

# How **to be an effective mentor** and how this will boost your personal and professional development

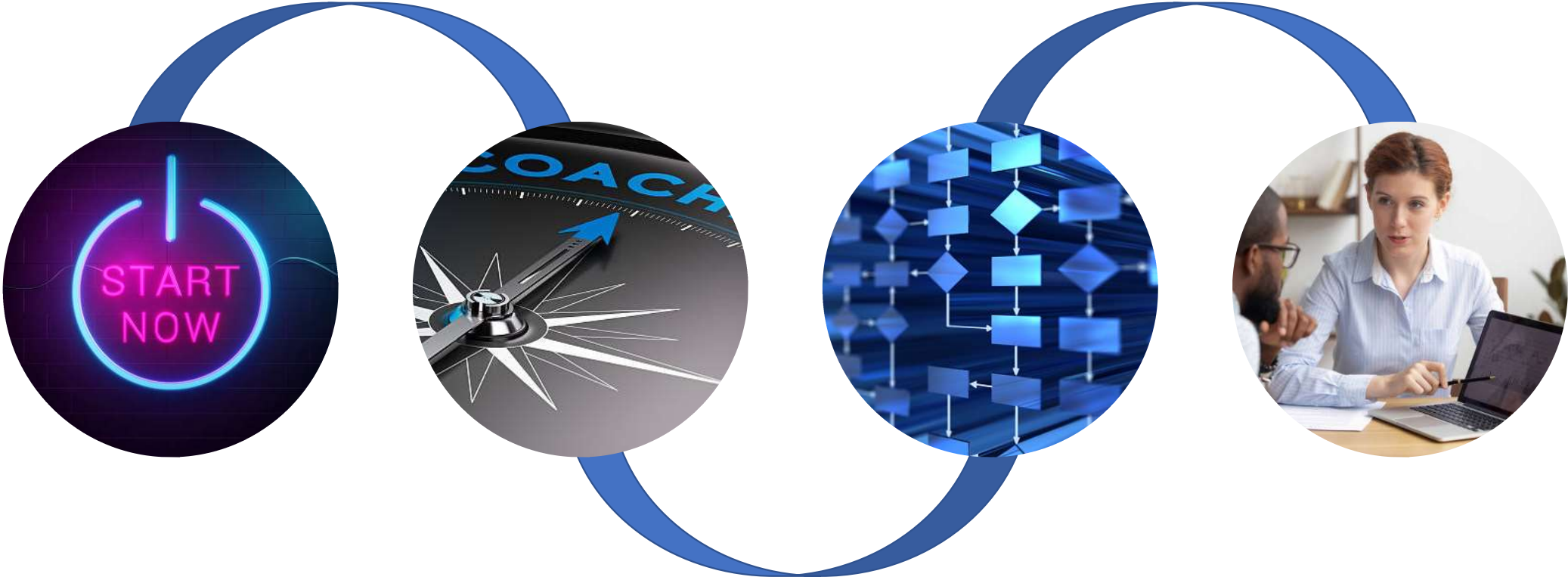


**Richard Tulley**

Programme Director | Mentor | Coach | APM Fellow | D & I Ally

**A Coaching Mindset**

**Being the Effective Mentor**



**Purpose**

**A Structured Approach**

# Mentoring 101

The most important thing to establish a positive mentoring relationship is **Purpose**

Why else bother?

A mentoring relationship without purpose is little more than a conversation.

The mentee must be able to make a **personal statement...**

“

**I understand what mentoring is  
and I have made a conscious decision  
to enter into a mentoring relationship  
because ...**

”

... it is really important that the mentee **writes this down**



Conscious decision

Voluntary

In understanding

With conviction

# Your Purpose as the Mentor

If you are to become an effective mentor then your purpose is equally important.

Good intentions are laudable...

But if you are to genuinely commit to becoming an effective mentor then you need to derive tangible benefit.

Positive mentoring relationships are mutually beneficial.

Your benefit as the mentor should be all around your development as well as your mentee's development.

As the mentor, you must also be able to write your **personal statement**...

“

**I am committed  
to being an effective mentor *because* ...**

”



## The Coaching and Mentoring Mindset



un-locking **potential** more than focusing upon performance

# Potential

Coaching and Mentoring are all about exploring and releasing your client / mentee's potential.

We all have the potential to learn, to grow, and to develop... a capacity to change.

We all have more potential within us than we have yet realised.

## potential

*Adjective [before noun]*

possible when the necessary conditions exist

From the Cambridge Dictionary

An effective mentor focuses upon creating the necessary conditions

## Mindset

The mentor creates a 'safe' environment, building trust, enabling the mentee to have the confidence to explore their goals and motivations.

