



Coaching Report

March 2017

Directors' Corner

"We know that coaching is effective in creating space for change and now through neuroscience research we can develop tools that align with how our brains function — such that we can make quantum leaps in coaching outcomes," says Carlos Davidovich, MD, executive coach and expert on the relationship of neuroscience to coaching. [Dr. Davidovich led one of the most popular tracks at our annual conference last fall.](#)

Our theme this month is the connection between neuroscience and coaching, one of the 'hot topics' for practitioners, with recent studies providing deeper insights into:

- how emotions are processed
- how neural networks facilitate decision-making
- how habits form and can change
- how visions and ideas are generated
- how brain plasticity enables change to facilitate growth

The efficacy of coaching -- already understood to a certain extent from cognitive-behavioral research -- is being strengthened with neurobiological research on an almost daily basis. As an example, Richard Boyatzis and Angela Passarelli at Case Western University have demonstrated through [fMRI studies](#) that coaching with positive affect (exploring what works and what's possible) versus a negative affect (working on what needs to be fixed) has a significant impact on a coachee's ability to create a future vision and make the changes needed to manifest it.

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Perspectives and Challenges for the Study of Brain Responses to Coaching: Enhancing the Dialogue between the Fields of Neuroscience and Coaching Psychology
- **BOOK:**
Scientists Making a Difference: One Hundred Eminent Behavioral and Brain Scientists Talk about Their Most
- **WEBINARS:**
Mar 23rd 12:00-1:15pm ET
The Alchemy of Trust: Neuroscience and the Coaching Relationship with Judith E. Glaser

Apr 25th 9:00-10:15am ET
Emotional Agility Coaching with Susan David, PhD

Our webinar this month explores the *Alchemy of Trust* with one of the most respected translators of today's neuroscience research into practical applications for coaches. Based on her direct collaborations with neuroscientists, best-selling author Judith Glaser will share case studies where understanding how the brain functions in creating psychological safety -- and trust -- makes the difference in successful coaching.

All of the above notwithstanding, a 'reality-check' is in order, for despite developments in neurobiology and neuroendocrinology, scientists are quick to remind us that our knowledge of the brain -- and its role in behavior change -- is just beginning to take shape.

Our research article -- and commentary -- this month tell a cautionary tale, reminding us of the promise and limitations of the holy grail of brain science. A lead article in *Coaching Psychologist* from June 2015 by Dias, Palmer et al., [Perspectives and Challenges for the Study of Brain Responses to Coaching](#) describes the 'state of the union' between evidence-based coaching and studies of brain functioning.

This broad-based review of the literature is a must read for coaches. It reviews the landscape of fMRI imaging studies of brain functioning in the face of deficits, such as depression, fear and anxiety. The authors also point to the challenges still to be overcome. For example, we have yet to study how coaching works in 'real time' by imaging brain activity during coaching, and most neuroimaging studies still focus on *abnormal* brain functioning. We also include here the important commentary from University of Sydney coaching psychologist Anthony Grant. He cautions coaches not to get caught up in 'neuromyths' or pseudo-insights from neuroscience.

Finally, in keeping with our enthusiasm about the evolving field of neuroscience we recommend a book that accomplishes a rare feat: a highly readable series of essays written by real scientists. In [Scientists Making a Difference: One Hundred Eminent Behavioral and Brain Scientists Talk about Their Most Important Contributions](#), each chapter is an essay by a pre-eminent psychologist or brain scientist -- not in translation but in their own words -- on topics as wide-ranging as childhood brain development, how memory works, epigenetics, the development of language, and many more. This book is unique as it provides coaches a glimpse into the minds of the brilliant explorers who work in the trenches to expand our knowledge of our brains, our bodies -- of our very selves as humans.

We hope you will enjoy these resources and be inspired to dive deeper

HARNISCH GRANTS:

Next Grant Deadlines:

May 1st

Special thanks to our
Sponsors, Fellows,
Members and
[The Harnisch Foundation](#)
for supporting the Institute
of Coaching

into your own journey to connect the dots between neuroscience and practice.



