadrants to appreciate the underlying assumptions of how change occurs and how schools of coaching have approached the rapidly growing field of adult development. Further delineation of Integral Coaching Canada's use of subject-object theory and a "transcend and include" developmental model is provided and resides at the root of this school's AQAL approach to change. Included are the necessary steps of working with a client's Current Way of Being (the strength of its identity, horizontal capacities, and inherent limits) as well as the client's emerging future, a New Way of Being that better supports a client's desires, intentions, and response to the call that he or she uniquely hears.

Key words: AQAL; coaching methods; human development; integral coaching; subject-object theory

Throughout human history we have sought out people to assist us in our quests to grow, develop, and bring about change: shamans, elders, teachers, spiritual leaders, experts, consultants, therapists, and mentors. In the past 20 years, professional coaches have stepped into this powerful and poignant niche of need and yearning to provide new ways of supporting human growth. As the demands of modern life become increasingly complex, many are turning to coaches to address suffering inherent in the dissonance between how we are and how we want to be in our personal and/or professional lives. Right now, all across the world, people are being coached on topics as wide ranging as enhancing strategic planning skills, working more skillfully with others, living an authentic life, eating healthfully, becoming a better parent, attending more mindfully to body and spirit, saying no to requests from others, and so on. This proliferation brings both an exciting momentum to the field and the need for a steady frame of reference to understand and evaluate coaching methodologies. In this article, I will leverage the rich depth and breadth of integral theory for this purpose, as well as outline its rigorous and artful application in our Integral Coaching® work. First I will examine the arising of the discipline of professional coaching, including the development of formal coach training programs. I will then provide an introduction to Integral Coaching Canada's method and process for working with human beings through an integral frame.

Evolution of the Field of Coaching

Prior to the 1980s, most people used the term "coach" to refer to a role in the field of human performance, specifically the field of athletics. During the 1980s, coaching moved outside the boundary of sports and into

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the broader field of human potential, primarily in organizational settings. Companies were actively seeking ways to accelerate and advance human performance. Change was occurring at faster and faster rates, and with this came a need to find better ways for people to not only meet challenges but to develop themselves. Leaders were called to increase their capacities to delegate, manage, and prioritize while simultaneously balancing the demands associated with the advent of modern technology, globalization, and multicultural teams located in different countries. Professional coaching became a development modality that effectively met more complex needs and provided reliable and confidential executive support. Further, coaching emerged as a legitimate profession beyond the field of athletics. As these early years unfolded, business cards declaring one as a “professional” or “executive” coach sprouted up routinely and people sincerely offered their expertise working with business leaders and managers. Despite this surge in mainstream popularity, formal coach training programs were still in their infancy and not well recognized by the client population.

In the early 1990s, formal coach training courses progressed into professional certification programs. And over the past 15 years, the field of professional coaching has continued to grow rapidly to include coaching services, coach training, and coach accreditation. Today coaching services support just about any field imaginable: life coaching, career coaching, performance coaching, executive coaching, parent coaching, relationship coaching, and peer coaching, to name a few. As coaching’s forms of service and modes of training expanded, the essence of its offerings and training programs remained relatively the same: to support change and development in a person’s life. What differs among coaching schools and approaches, however, are their underlying views about what it actually takes for change to occur. In this article, I will use integral theory as a powerful framework for understanding these diverse views.

Laura Divine and I have been active participants in the coaching field since the late 1980s, initially as executives working for large corporations receiving coaching, attending coach training courses, and coaching others. We have been exposed to and trained in various coaching approaches over the decades and are Master Certified Coaches accredited by the International Coach Federation. Coincident with our coaching immersion, we have studied Ken Wilber’s work since the late 1980s and been engaged in our own personal development paths for even longer. Throughout our careers, we continued to hold deep inquiry regarding what it actually takes for change to occur and also be sustained in a person’s life. We began to feel a palpable tension between existing models of coaching and what we were experiencing through our own coaching work. As much as we could appreciate the value of various coaching approaches that we had been exposed to and used, they seemed incomplete and partial. We wanted to include and transcend the traditional modes of coaching into a more integral, sustainable, and powerful approach. From this space between what we envisioned and the current modes of coaching available arose a profound call to develop a truly integral model. Thus, we brought together each of our histories in various change management modalities, went to the root of integral theory, and developed our own coaching approach from the ground up. We called it Integral Coaching®.

Our approach is sourced by a “transcend and include” developmental model as described by Ken Wilber (1980, pp. 93-96) and Robert Kegan (1994). It also uses the other components (or elements) of Wilber’s integral approach, including coaching-specific models that illuminate quadrants, levels, lines, states, and types. The AQAL model (all quadrants, all levels, all lines, all states, and all types) forms the primary lens through which our coaches come to know and appreciate their clients’ unique worlds. Finally, our Integral Coaching® approach also draws upon the wisdom and compassion we have gleaned through our own unique life journeys.

The first section of this article depicts how the four-quadrant model distinguishes multiple views regarding the requirements necessary for change to occur and how these views shape the role of the coach. Next, the article moves into its primary focus—to provide you with a comprehensive overview or map of our Integral Coach-

ing® approach. This article also sets the context and foundation for each of the subsequent articles contained in this issue of the *Journal of Integral Theory and Practice*.

Belief Structures Underlying Human Change

At its core, coaching is about change, bringing about change, sustaining change, and nurturing change as we develop over time into fuller and freer versions of ourselves. It is from this root intention of supporting change that coaching schools started to arise. And, as is the case in any profession, these schools arose with diverse views as to how human change actually occurs.

Whether realized or not, coaching schools have underlying belief structures regarding change. This includes both how change is approached and how it is sustained in clients. In other words, coaching schools, unconsciously or consciously, have a view of how people grow, integrate, and maintain anything “new” in their lives.

An examination of perspectives on human development and change is well-served by the four quadrants component of the integral (or AQAL) approach. It offers a powerful way to map the various beliefs about how to enable change in a human being’s life. Similar to Wilber (2000) mapping various therapeutic approaches in the field of psychology using the four quadrants, we will use the quadrants to locate the key perspectives held by various coaching schools. As is the case with any perspective, it shapes what a coach and client do and do not attend to or focus on during coaching sessions; it shapes the roles and the dynamic of the coaching relationship; it shapes what is looked for to discern if the desired progress has actually been made; and it shapes the actual method or approach that is used to provide coaching services. Although each school sincerely brings forth their

