Base Metal...

May 2026

Introduction

The International Coaching Federation has recently revised one of its competencies to refer explicitly to use of knowledge. This change reflects wider discussions about how as coaches we can draw on our own experience and learning rather than confine ourselves only to asking questions of our clients. Whilst the essential principle of supporting the client to discover and deploy their own resources remains unchallenged, the means by which we can achieve a partnership relationship are enriched - with accompanying opportunities and concerns... In this edition of Base Metal Ray links these considerations with the work of Dr David Drake.

Paul and Ray **The Alchemy Team**

Here, now

Midlands Coaching Central is a community of practice for coaches, with meetings on-line and in person. This month the topic for the session was "Expanding Our Coaching Maturity: Exploring the Five Maturities" These are the subject of a report by Dr David Drake: ***Drake, David B. (2024) The Five Maturities: A New Paradigm for Coach Development, The Moment Institute.*** *(the full report is at this link.)*

Participants in the meeting could expect "an exploration of "The Five Maturities of Coaching" - a framework that opens up how we think about ourselves as coaches. How do we show up? How do we make sense of things? How do we navigate the messy, complex moments that coaching often brings? *Maturity isn't a destination - it's a journey. So how do we move along the way? This session offers a practical lens for understanding our own development, helping each of us to notice where we naturally operate, where we might stretch, and possible ways to develop our practice more intentionally. We will look at this from two angles: your development as a coach, and what maturity might mean for the coaching profession in today's complex world.* There will be space to reflect, meet fellow coaches, and share questions and insights."

A link to the Report and related videos was provided: these resources were the inspiration for a short preparatory exercise before attending the meeting, to reflect on the following:

"Mastery has more to do with presence than perfection."

"Let go of attachment to method, theory, tools - pay attention in the moment."

"Meet the client where they are. Listen. Notice. Really notice."

"Most people don't live their lives by goals - for many, goals are counterproductive."

"What our clients appreciate most about us is the way we are with them as another human being. What they remember long after the session is how they felt."

"I am free to act with integrity and use all of who I am, all of what I know, and all that I have done as a resource for this person on their terms now."

"I am free to BE the work - to mature myself so I can courageously walk with them into the unknown."

Q. What do these assertions invoke in you? What might that mean for your own practice and development?

The session began with a check-in: each person giving their name and, in a single word, what they felt in this moment. This introduction provided an opportunity for every individual to speak and be heard: to arrive and be acknowledged, in the spirit of the deeper exchange "I see you", "I am here". Importantly, this manner of starting aligned with David Drake's attention to the present: *being here*, *now* – which is at the heart of **The Moment Institute**. Also, it offered a marker and reminder for each coach to check in with self and to centre before any coaching or supervision session.

Q. How do you manage your own state prior to each of your coaching sessions?

Slides were presented: 'The secret in life is to show up. Most people don't. Be real; true to your values. Three brains: head, heart, gut - in sync. Alive, alert, attentive, attuned… Present, noticing, sensing - here, now. Inhibiting habitual reaction - choosing response. In service of the client: I see you.' And "*Who are you being when you coach*?" Playing a role? A professional practitioner? A critical friend? A helper? A problem solver? A servant? A witness? A travelling companion? Another human being? Somewhere on a continuum from counsellor to mentor? How do you know your boundaries? How do you communicate who you are being?' Breakout trios addressed "***Who am I being as a coach?***"; insights were shared in plenary.

"The Five Maturities" were described: Personal - my capacity; Spiritual - my clarity; Professional - my competency; Social - my capability; Contextual - my credibility, and examples cited, opening the way to further breakout groups and shared highlights addressing "***Where might I stretch and develop? How could I do this?***" And, invited by David Drake's own questions 'What do clients and the world need from us now?' and 'What is the role of AI in coaching?', "***What are the implications of The Five Maturities for the coaching profession?***"

This Base Metal discussion has not attempted to convey the breadth and depth of the **Report**: please see it.

Q. How might a greater awareness of Dr David Drake's work be of value to you in your coaching?

Book reviews

In addition to David Drake's Report **"The Five Maturities"**, available online, see also:

"The Philosophy and Practice of Coaching: Insights and Issues for a New Era", David B. Drake, Diane Brennan et al, Wiley, 2008, and **"Narrative Coaching: The Definitive Guide to Bringing New Stories to Life", David B. Drake, CNC Press, 2017.**

See also **"The Art of Noticing: Rediscover What Really Matters to You", Rob Walker, Ebury press, 2019",** and

"The Power of Now: The Global Phenomenon: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment", Eckhart Tolle, Yellow Kite, 2001. For a complementary perspective and examples, see:

"The Power of Moments - Why Certain Experiences Have Extraordinary Impact", Chip Heath and Dan Heath, Bantam Press, 2017, and

"Switch - How to change things when change is hard", Chip and Dan Heath, Penguin, 2011

Thoughts, ideas and quotations

"Defining moments shape our lives, but we don't have to wait for them to happen. We can be the authors of them." Chip and Dan Heath.

"Bring your mind to the present and your thoughts will rest." Haemin Sunim.

To find out more about Alchemy of Coaching go to https://alchemyofcoaching.com

Let us know your response to Base Metal articles and reviews. ***We welcome guest contributors!***

Contact us We look forward to all kinds of communication for **Base Metal**… it's a forum for sharing and learning about coaching. Please do send us ideas, thoughts, suggestions or feedback.

paul@alchemyofcoaching.com **ray@alchemyofcoaching.com**

Alchemy of Coaching