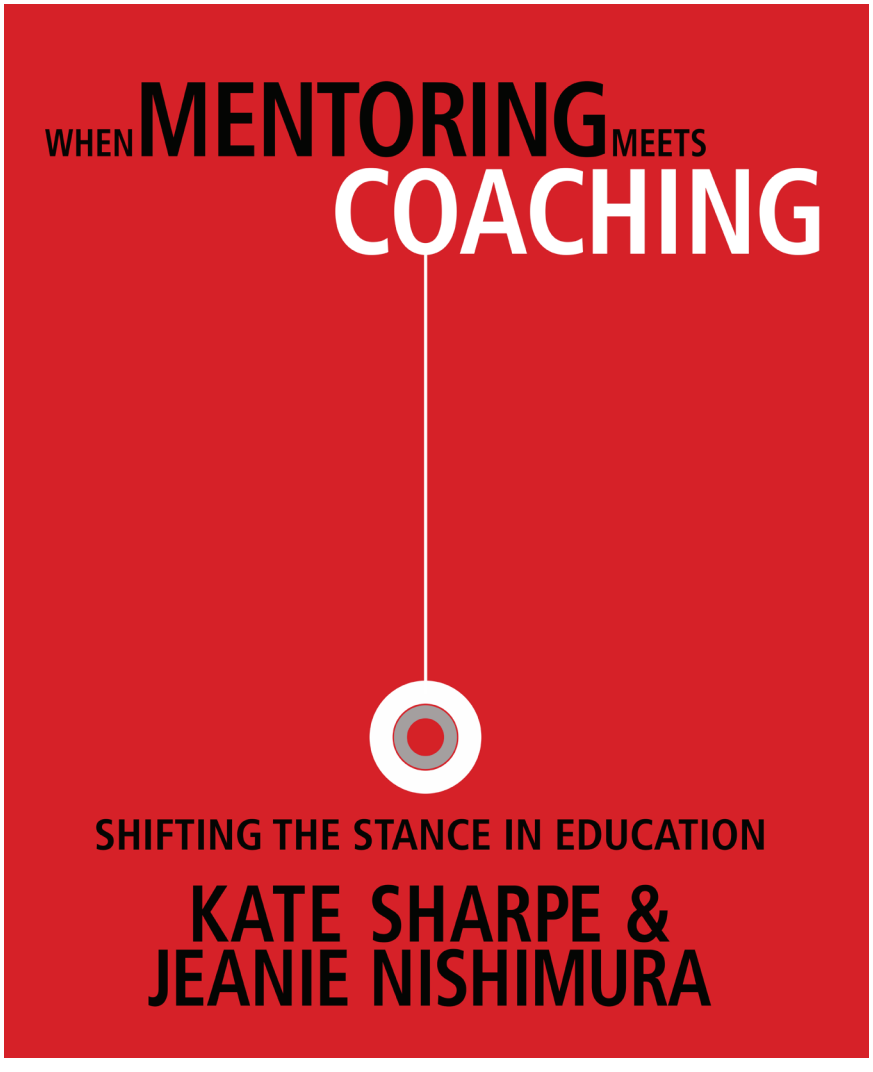

SAMPLER

This sampler includes selected excerpts from
When Mentoring Meets Coaching: Shifting the Stance in Education
by Kate Sharpe and Jeanie Nishimura.

Kate Sharpe, M.Ed., Certified Professional Coach, ACPC

Kate Sharpe is a committed educator, programming consultant, and certified professional coach. The centrality of coaching, as a set of pedagogical and leadership tools to support behavioural change, uniquely positions the reach and impact of her programming and facilitating with students, teachers, administrators, and system leaders.

Kate, together with Jeanie Nishimura, designed, created, and is co-leading a large national program, the Mentor-Coaching Institute, in partnership with Education Leadership Canada (ELC) and Pearson Canada, supporting teachers and school and system leaders in the areas of leadership, coaching, and mentoring.

Jeanie Nishimura, M.Ed., PCC, CPCC

Jeanie is an experienced educator and certified professional leadership coach who draws on her background in the arts, curriculum design, adult education, and coaching to foster learning and growth in individuals and groups.

Since 2007, Jeanie has collaborated with Kate Sharpe in offering programming that invites educators in all sectors to embrace the skills of mentor-coaching as an impactful framework for building capacity. Jeanie's commitment grows out of many years of experience as a drama teacher/consultant, a course designer and instructor for the Dramatic Arts Specialist at OISE/UT, and as a founding member of the coaching faculty at Adler Canada.

