

Module 14 Lesson 3

Transcript

Today's very important lesson is the seal the deal stuff that makes your client choose and use you instead of someone else. You're the only you, right? Lots of your clients are going to want to be impressed by your training and how long you've been in practice, but those things aren't the things that necessarily make your counseling relationships special and impactful.

I'm sure you've had an experience with someone who may be great at knowing their stuff and you trust you're in good hands, but when it comes to feeling connected and understood, nothing transmits. Radio silence. Total disconnect. We're going to talk about that today. We're going to do a deep dive into how you can do your amazing helping work and have your clients feel understood and emotionally onboard because of your connection to them.

How to create connection to set the stage for transformation, because it doesn't happen immediately. Just to recap quickly, in the last lesson you learned that getting a green light in all three brains is the key to lasting transformation. And in this lesson I'd love to dive into the nitty-gritty of the transformational coaching method itself and teach you three of the most sort of foundational skills.

There's so many skills that you learn in the transformational coaching method. There's at least 40 foundational skills and questions, sequences, and specific exercises that you learn to take a client through, and they do take a good 12 months to learn. But in the time that we have together, I think beginning with these three really can make a difference for the kind of connection that you can start to create with your client right now.

Whenever you start working with a client, you start by creating connection. And the reason why is because you want that critter brain defense to go down. You want someone to feel like they're with like kind, and the first way we do this in transformational coaching is by creating something called rapport, and rapport is a coaching technique.

It's the technique of all techniques. It's one I think that people would be like, "That doesn't really matter." It totally matters because it allows you to build trust and safety between yourself and another person. So when you have rapport with a client, the critter brain goes, "Ooh, I'm with like kind. You are safe here. I can relax." And then that opens the channel to connect because the person doesn't feel guarded and they don't feel threatened.

So why else is rapport important? Because if trust and safety are present, client's critter brain is triggered, defenses go up. When that happens, the client is going to resist your coaching. I don't know if you've ever had any experience of working with someone who's just one word answer, very ... I don't know if antagonistic is the right word, but just not open. Just like, "[inaudible 00:03:04]." It's because there's not enough rapport. And of course, if they're like that and they're resisting the coaching, they're not going to follow through, they're not going to get results, it's not good for anybody.

Truth be told, rapport is really the first step in any important communication between people, let alone in coaching, but certainly no coaching technique can really work very well without rapport. Because when you have it and it's good, the client can relax, be honest, be vulnerable. Now, how do you build rapport? Well, let's look at the next two skills because this is where they come into play.

See how I'm doing that? See how I'm weaving it all together like a magician? If you can't have fun while you're learning, why learn? Okay. So let's go. And PS, I don't know how many people would be like, "Ooh, talking about rapport is the most fun ever." It's sort of one of those things of you know you're a geek about coaching when you think rapport is fun and magical, but it is.

So let's go to the second skill that I also think is magical, and that's active listening, which is something that you might've heard of before. I just want to put a new lens on this, maybe a new frame. And first of all we should ask, why is active listening important? Why is this a foundational skill? And if you guessed it's important because it lowers the critter brain's defenses, you were right and you get a car, and you get a car, and you get a car.

So, what is active listening, how does it relax the critter brain? So often in a conversation with another person, we're having the conversation but also planning about what we're going to say next and thinking of what we're going to say and making assumptions about what the other person is saying instead of really listening, really being present, we're not really present with people often. We're often in our own heads in the conversation.

So active listening is the opposite of that, and I would ask you to consider active listening as witnessing your client. You're an observer. You're witnessing. You're holding a space for the client, offering your full presence for whatever it is that your client is experiencing without trying to change it, without giving advice, or without sharing your opinions. Now, let me just qualify that by saying yes, you will eventually give recommendations, and you will give advice and things like that, but you

can't start there because there's not enough rapport created for those recommendations to really land.

You want to start with this active listening and holding this space, and sometimes we call this creating a field of listening, or you might hear some people call it coaching presence. It's essentially having this field of listening where I'm witnessing my client. Another component of this is I'm regarding my client as completely powerful and capable of creating whatever it is they want in their list, so I'm a calm, anchoring presence, neutral, observing the client, believing that they're powerful and capable, and now I'm creating this field of listening where whatever comes up for the client is okay.

Believe they're going to find their power and their truth. That's just what's going to happen in the conversation. And that's where my field of listening and how it's created, that's active listening. So when the client starts to feel that from me, their worry about being judged or criticized starts to fall away. When clients come to you, they are so fricking scared that you're judging them because they think since you're a nutrition coach, you're perfect.

You never eat a carb, or you never have sugar, or whatever it might be that's in their mind, they think, "You're perfect. I suck. But I'm coming to you for help, but I secretly don't want you to know how much I suck because I'm super afraid that you're going to judge me as much as I'm judging me for being horrible." And if that's going on in the client's mind, their critter brain of course is up.