Warmly,
Jeffrey Hull, PhD
Director of Education and Business Development

Research You Want to Know

[Perspectives and Challenges for the Study of Brain Responses to Coaching: Enhancing the Dialogue between the Fields of Neuroscience and Coaching Psychology](#)

Gisele Pereira Dias, Stephen Palmer, Siobhain O’Riordan, Sabrina Bastos de Freitas, Leonardo Rosa Habib, Mário Cesar do Nascimento Bevilaqua & Antonio Egidio Nardi
The Coaching Psychologist, Vol. 11, No. 1, June 2015 11; The British Psychological Society – ISSN: 1748–1104

Abstract from the authors:

The interest in coaching psychology and neuroscience has been steadily increasing over the past 15 years. However, the two fields have not yet established consistent dialogues underpinned by experimental research. This paper highlights the importance of such dialogue for the growth of evidence-based coaching and how coaching psychology could benefit from previous neuroimaging and electroencephalographic studies in the field of psychotherapy and task-specific brain functioning to design research protocols that could significantly contribute to our understanding of how coaching works at the brain level and how coachees could best achieve results.

[Response to Dias et al.: Coaching the brain: Neuro-science or neuro nonsense?](#) Anthony M. Grant

The Coaching Psychologist, Vol. 11, No. 1, June 2015

Abstract from the author:

This paper discusses some myths and misconceptions that have emerged in relation to neuroscience and coaching, and explores the notion that neuroscience provides a foundational evidence-base for coaching, and that neurocoaching is a unique or original coaching methodology. It is found that much of the insights into coaching purported to be delivered by neuroscience are long-established within the behavioral sciences. Furthermore, the empirical and conceptual links between neuroscientific findings and actual coaching practice are tenuous at best. Although at present there is no convincing empirical support for a neuroscientific foundation to coaching, there are important ways in which coaching and neuroscience can interact.... It may well be that coaching can be of greater use to the field of neuroscience than the field of neuroscience can be to coaching. In this way, we can address many neuromyths and misconceptions about brain-based coaching, and begin to author a more accurate and productive narrative about the relationship between coaching and neuroscience.

Book of the Month

[Scientists Making a Difference: One Hundred Eminent Behavioral and Brain Scientists Talk about their Most Important Contributions](#)

by Robert J. Sternberg (Editor), Susan T. Fiske (Editor), Donald J. Foss (Editor)

Scientists Making a Difference is a fascinating collection of first-person narratives from the top psychological scientists of the modern era. These readable essays highlight the most important contributions to theory and research in psychological science, show how the greatest psychological scientists formulate and think about their work, and illustrate how their ideas develop over time. In particular, the authors address what they consider their most important scientific contribution, how they got the idea, how the idea matters for the world beyond academic psychology, and what they would like to see as the next steps in research. The contributors, who were chosen from an objectively compiled list of the most eminent psychological scientists, provide a broad range of insightful perspectives.

Live Webinars for IOC members

[View our Calendar section](#) for all our latest events and offerings, including our IOC Roundtable events!

March

The Alchemy of Trust: Neuroscience and the Coaching Relationship with Judith E. Glaser

Date: Thursday, March 23rd

Time: 12:00 - 1:15 pm ET

Through advances in neuroscience we can now see inside the brains of people when they are experiencing different emotions. What is so astounding is the dramatically different 'brain landscape' that shows up in fear and distrust states versus states of joy, happiness and trust. This revelation about our brain's activity is so profound that it changes the very foundation of how leaders lead.

In this interactive webinar, Judith will share the latest insights about the neurochemistry of trust and distrust so that coaches have new ways to move their clients into powerful states of mind that release fear and distrust and activate brain chemistry that builds thriving relationships, partnerships, teams and organizations.

This webinar will enable coaches to:

- understand where the trust and distrust networks live inside our brain
- learn practice for activating trust
- learn how to expand their client's capacities to observe, feel, live more deeply—and lead more effectively

To learn more, find [Judith's book here](#).

