



CoachingAF

HELPING YOU ACHIEVE CAREER CLARITY

What to Expect in a Coaching Relationship with Aaron

I am incredibly excited to work with you and I hope you're feeling the buzz at the possibility of growth and change. This document is designed to lay out some important guidelines and ideas before and during the time we work together. Please don't hesitate to ask questions!

-Aaron

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Some Foundational Expectations

The following are some core expectations for our coaching relationship. While not exhaustive, it will reflect a series of crucial foundations upon which our relationship will thrive.

Confidentiality

Everything we discuss is held in the strictest of confidence. What you and I talk about stays between us, unless there is a danger to you or anyone else or I am compelled by a legal authority or court order. Know that maintaining your trust and confidence is my top priority.

Roles

I am sometimes asked if I am a Coach, a Consultant, or a Mentor. And the answer is...yes. But let's answer it in pieces.

- First and foremost, I am a coach, which means I hold your agenda – not my own. I believe that you, as the coachee, are resourceful, creative, and whole. As a result, you'll find that I am not here to tell you what to do, but rather to guide you to realize what you've known all along. That said, if you need or want tactical guidance (akin to a consultant), I can (and will) take off my coaching hat from time to time. But coaching and telling you what to do are quite different!
- Another thing I have been asked is "Is this therapy?" The answer is no. Therapy involves treating the patient for something – making them "better" in a sense. This is not clinical, I am not a doctor, and we are not fixing anything per se. Rather we are getting you to a better place in terms of decision making, value alignment, and other elements that are important to you.

Your responsibilities as the coachee include being present, coming to sessions prepared to work on something or discuss a topic, and wanting to be coached.

During Our Sessions

- Each of our meetings will begin by asking what you're looking to gain from that session. We will recap what happened with any activities you've committed to doing in between sessions. We may call them assignments or homework, but these will be tasks that are related to what you're working on.
- Bring something you want to work on. It can be a topic that you've been thinking about, a goal that you want to achieve, or something trivial. But it must be something you want to work on.
- Uncomfortable situations: We are going to run into uncomfortable situations – this much I can guarantee. So be ready for that. Don't shy from it – head into it.
- Celebrating failure: Do not hesitate from bringing up failure. These are the crucibles from which we (and you specifically) will gain tremendous knowledge.
- Interruptions: I'm going to interrupt you when necessary. I'm not doing this because it's fun (although it can be). Sometimes you need to get called out.
- Right vs. Wrong: In coaching, no one gets to be wrong or right. This is not a place for judgment but for you to acknowledge what's the best fit/path/decision/etc. for you.

Outside of Our Sessions

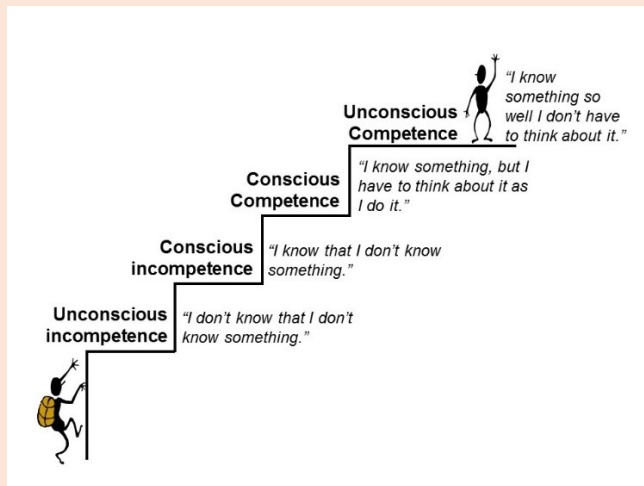
- Most of what you gain will be **outside of our structured sessions**. Thinking, brainstorming, making commitments to your actions, and trying things out will happen beyond the confines of

our 60-minute sessions. Our session will serve as check-in's, measurements of progress, and how to get unstuck from major issues.

