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## *Coaching and the Unconscious*

Joel M. Rothaizer and Sandra L. Hill

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# Coaching and the Unconscious

Joel M. Rothaizer and Sandra L. Hill

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*Rothaizer and Hill have long proposed that masterful organizational consultants must integrate coaching into their work and that masterful organizational coaches must integrate consulting into their work. In this challenging article, they propose that masterful organizational coaches must integrate an understanding of psychology and the unconscious into their work.*

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In our last **IJCO™** article (Hill & Rothaizer, 2007), we wrote about the artificial distinctions that are often made between coaching and consulting. Sandra dubbed the current coaching movement as “second generation coaching” to differentiate it from her training in organizational development, where coaching was one of the many tools available to the experienced OD consultant. There are equally artificial distinctions made between coaching and counseling or psychotherapy, leading many coaches to not integrate “the unconscious” into their work, as if that’s somehow out of the realm of coaching.

We’ll discuss the importance we’ve found of integrating both the individual and collective unconscious in our work. In particular we’ll be discussing how we use the Enneagram and Developmental Thinking, both of which facilitate the possibility of active exploration of the unconscious (that which is not easily and readily available in conscious thought).

## **FIRST, WHAT WE FOUND ON THE INTERNET**

The evening before starting this article, we Googled for coaching vs. counseling vs. psychotherapy and took whatever came first. Here’s some of what we found. We’ve intentionally left off the names of the coaches who presented this material, since our intention is to make a point rather than point fingers. Staying true to our basic premises, we understand that what we found has more to do with the current context of the coaching movement than with characteristics of any particular individuals. Is any of this familiar? Have you found yourself saying anything like this?

Coaching is about the present and the future. If you have issues rooted in the past, you may need to seek therapy or psychological help. Think of a therapist as an archaeologist, helping you dig in the past to unearth issues affecting you now. Think of a coach as an architect, a partner, helping you to build a better future for yourself.

The difference [between therapy and coaching] is similar to working with a physical therapist and a personal trainer. The therapist is working with you to improve function in an area that has been injured or is not working properly, the trainer works with you to develop a higher level of overall function, strength, stamina and form.

Coaching does not focus on “why,” but “what now?” In coaching, you will not analyze the past, but look toward the future to figure out what to do next.

One coach references a table in a published article by two very well-known coaches that includes:

(1) therapy explores the root of problems while coaching focuses on solving problems; and (2) therapy works to bring the unconscious into consciousness, while coaching works with the conscious mind.

Multiple people use this same line: Coaching works best for already successful people who have resolved past issues and are ready to go to the next level in their career, life or with a project.

Coaching is about living in the “present” and taking action to create magical futures.

Is this true? As coaches, are we working with people who are free of their past, who have resolved all the negative influences of their upbringing, and who can rely only on their conscious minds to bring them to higher levels of effectiveness, success, happiness and self-actualization?

Why do we find such distinctions? Perhaps:

- When a new field (what Sandra called “second generation coaching”) begins, it often needs to define itself by creating “straw dog” analogies, comparing masterful coaching to mediocre or even terrible consulting, counseling, teaching, mentoring, etc. It brings itself up by putting something else down. We like to ask people, “Imagine your best friend who’s a therapist/consultant/teacher/mentor is listening to you, and *now* discuss the distinctions between coaching and those fields.”
- Coaches who don’t have a psychology background need to justify why they didn’t need a psychology background to be effective.
- Coaches would like to simplistically believe that, just because they say so, there’s no need for coaches to understand or address processes like transference

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(clients projecting issues with significant others from their childhood onto helping professionals), counter-transference (helping professionals respond in a similar way to their clients), and projective identification (clients eliciting from their helping professionals responses that the clients experienced in childhood). These processes, which may occur in any helping relationship, are almost always out of conscious awareness. This is another reason for coaches to integrate an understanding of the unconscious in their work.

- As a marketing ploy, coaches want to define their ideal clients as somehow beyond needing to explore their unconscious. “My clients are people who don’t need to look at problems areas, and are ready to leap forward into new transformational potential!” “I work with clients who don’t need to have anything be wrong, but just want to have their lives be more right!”
- To support the argument for there not being a need to be regulated like many other professions.
- As a way for coaches to be able to avoid dealing with their own unconscious: with their irrational beliefs, maladaptive assumptions, deeply programmed emotional responses, etc.
- Because, as we discussed in the last article, coaches are unaware of how much they’re impacted by the contexts in which they live and work; they’re unaware of the unconscious collective influences that shape their behavior in different settings; and they therefore don’t work with their clients in this way.
- Or because, as Joel discussed in his 2008 ICF presentation, despite coaches liking to see themselves as post-conventional thinkers, as people who embrace a Living Systems perspective and the kind of perspective illuminated in Lynne McTaggart’s (2008) *The Field*, most coaches (and those in many other professions as well) are still actually living in a quite conventional and mechanistic worldview. When it comes to their own lives, and the lives of those whom they coach, they prefer to see individuals as separate actors who are able to “create their own reality” with sheer energy and enthusiasm, rather than as non-separable aspects of fields of consciousness who are constantly impacted, at a level beyond their conscious awareness, from without and from within.

