INTRODUCTION

If you are hoping that this is another book which will provide you with a five- or seven-step coaching model, please put it down, as you would be wasting your money. This book is not aimed at the novice coach, it is aimed at those coaches who have extensive experience and would like to anchor their practice on a theoretically-grounded, evidence-based scientist-practitioner model. Senior executives and human resources management practitioners who have an interest in using and sourcing executive coaches will find this book helpful, in that it will give them an idea of the kinds of question they should be asking of prospective coaches. Can the prospective coach make their model explicit? What philosophy, theory, application and experience underpins the coach's work? Has their work been researched; if not, what evidence do they have to substantiate their claims about their work?

This book is an experiential account of my journey towards becoming an executive coach. So why write my story, and why do I think that my story can make a contribution to the discipline of coaching? In July 2008 a number of coaches from around the world met at the Global Coaching Convention (GCC) in Dublin to discuss the development and professionalization of coaching. The GCC's

Working Group on a Research Agenda for Development of the Field noted in the Research Appendix to the *Dublin Declaration on Coaching* that "Research is critical to the development of the emerging profession of coaching", that "Every practitioner has the responsibility of doing research in their own practice", and that "Practitioner and academic research are considered to be of equal value to the coaching community and its developing body of knowledge" (GCC, 2008:11).

In supporting that notion, however, I was immediately confronted with a dilemma. And the dilemma was simply this: there are so many coaching books in the market. Books on coaching models, what coaching is, and what it is not. But nowhere could I find a book which explained how a coach could develop their own practice and coaching model within the scientist-practitioner framework. And if we want to develop the emerging profession of coaching within that framework, there needs to be examples of what it means to be a scientist-practitioner, and how to develop one's own model and practice within that framework.

This book is a response to that need. This is my story of how I developed and researched my own coaching model and practice within the scientist-practitioner framework, which ultimately led to the first Doctorate in Professional Studies in Executive Coaching completed through the National Centre for Work-Based Learning at Middlesex University, London. It is not an attempt to present the definitive model on coaching; it is rather my model that I developed for my coaching practice, and that was born out of my experience; it is congruent with who I am. The more fundamental aim of the book is, however, to share a thought process with you that will enable you, the reader, to hopefully develop your own coaching model and practice within the scientist-practitioner framework.

In their book *The Modern Scientist-Practitioner: A Guide to Practice in Psychology*, David Lane and Sarah Corrie (2006) argue the case for reformulating what it means to be a modern scientist-practitioner within the profession of psychology. I believe that their reformulated scientist-practitioner model is a very good basis on which to establish and define the profession of executive coaching. They suggest that the scientist-practitioner organizes their reasoning skills around three domains, namely purpose, perspective and process (Lane and Corrie, 2006:48–49):

1. **Purpose**. They believe that in undertaking any psychological enquiry it is vitally important to be clear about the journey's fundamental purpose. What is it that the practitioner and client are hoping to achieve? In other words, what are the outputs or results that the client wants to achieve? In defining a clear purpose, clear boundaries can also be established. It helps to define with whom the therapist will and will not work, and when it will be important or necessary to refer the client to another professional.

2. **Perspective**. They point out that part of the agreed purpose would include being able to define what the therapist brings to the encounter. This would include all the practitioner's models, values, beliefs, knowledge and philosophies, as well as a sense of their competence limitations. I would go so far as to say that this would include the metaphysical models and assumptions that the person holds.

3. **Process**. Having defined the purpose and perspective that underpin the work, it then becomes possible to structure a process to undertake the work. So what method or tools can be used to help achieve the desired purpose within the constraints of the specified perspective?

Lane and Corrie's (2006) three perspectives for the scientist-practitioner are very similar to, if not the same as, Mouton's (2001:137–142) "three worlds" framework for research, comprising:

1. **World 1**. The world of everyday life and lay knowledge. This is the world of ordinary social and physical reality. This is where we spend most of our lives and we use lay knowledge, i.e. common sense, experiential knowledge, wisdom, insight and practical know-how, to solve problems and gain insight into everyday tasks and problems. It is here that social and practical problems arise that require interventions, action, programmes or therapy. Lane and Corrie's (2006) "purpose" will be formulated in, and to address problems encountered in, World 1.