- Journaling: It is vital that you keep a journal during our working relationship. This can be physical (pen and paper, notebook, etc.) or digital (OneNote, Evernote, etc.) but taking thoughts out of your head

Where We Are Going with Coaching

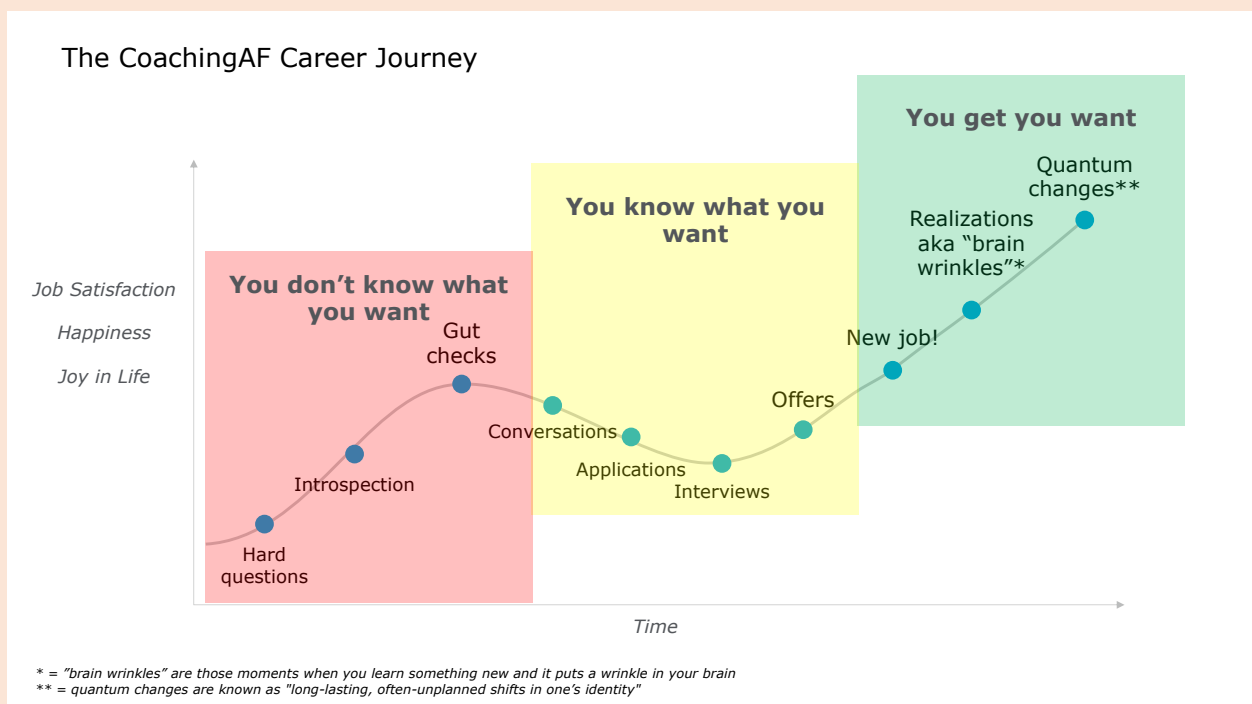
The start of our relationship will likely feature moments of **unconscious incompetence**. If you aren't even aware of something, it makes it hard to grow through moments of self-awareness. As we progress,



you will become more aware of your lack of knowledge, or what we call **conscious incompetence**. Then as you grow your knowledge and flex your mental and behavioral muscles, you'll arrive at **conscious competence**. All of this will hopefully lead you to identify those elements in your life of **unconscious competence**.

What each of these means to you will be unique to you. But my goal will be to help shepherd you on this journey to get to where you need to go.

It's also important to keep in mind that our time together may start with you at any number of places across the career journey. The model below is meant to illustrate just some of the steps you may go through in your search for meaningful work or meaning in life!



Terms and Definitions

We're going to use some terms you might not be familiar with. There will likely be more, as well. I'll explain them in each session but if I refer to something you don't recognize, start here.

