COACH TRAINING EDU

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Howard Decker

Who needs a coach?

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Two journalists back to back. How do you like that? You can't get that any place else. Thank you very much. The energy, I have to say, is incredible here. John and everybody, fantastic.

But I do have a confession to make. When I started my coaching journey a year or so ago, I knew one thing: I didn't need a coach. Didn't need a coach. Anybody with me on that? Right.

I've been a supervisor, a leader, and a manager for thirty-five years, almost all my career, in big groups and small ones. I led a chamber of commerce. I led a leadership organization. And I led a Scout troop. I didn't know how to camp, and I led a Scout troop.

I've been helping people grow and make progress, and helping organizations make progress, all of my career, all of my life. So why would I need a coach? And besides, if I've got a problem, I can just take care of it myself. I'm good.

So I started the journey with CTEDU. One of the things that drew me to it was the community. I looked forward to the challenge of the ICF method and all of the packaging CTEDU brings to the table, and that has proven true throughout the journey I've been on. I wanted to learn about Hope Theory and all of the positive reinforcement, everything we're learning here today.

And I worried. I worried about how I was going to get through training, with all this classwork, as the doctor said earlier, and a big job. How was I going to make enough videos to get through the assessments? Chris knows about that. And how was I going to get a hundred hours? How do you get a hundred hours? Now we've talked about somebody who had fourteen thousand hours. How does that… But all of those worries have vanished, and things have made progress. And I still didn't think I needed a coach.

But then the process with CTEDU started. In my introduction to coach training, there was a really neat exercise called the Wheel of Life. You all know it well, right? You've given it to your clients. It's a great icebreaker, and for me it was a wonderful icebreaker. It was really exciting, until I looked at it when I was done.

The job part was great. The home, family, and relationship stuff was okay. But the rest of it was blank. Almost completely blank. And I started to wonder how I was getting through life rolling around on a wheel that wasn't round. Maybe I had a flat tire. What was I going to do about that?

A little later in the program, Chris and Janice were my 1.0 class trainers, and a little while after that, I got to participate in the hot seat. You remember from class: you volunteer as the client, and you get coached in front of everybody. Even though it's online, you're still in front of everybody, so you're kind of baring your soul. I decided my lopsided wheel was going to be the topic, because that seemed pretty simple to me. It was a lopsided wheel. I'd figure out how to fix it.

A couple of powerful questions later, they came to the more powerful questions.

- What do you do for fun?
- Who do you make time for?
- What are you curious about?

Those are pretty simple questions, but they were very powerful for me, and I didn't really have any answers. I didn't like that. After thirty-five years of leading people and organizations, I really couldn't tell you what I did for fun. I couldn't tell you who I made time for. I didn't have a ready answer. That was a concern.

Then, not long after, one of our classmates said something in a lesson on value. Remember that one? That was a really good one. The coach asked her where she placed her value, and she said she wanted her value to be about her. Not about anything she did, or any accomplishments, or her résumé, or any of that. Just her. We've heard a little bit about that today.

That hit home for me, because for most of the last many years, I've thought of my value as what I've accomplished and what I've done to help other people. How did I do for my family? What did I provide here? How did I help my organization do this? How did I help my friends? How did I help others make progress? I'm not sure I knew at the time what it felt like to have value just for me. Realistically, I knew it, but underneath, I didn't feel it.

And it made me think about what I told the colleagues I worked with all these years: Work hard. Take care of yourself. Make mistakes, we'll figure it out. Fail fast. All these things we talk about in here. I wasn't practicing what I preached. And that stung for a bit.

That's when it hit me. Maybe I do need a coach. It hit me three times. How many was that? That was three, right? So it beat me over the head. And I sure needed help filling the wheel, because that was my primary objective.

It reminded me of a story I read not that long ago. Once upon a time, there was a cobbler. He walked across the village to his workshop every day, and he worked from dusk until dawn making shoes. Everybody in town had a pair. They were fantastic shoes. Everybody loved them. People were waiting for them. There were lots of orders. Everybody had a pair except the cobbler. He didn't have any. He figured, "I'll get around to making those." You know how

that feels, right?

So every day he walked through the mud. This was before rideshares and paving and all that. He walked through the mud and the slush every day in torn leather shoes, because he was too busy taking care of everybody else to take care of himself.

Then one cold day, he got home and he was sick, and he couldn't walk across the village to work. He lost his customers. He lost his business. And he lost his value, or at least what he thought was his value. It was all because he couldn't take care of the two feet on his own body, the ones he actually controlled.

I was the cobbler. And I'm not anymore. So I want to thank the folks at CTEDU, my peers, especially in my class, and my trainers, Chris and Janice, and now Janice for 2.0, which I've already started.

My wheel is rolling along a lot better, and I couldn't talk about it if it wasn't. I even have some answers to those questions. What do I do for fun? Well, I'm a big baseball fan, so I went to fifty baseball games this year. I counted. I want to be regionally sure. Everybody who knows where Sugar Land, Texas is? Round Rock, Texas? Who knows about that? Houston, Texas, knows about that. And Wrigley Field. Who knows about that? That was the best.

And who do I make time for? I make time for me. Yes. Now, my friends and family count, and my work is important, but I'm trying to put myself first, to the point where every week I do something just for me that has nothing to do with work.

And what it showed me firsthand is that what you do every day, what I want to do every day, and why we're here this weekend, is the power of coaching. And I learned that not from coaching, but from learning through CTEDU. Fascinating.

Now, I have a little homework for you, because a session wouldn't be any fun without homework, right? It comes in three parts.

1. First, take that Wheel of Life exercise out and do it for yourself. Really do it. And listen to what it tells you. Keep that with you.
2. Second, think about your highest aspiration, like John talked about yesterday: your hopes, your dreams, your passion. Package that all up in a little suitcase and take a trip out to see your future self, two or three years from now. You'll be amazed at who you meet, and you'll learn some incredible things. It'll be a journey well worth taking.
3. And third, get a coach. Get a coach.

When you're in the client's chair, take off your protective vest. You wear that during coaching so things bounce off you and back to them, right? Take it off. Be vulnerable. And what do we

like to say? Trust the process. Trust the client. Trust yourself as a client too.

And when those powerful questions come, the ones you're really good at asking but maybe not as good at answering, answer the questions. Let your coach guide you where you know you need to go. Experience the moments you feel so good about when your clients get them. Feel what it's like there. Walk a mile in your client's shoes, and you just might make sure you've got the right shoes on for your journey.

Just remember:

> *Don't be the cobbler, and don't be the coach who forgot to get a coach.*

Thank you very much.