The foundation for *When Mentoring Meets Coaching: Shifting the Stance in Education* is the **Mentor-Coaching Institute** developed by Kate and Jeanie. Readers of the book may be interested in attending this powerful four-day program.

For more info go to www.mentor-coachinginstitute.com

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The *When Mentoring Meets Coaching* website (www.pearsoncanada.ca/wmmc) will include a demonstration video and a variety of tools to support

- the mentor-coach in holding the coaching frame and stance with the mentee and applying the mentor-coaching principles and skills
- the mentee's expanding awareness, possibilities, and actions
- the mentee in building capacity and mobilizing

Introduction

Excerpt from Introduction of *When Mentoring Meets Coaching*

This book has grown out of our commitment to bring coaching skills and principles to all those involved—directly and indirectly—in education at all levels from Kindergarten to Grade 12 to college and university. Through our extensive experiences in the field, we have witnessed how the stance and skills that coaching brings to education create the conditions for people to be in professional learning conversations differently, be they in offices, classrooms, or hallways. When we create space for people to increase their autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Kaufman, 2012), we see increased engagement and motivation.

It is our belief that the mentor-coaching framework is deeply relevant beyond educational settings. Any mentor, regardless of context, will be able to use the skills and principles outlined in this book to support them in their relationships and conversations to build capacity.

We believe that building capacity sits at the core of education. Building our own capacities, in supporting others as they build their capacities, is vital if we are to maximize our individual and collective potential and engage in the discourses surrounding the systems in which we work. This is what we mean when we discuss building capacity from the inside out.

Central to this book is the belief that all educators are leaders and mentor-coaches engaged in building capacity in themselves and others. We hope that all educators will find this book to be a rich, relevant resource.

We are excited to be collaborating on this book. Having worked closely to develop and facilitate impactful mentor-coaching training for all levels of education, we have been learning and growing in our understanding of the vital role that coaching skills have to play for all leaders, particularly in education, regardless of their context.

In McKinsey & Company's report "How the world's most improved school systems keep getting better," Mourshed, Chijioke, and Barber share an analysis of twenty top-performing school systems from around the world, and identify "how each has achieved significant, sustained, and widespread gains in student outcomes" (2010, p. 2). The report details the characteristics of system reform, moving along the performance continuum from poor through fair, good, great, and excellent. In the discussion surrounding a system's progression from great to excellent, which is the current reality here in Ontario, the authors describe the shift in balance that is required: from a central focus on accountability interventions to the building of collective capacity. The report suggests that this be done through professional development and training that facilitates increased collaboration, shared intentionality and responsibility laterally across the organization (that is, not the typical top-down approach).

A model to support this kind of professional learning for leaders and educators—one that accesses both individual and collective engagement—is the essence of mentor-coaching. Embedded in the model are the skills, principles, and structure needed to create an environment where participants can be a part of a mentor-coaching relationship that allows and supports the conversations, intentionality, and action required for continuous improvement and rigour.

Given the centrality of inquiry and the asking of impactful questions in the mentor-coaching process, we feel that it is only fitting to identify the five main inquiries that have directed the design of our Mentor-Coach Training for Educators Program, now called the Mentor-Coaching Institute, and, in turn, the writing of this book:

Inquiries to Support Individual and Collective Capacity Building

1. What do we need to support the professional growth of our leadership and teaching?
2. Who do we want to partner with as we structure our individual learning and growth opportunities?

continued...

3. How do we bring ourselves to relationships and conversations that foster learning and growth?
4. What skills do we need to cultivate our ability to hold the space for expanding each other's awareness within meaningful conversations?
5. How can we continue to expand and deepen our collective capacity and commitment to increased levels of student achievement and success?

As educators, our training and experience as certified professional coaches and facilitators has enhanced our skills and our commitment to sharing the coaching mindset and process in service of deep professional growth and change from the inside out. Our educational backgrounds in curriculum development, professional learning and development (from Kindergarten to Grade 12 to higher education), health and physical education (Kate), and drama in education (Jeanie) have grounded us in adult education, experiential learning, the centrality of capacity building in education and leadership, and the importance of learning and the integration of the new learning over time in order for significant growth and change to happen.

In my continuing work with teachers and students in schools, I have realized that integrating my coaching skills into my pedagogy and stance as an educator has further mobilized me as a teacher.

