



Association of Integrative
Coach-Therapist
Professionals

On thinking and integration

What relationship does the Thinking Environment have to coaching, therapy and the integration of the two disciplines? Linda Aspey interviews **Nancy Kline, author of *Time to Think***

The Thinking Environment seems to have really captured the attention of the coaching community. What are your thoughts on this?

Ten years ago, the head of a coaching accreditation programme invited me to speak at their conference. I was surprised, and I asked her why they were interested in the Thinking Environment. She said, 'Because the real point of coaching is that clients do their own thinking and emerge with ideas the coach could never have conceived.' 'Really?' I said. 'That's wonderful.'

I was hopeful – until then, I'd gathered that the point of coaching was, in the end, for the coach to offer their finest thinking to the client and to keep the client focused on outcomes set out at the beginning. I'd also thought that the point of sponsored coaching in particular was for the coach to make certain the outcomes of the sessions were outcomes the sponsor required. I'd thought that these outcomes even needed to be translated into metrics. So I was pleased to hear that...



Nancy Kline, whose Thinking Environment is, in her own words, 'exquisitely person-centred'

The research space

Brendon Harvey, AICTP's research lead, introduces some ways of thinking about building our research resources

The launch of the new Association heralds interesting times for those of us working in the integrative coach-therapy field. Much needs to be done in forming a new organisation, keeping true to our values and ensuring the needs of Associates are being met. Since taking up the role of the research lead for AICTP, I have been keen to engage with new and prospective Associates with the aim of developing a collaborative conversation around research. I am also aware that the term 'research' could mean many different things to members. If you are a

student practitioner trying to complete a dissertation, your needs may be different to an experienced practitioner trying to keep on top of what's new in this emerging area of research. Therefore, the challenge is to create a research space that can accommodate these potential differing needs of Associates.

So what could a 'research space' look like? As both practitioner and academic, I have sought to promote research as ultimately a practical, empowering resource. By that I mean that...

It's all about the relationship client:

Gordon Jinks explains why true collaboration with the client results in the client making the changes they want earlier rather than later

Working collaboratively as an integrative coach-therapist

Extract from an imaginary supervision session:

Supervisee: '...so I was thinking that we were touching on an underlying issue that might be really important. I wasn't sure whether to focus on that and really try to get to the bottom of it, or stay with what we'd said we would work on.'

Supervisor: 'What did the client think?'

Supervisee: 'Oh, right, yeah... maybe I could have asked her.'

It may seem obvious, but I imagine most people reading this will recognise something like the situation alluded to above from one or other perspective. In my case, it feels very familiar from both. I find myself frequently making such interventions in supervision, but yet I also find, quite often in the course of my work with clients, that I am listening hard and thinking hard, and trying hard to work out which way to proceed with the session, when the obvious and most useful thing to do is check in with the client and see what they think...

Managing the integration of coaching and therapy

Esther Patrick considers movement between, and integration of, disciplines in her summarising of members' discussions around this topic on our LinkedIn group

From the start of the AICTP group, I believe we've been seeing two viewpoints emerge about the nature of integrative work: *fusion* and *back and forth*. Seven months ago, Debra Jinks asked our LinkedIn members: 'How do you manage movement between disciplines when using an integrative coach-therapy approach?' A thought-provoking thread ensued at <http://tinyurl.com/bwuaojh> and, as with many of the group's discussions, aspects of these two viewpoints can be seen at play.

The fusion viewpoint

This could be summarised as: *Coaching and therapy actually have a lot of overlap. The integrative approach is a true blend, with the exact nature of an intervention at any given time being driven by the coach-therapist's intuition and the client's need. The traditional labels and boundaries might hold more significance to us than to the client, and this significance might be less important than we have previously believed...*

An emotionally intelligent approach in coaching and NLP

Ian Llewellyn-Nash integrates into his coaching practice the traditional counselling focus of emotional intelligence with the meta view of NLP – believing, however, that the intervention is really about how you are rather than what you do



Integration can be better understood through its synonyms such as 'adding', 'mixing', 'incorporating', 'combining', 'amalgamating', and 'assimilating'. Within the field of people-focused approaches and/or therapies, it may be conjectured that territorialism exists or may have existed. For some even, a 'never the twain shall meet' concept holds sway – we don't mix NLP with counselling; we don't blend coaching with psychotherapy. But in recent years, there has been a real shift towards an appreciation of what each approach brings and adds to the other, and what each may learn from the other in order to support clients to better and more meaningful outcomes.

I am an nurse of adults, a researcher in emotional intelligence (EI) and an NLP professional. Each of those areas of interest and theoretical passions finds application in the field of coaching. Clients have been former leadership students, contacts across the range of LinkedIn contacts and/or those who have specifically sought me out. I am a keen believer in an ontological approach to working with clients. By that, I mean coaching is not what you do, NLP is not what you do, working with emotional intelligence is not what you do. On the contrary, it is essentially about who you are, how you comport yourself and how you orient yourself towards your work so that the elements of your work are not so much tools but ways of working...

These are samples from the articles in the latest AICTP journal – issue 4, May 2013. There are also reviews, network news and AICTP updates from the Chair.

AICTP journal is published quarterly for Associate members of AICTP. To become an Associate, please visit www.aictp.org.uk and follow instructions on the 'contact and membership' page to subscribe.