

Session 28: Power, authority and culture

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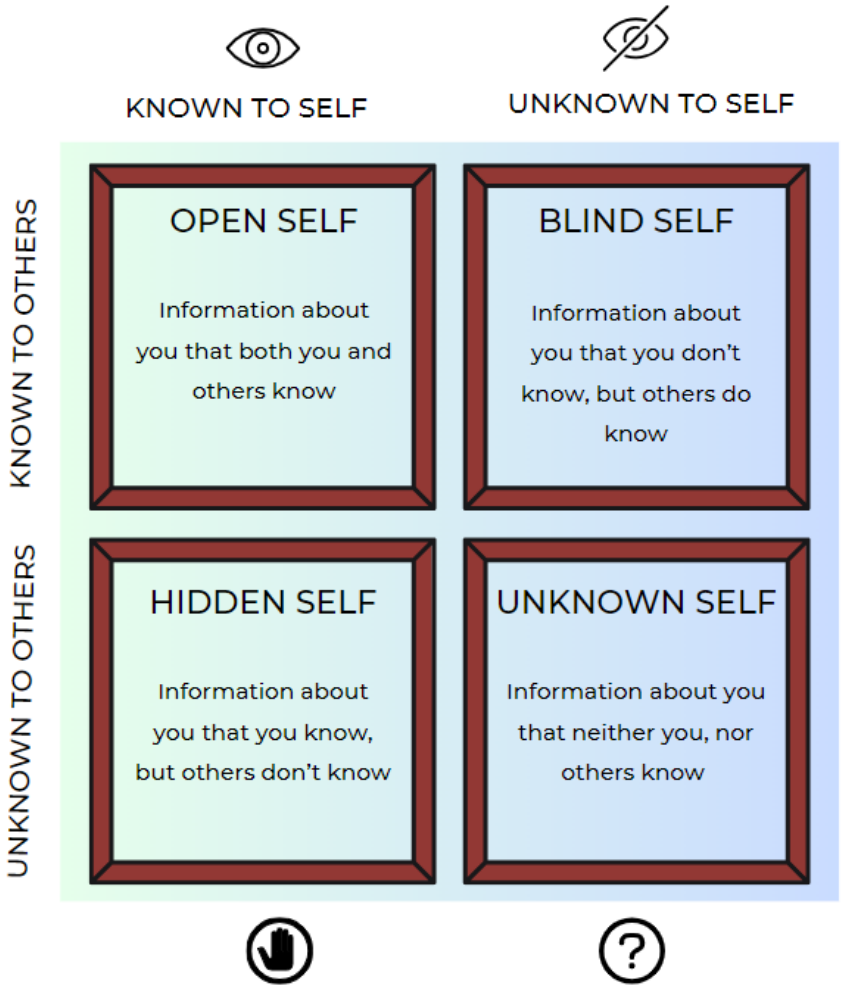
Today we are exploring

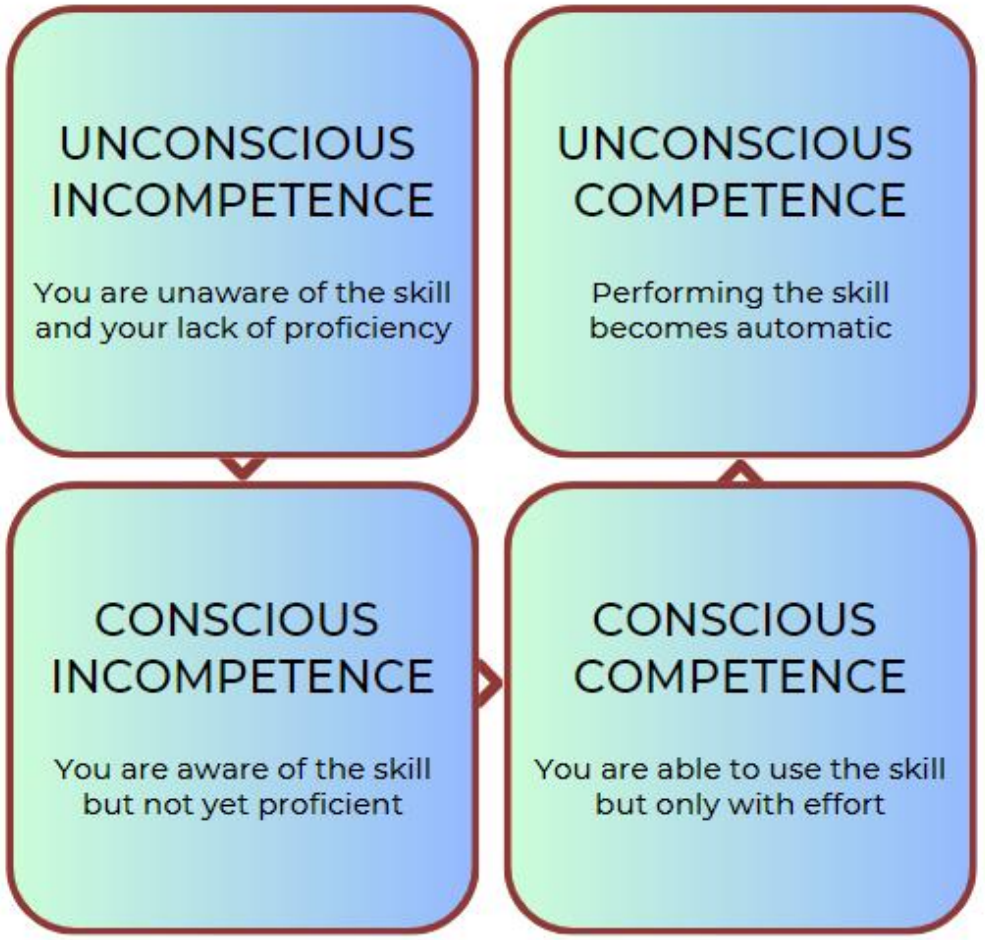
- ✓ Concepts of power and authority and power dynamics including difference
- ✓ Power and authority that influence families
- ✓ Power dynamics that are passed on and within families
- ✓ Cultural considerations working with diverse coachees
- ✓ Links to CLEAN coaching
- ✓How you can use it in your practice