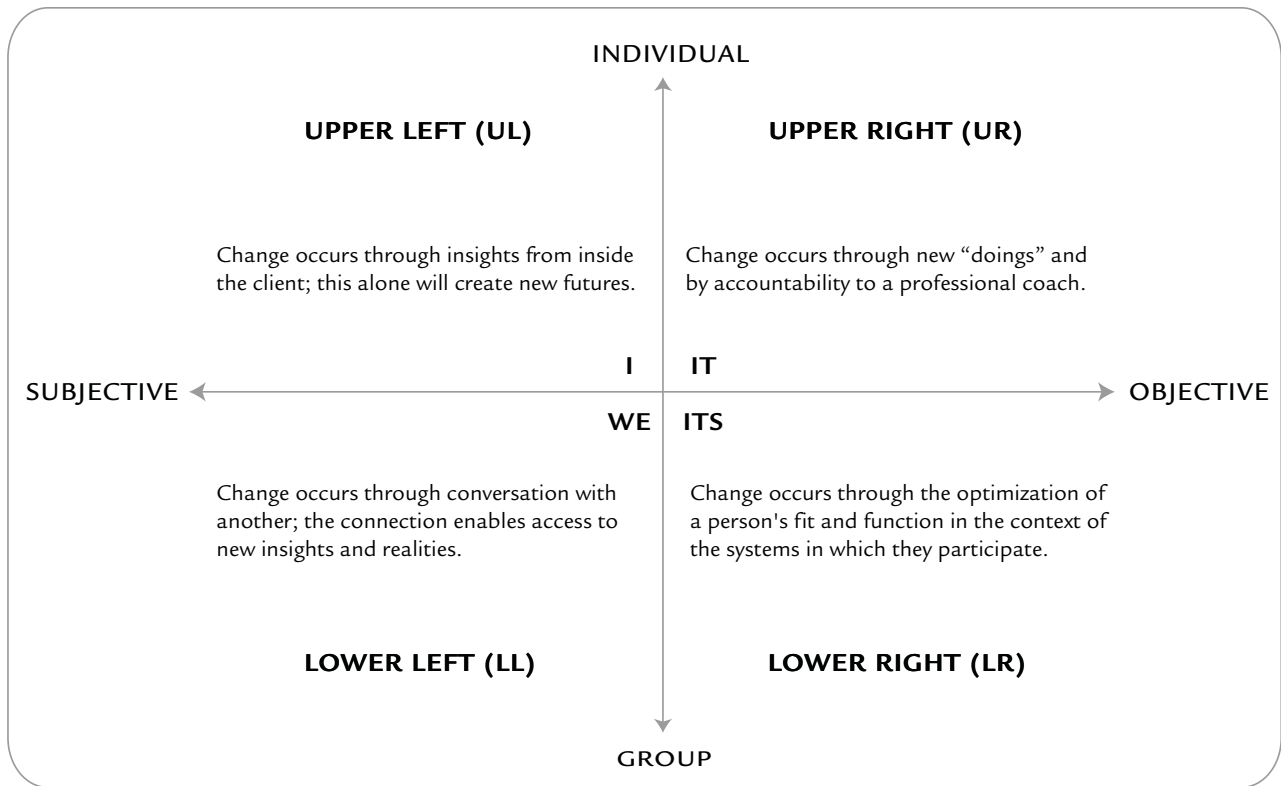


Figure 1. Common belief structures for change.

earnest comprehension of what it takes to bring about change in the prospective coaches and clients whom they serve, we have found that many approaches are partial. Typically, only one or two quadrants are focused on or privileged in a single coaching school. Figure 1 provides some of the most common perspectives of change subscribed to by various coaching schools.

My intent in this article is not to provide specific critiques of particular coaching schools. Rather, it is to provide a map that serves two functions. The first is to provide you with a way to examine views regarding what it really takes to bring about and sustain change, and the second is to provide a means to appreciate and distinguish what is included (and not) in any given coaching approach. When reading through this section, notice your own preferences and biases as well as consider what quadrants are included (or not) in the various coaching approaches with which you are familiar.

A school that approaches change from the Upper-Left (UL) perspective believes that change occurs through bringing what is unconscious or in the client's inner world into the conscious light, that answers reside in the deep wisdom that resides within each of us. Gaining access to this inherent inner knowledge and then following its guidance is how schools operating from this perspective view change. Stemming from this belief is a coaching approach that focuses on enabling clients to access their interior wisdom, learning to hear it, trust it, and give it voice.

The coach's role in this approach is to enable clients to reveal, unfurl, and connect to their own deeper beliefs, truths, and intelligences. Coaches hold the space and ask questions that open the client to their inner consciousness and potentially to a consciousness beyond the self. This requires the coach to refrain from offering their perspectives, as this would unduly influence the client in ways that counter the fundamental belief of this coaching approach. While clients build capacities such as deep internal wisdom, cognitive perspective-taking, and emotional understanding, they do not necessarily translate these interior capabilities to efficacy in their lives. In our view, the phenomenological roots of this coaching approach emphasize dimensions that are necessary to bring about and sustain change—inner awareness, reflection, and a more deeply sourced wisdom—but without attention to the other quadrants, it is incomplete, insufficient, and partial.

Schools that approach change from the Upper-Right (UR) perspective hold a belief that change occurs through taking deliberate action. No action, no result, no change. According to this view, change comes about by shifting what we physically do, how we behave, and how we speak. This behaviorism-based approach to change asserts that what we do shapes who we are. The strongest enablers of change from the perspective of this coaching approach are measurable actions, breakthrough results, stretch goals, and getting things done.

The coach's role is to help the client do just that: set behavioral goals, build action plans, and hold the client accountable to carrying out each step. Through motivation and/or challenge—carrot or stick—the coach's job is to get the client to accomplish the steps in their plan and achieve their stated goals. Clients gain strength and confidence when they get things done that they have never before been able to do. In our experience, clients coached from this perspective truly can experience substantial accomplishment, but they often become reliant on the coach's enthusiasm, motivating support, and action-planning capabilities versus building a self-sustaining competency within. We agree that the UR coaching model leverages an important component of sustaining change—taking action, developing new behaviors, demonstrating added skills, and achieving new results—but in isolation, it is partial.

Schools that approach coaching from a Lower-Left (LL) perspective are rooted in the belief that change is sparked by the interaction and shared meaning-making between individuals. They believe that conversation and the shared intersubjective understanding that naturally occur in a conversational space give rise to new thoughts and ideas that would not be possible alone. Grounded in hermeneutics, this LL approach believes that change does not occur until we are exposed to language that evokes a break, a crack, or a disruption in our own construct of meaning. This approach calls for the voice of an “other,” or the coach, so that through conversation the power of language can shift a client’s view of reality. This approach holds the coach’s role as being a conversational partner with the client, a “thinking partner” bringing forward new perspectives that are intended to serve as catalysts towards new client insights. The coach is also fully present with the client and stays attuned to follow threads that spontaneously arise. This approach advances both the client’s access to new ways of seeing as well as their capacity to be intimate while enjoying emergent conversation. Yet there is a risk of the client being unable to embody what he or she can so richly talk about. In our experience, the LL coaching model allows for key elements of human development—the capacity for shared meaning, intimacy, unique expression and insights, witnessing and being witnessed, and understood—but alone, however powerful, this approach is insufficient and partial.

Finally, we find that schools that orient from the Lower-Right (LR) perspective tend to approach change with the belief that change has to do with optimizing the function and fit of a client in the context of the overall system(s) in which they live. While the system discussed here may be the organization in which the client works, a LR approach would also include any other group or system, such as their family or community. For example, if there is not a good fit between the client’s skill sets and the roles, expectations, and operating structures of their organizational system, then the client most often has to adapt to better align with the system within which they want to contribute, develop effective ways to influence the system, or move to a system where there is a better fit.

The coach’s role in LR approaches requires a systems view in order to understand the style and requirements of the system and how to assess their client’s fit in the system. This will determine what is feasible for the client and what is not possible, barring systemic and structural changes. This step may involve such things as obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the organization (team structure, mandates, operating principles and procedures, relationships between players, etc.) as well as how the client fits into the organization (their role, functions, reporting structure, etc.). Depending on the results of this comprehensive view, the coach would work with the client to help them build the knowledge and capabilities needed to better contribute to the whole. This may include working with other organization members similarly, or if a successful fit does not look possible, the coach would assist the client in finding greater organizational congruence elsewhere. This approach enables the client to better understand the lay of the land, learn how they can influence the system, and/or discover an alternative system that could be a better fit. In our view, a LR coaching approach captures a critical aspect of realistic and substantive change—an understanding of the larger system, roles, expectations, and operational requirements—but as a sole focus, it is incomplete and partial.