So when you can create this sort of neutral judgment-free zone of listening, this active field of listening where I'm witnessing your power and capability and seeing you as a fricking amazing person, that worry about being judged and criticized falls away, the critter brain relaxes, the client opens up for change. So again, you're not going to spend the whole time in a session just listening. You will eventually be giving recommendations, you'll be asking questions, et cetera, but how do you know which questions to ask and when to ask them?

Well, that takes us to transformational coaching foundational skill, [inaudible] trace, something called the MAP. I loved learning about the MAP because it just opened my eyes, and maybe it'll open yours to why people are so different and why communication can sometimes feel so hard. So let's take a look at the MAP. The MAP is a visual sort of concept. It helps us understand that everybody sees the world differently.

We have our own map of the world depending on our upbringing, our attitudes, our beliefs, our prejudices, our individual perceptions at any given time, so if you and I were to stand in a room

and there were projector screens in front of us, one in front of me and one in front of you, and we each projected our map of the world onto the screen, all of my beliefs and attitudes, all of your beliefs and attitudes, and then we looked at the two different maps on the screen, it'd be totally different. I'd have a city over here, you'd have a river where I have a city, I'd have mountains, you'd have none. Completely different views of the world because we're completely different people.

So here's another example of that to think about this in a different way. Imagine that you're in a big ballroom, and maybe there's a wedding going on, and there are hundreds of people attending, and let's say there's a fight that breaks out in the corner of the room. And it's a big thing, everybody's like, "Oh my gosh, there's a fight." And afterwards, as everybody's talking about what happened, every single guest probably has a different perception or memory or story or meaning about the big fight. How it happened, why it happened, what happened, et cetera, because each guest has a different and unique map, therefore they have different and unique perceptions about the fight that occurred.

Someone could be like, "Oh, that fight occurred because it's a family battling over estate money." Or someone could be like, "Oh, that fight occurred, but it really wasn't a fight. Someone was feeling sick and they fell down and the other person got knocked over." It could be all different perceptions. So your map is your internal map of reality. It is your unique view of the world.

Now, why does this matter? Neat, but why does it matter? Everyone has a completely unique world view and each world view is equally valid. This is so important. This will completely change all of your relationships to understand that, and that the MAP determines your experience of life. So often, we assume that other people think like us and they don't. And this is a problem in relationships, but it's a problem in coaching as well, and let me tell you why, because some coaches feel like it's their job to figure the client out. "I'm going to figure you out."

But our job is not to interpret or analyze the client, that might be the realm of therapy. A coach's job is to get curious about what someone is experiencing from their point of view, from their map, and how they keep managing to have that same experience, especially if it's not an experience they want to have happen. That's a coach's job. So in order to say, "Oh wow." If you think about traveling to Spain, for example, you might go to Spain and go, "Oh, it's so interesting. They take naps in the afternoon." "Oh, interesting. They have garbage pickup that way." "Oh, interesting, they have such and such."

Your client is another country, and they're creating experiences based on their beliefs, their programming about what they need to do, be, and have to keep love, safety, and belonging intact, and oftentimes if they're coming to you, they're creating experiences that they don't want to be

having, but they don't know how to change it. So your job is to get curious. "How are you creating that experience? How is that conflict between your human brain and your critter brain happening, and how might we shift that?"

And the only way to do that is to get off your map and to get onto your client's, so stop thinking from your point of view and start to become curious about your client's map. And the way that you learn about your clients now is by asking specific questions that we'll train you to ask, and doing it in a specific order. I'm going to show you some of that.

Remember always, your client that's sitting in front of you is a different country that you have never visited. You don't know anything about this person. Your client's map is completely different than yours. And one of the biggest mistakes that coaches make is assuming that they know what their client is talking about or meaning, and I did that when I was first a coach because I wanted to look smart. So it would be like, "Well, I'm feeling such and such," and I'd be like, "I understand." I might not have understood, I just wanted to look smart.

So if you assume that you know what your client is talking about or meaning, then what you're really doing is viewing the client through your own map, and that's the opposite of what we want to do. And when coaches make this mistake, it's kind of not their fault because they may not know about the MAP. I didn't know about it. I went to a whole coach training and never heard this word in my life, the MAP, what does that mean? It's like, "This is the number one thing I need to know."

So example, a client says, "I feel fat." Well, a lot of coaches can take that at face value and assume they know what feeling fat means because they're making an interpretation of feeling fat based on their own MAP, but in transformational coaching, we know that the way the client feels fat is probably not the same way that you as the coach might feel fat, if you ever do. So instead of taking the comment at face value, a transformational coach is going to start to dig deeper and asking questions like, "In what way do you feel fat?" Or, "How specifically are you feeling fat?" to get the specificity that you learn in transformational coaching is what helps you drill down to the core of an issue. You're going to see this in practice in a moment.