Development through mentoring comes from increasing *awareness* ... self-awareness and greater awareness of their situation, the options available, and the actions that they can take to move with purpose towards their goals.

## Emotion

The necessary conditions also include emotional factors. Development is inhibited by doubt, lack of confidence, stress, for example.

So the mentor puts thought and effort in to also raising the mentee's confidence.

Fundamentally, though, challenges / stresses in the mentee's work-place are external factors that may make mentoring ineffective.

# The Inner Game

## **Performance = Potential** minus *Interference*

Coaching in a professional context, as we understand it today (executive coaching, coaching in the work-place) has its origins in sport.

Tim Gallwey was a successful sports coach, initially in tennis.

As he coached tennis players he determined that increasing a player's performance on the court was about more than developing their technique and tactics...

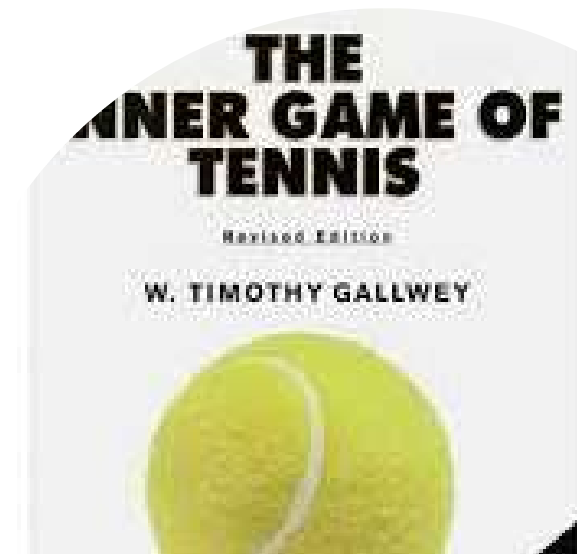
As well as their opponent on the other side of the net, he focused upon the opponent in their own head – the player's doubts, their lack of confidence, their uncertainty.

Gallwey called this *interference*... the interference was a barrier preventing the player from reaching their full potential.

*The Inner Game* was about removing interference – building a more positive mindset, mental stamina, confidence.

This concept and approach has been embodied in the coaching ethos and in modern coaching approaches.

As mentoring is focused upon unlocking the mentee's potential, the approach that the mentor takes will naturally have an emphasis upon dampening the mentee's interference.



# Learning and Development Relationships

Both Coaching and Mentoring are all about learning and development *relationships*

... we take the view that there is **common ground**, expressed as underlying principles, which underpins both coaching and mentoring

... coaching and mentoring are both **learning relationships**, which help people to:

- Take charge of their own development;
- Release their potential; and
- Achieve results which they value.

From Coaching and Mentoring At Work  
by Mary Connor and Julia Pokora

## Relationship

Mutually beneficial  
Based on trust  
Commitment on both sides  
*Stimulating*

+

## Development

Increasing Awareness:

