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THE MISNOMERS OF SPIRITUAL 'DIRECTING' AND 'COACHING'

ABSTRACT

The article considers the terms 'directing', as used in spiritual directing, and 'coaching' related to its general use, but spiritual 'coaching', in particular. Directing and coaching are said to be misnomers that communicate directivity instead of primarily being situated in a non-directive style of engagement. Within the author's theoretical paradigm, spiritual accompaniment and spiritual, narrative informed, coaching were said to be kindred spirits. Both emphasise experience, broadly adhere to a facilitative style of engagement, and do not subscribe to a deficit model, aiming to fix or remedy, in the first instance, least of all attempting to be an expert on a person's life. Attention is paid to what potentially contributes to the said misnomers. The article concludes that misnomers cause barriers to inter-professional inquiry and practice.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since I started to consider what a facilitative approach in, and to practical theology might involve,[1] my research naturally led to conversations with spiritual director, Dr. Willem Nicol. Within the wider scope of my research, the aspect that pertains to my conversation with Dr. Nicol revolves most notably around spirituality and ways in which we engage people in this context.

The wider research theme is conducted within the discipline of practical theology. It explores the notions of narrative and spiritual coaching in view of the organisational context. It also reflects on interaction modalities

1 Cf. Pienaar (2012); Pienaar & Müller (2012).

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such as facilitation, therapy, and consulting, which I view as related to many ways of doing coaching. Consequently, my wider academic interest is in the intersection between practical theology and organisational studies. Significantly, it adds the means of, and inquiry into engaging the organisational context through said ways of interaction. As such, the focus becomes organisational praxis.

One of the first aspects that stood out to me in conversation with Dr. Nicol[2] is that, in his spiritual directing practice and in the way in which I perceive spiritual coaching, we both choose a general non-directive approach; this somewhat surprised us. It was clear that he viewed coaching as directive. I understood spiritual directing to be, as the word conveys, directive.

2. THE MISNOMER OF SPIRITUAL 'DIRECTING'

2.1 Surprised by spiritual directing

During my theological studies, Dr. Nicol was appointed as my minister in the student congregation I attended. As I have known him for many years, there was a kind of discrepancy between what spiritual directing seems to suggest about the process and what my experience was of how Dr. Nicol interacted with students.

In my conversation with him, I initially and purposefully referred to spiritual 'directing' in the hope that, if my hunch were accurate about his unease with the notion, he would explain it, which he did. He prefers to use the term spiritual 'accompaniment', as it describes the kind of relationship he has with those who come to see him better.

Nicol (2010:17) states that, in principle, the practitioner does 'begeleiding' (accompaniment) and does not provide 'leiding' (direction). His reason for this resonates strongly with a narrative approach, noticeably when he mentions that the 'accompanee' knows more about his/her own experience than the 'accompanier' (Nicol 2010:17). The word 'accompaniment' is particularly relevant since, in his experience, people often commit to spiritual accompaniment for years. If we choose the term 'spiritual accompaniment', it describes not only the approach to each encounter, but also an ongoing relationship. By contrast, 'spiritual directing' would perhaps best translate in Afrikaans as 'geestelike aanwysing'. This could

2 Our conversation took place on 26 November 2012 and pertains to all instances where Dr. Nicol is referred to without in-text referencing.

involve showing, going before or guiding, pointing, teaching, instructing, and sharing of information to these ends.

2.2 The transition to non-directivity

Although we have to acknowledge that there are various communities of practice in spiritual directing and coaching, 'spiritual directing' harbours a misnomer, since it particularly evolves into an approach that is non-directive.

Nicol's preference for the phrase 'spiritual accompaniment' is not one that is merely personal. We both hold related views in viewing non-directivity as part of a wider movement. We are aware that non-directivity gained prominence in society and that such views have become more pronounced over the past few decades; he refers to a period of approximately thirty years. According to him, spiritual directing has come a long way from its initial practice in monasteries, where aspiring monks would be directed, that is, guided in keeping daily spiritual practices such as prayer and reading.

