

**PLANNING, IMPLEMENTING AND EVALUATING A TRAINING
PROGRAMME OF INTRA- AND INTERPERSONAL KNOWLEDGE AND
SKILLS FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE COACHES**

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Master's thesis

Sport and Exercise Psychology

Autumn 2020

Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences

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Abstract

Huovinen, Heikki 2020. Planning, implementing and evaluating a training programme of intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills for high performance coaches. Master's thesis in Sport and Exercise Psychology, Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences, University of Jyväskylä. 144 p. (13 appendixes).

Emotional intelligence has been highly endorsed by coaches and coach developers as a prerequisite for successful coaching. Nevertheless, the training of intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills (IIKS) which are related with emotional intelligence have not been well researched among high performance coaches (HPC). The aim of this study was to plan, implement, and evaluate a coach training programme which focused on developing high performance coaches' intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills. This is a feasibility and acceptability study, and it was designed as an educational action research case study with mixed methods. Specifically, the present research aimed at assessing and rank-ordering methods that have the potential to improve the IIKS's in HPC's.

The training programme used social emotional learning as a framework for the training, addressing areas such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making. The workshops dealt with specific interaction skills such as I-messages, active listening and problem solving skills, all of which are derived from Gordon's theory of interaction. The self-awareness element in the SEL framework was complemented with McAdams' three-layered approach to personality psychology (i.e. traits, strivings, narratives). The main specific data collection methods used and assessed in the programme included life story interview, peer reflections, composing personal coaching practice framework, social emotional learning group workshops, home work with written reflections and trait emotional intelligence questionnaire. Acceptability and participant perceptions were assessed during and after the training programme. Researcher's log was kept in all phases of the programme and this information was triangulated with the participant perceptions. Participants (n=8) were high performance coaches, coaching elite performers such as elite athletes and corporate c-level executives, consultants and entrepreneurs. The average high performance coaching experience of the participants was 9 years.

The main finding in this study was that high performance coaches perceived the training of intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills as beneficial for their coaching practice. The acceptability of the programme was high as indicated by positive perceptions of the workshops and most of the methods that were used. However, the individuals had different learning needs and preferences as indicated by high variance in perceptions of most beneficial methods in the programme. On average, the most preferred methods were listening skills training, the life story interview (LSI) and peer reflections. Many of the participants struggled with confrontative I-messages. Thus, exploring and training the articulation of one's feelings in conflict situation may be useful and needed for HPC's. However this notion needs further empirical support. The findings can serve to further narrow what is most relevant and efficient way to implement a high performance coach training programmes to advance the IIKS's in this population.

Keywords: Personality, narrative identity, emotional intelligence, social emotional learning, active listening, high performance coaches, self-awareness, reflection

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1 INTRODUCTION

The complex and dynamic world of high performance sport requires vast amounts of competencies from the coach, ranging from technical and tactical expertise to “people skills”. High performance coach is a central actor in the development of the athlete and in the coach-athlete-performance relationship, thus they may be seen as performers at their own right (Mallet & Lara-Bercial 2016). The high performance coach (HPC) is a term that has been used in literature as a synonym for a coach who is central in managing the performance of elite athletes (Mallet & Coulter 2016; Lara-Bercial & Mallet 2016; Mallet & Lara-Bercial 2016; Chan & Mallet 2011). These performers are normally judged by the media and sport followers by their win/loss record. However important the records are, and useful in assessing success, there may also be something more that contribute to their success or failure. In her research article “It’s Not What They Do, it’s How They Do It: Athlete Experience of Great Coaching”, Becker (2009) stated that athletes perceived great coaches to be positive, supportive, fair and consistent, and that they are equally focused on developing athletes and human beings. Also, Din and colleagues (2015) found out that elite coaches coaching philosophy starts from putting humans first and athletes second. Finally, the main motto of one of the most successful teams in elite sports, the All Blacks of New Zealand (in Rugby), was “Better People make Better All Blacks” (Hodge et al. 2014), reinforcing the idea of coaching the athlete as a whole person, and not just an athlete. What is it that help coaches become great in coaching the whole person?

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been broadly studied in corporate leadership setting and there’s plenty of evidence to show that EI is the prerequisite for effective leadership (e.g. George, 2000). The HPC’s have not been studied that much in this context, however EI has been pointed out as one of the main abilities also for this population if they are to be successful (Lara-Bercial & Mallett, 2016; Chan & Mallett, 2011). The importance of emotional intelligence in sports has received a great deal of attention recently amongst HPC’s and also popular media. The coach of Philadelphia Eagles, Doug Pederson, lead the underdogs to victory in the 2018 Superbowl, and highly endorsed emotional intelligence (e.g. self-awareness, empathy) in his coaching practice (Dudley 2018). In fact, majority of the EI subscales have been shown to correlate significantly with overall coaching efficacy (Thelwell et al., 2008). Furthermore, 17 serial winning HPC’s

consistently demonstrated high self-awareness and highlighted the importance of high emotional intelligence to be able to adapt their behaviour to each individual, rather than using one size fits all approach (Lara-Bercial & Mallett, 2016). Emotional intelligence has been conceptualized in a two main ways – ability and trait. The ability model of emotional intelligence by Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (e.g. Mayer et al. 2003; MSCEIT) assesses performance measures of EI, and it has been a widespread way of conceptualizing and assessing emotional intelligence. However, this model seems not to be suitable for individuals with high EI as the items appear too easy to challenge these people, rather it could be more suitable to discriminate people in the low end of EI (Fiori et al. 2014). Most of the high performance coaches seem to possess high emotional intelligence (e.g. Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016), thus this model may not be the best for this population. Another main approach to EI is the trait approach, which seeks to capture EI through self-report measures (also sometimes including external reports of the person). The trait emotional intelligence (TEIQue) has showed highest predictive validity among the self-report models of EI (Petrides, 2009). Nowadays, researchers have sought to combine the ability and trait perspectives of EI, and this has produced the tripartite model of EI; knowledge, ability and trait (E.g. Mikolajczak, 2009). Knowledge refers to the degree which people know about emotions and managing emotional situations. Ability level encompasses the capacity of the person to use his/her emotional knowledge and emotion regulation strategies during an emotional situation. Finally, the trait level refers to dispositions that the individual has in emotion-related situations, and how they seem to behave on average. In sum, knowledge level of EI deals with what people know about emotions and emotion regulation, ability level with what people can do, and the trait level with what people actually mostly do. Similarly to the tripartite model, the present research aims to use a more broad term to describe emotional intelligence rather than just narrowing it to knowledge, ability or trait level. Therefore, the present research uses the term intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills (IIKS) to describe all the levels of emotional intelligence. The knowledge and ability levels of emotional intelligence are trained in the present research programme and the trait level is been reflected by the coaches through specific tools.

Self-determination theory (SDT) by Ryan and Deci (2000) may offer some insight in terms of why emotional intelligence may be important for the HPC's. According to the SDT, all humans strive to meet their universal needs of autonomy, competence and

relatedness in their pursuit towards a meaningful life. When these three needs are fulfilled, one will be self-determined and motivated towards that particular activity in that particular context (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The fundamental nature of fulfilling these three innate needs echoes in what the athletes say they need from their coaches; trust, respect, communication, commitment, support for autonomy and empowerment (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003); all essential elements supporting the importance of high EI for the HPC's. In other words, the emotionally intelligent coach may be better able to adhere to athlete-centered, autonomy-supportive coaching, which has been shown to yield fruitful outcomes in terms of sustainable motivation and commitment towards athletic preparation (Amorose et al. 2016; Mageu & Vallerand 2003).

Emotional intelligence may be improved through training in athletes (e.g. Campo et al., 2016; Crombie et al., 2011) and in coaches as well (Chan & Mallett 2010), however there seems to be a gap in the literature about what type of training would be most effective and how the training could actually be implemented (e.g. Boyatziz et al. 2013). In fact, Chan and Mallett (2011) proposed that some of the key questions about emotional intelligence in high performance coaches is that how the learning and development process in this area might work, as well as how might coach education/accreditation embrace the development of soft skills such as EI. Mallett (2010) evaluated a coach enhancement programme that focused on self- and social awareness and found out that training these competencies can advance self-awareness of strengths and development areas. In addition, many of these coaches reported increased openness to feedback as well as understanding of empathy and engaging in empathic behaviours. However, to the knowledge of the author of the present study, there has not been other studies addressing the development of these intra- and interpersonal competencies in high performance coaches. Thus, it seems to be unclear what is the type of deliberate practice that high performance coaches should engage in in order to improve their emotional intelligence. In fact, whilst deliberate practice to become professional in different sports has been quite well established, the deliberate practice to excel as high performance coach has not yet been well covered (Erickson et al. 2007).

Social emotional learning (SEL) has been used widely in teacher development, and it might provide useful framework for developing intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills in high performance coaches (see CASEL: <https://casel.org>). SEL is a broad

umbrella for developing intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills, drawing methods and principles from humanistic psychology such as the work of Thomas Gordon (Gordon 2018), Carl Rogers and their likes. Also, SEL is based on well-established theories on human interaction and motivation, such as the self-determination theory. Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making are the elements that are being addressed in a SEL-intervention, which may be relevant for the HPC's when considering different interactions with athletes (Lintunen & Gould 2014).

The research by Lara-Bercial & Mallett (2016) highlighted the day-to-day practices of 17 serial winning coaches and found 4 major themes that each of these coaches focused on in their successful practice: Philosophy, Vision, People and Environment. These coaches felt that they had a strong sense of purpose and direction due to having their practices rooted in a very clear philosophical framework (goals, values and beliefs). Furthermore, these notions by the coaches were also highlighted and appreciated by their athletes, which suggests that these coaches had high self-awareness (Lara-Bercial & Mallett, 2016). Hopkins (2011) suggested self-awareness to be the cornerstone building block for EI, and that self-aware leaders understand their values. In the absence of a very clear personal coaching philosophy and values, the HPC might not be optimally equipped to meet the needs of the demanding world of high performance sport even though he might have good knowledge of the different tools related to technical and also EI side of coaching. In order for a clear coaching philosophy to be constructed to serve as a cornerstone for the coaching practices, it seems logical that the coach needs to study who (s)he is. The coaches' personality, it seems, becomes a crucial area of self-awareness, as it may act as mediator and a tool in the coach-athlete relationship, which will impact on the outcomes of the coaching process. In fact, Mageau and Vallerand (2003) presented a motivational model of the coach-athlete relationship, where the coach's personal orientation and perceptions of the athletes' behavior and motivation was connected on the autonomy supportive behaviors of the coach. The coaching process may be steered to an adverse direction if the HPC lacks self-awareness of these personal orientations and dispositions. Thus, the HPC may need to actively explore their personal beliefs that underpin the coaches' perceptions of his/her athletes and the contexts they operate in. These beliefs, in turn, may be quite integral parts of the personality of the HPC.

Dan McAdams (1995, 2013) has proposed a three-layered “whole person perspective” approach to understanding people, which could serve as a useful framework in investigating the coaches’ personality and dispositions. He argued that to know a person one needs to draw information from three different layers; dispositional traits (social actor), goals and strivings (motivated agent), and narrative identity (autobiographical author), (McAdams 2013). Each of these three layers correspond to three developmental phases of psychological selfhood, emerging in different points in life and developing over the course of life (McAdams 2013). This approach has been suggested by Coulter and colleagues (2016) as a useful means to understand people in the domain of sport and exercise, potentially benefitting intervention planning and client formulations for cultivating self-enhancement, performance and enjoyment. Furthermore, the whole person approach has also been used in describing who and what are serial winning high performance coaches (Lara-Bercial & Mallett, 2016, Mallet & Coulter 2016).

One could argue that studying oneself through the three layers might allow better self-understanding, leading to more clear vision, values and direction for life and coaching. Specifically studying the past life episodes, the narratives, and constructing meanings out of them might be a worthwhile endeavor for the HPC. Indeed, Szpunar (2010) has suggested that the ability to simulate future scenes is linked to the ability to recollect episodes from the autobiographical past. In other words, the coach who is familiar with ones’ narrative identity, may find it easier to set forth a clear future vision and mission to guide his/her own work and the preparation of his/her athletes. There is evidence that purposeful reflection in youth is connected with attaining a senior international status later, whereas less reflective athletes attained lower level of competition in adulthood (Jonker et al. 2012). Lara-Bercial and Mallet (2016) found the same high-reflexive qualities among the serial winning coaches, indicating that reflecting on past experience and learning from them may be a key to attain high level in expertise. Athletes need to counteract automaticity and remain cognitively engaged to improve their practice and one might argue this holds true for the coaches as well, who are performers at their own right. Ericsson’s theory of deliberate practice (1993) states that athletes (and other experts) must perform purposeful, continuous and effortful practice sessions for many years in order to reach mastery:

“When most people practice, they focus on things they can do effortlessly. Expert practice is different. It entails considerable, specific, and sustained efforts to do something you can’t do well – or even at all” (Ericsson et al. 1993).

The mastery in the “how” of coaching may be much related to knowing who and what the coach is him/herself. Combining personality psychology to training of high performance coaches has not been conducted before, also the research on emotional intelligence in high performance coaches is generally in its infancy. The present study aimed to plan, implement, and evaluate a coach training programme, which focuses on developing the high performance coaches intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills. Specifically, the present research aimed to assess and rank-order a variety of tools and methods that have the potential to improve the intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills in high performance coaches. This is a feasibility and acceptability study, using educational action research case study design.

2 QUALITIES OF HIGH PERFORMANCE COACHES

In sports, the athlete is generally considered as the high performer. However, high performance coach is also suggested to be considered as a performer him- or herself, as the coach is a central actor in the coach-athlete-performance relationship (Mallet & Lara-Bercial 2016). The term “high performance coach” has been defined by Ericsson et al. (2007) as “someone coaching highly skilled athletes in a sport environment that focuses primarily on performance, as opposed to fun or athlete development”, and the term has been used quite broadly in the coaching literature (Mallet & Coulter 2016; Lara-Bercial & Mallet 2016; Mallet & Lara-Bercial 2016; Chan & Mallet 2011). Majority of the present high performance coaches seem to focus on the idea of “humans first, athletes second”, which appear to be somewhat in conflict with the above definition (Lara-Bercial & Mallet 2016, Din et al. 2015). The present research expands the definition of high performance coach to a coach that coaches high performers, including elite athletes and corporate high performers such as C-level executives, consultants, politicians and entrepreneurs, focusing on holistic development of the individual, as opposed to just raw performance. This definition is based on Hints Performance Coaches ethical code, which states that: “Coaching is partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to optimize their personal and professional potential”.

2.1 Personalities

McAdams (2013, 1995) argues in his integrated personality framework that to know a person we must explore three different layers; Social actor (dispositional traits), motivated agent (goals and values,) and autobiographical author (unfolding identities and self-stories). See the three different layers of personality developing over the course of time as described by McAdams (2013) in figure 1 below.