What do power, authority and power dynamics mean to you?

- ✓ Finish these sentences: power is… authority is… power dynamics are…
- ✓ How do you feel about your own personal power?
- ✓ How does it feel in your body when you think about power?
- ✓ What helps you to step into your personal power?
- ✓ What does personal power help you to do, be or have?
- ✓ What helps you to explore personal power with someone else?
- ✓ How do you know when you are aligned with your personal power? What does that feel like?
- ✓ How do you know when you are not? What does that feel like?
- ✓ What else do you notice?
- ✓ What do you want in place to ensure there are positive power dynamics between you and your coachees?
- ✓ Explore the different resources relating to power in the course materials for ideas

Johari Window and 4 stages of competence





Finding WHAT Matters
COACHING SKILLS FOR PARENTS

What is power?

- If someone has power, they have a lot of control over people and activities.
- Your power to do something is your ability to do it.
- If it is in or within your power to do something, you are able to do it or you have the resources to deal with it.
- If someone in authority has the power to do something, they have the legal right to do it.

https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/power

- In terms of coaching we need to consider:
  - where the power sits
  - how the coach and coachee feel about their own personal power
  - how power underpins our sessions

What is authority?

- The authorities are the people who have the power to make decisions and to make sure that laws are obeyed.
- An authority is an official organization or government department that has the power to make decisions.
- Authority is the right to command and control other people.
- If someone has authority, they have a quality which makes other people take notice of what they say.

https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/authority

In terms of coaching we need to consider who we are making into an authority:

- who are 'the authorities' who are having an influence on the coachee?
- Is that influence appropriate? Helpful? Supportive? Warrented?

What are power dynamics?

- Power dynamics refer to the interpersonal relationships between individuals in which some hold power and authority over others.
- It is a diverse and complex concept that varies across cultures, institutions, and social structures.
- Power dynamics play an essential role in shaping our daily interactions, impacting the way we communicate with others, make decisions, and behave in social situations.

https://www.freedomtoascend.com/guides/power-dynamics/

In coaching it is helpful to review:

- How we see ourselves
- How our coachee sees us
- The cultures, institutions and social structures involved

Power structures and authority that influence families

- Education, teachers, Ofsted, standards, age related norms
- Healthcare, GPs, hospitals, professionals, diagnostics
- Social care including social services, respite, monitoring
- Family, friends, social norms, what everyone they know is doing
- Law enforcement, criminal justice, restorative justice
- Social media influences, celebrities, other young people
- Work, employment, self-employment, career
- Financial structures, banks, mortgage companies
- Housing, social housing, home ownership, adequate housing
- Political parties, changes in legislation, funding priorities

We have to be clear about the context we are in if we are going to support women in a family context



'That's an excellent suggestion, Miss Triggs. Perhaps one of the men here would like to make it.'

2. Almost thirty years ago the cartoonist Riana Duncan captured the sexist atmosphere of the committee or the boardroom. There is hardly a woman who has opened her mouth at a meeting and not had, at some time or other, the 'Miss Triggs treatment'.



10. Jacqui Oatley receives an honorary degree in 2016. When she started as commentator on Match of the Day in 2007, there was an explosion of criticism. 'An insult to the controlled commentaries' of men, one said; 'I'll be changing channels' said another.

