

# *Chapter Three*

## THE VISION OF THE COACH

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Now we will examine the characteristics of the analytical, appreciative and creative eyes and consider how each represents different stages of the evolving vision of the coach. The creative eye combines the analytical and appreciative aspects to give an unlimited 3D vision with an individual, relational and universal awareness. This is the eye employed by the masterful coach.

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How do we learn to see our own potentiality and that of the client? In wishing to find a coach the client wants to learn how to expand their vision, discover new choices and move closer towards their potential. To facilitate this the coach must already have, and recognise, the importance of an expanded vision. To

illustrate how we might learn to expand our vision, let me share with you a model of the three eyes of the coach that has emerged from my own practice.

When I coach I realise that I employ three quite different ways of seeing: an analytical eye, the appreciative eye and the creative eye. These three eyes appear to be distinct and separate. More accurately, they represent key milestones in discovering the evolving vision of the masterful coach, as we will explore.

### • MIRADORS •

Each eye looks from a different viewpoint. It may be quite a revelation to realise that our vision of reality is not fixed but can profoundly change depending on the particular viewpoint we take. Not appreciating this conundrum can profoundly limit how we see and practice. Let me explain this more clearly by using an analogy of how I imagine these different viewpoints to be.

I am blessed to spend a good deal of my time in the mountains of Andalusia in southern Spain. The scenery is dramatic and beautiful and the way of living is simple and natural. One of my favourite roads is the road to Ronda, the nearest town to the village where I stay. This road is always an adventure. What I enjoy most are the Spanish miradors. A mirador in the Spanish language is literally a look-out or a viewpoint. As you travel along this road you are invited to stop and visit the different viewing points. I have two particular favourites. One is close to the start of my journey and overlooks the village where I stay. When I stop and visit this viewpoint, I can focus on the activities and changes of the village and explore from above the things that I miss when spending time within it.

The second mirador close to my heart is a stop nearer to my destination. In contrast to the first, this mirador has a panoramic vista. When I look out from this viewpoint my awareness seems to expand. I feel somehow closer to the mountains and can catch a glimpse of the distant Mediterranean. Sometimes I can see even further beyond to a point approximately 100 km away and the distant silhouette of the Atlas Mountains of the continent of Africa.

I value both of these miradors equally and always take time to stop and look. They are contrasting in what they offer the observer. The first is a chance to bring the whole village into focus and to clarify and study how it is changing. The second offers a chance to expand my awareness, to open and look beyond the confines of a more limited field of vision.

Similar to the miradors, the three illustrative eyes that comprise my vision as a coach offer the opportunity to adopt three contrasting viewpoints. Consciously moving between these viewpoints offers the coach profoundly different ways of seeing reality and how we relate. I am mindful when exploring these different viewpoints of not creating a bias to any particular one. Each has its own place and purpose and both serve and limit the vision of the coach, as we will now explore.

### • THE ANALYTICAL EYE •

**The analytic picture of the human mind is a deterministic machine which, in order to know, isolates objects and events . . . such actions are uninformed by the whole.**

Peter Senge

In our everyday life and work we mostly employ an analytical eye. This eye belongs to that aspect of you that is fundamentally concerned with protection and survival. The goal of this eye is to offer security and to affirm and strengthen your identity.

## VIEWPOINT AND CHARACTERISTICS

### VIEWPOINT OF THE ANALYTICAL EYE

This eye takes the viewpoint of a detached observer. It is a clear, cold, objective and scrutinising vision of the visible and physical. When we take this viewpoint we step outside things, taking an exterior view. We look at everything from a position of being on the outside looking in, isolate ourselves and become a part separate from the whole.

The analytical eye seems compelled to look outwardly for the answer. The ‘something more’ that we seek outside ourselves, and believe will make us complete, is conceived by the analytical eye. This answer may be a bigger and better job, car, house or a more suitable partner.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ANALYTICAL EYE

The analytical eye strengthens your personal identity by defining how you are different and distinct. It is a judging eye that believes it has the right answer. Listen carefully to your everyday conversations and you will hear just how much you affirm your personal power and correctness.

The analytical eye seeks problems and provides solutions. It takes a critical, cynical and negative view of things. It is quick and incisive to judge, and is driven to rationalise, process and interpret information. This is the determined and meticulous

eye of the perfectionist. In judging right from wrong, it splits the good from the bad – selecting the good and rejecting the bad. It is therefore a divisive eye creating a dualistic vision of reality. It conceives conflict both within and without.

The vision of the analytical eye is one-dimensional (1D) monochromatic – black and white, selecting either this or that. This vision is partial and limited and cannot accommodate both this *and* that.

### IMAGINING THE ANALYTICAL EYE

While writing this chapter I taught the three eyes to a group of coaches who wished to extend their practice. While presenting the analytical eye, I asked the group to consider what images might best capture its characteristics. One I liked particularly was the eye of a Sherlock Holmes figure; someone with a big looking glass, always searching for clues and ultimately judging who should or should not be sent to jail.

I was in Amsterdam with my camera and thinking about how prevalent the analytical eye is in everyday life and work. I found myself facing a shop window and took the infrared photograph shown in Figure 5 (p. 34). This image captures the cool rationality of the analytical eye. We look at the world only from our heads and in our busy outward search for the answer can become habitual and quite robotic. This eye has very little or no capacity to self-reflect and so creates a partial ‘spectacled’ view of reality.

### DEVALUING INNER EXPERIENCE

When working with groups as a team coach, it is not uncommon that I am approached at break time by one or more of the participants, with the plea: ‘Andrew, please no touchy



Figure 5

feely stuff.’ If the analytical eye was to speak its mind then this is what it would say. This eye needs certainty and is very uncomfortable with subjective experience, which raises a particularly important point: the analytical eye has very little or no interior view to its vision. The analytical eye is blind to, and devalues, the inner world of subjective experiences. In its need to know, this eye rationalises and rejects the inner world of experience, including deeper feelings and emotions, values, aspirations and qualities. It is driven by fear rather than being willing to face this emotion.