All of the coaching schools that exist today can be mapped using the AQAL model. There are a myriad of combinations ranging from a school’s focus that is purely UL or LR to ones that are a combination of these views. Some schools emphasize the subjective quadrants (i.e., the UL and LL), engaging in deep meaningful connection and inquiry, forging a strong bond between coach and client—they believe that it is from this subjective side of the map that all is possible. Other schools focus on solely the objective quadrants (i.e., the UR and LR), valuing action, results, and systemic contribution. Some schools attend to only the lower quadrants believing that group dynamics, shared meaning, group structures, systems, and processes are the strongest influencers of change and human development. Still other schools attend to three of the four quadrants (e.g., the UL, LL, and

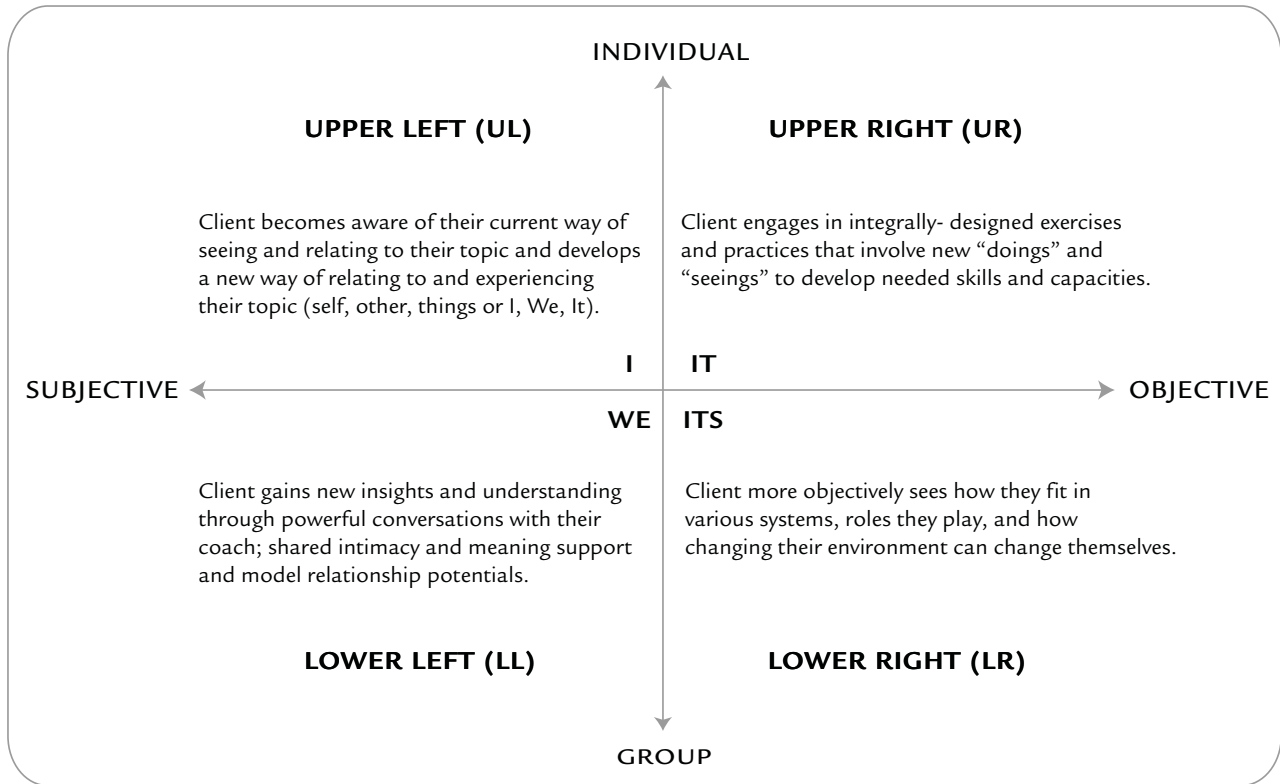


Figure 2. Integral Coaching® approach to change.

UR) without including the perspective of the LR, where optimal fit and function is an important dimension in affecting and sustaining change. Many combinations are possible, and yet very few offer a balanced attention to all four quadrants.

Integral Coaching® Approach to Change

An investigation of the underlying beliefs of these coaching approaches show that they are all right and they are all partial. The view that we hold for our Integral Coaching® approach is that for change to occur in a way that is embodied and sustained, the focus and attention needs to embrace and include all four perspectives of how change occurs. Furthermore, the quadrants need to be utilized in an interconnected fashion rather than as separate segments in a non-integrated way. See Figure 2 for the four-quadrant approach to change that we use in our Integral Coaching® method.

Without an approach that draws on all four quadrants, including a strong system of structural development, the client may have new insights and very powerful conversations with their coach, but limited sustainability in terms of action and embodiment. They may become reliant on their coach’s skillful guidance and perspectives. Over time, client growth also requires practices to develop necessary capabilities, the structure of a formal coaching contract or program to guide the coach and client’s work together, and a methodological framework that integrates all four quadrants into a coaching system that ensures these practices are based on all four perspectives.

Our Integral Coaching® approach employs a methodology that includes and enables the deep and penetrating insights that come to light through conversation, intimacy, and shared meaning (LL). Clients’ ways of seeing

and understanding greatly expand (UL) and systemic impact is readily examined and effectively worked with over time (LR). Muscle-building actions (UR) are on behalf of developing underlying capabilities needed to fully and skillfully function in this wider, broader landscape across all quadrants. With a comprehensive methodology such as this, the client tends to more easily trust the map of their coaching work. The structure of their coach's approach provides a strong, powerful, and safe container that allows the client to understand where they are, where they are headed, and the journey along the way.

Developmental Models and Coaching Methods

Having mapped various coaching approaches across the quadrants and shown how these four perspectives guide the way a coach works with a client, I will now turn to the next consideration: What developmental wisdom underlies the *method of coaching* utilized by different coaching schools? To what degree has developmental theory been investigated? Has a rigorous method been formulated that supports a particular developmental model? What are the key components of that method, and what is the process for carrying it out? The degree to which coaching schools have articulated a developmental model—let alone formulated a comprehensive methodology that brings the theory into actualized form—varies widely.

Developmental, systems-based, and rigorously-defined coaching methods anchored in research are critical missing components in most coaching schools. If you ask questions in order to reveal a school's method of coaching, most responses describe the *process* rather than the *method*: “First our coaches do this, then they do this, this is the path, this is how we get there.” An elucidation of the method driving the process is almost always missing. Even if one asks directly: But what is the method of development upon which the process is built, the most common reply lists the elements or components included in coaching in general. Responses may include words like practice, embodiment, insight, distinctions, reflection, connection, powerful questioning, deep listening, or witnessing, but none of these alone or in combination is a *method*. They are components of coaching conversations. They are not a coherent part of a comprehensive system. Unless, of course, the coaching method is defined as, “We just have coaching conversations.”

Looking at coaching conversations themselves can help illuminate the way in which a coaching school views development. Whether the school is aware of their approach or not, it shows up in the way or form through which their coaches conduct conversations with clients. A coaching conversation takes place between a client and a coach and is focused on what the client needs, wishes to develop, or longs for in their life. Conversations may include issues clients are facing at work or home, related topics of concern, or developmental opportunities. How the conversation takes shape directly relates to and is, in many ways, informed by the beliefs underlying a particular school's approach to change.

Indeed, many schools speak about coaching conversations rather than coaching methods. Items generally included in any coaching conversation are active listening, powerful questioning, and direct communication that can include bringing forward new perspectives. These are, in fact, International Coach Federation core competencies. However, most coaching schools do not have a particular method for operationalizing these competencies in a comprehensive framework of human development. The components do not sit in a “bucket” of what the conversation is supposed to be doing, let alone how and why. The competencies themselves end up being the map. One is left wondering: What is being done and how does the coach know if it is going well for the client or not? Depending on the coach's own AQAL Constellation™ (their unique profile of quadrants, levels, lines, states, and types), the answer is vastly different, especially if coaches have not been trained to see their own preferences, biases, and related views. There may be great conversations between a coach and client, but usually the developmental map that core competencies rest in is not well defined.

One can well imagine the different tenor of conversations led by a coach from an UR coaching approach versus a LL school of thought. Furthermore, as a unique human being, the individual coach will have his or her unique quadrant orientation—a topic explored in depth in Laura Divine’s article (pp. 21-40 in this issue)—which affects how the coach orients through a particular quadrant and translates the remaining three quadrants. Quadrant orientation bias is especially noticeable if the coaching school has a loosely defined conversational approach, without a robust method within which various types of coaching conversations are held, without a process that is clear for both the coach and the client, and without explicitly defined and developed capabilities of the coach to effectively carry out the developmental model employed.

Coaching Conversations

Let us explore coaching conversations, as they are a fundamental part of the coaching discipline. Certainly we can agree that all coaching conversations have a beginning (opening connection, quick update, and how are you?), a middle (where the majority of time is spent), and an ending (agreeing on next date, next steps, confirming actions, if any, new perspectives, if any, expression of thanks, etc.). What unfolds in the middle of a conversation is quite different depending on the coach and the approach they employ. Figure 3 provides a glimpse into how the middle of conversations can sound depending on the view of change advocated by a particular coaching school as originating in the UL, UR, LL, or LR quadrant.