The word 'facilitation' is often used in an attempt to describe the nature of the movement to non-directivity. The image that informs his views on spiritual accompaniment is one where the 'accompanee' walks in front and the 'accompanier' acts as a *facilitator* from behind (Nicol 2010:17, emphasis added). Yet this seems to resemble the style of coaching. Palmer and Whybrow (2008:10) refer to a survey in which the majority of coaching psychology practitioners adopt a facilitative coaching style (67.9%) rather than an instructional one (17.4%).

2.3 A way forward?

Related to the terms 'spiritual accompaniment' and 'spiritual directing', there is the term 'spiritual direction'. Fresen (2000:179) notes that, although many authors prefer spiritual accompaniment, the description 'spiritual direction' is still commonly used. In her essay, Fresen (2000:180) specifically chooses 'direction'. This is interesting as she regards the phrase 'spiritual direction' as an unfortunate term (Fresen 2000:179), with which Nicol agrees.

There is a way in which we can interpret spiritual directing, but more naturally, spiritual direction that is in keeping with the shift in consciousness away from the early practice of a directive approach in spiritual directing. To Fresen (2000:179), spiritual direction is about seeking direction in life.

Seeking direction is important, considering that McCarthy (2000:192) shows that our seeking and restlessness are concerned with trends such as

materialism, commercialism, and anonymity in mass society. Furthermore, McCarthy (2000:194) notes that people of every background are

> searching for depth, meaning, and direction – for a reality or purpose greater than and beyond themselves, which is worthy of their commitment and their life energy.

This is not only the reason for the explosive interest in spirituality (McCarthy 2000:192), but it also has relevance for the practice of spiritual accompaniment (Fresen 2000:179).

This is important, since we can still argue that, in spiritual direction, the spiritual director gives direction. This is not the case. Fresen (2000:179) writes with reference to spiritual accompaniment:

> ... a person who is looking for meaning and direction finds support in talking to another, often more experienced person. Both enter the relationship in the belief that it is the Spirit of God who leads, who gives the direction.

3. THE MISNOMER OF 'COACHING'

Coaching is slightly more complex, as there are various ways of practising coaching that are indeed directive. It is still a misnomer in that the primary perspective has shifted to what a coaching engagement style involves; as with spiritual directing, away from directivity to non-directivity and self-directed learning.

3.1 Surprised by coaching

Dr. Nicol seemed both surprised and intrigued when I mentioned that coaching is, in my view, especially non-directive and, in this sense, also a relationship between equals, as he perceives spiritual accompaniment. At that time he had, earlier in our conversation, compared spiritual accompaniment to coaching, by mentioning what he believes to be the directive nature of coaching. This is also partly reflected in his writing, namely that coaching, instead of being a relationship between equals as with spiritual accompaniment, is established in a vertical, top-to-bottom relationship ('afdraande-verhouding') (Nicol 2010:17). Nicol (2010:24) indicates, for instance, that life coaching might come close to spiritual accompaniment, except that the term 'coaching' ('afrigting' in Afrikaans) supposes that the coach has more authority than the one being coached. It is not the intention of either life-coaching processes, or the spiritual directing relationship to convey that a directive approach is taken.

To a signifcant degree I encounter the assumption that coaching is directive. I was surprised to hear from a colleague who was recently brought under the impression from another university's master's degree coaching student that coaching is directive. Informed by my research fellowship, I developed the Advanced Course in Personal and Corporate Coaching (ACPCC), in the Continuing Education division of the University of Pretoria. This is also apparent in this instance. New coaching students initially view coaching as directive. In my experience, some students do grapple with the notion that it is not, in principle, directive. Informed by her global involvement in workshops that train participants in narrative practices, and while discussing her contribution to the ACPCC course as a lecturer, Dr. Swart (3 December 2012) notes that, in some of her conversations with participants, coaching and facilitation come across as directive. She experiences this from the way in which it is practised.

While coaching can and certainly is practised from an instructional or directive approach, it is erroneous to assume that this is what coaching entails. Serving on the ethics committee of Coaches and Mentors of South Africa (COMENSA) for a while, it was clear to me from various conversations that COMENSA particularly values the methodological and epistemological diversity in the profession of coaching. COMENSA (*s.a.*) conveys that, as a professional coaching body in South Africa, they offer an 'inclusive umbrella'. The diversity in the practice of coaching is also reflected in theory (cf. Wildflower & Brennan 2011).