- Self
- Situation

Longer-term; goal-based

+

## Potential

Nurture, un-lock  
Dampen *interference*

=

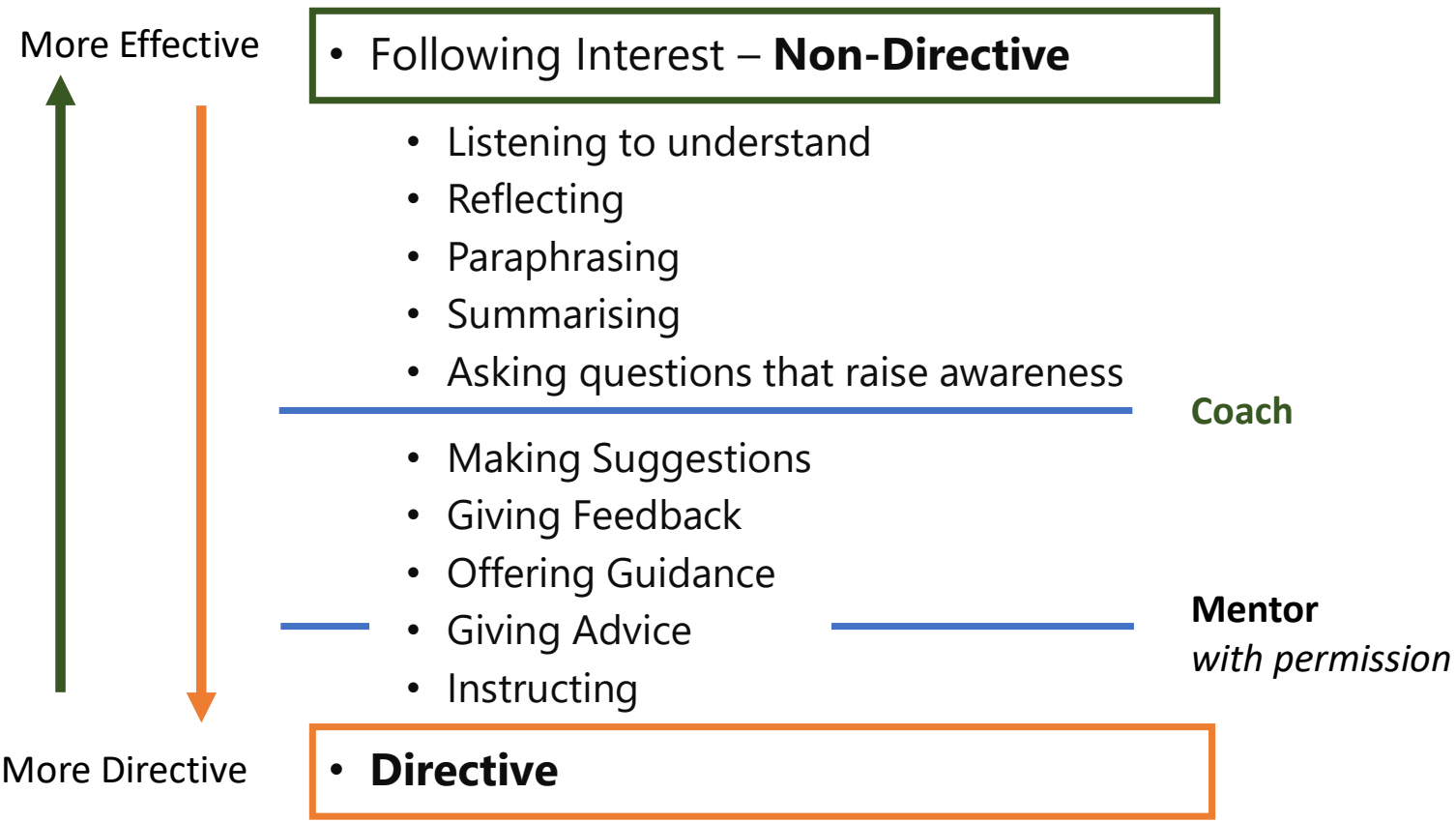
**Growth**



# Being Non-Directive

Being non-directive is at the heart of Coaching and Mentoring ... being non-directive is a world away from teaching, it is a world away from the 'telling' and instruction that you get in the work-place.

The diagram below illustrates the spectrum of Coaching Skills, from Myles Downey's Effective Modern Coaching.



Coaching is even more non-directive than mentoring... Mentors have some experience and expertise in the mentee's professional field, so may offer guidance ... but being conscious that they are becoming more directive.

The more non-directive the mentor is, the more effective the mentoring will be.

# Structure The mentoring life-cycle and coaching models



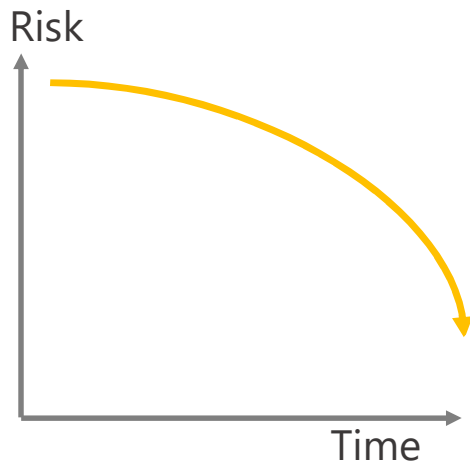
Facilitating, guiding and mitigating the risks