### PAUSE POINT

**How does the analytical eye serve and limit your coaching practice?**

#### HOW THE ANALYTICAL EYE SERVES

- It provides a sense of security and certainty – ‘a reality check’.
- It offers clear, factual and coherent explanations.
- It simplifies and makes life easier by judging and solving complexity and contradiction.
- It focuses and clarifies.
- It is an efficient eye.
- It is precise and a meticulous eye for detail.
- It is quick to process by rationalising, analysing and interpreting.
- It simplifies by sorting and selecting from multiple data.
- It is a reliable deductive eye that employs reason and logic to extrapolate and formulate.
- It is well informed by memory and can repeatedly draw solutions from the past.

- It informs of the material and physical reality of things – the facts.

### The analytical eye provides a sense of security and certainty

When the analytical eye is used in combination with the other eyes, it offers the coach essential skills. Such skills are evident in the above list and include the ability of the coach to focus, clarify and meticulously observe. If, however, the analytical eye is employed alone, its vision can profoundly inhibit your capacity and ability to coach. The following list of limitations clearly indicate why this is so.

#### HOW THE ANALYTICAL EYE LIMITS

- It is a directive and instructive eye that is comfortable to challenge and debate.
- It is fixed and rigid.
- It is an exclusive eye that is unable to accept another's viewpoint without strong persuasion.
- It is compulsive and fast to process.
- It interprets only a limited field of data, namely the visible and factual.
- It is concerned more with the quantity of things and ignores the quality of experience.
- It differentiates, isolating the part from the whole.
- It has little or no capacity to reflect or relate.
- It is a judging eye that is divisive and dualistic.
- It oversimplifies complexity, offering a reductive and one-sided solution.
- It is the infallible eye of the perfectionist.



- It is politically motivated and seeks not only the absolute truth, but also the one right answer and way of doing things.
- It fears being emotionally overwhelmed.

Let us consider some of the key points from this list to illustrate how using the analytical eye alone can limit your capacity to coach.

### THE COMPULSION TO ANSWER RATHER THAN QUESTION

The temptation of the analytical eye is to provide the answer rather than to question. The way you can recognise a domineering analytical eye is when you feel the need to provide the answer to your clients, rather than allowing them, through your questions, to discover their own. Providing the answer steals the chance for clients to solve their own issues and challenges. Personally owning the issue and recognising the desire to change are key realisations within the coaching experience. Essentially the coaching relationship provides clients with the opportunity to learn about their inner resourcefulness.

### THE NEED TO RATIONALISE RATHER THAN RELATE

By overlooking the interior world of subjective experience, the analytical eye is compelled to rationalise and is unable to empathise and relate. Fundamentally, coaching is a relationship through which the coach learns how to understand the needs and desires of clients and helps them to take conscious steps towards fulfilling them. It is essential that the coach learns the importance of empathy. The continuous temptation to rationalise inhibits this prospect.

## INFALLIBILITY – OVERLOOKING THE POTENTIAL VALUE OF PROBLEMS

The analytical is the eye of the perfectionist. When a problem is seen it is quickly solved. Problems are judged to be unwanted, the goal is their solution. To the analytical eye a problem without an answer is a failing. From this viewpoint, the problem is not considered in any way to be a possible source of potential learning for the client or key to their growth and development.

## POLITICS AND DISEMPOWERMENT

The analytical eye believes it has the right answer. This view creates a strong political stance where individuals believe there is just one right and tested way of doing things – ‘my way’. When this position is asserted, the chance for others to engage and find their own solution is taken away. Such a political stance can stifle the very thing it wishes to foster – the creativity and motivation of a more productive workforce. The standpoint of a strong analytical eye is likely to disempower and disengage the clients, stealing away their chance to realise their own inner resourcefulness. Once more, this sense of knowing the right way of doing things and having the answer can profoundly limit the prospect of successful coaching.

## NOT SEEING BLINDNESS TO HOW WE REACT

We have already explored how, in judging right from wrong, the analytical eye selects what it sees as correct and rejects what it deems as wrong. Such judging splits and divides our sense of self, banishing the bad to the edge of our consciousness. Ultimately we can never truly banish these rejected parts as they will seek to be remembered through the unconscious and subjective experi-

ence. The analytical eye is blind to this and is completely unaware of how our own unconscious reactions can strongly influence and impact on how we relate, including in the coaching relationship.

### SLEEPING BEAUTY

While writing this chapter, I was invited to a performance of the ballet *Sleeping Beauty*. As the orchestra played the enchanting score, I recalled a childhood memory. I once had an orange vinyl record that I and my twin brother endlessly played. It told the story of Sleeping Beauty in words and music. Although this was over forty years ago, as specific parts of the musical score were played, words and even sentences from the story came back into my mind. At one point, laughing to myself, I quoted a whole sentence – to the dismissive stare of my friend sitting next to me.

I became immersed in the dancing and stage play and how the different characters were portrayed. I looked around at the packed audience in this magnificent theatre and wondered: why does this ballet have such universal appeal? Maybe we are all ‘sleeping beauties’? The analytical eye, in wishing to protect and define us, is unable to see inside and experience our inner beauty. Might we then live a good deal of our lives only partially awake? Is there a danger that we, too, may sleep for a hundred years? More importantly, how might we awake from our sleep?

**The analytical eye, by building our sense of security and identity, isolates us from our wholeness, providing a very disconnected view of reality**

I am drawn at this point to the words of Albert Einstein, who recognised that we suffer an optical ‘delusion’:

**There is an optical delusion of consciousness where we experience ourselves as something separate from the rest. We are invited to widen our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.**

In seeking the comfort of what is certain and known, we appear to disconnect ourselves from the whole and suffer a partial and limited vision. It is the partiality of the vision of the analytical eye that profoundly limits your ability to coach.

## • THE APPRECIATIVE EYE •

The second eye of the coach is the appreciative eye (Figure 6, opposite). This offers a markedly different vision of reality that contrasts with that of the analytical eye, as described below.