April

Emotional Agility Coaching with Susan David, PhD

Date: Tuesday, April 25th

Time: 9:00 -10:15 am ET

While we and our clients strive for stronger personal relationships, to conquer our bad habits, to lead more effectively, or to get ahead in our

careers, we often get caught in negative emotional and behavioral patterns that prevent us from moving forward. Meanwhile, the demands of our culture increasingly make us even less able to perform at our best. But by becoming more aware of our own emotional nature, learning how to face our feelings and unhooking from our negative thoughts, we can begin to evaluate them and to change our actions to match our values. Emotional Agility is a process that enables us to navigate life's twists and turns with self-acceptance, clear-sightedness, and an open mind. The process isn't about ignoring difficult emotions and thoughts. It's about holding those emotions and thoughts loosely, facing them courageously and compassionately, and then moving past them to ignite change in our life.

Drawing on more than twenty years of research in the field of behavioral science, Susan David, an award-winning psychologist at Harvard Medical School and co-founder of the Institute of Coaching, will outline the key components of Emotional Agility, the concept that Harvard Business Review heralded a Management Idea of the Year.

PARTICIPANTS WILL LEARN:

- Why emotional agility is a critical skillset.
- How getting hooked by our thoughts, emotions and stories stops our clients from thriving.
- The essential steps to cultivate emotional agility in life and work.

To learn more, find [Susan's book here](#).

CoachX Video

Patricia Marino on Self-Sabotage

Our CoachX video this month features Patricia Marino, an IOC Founding Fellow whose professional background extends across 30 plus years teaching English in urban middle and high schools. Patricia's passion to meet the needs of students led to action and research on evidence-based writing methodologies. In her video, she describes how **responsibility and participation**, two components of a framework she calls *digging deep*, helped her finally gain the upper hand on self-sabotage.

Also, see Patricia's accompanying [blog post here](#).

Calls for Papers

2017 Coaching in Leadership and Healthcare Conference

We invite you to share your research on all aspects of coaching at the **2017 Coaching in Leadership and Healthcare Conference**. The Conference is organized by the Institute of Coaching, McLean Hospital, and Harvard Medical School on **October 13th and 14th 2017** at The Renaissance Boston Waterfront Hotel, Boston, MA.

We invite submissions of proposals for:

- **Oral Paper presentations:** Accepted papers will be presented in oral sessions according to topics.
- **Posters:** Accepted posters will be arranged in an exhibit during the poster session, with opportunities to interact with authors and audience.

The purpose of these sessions is to have a stimulating exchange of information and discussions about coaching theory, research and its relevance to practice, as well as to expand the network of coaching researchers.

Visit the [Research Sessions website](#) for information on paper and poster submissions and to create an account. The deadline for the receipt of submissions is **May 15TH, 2017**. More information on the conference will be available soon on the [IOC Website](#).

Philosophy of Coaching: An International Journal

The third issue of Philosophy of Coaching: An International Journal focuses on **coach training and education**.

We invite papers that address such questions as: What do we mean by coach education and training? What philosophies and methods underlie coach education and training? What are the current challenges and opportunities? How have coach education and training evolved? What does the future look like? What gaps in education and training need to be addressed?

We invite the following kinds of submission:

- **Research Papers** (5,000 words approx.) for multiple, well-researched perspectives

- **Position Papers** (3,000 words approx.) for a single, well-researched perspective
- **Book Reviews** (1,000-2,000 words approx.) that summarize and evaluate coaching-relevant books published in the past 12 months
- **Response Papers** (1,000 words approx.) that respond to ideas, themes and perspectives published in previous issues of [Philosophy of Coaching](#)

See [instructions for submission here](#). The deadline is August 1, 2017. Download a copy of this Call for Papers [here](#), and find more details [here](#).

Save the Date!

Our next [Annual Coaching in Healthcare and Leadership Conference](#) – the “conference that never ends” – is set for **October 13-14, 2017**. Save the date and join us in Boston, MA for this one-of-a-kind 10th anniversary event.

Offerings for IOC Members

Not a member? [Join us!](#) The Institute of Coaching provides the best tools (thousands of on-line resources, webinars, coaching reports/digests), a sell-out annual conference, thought leaders and an exceptional community to help advance your coaching practice. Join our growing international membership.

[Learn more about IOC membership](#)