*When we first learned about the Enneagram, we saw how much of what we’d thought of as “free choice” was remarkably programmed—the response to forces operating beneath the surface, out of our conscious awareness.*

But why explore what’s below the surface when we can just focus on holding a vision, creating some action steps, and moving wonderfully and powerfully toward our chosen goals? For one, because, if

we're honest, we know that this simplistic and naïve growth model hasn't worked for almost any of us, including those of us who are executive/organizational coaches. Individuals (and coaches!) have an unconscious, and ignoring it doesn't stop it from having an ongoing and profound impact on near everything we do. Similarly, contexts (organizational cultures, etc.) have their own collective unconscious that is always exerting a tenacious pull on those within these contexts. Ignoring the pull of these individual and collective fields does not make them go away, nor obviate their impact.

The kind of simplistic models we found on the internet just don't work in real life (which presumably includes coaching). They're even less effective in executive/organizational coaching, where the internal (individual) and external (contextual) pulls from the unconscious are escalated.

## **THE ENNEAGRAM**

We've found the Enneagram to be a wonderful model for exploring both the individual and collective unconscious. We see the Enneagram as the map to our illusions, the filters and blind spots and worldviews that operate mostly outside conscious awareness, yet drive our behavior to an uncomfortable extent. We've worked deeply with the Enneagram for many years, and are consistently humbled by the deepening layers we find. Our clients tend to love the insights that are generated through their exploration of their Enneagram types. Similarly, we've found that organizations and groups have their own Enneagram types, highly resistant to change. Understanding and working with those types has been an important part of our organizational consulting work. We'll provide some information on the Enneagram here, and then provide further information including a brief description of the nine Enneagram types in Appendix A.

### **You can't find your glasses when they're sitting on your nose!**

We use the Enneagram as a tool to improve overall organizational effectiveness, developing high performance organizational cultures including enhanced teamwork and versatility of leaders. Understanding how we see the world, and how our perspective is different from the perspective of others, is important not just for leaders, but for all organizational members.

### **What is the Enneagram?**

The Enneagram describes nine different sets of values and filters through which the world can be seen. Our approach does not put people or groups "in boxes." Instead, we assist organizations and individuals in recognizing and expanding the boxes they are already in, and ultimately in dissolving those boxes where desired. It's a respectful and *dynamic* system that provides an in-depth path of healthy development for each type, including how to build on strengths and avoid pitfalls. It assists leaders and employees in seeing themselves, clients, customers and other stakeholders, as well as the



organization itself, through new eyes. Energy is freed for productivity and creativity that was previously lost in frustration and agitation because of playing out repetitive patterns.

### **Depth of the Enneagram**

The Enneagram is focused on much more than surface behavior. Instead, it illuminates what most likely actually drives the surface behavior, the underlying motivations. We assist our clients in viewing the attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, mental models, filters of perception that guide how they act as *governing variables*. This is part of what we're referring to, in this article, as the unconscious. But how aware are we of what's actually driving our behavior? And what are the implications of not being aware?

Without development, the qualities of the Enneagram types operate quite unconsciously in us. We don't notice the assumptions we make, the beliefs we hold, and our particular emotional, mental, and physical patterns. Instead, we operate on autopilot. When people first learn the Enneagram they tend to be quite surprised at how much of what they considered "spontaneous" behavior is accounted for by the Enneagram type. Later, they are equally surprised at their increase in freedom of choice including the ability to lead and perform more effectively.

### **The Enneagram triads**

There are several ways of dividing the nine Enneagram types into three groups of three. Two of these approaches are particularly helpful in organizational settings. The first are called the Hornebian Triads, so named because Karen Horney (1945) described the three movements of the ego as *against, towards, and away*. The Hornebian Triads (Riso & Hudson, 1996, 1999, 2000) are about how we get our needs met. There are three **Assertive** types (the "against" types, who tend to demand that their needs get met), three **Compliant** types (the "towards" types, who believe that they'll get their needs met by meeting their internalized superego definitions of what a "good person" does), and three **Withdrawn** types (the "away" types, who tend to meet their needs through a rich inner life rather than through life in general).