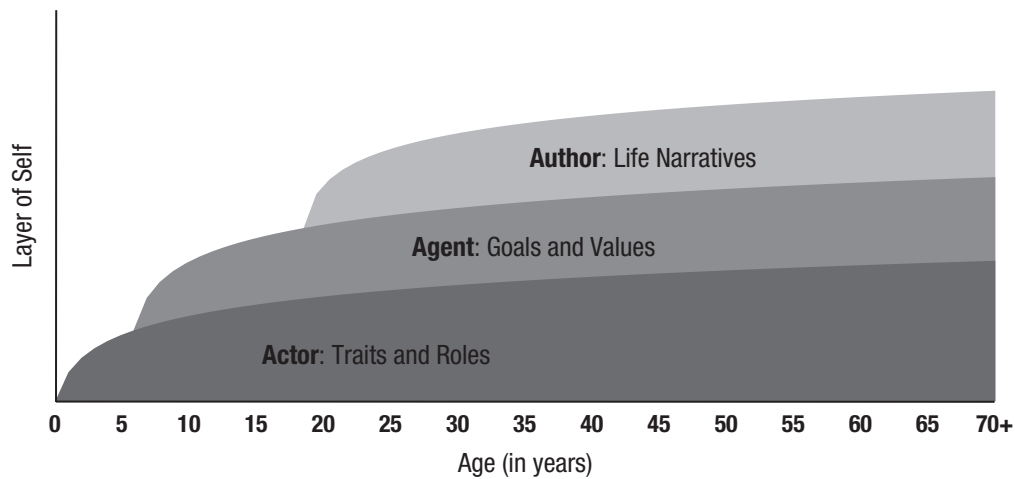


Figure 1. The three layers of self (McAdams 2013).

Analyzing the person as a social actor through traits may tell us the average behavioral patterns of people, which gives us one vantage point to the person (McAdams 1995). However, people do not always act in accordance with their dispositional traits but adjust their actions to match the social role that the situation demands (McAdams 2013). For example, an introvert might act rather extrovertedly in a party or other social event, as the individual has learned to act in that way to advance his/her social life. To understand the person on a deeper level one needs to also consider the agency of the person, such as his goals and values. Finally, investigating the person as autobiographical author helps to understand the meanings that the person assigns to his/her life. The author seeks to formulate a meaningful story of his life, integrating the past and imagining the future in a coherent way to explain for self and others why the person wants what he wants, who the self was, is and will be as a developing person over time (McAdams & Cox 2010). See table 1 below for description of the serial winning coaches, that will be the main population that is being investigated in the following chapters (Mallett & Lara-Bercial 2016).

Table 1. Serial winning coaches' background information. (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016).

Number of Coaches	17 (2 female) including 1 Paralympic coach
Sports	Field Hockey (2), Ice Hockey (2), Basketball (2), Speed Skating (2), Sailing, Windsurfing, Rowing (4), Swimming, Judo, and Athletics
Countries	Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, Serbia, UK
Gender Coached	Male (4); Female (1); Male and Female (12)
Number of Combined Gold Medals/Major Championships/Professional League Titles	160 (at time of publication)
Age	44–75 years (M = 55.7 years)
Coaching	8–45 years (M = 29.2 years; HP M = 25.2 years)
Experience as Athlete	International (10), National/Regional (6)None (1)

2.1.1 The High Performance Coach as a Social Actor

Traits are built on a genetically influenced foundation from birth, which form a progressively more consistent set of typical behavioral signatures as the person develops (McAdams 2013, McAdams & Olsen 2010). Big Five (i.e. neuroticism, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion) is one of the most popular trait theories, which seems to capture the structure of self-attributed dispositional characteristics in several different cultures (Heine & Buchtel 2009). The traits provide a broad and generally stable assessment of how a person behaves on average, however they are decontextualized and are not accurate in predicting behavior in specific roles, such as coaching (McAdams 2013). Fourteen serial winning coaches (SWC; 128 medals overall) were assessed in terms of their Big Five traits, and the overall result indicated they were high on conscientiousness and extraversion, and low on neuroticism (Mallett & Lara-Bercial 2016). This type of a trait profile indicates the SWC's are clear optimists (well-being), goal-oriented & directed (impulse control), and "go-getters" (active). These characteristics build a picture of a group of people who take the challenges in life and sport calmly and with a positive solution-orientation focused on the future, who have a clear vision what needs to be done, and who are willing to work hard to reach their targets.

The traits do not disclose, however, which values, motives and goals underpin their action, and may not produce a holistic understanding of the person. Therefore, the second layer of personality, Motivated Agent, will be discussed next.

2.1.2 The High Performance Coach as a Motivated Agent

It is a common belief that children become clearly more intentional, rational and goal-oriented between the ages of 5-7, which is the time that the Motivated Agent starts to step more to the stage of life (McAdams 2013). The impact of social environment is more pronounced at this layer of personality compared to the social actor's traits which have a strong biological foundation (McAdams 2015). The persons' agency as well as societal constraints will define the set of values and goals that the individual will eventually commit to (McAdams 2013). The serial winning coaches were assessed as Motivated Agents through a personal strivings measure, developed by Emmons (1989). This measure aims to capture what is the content and motivational themes of their strivings, in other words what do they want in life and how it is expressed in their coaching practice. In contrast to the traits, the emphasis on assessing personal strivings is on *what the people are trying to do* rather than *what they are like*. It has been suggested that the influence of traits on goals is modest, whereas the social and cultural forces impose a much stronger effect on the motivated agent and his goals (McAdams 2015). The results of the strivings measure showed the SWC's were agentic and approach-oriented. Their agency, contrasted to communion, was driving their behavior (Mallett & Lara-Bercial 2016). Two-thirds of the SWC's strivings reflected a strong agency (e.g. self-improvement, learning), however the SWC's also showed commitment to the service of others for a distinct purpose (e.g. do good, be fair). Furthermore, the SWC's were approach oriented (e.g. have fun, complete tasks & meet deadlines) rather than avoidance-oriented (e.g. not to lose control). This reinforces the SWC's optimistic nature who sought opportunities and were solution and future oriented (Mallett & Lara-Bercial 2016).

The SWC's dominant motivational themes were learning and personal growth, achievement and power. The learning and personal growth was considered important for both the coach and the athlete, and many of the strivings revolved around self-improvement, indicating a high degree of motivation in becoming better coaches and people (e.g. learn from support staff, discover something new). Similarly, a strong sense of purpose was reflected in their commitment to serve others, in other words being people and athlete-centered (e.g. support my kids and athletes, demand but be supportive).

Achievement (e.g. perform my potential) was a key motivational theme, as the SWC's valued their work as highly important and the sense of accomplishment was a big driving force. The SWC's portrayed a strong task-focus with a clarity of purpose (e.g. clear daily goals). Finally, power emerged as the third motivational theme, specifically the power to positively influence others (e.g. teach something to my children every day). The motive for power was rooted in the holistic development of athletes (e.g. build athletes' confidence daily). The SWC's appreciated the need for taking also care of personal wellbeing (e.g. look after own health) in order to use their power to create the best environment for their athletes to thrive in (e.g. be positive within positive surroundings).

Taken together on average, the SWC's seemed to be driven by personal growth and development of others, being highly successful and challenge themselves, as well as leading others in order to impact them positively (Mallet & Lara-Bercial 2016). However, there remains some questions to be answered with regards to understanding who the SWC's are. What are the meanings that these SWC's assign to their lived experience and imagined future? Why they are so driven towards success, what does it really mean to them? Why do they coach in the first place? What does it mean for these coaches to be a coach? The narrative identities of high performance coaches, which seek to answer the above questions, will be reviewed next.

2.1.3 The High Performance Coach as an Autobiographical Author

The final layer of personality aims to investigate the narratives which people construct to define what their lives mean. The traits and strivings may fall short in fully understanding the whole person, whereas examining the internalized narrative integrating the past, present, and future may lead to a more deeper understanding, informing us how the person shapes his/her sense of identity (Coulter et al. 2016). Autobiographical memory emerges in early childhood, but it is the time of late teens and the early 20's that people start to become autobiographical authors, who are able to find meaning, cohesion and purpose from their life events, which define who they are (McAdams 2013). In other words, how the person came to be who he is and where he may be headed (McAdams 2013). The important aspect of studying narrative identities is widely endorsed in personality

psychology, as personal memories and structural characteristics of life stories play a significant role in psychological health and personal growth (Singer et al. 2013; McAdams 2013). However, the study of narrative identities has only recently begun attracting attention among sport psychology researchers (Douglas & Carless 2015 in Coulter et al. 2016).

The culture where the person is situated in, has a big impact on the personality of an individual, not so much concerning traits, but particularly the goals and values as well as on the meanings in the personal narratives (Wiggins 2003). McAdams (2013) summarized that culture sets norms and constraints for the behavioral expression of the roles and dispositions of the social actor and provides scripts, timetables and priorities for the motivated agents goals and values. For instance, an extravert is an extravert across cultures, but the *expression* of this trait will differ between for example among average Japanese middle-aged men compared to similar aged men in the US (McAdams 2013). Finally, the culture where the individual is situated in provides the discourse and language where the autobiographical author chooses the metaphors and narratives that are used in construction of the narrative identity. The stories people tell about themselves usually parallel the big cultural stories – such as “the redemptive stories” that are common among highly generative American adults, where the storyteller typically 1) enjoys a special blessing or benefit early in life, 2) expresses sensitivity to the suffering of others as a child, 3) establishes solid and strong value set in youth which serves as powerful conviction through the adult years, 4) overcomes adversity over and over again, 5) seeks to integrate experiences of power and love, and 6) aims to achieve goals in the future which benefit society (McAdams 2006). Arguably the American culture is penetrating much of what we believe in in the western world, as the popular culture, but also the coaching culture is nowadays very “Americanized”.

Serial winning coaches’ and their athletes’ narratives were examined in the study by Mallet & Lara-Bercial (2016). One of the broad questions in the semi-structured interviews was: “What are serial winning coaches like (traits, values and beliefs)”. There were high consistencies in how the coaches’ described themselves compared to the athletes’ descriptions of them, in all the different personality layers (Actor, Agent, Author). The consistent themes that emerged from these descriptions considering traits were strong work ethic, confidence, social competence and positive approach to problem

solving. Regarding values and beliefs, the coaches thought coaching should be athlete-centered and holistic, the coach has to have high moral standards and sustained success requires adequate work-life balance. The athletes described their coaches acted on these values. When asked about key skills of the coach to be able to succeed, the coaches and athletes agreed about effective communication, planning, managing and relationship building (Mallett & Lara-Bercial 2016).

There were no two career pathways that were the same amongst the SWC, however there seemed to be a number of recurrent themes that may serve as a useful reference for the development of the next generation of high performance coaches (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). The role played by the parents, extended family and significant others in shaping the character and approach to life and coaching were emphasized in the SWC narratives. Upbringing in rural area impacted on some of the SWC's work ethic and desire for success, whereas some others claimed "the teaching and helping gene is in my blood", referring to parents doing a job in the business of teaching and/or helping others. In fact, the majority of the SWC's had felt a desire to coach from an early age.

When comparing to other coaches, the serial winning coaches themselves perceived that their work ethic, knowledge & skills and credibility were differentiating factors, whereas their athletes tended to highlight their inter- and intrapersonal skills, such as empathy, self-awareness, persuasiveness and open-mindedness (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). These coaches had the ability to be empathetic and acknowledge feelings and concerns beyond sport. The SWC's seem to be good in persuading people in a consensus-seeking dialogue, which supports athletes speaking out and having creativity and initiative. Other, less-successful coaches seemed to be more directive, "telling the athletes what to do". Nevertheless, some of the SWC operated under a more authoritative method, however they tended to be open-minded, flexible and adaptable. The coaches' good awareness of the actions and their impact as well as awareness of motives and feelings of them and others, were recurrent themes in many of the athlete interviews. (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Furthermore, the SWC's seemed to have a high level of self-awareness as their perceptions of themselves had high agreement with the perceptions of their athletes. (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016).

Ten of the SWC's had been international and/or professional athletes themselves, six had competed on national/regional level, and only one SWC had no personal experience in competitive sports. Of the 10 former international level athletes 5 had won medals at large-scale events, but only 2 of them had won gold (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). All of the SWC with athletic experience thought that the fact that they had not won played a significant role in fueling their passion and desire to make it as a coach (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016), indicating a redemptive life story typical in the western world (McAdams 2013). For some the lack of winning was attributed to insufficient talent, whereas some felt they were let down by the system and experienced injustice in their own pursue towards athletic success, which fed their hunger to do all in the power of the SWC to support their athletes to fulfil their ambitions. This unfulfilled ambition and potential coupled with a strong sense of direction and purpose seemed to lay a strong foundation for passion and drivenness towards high performance coaching (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Another common theme amongst the narratives of the SWC's was opportunity and risk-taking. Car-accidents (3 coaches), unexpected risky job offers (6 coaches), being at the right spot at the right time (5 coaches) had significant impact on the careers and lives of the coaches. The SWC emphasized that they were ready and willing to take risks when an opportunity arose, whilst still accepting the role of chance and good luck.

Finally, the SWC's seemed to be balancing between a grounded self-belief in their own ability and a "healthy" dose of self-doubt about whether they could win again. Lara-Bercial and Mallet (2016) defined this as "serial insecurity", which allowed the SWC's not to become complacent and to keep up trying to win over and over again with their athletes. The past success did not matter to the SWC, as they "wanted to be great this year, not last year" (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016).

To sum up, Lara-Bercial & Mallett (2016) stated that the SWC's seemed to have a dual mission, as they were relentlessly pursuing to enhance human development, both their own and that of their athletes, as well as everyone impacting the athletes' performance. High performance coaches, such as these SWC's, are central actors in the development of the athlete in the coach-athlete performance relationship, thus they may be seen as performers at their own right (Mallet & Lara-Bercial 2016). This results to the dual mission, as their own performance development is also central to their athletes' development. Driven Benevolence was a term conceived by Lara-Bercial & Mallett

(2016) to describe how the SWC's approached this dual mission. Driven Benevolence is defined as:

“The purposeful and determined pursuit of excellence based on an enduring and balanced desire to considerately support oneself and others” (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016).

Drivenness relates to the single-minded and purposeful pursuit of excellence, as well as to a sense of purpose and duty towards high performance coaching, as expressed by the SWC. Benevolence describes the central desire to do good to others in the work of the SWC, which is directly linked to their values and coaching philosophy. A genuine care towards their athletes, not only professionally but also personally, was reflected by the athlete and coach narratives. The studies by Din and colleagues (2015) as well as Vallée and Bloom (2005) echoes similar values and mindset, as their studies in high performance coaches revealed the coaches' inclination to treat their athletes as people first and athletes second.

In conclusion, the life narratives of these SWC portray a redemptive life story (McAdams 2013) of righteous adventurers and grounded realists with a higher purpose, revolving around Driven Benevolence.