3.2 The transition to non-directivity

I shared with Dr. Nicol that the shift he noticed taking place from spiritual directing to spiritual accompaniment also occurred in coaching. It happened to the extent that Cox *et al.* (2010:2), in their handbook on coaching, report that the majority of coaching approaches are non-directive in nature.

Cox *et al.* (2010:3) report this shift from directivity to non-directivity in coaching as follows. The traditional model requires the coach to have expertise in, or knowledge of the task; is driven by the coach's agenda or is, at best, agreed; emphasises 'doing' or performance; is geared towards skills acquisition, and is aimed at achieving standards set by someone other than the coachee. Although this model is still relevant, an important shift has taken place where the coach's knowledge and expertise of the coaching process are required; the coachee's agenda is what drives the engagement; a shift towards 'becoming' or self-actualisation is evident; developing capability happens by building insight and self-knowledge towards more substantive change, and the coachee's standards must be met.

I am of the opinion that these shifts involve a change in posture and societal consciousness. This shift in posture is also noticeable in modalities other than coaching and accompaniment. The case for this development as a sociological shift is stronger in terms of the professionalisation of the modality of facilitation (cf. Pienaar & Müller 2012:5; Pienaar 2012:245). Facilitation seeks to foster cooperation above autocracy and democracy (Hunter *et al*. 2007:23); some show a tendency away from the command-and-control model (Bens 2005:28) and in line with the development in terms of what is known as the 'learning organisation'. According to Daft (2010:31-34), the learning organisation is, for instance, characterised by a shift from vertical to horizontal organisation structures, from routine tasks to empowered roles, from formal control systems to shared information, from competitive to collaborative strategy, and from rigid to adaptive culture.

3.3 A way forward?

While we can make something of the idea of spiritual directing involving finding or discerning direction (not giving direction), it appears that coaching has a misnomer inherent in its name. Likewise, according to Fresen (2000) who notes that spiritual 'direction' is an unfortunate term, as Nicol affirms, the reference to coaching is also unfortunate. This is particularly relevant to those who position themselves broadly within a non-directive approach.

It is unfortunate in the sense that those who have some knowledge of all the varied approaches, genres, or contexts of coaching, could be expected to understand that, theoretically, coaching is not, even if not only, directive. Considering the plethora of words that denote coaching, it is perhaps understandable that some denotations would lean more towards non-directivity (whether in theory or perception); in other words, narrative coaching, coaching for meaning, values or axiological coaching, ontological coaching, spiritual or transpersonal coaching, and developmental coaching. However, other denotations such as performance coaching or business coaching might strongly conjure up associations of directivity.

If we were to accept that coaching is not necessarily directive, but particularly non-directive, one other matter needs our attention. The matter of story, or narrative, is an important aspect in the way in which we interact with people by means of modalities such as coaching or therapy. In my opinion, spirituality (and in the immediate context inclusive of religion) and narrative cannot be separated. Consequently, I find it difficult to subscribe to attempts at separating *spiritual* accompaniment from *narrative* coaching (Nicol 2010:15-24). Bellah (2011:14) asserts, for

instance, that 'story' (as verbal symbolisation) is important in nearly all kinds of religion. As for a particular style of engagement called narrative, the 'narrative approach' within the modality of coaching has received theoretical consideration (cf. Drake 2010; cf. Law 2008). A great deal could be mentioned about how the spirit of a narrative approach – and therefore also narrative coaching – differs from direct and very explicit approaches to, for instance, goal-setting and the importance of taking action in respect of popular perceptions of coaching.

4. NARRATIVE APPROACH AND SPIRITUAL ACCOMPANIMENT

My particular interest in this section is with what Nicol (2010:15–24) indicates spiritual accompaniment is *not,* when compared with coaching and therapy. While I agree with his distinction between accompaniment and therapy (as I shall indicate), therapy that is narrative does not fit the picture. A narrative approach is neither overtly directive, nor problem focused, *per se*.

Nicol's understanding of spiritual accompaniment and my understanding of coaching are both mostly (or, at least, in our respective communities of practice) *non-directive*, *facilitative*, and characterised by a *relationship between equals*. Neither would have thought this to be the case, had it not been for our conversation. But how do narrative considerations fit into the conversation.