2. **World 2**. The world of science and scientific research. Scientists select phenomena from World 1 and turn them into objects of scientific inquiry. "Whereas in everyday life we search for knowledge that will help us cope better with the challenges and demands of each day (a very pragmatic interest), the aim of

science is to generate truthful (valid and reliable) descriptions, models and theories of the world" (Mouton, 2001:138). This has to do with the research process in terms of its problem statement, design, methodology and conclusions. This of course takes place within certain defined theories, models, typologies, concepts and definitions. World 2 is the context of Lane and Corrie's (2006) process domain.

3. **World 3**. The world of meta-science. This is the world in which we reflect on the reasons and justifications for certain actions. More importantly, it is the world of critical reflection, deciding which theory, indicators, measurements, and research design to choose. Over time this has led to various meta-disciplines, theories and paradigms, including paradigms in the philosophy of science and in research methodologies. This is the perspective domain covered by Lane and Corrie (2006), a critical component which I believe is often neglected by coaching practitioners. In fact, I would not stop at the world of meta-science; I am in full agreement with E.F. Schumacher, the economist and Rhodes Scholar, that it should include the metaphysical:

> Education cannot help us as long as it accords no place to meta-physics. Whether the subjects taught are subjects of science or of the humanities, if the teaching does not lead to a clarification of metaphysics, that is to say, of our fundamental convictions, it cannot educate a man and, consequently, cannot be of real value to society ... What is at fault is not specialization, but the lack of depth with which the subjects are usually presented, and the absence of metaphysical awareness. The sciences are being taught without any awareness of the presuppositions of science, of the meaning and significance of scientific laws, and of the place occupied by the natural sciences within the whole cosmos of human thought. The result is that the presuppositions of science are normally mistaken for its findings. Economics is being taught without any awareness of the view of human nature that underlies present-day economic theory. In fact, many economists are themselves unaware of the fact that such a view is implicit in their teaching and that nearly all their theories would have to change if that view changed (Schumacher, 1989:98–99).

If coaching is to develop into a fully-fledged profession, I believe that it is critical for us as coaches to develop our critical reflection skills and apply them to the world of meta-science, metaphysics and meta-theories as it pertains to coaching. Therefore, I am in total agreement with Lane and Corrie (2006) that scientist-practitioners must be able to make their perspectives explicit. Only if we make them explicit can they be held up for critical reflection.

In this book I will share the process of how I developed and continue to develop the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model within the scientist-practitioner framework. Part of the process is to make the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model explicit so that it can be held up for critical reflection. It is my sincere hope that it can contribute to the dialogue of what it means to be a scientist-practitioner within the evolving and emerging profession of coaching. In order to make the model explicit I will use David Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Model.

Chapter one: Reflections on my personal journey

Chapter one is a personal account of my own concrete experience and reflective observation on that experience. It is my story of how I stumbled into the field of coaching. Like so many coaches I have met, I did not plan to become a coach; it was an evolutionary journey. The chapter outlines the way in which I came to develop an interest in coaching, and the theories that contributed to that interest.

Chapter two: The meta-philosophical framework

Chapters two to four deal with the philosophies and theories that underpin the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model; in other words, these are the abstract conceptualization chapters. In Chapter two, I explore three meta-theories that have influenced, and are an integral part of, the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model. The first meta-theory is the Integral Model of Ken Wilber. I want to make it clear from the outset that I believe Wilber's theory is **a** theory and not **the** theory. I have, however, found it to be a very useful conceptual framework within which to think and do my work.

The second meta-theory that is explored very briefly in Chapter two is the Diamond Approach developed by A.H. Almaas. Once again,

I do little justice to the depth and excellence of his work. But in the context of this book, it is necessary only to make the reader aware of Almaas's work. I would highly recommend his work to any person exploring a more integrative approach to life.

The last meta-theory explored in Chapter two is the Experiential Learning Theory of David Kolb. The more I work with his theory, the more respect I gain for the depth involved therein. Sadly, I believe that many people use Kolb's work very superficially. Finally, I end Chapter two with the integration of Wilber (1995) and Kolb (1984); and this new synthesis is the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model.