2.2 Coaching practices

Elite athletes need to maintain motivation over long periods of time in order to muster the energy to train frequently, intensely, and to build success in their sport. Arguably, motivation is one of the most important factors to be considered by the high performance coach. The self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 2000) is a widely endorsed concept in the study of motivation, which is broadly used also in the high performance sport setting (e.g. Hodge et al. 2014, Mageau & Vallerand 2003), and may provide us with some insights in terms of how to foster the motivation in elite athletes. Lara-Bercial & Mallett (2016) explored the practices of 17 serial winning coaches (SWC) and consolidated 4 separate themes related to “what do high performance coaches do in their day-to-day practice”, including a practical application of the SDT in their coaching

contexts. The themes in this framework were; 1) Philosophy, 2) Vision, 3) People, and 4) Environment. See an illustration of these four themes in figure 2 below.



Figure 2. Serial Winning Coaches' Coaching Practice Framework (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016).

The framework by Lara-Bercial & Mallett (2016) will be compared and contrasted with mainly two other sources from the literature (Din et al. 2015; Hodge et al. 2014), as there has not been many studies in high performance coaches coaching practices. A study conducted by Din et al. (2015) investigated the leadership roles of Canadian Olympic medal-winning coaches by interviewing the coaches and their athletes. A total of 10 coaches and 12 athletes who medaled in the 2010 Olympic Games were interviewed using framework from the Olympic podium performance model to investigate the coaches' transformational leadership behaviors (Din & Paskevich, 2013; Din et al., 2015). Hodge et al. (2014) interviewed the coaches of the All Blacks rugby team of New Zealand, to investigate what factors contributed to the teams' motivational climate and success. During 2004-2011, the team's winning percentage was 85% along with achieving first place at the Rugby World Cup in 2011.

2.2.1 Self-determination theory

According to the self-determination theory (SDT), all humans strive to meet their universal psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness in their pursuit towards a meaningful life (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The more these three needs are fulfilled, the more one will be self-determined and motivated towards that particular activity in that particular context (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The fundamental nature of fulfilling these three innate needs may be seen in what athletes say they need from their coaches and; trust, respect, communication, commitment, autonomy and empowerment (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003). The SDT presents a continuum, where intrinsic motivation is the most self-determined mode of behavioral regulation, and amotivation is the least. In the middle of the continuum lies extrinsic motivation, which relates to engaging in activity for instrumental reasons (i.e. as a means to some end) (Deci & Ryan 2000). Important notion here is that when a certain behavior, although not intrinsically motivating, is internalized and integrated as part of who the person is, the behavior will become self-determined and the person will be motivated towards that activity. In other words, autonomous (i.e. self-determined) motivation can also include extrinsic sources of motivation, if the person accepts the extrinsically motivated behavior as part of their value structure (Deci & Ryan, 2000). For example, an elite athlete may adhere to exercise bouts that he/she does not like to do at all but is very committed to do those because the exercise bouts hold instrumental value to them (i.e. becoming a more endurable athlete). When the three basic needs are fulfilled in a certain environment and activity, the individual will experience more autonomous motivation and less controlled motivation which facilitates psychological wellbeing and adherence towards this activity (Deci & Ryan 2000).

Autonomy-supportive coaching behaviors that are focused on meeting the three needs, are shown to be connected to the intrinsic and self-determined extrinsic motivation of athletes (Amorose et al. 2016; Mageu & Vallerand 2003). Furthermore, the degree of the athletes self-determination (i.e. intrinsic motivation) is related to sport persistence as well as performance (Mageau & Vallerand 2003). See table 2 below for an outline of the coaches' autonomy-supportive behaviours.

Table 2. Autonomy supportive behaviors of the coach. (Mageau & Vallerand 2003).

Autonomy-supportive behaviours	Supporting references
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide choice within specific rules and limits 	Swann and Pittman (1977), Zuckerman <i>et al.</i> (1978), Thompson and Wankel (1980), Martin and Dubbert (1982), Oldridge and Jones (1983), Dwyer (1995), Goudas <i>et al.</i> (1995), Cordova and Lepper (1996)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a rationale for tasks and limits 	Baumrind (1967), Koestner <i>et al.</i> (1984), Freedman and Phillips (1985), Newby (1991), Deci <i>et al.</i> (1994), Grusec and Goodnow (1994), Cordova and Lepper (1996)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge the other person's feelings and perspectives 	Koestner <i>et al.</i> (1984), Deci <i>et al.</i> (1989, 1994)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide athletes with opportunities for initiative taking and independent work 	Grolnick <i>et al.</i> (1984), Brawley and Vallerand (1985), Deci <i>et al.</i> (1989), Boggiano <i>et al.</i> (1993), Boggiano (1998)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide non-controlling competence feedback 	Fisher (1978), Pittman (1980), Ryan <i>et al.</i> (1983), Vallerand (1983), Vallerand and Reid (1984), Kast and Connor (1988), Deci <i>et al.</i> (1999)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid controlling behaviours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – avoid overt control – avoid criticisms and controlling statements – avoid tangible rewards for interesting tasks 	Hoffman (1970), Lepper and Greene (1975), Pittman <i>et al.</i> (1980), Brustad (1988) Scanlan and Lewthwaite (1986), Deci <i>et al.</i> (1993), Barber (1996), Reeve and Deci (1996), Noels <i>et al.</i> (1999) Halliwell (1977), Orlick and Mosher (1978), Thomas and Tennant (1978), McGraw and McCullers (1979), Pittman <i>et al.</i> (1982), Amabile <i>et al.</i> (1986), Deci <i>et al.</i> (1999)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent ego-involvement in athletes 	Ryan (1982), Plant and Ryan (1985), Grolnick and Ryan (1987), Koestner <i>et al.</i> (1987), Beauchamp <i>et al.</i> (1996)

Lara-Bercial & Mallett (2016) explored the practices of 17 serial winning coaches (SWC) and stated:

“Coaching at the high performance level is moving away from coach-driven power relationship toward a cooperative partnership between athlete and coach”

The above statement reinforces the importance of athlete-centered, non-controlling and autonomy-supportive coaching style to ensure a productive motivational climate for the athlete to flourish in. Nevertheless, the coach also needs to understand that his positive involvement and providing structure are important features that impact on the motivation and behaviours of his athletes. Mageau and Vallerand (2003) assert in their “motivational model of the coach-athlete relationship” that without their coaches’ support and involvement the athletes may not feel connected, and in the absence of structure and boundaries the feelings and experiences of competence in the athletes may be endangered. See below in figure 3 below for a motivational model for the coach-athlete relationship as proposed by Mageau & Vallerand (2003).

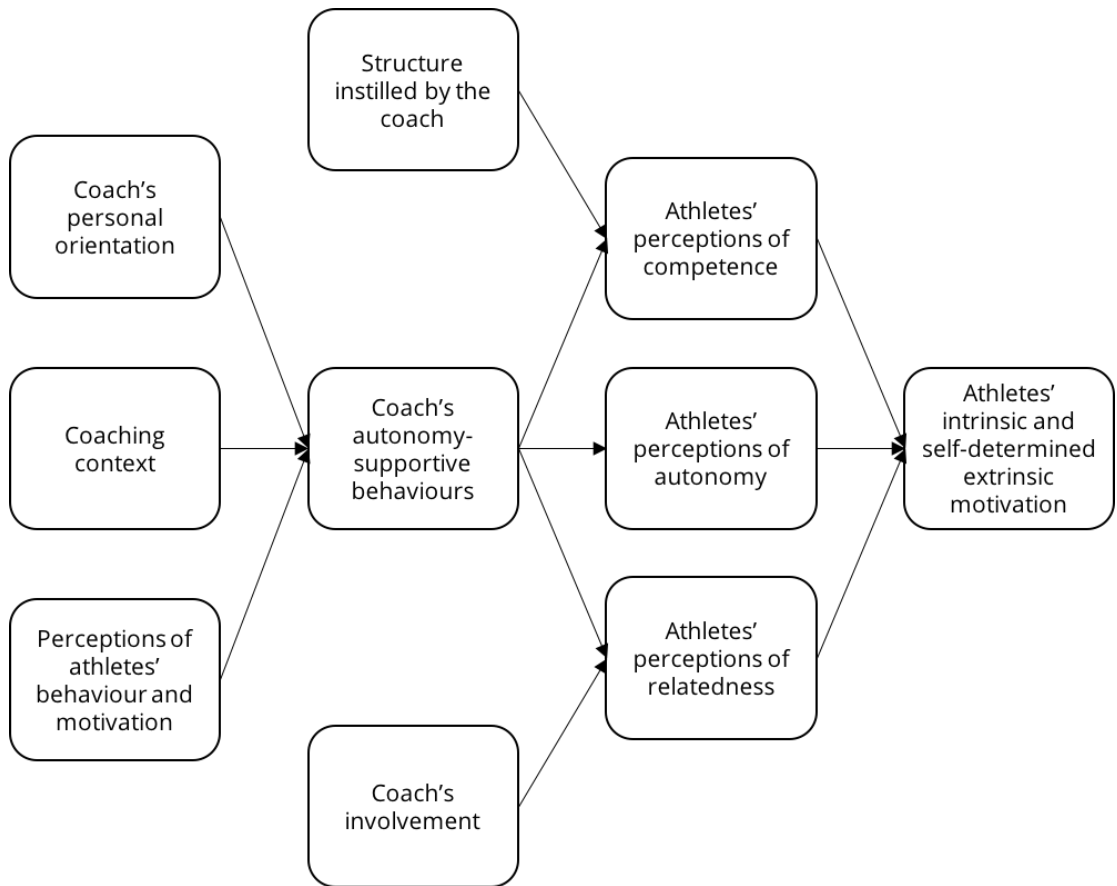


Figure 3. Motivational model for the coach-athlete relationship (Mageau & Vallerand 2003).

Jaakkola et al. (2016) studied young elite ice hockey players (M= 17 years of age), and found that motivational climate emphasizing effort, personal development and improvement positively impacted on enjoyment of players, which is indicator of intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, when the juniors' achievement goals were focused on mastering tasks, the players enjoyed the game more. In addition, it is important to note that even though ego-involvement may impede general motivational climates, ego-involvement is required in high level professional sporting contexts. Nevertheless, the literature seems to be conclusive that autonomy-supportive, mastery-focused motivational cues (e.g. providing choice, avoid controlling, prevent ego-involvement) are instrumental in developing a motivational climate to enable sport success.

In order for the coach to be autonomy-supportive and understand what kind of support and structures are appropriate to be instilled, he needs to have good intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills. Jacobs et al. (2016) found that coaches desire to

master these skills in order to become “good coaches”. Chan & Mallet 2011 asserted that emotional intelligence is crucial in order for the coach to lead effectively and facilitate high performance in her athletes. Furthermore, Becker (2009) stated that athletes perceived great coaches to be positive, supportive, fair and consistent, and that they are equally focused on developing athletes and human beings, which further highlights the importance of inter- and intrapersonal knowledge and abilities, in other words emotional intelligence. The concept of emotional intelligence and its development will be discussed in chapter 3 in this paper.

2.2.2 Philosophy

Seventeen serial winning coaches and their athletes felt that the coaches’ day to day practices were anchored on a very clear philosophical standpoint; their values, goals and beliefs about life and coaching (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). This provided them with a strong feeling direction and purpose. The coaching philosophy of these elite coaches revolved around three elements: 1.) Athlete-centered approach; 2.) High moral values (i.e. honesty, loyalty, respect); and 3.) Aiming to find a relative work-life balance for both the athletes and themselves. Coaches Henry and Smith developed a “flexible and evolving” philosophy for the All Blacks and also the players were invited to actively participate to this process and mold it (Hodge et al. 2014). Their main motto echoed an athlete-centered approach as well as high moral values: “Better People Make Better All Blacks”.

This philosophical standpoint steered the team to developing each player individually and to focus on their character rather than just their performance. Every player was seen as a person who had something important to contribute to the team. This was perceived as important for enhancing the team’s motivational climate (Hodge et al. 2014).

The “flexible and evolving” element of the coaching philosophy by the coaches Henry & Smith directed the team to do things together as a group, including coaches and also players. The team had a journey where the coaches made all the decisions in the beginning, to a dual decision-making process (coaches and players), to finally a player-led decision-making emphasis. This meant that the coaches needed to adapt to the

developing ability of the players to take more responsibility themselves (Hodge et al. 2014). Coach Henry stated about his flexible mindset towards coaching:

“It would depend on the needs (of the team you’re coaching)... Sometimes I’m tough and directive, putting them under pressure and trying to create stressful situations; and sometimes I’m empowering, reinforcing, and encouraging. I think it depends on the needs of the players, your group awareness, the time in the (training) week, the state of play in terms of how you’re travelling (i.e., performing as a team)... Generally, people would say I’m an empowering coach, who asks questions and creates self-awareness; but at other times... on a different day, they may see me bark at players and put them under pressure... I’d say flexible, tending towards giving ownership to the players.”

The philosophy towards coaching portrayed by Henry and Smith seemed to follow the principles of athlete-centered, autonomy-supportive coaching in practice, however also using directive elements (Hodge et al. 2014). The Olympic winning coaches also appeared to practice both autonomy-supportive but also more authoritarian coaching styles (Din et al. 2015). These researchers conceptualized the leadership practices of these coaches to demanding leadership, relational leadership and solution-focused leadership. Similarly as what coach Henry said above, the Olympic winning coaches had the ability to demand a lot from their athletes but also accurately empathize for the athletes as human beings. One could argue, as described in the SDT, that even the authoritarian directions from the coach can be autonomy supportive, provided that the athlete perceives the directions as something that will provide instrumental or intrinsic value to him/her (i.e. help the athlete become better). After all, the coach is usually the expert in athletic preparation and the athlete will benefit a lot from this expertise in their preparation towards elite performance, which, in most cases, holds intrinsic value to the athlete. The athletes of the SWC’s felt that their coaches were “benevolent dictators”, being “ruthless but not heartless”, which seem to highlight the dual-nature of high-performance coaching, where both tough decisions & demands (e.g. concerning player selection and/or hard training) and genuine care is needed (Mallett & Lara-Bercial 2016). One athlete summarized the demanding and relational aspects of the coaches’ flexible leadership styles in the following way:

“He treated us all as individuals, each person is a little different too within a team...and there is an on time (sport specific preparation) and an off time (non-sport personal interaction). And the best coach - I like that they will say how’s your family, what’s going on in your life and then it’s an on time where it’s chalkboard – it’s focused. It’s really finding that balance” (Din et al. 2015).

