

Coaching & Social Action

Giving of your coaching expertise to create positive change

By Patrick Williams, EdD, MCC

When I think of what the process of coaching brings to others, the words that come to my mind are connection, collaboration and co-creation. I think these qualities are also what we need more of in the world. We are connected globally more than ever, mostly by electronics (cell phones, email, chat, texting, Twitter, Facebook and other social media), yet there is a robust hunger for true connection and meaningful relationships. The more “high-tech” our lives become, the more “high touch” we need in our lives.

Given the incredible results I have witnessed from coaching (as both the receiver and the coach), I had a vision in 2005 of finding a way to bring the power of coaching to the underserved and remote locations in the world.

That vision became a nonprofit corporation, Coaching the Global Village. In my work experiences in Africa, Turkey, Australia, Italy, Costa Rica, Mexico and many other cultures, I have gained as much from those I helped as they did from my efforts. I believe that coaching is the missing link to empowering people to carry on after receiving assistance from nonprofits and nongovernmental organizations.

At Coaching the Global Village, we started with a founding board of advisors, created a coaching curriculum, conducted three pilot studies and one paid training, collected research, and have now formed a new official governing board of directors. Our new board is multicultural, multilingual and international in scope. We are looking for ways to partner, collaborate, and connect with other nonprof-



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its, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and communities around the globe. We have a newsletter, so if you want to be kept informed of what we are doing and discover your part, please sign up. Go to www.CoachingTheGlobalVillage.org

As this new venture indicates, coaching is an evolving profession, a methodology focused on empowerment that challenges many of us to seek positive change in the world. Changing the world is a tall order, and it may sound like an idealistic dream – but what is wrong with some idealism? I believe we need the inhabitants of this planet to exhibit ideals and values and then to live in congruence with those ideals and values. Coaching can help make that a reality one individual and/or one community at a time.

This is especially true in the nonprofit sector, where opportunities

abound and tremendous change is happening. There are studies, research initiatives and coaching programs aimed at leaders of nonprofit and social profit organizations in the United States as well as NGOs around the world.

The increasing visibility of coaching in the nonprofit sector is creating much momentum for change (see sidebar on next page). Check your local community listings and websites to see if there are efforts you can connect with where you live.

Become the Change

“There is no way to peace. Peace is the way.” These immortal words spoken by Gandhi are the only truth about peace that will lead to its ever being realized in our world (I recommend reading *Peace is the Way* by Deepak Chopra). You and I must

Where to Start

Here is a guidemap to help you make the connection between coaching and social action:

- Familiarize yourself with the collection of unique nonprofit coaching initiatives including *Coaching Global Village* at www.CoachesCare.org – an idea created by a leading coaching business solution provider, Practice Pay Solutions, as a way to make more visible the work of these organizations and individuals involved in service work throughout the coaching world.
- Check out *The Gift of Coaching*, a new website and service funded by the Harnisch Foundation that seeks to find a way to link people who need coaching with qualified coaches who want to ‘gift’ the service in meaningful ways at www.thegiftofcoaching.org.
- Explore *The Coach Initiative* at www.coachinitiative.org, where professional coaches can volunteer their experience and expertise “in support of global projects that focus on the betterment of the human condition and uplifting the human spirit.”

strive toward peaceful living in our homes, with our families, our communities, and our world. We must be purposeful and conscious in our actions and communications every day. And when we find ourselves not at peace, act! Do something peaceful, or “peace-creating.” Be anonymously kind to someone, or be of service to a stranger. Give a gift for no reason other than that of love.

We all can be less apathetic and more responsible (response-able).

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What daily actions are you taking for peace? What self-limiting beliefs about the world and about other cultures are you not challenging? Anger and violence seem to be dominating human attitudes today and yet I know that there are millions of quiet peacemakers. Maybe it is time to be more vocal, more actionable, and more authentic. How can we find

ways to mobilize our “global warming” between human beings that we need so much more of in the world?

In *Speak Peace in a World of Conflict* by Marshall Rosenberg, he teaches us to create peace by connecting to life at three levels:

- Creating peace within ourselves.
- Creating peaceful connections with others.
- Transforming the structures we have created – corporate, judicial, governmental, etc. – that don’t sup-

port peaceful, life-enriching connections between us.

In *The Anatomy of Peace*, by the Arbing Institute, the character of Yusuf says, “lasting solutions to our outward conflicts are possible only to the extent we find real solutions to our inner ones.”

Peace is the way, and the path begins within us. Only then can we

journey toward peace with others in our community and hopefully spread the peace beyond ourselves.

Make It Happen

What passion inspired you to become a coach? Are you still feeling that passion, or have you given yourself over into the daily grind of work? If we wish to become the peace we want to see in the world, to initiate change and growth, and to lead others through the same process, that passion is essential.

Coaching offers powerful tools to create change. We can take these tools into our communities, into our wider culture, and into the world. How you accomplish this does not need to be as big as the Coaching the Global Village project, but you still have the power to generate change. If there is not an organization in your community, join together with other coaches to create a unified effort. Give pro bono coaching to a leader of a nonprofit. Participate in one of the organizations at www.CoachesCare.org. We are stronger in groups than we can ever be as individuals. To quote a saying I learned in Tanzania, “I am because we are.”

How can you help? What will you do differently? Reach out to someone you know in your community where coaching could impact their life in positive ways. Ask if they would like to be coached. Send your ideas and thoughts to me at ideas@coachingtheglobalvillage.org and I will highlight the best ideas in a future column. •

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