If a coach conducts the middle or bulk of the conversation from the UL perspective, then they will most likely ask questions aimed at evoking a client’s interior: how they react to a new frame, how they feel about a new seeing, and how it affects who they take themselves to be. Coaches who approach change through this quadrant

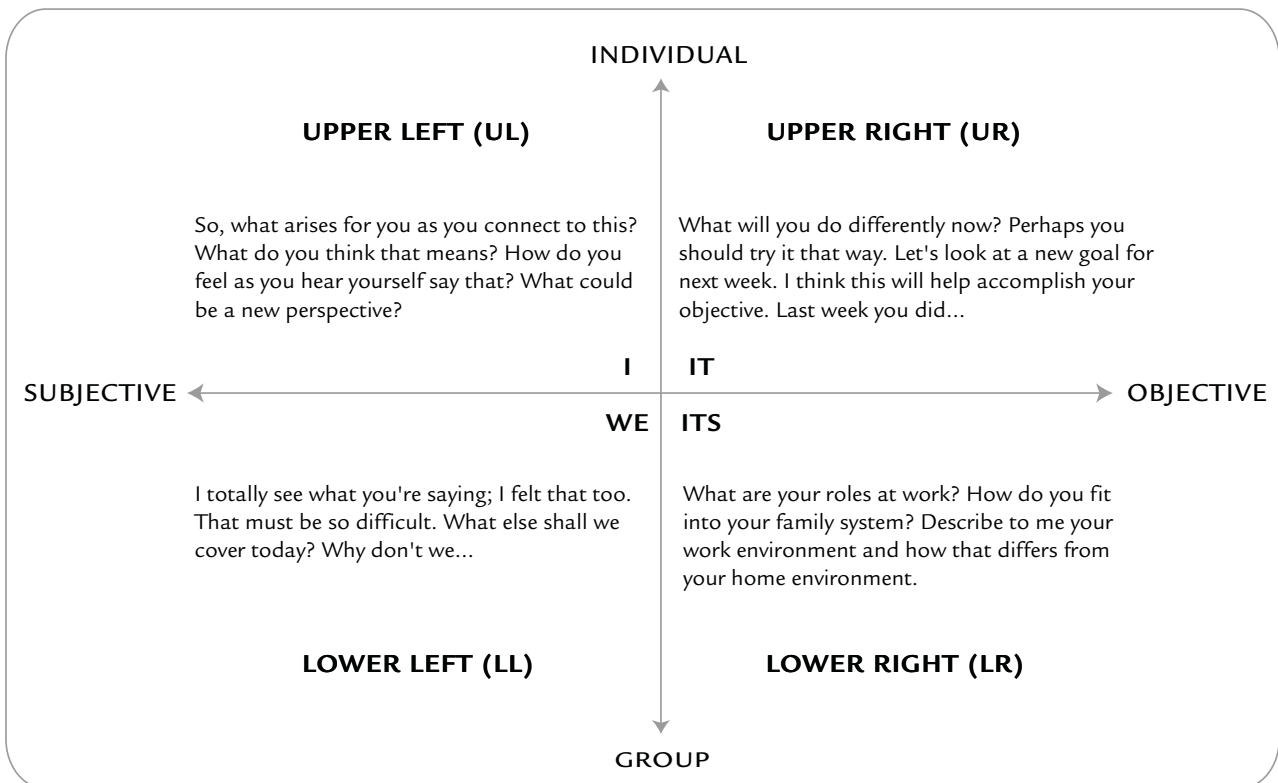


Figure 3. The “middle” of four different coaching conversations.

do not tend to bring forward their own thoughts or assessments—as mentioned above, they primarily see their role as an enabler for the client’s interior wisdom to be brought into the light and expanded through skillful questioning. Through this frame, a coach does not tend to offer structured, well-defined practices or exercises in the UR to support the client in structurally engaging with a new insight. Who am I to suggest what the client should do? UL-leaning coaches trust that insight will naturally and organically become embodied as the client moves through the world. In our view, this is a partial truth. Over time, a client will develop; that is a human phenomenon. But, a coach can also work to alleviate suffering by employing an all-quadrant approach sooner and with greater consciousness.

Furthermore, not only is an integral approach fundamental to a complete coaching inquiry, but also to understanding client responses. The client’s answers arise from their unique way of framing the world, and therefore sit in a container that by its very nature strives for both transcendence (Eros) and communion (Agape). Self-identity fights to be maintained in its current structure, and will color the client’s responses and reactions to coaching inquiry. Responses from a client to any question posed are always answered from the vantage point of their unique AQAL Constellation™. This Constellation gives rise to a client’s Current Way of Being (CWOB). This CWOB includes all of who they are at that moment in time: their way of seeing (perceptions, feelings, thoughts), their way of going (words and actions), and their way of checking for how things are going (results or consequences).

New insights, perspectives, or expanded views are still processed through the client’s current AQAL Constellation™. New seeing is primarily a function of the mind grasping something new. It is not yet embodied as a lived experience, although many clients do feel, “Now that I see it, I must be it.” Ah-ha moments are, in essence, state experiences, but that does not mean that what is seen or realized is stably lived at that moment in time. Competency or capacity building is associated with all four quadrants; insight alone does not lead to change.

However, many coaches take the wise answers to UL questions or rich co-creative LL conversations as indicators of embodiment versus indicators of cognitive understanding. These are two different things. Without getting to know and work with their CWOB through structured, integrated practices as they transcend and include a longed-for New Way of Being (NWOB), we are left with mind snacks—delicious, insightful, meaningful. But not embodied.

If the middle of a coaching conversation rests in an UR orientation, the focus is on planning, reports of action taken, and required future steps. The available amount of energy and how to increase capacity is also a common concern. While we concur that it is necessary to take action, the UR does not provide an UL ability to understand the complexity associated with trying on new behaviors: “Why do I resist doing this but not that? Why do I always leave this for the bottom of my list but this other item always gets done? Why did I not get done what I agreed to do?” Similarly, the client may have struggled with behavioral change in response to his or her way of engaging in key relationships (LL) or systems (LR), and will be unlikely to make true progress unless those “collective” quadrants are included. A typical accountability session conducted from the UR perspective may also include a client reporting to their coach that they were unable to carry out an action. A coach who responds with, “Let’s talk about how committed you are to this or not?” is resting in an UR focus on action with a singular meaning-making perspective of getting things done through commitment and willpower.

If the middle of a coaching conversation rests in the LL, clients often feel that their coach “really gets them” and the conversations are supportive, valuable, and insightful. Clients can have a hard time imagining ever

being without their coach. The idea of having a solely UR plan of action and then a conclusion to the coaching relationship is not within this particular frame of holding change, which includes having a thinking partner for as long as the client is in a particular position. Clients often truly value the intimacy, support, and deeply shared meaning associated with their work together. However, when you ask a client specifically to speak about what has actually changed in their lives as a result of their coaching relationship, many times they are not able to point to many explicit actions or results. They tend to respond more subjectively, “Everything has changed. I am so fortunate to have another person to consult with and I really appreciate her support.”

In summary, coaching approaches that orient from one or a few quadrants are inherently partial. Enabling new actions (UR) without consideration of the impact on the systems in which the client resides (LR), on the shared space of relationships (LL), or on his or her own unique interpretations (UL) puts at risk sustainability and true embodiment of change. Similarly, schools that take an Upper Quadrants approach (through UR actions in support of arising UL insights) can leave clients with many “seeings and doings” without a system or map to hold it all together. Similar conclusions can be drawn about Right-Hand or Left-Hand approaches. As Wilber (2000, p. 113) has aptly stated, “Cripple one quadrant and all four tend to hemorrhage.”

The beliefs regarding what it takes for change to occur set the formation of a coaching approach in motion. These beliefs also influence the degree to which a developmental model is considered and/or defined, a comprehensive method is formulated, and a process for the method is operationalized. In our view, all of these approaches have relevance and respond to important human needs for support, guidance, and companionship in development. However, in our estimation, the approaches arising from partial assumptions regarding how change occurs and the lack of coherent methods and processes in coaching systems leave clients not as well served as is possible with a full integral approach.