2.2.3 Vision

To be able to clearly articulate a vision of what it takes to win was seen as central to successful athletic performance by the serial winning coaches and their athletes (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). The SWC’s seemed to be constantly innovating and finding the decisive elements to allow winning. Furthermore, the SWC’s seemed to be able to simplify the complex vision into manageable steps and prioritize these steps accurately to help the athletes realize success. The vision of the SWC’s was materialized in a long-term plan, that took vast amounts of time from the coach and the athlete to create. The plan also included several alternative directions (i.e. plan B, C, etc...). The planning was “action-led and “process-driven”, which meant that for each objective there were clearly identified actions that enabled reaching the objective, and a process was put in place that allowed the completion of those actions (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). The SWC’s highlighted the importance of critical thinking around their own actions and beliefs in order to be able to decisively act and change plans if something is not working. The “flexible and evolving” culture of the All Blacks seems to endorse this same idea of constant self-criticism to allow optimal progress (Hodge et al. 2014).

Specific goal-setting has been shown to enhance the performance of the athletes compared to no goals at all or “do your best” goals (Burton & Naylor 2002; Kyllö & Landers 1995). Locke & Latham (1990, in Tenenbaum & Eklund 2007, p.297), described why goal setting may work:

“When used systematically, goal setting works because it focuses attention on specific task demands, increases effort and intensity, encourages persistence when adversity is encountered, and promotes the development of strategies and problem solving to move towards goal achievement.”

When setting goals, the coach and athlete need to consider what types of goals work in what type of situations (Vealey 2007, in Tenenbaum & Eklund 2007, p.297). When the athlete manages to focus on right type of goal at the right time, mental skills may be enhanced (Kingston & Hardy 1997). *Outcome goals*, such as winning an Olympic medal, are not controllable directly by the athlete, however may provide inspiration and motivation to endure the tough athletic preparation (Vealey 2007, in Tenenbaum & Eklund 2007, p.297). *Performance goals* are more controllable by the athletes, as these may be altered through raising and lowering difficulty in order to be optimally challenged (Vealey 2007, in Tenenbaum & Eklund 2007, p.297). In fact, Locke & Latham (2006) stated that important qualities for a goal to facilitate performance are specificity and difficulty. The performance goals are specific performances that are directly linked to the sport that the athlete is practicing. For example, the performance goal of a sprinter may be standing long jump or a specific strength result, or even a time in a certain competition during the season. *Process goals*, on the other hand, are used in every day athletic preparation and are very much in the control of the athlete (Vealey 2007, in Tenenbaum & Eklund 2007, p.297) – for example directing focus to the specific goal of a certain exercise, as opposed to just “going through the motions”. Furthermore, Din and colleagues (2015) observed how Olympic podium level coaches had a clear and strong vision, which was materialized in meticulous, exhaustive and individualized planning. One of the interviewed athletes said that her coach begun planning for the 2010 Olympic Games before her athletes had competed in the 2006 games. The athlete described her coach in the following way:

”She would stay up until two in the morning thinking about one program – so, so methodical in terms of what we were doing on each day and why...everything was *so* well thought out and planned to the most minute detail – I had absolute faith because of that – faith that we were totally prepared in the best possible way.” (Din et al. 2015)

The statements of the SWC’s seem to be in line with what literature says about creating a clear vision (including good planning and goal setting) to realize success.

2.2.4 People

”It is about people supporting other people to achieve exceptional outcomes.” (Mallett & Lara-Bercial 2016).

The serial winning coaches thought that building a good team was crucial to success, and a good team member possessed something more than mere ability. Two factors seemed to impact on staff and athlete selection for the SWC’s; the needs of the athlete/team and character fit. The latter meant that the new person in the team would uphold similar beliefs and values to those of the coach (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Emotional intelligence was considered as a springboard to manage the high performance team around the athlete(s), and to manage the coach-athlete relationship itself. Chan & Mallett (2011) as well as Gilbert & Côte (2013) highlight that coaches must possess interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge and skills, in other words emotional intelligence. Côte and Gilbert (2009) discussed about effective coaching to facilitate athlete development (including but not limited to performance): Effective coaching was proposed as consistent and integrated application of appropriate professional knowledge of the sciences & the demands of the sport itself, and inter- and intrapersonal knowledge & skills (Côte & Gilbert 2009). The SWC’s reported how high levels of emotional intelligence was crucial so that they could adapt their behavior to suit each individual to build relationships and/or manage conflicts (Mallett & Lara-Bercial 2016). Furthermore, Hodge et al. (2014) found how the All Blacks “Better People Make Better All Blacks” emphasis seemed to direct the team to develop both intra- and interpersonal competencies in addition to mere performance. Coach Smith described how “connections” with people in the team are important for performance:

“We believe it contributes to performance... A lot of your performance, I think, depends on the connections you have with people around you... connections with the game, but also connection with the fans of the game, connection with your family, and with each other (teammates). And generally those connections are stronger if you’re a good bugger, and you do things the right way. That’s where a lot of your resilience comes from, I reckon; is that you’re playing for other people, as well as yourself.”

The SWC's possessed high level of self-awareness, as indicated by high congruence between both Big-Five personality trait assessment (NEO-FFI) and interview data (Mallet & Lara-Bercial 2016). Self-awareness, on the other hand, is seen as a key factor and mediator of emotional intelligence (Chan & Mallett 2011, Gilbert & Côte 2013). The interviewed athletes explicitly described their coach having a high level of self-awareness and emotional intelligence, as illustrated by the following reports by the athletes:

“(the coach) wasn't always nice, but knew exactly when he was and when he wasn't and plays whatever role he thinks is going to get the job done on that day”

“(our performance was hindered) until the coach became more self-aware of some of his behaviours and how they affected us. We were constantly in fear of him and it took us two years to gather the courage to talk to him about it. He has done a lot of self-reflection since and we went on to win gold”

The ability of the SWC's to self-reflect and to be critical towards themselves may have provided them with higher level of self-awareness which, in turn, may be linked to effective and efficient learning, as well as preventing them from behaving in ways that are detrimental to athlete performance (Mallett & Lara-Bercial 2016). One of the Olympic winning athletes in the research by Din et al. (2015) described the coaches' ego-free self-critical attitude:

“It's 100% confidence with little to no ego. Never getting bogged down by ego. They have to be *very* confident in what they are doing and what their strengths are but *no* ego – so if they don't know something, they have no trouble asking somebody else, they seek the answers for things they don't know.”

Fostering belief in people was something that the SWC's purposefully and systematically engaged in (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). This fostering of belief was divided to three areas: Believe in ME (the coach), Believe in YOU (the athlete), Believe in US (the high performance team). The coach's social capital and his/her ability to build a positive relationship with the athlete/team were two most commonly identified sources of belief in the coach. The social capital referred to past experiences as an athlete and/or previous wins, whereas the ability to build relationships with good connections came down to personal touch, integrity, empathy and reliability, among some other things (Lara-Bercial

& Mallett 2016). The SWC's facilitated self-belief and motivation in their athletes through optimal balance between challenging and supporting them. Belief seemed to be developed through monitoring the athlete progress coupled with corrective actions when/if there's a plateau in progression. On the other hand, trusting in the athlete's talents and demonstrating it to them was seen as important, especially in close proximity to competition. In practice, the SWC's focused on process over results, fostered self-reliance and self-awareness in the athlete (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). One athlete described his/her coach in this way:

"he is very perfectionistic, so he really focuses on the details, but he is very good at positive coaching, he does not only say what you are doing wrong, but he says what you are doing well and this combination makes him a champion maker."

Belief in us, in the team, was cultivated by several means by the SWC's, including pre-season retreats and "special events" (special lunches, going for a drink or two) and also in the day-to-day interaction with the athlete(s) (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). The All Blacks coaching team also used an informal way (meeting for a lunch, chatting) and integrated relationships to build connections and belief in the team (Hodge et al. 2014). In practice, the coaches allowed opportunities to laugh, to relax, to enjoy the company of the teammates, which helped them to satisfy their basic psychological needs. Coach Smith stated that they needed to laugh and enjoy what they were doing, and take a real pride in that. Furthermore, one of the most important ideas was "the love of the game". The coaches draw some inspiration from the ancient Spartans: Courageous warriors were always looking for the opposite of fear. In the All Blacks case the opposite wasn't courage or bravery, it was love (Hodge et al. 2014).

Some coaches thought that a robust collective discipline around shared objectives was crucial (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). The All Blacks rugby team certainly endorsed the idea of high performance expectations and fostering acceptance of group goals (Hodge et al. 2014). This ethos included giving up on personal egos, clearly understanding each team members contribution and a solid focus on processes and routines (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). The athletes thought that good team cohesion was built around personal connections with the coach and teammates, discipline instilled by the coach, providing fresh goals and sharing leadership and decision making with the athletes.

Also, athletes expressed that their coach was able to deliberately create “crisis” situations so that the team could come together (even against the coach sometimes) and avoid complacency. In fact, the SWC’s themselves thought that there’s a high need to keep the athletes grounded through combating complacency, entitlement and emotional instability. (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). The SWC’s were very keen to address these issues early, clearly and directly, using strategies to “tear down and rebuild” their athletes. Developing a feeling of gratefulness amongst their athletes was seen very important; a sense of gratitude towards the position they were in no matter how hard they had worked for it. One athlete described how his/her coach would:

“...make me worry for four months about my place in the team for the Olympics, even though he knew I was a definite, just to keep me on my toes”

The coach was also seen as a provider of stability and positive dependability in the dynamic, hectic and pressurized world of high performance sport, which may have helped the athletes to maintain belief in their journey towards competitive success (Mallett & Lara-Bercial 2016).

2.2.5 Environment

Both the SWC’s and their athletes endorsed the idea that having a strong “high performance culture” where everyone understood what was required to achieve competitive results was fundamental to sustained success (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). The SWC’s described five main pillars that develop and maintain the high performance culture.

Expectations of excellence. High expectations and standards were enforced by the SWC’s. Critical elements to this were instilling personal responsibility and accountability as well as everyone in the high performing team actually living and acting on the values of the group. The All Blacks rugby team also had an expectation of excellence in the team (Hodge et al. 2014). The players saw themselves in the team as servants, which directed them to accept the challenge and the demands of the game as their own self challenge and vice versa. The coaches focused more on strengths than weaknesses, boosted the players

self-esteem by making the players proud of who they were and what abilities they had (Hodge et al. 2014).

One athlete described a culture with expectations of excellence in the following way: “as soon as you walked in there, you knew how to behave in that environment, the culture was everywhere”.

Leaving no stone unturned. Attending to all meaningful factors that contributed to performance as well as constantly seeking new elements that may provide an edge in competition was seen as key behaviours by the SWC’s. One coach gave some examples of this such as building the right team, attending to each detail and controlling the controllables (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016).

Challenging training environment. Healthy, yet “open and fierce” competition was emphasized in the practices of the SWC’s to allow sustained high performance (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Furthermore, one coach highlighted how establishing practices that include a challenge and toughness level that is similar or above of what is experienced in competition is capital for the athletes. Also, SWC’s viewed that new and fresh practice and competition goals need to be set promptly once the old ones are reached in order to generate fresh motivation.

Stability and dependability. A key feature of a productive environment according to the SWC’s was that the motivational climate as well as the people would remain relatively stable so that everyone could focus on doing their job. However, the coaches were mindful of not creating too much support and dependability which could interfere with athlete self-reliance and resilience (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016).

Influencing externally. When needed, the SWC’s sought to influence on people who had the potential to impact on the environment of the team, such as those in powerful positions within governing bodies or clubs (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016).

2.3 Learning and development

Werthner and Trudel (2006) proposed that high performance coaches' learning could be conceptualised according to Moon's (2004) generic view of learning. This conceptualisation of learning consists of three types of learning situations: 1.) Mediated (e.g. coaching clinics), 2.) Unmediated (e.g. following other coaches), and 3.) Internal (e.g. introspection, reflection). A similar classification of coaches' learning experiences has been proposed also by Nelson, Cushion, and Potrac (2006), by dividing the coach learning to formal, nonformal and informal. Rynne and Mallett (2014) asserted that coaches must learn in order to succeed and to sustain their successful practice. The ways by which high performance coaches have learnt to master their craft in the three different contexts of Moon's (2004) generic view of learning will be discussed next.

2.3.1 Mediated learning experiences

Even though accessed by majority of HPC's in different studies, formal coach certification and/or accreditation programmes have been considered to be of relatively low impact to the coaches' practice (Rynne & Mallett 2014; Lynch & Mallett 2006). Notwithstanding the previous notion, the SWC's asserted that coaching qualifications were a key to their development especially in the early stages of their career, which had given them foundational knowledge and "mental frameworks" (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Furthermore, in another study, formal coaching education or mentorship were reported as important learning experiences by HPC's in order to become a high performance head coach (Erickson 2007). However, the SWC's all stated that formal education needs to be relevant and done by credible coach developers in order to be effective (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Thus, one could argue that not all coach development programmes have been able to meet the learning needs of the coaches, as so many of them have dismissed the utility of these programmes in the past (e.g. Rynne & Mallett 2014; Lynch & Mallett 2006). Mallett & Lara-Bercial (2016) suggest the following guidelines for formal coaching courses:

"Coaching courses should support the acquisition of new knowledge, yet for coach education to fulfil its role, coaches must be provided with time, opportunities and support

during or in between courses to take stock of current knowledge, digest new knowledge and look for ways to translate it into practical applications. Individual and guided self-reflection appears critical for this to happen. By the admission of the SWC, high performance coaches are never the finished article. In a way, those developing high performance coaches should make explicit attempts to connect formal and informal learning in seamless ways. For instance through the careful design of learning tasks that require the application of a recently acquired knowledge base to a specific and real situation the coach is trying to resolve.

As a somewhat converse finding compared to the usefulness of formal coaching clinics and qualifications, the vast majority of HPC's have considered academic background to be of utmost importance to their coaching practices (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016; Rynne & Mallett 2014; Werthner & Trudel 2009). This background has been reported to accelerate on-the-job learning of the high performance coach (Mallett & Lara-Bercial 2016). Furthermore, the HPC's with academic degrees have reported that this background has provided them with improved critical thinking skills, work ethic, greater confidence and skills in interacting with support staff, and gaining appreciation towards science that underpins their coaching practice (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016; Rynne & Mallett 2014).

Nevertheless, there is wide variation of backgrounds from where the HPC's can come from and still be successful. In fact, Erickson and colleagues (2007) proposed that different coaches can compensate a certain deficit in their background in different areas. For example, some coach may lack experience as an elite athlete but may compensate with more experience in coaching and/or in their academic backgrounds, and vice versa (Erickson et al. 2007).

2.3.2 Unmediated learning experiences

There seems to be a clear trend for high performance coaches to use more unmediated on-the-job learning over formal, mediated learning situations to develop their coaching craft (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016; Mallett et al. 2016; Rynne & Mallett 2014; Erickson et al. 2008). From the unmediated learning situations, on-the-job experience, discussions with others and experience as athlete have emerged as most valued learning opportunities for the HPC's (Rynne & Mallett 2014). Similarly, the serial winning coaches preferred

peer learning (e.g. conversations with other coaches) over all other forms of learning (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). In fact, preferences for all the other learning opportunities did not even come close to peer learning, as 11/17 of the SWC's ranked it as most preferred and the second most preferred opportunity had only one coach ranking it as the most preferred (see table 4 below).