These are reflections and expressions of generally unconscious belief systems. While people can often identify in which of the three groups they most fit, they are most commonly unaware of what is driving that behavior. How many Assertives recognize that having closed hearts drives them? How many Compliant types recognize their difficulty in having clear and independent thought? How many Withdrawn types are conscious of their fear of moving in the world? Assisting leaders and organizational members in becoming conscious of their tendencies helps them make more versatile choices. Similarly, recognizing whether the overall organizational culture and subcultures are Assertive, Compliant, or Withdrawn illuminates much of what's impacting the individuals within that context.

*Many coaches are able to "carry" people with their energy and enthusiasm, but this is short-lived.*

*Our interest has been in helping organizations and those within the organization evolve to a sustainable higher stage.*

The Assertives are Types Three, Seven and Eight. The Compliant are One, Two, and Six. The Withdrawns are Four, Five, and Nine. For those who aren't familiar with the Enneagram types, see Appendix A for brief descriptions of each type.

The Harmonic Triads, first identified by Riso and Hudson (2000), reflect our initial responses when things don't go our way. There are the three **Positive Outlook** types ("Hey, it's OK, we'll get over it, it's been worse, let's just keep our spirits up and get this done"). Then there are three **Competency** types ("Let's just be big boys and girls, put our feelings aside, be rational and productive, and get this handled") and three **Reactive** or **Intensity** types ("First I have to blow off some steam, and have you acknowledge my reactions, and then I can relax and be part of the solution"). We have fun introducing this triad because there are so many judgments made, from any of the three, about the other two. The Positive Outlook types are Seven, Nine, and Two. The Competency types are One, Three and Five. The Reactive/Intensity types are Four, Six, and Eight.

We've included one case study from our use of the *Enneagram* in organizations in Appendix B.

### **The Enneagram and the unconscious**

When the Enneagram is used in a simplistic way, as is often presented in pop psychology type magazines, it's primarily about observable and conscious behavior at best. The same is true when, rather than giving it the time and energy it requires, organizations allow too little time for learning and integrating. This is what many consultants and/or trainers refer to as wanting "training by injection." But one of the true gifts of the Enneagram is its illumination of the unconscious, both individually and collectively. When we first learned about the Enneagram, we saw how much of what we'd thought of as "free choice" was remarkably programmed—the response to forces operating beneath the surface, out of our conscious awareness. Again, having the ability to pay attention to factors that were previously unseen and make new choices is one of the major potential contributions of the Enneagram.

### **DEVELOPMENTAL THINKING**

We also make extensive use of Developmental Thinking models in our work, integrating the concepts of Susanne Cook-Greuter (2005), Ken Wilber (2003, 2007), Bill Torbert (Rook & Torbert, 2005; Torbert, 2004), Bill Joiner (Joiner & Josephs, 2007), Robert Kegan (1998), and many others. It's likely less obvious why we're bringing up Developmental Thinking in our discussion of coaching and the unconscious. Yet it's highly related. At each increasing level of being able to integrate hierarchical complexity we're able to be more aware of what was previously driving us unconsciously. Thus we are able to make choices that are more effective, that take greater span and depth into account and that do the greatest good for the greatest number of people. We'll do a brief introduction

to Developmental Thinking, and then pay particular attention to work by Robert Kegan (1998) that shows the importance of Developmental Thinking to the understanding of the role of the unconscious, and bringing more of the unconscious into conscious awareness, in executive/organizational coaching.

### **States and stages**

Developmental models result from studying the sequential levels of human development well into adulthood. These models reflect different ways of making sense of the world and then responding to it, some clearly better than others for effectively dealing with complexity, ambiguity, and rapidly changing conditions. These, of course, are what organizational leaders are increasingly facing. Through a developmental lens, a *stage* is the level an organization, team, or individual has reached that's stable and habitual. A *state* is a temporary level, either higher than usual due to support, or lower than usual due to stress, a misaligned context, or other adverse conditions.

### **How do we apply our understanding of stages and states?**

In our work we've found it very important to understand the distinction between the two. Typically, trainers and motivational speakers come into organizations and most people are "pumped up" for a short while (between hours and days) until they gradually revert to the influence of their current organizational context and individual level of development. Similarly, many coaches are able to "carry" people with their energy and enthusiasm, but this is short-lived. Our interest has been in helping organizations and those within the organization evolve to a *sustainable higher stage*. That's what matters for sustainability.

Any two leaders may view the same situation and make sense of it very differently, *and not all these ways are equal*. Some are more effective than others for leading successfully in conditions of increased uncertainty and complexity and for *leading through change*. Leaders with higher level developmental thinking are better able to manage a wider span of influence and generate more sustainable results which engage the greatest number of diverse stakeholders. They are better able to respond effectively to a broader variety of conditions because they have more choices at their disposal and the wisdom to know how and when to apply them. Leaders at higher developmental levels understand how to help build collaborative contexts that bring out the best in organizations, teams, and the individuals within them.