It is acknowledged that people who are trained in a narrative approach will find that they can incorporate much of their style into spiritual accompaniment (Nicol 2010:23). In this instance, the mention of a narrative approach concerns narrative therapy (Nicol 2010:23). Among everything that spiritual accompaniment is not,[3] he acknowledges that narrative therapy comes closer to spiritual accompaniment (Nicol 2010:23). What then of narrative coaching, given his initial understanding of coaching as being directive?

Whatever people bring to us as intentional collaborators in their lives is entirely up to them. They have a perception about what it is that we do and that is not something that can adequately be addressed beforehand. Nicol, for instance, notes that spiritual accompaniment is not about problems. One of the ways in which he differentiates narrative therapy from spiritual accompaniment is by noting that narrative therapy is primarily concerned

3 This is not restricted to religion; neither to teaching, pastoral work, a kind of psychological therapy, nor to mentoring or life coaching (Nicol 2010:15-24).

with helping people deal with problems by means of new possibilities derived through the thickening of peoples' stories (Nicol 2010:23-24). Yet, concerning spiritual accompaniment, Nicol (2010:56) mentions that it is a well-known experience that people go for spiritual accompaniment in order to help them understand and persevere in the midst of what they experience as various kinds of problems.

It is reasonable to say that we find ourselves, as spiritual accompaniers and narrative – allow me to purposefully use the word – therapists, in the same predicament. Neither of us, from the perspective of a practitioner, would mention that our methodology or even simply our way of being with people focuses on solving problems. From sources such as the Dulwich Centre (*s.a.*) that can be used to track the development of narrative practice, it is evident that the narrative metaphor has responded exceptionally well to problems. While the ability to respond to problems is more than a by-product, the relationship between narrative practice and the choice for working in this manner is not linearly connected to problems.

While it is true that the narrative therapist thickens stories that do not sustain problem-saturated accounts of life, identity, experience, and so on (cf. Freedman & Combs 1996:16), the narrative practitioner (in general and not simply the therapist) rather tries to work in ways that go 'beyond solving problems' (Freedman & Combs 1996:16). The narrative approach takes the consistency of water flowing into every modality and theme – whether conventional therapy (as it might relate to problems) or coaching (as it might relate, for instance, to goal-setting and performance).

The narrative approach is capable of this movement beyond problems for various reasons. First, although the genres, themes, and modalities wherein narrative practice might find expression are extensive,[4] these are made sense of through the same epistemology lens (irrespective of whether the context is about problems or setting goals). Secondly, human beings experience their lives 'inherently in narrative form' (Crites 1971:291). Müller (1996:20) credits Stephen Crites as being among the first to draw attention to this. Narrative practitioners work across disciplines and modalities with this inherent quality. Relevant also to his own discipline, namely practical theology, Müller (2004:297) says of the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, psychology, and health sciences that there are 'signs of a development towards a narrative approach'. The narrative practitioner should ask him-/herself how the narrative metaphor could respond, if at all, to the distinguishing accent of a particular modality at a specific time of its development.

4 Some might, therefore, opine that it tries to be all things to all people.

From conversations with Dr. Nicol, it appears that, in its response to coaching, the narrative approach finds a kindred spirit in spiritual accompaniment. In what way might this be the case? It does not follow a 'death by problem-talk'[5] approach. If this is relevant for narrative therapy, it also applies to narrative coaching, perhaps more so since coaching (with the exception of a narrative approach) tends to cause fewer problems. It should also be noted that a pertinently narrative approach to coaching would want to steer clear of a 'death by goal-setting' approach and thus find itself in harmony with the voice of spiritual accompaniment that opens people up to mystery amidst a control-obsessed society (Nicol 2010:57).