Erickson and his colleagues (2007) findings suggested that experience as an athlete may be necessary for one to become a high performance head coach. This experience may have provided opportunities for the coaches-to-be to observe the coaching, teaching, values and interpersonal practices of their coaches, which may have helped them go gain valuable knowledge where to root their own coaching practices (Werthner & Trudel 2006). In fact, this finding is plausible in the light that the coach spends usually far more time in the sporting venue compared to formal learning environment (Gilbert et al. 2006). Furthermore, Erickson and colleagues (2008) found discrepancies between developmental coaches preferred and actual sources of learning, as 58% reported learning by doing as an actual source of knowledge, but only 37% reported it as a preferred source. Also, the SWC's had quite large discrepancies between their accessed learning opportunities vs. what they preferred: Peer learning was the most preferred learning opportunity, but it was only the 4th most accessed one (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). See table 3 below for an illustration of this. Interestingly, mentoring was highly valued by the SWC's in their qualitative reports, however in the quantitative questionnaire did not emerge as very used nor preferred learning opportunity (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). The need for mentoring seems to be especially high in the earlier stages of coach development, before reaching elite level (Erickson et al. 2007). In fact, Erickson and his colleagues (2007) found that mentoring at this stage may actually be the most valuable learning experience for the maturing coach.

Table 3. Serial winning coaches use and preference for learning methods (adopted from Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016).

	Learning method	Used	Preferred
Mediated	Coaching qualifications	1, 3, 3, 3, 1, 1, 1, 4	2, 2, 3, 2, 1, 3
	Coaching clinics	2, 1, 2, 2, 3, 4, 4, 2, 3	1
	Mentoring	1	
Unmediated	On-the-job learning	1, 4, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 3, 1	2, 2, 2
	Peer learning: Conversations with other coaches / observation and questioning	3, 2, 4, 1	1, 3, 3, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1
	Self-study: Reading/DVD	3, 4, 4, 2, 2, 3, 4, 2	1, 2, 2, 4
	Role models	3	
	Experience as athlete	2	
	Writing own books and DVD's	3	
	From business world	3	2
Watching the sport	3		
Internal	Self-reflection	1	2, 2, 3, 2
	Athlete feedback	1	

Coaches stated the 4 types of development methods they had accessed most frequently in descending order. As such, even when a method is ranked as 4, it still denotes a relatively high frequency compared with others that do not feature in the top four for each coach. Similarly, when asked about preferred methods, an option rated as 4 can still be considered as seen positively by coaches. Significant importance is attached here to the frequency with which a particular type of learning method features in coaches' top four either as used or preferred.

The hectic nature of high performance sport may prevent many coaches from accessing the most useful and preferred learning opportunities. It has been suggested that the current practices of HPC's may not optimally ensure continuous development and growth of the HPC's, as the learning of the coaches themselves seems not to be very well structured as a part of the coaching process (Rynne & Mallett 2014). Thus, the sustainability of the HPC may be endangered, as failing to renew oneself may lead to losing to competition

and/or failing to develop the athletes optimally, and the consequence may be ending up without a job (Rynne & Mallett 2014).

2.3.3 Internal learning experiences

Internal learning can be considered as reflection in three different contexts: Reflection in action (during competition or practice), reflection on action (after competition or practice), and retrospective reflection on action (at the end of a preparation period or season) (Gilbert & Trudel 2001). Each of these contexts provide a slightly different internal learning opportunity for the coach. The SWC's stated that high level of self-reflection and subsequent self-awareness is necessary for any kind of learning to take place (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). However, structured self-reflection was not seen as a necessary part of preparation, but unstructured regular self-reflection was seen as very important, and this is what occupied the minds of these people much of the time. The insatiable thirst for knowledge and development steered the SWC's to automatically reflect on the practices and performances, about what they could do better (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Also structured reflection on action was considered essential in the form of technical and tactical debriefs with the athlete(s)/team (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Furthermore, Mallett & Lara-Bercial (2016) state that those who are developing and educating high performance coaches should strive to connect formal and informal (i.e. mediated vs. unmediated & internal) learning seamlessly, and propose that individual and guided self-reflection appears to be a critical component for optimal learning to occur. These authors continue to suggest that coach development should be integrated to the demands of the job, with social support from mentors, peer groups and social networks.

Reflection has been considered as an important part of gaining sport expertise, among athletes (Jonker et al. 2012), and their coaches (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016; Jacobs et al. 2016). Nevertheless, in order for the reflection to be useful it must be grounded on empirical observations, not relying merely on memory and suggestions of the mind. Werthner and Trudel (2006), drawing from the work of Moon (1999), suggested that (coach) learning should be viewed as a process of changing conceptions rather than the mere accumulation of knowledge, which arguably may be more the case when coaching "in the field" compared to "laboratory circumstances" in formal institutions (e.g.

universities). This may partly explain why the HPC's access and prefer on-the-job learning over formal learning. Nevertheless, academic background, as also affirmed by the HPC's, may provide an ideal background for critical self-reflection and deeper learning (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016; Rynne & Mallett 2014). Cushion (2018) asserted, a crucial question to ask is that to what extent reflection actually serves to reinforce rather than challenge the existing assumptions? Arguably, mentors and peer support and other social support can provide additional perspectives and content to the self-reflection. In absence of this social interaction, the self-reflection could more easily lead to circular thinking and repeating past mistakes, whilst exposing ones' own thinking honestly to someone else may help grounding the reflection to more objective empirical observations, which in turn may lead to more accurate decision making with athletes. In fact, vast majority of the SWC's preferred peer learning over other learning methods, which may be a sign that elite high performance coaches value additional input to their thinking by other coaches. Furthermore, high performance coaches have been shown to learn through reflecting their coaching practice with others and letting others reflect their practice with them (Rynne & Mallett 2014). These reflective discussions allowed coaches to identify poor practices (their own and those of others) as well as good practices, and integrate these learnings to their thinking and the subsequent practical action with their athletes. Nevertheless, this sort of learning seems to be unmediated and a sustainable peer learning practice seems not to be always assured in high performance coaches (Rynne & Mallett 2014). The below quote from coach Henry of the highly successful Rugby team of New Zealand, All Blacks, underscores the need for the coach to change in order to "stay in the game":

"I've been coaching for 37 years... [When I started] I was very directive as a coach... pretty authoritarian. But now it's... a group of people trying to do something together, rather than a group of coaches and a group of players... I think that's evolved naturally... Now it's much more consensus; there's a consensus home environment, there's a consensus educational environment... If you didn't change [as a coach], you were history." (Hodge et al. 2014).

As an evidence of changing his conceptions after discussions and self-reflection, coach Henry stopped doing pre-game team talks. Here's what coach Henry said about his conceptions of pre-game talks after discussion with the captain of the team, Tana Umaga:

“...I had been team-talking for 30 years, and I thought it was bloody important, and he thought it was a bloody waste of time... He was dead right, and thank God he told me. I could still be doing it!”

Lara-Bercial and Mallett (2016) summarise how the SWC's seemed to view their learning experiences:

“SWC appear to view formal learning as a necessary springboard and a compass to guide their early forays into coaching; nonformal learning as an opportunity to be checked and challenged by other coaches' practices; and informal learning through on-the-job learning (including learning from athletes), self-reflection, and interactions with peers and mentors as most powerful and lasting.”

Mallett and Lara-Bercial (2016) suggest that high performance coaches could engage in work with sport psychologist in order to improve their coaching practice and internal learning. Some of the suggested areas to work on with the sport psychologists were guided self-reflection, personal counselling, rest and regeneration diaries and mindfulness training. Furthermore, these authors suggested that it may be more beneficial for the coach-athlete-performance relationship if the coach worked with a sport psychologist, instead of the athlete.

3 DEVELOPING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS

It has been suggested that in addition to possessing appropriate professional knowledge about the science of sport, high performance coaches must also have good interpersonal (e.g. connecting with athletes) and intrapersonal (e.g. self-awareness) knowledge and skills (Gilbert & Côté 2013; Côté and Gilbert 2009). Furthermore, Côté and Gilbert suggested that the integrated application of professional-, interpersonal- and intrapersonal knowledge and skills consistently is essential in effective coaching to facilitate athletes' development (Gilbert & Côté 2013; Côté and Gilbert 2009). There seems to be a growing body of literature that stresses the importance of developing good inter- and intrapersonal knowledge and abilities of high performance coaches, in other words social and emotional skills (Lara-Bercial & Mallet 2016; Jacobs et al. 2016; Campo et al. 2015; Chan & Mallett 2011; Mageu & Vallerand 2003). Nevertheless, the training and development of this important area of high performance coaching has been researched only in few studies in this population (e.g. Chan & Mallett 2010).

3.2 Emotional Intelligence and Social Emotional Learning

An individuals' emotional intelligence has been shown to predict both athletic performance (Crombie et al. 2009; Perlini & Halverson 2006) as well as coaching efficacy (Hwang et al. 2013; Thelwell et al. 2008). Emotional intelligence (EI) can be approached from three different perspectives, knowledge, ability and trait (Campo et al. 2015). Knowledge refers to what people actually know about emotions and how one could deal with emotional situations (Campo et al. 2015). Ability level of EI means how able the individual is to use emotional knowledge during an emotional situation, for example using an emotion regulation strategy (Campo et al. 2015). One of the most used models for ability approach to EI is that of Mayer, Salovey and Caruso's, which encompasses perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thinking, understanding emotions and regulating and managing one's own emotions as well as those of others (Mayer et al. 2003). In this model, EI performance (i.e. ability) can be measured by the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso emotional intelligence test (MSCEIT). Finally, the trait approach refers more to what people actually do in their inter- and intrapersonal relationships rather than what they know or are capable of doing (Campo et al. 2015). Laborde and colleagues (2016)

propose in their review about emotional intelligence in sports that the current evidence may steer researchers towards using the trait emotional intelligence questionnaire in their studies (TEIQue, Petrides 2009).

Emotional intelligence may be improved through training in athletes (e.g. Campo et al., 2016; Crombie et al., 2011) and in coaches as well (Chan & Mallett 2010). Research has shown that all the different levels of EI may actually be improved (Laborde et al. 2016; Campo et al. 2015). However, there seems to be a gap in the literature about what type of training would be most effective and how the training could actually be implemented (e.g. Boyatziz et al. 2013). Social emotional learning (SEL) is a broad umbrella for training inter-and intrapersonal knowledge and skills, that has been used widely for example in teacher development (e.g. Talvio et al. 2013), and it might provide a useful framework for developing high performance coaches. SEL is based on humanistic psychology tradition, drawing methods and principles from the work of Thomas Gordon (Gordon 2018), Carl Rogers and their likes. Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making are the different elements of SEL, which may be relevant for the HPC's when considering different interactions with athletes (Lintunen & Gould 2014). The following chapters will deal with the five areas of social emotional learning. See figure 4 below for the different elements of social emotional learning:

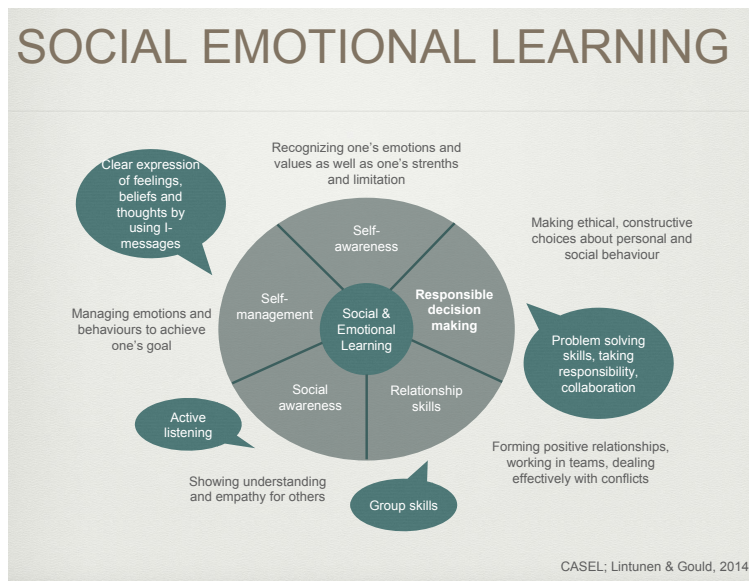


Figure 4. Social and emotional learning core competences in the center. Speech balloons represent respective skills from the theory of Gordon (2003) for the competences (Lintunen & Gould 2014).

3.2.1 Self-Awareness

Chan & Mallett (2011) stated that an antecedent of leading others is firstly, knowing thyself. Mallett and Lara-Bercial (2016) asserted that enhanced self-awareness has the potential to mediate many positive coach and athlete outcomes, for example stress reduction and coping, emotional regulation, higher levels of emotional intelligence and increased management capacity. Furthermore, self-awareness has been asserted to be the cornerstone for other areas of emotional intelligence (Hopkins 2011). Hopkins (2011) frames emotional self-awareness as the ability to recognise and understand one's emotions and the internal processes they are associated with, and their impact on other people. Furthermore, self-awareness includes possessing an accurate understating of one's strengths, limitations and characteristics (Bar-On 1997, in Hopkins 2011). The serial winning coaches highly endorsed the utility of good self-awareness to efficient coaching (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Also the athletes' of the SWC's tended to appreciate the self-awareness of their coach (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). The SWC's perceptions of themselves had high agreement with the perceptions of their athletes, which is a good indicator of high self-awareness of these coaches. (Lara-Bercial & Mallett

2016). Hopkins (2011) stated that “self-aware individuals have a propensity for self-reflection”. Mallett & Lara-Bercial (2016) seem to agree and propose that consistent amounts of self-reflection (guided and personal) will enhance coaches’ self-awareness and their critical thinking ability, so that they are better equipped to always question what they and others are doing and looking for better ways to do things. The SWC’s seemed to have high propensity for self-reflection, as indicated by the following quote by one of the coaches:

“you never stop thinking about it when you go home; about the things you could have done better to impact the outcome” (Mallett & Lara-Bercial 2016).

Also, mindfulness training has been proven beneficial for present moment awareness as well as improving emotional control and reducing stress (Longshore 2015). Mallett & Lara-Bercial (2016) continue that those who are developing and educating high performance coaches should focus on individual and guided self-reflection as this is critical for optimal learning to occur, and this reflection could be supported by mentors, peer groups and other social networks. Furthermore, Mallett & Lara-Bercial (2016) suggest to use tools such as the life story interview (<https://www.sesp.northwestern.edu/foley/instruments/interview/>) and the personal strivings questionnaire (Emmons, 1998) to help the coaches to build higher awareness of who they are and how they act. Socially competent coaches are able to recognise their values, emotions and accurately assess their strengths and weaknesses (Lintunen & Gould 2014), and arguably the formerly mentioned tools may serve in identifying these better.