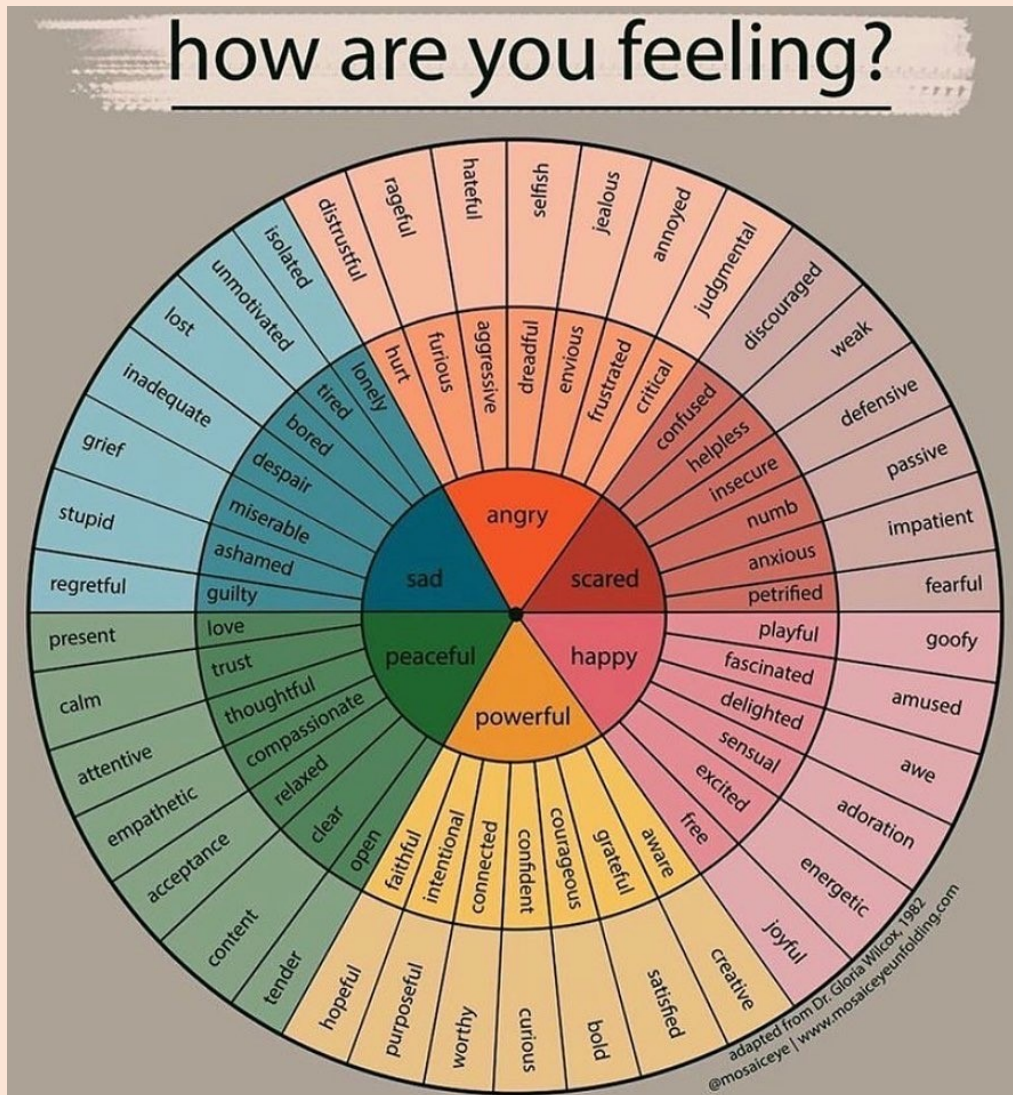
- Bottom lining
 - Get to the point! This is the skill of brevity and succinctness. Bottom-lining is also about getting to the essence of your message rather than engaging in long verbose stories.
- Captain and Crew
 - An exercise we will do together to give you the ability to summon strength and allies when you run into challenges, obstacles, or saboteurs.
- Mind-Mapping