Whereas spiritual accompaniment and spiritual coaching value mystery, a narrative approach in the context of spirituality or any other context, follows a 'spirit of adventure' (White 2009:59). In asking 'Where did it all begin?', White (2009:59) refers to White and Epston (1992:9), stating that the attempt to preserve this 'spirit' of adventure is central to their [narrative] work. It is perhaps helpful to experience something of this spirit by watching the 2009 film, the animation *Up.* In this film, the name of explorer Charles Muntz's airship shares this key narrative attitude, namely 'The Spirit of Adventure' (Pixar Wiki, *s.a.*). Broadly synonymous with this is what McKenzie and Monk (1997:92) describe as the need for 'a stance of persistent and genuine curiosity'. It is also a welcome coincidence that spiritual accompaniment and spiritual coaching share this narrative value encapsulated in the '*spirit* of adventure', all of which would hold that it is not about problems *per se* (although there may be many kinds of problems on the journey).

Though a narrative approach finds a kindred spirit in Nicol's portrayal of spiritual accompaniment, it does not imply that they address what they regard as important in the same way.

5. THE INGREDIENT OF EXPERIENCE

It should be evident from the above that narrative practice (as it informs my views on therapy, coaching, and naturally then also spiritual coaching) is neither directive nor problem centric. Coupled with spiritual accompaniment, it uses experience, which is a key ingredient in spiritual accompaniment, coaching and therapy informed by a narrative approach.

5 The phrase 'death by ...' refers to particularly cacao-rich, chocolate desserts referred to as 'death by chocolate' In this context, 'death by' is a technical term referring to a particular characteristic of the modality or approach.

5.1 Spiritual accompaniment and narrative spiritual coaching in relation to experience

The following section explores how spiritual accompaniment and narrative-informed spiritual coaching might address the aspect of experience differently.

5.1.1 Spiritual accompaniment and experience

To a large degree, spiritual accompaniment entails that one should learn from one's own experience (Nicol 2010:60). It also relates to the experience of the accompanier who is regarded as extremely important (Nicol 2010:60). To emphasise, Nicol (2010:60) mentions that some technique on the part of the 'accompanier' can help, but should not play a significant role (Nicol 2010:60). If the spiritual accompanier can learn from his/her life experience, one can guide someone else to learn from his/her experiences (Nicol 2010:60).

The primacy of experience in spiritual accompaniment comes from the key assumption that God is 'everywhere actively present' ('alom aktief aanwesig') (Nicol 2010:60). Consequently, in the face of problems that people bring to spiritual accompaniment, the aim of the spiritual director is not to alleviate pain (Nicol 2010:128). It is asserted that one should not help the 'accompanee' *out of the pain* as much as one should rather help the person learn and grow *within the pain* (Nicol 2010:128). It is, therefore, not as a rule desirable to offer words of comfort (Nicol 2010:128).[6] A number of questions could be asked that relate to learning and growing within the pain. Examples include (Nicol 2010:126):

- Where is God in this situation, to you?
- What is God up to in this situation?
- Are there things that keep God from working here?
- How would you want to experience the Lord in this situation?
- How does the Spirit lead you in this situation?
- Imagine that Jesus is sitting on this chair … what do you think he might say about this?

It is significant to mention that God does not necessarily have to be mentioned. He could have asked (Nicol 2010:126):

6 However, there is comfort in the fact that someone is present, through that person's listening and showing that s/he understands (Nicol 2010:128).

- What is the enduring meaning of what you are experiencing?
- What do you learn from your life journey?

The intention with all these questions is not that the person should answer favourably or in any particular manner. On the contrary, it is acknowledged that any deeper question does not necessarily lead to positive answers (Nicol 2010:127).

5.1.2 Narrative-informed spiritual coaching and experience

A great deal of what Nicol mentions about spiritual accompaniment speaks to me of reformulation in narrative practice. A particular experience or event can have different meanings (cf. Müller 1996:123). In my opinion, Nicol is saying that the invitation of spiritual accompaniment adds to this 'reformulation' (that I find in a narrative approach) of the *location* of God. Locating God in the story or in the present circumstances can in itself be viewed as a reformulation, to the extent that the alternative formulation is experienced as directed by God.

Although no encounter is classified as spiritual accompaniment by simply referring to God in one or two questions, I do think that it is important. Otherwise, one closely approaches many other forms of coaching in relation to experience and perspective, particularly narrative coaching, but – bearing in mind that coaching is often non-directive – also developmental coaching, transformational coaching, ontological coaching, gestalt coaching, and life coaching (Cox *et al.* 2010:2). All of these would relate to spiritual accompaniment, if the latter does not specifically make something of God.