Mary Beard: Women & Power, A Manifesto

Finding WHAT Matters
COACHING SKILLS FOR PARENTS

Power dynamics that are passed on within families

- ✓ Values and beliefs about power within the family – what it means, what is important, what that means for different family members
- ✓ Perceptions of gender – strength, power, caring, nurturing
- ✓ Attachment styles – securely attached, avoidant, resistant, disorganised
- ✓ 6 human needs: certainty, variety, significance, love, growth, contribution
- ✓ Neurodivergence – anger, anxiety can be used to gain control / certainty
- ✓ Trauma and trauma responses – grandparents who had been in the second world war
- ✓ Narcissistic traits – selfishness, sense of entitlement, lack of genuine empathy, need for superiority – fight / flight trauma response?
- ✓ Codependent traits – trying to get others to meet your needs: denial, low self-esteem, compliance, control, avoidance – fawn / freeze trauma response?

Cultural considerations when working with coachees

- ✓ The need for the **coach to have a very clear understanding of their own culture**, and how this could play out in a coaching relationship
- ✓ The need for the **coachee to be willing to explore their coaching issues in relationship to any cultural issues** which are part of the bigger system
- ✓ Developing a **coaching environment where different perspectives from different cultural insights becomes useful and informative**, rather than provocative and confrontational
- ✓ The paramount importance of **building the coaching relationship and establishing rapport**
- ✓ The importance of **contracting** around the whole of the coaching work
- ✓ The importance for the coach of being in **supervision with an experienced cross-cultural coaching supervisor**

https://assets.henley.ac.uk/legacyUploads/pdf/exec-ed/Point_of_View_challenges_of_cross_cultural_P_Bossons_13.pdf

Connecting with your personal power

- ✓ Notice how it feels in your body when you are connected with your personal power
- ✓ Notice how it feels in your body when you are not connected with your personal power
- ✓ Whenever you make a decision, no matter how tiny, notice how you feel in your body – is it a hell yes? Or a no?
  - ✓ Would you like a cup of tea? English breakfast or earl grey? Cow's milk or Oat? Sugar or agarve? A mug or a cup? Now or later?
  - ✓ What did you feel when it was a yes? Where did you feel this?
  - ✓ What did you feel when it was a no? Where did you feel this?
- ✓ Apply this body-noticing approach to other decisions in your life
- ✓ What happens when you stick with what feels good over the course of a week? A month? A year? This is integrity
- ✓ **Warning: This has the potential to dramatically change your life!**
- ✓ Consent: making a cup of tea: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZwvrxVavnQ

Consent

- ✓ There are multiple opportunities to give space for the coachee to consent throughout the coaching relationship
- ✓ From contracting to reviewing to closing the coaching relationship
- ✓ This is about keeping the power and control for as much of the relationship as possible with the coachee
- ✓ The more they can feel into that power and control within the coaching relationship, the more they can do that in other aspects of their life
- ✓ This has the potential to be triggering when people's consent has been overridden in the past
- ✓ They may not be used to having the power to decide
- ✓ You can refer to counselling if this brings up something that the coachee needs to process
- ✓ Consent: making a cup of tea (2.5 min video): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZwvrxVavnQ

Links to Clean coaching principles

1. **Acknowledge experience just as it is described** – no extra ‘words’ from the coach – power sits with coachee

2. **Accurately preserve and utilise expressions of experience** – use the coachee’s exact words to develop the discussion – coach is not influencing coachee’s process

3. **Attend to aspects of experience congruent with those expressions** – develop the conversation using the content the coachee has brought – could be helpful from a cross-cultural perspective

4. **Only presuppose near-universal aspects of human experience** – don’t make any other specific assumptions about how the person is experiencing their world – limits usual power dynamics

5. **Have no intention to change a person or their experience** – just as with coactive coaching – the person is whole and complete exactly as they are – power sits with coachee

https://cleanlanguage.com/introducing-clean-language/

What this means for you personally

- ✓ Reflect on your relationship with the power in your life – what do you notice?
- ✓ Use the questions at the start of this session to help you reflect
- ✓ Identify 3 ways you want to connect more deeply with your personal power in your coaching at the moment – with awareness that you can explore other aspects another time
- ✓ Plan what you will do over the next month to connect with your personal power
- ✓ Look through the lens of your personal power is helping you with your parenting
- ✓ Consider how awareness of personal power can help other parents

The importance in a parenting context

- ✓ The ability to connect with your own personal power will naturally influence your parenting, whether you focus on it or not
- ✓ You can share this ability with coachees, both formally by showing and explaining, and informally by modelling the approaches in your sessions
- ✓ You can pick the knowledge, skill or behaviour that feels relevant in the context:
  - ✓ Introducing the coachee parent to the concept of personal power may help the coachee to explore different ways of exploring power dynamics with their child
  - ✓ How could the coachee use the concept of personal power to help the coachee's child to flourish?
  - ✓ How does the child feel in their body when they are connected with their own personal power?
  - ✓ How can the coachee check in with their child to explore what is working and develop connection with their personal power further?
  - ✓ What can the coachee do to move the child's connection with their personal power from the house to other places?
  - ✓ How can the coachee negotiate with others to ensure the child's personal power remains with the child?