### VIEWPOINT AND CHARACTERISTICS

#### VIEWPOINT OF THE APPRECIATIVE EYE

The appreciative eye adopts the position and viewpoint of an inner observer that looks at reality from the inside out. It is comfortable to simply experience rather than process and analyse. The appreciative eye is a sensing eye that can develop awareness by attuning to the sensations of the body. This offers the coach a capacity to listen inwardly so that our vision can be expanded to sense feelings, values, aspirations, passions and qualities. In contrast to the analytical eye, the appreciative eye can recognise our inner resourcefulness and begins the exploration of how we can discover and access the source of our hidden potential.

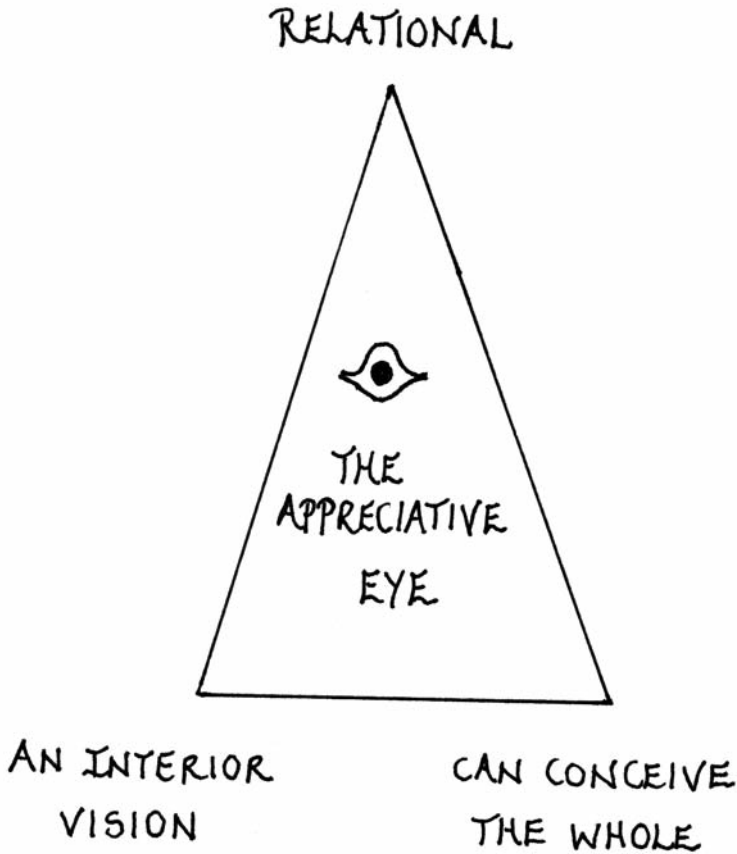


Figure 6

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE APPRECIATIVE EYE

Rather than seeking to answer, the appreciative eye is a curious eye that is comfortable to question. It is patient and reflective. Its motivation is to understand and appreciate. This eye offers a fresh view of reality that we associate with the beginner's mind. The opening of this eye marks another milestone of the journey in awakening the vision of the masterful coach.

## The appreciative eye offers a capacity to listen inwardly

This eye is encouraging and supportive. It focuses on the positive core of individuals, affirming their strengths. Through this eye we are able to extend our vision beyond oneself to encompass a wider appreciation and understanding of others. This is the nature of how we relate with empathy. With the capacity to embrace both self and other, the appreciative eye offers the coach a two-dimensional (2D) vision.

The appreciative eye is comfortable with seeing beyond the visible and factual. It is sensitive to inner motivations, aspirations and qualities. The appreciative eye has an integrative vision and seeks to conceive of the larger whole in which we are a part. This is the bigger context that, when realised, can give our life deeper meaning. This eye is comfortable to look for the ‘something more’ beyond the material. Rather than return to the memories of the past to inform how we act, this eye is able to conceive and contemplate the prospect of the future and all its possibilities as a potential source of learning.

### IMAGINING THE APPRECIATIVE EYE

When I imagine the experience of opening the appreciative eye, I see a doorway similar to the one shown in Figure 7 (opposite). As the appreciative eye opens, so does an inner doorway through which we are invited to step and to experience our interior world. This is an enterprising eye that is comfortable to take the risk of stepping beyond the rational and what is known and certain. It deepens our understanding of self and other and how we relate.



Figure 7

## PAUSE POINT

**Consider how the appreciative eye serves and limits your coaching practice.**

### HOW THE APPRECIATIVE EYE SERVES

- It is a relational, patient and empathic eye.
- It is an accepting and inclusive eye.
- It is an enterprising, reflective and curious eye that is comfortable to question.
- It is an integrative eye that conceives the larger context of things, the whole and how we fit in.
- It sees the positive core and seeks to discover an individual's strengths, achievements and continuing success.
- It is a sensing and qualitative eye that can attune to the interior world of subjective experience.

### THE CAPACITY TO RELATE RATHER THAN RATIONALISE

The appreciative eye is keen to relate rather than rationalise. Though we often talk of the work of the coach in singular terms, coaching depends on the dynamic of the coaching *relationship*. The primary intention of the coach is to be able to relate sufficiently to understand the needs of their clients and to help them to remember their innate desires and motivation to change. This realisation is vital to the work of the coach.

### THE ABILITY TO QUESTION RATHER THAN ANSWER

Whereas the analytical eye is swift to answer, the appreciative eye offers the coach the ability and capacity to question. Rather



than seeking to know for certain, this eye is quite comfortable to sense and explore. The art of questioning lies at the heart of coaching. Guided and supported by the coach, clients are invited to reflect and to expand their awareness.

### DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

In its ability to sense and experience the subjective, the appreciative eye offers the coach a deepening emotional awareness and intelligence. The appreciative eye is a feeling eye. Whereas the analytical eye fears and rejects ‘the touchy feely stuff’, the appreciative eye is curious and able to meet with, own and explore our emotions, values, aspirations and passions. The appreciative eye seeks to accommodate these experiences as the basis of how we relate, and can more deeply understand the self and others. Whereas the analytical eye judges our emotions to be our enemies, the appreciative eye seeks and values emotions as our closest friends.