# The Mentoring Life-cycle (Overview)

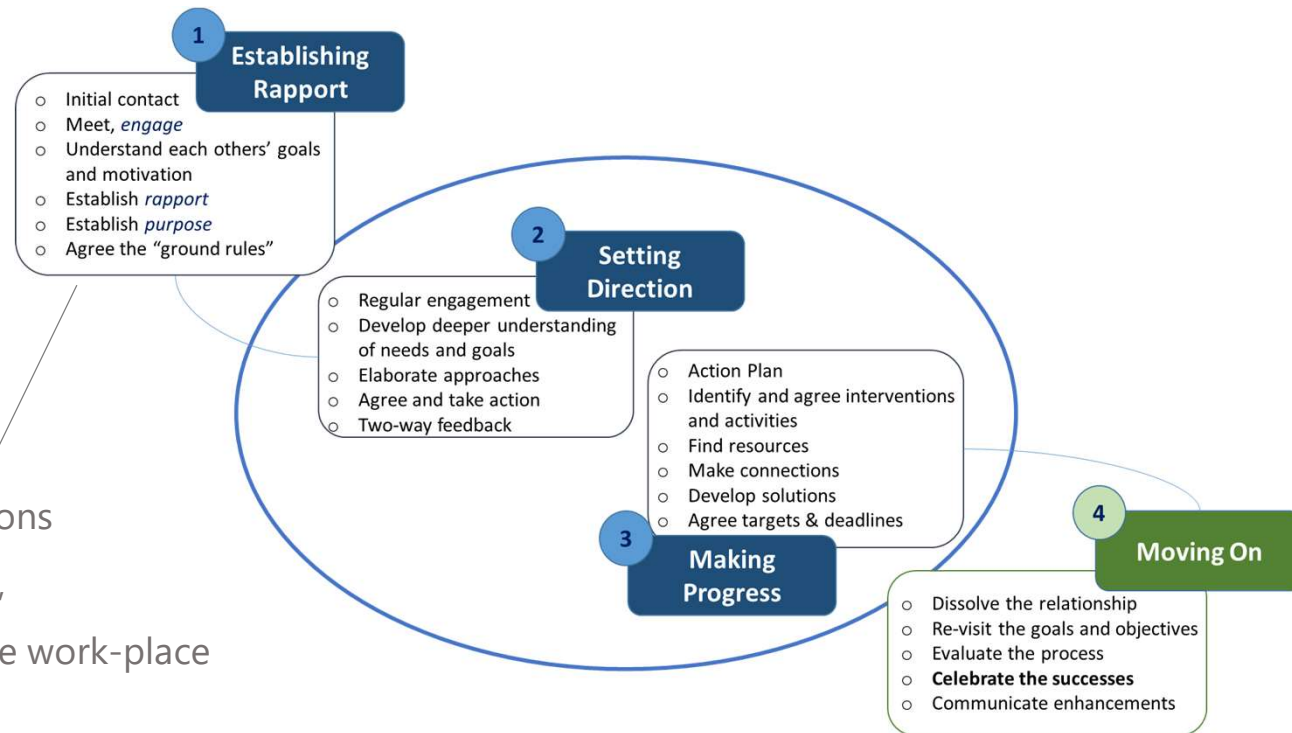
The mentoring life-cycle is really important – it gives structure to our mentoring relationships and it guides us towards the logical next steps.

It helps mentors and mentees to contextualise the dynamics of forming, sustaining and (ultimately) concluding their mentoring relationship.

The risk that a mentoring relationship fails is greatest at the very beginning...  
Using the life-cycle helps to greatly reduce the risk of failed or suboptimal mentoring relationships by focusing on the most common causes of failure.



- × Misunderstanding
- × Unrealistic expectations
- × **Lack of purpose**
- × Wanting a “quick fix”
- × The answers lie in the work-place
- Lack of *chemistry*
- Mentoring is not the most appropriate development solution



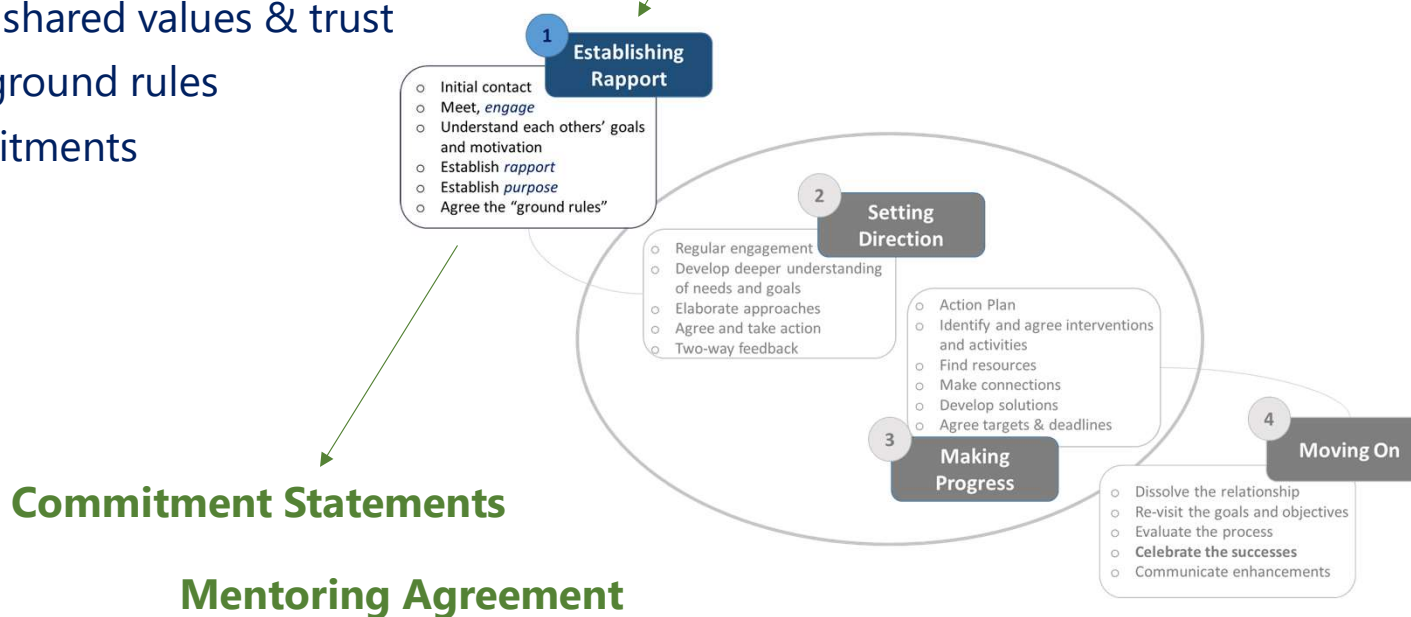
# The Mentoring Life-cycle (Secure Foundations)