Okay. When we are able to drill down like that and say, "In what way are you feeling fat?" Or, "How specifically are you feeling fat?" When we can drill down, understand that the experience of feeling fat has nothing to do with weight often. Sometimes it does, oftentimes it doesn't. And that's something that transformational coaching helps us discover. So in fact, in transformational coaching, it's very helpful to assume that you don't know what the client means.

You want to come from that frame of mind of, "I don't understand you. I have to ask more questions in order to understand what you're thinking or what you're feeling or experiencing so I can get a really clear picture of your map. I can get a picture of how you are experiencing the world." Why is this important? Because. This is so a pet peeve of mine. We'll introduce you to a little pet peeve named Steve. It's really not named Steve, but that rhymes. Just came to me, and I've been spending a lot of time with my four year old daughter reading books, rhyming books, so now I'm starting to rhyme at random times, possible inappropriately. So moving on.

So why is it important to understand not assuming what a client means, and instead asking questions to get on their map? So my pet peeve is that a lot of conversations with nutrition coaches are looking kind of like this one. I'll show you. The coach might say, "What would you like?" Client says, "I want to look amazing in my bikini this summer." The coach says, "Well, how much weight do you want to lose?" "Maybe 20 pounds," the client says. "Great. Did you do your food journal before our session?" "No." "Okay, well let's go keto, and here's a list of meals you could try. How does this sound?" "Uh." "Great, see you in a few weeks."

I'm exaggerating a bit, but not really, because why is this conversation not going to work in the long run? Because the coach hasn't established rapport, isn't actively listening, is definitely not on this client's MAP, is not asking about their experience. This coach in this conversation has no chance of uncovering and transforming the client's underlying reason for staying stuck, and there is one.

Now, of course, there are times when you're going to give your clients information on food or help with meal planning or give them meal suggestions or give them checklists or give them recipes. You're going to do that, but it's not useful to jump to those things until you have a clear idea of the underlying reason for staying stuck. Why is that? The client will not be able to stick to a list of to-dos or list of action steps for the long-term until you uncover and transform the underlying reason for staying stuck. So if you jump right to the to-dos, it's not useful. And the client's not even really ready to hear it, let alone accept it, let alone take action on it.

So let's look at this conversation again, but from how it might sound using transformational coaching. The conversation might start with the same. "What would you like?" Client, "I want to look amazing in my bikini." That's the same. Notice, now we start getting different. "So you want to look amazing in your bikini this summer." This is another technique actually, we call it verbal backtracking that you would learn in transformational coaching where you actually say back to the client what they just said.

And why do we do that? I'll give you one guess. It calms the critter brain because the critter brain goes, "Oh yeah, that's exactly what I thought. I'm with like kind." Okay, so the coach says, "You want to look amazing in your bikini this summer. What's important about that for you?" Very important question. When somebody comes to see you, they say, "I want this." They really want what they think this is going to get them. So, "Okay. What's important about that for you?" The client says, "Well, I want to feel hot. I want to feel confident in our swim club." "Ugh, summer swim club. It's the worst when you don't feel good about yourself." That's my map. You want to look cute at the swim club.

Anyway, so the clients says, "I want to feel hot and confident at our swim club, I haven't felt that way in a while." So the coach responds, verbal backtrack, "So you want to feel hot and confident at your swim club, and you haven't felt that way in a while. What will having that do for you?" Now, asking what will having that do for you is another way of asking what's important about that. "What will having that do for you?" It might sound awkward, but it's worded for a very specific way, because having that is going to do something for them. We want to find out what that is.

Client, "Well, I guess I would feel like I was sexy again." "Great. So you'd feel like you're sexy again," verbal backtracking. And the client says, "Exactly. You're in my head, how do you know what I'm thinking?" "Well, I just repeated back what you said to me." I know we're technically not covering verbal backtracking, but it's so great because it took so much pressure off me as a coach of having to say something profound to the client. I don't have to say something profound, the most profound thing I can say is what they just told me.

And you might think, "Oh, that's weird. Won't they think it's weird?" They won't. They won't even know, especially if you have good rapport established. And then the coach says, "Well, what's important about feeling sexy again?" Client, "I feel like my husband might notice me for once." Oh, here we are. And the coach says, "And when your husband notices, what will having that do for you? What's important about your husband noticing?" Client, "Well, this may sound dumb to talk about with a health coach or a nutrition coach, but I just haven't felt connected to him in a long time." "So what is it you want, again?" "I guess I want to feel connected to my husband."