One of the distinguishing aspects in spiritual accompaniment – one that spiritual coaching and more so narrative spiritual coaching would share – is the openness towards God and the ascription of meaning to different interpretations, to the awareness and activity of God in one's life: The location of God.

Where spiritual accompaniment and a narrative approach to spiritual coaching share something of the idea of reformulation, spiritual coaching would also draw on 'reframing'. Some might use reformulation and reframing interchangeably. Müller (1996:123), for instance, mentions 'herformulering', equating it in English with 'reframing', as it would later be used in family therapy. I find value in keeping them separate and thus to translate 'herformulering' literally as 'reformulation'. While reformulation implies different interpretations of the same event or experience (the

how of the experience), reframing involves locating previously 'unstoried' experiences (the *where* of experience).

While reframing could be useful in itself, a narrative-informed spiritual coaching goes one important step further to complete the reframing process. In narrative practice, the main ingredient of experience, while not discounting the activity of God in a particular experience, takes a decisive 'storying' turn:

> In striving to make sense of life, persons face the task of arranging their experiences of events in sequences across time in such a way as to arrive at a coherent account of themselves and the world around them (White & Epston 1990:10).

In the above paragraph, 'storying' is carried by references to acts of 'arranging' experience as an attempt at creating 'coherence'. This relates in the following paragraph to the notion of 'organising' experience by means of stories in an attempt to ascribe 'meaning' to one's life by virtue of the arrangement. While these stories (that draw on experiences) are told, they are more than being merely told as if playing an old record. In the telling, meaning is constructed and the story is performed which, in itself, is an experience.

> If we accept that persons organize and give meaning to their experience through the storying of experience, and that in their performance of these stories they express selected aspects of their lived experience, then it follows that these stories are constitutive – shaping lives and relationships (White & Epston 1990:12).

It is only from this constituted life and relationships that one can move to the matter of goals in a conventional coaching sense. The narrative practitioner as coach would be wary of moving into detailed goal-setting (whether in performance coaching, skills coaching, coaching for meaning, or spiritual coaching), if it means treating it separately from the stories that are shaping our lives and relationships.

6. ORIGIN OF ASSOCIATION WITH DIRECTIVITY

If coaching, narrative coaching, and narrative-informed spiritual coaching are non-directive, where does the connotation with directivity originate? This is difficult to answer with any kind of certainty. I shall present two possibilities.

6.1 Connotation with sports coaching

Starr (2008) suggests that sports coaching is the most recognised form of coaching. When Nicol compares spiritual accompaniment with coaching, alluding to its directivity, he explicitly mentions the example of a sports coach. Wanting to move away from the notion of directivity, but keeping with the metaphor of sport, I indicated to him that different kinds of sport position the coach differently in relation to the team or coachee.

The variety of sport and the kind of relationship that the coach has with the team and/or individual players may be a good analogy. It helps us understand the diversity in coaching with respect to aspects such as coach attitudes, styles, and methodologies. The involvement of a rugby coach, a basketball coach, and a chess coach will be different when considering how teams in different sports prepare, the kind of knowledge the coach would need to have, and what interaction is allowed between the coach and the team or individuals during a match. One can imagine that there are many determining factors that have an impact on the engagement style, such as the nature of the game, the number of players, and the character of the coach and players, respectively.

Apart from coaching's prevalent association with sport (Starr 2008), literature relates coaching particularly to the image of a carriage. Those who follow an etymological inquiry indicate that the word 'coach' comes from a town called 'Kocs' in northern Hungary (Cox *et al.* 2010:2). The apparent association, in this instance, is with both the name of the town and what it was known for, i.e. making horse drawn carriages (Cox *et al.* 2010:2).

6.2 Skills and performance coaching

Tchannen-Moran (2010:3) suggests that 'skills and performance coaching' might be the original and most common genre of coaching. Wilson (2007:36) remarks about what she considers the original coaching model, named GROW, developed by Sir John Whitmore and others. This model is particularly founded on the performance context (Wilson 2007:8). Indeed, it is said that Whitmore himself coined the phrase 'performance coaching' (Wilson 2007:8). If the perception of directivity in performance coaching lives widely and strongly with people, it would mean that, from the outset, coaching would have been understood as a directive process.