What Laura and I have been (and continue to be) interested in is building a coaching approach that provides the best opportunity for a client to actually make, sustain, and embody change in a way that contributes to their unique developmental journey. The following sections describe the coaching approach we have built based upon the belief that for translation and transformation to occur, not only must we include a four-quadrant view of change, but the approach itself needs to be fully AQAL (all-quadrants, all-levels, all-lines, all-states, and all-types). This includes the developmental model our Integral Coaching® is guided by as well as the comprehensive method itself. We started with the question: How do you bring a “transcend and include” developmental model into coaching? And the answer has been: through a truly integral application.

Our Transcend and Include Development Model

Coaching is a “present to future” orienting discipline, with many approaches placing a strong emphasis on the future component: development, growth, and forward-focused change. Many coaching schools focus on the “gap” between here (today) and there (future). Often coaching clients are working towards new goals, new insights, new work, and/or a new life, and as such, “new” or “next” is the focus of most coaching work. There are unmet or emerging desires that span from succeeding in a new executive assignment to being a better parent; from supporting an Integral Life Practice to being less authoritarian; from life is not proceeding how I want to life is not as meaningful as I would have hoped; from wanting to change jobs to being less stressed in my current job. As you would expect, the fully free human being has future aspirations that cover a vast spectrum of longings, dreams, and desires.

The coaching industry contributes to the prevailing “not-there-yet” climate prevalent in the fields of personal and professional development and therefore, in our clients as well. This includes dreams not met, goals not

achieved, and a sense of still more to do, learn, and be. The gap between here and there for most clients is significant. And, of course, for people living a life that includes active and ongoing conscious development, there will always be a gap. Both personal and cultural evolution requires one to lean into this gap and continue to move forward. And the field of professional coaching may be one of the contributors to the development fatigue that plagues our current lives. *Not done yet. Never done.* This can actually be a very freeing view of growth at later stages of development. However, for the majority of people, it is a tiring time of opportunity as they also long for solace, rest, and stillness.

You can feel it even in the human potential movement. The drive for vertical development, new, and next can be greater than the drive for here, now, and the embodied me already at home today. How do I integrate this me—already here—in a healthy way? How can I work with her abilities and limitations with skillful means? Why is the focus only on the future me? What about being fully aware and present to the current me already living my life? Working with our current capacities and capabilities leaves much to be done and it is important to be with the “what is” of my life and not just the “what is possible”: we need to attend to both. Coaching supports striving for achievement and growth (orange altitude) and sensitivity and openness to all forms of development and transformation (green altitude). Healthy integral development, however, includes the “what is” of ourself (this current me) and not just transcending to a future me.

Healthy inclusion is a critical component of Integral Coaching®. In our decades in coaching, we have not found another coaching school whose coaching methods, processes, or development practices formally include a view that the “current me” is the ground from which a “new me” will grow—we value the present, not just the future, in this “present-to-future” paradigm. Integral Coaching® supports a client’s healthy transcendence to the next developmental locale while also including the place where they currently stand. It is this CWOB (Current Way of Being) that is usually unseen and unconscious to us and our clients. Our CWOB has a structure and a way of seeing, taking action, and checking how things are going. This way of seeing, going, and checking is distinct for each client and is manifesting in the world whether the client is aware of it or not. And, as is true with most systems, this CWOB will fight to maintain itself even if change or a NWOB (New Way of Being) is deeply desired. Like a transplanted heart deposited in the chest of a deeply grateful human being, the first response of the body is to reject the foreign object, even if it will save our life. Integral Coaches™ provide support and structure to help clients through natural resistance such that over time, new ways are embodied, which includes getting intimate with our embodied current ways.

Our CWOB drives where we sit when we walk into a classroom, who we gravitate to or are distant from, whether we choose to sit or stand, dive into projects or hold back, what we notice and do not, and how we check on how are things going. A CWOB is unique and arises from a client’s AQAL Constellation™. And, like a fingerprint, it is not repeatable in anyone else. This is why a particular position in a company can have a clear job description in writing, but John (the new guy) will fill that role in a very different way than Alice who just left. John and Alice will each have a unique way of seeing, going, and checking in relation to the same job description. John has been described as a racing boat captain with firm hold of the wheel. Alice has often been referred to as an oak tree sheltering her team with a strong sense of right and wrong. A race boat captain has a very different way of seeing, going, and checking. And one can well imagine that Alice’s departure and John’s entry will significantly affect everyone on the team!

The strong “present” of a CWOB is a comprehensive unification of all past moments, a culmination of who and what we have been up until the current moment. As such, it is important for a developmental system to acknowledge its power and resiliency. The muscles of this CWOB have been uniquely honed to support our

current manifestation. Whether we are aware of it or not, these capabilities exist to support a particular and needed way of being in the world. Integral Coaching® pays attention to the strength of the present manifestation, by both honoring it and utilizing its skills and capacities, while at the same time attending to the aspects of the CWOB that do not support a client’s development in the coaching topic that is the focus of their work. A singular focus on the “bright and new future” only attends to half of a client’s developmental reality—it does not attend to the developmental tension between the “current me” and the “future me” that rests in the present moment. Attending to the future alone creates much dissonance and leaves gaps in development over time.

The tension between the past and future realities is readily seen in organizations. Consider a new leader who speaks prolifically about the new, shiny future without acknowledging the present; he does not honor the company’s past actions, triumphs, and failures that brought it to where it is today (thank you, very much). The situation is the same for coaches; the client has survived and thrived in their own unique “past to present” without the help of a coach. And it is this strong past that enables a client to look toward a new future and seek the support of a coach.

In a developmental sense, getting to know, honor, fully see, and work with a client’s CWOB is necessary if the healthy aspects of this current way are to be included in the client’s next iteration of himself. As Wilber stated (personal communication, December 2, 2008), “Healthy translation leads to healthy transformation.” Working healthily with the current manifestation of a client enables them to develop a conscious capacity to understand why they do what they do, say what they say, and respond to everyday situations in the manner that they have gotten so used to. This manifestation includes the great and not so great aspects as well as the ability to discern what is to be honored and honed, as well as what is to be let go of in the transcending. In our system, working with the CWOB also enables the client to work healthily with its limiting aspects (i.e., the parts that they are outgrowing, shadow elements, and aspects of themselves that are no longer serving a call to a fuller and freer self). Compassionate openness to the pain and beauty of the CWOB modeled by the Integral Coach™, and key to our coaching model, allows the client to witness himself more fully without running, denying, or suppressing aspects in fear or shame. Many coaching schools focus on discarding and improving only. Our Integral Coaching® method provides a much-needed platform for clients to “get real” but without judgment or force in holding their feet to the fire. As Pema Chodron stated (2001, p. 27), “If this process of clear seeing isn’t based on self-compassion it will become a process of self-aggression.” Spiritual and moral lines of development along with the cognitive, emotional, somatic, and interpersonal lines create a further integral cascade that allows self-awareness and change to flourish and become embodied.

In summary, Integral Coaching Canada works with two concepts of “me” that exist simultaneously: a “current me” and a “future or new me.” Both of these identities have a way of being that includes: 1) a way of seeing, perceiving, and making sense of; 2) a way of going that includes actions, words, interactions, “doings”; and 3) a way of checking or gauging if the results or consequences of actions are a success or failure, a happy result or sad one, good or bad, and so on. Each of us has a CWOB and we all grow into NWOB in repeated and ever-widening cycles over our developmental lifetime. Integral Coaching® builds the capacities and capabilities to grow into a NWOB while also working to integrate the healthy aspects of our CWOB as we transcend and include it.