- A method of visualizing ideas and their connections with one another. [Start here](#) with this article from mindmapping.com and consider looking into software tools like [MindNode](#) if you want to digitize them.
- A cheap/free/easy way to get started is also just to get a piece of paper and pens!
- Resonance
 - When resonance is present, you are honoring your values and I as your coach can sense your true self. There is a feeling of aliveness coming from you. Dissonance signals the presence of the Saboteur.
- Saboteur
 - Sometimes called the “Inner Critic,” “Negative Self Talk” or the “Committee,” the Saboteur has all the reasons ready for why this plan (whatever you have in mind) is a stupid, dangerous, hopeless or otherwise ill-advised course of action. The Saboteur is particularly adept at taking a small piece of the truth and fabricating it into the blanket reason for stopping, or never starting.
- SMART Goals
 - Goals that are **S**pecific and **M**asurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound. Given our work involves change, tasks, thoughts, and transformation, any of the goals you identify need to be SMART goals.
- Values
 - Values represent who you are right now. They are principles that you hold to be of worth in your life. People often confuse values with morals. Values are not chosen. They are intrinsic to you. Your individual values are as distinctly yours as your thumbprint.
- Wheel of Life
 - One of the first exercises we will do, which helps to assess where you're at in life.

Feelings

Another concept to be prepared for is when I ask you how something makes you **feel**. Responses to this question often come back in the form of what someone was *doing* or how something affected the situation. If this happens, I'm going to call you out because both of those responses do not reveal how you are **FEELING**. This is by no means a complete list but is meant to be directional and a guide to terms that better reveal how you are feeling.



Logistics

Scheduling Appointments

Our calls will usually be done over Zoom, phone, FaceTime, or other video communications tools, unless an in-person session is logistically feasible. Our sessions will last 60 minutes and are designed to be held twice a month, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed upon.

Missed Appointments

Your time is your time and I will hold that time for you and whatever topic(s) you're looking to discuss. If you're running late, please do your best to let me know. **Changes to date/time must be made at least 24 hours in advance – otherwise the session will count as having been completed.** If you miss your session due to illness, death in the family, or other element out of your control, any decisions to make up the session will be made at my discretion.

If we go more than one month between sessions, I reserve the right to cancel your remaining sessions and issue a refund for any un-fulfilled sessions. This is an important commitment and pushing sessions to beyond a month does not demonstrate a commitment to yourself or to your coach.

Payments

You will receive an invoice through QuickBooks which includes a bank transfer payment option. If this is not possible, PayPal, Zelle (through Chase), or a check are acceptable alternatives. If you wish to use a credit card (get those points!), please contact me before I send the invoice (note: this requires an additional fee)

Payments must be received before sessions are held. For example, if you pay for your first six coaching sessions and complete all six sessions, payment for the next set of sessions must be received before the next session is held.

More Resources

On CoachingAF.com under the Resources tab, you'll find an updated list of suggested books, articles, and other helpful reference material along with some of the new client documents you will need.

About Me and Co-Active Coaching

Me

You know a bit about me by now but the reason I am a coach is because I believe fully in the transformative power of coaching and self-awareness. I arrived at business school in the fall of 2010 completely blind to my gaps and perception challenges, and now after three executive coaches and cutting through saboteurs and misguided ambition, I do the work I love. I formed [CoachingAF](#) to better support individuals who are in career flux and looking to find the place to do their best work.

When I am not coaching, I'm traveling the world (as chronicled in my travel blog, [Go See the World](#)) or [working at SAP SuccessFactors](#) where I help our HR leadership teams develop their people strategies and use technology to create quantifiable business value. Or I'm aiming to be the best dad/husband/partner in the world to my son Cooper and my wife Caitlin.