Also, increased self-awareness has been suggested to have potential therapeutic and protective properties to buffer against the stresses of high performance sport (Longshore 2015). In fact, mindfulness training, that develops awareness of the present moment, has been demonstrated to improve emotional control, reduce stress and help build better coach-athlete relationships in high performance coaches (Longshore 2015). Sport psychologists have been proposed to support high performance coaches to achieve deeper levels of self-awareness. Mallett and Lara-Bercial (2016) described the utility of using a sport psychologist to advance the high performance coaches’ self-awareness:

“This process of self-awareness augmentation can lead to coaches gaining a deeper understanding of who they are, what drives them, and what triggers certain feelings,

emotions, reactions and behaviours. It can also help coaches recognize possible issues earlier and the potential consequence of different ways of dealing with them before they happen. It may also improve the ability of the coach to understand athletes better and be able to empathize with their needs and wants.”

3.2.2 Self-Management

Self-management refers to managing emotions and behaviours to achieve one’s goals (Lintunen & Gould 2014). Arguably, one could consider self-empathy as an area of self-management as well. Rosenberg (2003, in Tschannen-Moran & Carter 2016) defines self-empathy as respectful understanding and acceptance of one’s emotions. In the absence of self-empathy, sufficient self-care could be hampered. In fact, the serial winning coaches highly endorsed the need for self-care, or “relative work-life balance” in order to sustain their practices and to be effective (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). The SWC’s had high compassion and kindness, not only towards their athletes and support staff, but also towards themselves. They took time for family, “switched off” through different hobbies and friends as well as took care of their physical condition (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Interventions derived from Gordon’s theory of social interaction (2003) provide a tangible link to access and train the different SEL areas (Lintunen & Gould 2014). For example, in the domain of self-management, I-messages can help in communicating ones’ feelings, thoughts, values, wants and needs in a way that enhances interaction with others (Lintunen & Gould 2014). An I-message is a non-judgmental statement of the person’s internal experience and how other people’s behaviour may have impacted on your experience, and formulation of I-messages can be practiced. When properly using I-messages, people are not left ruminating about their feelings and there does not need to be any guessing how someone else may be feeling. This has been shown to facilitate team building (Rovio et al. 2012). I-messages can also help in understanding ones’ own emotions better, both those of the coach and of the athlete (Lintunen & Gould 2014).

3.2.3 Social Awareness

Social awareness consists mainly of empathy – taking the perspective of others and recognizing and appreciating individual and group similarities and differences (Lintunen & Gould 2014). Empathy has also been described as a capacity to learn, analyze and differentiate between the differences in one's own and others' emotions (Goleman 1995, in Tschannen-Moran & Carter 2016). Furthermore, empathy seems to have both cognitive and affective components (Tschannen-Moran & Carter 2016). The cognitive component includes accurately perceiving and interpreting the thoughts and feelings of another person and striving to understand the other person's point of view (Goleman 1995, in Tschannen-Moran & Carter 2016). The affective part refers to an emotional connection with another's emotional state (Zaki et al 2008, in Tschannen-Moran & Carter 2016).

Active listening, or reflective listening in motivational interviewing (Miller & Rollnick 2013), is one of the core skills to communicate empathy (Lintunen & Gould 2014). It is a listening method in which the listener aims to non-judgmentally understand what the other person is saying and reflects back to the speaker his/her interpretation of what the person has said (Ivey & Bradford Ivey 2009, in Lintunen & Gould 2014). The interpretation does not need to be exactly correct, for the other person can also correct the interpretation. What matters is that the listener communicates acceptance of the speakers' thoughts and feelings (Miller & Rollnick 2013). Essentially, active listening helps the other person to understand themselves better, their feelings, thoughts, values, needs and goals (Lintunen & Gould 2014). Motivational interviewing is an evidence-based method to advance behaviour change through strengthening persons own motivation to change. Miller & Rollnick (2013) define motivational interviewing as a collaborative conversation style for strengthening a person's own motivation and commitment to change. Motivational interviewing seems to be superior to traditional advice giving in the treatment of a wide range of behavioral and health problems (Rubak et al. 2005, in Lintunen & Gould 2014), as well as in promoting physical activity (Rasinaho et al. 2011, in Lintunen & Gould 2014). Arguably, the principles of motivational interviewing, such as reflective listening, may be useful in the context of high performance sport as well, as coaches are essentially promoting change in their athletes. In fact, the SWC's aimed to build athlete self-reliance, resourcefulness and motivation by having an empowering style

of coaching, which was based on sharing of responsibility and decision making with the athlete (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Thus, the athletes were encouraged to find solutions from within rather than just relying on what the coach would tell them. These notions, along with the high benevolence (i.e. empathy) towards athletes, seems consistent with the empowering and autonomy-supportive principles of motivational interviewing.

3.2.4 Relationship Skills

Relationship skills constitutes of establishing and fostering positive and healthy relationships based on cooperation, dealing appropriately with social pressure, seeking help when needed, and being proactive as well as resolving and managing conflict situations (Lintunen & Gould 2014). These interpersonal skills have also been defined as social awareness, empathy and relationship management (Bar-On 1997; Goleman 1995, in Tshcannen-Moran & Carter 2016). The specific skills from the theory of Gordon (2003), that improve interpersonal relationships, include positive- and confrontational I-messages, mediating skills and avoiding use of “roadblocks” in communication. The I-messages are used especially when giving effective feedback of behavior (Lintunen & Gould 2014). The roadblocks are messages that can be damaging for relationships, for example messages that are judging, labeling, moralizing and threatening, among others. These roadblocks tend to get in the way of good listening (Lintunen & Gould 2014). I-messages consists of three parts. First, it describes a specific behaviour of the person. Second, it reveals the coach’s feelings about this behavior. Third, I-message expresses the tangible consequences of the behavior on the coach (Lintunen & Gould 2014). This seems especially useful in instilling responsibility in people, for this sort of message reveals what are the consequences of ones behaviour to others, and one can then take responsibility to correct it. In other words, when the athlete realizes what problems does his/her behaviour cause to the coach or other people in the vicinity of the athlete, he/she has a genuine feeling of guilt which can raise empathy. This empathy can be accurately expressed and then problems can be addressed with the relevant parties, which can help the athlete and his/her team and their relationships to grow. In fact, conflicts, when properly delt with, may actually deepen the connections with coach and athletes and

athletes and athletes, as indicated by a case study of excellence in elite team sport (Hodge et al. 2014).

3.2.5 Responsible Decision-Making

Sharing of responsibility and decision making seems to be in common for many of the modern high performance coaches (e.g. Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016; Din et al. 2015; Hodge et al. 2014). In social emotional learning, responsible decision making refers to considering ethical standards, safety, appropriate social norms, respect and contributing to the well-being of one's community (Lintunen & Gould 2014). Responsible decision making may be paralleled with the SWC's notions of their overall, very philosophical and ethical approach to coaching. Lara-Bercial & Mallett (2016) concluded that the SWC's had this driven benevolence within them, that they wanted to help people grow and develop, whilst growing and developing themselves at the same time. This philosophical standpoint steered the SWC's towards ethical and responsible decisions, rather than dictator like decision that are derived merely from the needs of the coach (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016; Mallett & Lara-Bercial 2016). In the heart of this philosophy is putting the human first and the athlete second. A lot of modern high performance coaches seem to have adopted this philosophical standpoint to their coaching (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016; Din et al. 2015; Hodge et al. 2014). Perhaps the motto of the all blacks, according to Hodge and colleagues (2014) encapsulates this philosophy: "Better People Make Better All Blacks". In other words, the development of human character and moral seems to be very important for HPC's. Furthermore, individual athletes seem to thrive in their team environment when responsibility is increasingly shared from the coach to the players as their capacity to take that responsibility grows, as indicated by the "flexible and evolving" nature of the All Blacks team (Hodge et al. 2014).

Values are crucial for responsible decision making. They are learned mostly in childhood through modeling identification (Gordon 2003). Later, in youth, values are also acquired through talking and discussing about their experiences and behaviours and reflecting these (Lintunen & Gould 2014). It may be impossible and also unethical to force others to adopt your values (Gordon 2003). Instead, one can model values and arrange opportunities to discuss and reflect what different things mean for different people.

Values have been established as a key ingredient to effective behaviour change both in acceptance and commitment therapy (Luoma & Hayes 2017) as well as in motivational interviewing (Miller & Rollnick 2013).

Emotional intelligence may be improved through training in athletes (e.g. Campo et al., 2016; Crombie et al., 2011) and in coaches as well (Chan & Mallett 2010). Research has shown that all the different levels of EI may actually be improved (Laborde et al. 2016; Campo et al. 2015). However, there seems to be a gap in the literature about what type of training would be most effective and how the training could actually be implemented (e.g. Boyatziz et al. 2013). Social emotional learning (SEL) is a broad umbrella for training inter-and intrapersonal knowledge and skills, that has been used widely for example in teacher development (e.g. Talvio et al. 2013), and it might provide a useful framework for developing high performance coaches.

4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The present study aimed to plan, implement, and evaluate the feasibility and acceptability of a coach training intervention programme, which focused on developing performance coaches' intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills. The aims of the current study in detail were to:

- 1) Develop a contextually relevant social emotional learning (SEL) programme for high performance coaches, which covers the elements of social and emotional learning framework (Lintunen & Gould 2014; Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), 2012).
- 2) Describe the implementation of the programme.
- 3) Describe the feasibility and acceptability of the programme tools and methods in terms of their utility to advance high performance coaches personal coaching practice.

5 METHODS

5.1 Description of the researcher

I have been working as a performance coach in Hints Performance since 2011. In 2014 I started also to work as a line manager for other coaches. I've been coaching elite racing drivers in Formula-1, GP-2, GP-3, Super Formula and Formula Renault, as well as individual elite ice hockey players and C-level executives, consultants and entrepreneurs. C-level executives refer to the highest level of leadership team members in corporate companies (e.g. CEO, CFO etc.). Furthermore, I have been leading group workshops and lectures in Hints Performance since 2014, mainly with corporate clients but also with elite racing teams. My main high performance coaching achievements are two Formula-1 world championship titles. The researcher has masters' degree in Sport Sciences, majoring in exercise physiology, and I am currently on a study leave to complete another MSc major in Sport and Exercise Psychology. The current research is the MSc thesis for this degree. Before the study leave I operated as the Coaching Director of Scandinavia, focusing on individual clients, managing the coaching staff in Scandinavia and developing the coaching content in the company. Coaching in Hints Performance is based on a holistic performance and wellbeing method, addressing areas such as physical activity, nutrition, recovery, biomechanics, mental energy, general health and core. The concept of core deals with inner motives, values and dispositions by three questions: Do you know who you are; Do you know what you want; Are you in control of your life? (<https://www.hints.com/>). Each client of Hints Performance, from a business executive to an ice hockey player or a formula-1 driver, will go through the same method, which is individualized depending on the goals and aspirations of the specific individual.

I have always been very interested in people, first about the physiology, now more about the psychological aspects. Sports has been a natural domain for me to exercise my interest towards people, as I've played sports all my life, mostly focusing on ice hockey. I had a semi-professional ice hockey career in the highest junior league and in the second highest senior level in Finland. My main sports achievements include silver in Finnish junior championships and bronze and silver in the second highest senior level. My interest towards people led me to coaching which I started as a personal trainer in 2006. Since

then I've become more and more interested in human potential and our ability to grow as individuals. The coaching philosophy of Aki Hintsu struck me as a special approach to advance human performance and wellbeing. It has also been endorsed by Hintsu clients and seemingly many other people based on how much Aki's book has sold in Finland and worldwide (over 100 000 copies sold). One of my main motives to join the present sport psychology masters programme was to investigate what literature says about elite high performance coaching practices. Furthermore, I wanted to bring this knowledge back to Hintsu Performance and compare and contrast this with the coaching tradition of Aki Hintsu in order to advance our coaching. Also, my motive for the current research was to develop myself as a facilitator of high performance coach development programmes.

5.2 Participants

The participant coaches were recruited from the senior coaching staff of Hintsu Performance. Criteria for participation was working full time and having a senior status in the company and also a minimum of 3 years of experience in coaching elite performers (e.g. C-level executives, professional athletes). Senior status in the company refers to being a Senior Performance Coach or Coaching Director. All the performance coaches (n=10) who fulfilled the above criteria in Hintsu Performance were invited to participate to the study. Eight (8) of the invited participants accepted to participate in the study. Consequently, 80% of the total population participated in the study. Two of the participants were female, and six of them were male. Six participants were Finnish and two were British, therefore the programme was delivered in English. The participants age ranged from 32 to 52 and their high performance coaching experience from 4 to 15 years. See below in table 4 the age and coaching experience of the participants.

Table 4. Participants (n=8)

	Mean	SD
Age (years)	37,8	6,1
Coaching Experience (years)	9,3	3,7

5.3 Research design and procedure

The present study was chosen to be an educational action research case study with mixed methods design. The development and implementation of a social emotional learning programme (Lintunen & Gould 2014) coupled with exploring the narrative identity of the coaches' (McAdams 2013) was the case of focus. An action research case study has been defined in the following way: "An action research case study employs an action orientated approach to a prescriptive case study process combining problem solving with research in a way that is appropriate to the circumstances of the research to provide both academic rigour and practical relevance." (Altrichter et al. 2002). In other words, action research case study aims to conduct academically rigorous study coupled with finding practical solutions to specific real-world problems. In this research, the main problem was that what are the qualities, method and content of an effective high-performance coach development programme that can advance intra- and interpersonal coaching knowledge and skills. Furthermore, an action research case study aims to evaluate and reflect the intervention during and after the intervention, and finally repeating this process. The above mentioned qualities of an action research case study are ideal for the present intervention, as it is essentially about assessing the feasibility and acceptability of a coach development programme.

Before the intervention, the participants participated in a roundtable needs discussion in order to steer the content of the workshops to more accurately meet the needs of these particular coaches, and to respect their autonomy as described in the SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Also, before starting the SEL phase of the program, the narrative identity of the coaches was explored to facilitate their self-awareness. This tool is called "The Life Story Interview" (McAdams 2013). This tool was not a measure, but a part of the intervention programme. The interview took approximately 2,5 hours and was conducted through an online meeting with an assistant researcher. The researcher has been working as a line manager and is a colleague for majority of the participant candidates. Consequently, there would have been a role conflict had the researcher performed the interview, as it is very personal by nature, and a more confidential and secure environment may be established by another interviewee, who has knowledge of this specific method. This interview was not recorded nor analysed, rather this dialogue was used as a foundation for the reflective discussions during the intervention programme. The assistant researcher was a student of

sport and exercise psychology from the University of Jyväskylä, who had training in reflective listening skills and familiarity with the life story interview method.