Integral Coaching® Application of Subject-Object Theory

The next section will examine how we use subject-object theory as a foundational element in our “transcend and include” Integral Coaching® method. Ken Wilber’s many publications have elaborated on this develop-

mental path where what is subject at one level becomes object of the subject at the next level.¹ In *The Atman Project*, we find the following summary statement:

At each point in psychological growth, we find:

1. A higher-order structure emerges in consciousness (with the help of symbolic forms);
 2. The self identifies its being with that higher structure;
 3. The next higher-order structure eventually emerges;
 4. The self dis-identifies with the lower structure and shifts its essential identity to the higher structure;
 5. Consciousness thereby transcends the lower structure;
 6. And becomes capable of operating on that lower structure from the higher-order level;
 7. Such that all preceding levels can then be integrated in consciousness.
- (Wilber, 1980, p. 94)

We would depict this using Integral Coaching® language by saying that a client comes to coaching longing for change in an aspect of their life. Through interaction with their Integral Coach™, the client comes to see both their CWOB (through symbol or metaphor) and all that their CWOB has allowed for in their life up until now. They also clearly see the aspects of this CWOB that are preventing them from manifesting in a new form. This is the first step in the self dis-identifying with their lower structure.

Then, the client is exposed to a NWOB (through metaphor or symbol), and the client identifies strongly with that higher self and the structure of that self (its ways of seeing, going, and checking) as it emerges. This is the beginning of the client becoming conscious of and identifying with a higher order structure or their NWOB. Throughout formal cycles of development during the course of coaching, the client engages in a dual approach of building the capacity to witness and healthily integrate the CWOB as they simultaneously build new capabilities to embody the NWOB in their lives. Through this structured, integral developmental process, the client progressively dis-identifies with their CWOB and shifts their essential identity to the NWOB. They are still able to draw upon the strengths and capacities from their CWOB, but they now do so from the vantage point and capabilities associated with their NWOB.

This process of including and transcending is used in Integral Coaching Canada’s methodology in vertical (transformation) and horizontal (translation) development for, in fact, they are intimately related. Filling out our horizontal capacities and getting familiar and competent in the whole territory increases the probability of vertical movement. When we speak about horizontal capacities we are referring to exploring the whole terrain arising from a client’s current AQAL Constellation™, which includes not just their level of consciousness (structure-stage) but also their lines-of-development profile and quadrant competencies as well as the effects of quadrant orientation, the ability to experience and work with various states (both state-stage development and moment-to-moment healthy state access), gender development capacities, the current manifestation of their Enneagram type structure, and so on.² Working with this full set of AQAL lenses is more fully addressed in Laura Divine’s “A Unique View Into You” article (pp. 41-67 in this issue). Horizontal capacities involve working with all aspects of a client’s CWOB, including shadow elements. In so doing, a client fills out the territory, addresses shadow elements arising in this current form—hopefully contributing to less “kids in the basement” issues in the future—and fully claims the talents and skills associated with who they are at this moment in time.³

It is important to point out that we hold these transcend and include cycles as microgenetic and not macro-level stage movement. In other words, our view is that there are multiple cycles of development within altitude or structure-stage. So, as you explore our method more fully, be assured that we are not proposing that a six or ten month coaching relationship will produce a shift in level of consciousness, although coaching work definitely supports this occurrence when clients are at the exit phase within a level. Our Integral Coaching® method also provides evidence for shifts within level from an entry phase (what we term *wobbly*) to a solid phase and from this solid phase to an exit phase (what we term *disintegrating*). This is further elucidated in “A Unique View Into You” (pp. 41-67 in this issue).

In developing our coaching method, we also drew from subject-object theory principles that can be briefly translated into Integral Coaching® terms as follows: When I live from a certain way of seeing, going, and checking (my CWOB), I am not usually aware that I am operating from this place. It simply is “me.” It is the “me” who I take myself to be. Being blind to me, I am the subject; I live as subject. It is my “am-ness,” my identity, “me.” This is referred to as my proximate self and I cannot see it as object.

Development opportunities arise when this unconscious driver starts to become visible. I (subject) become seen by me and begin to develop capabilities to work with this “me” (object) fully, consciously, and openly aware. Once “I” become seen by me, I am no longer fully identified as the “I” (first-person subjective) and movement, therefore, has already begun in the developmental path toward “I” becoming “me” (first-person objective) or “my” (first-person possessive) over time. I can notice “my” thoughts or “my” feelings but they are not all of who I take myself to be because I am also the one doing the noticing. Within a coaching frame, I can, with greater awareness, more fully attend to my own development.

The initial shift occurs in the “ah-ha moment” of seeing my CWOB, usually offered by the coach through a metaphor or image. *Oh, there I am!* In this moment, I glimpse me as object and this represents the first move from proximate “I” (total subject) to distal “me” (partially object). Per above, this distal “me” refers to the *part of me* that I can see as object. Of course, at this first moment, I am still living through the reality of my CWOB so, in essence, I am seeing my CWOB through my CWOB. In other words, at the moment that I have the ah-ha experience associated with seeing my CWOB, that is the exact moment of initial progression from proximate to distal, subject to partially-objectified subject. An ah-ha moment is a product of this first shift! Over time, subject becomes more and more fully object and object is consciously worked with as I dis-identify with it. As my NWOB becomes more embodied, I can look back and see my “old self” and its related attributes fully as object. As I transcend and include, I have the ability to work with my old CWOB through the seeing, going, and checking capabilities of my NWOB. The subject at one level has become the object of the subject at the next level, and I have taken responsibility for the healthy inclusion of my CWOB in that development.

Phases of Development in Integral Coaching Canada’s Method

Now that we have reviewed the foundation of our Integral Coaching® method with respect to key aspects of integral theory, transcendence and inclusion, and subject-object relations, let us turn to how these components manifest in the phases of client development as understood and applied through Integral Coaching Canada.

Current Way as Subject (not yet visible to client)

- The Current Way of Being (CWOB) is the client’s current manifestation in the world. It is an unconscious driver in the client’s life. (Subject: proximate self or “I”)

Current Way as Object (first made visible to the client as partially-objectified subject moving to object over the course of coaching work)

- Once the CWOB metaphor is offered to the client, the CWOB becomes visible and accessible. It becomes an “object” that the client can now be in relation to and dis-identify with as they work with new practices and reflection exercises to become more effective with its historical pulls. (Partial object: distal self or “me/ my”)

New Way as Object (a future self that starts as an object seen by the current self and becomes subject over time)

- The client also works with the developmental capacities necessary to build their New Way of Being (NWOB). They identify with this NWOB and its expansion of seeing, going, and checking capacities. Embodiment is built through structured cycles of development, including AQAL model-based practices and exercises. Over time, this NWOB will become “subject” and the next driver of the client’s life.

Transcend and Include

- The CWOB never disappears, nor should it. This is a radical departure methodologically from most coaching schools that focus only on the future or the “gap” between here (now) and there (future). Our CWOB lives inside our next level of development (vertical or horizontal). Building new capacities to work with what has been an unconscious driver of our life is as deeply constructive as building capacities towards a NWOB.

As the NWOB becomes embodied over time, the client is able to work with their CWOB aspects through the capacities of their NWOB, thus transcending and including as they develop.

This dual-mode development is extremely powerful. It allows the client to identify where they are in any given moment: whether they are drawing on their CWOB or their NWOB, when it is appropriate to draw from which one, and when they are being pulled strongly in one direction or another. Working actively with your CWOB and NWOB calls for being awake, knowing where you are, and bringing this consciousness to your manifestation in the world. This ability has huge and immediate impacts on a client’s life.