*Contextual thinking, as we've defined it, is the shift in perception that looks outside an organization, team or individual for root cause of behavior, before looking inside that organization, team, or individual.*



The higher levels of developmental thinking include:

- The ability to think contextually;
- Increased self-awareness and the ability to self-reflect: Who am I, how can I better understand others, and how am I impacting those around me? What are my strengths and challenges, and how will I address them?
- More hierarchically complex and integrative thinking: having an “opposable mind,” yes/and vs. either/or thinking, embracing contradiction and paradox, and taking multiple factors into consideration; ability to see and integrate wider and higher perspectives, including multiple stakeholders and further into the future; holding that many things can be true at once.

### **Contextual thinking**

We see contextual thinking as the single most important leadership competency, one that is given insufficient attention by most coaches in our experience. Contextual thinking, as we’ve defined it, is the shift in perception that looks *outside* an organization, team or individual for root cause of behavior, before looking *inside* that organization, team, or individual. It’s the perspective that enables us to assist our clients in consciously guiding the evolution of high performance cultures.

We’ve developed this example to help explain contextual thinking. Imagine a car mechanic tells you that one of your tires is wearing very unevenly. You wouldn’t just replace that tire. Why? Because you know you have to first get the car in alignment. Otherwise, a new tire will also wear very unevenly. Yet, in our organizations, when someone isn’t performing well most leaders tend to try to correct that employee’s performance or look for a new employee, rather than considering what was out of alignment in the organization/group context that might have led the first employee to be struggling. Assessing and addressing the context surrounding an organization, team or individual, rather than just looking directly at the organization, team or individual, is the essence of contextual thinking.

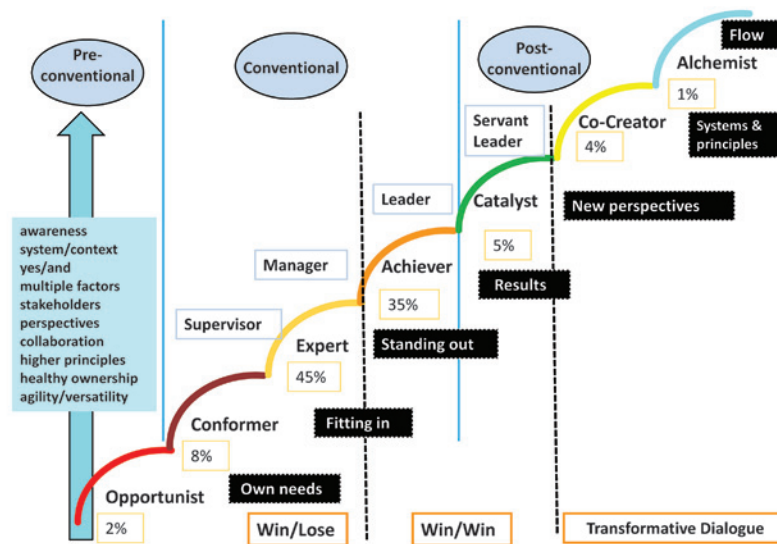
Contextual thinking is needed to understand why organizations operate as they do, why people behave as they do, and how to most effectively influence performance and behavior. This is often called “systemic thinking,” but we found that term has become muddled. Most leaders, coaches and consultants claim to think systemically, yet most do not adequately understand or apply the power of the context.

Why, you may ask, are we including the discussion of contextual thinking in an article on coaching and the unconscious? Most of us have grown up with mechanistic ideas (rather than a Living Systems perspective) and those beliefs and assumptions are operating in our unconscious minds, guiding how we address problems and other

*We didn’t even know we were wearing colored glasses—now we can take them off, look at them, understand their impact, see the world more clearly, and make different choices.*

situations in our lives. We don't realize how much that's guiding and limiting us because we haven't learned how to identify those unconscious assumptions and make new choices. Similarly, when we're able to step back and take a contextual perspective, we begin to see the beliefs and assumptions that are operating within the organizational context, driving both thinking and behavior. See our example in Appendix B for more detail. The chart that Joel used for his 2008 ICF presentation showing developmental levels is offered in Figure One. The names of the levels in the chart have been drawn from the work of both Bill Torbert (2004) and Susanne Cook-Greuter (2005), and Bill Joiner and Stephen Josephs (2007).

**Figure 1. Developmental thinking**



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### The work of developmentalist Robert Kegan

To be a truly effective coach we should first be totally present, in the here and now, right? We hear this phrase so often. And yet it's so developmentally simplistic. Let's be honest. None of us are "totally present, here and now." More importantly, for the purposes of this article, most are not even aware of what's limiting their ability to truly be present. Hopefully we're becoming more so over time, but that process generally requires becoming conscious of what has not previously been conscious, a process of peeling away layers of unconscious limitation that gloriously never ends.