Contrary to perception, Tchannen-Moran (2010:3) mentions that skills and performance coaching attempt to *assist* one to learn how to do something better. The focus, therefore, is still on assistance and not instruction. This relates to Nicol's (2010:60) remark that, in spiritual accompaniment, the 'accompanier' guides (that is, helps or assists)

people to 'learn from their own experiences'. In contrast to the connotation of performance coaching being directive, Whitmore (2003) emphasises a non-directive 'ask-not-tell' approach (Grant 2005:3). According to Grant (2005:3), this is in contrast with a 'tell-rather-than-ask' approach, related to the robust approach of Marshal Goldsmith (2000), who emphasises direct feedback and advice-giving.

If the coach is expected to teach or instruct, one cannot avoid a link with the field of education. Knowles *et al.* (2011:116) indicate that students experience a culture shock when they are first exposed to adult educational programmes that require of them to participate in the planning. Because the emphasis in coaching is on self-directed learning and teaching people how to learn (Wilson 2007:8), non-directive coaching can be regarded as a form of 'adult education' or andragogy (Knowles *et al.* 2011; Knowles 1980). The shock, to which Knowles *et al.* (2011:116) refer in adult education programmes,[7] people experience is the result of people having been conditioned to be dependent on the teacher [or coach – EP] whose role is to teach.

The directive approach in coaching is riddled with pedagogy. In Knowles' (1980) work, this relates to teaching children. Knowles' 'definition of andragogy was developed as a parallel to pedagogy' (Holmes & Abington-Cooper 2000). For Knowles (1980), the outcome of adult education is self-actualisation. This corresponds, in Knowles *et al.* (2011), to at least two of several assumptions of the andragogical model, namely the learner's self-concept (Knowles *et al.* 2011:63), and internal pressures or motivators such as self-esteem and quality of life (Knowles *et al.* 2011:67).

For the purpose of this article, the association with pedagogy is more about instructional approaches rather than about the aspect of teaching children.[8] Although, if one were to follow Knowles' (1980) early conceptualisation, one would be left with the telling irony of coaches who can then be seen to treat coachees as children (among others, these 'children' would be senior management and executives). In this instance, andragogy (instead of pertaining exclusively to adults) relates in the context of coaching more to non-directive, self-directive or facilitative learning or approaches.

7 This is also relevant to coaching and particularly kept intact by misnomers and misconceptions.

8 In a literal sense, pedagogy means the 'art and science of leading children' (Knowles et al. 2011:35).

The traditional coaching model that was centred on skills acquisition (Cox *et al.* 2010:3) can be viewed as a form of pedagogy. For instance, Holmes and Abington-Cooper (2000)[9] note that the 'the pedagogical model is a content model concerned with the transmitting of information and skills'. In fact, one is left wondering whether instructional approaches to coaching, if they do not at some stage take a decisive turn towards andragogy, are not a form of instructional teaching, and thus pedagogy.

For coaching as a profession, it is of benefit to bear in mind the distinction between 'teaching' and 'learning' as two distinct activities (cf. Moon 2004). Following such a distinction, it is no menial matter where (between teaching and learning) and to what extent coaches position themselves. If it is not a categorical positioning and a matter of degree, then the philosophy, the reasoning, and continually answering to the problematic of how it takes shape in practice become important.

It appears to be somewhat popular to refer to something as coaching when it is clearly more closely related to teaching.[10] In my view, performance and skills coaching are particularly susceptible to this. Although not an academic writer, but having extensive experience in the publishing industry, Hyatt (2012) mentions some forms of coaching, such as writing, speech, and vocal coaching. These forms of 'coaching' correspond better with notions of, for instance, what teaching, tuition, training, and taking lessons imply. For a period of nearly twenty years, I have been involved in teaching music. I have never referred to it as coaching. For it to be music coaching, the engagement style would at some stage, or to a significant degree, have to involve a non-directive, andragogy approach.