At the outset the focus needs to be upon:

- Establishing common understanding
- Building rapport
- Ensuring clarity of purpose
- Building upon shared values & trust
- Agreeing the ground rules
- Making commitments
- Mitigating risk

“Chemistry” session  
**Mentee Personal Statement**

Understanding  
Voluntary  
Conscious Decision  
Purpose



The Chemistry Session and the mentee Personal Statement are critical to establish rapport and determine purpose.

Commitment Statements promote shared values and a sustaining relationship; the Mentoring Agreement ensures clarity of purpose and ‘ground rules’

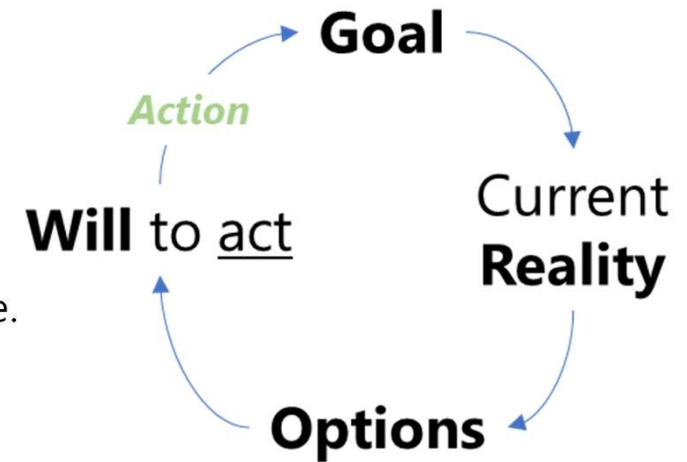
# Using Coaching Models ... GROW

GROW is a relatively straightforward 4-step coaching model, developed by Sir John Whitmore; it is very well established, easy to understand and to apply.

It can be applied at the 'macro' mentoring relationship level, and within each individual mentoring discussion.

The acronym is derived from the 4 stages:

- **Goal**  
The mentee/client identifies a goal, or an outcome, that they want to achieve.
- **Current Reality**  
Having identified the goal and explored it to fully understand the outcomes... and the *motivations*...  
Second step centres on the mentee/client's *current reality* i.e. where they are now?
- **Options**  
In cognisance of the client's goal and current reality... through raising awareness...  
Identifying and exploring options to make the 'journey' from current reality to the goal.
- **Will (to act)**  
Having explored the various options and decided on the preferred options, the client explores the *will to act* i.e. commits to taking action.

