



Skill Builder – Week 13 - 15

Adding Some Level 3.5 Skills

You have worked hard on your clarity questions, the contrast analysis between present state and desired state, and you are dancing with the WFO questions, testing questions, exploration questions, and clarity questions. Now it's time to add some level 3.5 skills!

Since it takes some practice to get familiar with each of the skills, and to integrate them into your coaching, we are going to start with a few of them and then add others in the next skill builder.

In this skill builder, we focus on 3 of the higher-level skills:

1. Detecting Patterns
2. Inferential Listening
3. Detecting Frames Presented



Detecting Patterns

In detecting patterns, we are listening for habits: ways of interpreting and filtering (meta-programs or cognitive distortions) or ways of doing that are characteristic and repeated. It may be something that plays across contexts, and it's a way of going to a meta-level with your client.

Listening for patterns has to do with being able to listen for language patterns through the use of meta-programs, cognitive distortions, as well as (for example) to what we understand through the processes in the APG. Is someone confusing human being with human doing? And might that be the “structure” behind their problem? So we listen for those kinds of patterns.

In order to detect patterns, we need to listen for procedures, structures, and at the same time have a focus on matching. As you'll notice, when we are listening for detecting frames, we want to be mismatching. That's what it is so critical to be able to do both at the same time, or alternate between the two.

Here you match with what you already know and understand about psychological structures (meta-programs and cognitive distortions). Of course, we want to listen for patterns that are related to the outcome!

Detecting patterns also requires a stepping back from the content. This is all about structure, not about content.



Inferential Listening

What is implied here?

Someone saying “But that’s not true.”, implies that something else IS true. So that’s the question to hold in the back of your mind (once you have enough information through clarity questions and you know the outcome!), **“What is implied here?”**.

If someone says that they want to become a great leader, then what’s implied is that they want to lead something or someone to somewhere. That’s what is implied. So you can ask questions around that. This also gives more information about what it is that they want!

Detecting Frames Presented

Detecting frames allows you to move up to the higher levels (META!) of what is going on for someone. The higher frames that hold something in place. In order to listen for frames presented, we need to listen for meta-comments and for beliefs that are said as a truth. That last part makes it more difficult to hear them, because they are said with a “matter-of-factness”. So we need to be critical thinking, sceptical (over trusting), and mis-matching.

When you have the present state and the desired state, I always listen for “What’s holding the present state in place?” and “What might be a contradiction to the desired state?”.

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As I listen for that, I feed it back and test it out with my client. “Did you hear what you just said? Is that your belief?” And then I can ask how it relates to the outcome my client wants to achieve. I can also quality control it, and check how that belief or frame is working for them.

That’s also when you can ask a testing question: “Is that what we need to be working on today?” and the WFO question: “Knowing this, what do you want to get out of this session?”



Skill Builder

1. Do you have the ability to step back and see the structure?
When was a time where you did that? Pick something small and simple, go back there and notice what you are thinking, how you are thinking, what you are seeing, etc.
2. Where are you on the scale of matching – mis-matching? How much flexibility do you have? If you don't have flexibility, go through the expanding meta-programs pattern in the Coaching Mastery manual.
3. For each of the next 3 weeks, pick one of the skills to practice with in conversations, coaching sessions, and when you are listening to tv or radio. What can you infer from what someone says? What patterns can you detect in terms of patterns and frames? When you find examples, please share abundantly on the Facebook, so you can together learn and integrate each of these skills!