6.3 The complexity of wearing different hats

The notion of different hats refers to the different roles or capacities in which one interacts with people. It has a distinct practice dimension. Dealing with the theme of directivity within modalities of practice (such as, coaching, therapy, and facilitation) reveals the complexity of the matter. The implication being that it (helping roles such as coaching, accompaniment and the concept of spirituality) cannot be treated only as a theoretical construct. As referred to earlier, in what seems to be a natural

9 In their article, Holmes & Abington-Cooper (2000) ask whether the distinction between pedagogy and andragogy is a false dichotomy. In the process, they give account of various education scholars' interpretations on the matter.

10 This also relates to the practice of professional facilitation with its colloquial use being rife (Pienaar & Müller 2012:2).

turn to non-directivity in these practices – partly giving rise to modern misnomers – attests to their living or practice nature.

The complexity of the matter lies therein that practitioners do not necessarily and exclusively follow either an instructional or a non-directive style. With an emphasis on coaching and facilitation being non-directive, on the one hand, and with the perception of it being directive, on the other, it could point towards how people find it difficult to try and maintain a non-directive style of engagement. When it is not clear to those with whom we work as to what hat we are wearing (that of teacher, coach, counsellor, and so on), this could be the origin of the misconception of coaching being directive.

Both Dr. Nicol and I subscribe to a style of engagement that we characterise as facilitative (in addition to it being non-directive). Facilitation is, in its own right, a professional practice (cf. Schuman 2005) and openly argues for neutrality. Schwarz (2005:27) points to what he regards as facilitative conditions that have to be met in order to act as a facilitator. These are being a-neutral, and towards this aim, third party, who has no substantive decision-making authority. Yet the mere notion of having to wear different hats or having to accept different roles (cf. The American Society for Training and Development 2008:8, 10; Bens 2005:19-20; Wilkinson 2004:24-25; Schwarz 2002:40-64), puts a question mark behind neutrality which would then veer strongly towards the conversation regarding directivity, considering that other roles are often regarded as unavoidable.

The intricacy of the matter is evident particularly in organisations where leaders and managers are assigned dual roles. One role might involve being a coach, facilitator or roles with similar styles of engagement, while other roles might involve traditional management styles. Keeping with a facilitative as opposed to a directive posture may, at times, be difficult for leaders who formally or informally act as coaches in their organisations. In their discussion of 'leadership development coaching', Ting and Riddle (2006:49) refer to such leader coaches and note that

> [L]eader coaches have a responsibility for achieving organizational outcomes cannot be denied. At times they will have to assume a very proactive coaching style that travels along a direct and instructional approach. But in their role as coaches, when they are at that point, they should pause to ask, 'Is it time to move from facilitating to directing?

Leaders or managers are subject to difficult decisions when they perceive themselves as coaches. Depending on the situation, Ting and Riddle (2006:49) see this as appropriate afterward, after 'telling', to ask more

self-developmental questions inquiring about what the coachee may have learned about him-/herself or a peer, or the situation in general (Ting & Riddle 2006:49). Blending roles could seem to be patronising and manipulative, and it is not surprising that some would then view coaching as directive.

7. CONCLUSION

Spiritual accompaniment and spiritual (narrative-informed) coaching have much reason for conversation. Drawing on my conversation with Dr. Nicol, misnomers create and sustain misconceptions that one practitioner holds about the practice of the other. Such inter-practitioner dialogue is stifled by the misnomers of 'directing' and 'coaching.'

Both spiritual accompaniment and coaching, but spiritual coaching (as informed by a narrative approach), in particular, rely on a facilitative style of engagement. A shift from advocacy to facilitation is important for long-term change in development (Kiiti & Nielsen 1999:53, recalling Tim Kennedy 1982). In addition, coaching and accompaniment are both non-directive and conducted on the basis of being a relationship between equals.

As with spiritual accompaniment, spiritual (narrative) coaching does not predominantly focus on problems (notably relevant to therapy) or goals (notably characteristic of coaching). In considering these remarks, I as coach or spiritual director cannot possibly be the expert on the story or content of a person's life, let alone on God's ways of working in, and through the experiences of a particular person.

Considering that spiritual accompaniment and narrative practitioners have their respective communities of practice embedded in different knowledge traditions, it is to be expected that they will not hold similar views in all aspects. However, it is in recognising that 'directing' and 'coaching' are misnomers that sustain misconceptions of them being directive, that inter-practitioner dialogue and much-needed theoretical reflection now become possible.

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