Bingo. Bingo, right? There we have it. So the client starts out with wanting to look great in a bikini, but when you dig deeper with transformational coaching to uncover that underlying reason for staying stuck, you discover that the client wants to feel connected to her husband. That's actually what she wants. And she feels in order to do that, so in order to keep love, one of her basic human needs, and probably safety and probably belonging, in order to keep love, she has to look great in a bikini. So what appears to be about body is actually about love.

Now here's the kicker. If she stays overweight, this client, then at least she still has the hope that if she was hot in her bikini, then her husband might notice her. But if she is hot in her bikini and her husband still doesn't notice her, that's too too great a loss of love. Then she's realizing her worst fear, "Oh, he doesn't love me, I'm not lovable," and she probably can't take that. So for her, in this case, this is an example, it's easier to stay overweight than face feeling unloved by her spouse. That's the underlying reason for staying stuck.

Now given that, can you imagine if you say to this person, "Well, here's a list of what to eat and not to eat." She'll go, "Okay." And she'll do it and she'll try to do it and she'll do her best to execute what you've given her, but if she can't sort of face the fear of going, "Actually, I'm just afraid my husband doesn't love me, so my sort of strategy to keep love is to keep the hope for it." If we don't address that, and just give a checklist of stuff to eat and lifestyle changes, it's just not going to be 100% effective. It'll help, because the client will try, but 80% of the work here is about transforming the beliefs around her being a lovable person, because you can't control what the husband does. Who knows if he's going to love her or not?

But she can love herself, and maybe she's never really done that before. Or maybe she has, but now it's a new look. It's an up-level version of, how is she loving who she is now? She's a different person than she's been in the past. So if she opens up to love herself more than she ever has, then the weight starts to drop off because she has love. It's coming from her. She doesn't have to rely on an external source. Then she'll just naturally want to follow the recommendations that you give her.

Health becomes who she is, not what she does. That's the magic of transformational coaching, and I want to point something out, this is not therapy. Remember the definition of coaching. Asking specific questions in a specific sequence that will uncover and transform the underlying reason for staying stuck. So in this sequence, I really ... here we are again, this is the sequence, I really only asked two basic questions in a sequence, which was, "What do you want?" And then I used a couple versions of, "Why do you want that?" Which in coaching we learned, you never ask why because it triggers the critter brain to defend itself.

You ask, "What's important about that for you? What will having that do for you?" And I just kept cycling that. "What would you like? What's important? What will that do for you?" And at the end, circles back again. So, "What is it you like again?" Oh, it's not the thing you thought you wanted. So I'm just going back and forth between two questions, and then I'm adding in rapport, active listening, and the MAP, and bam, we arrive at what's causing the conflict. What's the

underlying reason for staying stuck? Why are the critter brain and the human brain opposing each other? Because the critter brain's trying to keep love intact.

So this isn't therapy because I'm not analyzing her questions, I'm not diving into her childhood pain, I don't need to do any of that. I'm just asking questions to get clearer and clearer on the underlying reason for staying stuck, and then I know, "Okay, which beliefs and habits do I need to start helping this client shift so she can finally move forward, resolve that conflict between the two brains, and get the result that she wants instead of staying stuck?"

It's so fun. It's so addictive, I have to tell you, this kind of coaching, and if you are intrigued and you would like to see a full demonstration of transformational coaching in action, I have one with me and a student. I'm coaching her on issues that she's struggling with when it comes to having more energy. She's experiencing really extreme fatigue, and as a result is also having trouble losing weight.

So in the first sort of part of the conversation, I'm explaining more about the coaching method, so you'll learn more about that, more skills in addition to what you've learned here, and then you'll watch the coaching demo, which is about 25-ish minutes, and I think you'll be surprised by how quickly and powerfully we can uncover the underlying reason for staying stuck and then start to shift it. You're also going to see in the demo how I start crafting recommendations based on what we discovered.

So, super fun, and here's where you can go to watch that full demonstration of transformational coaching in action, plus the client in the demonstration is so delightful, and she has a really common challenge that so many of your clients are going to have. She's a mom, she has ... I can't remember if it was three or four kids, but she had a big family, and she just was not carving out time for herself. She was just running herself into the ground, running herself into the ground, and this is something that so many women do and struggle with, so it's worth watching, if for no other reason than you may have more tools in your toolkit for the next time you have a conversation with a client like that. And chances are very good that you will.

Okay, you're doing great. So let's recap. We covered three foundational skills from the transformational coaching method. We talked about rapport, we talked about active listening, we talked about the MAP, and I also snuck in there a little verbal backtracking. Thank you for letting me be your teacher. It's been so fun and such a pleasure, and I would love to continue the momentum that you've built and teach you even more about transformational coaching.