Robert Kegan (1998), an esteemed developmental psychologist, sees individual evolution as occurring as we develop the ability to step back and reflect on something that used to be hidden or taken for granted. Aspects that are "subject" are unseen governing variables. They're affecting everything we do, yet they can't be seen because they're the lenses through which we see, thus they're unquestioned, seen simply as part of the self. In Kegan's words, *we don't have*

*things that are subject – they have us.* We're at their effect, without even knowing it. When we can step back and these become "object" they can now be seen and considered, questioned, and reflected on. We didn't even know we were wearing colored glasses—now we can take them off, look at them, understand their impact, see the world more clearly, and make different choices. Instead of those things having us, *we have them*, along with far more "degrees of freedom" and ability to respond effectively. The more degrees of freedom we have, the more perspectives we can take, the more we can effectively address the contexts in which we work, assisting the evolution of organizations, teams, and individuals.

In Kegan's (1998) model, the more elements we can see, respond to, and make decisions about, the more complex a view we have. *Transformation occurs when we develop the ability to step back and reflect on something that used to be hidden or taken for granted and to make decisions about it.* Isn't this process central to effective coaching? Isn't this what enables us to see why we don't move in directions that would be more healthy, nourishing, etc.? Yet these aspects that were hidden or taken for granted, that which we were subject to, are in the unconscious. So how can coaches claim that they can ignore dealing with the unconscious in their work?

### **Perspective taking**

Another way of understanding developmental levels is as the ability to take hierarchically more complex and integrated perspectives on the world. Ken Wilber (Wilber, 2003, 2007; Stanich & Wilber, 2007), the founder of the Integral Institute, describes this well.

At an early developmental level we just have a first person perspective. This is the egocentric position, where my wants and needs are all that matter. Even when we're dealing with someone else we're just looking from our own perspective, but this limitation is *unconscious*.

At the next level we can have a second person perspective. We can now take an ethnocentric position, where we see ourselves as part of a group, and yet have difficulty taking a position that's different from that of our dominant group. Leaders at this level try to "fit in" and be accepted by their reference group. However, from this ethnocentric position our tendency to engage in "group think" is *outside our awareness. It's unconscious*. We think we're thinking freely. We don't see the limitation.

Then we may evolve to the ability of taking a third person perspective, where we can step back from some of our programming and make individual choices, develop our own world view that's not bonded to that of our reference group. Leaders at this level develop more of an individual identity, and focus on what will get results within their work context. Most people stop at this point, if they even get that far. We are still operating within a system, whose larger assumptions are unexplored, *but we don't know it. We*

*A trickle of us recognize that we're an interrelated whole, that we each help shape a context that can bring out the best in each other, or not.*

*are blind to the extent that we don't question our own governing variables, and the governing variables of our work context. This remains unconscious.*

Far fewer develop a fourth person perspective, where we can step back and examine our own programming, as well as the assumptions within our organizational context. Leaders at this level become fascinated with individual differences, with knowing and valuing how different all of us are. We question assumptions that we previously took for granted. Yet we still take more of an individualistic perspective, rather than being able to discern the true power of context. That remains unseen, largely unconscious.

A trickle of us, at best, develop a fifth person perspective, where we're living informed by an understanding of our interconnectedness. The two of us (Joel & Sandra) realize we can't really give each other feedback from our work together, as if we were each a separate observer of the other, because we recognize that we're an interrelated whole, that we each help shape a context that can bring out the best in each other, or not. We increasingly support each other in maintaining a Living Systems perspective as so beautifully described by Meg Wheatley in *Leadership and the New Science* (2006) as well the kind of interconnectedness that Lynne McTaggart relates in *The Field* (2008). Then we slip into a more mechanistic perspective. And then we remember. And then we forget. At every developmental level, we have to practice taking a higher level perspective, and find support in doing so, before what was formerly unconscious becomes sustainably conscious.

### **Sustainable change**

Let's talk more about sustainable change, and how it relates to the unconscious. We all know that we can look back on goals we've set for ourselves, with sincerity and determination and wholehearted fervor, yet we failed to either make or sustain that change. What got in the way?

Many coaches have shown interest in Dr. Dan Siegel's *The Neurobiology of "We"* (2008). Siegel comments on people he sees in treatment who do mindfulness practice so they can be more "in the now" while avoiding looking at whatever is unfinished in their past. He describes the inadvertent consequence of this attempt to stay in the conscious and present moment: by not examining and integrating what hasn't yet been made fully conscious, these people don't recognize how much their lives are at the unconscious effect of their past experiences, continually impacted in a detrimental way. Most coaches desire to assist their clients in transforming. Unfortunately, those who limit their coaching work to what's present and already conscious are, albeit unintentionally, greatly limiting their client's potential.