The SEL intervention included 3 facilitated workshops (8h+4h+4h), dialogues with fellow coaches in a group, reflecting the learnings weekly in a journal (30min) and with a peer coach (30min). There were also exercises assigned after each workshop. After the SEL intervention, the coaches composed their personal coaching practice framework to serve as a cornerstone for their day-to-day coaching practice in the future. Lara-Bercial & Mallett (2016) explored the practices of 17 serial winning coaches (SWC) and consolidated 4 separate themes related to “what do high performance coaches do in their day-to-day practice”. The themes in this framework were; 1) Philosophy, 2) Vision, 3) People, and 4) Environment. These themes served as the foundation for the participant coaches for writing their personal coaching practice framework, based on the reflections and learnings in the course and from their previous coaching education and experiences. See the research design and contents of the intervention programme more in detail in in Figure 5 below.

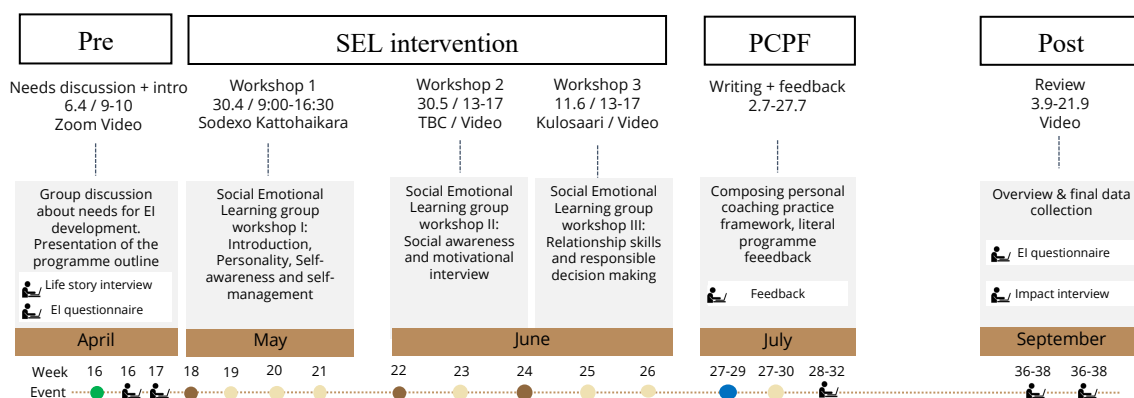


Figure 5. Research design and contents of the coach training intervention. PCPF = personal coaching practice framework. EI questionnaire = trait emotional intelligence questionnaire.

5.4 Measures, data collection and analyses

After each workshop, participants completed a short post-workshop feedback questionnaire which had a scale from 1 to 5 (from totally disagree to totally agree; see appendix 1). Means and standard deviations were calculated. A final semi-structured focus group feedback discussion was conducted after the intervention that qualitatively assessed the feasibility and acceptability of the current study (e.g. was the SEL intervention useful for your coaching practice?) See the questions in appendix 12.

The programme acceptability questionnaire was completed by the participants in the end of the training programme (see appendix 8). The researcher also kept a researcher's log during and after each of the workshops to aid in assessing the feasibility and acceptability of the SEL intervention. The researcher's log was used to reflect programme contents, methods and teaching styles, based on the reactions of the participants and the perceptions of the researcher. The participants completed the whole programme, including presenting their coaching practice framework to a peer coach, before the final focus group feedback discussion and the collection of the programme acceptability questionnaire. The focus group feedback discussion was recorded and analyzed after the discussion.

The participants filled trait emotional intelligence questionnaire (TEIQue, Petrides 2009), which takes 25 minutes, before the SEL intervention began. TEIQue has been used in athletic context before (e.g. Laborde et al. 2016) and the inventory shows adequate reliability (Petrides 2009). The TEIQue also has a clear and replicable factor structure comprising of four separate but interrelated dimensions of Emotionality, Self-control, Sociability, and Wellbeing (Petrides 2009). Furthermore, the TEIQue has been linked to neurophysiological parameters such as heart rate variability (Laborde et al. 2015) as well as to behavioral outcomes (Petrides 2009). In fact, Laborde and colleagues (2016) propose that the current evidence might steer researchers to use the TEIQue in their emotional intelligence training interventions. TEIQue was anonymously analyzed with a web-based scoring engine created by the authors of the instrument. The scoring engine can be found from the following internet address: <http://psychometriclab.com/overview/>. The results of the TEIQue analysis were handed to the participants before the third workshop. Feedback about the results were given by the main researcher only after the intervention programme so that that would not impact on the participant responses to the

questionnaires and interview. The feedback was written feedback, but also opportunity for spoken feedback was offered. The different domains of the TEIQue was discussed in the 3rd workshop with peers. Also, the coaches were assigned to evaluate their peers in the TEIQue domains in order to get additional perspectives to the traits of the participants. The results of the TEIQue was assigned to be shared in small groups after the 3rd workshop.

5.5 Ethical issues

The researcher is responsible for storing the data securely so, that no information of the study and/or the individual participants will be distributed to people external to the research group. The researchers' log included manually written parts during the workshops, which were translated to digital form (word) immediately after the workshop. The manual logs were destroyed after they were transferred to digital form. The manual questionnaires that participants filled (TEIQue, post workshop feedback and post programme feedback form), were securely stored in the personal office room of the researcher. These manual questionnaires are destroyed after they have been transferred to digital form, latest by end of December 2019. All the digital data was stored in the personal computer of the researcher, protected by a password, and are destroyed latest by end of the year 2025. The digital data was anonymized so that no identities are revealed in the data files. The data was anonymously used in the composition a masters' thesis. The original data files will not be distributed to anyone besides the researcher.

The researcher aimed to build trust and rapport with the participants, always trying to be mindful of their best interest, and also the fact that they may quit the research whenever they may feel like it. The potentially most sensitive part of the intervention programme, the life story interview, was conducted by the assistant researcher in order to ensure psychologically safe and trustworthy environment, for the researcher has been a colleague and/or a line manager for majority of the potential participants of the study. Life story interview was not be recorded, it was just an opportunity for the participant to reflect his or her life and values. Nevertheless, the methods used in this study should not cause any physical or psychological harm to the participants. An informed consent form was provided to the participants prior to the study. The participants were informed that

participation is voluntary, that the measurements will be treated confidentially and that they can refuse to participate at any point in the study without any consequence and without an explanation. The researcher tried to facilitate a trustworthy, friendly, but at the same time professional environment in the workshops, and in the final semi-structured qualitative interview. Upmost caution will be exercised considering issues of intrusiveness and inappropriate behavior, especially because the researcher has had working relationships with majority of the participants. Intervention times are kept reasonable (max. 8h for a workshop with several breaks, max. 2,5h for a single session), and arranged according to the available times of all participants. Although completion of some between-session exercises/forms is vital for intervention purposes and these exercises are highly recommended, the researchers did not hold participants accountable for not being able to do the tasks.

5.6 Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) provided a list of criteria to optimize trustworthiness of qualitative research. These criteria could be considered when planning, carrying out and presenting qualitative data. The criteria included credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. Nevertheless, it has been suggested that it is hard to operationalize such standards and the definition of trustworthiness remains essentially in the viewers eye (Barbour 2014, in Flick 2014). Barbour (Barbour 2014, in Flick 2014) instead encourages to prioritize the advice of others in qualitative research to ensure optimal trustworthiness. The present research did not use independent auditors or observers for practical reasons in the processing and analyzing of qualitative data, however the qualitative data was compared and contrasted with quantitative data in order to increase trustworthiness. Also, researchers' perceptions were compared and contrasted with the participant perceptions in order to mitigate the effects of individual subjectivities in perceptions and to offer different vantage points to the data. In fact, it has been proposed that qualitative findings can be compared with quantitative data to assess whether the meta-analytic findings are contradictory or complementary to the findings from quantitative analysis (Barbour 2014, in Flick 2014). This approach is called triangulation, and it can increase the trustworthiness of qualitative data (Barbour 2014, in Flick 2014).

6 RESULTS

This chapter presents the researchers log reflections as well as the content from the participant feedback forms and focus group discussion. The feedback forms were collected considering each of the tools and modules of the course (i.e. workshops, life story interview, homework etc.).

6.1 Needs discussion researcher's log

Five out of the eight participant coaches participated in the needs discussion that was held two weeks before the first workshop. The purpose of the discussion was to give an introduction about the programme as well as to hear about the needs and thoughts of the participants to more accurately steer the content of the workshops. The discussion was a 1-hour discussion held through online video meeting system. I presented a slide deck about the background, methods and schedules of the how of coaching programme. I wanted to share some of the most relevant high performance coach literature with the coaches, which concludes how elite coaches are very self-aware and people-aware and can act accurately to meet the needs and demands of different people in different situations. In other words, these coaches possessed good intra-and interpersonal knowledge and skills. This served as a rationale as to why we would do this sort of training. I also presented the social emotional learning framework as well as Dan McAdams whole person approach to personality to the participants, which would serve as the main skeleton for the programme and a means to develop the intra-and interpersonal awareness and skills. I wanted to make sure the coaches are aware about the specific time requirements of the programme, thus I presented what are the estimations for each of the task in the programme. Total estimation of time use per participant was 42 hours. I had pre-selected peer coach pairings and presented these to them during the session. The pre-selection was done because I wanted to avoid the coaches selecting a peer they would know very well and would prefer. Also, geographical vicinity impacted on the pre-selection of the pairing, in order to help the coaches to arrange their reflection sessions more easily. Finally, I asked for the needs and wants of the participants and the coaches agreed about the following:

- Learning from other coaches from different coaching situations
- Learn more about myself and other people

Learning more about how to better facilitate change in clients was also mentioned, as well as getting better at using different interpersonal coaching tools and timing their use in most effective way.

6.2 Workshop 1 – Introduction, personality, self-awareness and self-management

6.2.1 Researcher's log

The first workshop was the longest workshop (7,5h), and there were many aims in this session. First, my aim was to introduce the programme content and methods and agree about rules, learning goals and ways of working together. Since there was going to be a lot of sharing and learning about oneself and from one another, I wanted to particularly focus on creating safe working environment through mutually shared learning goal, rules and ways of working. Second, I wanted to present research about the personalities and qualities of elite high performance coaches, which provides rationale as to why training inter- and intrapersonal knowledge and skills is important for high performance coaches. My third goal was to introduce social emotional learning as a framework, with focus on self-awareness and self-expression in this workshop, which would serve as a main framework for developing the intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills. See the agenda for the Workshop I in table 5 below.

Table 5. Agenda for Workshop I.

Time	Theme	Method
9:00-9:30	Introductions	Group reflection
9:30-9:45	Introduction to the How of Coaching Programme	Presentation & Discussion
9:45-10:00	Our rules	Group work
10:00-10:45	Who and what are High Performance Coaches?	Presentation & Discussion
10:45-11:00	Break	
11:00-11:45	EI, Social Emotional Learning and Self-awareness	Presentation + Discussion + Exercises
11:45-13:00	Lunch	
13:00-13:30	Self-awareness and Self-expression	Exercises
13:30-14:15	Self-Management (I-messages)	Presentation + Quick exercises
14:15-14:45	Positive I-messages	Group exercise
14:45-15:00	Break	
15:00-15:30	Critical Reflection	Presentation & Discussion
15:30-16:30	Practicalities & feedback	Instructions, questions

The room was quite spacious office room, with big windows providing nice natural lighting. All of the eight participants were supposed to participate face to face to this workshop, for interacting face to face was assumed to be the best way to create a safe and effective working environment. Unfortunately, one participant was participating through online video system for he missed his flights before the workshop. All of the people knew each other beforehand, for they had been working together in the same company, although in different locations. However, this was a new group as such, thus focusing on group dynamics was thought to be important.

The workshop started with a round of group reflection, which was going to be a standard way to start the workshops. This was supposed to serve to support the autonomy of the participants as well as spark introspection and peer learning. The reflection was prompted with two questions: “Why am I here today?” And: “What meaningful coaching experiences do I have?”. The group shared their coaching experiences very openly and seemed to agree that they were participating so that they could learn more about themselves and from other coaches, similarly as to what was stated in the needs discussion. After this round of reflection, I introduced the programme content and methods (I wanted to be very clear about the expected time use and different modules of the programme so that people could prepare themselves). Whilst I let the participants know that this programme was part of my masters’ thesis and also developing Hints Performance Coach training, I reminded the participants that they can stop the programme any time they wish to do so and that everything is voluntary.

Group objectives and rules

Before setting group rules and their desired learning outcomes, I stated what objectives I had for the programme. My objectives included supporting and assessing the development of intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills of high performance coaches and reporting the findings in my thesis, as well as developing a training programme for Hints Performance Coaches. The objectives of the participant coaches were learning to use different tools with regards to client interaction (i.e. how, when), writing down one's own coaching philosophy as well as learning from and about oneself and one another. The working rules for this group were the following:

- No judgments – doers do mistakes, don't criticize about making decisions, but encourage
- Confidentiality
- Listen to others
- Share openly
- Be on time
- Have fun, enjoy
- Diversity – respect the individuality of people
- Commitment – you get what you give

After setting objectives and rules, I presented personality research about elite high performance coaches. In other words, what kind of social actors (i.e. traits and roles), motivated agents (i.e. goals and values) and autobiographical authors (i.e. life narratives) these people are (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Particular emphasis was on how coach description of themselves is highly congruent with athlete descriptions, echoing high self-awareness of these people. We had a brief discussion about the traits of the serial winning coaches (SWC, Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016), and the coaches in the room seemed to possess a lot of similarities with them. For example, the participant coaches talked about how they have a big thirst for learning and a strong work ethic, which may be signs of high conscientiousness, and this was analogous with the SWC's.

Life story interview discussion

We spent some 15 minutes to discuss about the life story interview, which was done before workshop I, and if they felt it had advanced their self-awareness. The coaches

concurred that it was a great experience to be the one who's being listened to, to be able to share ones' life story and get undivided attention from someone who genuinely listens and is interested about the story. In fact, the interest that was expressed by the interviewer by good follow up questions to the coaches' comments as well as a caring attitude seemed to be something that made the experience a rewarding one. The caring attitude by the interviewer was conveyed by supporting the autonomy of the coaches by reminding the coaches several times during the interview that they don't have to say what they don't want to say and that they may say whatever they want, and they may stop the interview whenever they want, if they feel like it. An interesting comment, that seemed to be widely accepted, was that it was a good thing to have an external interviewer, for the participants did not have to think "what this person will do with this information", but they could just talk and trust that the information being discussed is not going anywhere, but would stay just between these two people. One coach explicitly said that it was good that the interviewer stated that no information will be shared with the researcher, which helped creating a trustworthy and open environment. Also, the fact that the interviewer was unknown, seemed to further advance openness to share.