Chapter three: The methodological framework

Having a theory with no methodology is of no value to anyone, and so Chapter three deals with the methodological framework. The chapter uses the transcendental phenomenology of Moustakas (1994), Schumacher's (1978) four fields of knowledge, and Harri-Augstein and Thomas's (1991) learning conversations, to further enhance the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model. The Model proposes that coaching is about facilitating integrated experiential learning in individuals in order to enhance personal growth and development. It is "integrated" in that it caters for Schumacher's four fields of knowledge, and for Wilber's Integral Model which analyzes personal development through various levels of consciousness, especially in the personal and transpersonal levels. It is "experiential" in that it uses Kolb's Experiential Learning Model as the injunction or paradigm, and uses Harri-Augstein and Thomas's concept of Learning Conversations as the primary learning tool.

Chapter four: The business framework

In Chapter four I explore how the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model can be applied in the messy and complex world of managerial leadership. The chapter takes the theoretical Integrated Experiential Coaching Model, and adds a business context to it. This is done by incorporating strategy formulation via the Balanced Scorecard of Kaplan and Norton (1996), and organizational design principles with reference to the work of Galbraith, Downey and Kates

(2002) and Rehm (1997). All of this has to happen within a world of managerial complexity which can overwhelm executives.

Having set the business context, Chapter four then explores the individual leadership competencies of Jaques and Clement (1997), and how those competencies could help an executive cope with managerial complexity. What becomes clear is that within the business context, coaching is not therapy. Using the work of Peltier (2001), a clear distinction is made between coaching and therapy.

Lastly, referring to the work of Oshry (1999) and Kilburg (2000) it is shown that behavioural problems manifested by individuals within an organization could be intrapsychic, or due to systemic organizational design problems, or even the result of a combination of both. Hence it is argued that an executive coaching intervention should be aimed at working with cognitive potential, values, knowledge, skills and wisdom within the system in which the individual operates. In the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model, executive coaching is therefore about facilitating integrated experiential learning in individuals in order to enhance personal growth and development with the aim of improving individual and organizational performance. It is not therapy.

Chapter five: Applying and researching the integrated experiential coaching model

In Chapter five I move into the active experimentation part of experiential learning. This chapter briefly presents the findings of my doctoral research, which involved applying and researching the outcomes of coaching within the context of the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model. I then go on to explore how the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model has strong similarities to the "Friendly Disentangling" method or persuasion model developed by the Quakers. In 2003 the Corporate Leadership Council in the US published a report titled *Maximizing Returns on Professional Executive Coaching*. The report stemmed from research that the Corporate Leadership Council had undertaken at the request of its members into the effectiveness of Executive Coaching as a development intervention. I explore how the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model and the research findings relate to the five identified challenges identified by the Corporate Leadership Council.

In his book *Managers Not MBAs*, Henry Mintzberg (2004) challenges the conventional notion that the MBA degree develops managers. Following his critique of the MBA programmes, Mintzberg (2004) suggests a different approach to developing managers based on eight propositions. Although he expounds the propositions in the context of university training, I believe that they are applicable to coaching as well. In the last part of Chapter five, I explore these eight propositions, and see whether or not the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model and my doctoral research findings can be related to them.

Chapter six: The integrated experiential coaching model in a team context

Chapters six and seven deal with ongoing refinements to the Integrated Experiential Coaching model as a result of continuous critical thinking based on new evidence gathered from practice and my own ongoing experiential learning journey. Chapter six explores how the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model can be applied within a team coaching intervention.

Chapter seven: The impact of stress on learning

Chapter seven discusses the impact that stress can have on a manager's ability to learn, which in turn has a direct impact on the individual's ability to manage complexity. The chapter then explores feasible ways of dealing with and managing stress effectively.

Chapter eight: Personal reflections and implications of the coaching journey

Chapter eight concludes the experiential learning cycle, and I once again reflect on my own experiential coaching journey. This time, however, the reflection is on the development, application, research, and continuous refinement of the Integrated Experiential Coaching Model.

Chapter nine: Conclusion

In conclusion, I give some recommendations on a process that can be followed in order to develop your own coaching model and methodology within the context of the experiential learning cycle.