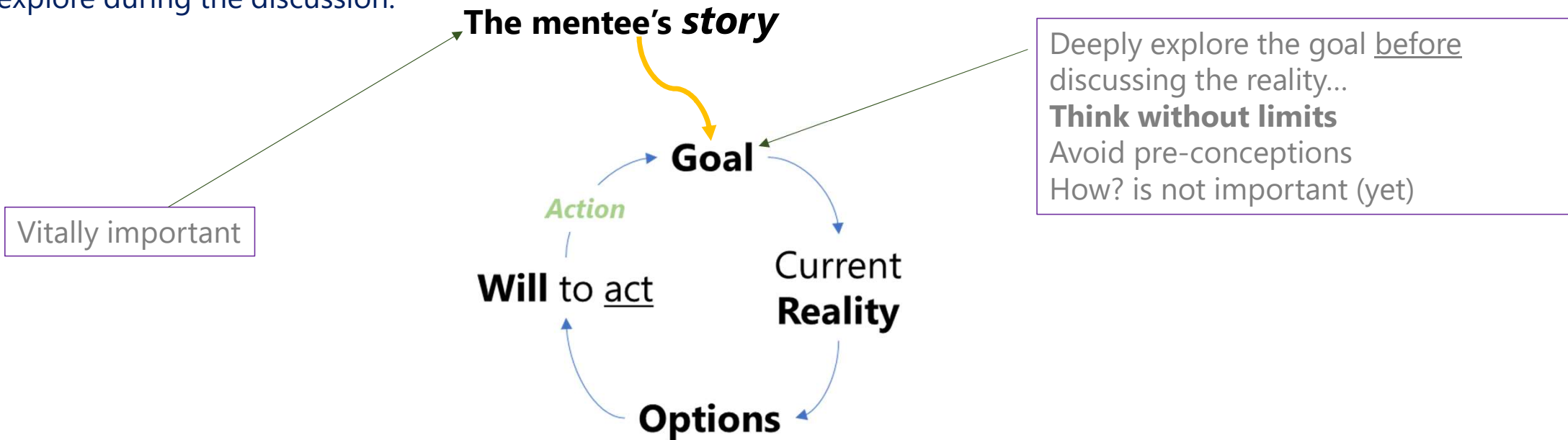


# Using Coaching Models ... TGROW

TGROW is an adaptation of the GROW model, by Myles Downey.

The "T" is for "Topic" – at the start of the mentoring relationship this is basically about starting out by really understanding the mentee's *story*...

Within each mentoring discussion this is about clarifying at the outset with the mentee what topic that most want to explore during the discussion.



When I hear the facts about someone, I know *what* they are...

When I hear their story, I know who they are

John Quincy Adams

## Being the effective Mentor



Creating the *necessary conditions*

# Remain focused on what “good” looks like

Always remain focused upon where you are striving to take the mentoring relationship and the key principles...

## The Mentor

Is committed to their own personal development:

- Making a *commitment* to their development as a mentor.
- Person-centred.
- Non-directive.
- Focused on the mentee’s agenda.
- Facilitating.
- Creating a safe environment.
- Actively listening.
- Asking ‘good’ questions.
- Understanding the mentee’s ‘story’.
- Raising awareness.
- Sharing connections.
- Reflecting.

At the heart of it ...

## A Learning & Development Relationship



with **Purpose**

## The Mentee

Takes ownership of their personal and professional development:

- Exploring, identifying, elaborating, and articulating their own goals.
- Increasing their self-awareness and awareness of their current situation.
- Exploring and evaluating options to develop and progress towards their goals.
- Displaying curiosity and initiative to seek out resources and make connections that support them on their development ‘journey’.
- Committing to, and seeing through, actions that positively contribute to their development and enable tangible progress towards their goals.



# You need to develop – and refine - the requisite skills

There is an art to mentoring, you need to understand and develop the requisite skills...

These skills over-lap significantly with leadership skills and are at the heart of positive relationships, both professionally and socially.

#	Competence	Description
1	<b>Understanding Self</b>	Demonstrates awareness of own values, beliefs and behaviours; recognises how these affect their practice and uses this self-awareness to manage their effectiveness in meeting the client's, and where relevant, the sponsor's objectives.
2	<b>Commitment to Self-Development</b>	Explore and improve the standard of their practice and maintain the reputation of the profession.
3	<b>Managing the Contract</b>	Establishes and maintains the expectations and boundaries of the mentoring/coaching contract with the client and, where appropriate, with sponsors.
4	<b>Building the Relationship</b>	Skilfully builds and maintains an effective relationship with the client, and where appropriate, with the sponsor.
5	<b>Enabling Insight and Learning</b>	Works with the client and sponsor to bring about insight and learning.
6	<b>Outcome and Action Orientation</b>	Demonstrates approach and uses the skills in supporting the client to make desired changes.
7	<b>Use of Models and Techniques</b>	Applies models and tools, techniques and ideas beyond the core communication skills in order to bring about insight and learning.
8	<b>Evaluation</b>	Gathers information on the effectiveness of own practice and contributes to establishing a culture of evaluation of outcomes.



# Practice makes perfect

As with any kind of skill, becoming effective requires both the theoretical knowledge and the practical application, with refinement over time through experience, insight, and feedback ...

You need to work at being the effective mentor.