As the coach awakens the appreciative eye, the bridge between feelings and thoughts is reinstated, together with the integration of the head and heart. Now emotions can guide and influence thought, offering us the ability to reorientate and respond.

### HOW THE APPRECIATIVE EYE LIMITS

- It is a spontaneous and unstructured eye.
- It lacks form and solid substance.
- It is an expansive eye that opens things up rather than closes them down.
- It is a qualitative and irrational eye.
- It is an emotive eye.
- It is concerned with the quality of how we relate.

- It favours reflection to discrete action.
- It is an eye that has depth and breadth, but is lacking in focus and clarity.

## WITHOUT FORM AND STRUCTURE

The major limitation of the appreciative eye is in its lack of form and structure. It is a reflective eye that is expansive and seeks the larger context to our working lives. In the coaching dynamic, the conscious expansion of awareness is ideally balanced by a conscious contraction – a focusing, distilling and processing of information. The appreciative eye alone cannot achieve this. Only when this eye is combined with others can the perceptions of the appreciative eye be grounded and informed. The appreciative eye can deeply relate and build awareness, yet it lacks the structure and focus necessary to bring clarity and to make meaning of our experience. This possibility is realised with the opening of the creative eye, as we will now explore.

## ● THE CREATIVE EYE ●

**The point of arrival we realise is our original point of departure.**

Piero Ferruci

Let us examine how the characteristics of the analytical and appreciative eyes are markedly different when compared. In the following list, can you see how the limitations of one correspond directly to the strengths of the other? This gives an important clue to their true interrelationship. Rather than viewing these eyes as separate and distinct, can we instead

combine them as if they were the two sides of the same coin? Might we then consider how the composite eye could further evolve the vision of the coach? This more creative eye would offer a dynamic three-dimensional (3D) vision.

ANALYTICAL	APPRECIATIVE
Outer observer	Inner observer
Exterior view	Interior view
Objective	Subjective
Detached	Relational
Problem solving	Experiencing
Sees partiality	Sees wholeness
Impartial	Empathic
Seeing	Sensing
Thinking	Feeling
Incisive	Expansive
Focused	Reflective
Active	Receptive
Reactive	Responsive
Quantitative	Qualitative
Facts	Experience
Rational	Irrational
Superficial	Depth
Negative	Positive
Planned	Spontaneous
Critical	Valuing
Judging	Encouraging
Dispassionate	Passionate
Black or white	Subtle – shades of grey
One-dimensional	Two-dimensional
Problem seeking	Strength and success affirming
Scientific approach	Artistic approach
Differentiating	Integrating
Past focus	Future focus
Self-affirming	Self-effacing

The creative eye accommodates the joint strengths of the appreciative and analytical while compensating their individual limitation. This creative eye offers both the reflective capacity to expand awareness and the focus to clarify. An illustration of the interrelationship of the three eyes of coaching is given in Figure 8, below.

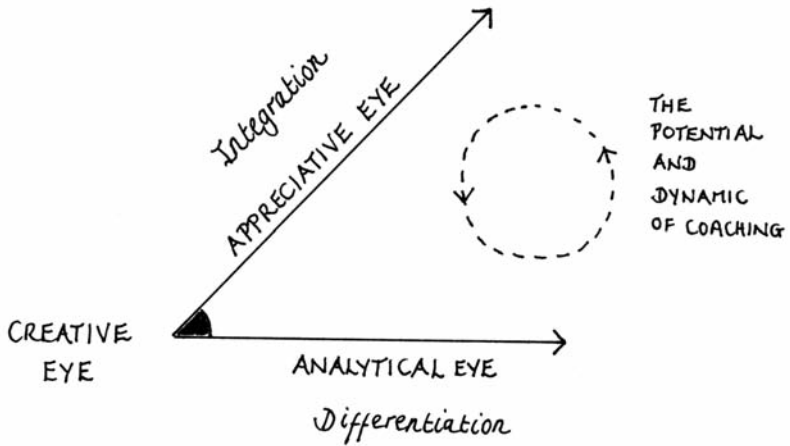


Figure 8

## VIEWPOINT AND CHARACTERISTICS

### VIEWPOINT OF THE CREATIVE EYE

I named this the creative eye because it connects us to our origin and source. In discovering this viewpoint we realise a deeper centre of identity – the source from which our values, aspirations and qualities originate. We can access our hidden potential and utilise our inner resources as the desire and motivation to make sustained changes. The coach can then become a responsive and conscious co-creator of the client's most ideal future.

**The creative eye is multidimensional. It is not fixed, but flexible**

The creative eye is dynamic and multidimensional. Its viewpoint is not fixed but flexible. It is able, at will, to adopt several viewpoints where reality is seen subjectively and objectively, accommodating both an interior and exterior, and an individual and collective vision of reality.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CREATIVE EYE**

The creative eye balances the compulsion to answer and process information, with the patience and choice to question and empathically relate. Whereas the analytical eye is often reactive and the appreciative eye receptive, the creative eye is truly responsive. This eye offers a deep and intimate understanding and appreciation of yourself and your client.

The creative eye can both integrate and differentiate, and, therefore, potentially synthesise. This eye may recall historical memories of the past or, equally, conceive of new and novel future possibilities. Through the dynamic vision of the creative eye, past and future are brought together into conscious awareness through the portal of the present moment. This offers the coach the potential of a much more unlimited vision and the freedom to respond. This dynamic flexibility and responsiveness can free us to discover the masterful coach.

**What makes the creative eye unique is its  
ability to realise and bring into form and  
express our wholeness as well as our  
partiality**

This is essential to allow us to make conscious the meaning and value of the larger energetic field in which we participate. What we can then realise is the ideal future we desire. Equally, as we will explore more fully later in this text, we remember and rediscover our most natural, truest and genuine self – our original self.