In Robert Kegan's (1998) words, the more we're subject to, the less we're able to consciously direct our lives and make sustainable changes. In Ken Wilber's (2003, 2007) words, the higher a perspective we can maintain, the more we're free to truly influence our lives.

*Most coaches desire to assist their clients in transforming. Unfortunately, those who limit their coaching work to what's present and already conscious are, albeit unintentionally, greatly limiting their client's potential.*

From the perspective of the Enneagram, the more we're able to identify what's driving us, the more we're able to step out of a self-oriented world view and live a life that's a reflection of deeply held values and meaning. For all these perspectives, development is about making what was formerly unconscious increasingly conscious, and then doing so again and again, in a never-ending spiral of growth.

### **Where our feet are planted**

We'd be much more than remiss if we left out what's actually most important. Ken Wilber and Alan Comb's "The Wilber-Combs Lattice" (Wilber, 2007) is a wonderful way of understanding two vitally important aspects to human evolution. These are two dimensions that are surprisingly independent of each other, although both extraordinarily important.

The vertical dimension is what we've described above as development of structures of increasing hierarchical complexity and integration. Wilber describes them as the ability to take increasing levels of perspective in the world. Spiral Dynamics (Beck, 2006) refers to it as evolution of values. Susanne Cook-Greuter (2005) refers to them as stages of ego development. Lawrence Kohlberg (1981) refers to stages of moral development, while James Fowler (Stanich & Wilber, 2007) describes stages of faith. Abraham Maslow (1954) referred to levels of developmental needs. As we mentioned previously, Robert Kegan (1998) describes increasing levels of subject/object integration. They are all describing somewhat different yet highly interrelated concepts that arose from years of study in human development.

The horizontal dimension reflects evolving states of consciousness. To what extent are we identified with the world of form? To what extent have we awakened to knowing that we're much more than individual points of consciousness? To what extent have we integrated subtle energies, and awareness of far greater realities, into our everyday life? To what extent have we explored deeper and deeper dimensions of consciousness?

This horizontal dimension is a different aspect of exploring coaching and the unconscious. There are realms and dimensions that are unconscious until we've devoted ourselves to finding them, and then integrating that knowledge into our lives. In our own experience, we (Sandra and Joel) find that this is what ultimately matters the most. We like the expression of it being "where our feet are." Are we coming from a limited perspective, or are we integrating what we've come to know from moving beyond prior boundaries of human consciousness? Again, from our experience and from our wisdom, a truly meaningful life starts from having "our feet" be in what's profound. And yet the ability to sustain this grounding in what's greater, while we're in form, depends on our vertical development. It depends on building structures and perspectives that allow that knowing to take form in the world, to do the highest good and be an expression of what most deeply matters.

*In order for any of us to live a truly beautiful life, to do the greatest good and be an expression of what's most divine, there must be substantial horizontal and vertical development.*



Wilber points out that there are people who have reached profound states of consciousness (horizontal development) yet who maintained very ethnocentric and limited perspectives within the world. There are also those who are vertically highly sophisticated, yet live within a box of shallow meaning. In order for any of us to live a truly beautiful life, to do the greatest good and be an expression of what's most divine, there must be substantial horizontal and vertical development. Both of those require maintaining an ongoing interest in exploring what's unconscious, bringing that into conscious awareness, and then looking for what comes next.

## CONCLUSIONS

We see that understanding coaching technology (having a model and associated skills) is just one aspect of being a masterful coach. We encourage the coaches we train to also explore models of human development, to understand contextual thinking, and to strive to understand the depth of the Enneagram, because in our experience it is the most powerful such model available.

Returning to those narrow definitions we found on the internet, coaching isn't just about the present and the future. It's also about bringing to light what from our past is impacting our present, seeing that with wisdom and compassion, and integrating and evolving. Masterful coaching focuses on both the "why" and the "what now." It's not either/or. It explores the past, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the present and the future. It explores the roots of problems as well as solving problems. It works with the conscious and the unconscious. It's about exploring what's currently unconscious so that we can be increasingly present. It's about seeing that we never fully resolve past issues, we just become increasingly more conscious, hopefully making better and higher choices. It's about an evolving heart, mind, and spirit in the interest of living in ways that enable us to be beacons of light in an increasingly struggling world.

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## ■ ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Hill and Rothaizer have assisted thousands of leaders and their direct reports in enhancing organizational capabilities. They each have extensive training and over 30 years experience in understanding the functioning of both organizations and the people within them. With offices in the United States and Canada, their focus is on organizational effectiveness, leadership development, team development, and executive coaching. They assist their clients in focusing on root causes rather than energy-sapping symptoms, and in discovering unique and elegant solutions to seemingly complex problems. They incorporate a Living Systems perspective and Contextual Thinking into all their work, as well as integrating Developmental Thinking models and the Enneagram.