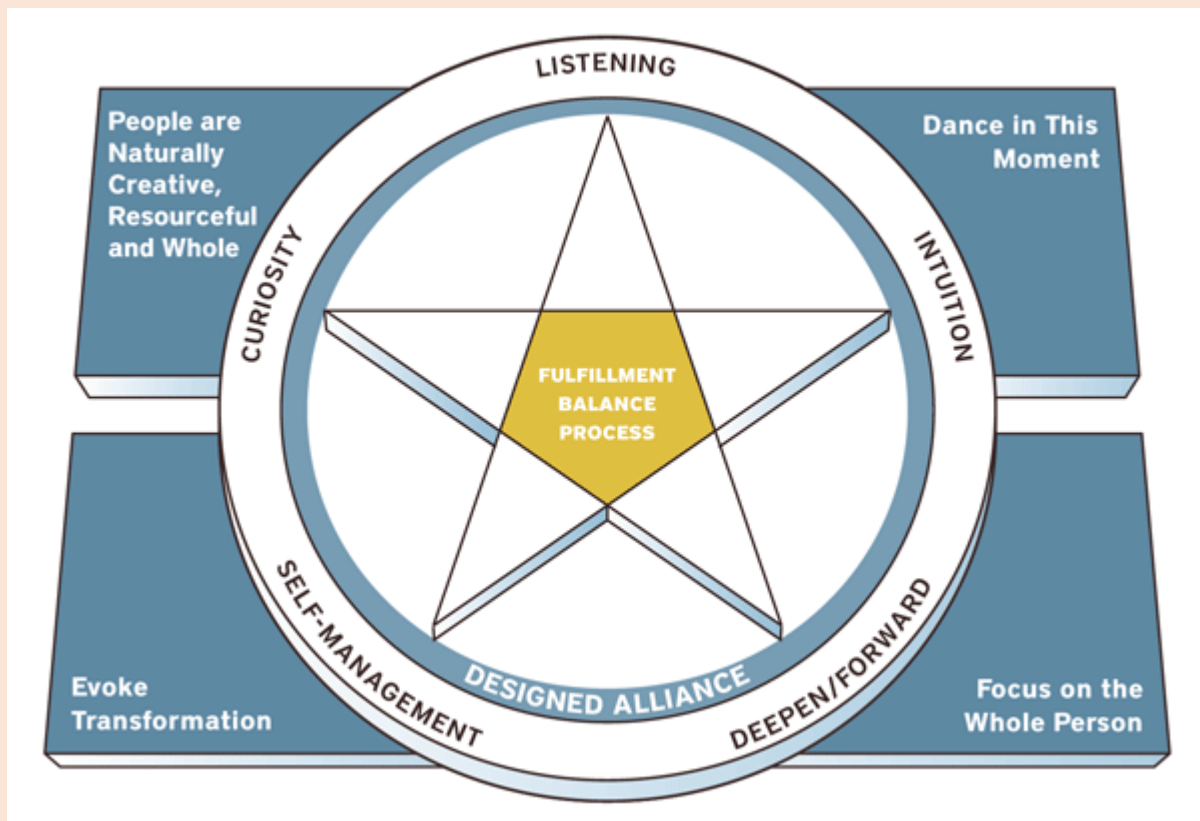
To contact me, please use one of the following mechanisms:

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- Email: aaron@coachingaf.com
- LinkedIn: [Private message](#)

Please follow CoachingAF on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), or [YouTube](#) to receive coaching and career content, relevant articles and thought leadership pieces, and the occasional bit of humor. If you share content related to your coaching or coaching concepts in general (on any platform), please consider adding the hashtag #coachingaf so we can foster a strong discussion!

Co-Active Coaching

I received my coaching training from the Coaches Training Institute (CTI) which developed the [Co-Active Model](#) that I use with clients (as shown below):



The keys to understand about this model are:

- *The Co-Active Model balances self-awareness, a keen agility with relationships, and courageous action to create an environment where individuals can be deeply fulfilled, connected to others and successful in what matters most.*
- *The “Co” in Co-Active suggests relationship, connection, intimacy and collaboration. Thus, the “Co” in us is curious, listens deeply, hears nuance, holds space for others, intuits and nurtures.*
- *The “Active” in Co-Active stands for power, direction, action and manifestation. So, the “Active” in us is courageous, has clarity and conviction, takes charge and achieves goals.*

What you need to remember about this model, beyond the four cornerstones, three principles, and five contexts, is the **designed alliance** - which encompasses everything, is that the designed alliance provides the “container” in which coaching takes place. Once the initial container is set, designed alliance is continuous and ongoing. You and I will design the container so that it is customized to specifically meet your needs. It is also a dynamic container, capable of changing over time so that it will continue to your needs as they evolve. The purpose of the designed alliance is to:

- Create a safe and courageous space for you.
- Establish your trust in me.
- Help me know how to work with you in a manner that empowers you.