### IMAGINING OF THE CREATIVE EYE

Seeking a photographic image that symbolises the creative eye, I have been repeatedly drawn back to recall a short stay in the Lake District of northern England. While walking around one of the beautiful lakes of this area, my peace and mind had stilled and I was simply observing the wonder of this truly natural setting and scenery. The lake is one of nature's great mirrors and is one of the places to which I return to reflect. On this day it seemed to offer a picture of everything in perfect symmetry and balance. The vast majesty of the ancient mountains seemed to be present and in the moment. My future wishes and aspirations, in this same moment, felt possible, even probable. In the stillness and reflection of the lake, nothing seemed impossible or out of reach (Figure 9, opposite).

The creative eye, not unlike the image shown in Figure 9, is deeply reflective. It has a truly expansive vision and a capacity to focus and discern in meticulous detail. This is a patient and responsive eye that can bring the past and future to their conscious conclusion in the fullness of the present moment. It offers a single point to which we can return and from which we can balance, while remembering the source of our innate motivation for change. Such is the possibility and prospect of masterful coaching.

At my best, in moments of mastery, I imagine I am coaching from the very moorings of the little boat: observing, reflecting, listening and imagining what may be happening in the depths of myself and my clients. I am intimately seeking to relate and to understand my clients deeply and help to guide them in taking responsibility and making the sustained changes they desire. The coach then becomes a co-creator.

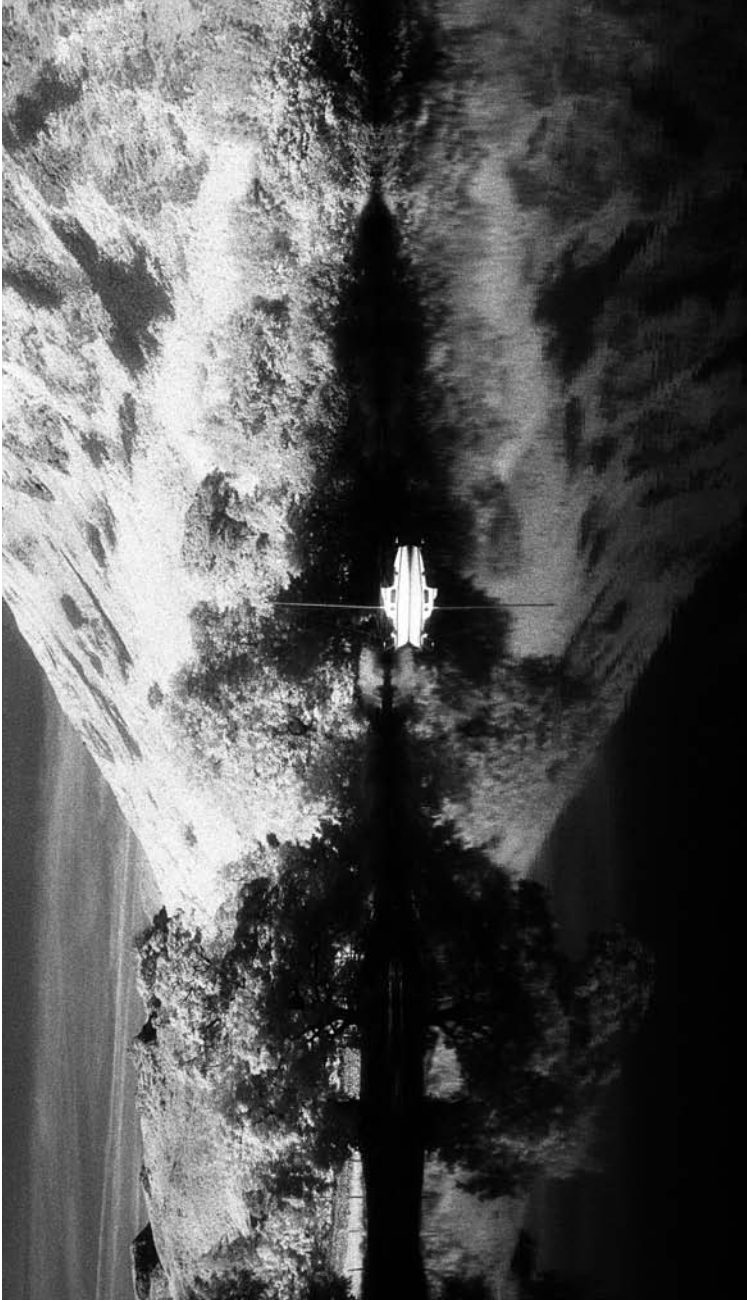


Figure 9

## PAUSE POINT

**Consider if the creative eye can offer you masterful practice. How can it do this?**

### REALISING A MORE UNLIMITED VISION

How can the creative eye serve your practice as a coach?

- It allows you to balance and reorientate yourself.
- It is a patient and playful eye.
- It is a truly responsive eye that operates by making choices.
- It can question and help to answer, and also invite you to sit with the unanswered question.
- By helping you to reflect, focus and relate, this eye can expand awareness and clarify current reality.
- It is an accepting and compassionate eye.
- It has 3D vision, including an interior and exterior, an individual and collective, and a universal dimension.
- It can resource the past and future within the present moment.
- It is sensitive to, and can discern, unconscious reaction.
- It is happy to reflect on the meaning of complexity and contradiction, without an urgency to solve.
- It can embrace and resolve conflict.
- It offers the discovery of a creative originality.

### DEVELOPING PSYCHOLOGICAL AWARENESS

This sensitivity of the creative eye cultivates an in-depth psychological awareness that is initiated with the opening of the appreciative eye. Here the coach can begin to sense and separate the impact and influence of their own psychology from that of



their clients. Distractions can be inwardly minimised. This refines the vision and deepens the sensitivity of the coach and their practice, as we will illustrate later in the book.