With capacity building as my "bottom line," and the original reason I completed the coach training, I am, as a teacher/facilitator, more agile and better able (read: more skills and competencies) to facilitate the work and conversations. Conceptually, I create a larger and more energized space for student-centred and directed learning and growth. As I work with teachers, leaders, and parents, my goal is to help them connect more fully to the idea of building capacity in students—supporting them as they access their strengths, voice, and wisdom.

From Kate

Initially, I was drawn to coaching because I saw it as an exciting methodology to support people in becoming evermore purposeful. As a drama teacher, I have always seen the art form as a rich place for students (youth and adults) to build capacity: exploring who they are becoming at the same time that they discover more about others and the human condition. For me, the power of inquiry and the rich variety of drama forms allow for heightened engagement and deep learning. What the coaching frame has added is further rigour around who I am "being." By this I mean paying evermore attention to how I am showing up as a coach-like teacher and facilitator and how I hold the space for participants to step in and step up.

From Jeanie

There is much wisdom on what leaders are to pay attention to—the essential qualities of character and intent that are needed, the critical nature of cultivating relationship, the need for effective communication, and so on. In our experience, what is lacking in the literature and in the training is the depth in mindset and skill development that is required to move from theory to practice—how do you truly support others in building their own capacity, how do you cultivate relationships, how do you become an effective communicator?

Through our professional mentor-coach training and experience, we explore the critical nature and rigour of the skills of listening deeply, asking impactful questions, acknowledging and building on gifts and strengths, and holding the focus on what matters. This book explores in depth the critical mindset, frame, and skills that build capacity in leaders to bring themselves to conversations differently and allow those conversations to foster growth and development, in themselves and in others. Having facilitated our workshops with hundreds of leaders—an ever-increasing number of whom are teachers—there is consistent recognition of how challenging it is to be fully present and listen deeply.

There has also been a visceral response to the challenge of shifting from the mindset of "fixing and solving" to the mindset of

"building capacity" by listening deeply to what matters and, through inquiry, accessing the resources and wisdom within.

Many leaders have initially expressed the belief that they are leaders because they are good at problem solving, giving advice, and sharing wisdom. Challenging them to shift the focus to the other person, supporting by inquiring rather than telling, has challenged them to dig deep in terms of the skills they bring to conversations and who they are being in each interaction. For many, the impact has been a significant recognition of their critical role as leaders in supporting others as they build their own capacities, as well as a more distributed leadership (and lighter shoulders).

As the nature of education morphs and the shape of curricula shifts in this digital age, our role as coach-like leaders in and out of the classroom requires expanded capacities and competencies. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) capture this in their statement that teachers "lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others toward improved educational practice" (p. 5).

For those leaders who are classroom- or lecture-based, the pull of old habits can be hard to relinquish. We challenge them to support their students' growth by inquiring rather than telling and working from an appreciative/growth mindset rather than a deficit/fixing mindset. In each interaction, they must adjust who they are being. The message we hear repeatedly is that the shift helped them to see the student as whole again and let go of the problem-focused "fixing" mentality. They are better equipped to get back to the task at hand—teaching and learning—by fostering capacity building.

"… harnessing the best in people, and inspiring them to live out their full potential."

—Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007, p. 2

Our Mentor-Coaching Program: Designed and Developed

For the last eight years, we have been deeply involved with a provincial initiative that involves situating the coaching mindset and skills within the mentoring framework. The result of our work has been the creation of a robust program that is supporting the professional learning and growth of leaders in education in Ontario.

We knew that creating a mentoring program with the aid and structure of coaching skills, and embedded with the coaching mindset

and principles, would bring mentors to the work and conversations with their mentees differently. The training would enhance the skills of the educators to be in the learning relationship and conversations with more attention and intention.

We also knew that the professional learning workshops had to grow out of the very real challenges facing the mentors and mentees—and that intentional practice, feedback, application, and integration beyond the training was critical in fostering learning and building capacity over time.

With these experiences and goals in mind, we set out to design a program that would integrate the coaching frame, principles, and skills into the ancient practice and tradition of mentoring. We wanted to support mentors in navigating the relationship and the conversations with their mentees and within their wider leadership mandates. As such, we knew it had to include a robust theoretical framework; in-depth coaching skills training; and abundant opportunities to practise, offer, and receive feedback, take risks to expand competency and confidence, and observe and model mentoring and coaching conversations, in real time.

We also knew that the program had to be offered as a series of sessions over time, allowing for the mentor cohorts to have ample time, opportunity, and intentionality between sessions to practise and integrate what they had learned (formally and informally) in the "real" world. From the research (discussed in detail later in the book) and our own experience, we know that implementation, practice, and support over time is critical if mentors are to truly integrate the mentor-coaching mindset and skills moving forward.