Hill has a doctorate in organizational psychology, while Rothaizer has a doctorate in clinical/community psychology. They are also both certified Holacracy Practitioners and Enneagram teachers. Their clients have included AT&T Bell Laboratories, General Electric, IBM, Lucent Technologies, Cisco Systems, HSBC, ADP, Mellon, Hagemeyer, Los Alamos National Labs, DoubleClick, StorageTek, STV, the World Bank, Skidmore Owings & Merrill, PeopleSoft, Sanofi-Aventis, Ferrelgas, Prologo, Nature Conservancy, Terry Orzynsky Auto Group & NeXstar Pharmaceuticals.

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## APPENDIX A: THE NINE ENNEAGRAM TYPES ©

### Type One (Reformers)

- **Worldview:** Seeing the world objectively through values and principles.
- **Filter (Average and below):** Carrying around an internal yardstick, judging myself and others against it.
- Rational and idealistic, at *High Performance* they display integrity, objectivity, responsibility, and commitment to quality. They live by their values, hold high standards, and they don't cut corners.
- At lower levels of development they're hard on themselves, and that hardness "leaks out" as resentment or criticalness of others. They become more judgmental, moralizing, impersonal, intolerant, and dogmatic, seeing only their one "right way."

### Type Two (Mentors/Helpers)

- **Worldview:** I focus on what others are feeling, what they need, and how I can meet those needs.
- **Filter:** Needing to be needed and acknowledged for how helpful I am.
- Interpersonal and caring, they're attracted to service and making connections. At *High Performance* they're empathetic, altruistic, appreciative, encouraging, warm-hearted, generous, and kind. People feel supported and cared for.

- At lower levels of development they become intrusive, giving-to-get (strings attached), possessive, and out of touch with their own needs. People can feel manipulated, and their flattery can come across as insincere.

### **Type Three (Achievers)**

- **Worldview:** I focus on how I can be successful and accomplish the next goal as efficiently as possible.
- **Filter:** Image focused, needing others' acknowledgement and approval.
- Ambitious and image-conscious, at *High Performance* they are authentic, adaptable, competent, enthusiastic, and motivational. They energize those around them with a can-do attitude. Once given a goal, they'll work tirelessly to achieve it.
- At lower levels of development, they start to treat people as objects that are helpful or barriers to getting the job done, and people begin to resent it. They can come across as superficial, arrogant, self-serving, pushy, insincere, opportunistic, and untrustworthy.

### **Type Four (Designers/Individualists)**

- **Worldview:** How I can express my creativity and uniqueness.
- **Filter:** I'm likely to be misunderstood and unmet.
- Expressive and individualistic, at *High Performance* they're creative, self-aware, sensitive, inspired and aesthetically oriented. They bring depth to their work lives, and encourage others to be more fully who they are. They find ways to put their unique stamp on whatever they are doing.
- At lower levels they become more moody, hypersensitive, and withdrawn. They can start to notice what's wrong in their lives, and become envious of others. They can become self-indulgent and alienated.

### **Type Five (Investigators/Observers)**

- **Worldview:** Detaching from the situation, stepping back to analyze and understand it.
- **Filter:** Cultivating knowledge, withdrawing and holding back from others to protect my tender heart.
- Intense and intellectual, at *High Performance* they're extremely perceptive, insightful, analytic, and inventive. Deeply curious about the world, they find their own answers and explore uncharted territory. They make remarkable leaps and connections, and are valued as sources of considerable wisdom.
- At lower levels of development, they tend to hold back of themselves, disliking intrusions on their time and space. They can be perceived as detached, arrogant, preoccupied, reclusive, and eccentric.

### **Type Six (Troubleshooters)**

- **Worldview:** Seeing multiple perspectives and constructively addressing potential problems before they arise.
- **Filter:** Security orientation leads to fearfulness and ambivalence about what could go wrong, and decisions about the right thing to do.

- Committed and security-oriented, at *High Performance* they are trustworthy, dedicated, warm and dutiful. They constructively point out potential problems before they become major issues. They value teamwork, and are cooperative, supportive, loyal team players. They often have a quirky, dry-witted sense of humor.
- At lower levels of development, they become nay-sayers, consistently focusing their attention on what might go wrong. Disliking unpredictability and rapid change, they can become reactive, anxious, suspicious, blaming, doubting, worrying, and volatile.