### DISCERNING HOW WE REACT

In stark contrast to the analytical eye, the appreciative eye can sense the interior world of subjective experience. The creative eye can take this one step further and discern how we react. This eye has the insight, subtlety and sensitivity to be able to separate how we react from how we respond. It has the capacity to be able to spot our own reactions and the reactions of others. It can reintegrate those parts we label as bad by bringing them back into our conscious awareness and control. The coach can now help their clients to own and tell their untold stories that may have been continually repeated and played out on others. This capacity to discern how we react allows us to acknowledge reaction and make choices of how we wish to respond. In this way the coach can help to transform reaction into response. This refines and heightens our ability to relate and coach.

### RESOLVING CONFLICT

The creative eye is deeply self-reflective. This allows the coach to contemplate and see beyond the need to judge. The conflict of ‘either this or that’ is embraced and considered, with space for something more still to emerge. This eye can hold opposing and conflicting possibilities, without the temptation to process or reductively problem-solve. It sees reality as it is, without a need to react or analyse. This eye can accept – and will attentively listen to – both sides of the argument.

**The creative eye can see conflict without judgement; it is unconditional and compassionate**

REALISING A MORE UNLIMITED VISION

As we will explore more fully in Chapter 6, through the vision of the creative eye we discover the masterful coach. For now and in summary, it is important to realise that the emergence of the creative eye brings with it the combined strengths of both the analytical and appreciative eyes. It has a much more unlimited vision, together with a deepening capacity to relate.

• THE THREE EYES IN PRACTICE •

In addition to working as a coach, I also take a special interest in coaching other coaches and helping to develop and continually deepen their practice. To illustrate how the three different eyes of the coach are employed in practice, let me share with you two recent case studies. The first is a coaching client who needed to develop an appreciative eye. The second illustrates how an experienced coach continues to evolve her vision and practice through discovering the creative eye.

AWAKENING THE APPRECIATIVE EYE

Peter is a senior manager and leader. A number of people from his department have complained to Human Resources (HR) that Peter is not giving them the support they need. Peter begins coaching feeling undermined and unclear of what may be happening in his department. The following are excerpts taken from coaching sessions that show how Peter awakens the

appreciative eye from the baseline of a strong analytical vision and discovers the impact of his previous blindness.

Coach: Tell me about the issue you face, Peter.

Peter: A couple of people in my department have complained about me and gone behind my back to HR.

Coach: What was your experience of what happened?

Peter: One of the persons in question came to me with a problem. There were things going on that I didn't understand. He told me a little about his issues. I wanted to help him and so told him what to do.

*Here Peter's strong analytical eye is present. He believes that his answer to what he thinks is the problem will satisfy his staff and is the best way to help others.*

Coach: You told him what to do?

Peter: Yes, he was telling me about his challenges and so I told him what would help to solve them. I shared the way I would do it with him.

Coach: How much do you care about your staff, Peter?

Peter: This really matters to me. I really do want to help them. I am always thinking, what can I do to help? And I tell them what to do, what I would do.

*Note how much Peter truly does care and is keen to help his staff. From the viewpoint of the analytical eye, the best way of helping is seen to be by giving the right answer.*

Coach: I can see how much you care, but I wonder if your staff realise just how much you do feel and care?

- Peter: What do you mean? I do care a great deal.
- Coach: I know you do (*pause*). When people come to you they may not present you with the real issue at first. They test if they can trust you – if you can relate and appreciate what’s happening to them. If you allow them to tell their story, their trust in you builds. They may then tell you what is really happening. My question, Peter, is: are you able to see this person without wanting to solve his problem?
- Peter: Mmm – I want to help and I do care.
- Coach: Shall we try to act this out between us, Peter? Let me play the member of staff and you be the boss – play yourself.

*We step into roles.*

- Peter: OK.
- Coach: Hi, Peter. I’ve got something going on.
- Peter: What is it and can I help?
- Coach: Yes, maybe. I’m really struggling with something.
- Peter: Is it personal?
- Coach: Sort of.
- Peter: You know, we have a good counselling support service in this company if you need personal help.
- Coach: Mmm. I have problem with workload and it’s effecting home as well at the moment.

*I am sensing in this role-play that something is stopping me bringing in how I am feeling – that it would be somehow wrong to do so. If I can’t express how I feel and be acknowledged by Peter without judgement, then I can’t trust the situation enough to say what is really happening.*

- Peter: OK, why don't you talk with your immediate line manager and we can explore your workload?
- Coach: Mmm. Peter, can I come out of role and speak to you about my experience? First, how was that for you?
- Peter: I really wanted to help you. Anything that I could do, I wanted to help.
- Coach: Can I be frank about my experience so that we can work this through together?
- Peter: Yes please.
- Coach: I could see you wanted to help, but you weren't helping me. There was so much more that I wanted to say to you about my problem, but, because you were offering me your solutions, something in me felt shut down. I didn't feel you empathised and really wanted to know how I felt. But I did see that you really wanted to help and were happy to offer me your solution.
- Peter: Really? Might that be why some of my folks are going behind my back to Human Resources?
- Coach: What do you think?
- Peter: Maybe.
- Coach: And what is missing that you are not valuing or offering, Peter?
- Peter: I'm not good with feelings or emotions. I'm a very practical and pragmatic man.
- Coach: Tell me about emotions and feelings.
- Peter: I'm not sure how to deal with emotions. A bit scared really.

*The analytical eye sees emotions as the unknown and often fears them.*

Coach: I could sense this – when I was in role it felt you were scared of mine too, which didn't allow me to tell you how I was feeling or what was really going on.

Peter: Really? I do want to help by offering my best solutions but in fact I'm actually doing the opposite – aren't I?

Coach: Yes. That may be true. Tell me, what do you think you have been missing?

Peter: Giving my staff a chance to say how it really is and being able to listen and hear them without offering my solution.

*Note how Peter realises that there is another way – through opening the appreciative eye he has a non-judging, more empathic and relational viewpoint.*

Coach: Exactly. Maybe because you don't place a value on feelings as much as answers and solutions, you are unknowingly devaluing them. This is not a judgement, Peter, but a perception.

Peter: Damn. I do want to help and in fact I'm doing the opposite.