Designing and implementing the program has been very rewarding for us both. Furthermore, the process of writing this book has clarified our thinking and made us even more committed to expanding the possibilities of integrating mentor-coaching at all levels to further enhance educational leadership and teaching practices.

Excerpt from
Chapter 6 of
When Mentoring Meets Coaching

Listening Deeply: Distinguishing Between "Listening Through" and "Listening To"

When someone listens to us fully and deeply, we feel seen and heard. We feel as if the signals we send "are directly perceived, understood and responded to…in a dance of communication that involves mutual collaboration… [It] enables a vitalizing sense of connection that [is] at the heart of nurturing relationships" (Siegel & Hartzell, 2003, p. 80). This has an immediate impact on the mentor-coaching relationship, building trust and keeping the focus on the mentee's agenda and capacity building. In fact, the capacity to listen fully and deeply is the second most critical mentor-coaching skill.

Most educators have long made active listening a part of their practice. However, to further enhance listening, we have found it impactful for mentor-coaches to distinguish between

- listening through—being distracted in their listening, and
- listening to—truly listening deeply.

By simply recognizing these distinctions, participants in the mentor-coach training have consistently found that they begin to listen differently, more deeply.

"Listening Through"

"Listening through" is what we experience internally as we listen. We listen through internal responses and experiences that we are having simultaneously that have a profound impact on our capacity to be fully present and focused on what we hear.

When we listen through, we filter what we hear, listening through the distractions of our own visceral experiences, lenses, emotions, assessments, experiences, stories, opinions, notions, conclusions, and judgments.

The curious thing is that we do not talk with one another about this interference in listening even though it happens constantly. If we are aware that it is happening, we usually do not comment, either as

the one pretending to listen or as the one sensing we are not being listened to. The conversation proceeds "as if" the listening were happening. Thus, most of us have not developed much rigour around noticing interference in our listening.

By inviting ourselves to identify and notice the many ways in which internal and external factors interfere and compromise deep listening, it is possible to raise awareness and enhance our capacity to listen to the other person. By naming the interference, we are able to notice its impact on our listening and then can consciously move it out of the way, so that we are once again fully present and in the moment, "listening to."

Listening Distractions

External	Physiological needs and messages	Internal
• Other people • Dialogue • Surrounding environment, situation	• Comfort • Energy • Fatigue • Wellness	• Internal state (e.g., not present, worried, excited, anxious, agitated, bored, frustrated) • Making own meaning and connections

For complete chart, see Chapter 6 of *When Mentoring Meets Coaching.*

"Listening To"

"Listening to" is intentional, focused listening. It means that the listener is fully present, in the moment, and able to be "over there" with the other person, listening deeply, with attention and intention.

When we are "listening to," we are present, curious, open, and without judgment. We are aware of the speaker's words, energy, tone of voice, body language and gestures, emotional expression, and so on. And as we notice these elements, we stay with the speaker, listening deeply, not leaving our listening to go on any "trips" to try to interpret what we think the speaker might mean.

FROM THE FIELD

Linda Beale
Principal and Mentor-Coach Training Program Facilitator

The single most important skill is listening. In my role of principal, I had many opportunities to listen deeply to students, parents, and teachers. By listening, I was able to become a truly collaborative leader in our school and in our community.

FROM THE FIELD

Val Fox
Co-founder, Digital Media Zone (DMZ) at Ryerson University; Chief Innovation Consultant, The Pivotal Point

The art of listening deeply is so much more than a space in which to receive someone's thoughts. Deep listening provides the platform for a mentee's internal gift of creativity to show itself in the form of strategic thinking and innovative problem solving.

With this, the mentee will experience the ability to develop his/her own deep listening skills, and with those skills, the bonus of learning and doing through curiosity, generosity, courage, and collaboration—the capacity-building traits of modern day entrepreneurship and innovation.

Mentor-Coaching in Action

Creating the Conditions to "Listen To"

Use the following strategies to help you arrange the space, time, and place for "listening to."

- Make concrete changes in your office and meeting spaces—such as moving away from the computer, rearranging the furniture, putting up blinds, and closing the door—to create a more conducive environment for "listening to" and reducing interference.
- Practise being mindful and direct about negotiating the appropriate time and place for an in-depth conversation that requires deep listening, focus, and space.