Figure 4 provides a pictorial representation of the transcend and include developmental model used by Integral Coaching Canada. At the beginning of a coaching relationship, a client is living fully from his CWOB (indicated by the dark grey circle). Over the duration of a coaching contract, the client builds capacities that enable him to better work with his CWOB so that its capabilities can be drawn on when necessary. Over time, the strength of this way of being decreases, and it is no longer the unconscious driver of his life. At the same time, the client is building capacities to support his NWOB (represented as the white circle). Over time, the client builds the capacities to live more and more from this expanded future while incorporating healthy aspects and addressing shadow aspects of his CWOB. At some point during the coaching relationship, the two come together in a true transcend and include developmental shift (indicated by the gray circles within the white circles). And, of

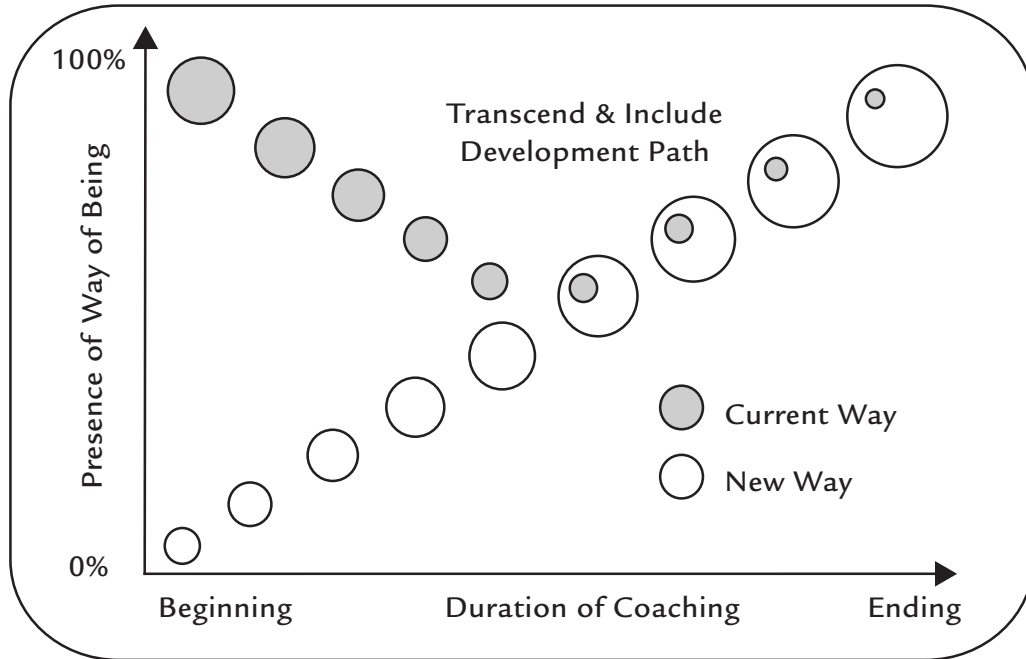


Figure 4. One transcend and include development cycle.

course, at some point in the future, the NWOB will become familiar, taken for granted, not-at-all new anymore, and will form a new subject or a CWOB ready for the next cycle of development.

Figure 5 provides a snapshot of what multiple development cycles look like over time. We go through many transcend and include cycles within a particular altitude. (The numerous cycles within a given level of consciousness account for the vast differences that exist within horizontal development.) Enabling horizontal

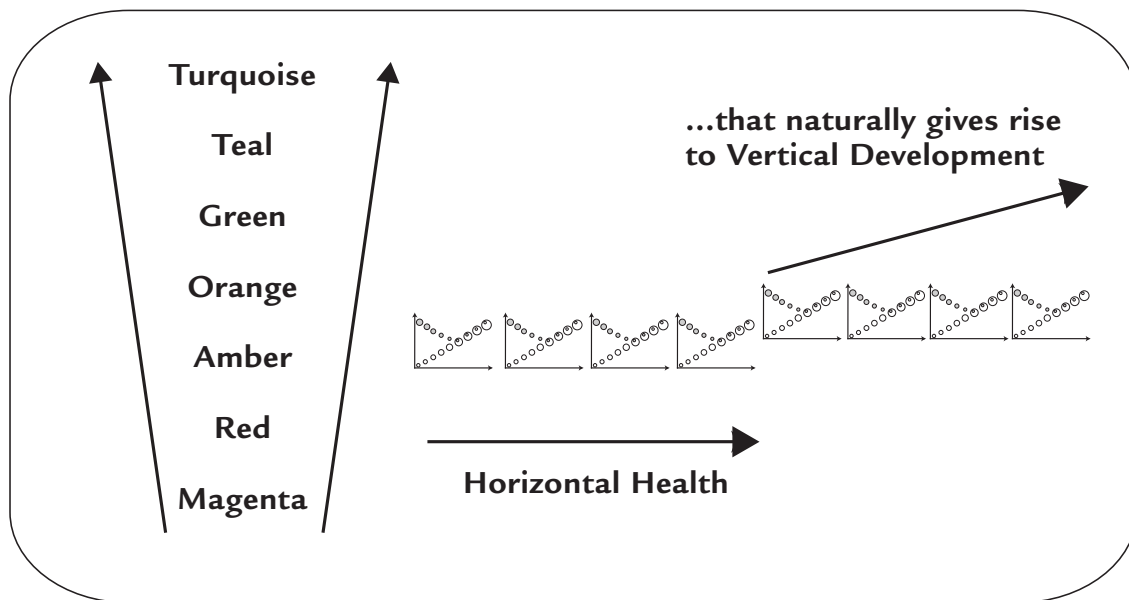


Figure 5. Repeating cycles of transcend and include development.

health involves very different approaches when an altitude first becomes available to us, to when it stabilizes, and to when it starts to disintegrate as a next altitude enters our field of awareness. In our Integral Coaching® work, horizontal health does not only address balancing the quadrants at a particular phase in a client’s level of consciousness but also attending to the healthy development associated with their Enneagram type structure, feminine and masculine capacities, necessary lines to support their coaching topic, access to supportive state shifts, and so on. In this way, we are building AQAL health at any particular level.

Integral Coaching Canada’s Coaching Process

As stated earlier, a coaching school’s process directly depends on their conscious or unconscious conceptions of how change occurs: some engage in conversations only, some in action planning only, and some in simply ensuring that International Coach Federation core competencies are included as elements of each conversation (powerful questions, active listening, etc.). Very few have a LR system that makes coherent sense of all these seemingly disparate yet related components. For example, some schools may view a written formal coaching program for a client as a “system” or map of development. Without it resting in a larger developmental system and LR coaching process, however, such a document is simply a list of things to do or accomplish (UR). For most schools, development systems are not defined and elements of coaching are randomly drawn upon. A compilation of a set of particular elements is presented as a coaching “system,” but, in actuality, these

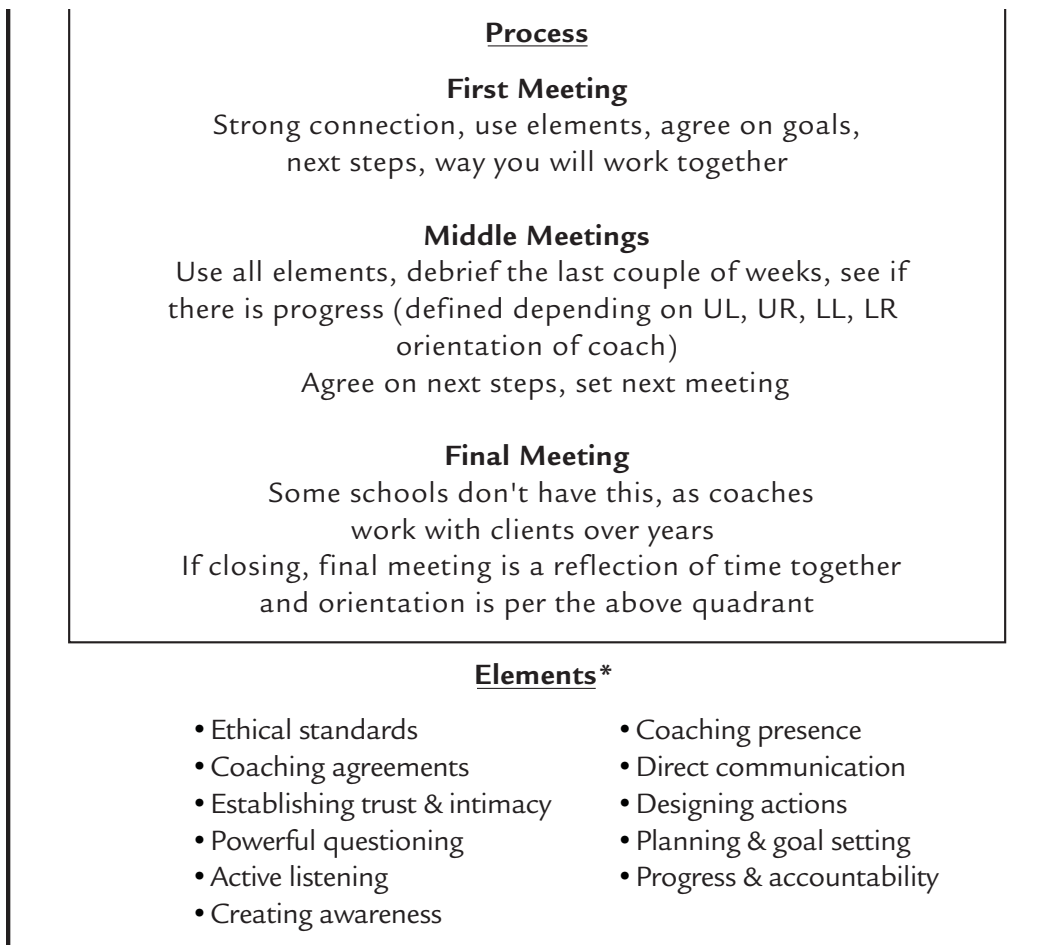


Figure 6. Generic coaching process and ICF core coaching competencies.