Coach: It's a perception that would be valuable for you to work with. Are you willing to do that? To see how you might approach this differently and to explore if this may bring about a very different response from your staff?

Peter: Yes. I need to. Yes I'm willing to do that.

Peter was able to explore his emotions and feelings more fully in the sessions that followed. Each morning before work he would walk his dog and use this time to reflect about his learning and key aspects of life and work. Peter brought a key change into the next session.

Coach: Let's check in, Peter. How are you today?

Peter: I'm OK. Things are moving along. I'm working on a key change initiative.

*Despite the good news about the key piece of work, I see a real sadness in Peter's eyes and sense heaviness in his energy. I decide to explore this further.*

Coach: You look a little sad and down. What's going on Peter? Are you OK to speak about it?

Peter: I feel a little depressed and quite stuck. I think I've been stuck for a while.

*Peter is owning and openly expressing his emotions.*

Coach: Thank you, Peter, for being able to include this. I have been wondering how you truly feel.

Peter: It's not a good place to be. I don't allow myself to be here often.

Coach: I know that (*pause*), but might there be value in being here? Just in being willing to say how it is and how you feel? Your emotions may be friends and helpful in some way if you are simply willing to include them.

Peter: I feel stuck in a groove. I don't feel I've been treated well. People don't seem to care enough. I haven't been supported in the way I deserve. I've been hurt by what's happened.

Coach: I really hear that, Peter, and can see how important this is and how it's affected you.

Peter: I've been running away from this.

Coach: Yes, I see. It seems very real when you tell me how it is for you – how you truly feel. I then feel a strong connection with you, Peter, a very strong connection.

*I am mirroring how his willingness to share his emotions has made Peter more real, and our relationship has deepened as a result.*

Peter: I hadn't realised how much I've been running and hiding from this.

Coach: And yet this, your experience, is important and real. How might I help you, Peter?

Peter: In a way it's just good to let myself speak like this, and then I know how I feel.

Coach: How important are your feelings to you?

Peter: Very.

Coach: How come?

Peter: They help me to understand myself and where I am. Otherwise I don't know where I am. Having spoken about them I feel somehow free to move on – a little, at least.

Coach: What an interesting learning (*pause*).

Peter: What do you mean?

Coach: You are valuing your emotions and experience. Can we go full circle?

Peter: Sure.

Coach: What happened when your staff came to you?

Peter: Oh I see (*pause*). Maybe they need what just happened here.



- Coach: Well, how do you feel right now?
- Peter: I feel seen and understood. I feel accepted and more real and quite still and solid.
- Coach: What if I had offered you a solution instead?
- Peter: I think I might have felt angry and overlooked.
- Coach: There it is Peter (*pause*). What are you taking away from this realisation into your work?
- Peter: I'm going to try to listen for people's feelings more and also allow space for their feelings as well as my own. They may be scary but they make me real and help me to relate.
- Coach: Do you feel able to do that now?
- Peter: Yes, I'll try it. I may get caught in solving again, but I now know how it feels when I simply give my answers to others.

At the next session Peter has found himself working with an external consultant who has evaluated a course on which Peter teaches. This consultant is bullish and dictating to Peter and his colleagues how things need to change.

- Peter: I found myself listening to this man and saying to myself: have you no idea how much you are disengaging this group and making them very angry? Yet he was totally blind to what was going on. All he wanted to do was to tell them his assessment, how he saw things.
- Coach: Isn't that strange that you should meet such a man (*smiling*)?
- Peter: Yes. I see what you are saying (*laughs*), when I think of my personal journey. And it's me that's

dealing with it and trying to mirror back to this man his blindness. If he expects the group to work with him then he has to realise the impact of his own behaviour and how it's made the group feel. How he has imposed his views without accommodating any of ours (*pause*)  
Andrew, I am becoming a facilitator!

Coach: I realise that and you are being asked to teach what you have learned.

Peter: Would you believe it?

Coach: What's it like to be a facilitator?

*Note how the role of facilitator is from a place of choice: it is a non-judging viewpoint where Peter can appreciate and express both sides. It's the view from the appreciative and creative eyes.*

Peter: I feel free that I can stand outside things, even when I am part of things. I don't get caught like I used to – forcing my own opinions and solutions on others. I'm quite happy now to observe and think about what difference I can make. I don't have to be in control. I can choose to act rather than simply react. Here this man was reacting and I could see the damage he was doing in telling us the solution, and he was completely blind to it.

Coach: In your awareness, you have come a long way  
Peter.

## THE CREATIVE EYE OF THE COACH IN PRACTICE

Susan is a qualified, experienced and practising coach. These excerpts are taken directly from two consecutive coaching

supervision sessions where Susan was keen to explore some of the edges of her practice in order to continue to learn and grow.

Susan: I love ‘doing’.

*Whenever I hear about ‘doing things’ I recognise the analytical eye and its need to get things done – to find the answer, to process and solve.*

Coach: How does doing serve you?

Susan: When I do things I feel as though I have achieved something. I get more satisfaction from doing. I can see what I’ve done. Often I feel as though I have to do things. I’ll watch television to relax but often feel guilty for not doing things. Moving is vital to me – I have to be on the move and doing things.

Coach: Anything more?

Susan: This keeps me busy, I feel as though I’m getting somewhere. Sometimes, particularly around the guilt thing when I’m watching TV, I think that doing is something I should do. There is voice that tells me that doing is a must.

Coach: Whose voice is that?

*Note how the voices of judgement, fear and cynicism are closely associated with the analytical eye. When we employ this eye the inner voices – which tell us what we should and must do – are never far away.*

Susan: Mmm. I’m not sure. It’s been with me a long time.

Coach: Yes. I wonder whose expectations they are – that you should do things?

Susan: It's my strong work ethic. You have to do to achieve. It was probably drummed into me. I'm not good at 'being' because I like to be on the move.

Coach: And you can only be when you are not moving?

