

2023 Coaching Skills: Metaphor and Metaview Follow-up Notes

Metaview and metaphor are both helpful skills. They can be exceptionally fun, and even when they are not, they can be exceptionally powerful.

1. Metaview

Metaview is very straightforward, and you will not need to practice it to use it effectively. The standard metaview question asks some version of the following:

- What would (X person) make of what we are saying?

Here are a number of other variations on this skill:

A) Alternative Self. Metaview from an alternative self's point of view, as in "Imagine yourself three months from now, and you have solved this problem. What might you advise yourself?"

B) An object. Metaview from an inanimate object: "If your deadline could talk, how might it support you?"

C) A note on a standard form of Metaview: The way I was taught metaview—and how I see many coaches use it—is like this: "Imagine you were floating over this problem. You are high above it and able to take in everything-- all the people involved, the whole context-- what stands out to you?" This never, ever worked for me. First, it doesn't really ask the client not to look out of their own current point of view. It feels like a mild nudge rather than a starkly different point of view. It might work, and feel free to experiment with it, but I have never found it as powerful as the other three versions above.

D) Metaview paired with metaphor (I demonstrated this one with a movie screen and movie)-- It doesn't have to be a movie, though. You can be creative. "Imagine you were in the stadium watching a game." "Imagine you were about to pick up a book."

2. Metaphor

Metaphors work by:

- simplifying complex issues,
- giving client's emotional distance from problems,
- creating a visual image that can provide clarity.

Using metaphor effectively requires some abstract thinking, some facility with language, and—occasionally—a bit of playfulness. When working with the metaphor, you can use one from the client or offer one of your own. Then, if the client likes the metaphor, you avoid talking about the real-world issue (temporarily) in favor of exploring the metaphor. It is helpful to explore all the properties of the metaphor (weight, color, size, location, material, shape, function, behavior, processes, people involved, etc.) You let new insights emerge from the client and then link the learning from the metaphor back to the real-world issue.

3. Review (We Are exactly halfway through this course. Let's look at everything you have covered so far):

1. Foundational ways of being that must be the underpinning of all coaching:

- A) Ethical decision-making
- B) Coaching presence
- C) the Coaching Mindset

2. Core skills that you will use every session:

- A) agenda-setting
- B) Accountability
- C) Powerful questions
- D) silence
- E) tracking energy
- F) acknowledgment
- G) Learning capture

3. As-needed skills:

- A) Permission
- B) Thesis
- C) Summary

D) Metaphor

E) Metaview

F) Scaling

G) Interruption