- **Practice** ... i.e. *repetition*

- Apply the knowledge and the techniques
- *Measure*
- Refine
- Repeat

Reflection  
Feedback

- **Best Practice** ... i.e. *study and exploration*

- Ethos
- Explore
- *Supervision*
- Practice

Formal study &  
accreditation  
*Informal*

# You need to facilitate a learning and development relationship

Remember that mentoring is a **relationship** between peers that is *mutually beneficial*...

- Based on mutual trust and respect.
- Non-directive.
- Exploring your mentee's **potential**.

Your mentoring relationship needs **secure foundations**...

- Clarity of purpose; common understanding of goals.
- 'Ground Rules' agreed.
- **Commitments made.**
- Rapport established.



## The role of the mentor...

- *Facilitate, encourage, welcome*
- *"test"* for Purpose
- Manage expectations
- Exchange Commitment Statements
- Establish a Mentoring Agreement

# You need to create the right conditions



## The role of the mentor...

- Set the tone, create the climate for change
- *Actively listen*, more than talk
- Raise awareness...
  - Open, insightful questions
  - Re-framing
- Stretch your mentee, as much as you support them

This is what the “right conditions” should look like for your mentee...

- It *feels* like a **safe place**
- There is mutual **trust**
- Trust encourages **candour**
- It is *non-judgemental*
- There is **empathy**... not sympathy
- It is **supportive**
- The **mentee’s agenda** is at the heart of it
- There is a focus on **potential**
- It *feels* **different to the work-place**

# Understand your mentee's goals ... explore their *motivations*

The purpose belongs to the mentee - these are their goals, they need to retain ownership.

As the mentor, understanding **what** they want to achieve is important...

But understanding **why** their goals are important to them is critical...  
This is a key area where asking open, insightful questions is so important



**why** is it important to you??

how will it **feel** to you??

can you *visualise* ... what will it **look** like??

how will it be **different** to now??

how will it **benefit** you??

how will it **benefit** people around you??

how will things **change** for you??

what will you be **doing**??

how might **you** need to **change**??

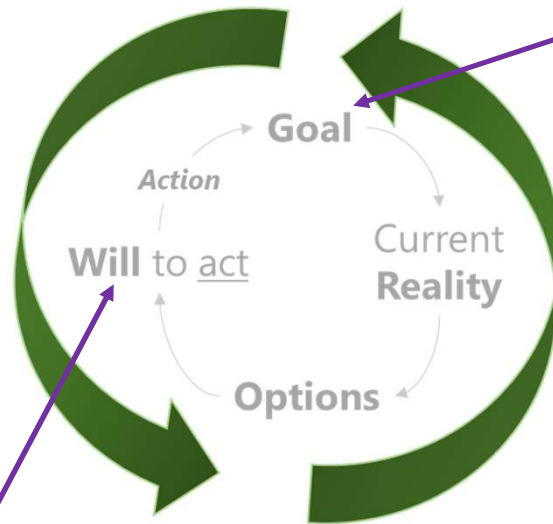
what **compromises** might you have to make??

## The role of the mentor...

- Explore
- Understand **why?**
- Build awareness
- Build attachment
- Encourage them to think without limits...  
don't worry about "how?", that will follow
- **Encourage your mentee to write their goals down**

# Recognise that change comes with action

Through using coaching models effectively you can maintain a focus upon your mentee's goals, and their will to act within each of your mentoring discussions...



Start each mentoring discussion by creating a climate for an effective mentoring discussion... and by exploring goals...

- What steps have you taken since we last spoke??
- How have things changed for you??
- To what extent have the steps that you have taken made a positive difference for you??
- How do you feel now??

Ending each mentoring discussion by being a catalyst for action, encouraging the mentee's will to act...

- What will you do now??
- When will you do it by??
- How will it change things for you??
- How will you know how well it has worked for you??
- How important is taking this step for you??

Always have a Plan B in case actions haven't been seen through, re-introduce purpose...

- What factors most prevented you from taking the steps that you said you'd take??
- How do you feel about your next steps now??
- Do you see things any differently now??

# Your Purpose is critical

Remember: mentoring should be mutually beneficial ...

Your development is important too.

For that to be possible, your mentee must be engaged ...

And you need to feel that you are *growing*.

Do not lose focus on

**your development opportunities...**

- Mentoring skills are *Leadership based* ...

And they are around *Emotional Intelligence*

- Active listening.
- Reading posture and tone.
- Asking good, insightful questions.
- Empathy.
- Effective communication.
- Influencing.
- Visioning.
- Inspiring action.