Susan: So they say. All this meditation stuff, this being, involves stopping. I like to keep on the move. Even when I sit down at home in the evening I sit in a rocking chair and rock.

*I realise that a reframe may help here. Rather than splitting 'doing' and 'being' through the dualistic vision of the analytical eye, can Susan expand her vision to see the possibility of experiencing both? Can she extend her vision to see the non-dual reality of the creative eye?*

Coach: Susan, let me plant a seed. When you talk about being and doing you separate the two. Doing is moving, being is still. How would it be to consider a third way? What if your being was in your doing? What if you could find perfect stillness and being within every busy moment?

Susan: Mmm. So that I'm present in the moment and in all that I do?

Coach: Yes. It may not be 'either, or' but allowing yourself to experience 'both'

Susan: Yes. Mmm (*laughing*).

Coach: Might it not be as black and white as you think?

Susan: I'm always trying to separate things. So the seed that you plant for me to consider is that being and doing can be one and the same – the being in the doing? Mmm (*pause*).

Coach: Yes. Maybe the more we make the being a destiny, the more it becomes out of our reach. What do you think?

Susan: Maybe (*long pause*). Yes.

At the next session we continued our exploration.

Susan: From the last session, the thing that keeps coming back to me all the time is what you said about noticing the being in your doing.

Coach: Yes.

Susan: I love that. This has been a real ‘ah ha’ for me. Realising that I can be and do at the same time is wonderful. And I just keep smiling, noticing that I’m doing both. It’s incredibly liberating. It’s wonderful.

Coach: Tell me a little more about what your experience is.

Susan: Erm (*pause*). It’s a connectedness, so it’s a connection with myself and it’s a connection with other people. When we were talking before about being in the moment, I now notice this when I’m with other people and how that manifests. I am not thinking in my head at all. It’s more energy, I’m just energy and I just notice things about the other person in a non-judgmental way.

*Note the opening of the creative eye here – relational, non-judging, unconditional, with a focus on experience and in-the-moment reality – and also the in-flow experience (‘I’m just energy’).*

Coach: Mmm.

Susan: But also non-judgemental with me. When I'm not in this place, I'm wondering if this person likes me or if I'm saying the right things. So all of that goes away and I'm just connected with myself (*pause*). It starts as a simple thing. Just noticing my feet on the floor or my bottom on the chair, and then I just think 'Yes, I am here'. It's as simple as that, but then it makes me grin (*smiling*), then I notice that I'm doing it – being it.

*Notice that when the creative eye opens, Susan is able to focus on her experiences and this switches off the inner voices that can judge and criticise.*

Coach: (*Smiling*) There's a new conscious awareness in you.

Susan: Yes (*pause*). Yes.

Coach: What are you connected to?

Susan: (*Laughing – long pause*) It's a non-judging connection. It's what it is, a connection – a connectedness.

Coach: Is this awareness you?

Susan: Erm, it probably is (*smiles*), it's me without any of my head stuff, so yes it's me – isn't it? It's just me in the world connecting with somebody else in the world; all the assumptions about anything else are all switched off.

Coach: Is this a more natural you?

Susan: Yes. It's a purer me. It's everything I'm about, keeping it simple and it's just that simple – a pure smile feeling.

*Note how Susan recognises a 'purer' experience – a connection to a deeper more authentic being and self.*

- Coach: The being that is you, when you are in your being (*smiling*).
- Susan: Yes, yes (*laughing together*).
- Coach: It's strangely paradoxical, and when we both laugh it's maybe because we are acknowledging a discovery.

*Note how our deeper original self is able to accommodate and accept paradox as a norm.*

- Susan: Well it's so obvious at one level and yet completely complicated at another.
- Coach: If it's so obvious (*smiling*), I wonder what you missed before?
- Susan: It's a type of connection that is beyond rapport, more like I have found before with animals. It's a non-verbal connection – a 'zzzzzzzzzz'.
- Coach: Yes (*laughing together*). What's the 'zzzzzzzzzz'?
- Susan: Its energy, all your energies line up. There's an attraction, like lots of little magnets lining up. What I tend to do is to keep people at a distance because it's safe. This is more about allowing the magnetic thing to happen and simply just notice.
- Coach: So how does this serve you as a coach?

*Now I am inviting Susan to ground this learning in her work and practice.*

- Susan: I've realised how much I do use this when I coach – my smiling bit. I can cut through all the stuff to find what's real. It enables me to be

- more authentic and to truly connect and to help my clients do the same.
- Coach: Are you saying that something of this type of connection allows you to be more authentic?
- Susan: Yes, and it gives my clients the same permission.
- Coach: Isn't that interesting?
- Susan: Yes. It's what I do and know that I do it. This is when my coaching is at its best. It can bring about change at an identity level. Andrew, you are able to work here, that is why it almost always brings impact and change.
- Coach: Coaching in the organisational setting is often thought to be about improving performance. You are suggesting that it can be much deeper at an identity level?
- Susan: Yes, that's true.
- Coach: It raises an interesting observation for us to consider – how you might influence more by how you coach than what you do.
- Susan: Yes (*pause*). Yes that's true. When you're experiencing, it's much easier to help your clients to connect with *their* experience. This makes a difference and can often help the coaching to shift.
- Coach: So rather than be caught in processing we are able to acknowledge key experiences, and this somehow helps the client to shift?
- Susan: Yes. I have one client who is very mind identified and always busy. I remember noticing his passion one day. I said 'I notice how passionate you are about this, aren't you?' He replied, 'Yes,



I suppose I am.’ This noticing of experiences, feelings and emotions seems to bring about important shifts. He actually stopped and reflected. I suppose this experiencing takes our clients out of their heads for a while. A few sessions ago you said: ‘You don’t have to say it out loud, but you do need to acknowledge how you feel.’ That’s an interesting process. It’s liberating. The feelings then don’t overwhelm, if you’re able to own them.

Coach: You’re speaking about the importance of allowing yourself to experience without judging and analysing.

*Susan notes the power of sensing and experiencing that exists beyond the judging analytical eye.*

Susan: Yes.