### **Type Seven (Enthusiasts)**

- **Worldview:** What's the next interesting, stimulating, fun thing to do? What can I plan next?
- **Filter:** Avoiding negative experiences, including having difficulty with commitment.
- Busy and fun-loving, at *High Performance* they can take any situation and find a way to make the best of it. They're joyous, spontaneous, enthusiastic, resilient, buoyant, playful, optimistic, charming, and multitalented.
- At lower levels of development they can become scattered, chronically unsatisfied, and have difficulty following through on commitments. They can come across as impatient and impulsive, with a short attention span.

### **Type Eight (Challengers)**

- **Worldview:** Taking charge and making an impact.
- **Filter:** Not wanting to be controlled and protecting vulnerability.
- Powerful and willful, at *High Performance* they make sure that they are empowered, and also empower those around them. Strong leaders and visionary, they are champions of the underdog, protect those in their care, and are self-assertive, magnanimous, courageous, and pragmatic. They take charge, can stand the heat, and make sure that they can make a difference.
- At lower levels of development they start to use their considerable strength to protect themselves, and can throw people off balance by becoming intimidating, bullying, and combative. They can become boastful, excessive, blaming, and have black-and-white thinking.

### **Type Nine (Peacemakers/Mediators)**

- **Worldview:** Looking for a felt sense of harmony and comfort.
- **Filter:** Avoiding conflict or other unpleasant situations that would disturb harmony.
- Pleasant and modest, at *High Performance* they are accepting, patient, calming, supportive, harmonizing, and steady. They build consensus, and masterfully blend divergent points of view.
- At lower levels of development, their desire for harmony takes the form of conflict-avoidance, and they can sacrifice their own position for the sake of keeping the peace. They can also become disengaged, stubborn, procrastinating, passive-aggressive, resistant, and apathetic.



## **APPENDIX B: ENNEAGRAM ORGANIZATIONAL CASE STUDY: MARKETING IN A TYPE NINE CULTURE**

We worked in a large international high-tech company with an average to low-average Type Nine culture. They had a bigger-than-life Type Six CEO who functioned at average to below average levels. The CEO had a very strong personality and often led with intimidating tactics when he was dissatisfied or anxious. He was under much pressure from the Board of Directors because there were significant changes to make in the company's core business. The company had always been the industry leader but they weren't on the forefront of new changes and were rapidly losing market share to competing organizations. The Type Seven marketing team had made many presentations to the CEO and he always had turned them away in disgust. They were never clear about why he was dissatisfied and would repeatedly try again with even more typical Type Seven enthusiasm and optimism about the company's potential for success.

They were introduced to the *Enneagram* as part of an extensive team building effort. They became clear about the implications of working within a Type Nine culture. For example, behavior that would be acceptable or even valued in other cultures was seen by other internal groups as pushy, aggressive and disrespectful. With new understanding they were able to have more constructive dialogues with other teams and resolve old conflicts.

Another major revelation was that that they were approaching the CEO in a way that was completely the opposite of what would appeal to him. Sixes look for worst-case scenarios, and only begin to relax when they know that you are doing the same. The marketing team was not allowing him to know that they spent any time anticipating anything other than positive outcomes. This set up a vicious cycle: the more positive they were, the more he would worry that they were missing something important; the more they'd feel the disconnect with the CEO, the more positive and enthusiastic they would get, etc. When they began their presentations with a more well-rounded approach including what could go wrong, and how they would deal with those contingencies, he relaxed and they were able to have a reasonable dialogue and plan together for the future.

When this CEO was hired he replaced 90% of the people at the Vice President level. The new executives were hired to be the antithesis of the old culture, yet the organization retained its strong Nine flavor. One of the members of the organization described it as a person whose head has turned, but the body continues moving in the same direction. This is a very important insight. The *Enneagram* type of the organization is independent of the types of the leaders.

The CEO was using typical Six strategies to try to move the organization forward. Yet, instead of changing in response to his volatility and pressure and attempts to generate fear, the organization continued to resist change while devoting remarkable amounts of time and resources to managing his volatility. We watched teams spend hours and hours on weekends trying to put together the kind of presentation with which he'd be OK. Some people observed that managing the CEO became the highest priority of the organization. Trying to stay in harmony with him became more important than the overall organizational goals.

There were certainly strengths to the Type Nine culture. There was a high emphasis on taking care of people, with excellent benefits and policies that supported long-term employment. On the other hand, the marketing team, as well as others in the organization, saw the cost of other aspects of the low-average Type Nine culture, such as the norm of saying "yes" when "no" was the real response, and lack of initiative and energy. Progress and true engagement were being impeded at a time in the organization's evolution when creative initiatives were critical for survival. Without dealing with these issues and others in the culture, the understanding brought about by learning the *Enneagram* would be temporary at best.

In this organization, training without consulting would have been of very limited lasting value. Effective consulting allows for more successful integration of the *Enneagram* through addressing the aspects of the organization keeping it from having a high performance culture.

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