Excerpt from
Chapter 7 of
When Mentoring Meets Coaching

Asking Impactful Questions: So What Are the "Best" Questions to Ask?

To assess the value of questions we ask, we need to focus on the impact of the questions on the mentee's awareness, choices, and action. We can do this by watching the mentee's body language and energy levels and, of course, by listening to what the mentee says.

Value of Question = Impact on Mentee's Awareness, Choices, and Action

Catalysis—

1) the causing or accelerating of a chemical change by the addition of a substance, which is not permanently affected by the reaction;

2) an action between two or more persons or forces, initiated by an agent that itself remains unaffected by the action

(Random House dictionary of the English language, 1966)

In the article "The Art of Powerful Questions," Vogt, Brown, and Isaacs (2003) position the impact of questions as "catalyzing insight, innovation, and action" (p. 1). For us, this is a helpful way to look at the key role, value, and skill of asking questions in the coaching process. Vogt, Brown, and Isaacs. believe that questions are used to accelerate the generation of insights, innovation, and action without altering the nature of the "reaction" occurring within the client.

The traditional mentor role is often about knowing, telling, answering, fixing, solving and, thus, effectively factoring "self" into the substance that undergoes "chemical reaction." Our approach is to become the "catalyst" through a very different means: listening, inquiring, reflecting, expanding, and navigating the relationship and conversations with questions. By resisting the tug to take on, fix, and solve, mentor-coaches serve as the catalyst for change and growth instead. This is a mindset and skill that grows with attention, intention, and practice.

Our Guide to "Best" Questions

The "best" questions to ask are…

Simple, Clean, and Clear

Simply constructed, unencumbered questions are easy to understand, and grow directly out of the content, intent, and meaning of what the mentee has just said.

Examples:

- What stands out?
- How can you keep this simple?

Results Oriented

Goal-, vision-, or results-oriented questions dial up the crispness or power of the mentee's connection with what they want. Forward-moving questions support the mentee, as they step further into choice, action, and accountability.

Examples:

- What will success look like for you?
- How will you know you are making a difference?

continued…

Poignant and On Target

Poignant or relevant questions grow out of "listening to" the mentee and speak to the immediacy of expressed concerns. Such questions "touch people with new possibilities and choices and lead to new skills and capabilities" (Hargrove, 2007, p. 255). Keeping the focus on the mentee rather than on the problem also increases the poignancy and traction of the question.

Examples:

- What will this require of you?
- Where is the opportunity in this for you?

Creating Space and Perspective

Effective questions create space. They invite the mentee to examine their own thinking, step back, and access a broader perspective by going up to the 10,000-metre level for a higher perspective, or by reaching forward and imagining success. Such questions can help to reposition the mentee within their frame of reference and provide an opportunity to "look at" what they had previously only been able to "look through" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009, p. 53).

Examples:

- Stepping back, what do you notice?
- How else can you look at this?

For complete chart, see Chapter 7 of *When Mentoring Meets Coaching.*

Types of Questions to Avoid

Questions that grow out of our judgment, interpretation, or agenda for the mentee

Examples:

1. This sounds challenging… Is this staff member competent?
2. What if we started with your leadership goals? I think you need to pay attention to them.

Questions that are in service of our curiosity rather than the mentee's agenda

Examples:

1. How have you found that new social worker in your school?
2. What on earth were the students thinking?
3. How exactly did you make that happen?

For complete chart, see Chapter 7 of *When Mentoring Meets Coaching.*

When Mentoring Meets Coaching: Shifting the Stance in Education

To Order the Book

Contact Pearson Canada Customer Service by phone at 1-800-361-6128, by fax at 1-800-563-9196, or online at www.pearsoncanada.ca/wmmc

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About the Mentor-Coaching Institute

The foundation for *When Mentoring Meets Coaching: Shifting the Stance in Education* is the **Mentor-Coaching Institute** developed by Kate Sharpe and Jeanie Nishimura. Readers of the book may be interested in attending this powerful four-day program. This unique program brings mentoring and coaching together as powerful allies to support a robust process for leading and learning in relationships. Participants acquire and practise the skills inherent in mentoring and coaching relationships, putting their learning into action, and developing a mentor-coaching mindset. Since its inception in 2007, this initiative has provided participants—administrators, supervisory officers, teachers, directors of education, board employees—with an enhanced skill set that supports capacity building in a variety of educational contexts.

For more information go to www.mentor-coachinginstitute.com

"The training, mentoring, and facilitating have all been an incredible professional growth experience—the most powerful that I have experienced in my 34-plus year career!"