## The role of the mentor...

**Reflection** ... in action ... and after action:

- What are you learning??
- How did it feel??
- How engaged is your mentee??
- Are you developing??
- *How* are you developing??
- Are you reading signals and moderating accordingly??

# “you have two ears and one mouth...”

This the Chinese symbol for the word “listen” ... Active listening is at the heart of coaching and mentoring, it is fundamentally important.

It is an essential leadership skill, and it is critical towards developing positive relationships...



## The role of the mentor...

- **Active Listening is an absolute core skill**
- Develop, refine, practice... repeat



# Raising awareness... Ask "good" questions

A key role of the mentor is raising awareness – the mentee's self-awareness, and an increasing awareness of their situation.

The mentor is also focused on raising their own self-awareness, and their understanding of the mentee's situation.

To raise awareness, the mentor needs to ask "good" questions ...

- Open questions (that don't invite yes/no answers)
- Questions that are thought provoking, "stretching" your mentee to explore
- Bring insight (to both mentee and mentor)



## The role of the mentor...

- **Asking insightful questions is another core skill**
- Develop, refine, practice... repeat
- Build a "question bank"
- **Explore**
- Build (your) understanding
- Raise (your mentee's) awareness

# Helping your mentee grow... Sharing connections

As the mentor, you do not have to have all the right answers...

Sometimes it is helpful if you don't

You do need to have all the right questions, though ...

A really positive way to support your mentee's development is to share connections with your mentee.

You will really help your mentee's growth through encouraging them to explore the answers they need and seek to learn through interaction with others...

- Resourcefulness
- Ownership
- Confidence
- Network

Time →



## The role of the mentor...

- Help your mentee find their own answers
- Open up your connections
- Encourage them to explore
- Remember the power of the pause

# You both need to make time and space

Recognise that work will be demanding and that life will get in the way...

Therefore there will be times when your mentee's focus on their development may be paused.

This will happen; it is not in its own right a sign that the relationship is floundering – it is a signal that your mentee needs some support and some space...



## The role of the mentor...

- Relationships take work, thought, and persistence
- Be accessible
- Be understanding
- Be responsive
- *Adapt*

# Celebrate your successes

Always take a moment with your mentee to recognise and celebrate their successes...

Help them to see how your mentoring relationship has contributed to their success...

And how your mentoring relationship might take them further.



Your mentee's achievements are significant...

When recognised, explored, and understood they are a major source of strength and resolve for your mentee moving forwards – they build *momentum*.

They are also a sensible point to encourage your mentee to re-calibrate – re-assess their goals and options.

## The role of the mentor...

- Help them **take strength** from their achievement
- Build *momentum*
- Encourage them to **Re-calibrate** ...  
goals, approach, and development opportunities

# The Mentee's Work-Place

Always respect the boundaries between your mentoring relationship and your mentee's work-place...

Don't blur the edges.



Your mentee's employer needs to be the one who tells them:

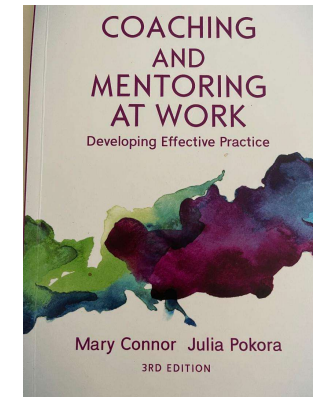
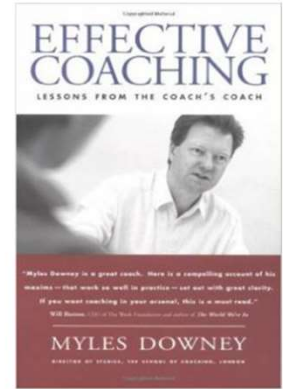
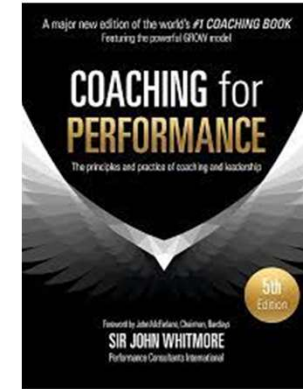
- What they have to do and what is expected of them.
- How to do what is expected of them.



## The role of the mentor...

- Encourage candour and trust with their Line Manager.
- Empathise, but don't undermine their workplace relationships, or introduce negativity.
- Encourage them to continue to learn and develop through colleagues.
- Focus on their potential more than their performance.
- Guide, support and encourage, don't direct.

## Recommended Reading



## Connect

Linked In:

<https://linkedin.com/in/richard-tulley-1b02ba1/>

## Visit

Web: The Project Mentor Space

<https://www.projectmentor.space>