*Elements are the 11 International Coach Federation (ICF) Coaching Competencies.

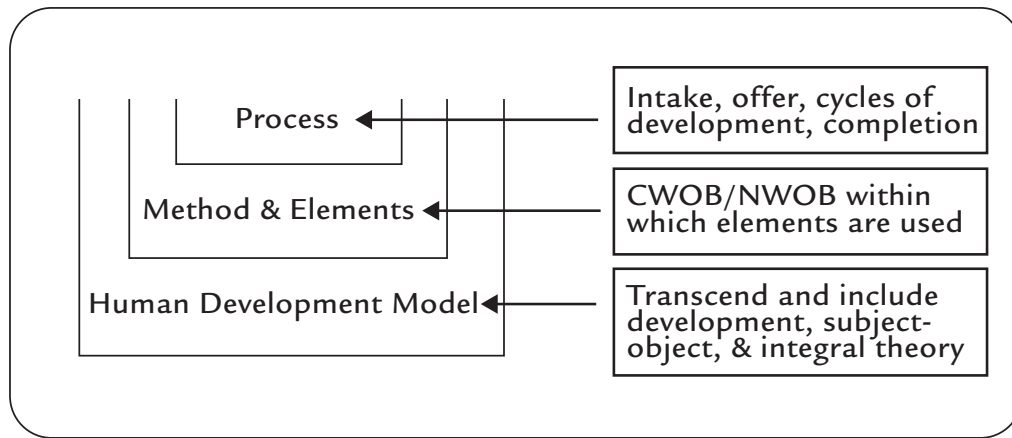


Figure 7. Integral Coaching Canada's nested system.
CWOB—Current Way of Being; NWOB—New Way of Being.

“systems” are a weak collection of separate elements. Figure 6 provides a broad or *generic* process that many coaching schools use and the core coaching competencies as defined by the International Coach Federation. These competencies are basic elements that are used throughout a coaching relationship.

An Integral Coaching® system includes and transcends Figure 6 by providing a strong LR structure and processes within which the elements come alive and are more profoundly defined. Integral Coaching Canada has a complex methodology, developmental foundation, training architecture, and curriculum that are all based on integral theory. Our methodology is an explicit system that enacts embodied developmental change. Furthermore, as seen in Figure 7, there is a process through which the coach and client journey. It is a dynamic and rigorous process that rapidly produces shifts in the client and deeply longed for manifestation. The widest “bucket” in Figure 7 is the human developmental theory upon which we have built our Integral Coaching® method. From that profound foundation arise the methodological elements, including working both with a client’s CWOB and their NWOB. The elements (from Fig. 6) such as “active listening” live within the powerful CWOB/NWOB methodology. The final “bucket” defines the actual process to carry out this method. There are four distinct types of coaching conversations, per Figure 7: Intake Coaching Conversation, Offer Coaching Conversation, Cycles of Development Coaching Conversations, and Completion Coaching Conversation.

In this article I have elucidated the underlying developmental and methodological foundations for Integral Coaching Canada’s human development model, introduced our Integral Coaching® method that arose from these foundations, and briefly identified the four types of conversations that arise from this foundation and method. My “Transformational Conversations” article (pp. 69-92 in this issue) will address how our method comes alive through different types of conversations that occur between coaches and clients.

Conclusion

Our process of building a coaching school based on integral theory has led us to include adult development models, subject-object theory, as well as many other sources of research. We continue to be amazed at the results that are realized by clients through such a coherent approach. These results are also directly related to the way we train our coaches to be able to embody this complexity. Not only is our coaching method integral in its design, but our Integral Coaching® Certification Program is also integral in its architecture. Our training focuses on integration and embodiment as we endeavor to elegantly bring the AQAL model into a practice that

serves humanity and alleviates suffering. We continually strive to achieve the very high standard of building the following capacities in the coaches who train with Integral Coaching Canada:

The Mind of an Integral Coach™—This development includes the necessary cognitive understanding of the AQAL model that serves as the backbone of our work, the rigorous application of the transcend and include coaching method (with its inherent understanding of subject-object theory), and the process wisdom to seamlessly carry out what it necessary to support another unique and complex human being.

The Heart of an Integral Coach™—This component includes the emotional and psychodynamic health of the coach, full and awakened responsibility for the manifestation of their own AQAL Constellation™, deep work in effectively working with their own CWOB and arising NWOB, shadow work associated with their individual development path throughout the program, and emotional capacities to hold the deep suffering and joy of other human beings, including the necessary life practices to build this embodied and loving presence.

The Body of an Integral Coach™—This element includes the complex somatic awareness and cultivation associated with embodying this deep work of supporting self and others, the range of expressions and experiences available (gross, subtle, causal), and the container (including strength, diet, fitness) to hold the full complexity of another human being with somatic patience, presence, and courage.

The Relations of an Integral Coach™—This fourth component addresses the right and healthy interpersonal relationships of a coach, which includes the profound knowing of self in relation to others, shadow elements, projections, and attractions. It includes the ability to compassionately hold human beings in fullness and freedom, not too loosely and not too tightly, and the ability to say difficult things because the crucible of relationship has been built with trust, openness, sensitivity, and love. Present in our coaches is a deep humility in the face of being given the opportunity to support other human beings in their one “wild and precious life” (Oliver, 1990, p. 60).

The Spirit of an Integral Coach™—This element includes exploring the spiritual foundation of each coach, in whatever form that takes. Coaches are able to rest in a wider net, sink into the experience of non-separation, relax into the ground of being, experience the natural desire to alleviate suffering for self and others, and healthily act through their unique form of answering a call to be of service.

The Morals of an Integral Coach™—This final element defines what it means to engage in ethical conduct with clients, to follow “right action” while in service, to know what motivates decisions to act or speak in a particular way, and to uphold the Integral Coaching® Professional Code of Conduct upon graduation. “What am I to do?” is the deep question for this component and it is fully explored throughout our coach training.

This is a rigorous integral system. And it is an intuitive integral system. We have developed a meticulous method and process to guide coaches through each step of working with clients while also enabling both to

draw on their creative and intuitive capacities—because, as human beings, we naturally intuit all the time. We often refer to the strong back or spine of a coach as the rigorous part of our developmental model. The front of the coach is the soft animal of our being, our intuition, our compassion, our sensing, our ability to connect, our capacity to love. Our programs are designed to bring both forward equally: rigor and love; challenge and support. Science meets soul and the Integral Coaching® dance continues.

NOTES

¹ References to subject-object development are found in many of Ken Wilber's books, including *The Atman Project* (1980); *Sex, Ecology, and Spirituality* (1995); *A Brief History of Everything* (1996); and *Integral Psychology* (2000), to name a few.

² At Integral Coaching Canada we have found the work of Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz (2004) to be a great resource for understanding the role of everyday waking states in coaching work.

³ Wilber has referred to unclaimed aspects of development arising in later stages in moments of disintegration under stress. For example, he has referred to heading home for Christmas with family as a true test of whether our younger stage issues have been resolved fully. And, of course, as we continue to transform we are able to bring a more complete tool kit to the table working with seemingly intractable issues through a wider frame.

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