One of the coaches reported that the LSI helped to understand how his past has impacted on his coaching behaviour today. The questions provided by the interviewer were seen by beneficial to the coaches to also consider something they may have not considered themselves about their lives. In other words, the questions seemed to advance the coaches' ability to challenge their thinking which can advance self-awareness. One of the coaches said:

"It was very good to have accurate questions by the interviewer, I had not considered some of the aspects of my life that he asked from me."

The LSI "life as a book" seemed as a useful structure to think and talk about one's life and understand oneself better. Two of the coaches said they were very energized and inspired by the interview. One coach mentioned that the interview helped "going deeper in my life story than what I have previously gone". Another coach said that the LSI helped to "re-frame my life and my thinking". A particularly strong comment that emerged when discussing about the LSI (as indicated by most heads nodding) was "you can control your character, but not your reputation. Better to focus on your character, what you are, than

what other people think you are.”. In fact, several people commented on a discussion about strengths and weaknesses, how the LSI helped to consider them, and how considering them helps oneself to focus on ones’ character, and not relying just on the opinion of others. Something that also got most of the heads nodding was that it was particularly useful to put oneself to a clients perspective, to share about one’s life and be the one who’s being listened to, to better understand what client is experiencing when a good listener listens and asks good and challenging questions. One of the eight coaches was somewhat reserved towards the utility of the LSI to advance his self-awareness, stating that “I’ve been studying myself before as well and this interview did not bring new information about myself”. Nevertheless, majority of the coaches concurred that they would deploy sort of interview to high performance coaches who would like to advance their self-awareness and subsequently their coaching practice, but the interview would need to be done by an external interviewer. However, the coaches reported that this interview, whilst can be beneficial for clients, should not be widely used with them for it may bring about psychological issues which the coach may not have competence to deal with. After the LSI discussion we had a long lunch, 1h and 15min, to give informal time for the participants to discuss, relax, and to absorb what had been addressed before.

Social Emotional Learning – self-awareness and self-management

After lunch, I presented the social emotional learning framework and research about the importance of emotional intelligence in high performance sport. I focused on self-awareness, in other words perceiving and understanding emotions, recognizing one’s values and understanding ones strengths and limitations. These areas were quite extensively addressed in the LSI discussion, so I went through these quite briefly. We conducted “ice berg of emotions” exercise with the group. The participant coaches reflected on an instance when their client demonstrated angry behaviours. The coaches then reflected what emotions may have triggered those behaviours. I then wrote these emotions on the flipchart, where an iceberg was illustrated so that the angry behaviours were above the water and all the other emotions were underneath. The emotions included for example frustration and disappointment. We then went on to discuss as to why it may be important to understand what emotions are beneath the surface, underneath the visible “iceberg of emotions”. Some of the comments included that in order to connect with their clients, the coaches need to listen and seek to understand, not only judge them according to what reactions the client may express, for the reaction may be a sign of something else

what the actual reaction may directly indicate. One comment that seemed to resonate with the coaches was that the coach must be passionate first when dealing with “the top of the iceberg” (in this case anger). My perception of this exercise for this group of experienced coaches was that it was somewhat of a familiar topic, and it was not something that created new learning experiences.

We then continued to the topic of self-management from the SEL framework. I presented a video of a US college baseball coach who seemingly is out of control in his behaviour that stems from his emotions. This coach seemed to be reacting very harshly to his players (e.g. throwing balls at his players). We then talked about strategies to manage one’s own emotions in pairs, and then shared these with the group. These discussions seemed not to be very enthusiastic, I got the feeling that also this area is something that is somewhat familiar and even evident to these coaches. However, some comments sparked more discussion than others. For example: “We can’t choose how we feel, but we are not our emotions and can choose how we react”. This comment made some of the coaches discuss about how one can take responsibility of one’s actions and is not in the mercy of the feelings. The discussion continued to what happens if one is not expressing one’s emotions at all, but is always controlling those? The conclusion in the group seemed to be that you need to find a responsible outlet for all of your emotions, otherwise those feelings may burst out in the wrong way (e.g. uncontrolled anger) or otherwise stay in your body/head and harm you. However, the coaches stressed that expressing one’s emotions need to be done so that it is not harming anyone else. For example, if you are angry and need to get it out, you could throw pillows to a wall in your private space and time. Expressing one’s emotions in front of the clients was seen as something that should be mostly refrained from. However, one coach was adamant that he feels that expressing his emotions freely makes him “more human” to the client and their connection can deepen because of this. Others argued that coaches’ emotions are not relevant for the coaching process and coach needs to be aware of their emotions and “express those on their own time”. One coach was particularly strong about not expressing ones’ emotions in a non-responsible way, stating that he felt that any kind of violent expression of emotions (e.g. breaking things) is wrong, including in ones’ private life, not only coaching. However, also this coach felt that emotions need to be expressed, but can be expressed in a responsible way without harming people or things. After this I presented ways of communicating, ranging from over-responsible to under-responsible. I spoke

about you-messages, and finally I-messages as tools for responsible communication. After this short presentation we had a 15-minute break.

After the break I presented the structure of positive I-messages and the difference between describing behaviour and labeling people. I then instructed the participants to write down 3 positive feedback messages in I-form to their colleagues. I asked the participants to write one of the messages to a flip chart, underline the emotion, write in capital the behaviour of the other, and circle the consequences on you. We then discussed the content of these messages. This was supposed to help in really understanding I-messages. In fact, composing I-messages was not something that was fluent for all of these people. There were many messages that were focused on another person, but not expressing what are the consequences on the coach. Also, some messages struggled with identifying what the coach had felt due to the behavior of the other person. When we discussed about this, the coaches seemed to agree that many times the coaches consider their feelings as irrelevant, however in some cases they are not and revealing those may actually serve to strengthen relationships. I felt that this exercise was useful, as it brought about lot of discussion and it seemed to provide some new learning experiences.

Finally, I instructed the participants about their homework (three weeks with different themes) and reminded them of the upcoming programme activities and timelines. In the end of the workshop the participants had the chance to write literal feedback about the workshop.

Post-workshop researcher's log reflection

Overall, I felt that the the workshop was quite good start for the programme. The energy was good throughout the workshop, especially in the beginning. My energy was good during the workshop, and I felt I could articulate the presentations quite well. Also, facilitating the discussions and exercises went well, I thought, for the participants seemed to engage in their tasks and there was lively discussion.

I felt that the TEIQue results should have been included in this workshop, and proper discussion about this could have been good to advance their understanding of their emotional intelligence traits and dispositions. This would've suited the self-awareness theme very well. The TEIQue was completed by most of the participants before the first

workshop thus discussing this could have been in place for it was fresh in their minds. The participants actually expected that this would've been discussed, and some were slightly disappointed and were wondering that when this would be addressed. The initial plan was to touch this in the first workshop, but I did not manage to complete all of the TEIQue result analysis in time, as some of the questionnaires were delivered to me after the assigned deadline. We then agreed to discuss the TEIQue in the 3rd workshop.

I was approaching the first workshop with a careful attitude about how far the participants could and should be challenged with regards to their personality dispositions. I thought that better not to prompt too deep self-disclosure for example about the life story interview but see what they want to share and talk about.

On hindsight, I should have used the space better – we conducted most of the peer and small group discussions and exercises in the same room but these could've been done more also in the other rooms as there were couple rooms that we could use. These additional rooms were also very nice and comfortable areas with sofas and tables. I feel that the presentations could also have been shorter and more time for discussions and exercises should have been provided, even though I aimed to prompt discussions also during presentations, and there were many exercises that the participants did. I believe that the learning experience of the participants would have been better if I would have removed some of the content and made it shorter. I had 95 slides which was probably too much. A good goal might be to have more than half of the time for exercises and discussions, and maximum 10 minutes that just I am talking in one go. I can see that this has been my personal disposition, having too much content related to time at disposal, so this is a big area to focus in the future workshops.

6.2.2 Life story interview feedback of the participants

The participants' average evaluation of the overall success of the interview was 6 on a scale from 1-7 and the consultant's overall performance was evaluated to be 6.6 on average (scale 1-7). See the full participant feedback in appendix 15. The participants seemed to like doing the life story interview. There were many different perspectives in terms of what was particularly beneficial in the interview, as highlighted by the different

answers by the participants. Nevertheless, many participants stated how the structure of the interview was useful to probe one's life and how past experience have impacted on how one is and behaves today.

6.2.3 Participant feedback of workshop 1

The participants completed a post workshop acceptability and feedback questionnaire immediately after workshop 1. See the questionnaire in appendix 1 and the collated feedback in the table below. The feedback seems to highlight that the skills studied and learned in the workshop were beneficial for the participant's coaching practice as the mean rating was 4.4 on a scale from 1 to 5. Also, the discussions with other coaches were highly endorsed, as it was rated 4.4 on average. On the other hand, the pace of the workshop and the participants' energy level was on the lower end in the ratings (3.8).

Table 6. Workshop 1 acceptability and feedback (n=8).

Area	Mean	SD
The facilitator conveyed the workshop rationale well to group members	4,4	0,5
The facilitator provided clear structure and focus to the group	4,4	0,7
The facilitator had good knowledge of the topics covered today	4,3	0,7
The overall format of the workshop was good for my learning	3,9	0,6
The skills studied and learned today are beneficial to my personal coaching practice	4,4	0,5
The skills studied and learned today are beneficial for me outside coaching	4,1	0,4
Presentations helped in understanding the program concepts and themes	4,2	0,8
Presentations were helpful in developing my coaching practice	3,9	0,8
Discussions with other coaches were helpful in developing my coaching practice	4,4	0,7
The exercises done today were helpful in developing my coaching practice	3,9	0,8
The pace of the workshop was good (not too slow, not too fast).	3,8	0,7
Overall score for today's workshop	4,1	0,6
My energy level during the workshop	3,8	0,5

scale 1-5, where 1 = totally disagree and 5 = totally agree

Below the participants' comments to open questions in the post workshop 1 questionnaire.

What would you keep?

- Good to talk to other coaches about different ideas and experiences
- Nice format with discussion & lecturing
- Discussions were the best, I-messages exercise
- Good group of people
- Conversations, intro to the studies
- The whole topic is interesting and something which will help us/me to develop as a coach (and person)
- Discussion always informative, also the group tasks encouraged this and gave good direction for discussion

What would you change?

- Much more discussions
- I was expecting more content around values etc. I think more content could have been included around the theme of the day. Now it felt like we went already quite a bit to relationships as well
- Would have been useful if the article that was cited often would have been pre-reading material
- Not really something I did not like, but quite a lot of content, maybe less content and more time on each part
- Practicing facial emotions was challenging for some, I found it quite fun though, good to also do things you don't like or find uncomfortable

Other comments?

- Good workshop and very helpful to start the process and understand the programme
- Results of questionnaires? Good work Heikki!
- The presentations were always guided by scientific support and evidence which gives this topic a much more concrete base

6.2.4 Week 1 homework – emotions and self-awareness

The first and second workshop were separated by four weeks, and each week had a designated home work that was based on the first workshop learnings. The homework included some exercises and self-reflections in a journal, as well as a weekly peer reflection about the homework. See the homework assignment in appendix 2.

I provided comments and questions about the participants' journal reflections in order to give additional perspectives to their thinking, and to let them know someone is interested in what they write about. We had a communication channel for the whole group (Slack). Instructions, timetables and other common information and encouragement was provided in the mutual channel. I thought it was important to remind the group about the learnings in the workshop as well as about the homework – not in the sense that people have to do those, but in the sense that what have we learned and what could we learn.

Couple of the participants wrote very shortly, just bullet points and couple sentences, whilst most of the participants actually seemed to contribute quite a lot (as indicated by writing full sentences and providing a cohesive account of their reflections).

Participant comments about the homework

We started the workshop 2 with discussion about the homework and the associated reflections. The participants seemed to agree that the peer reflections were really useful – they tended to take the self-reflection further than where it could have gone when done alone. The questions provided by the peer coach seemed to help to challenge ones thinking. Journal reflection was thought to be rather shallow way of reflection. Also, there were a lot of differences between the coaches in terms of which homework piece were found beneficial by an individual coach.

6.2.5 Week 2 homework – Positive I-message and needs

This week was focusing on clearly articulating positive messages to another person and reflecting about ones needs. See the assignment in appendix 3.

Participant comments about the homework

I-message exercise got somewhat controversial evaluations. Some of the coaches mentioned they really liked to purposefully articulate encouraging I-messages and being very clear about one's feelings towards the other, whilst others thought it was somewhat familiar way of communicating and the connection to coaching seemed a bit vague. One coach mentioned how he "struggles to express emotions", and said that I-message exercise was challenging, in fact it felt awkward, but it was good to let the other person know how you really feel, so they do not need to assume anything. Couple other coaches agreed. One comment included the homework specificity – it was perceived that the homework was possibly too much directed towards "life", and not so much to coaching specific contexts. This seemed to be resonate with people, however some participants mentioned that life and coaching are highly interrelated and that many learnings that arise from everyday life can be used in coaching as well.

6.2.6 Week 3 homework – Personal Strivings

This homework was about what people try to do on a daily basis (i.e. their strivings). See the assignment in appendix 4.

Participant comments about the homework

Three out of the eight participants felt that this homework was the most useful one of the three first assignments as it was most structured and for it prompted interesting self-reflection (i.e. what am I trying to do in everyday life).

6.2.7 Participant feedback about homework weeks 1-3

See the feedback for homework for weeks 1-3 in table 7 below. Peer reflection got the highest rating (4.3 on average on a scale 1-5) and emotion expression and management exercises seemed to get quite low rating (3.1 on average on a scale 1-5). However, there were some deviation in the individual responses, especially regarding the exercises (SD=1.2). On the other hand, the strivings homework exercise got the 2nd best rating (3,6/5) of all of the exercises during the programme.

Table 7. Homework feedback weeks 1-3.

General feedback	Mean	SD
Journal reflection was beneficial for developing me as a coach (n=7)	3,9	0,9
Receiving additional comments for my journal reflections further aided my learning and/or helped to deepen my reflections (n=6)	3,7	1,0
Peer reflection was beneficial for developing me as a coach (n=7)	4,3	0,8
Peer reflection further aided my learning and/or helped in deepening my reflections (n=7)	4,1	1,1
The exercises and reflections benefitted or will benefit me in my personal life (n=7)	3,9	1,2
Week I – Emotions and Self-Awareness	Mean	SD
Paying attention to what emotions I experienced and expressed was useful exercise for developing me as a coach (n=7)	3,1	1,1
Trying to manage emotions and reflecting my own emotion management practices was useful for developing me as a coach (n=7)	3,1	1,1
Week II – Positive I-messages and Needs	Mean	SD
Positive I-message exercise was useful for developing me as a coach (n=7)	3,4	1,0
Reflecting the recognition and management of my needs was useful in developing me as a coach (n=7)	3,4	0,8
Week III – Strivings	Mean	SD
Completing and reflecting upon my “personal strivings” was useful in developing me as a coach (n=7)	3,6	0,7

scale 1-5, where 1 = totally disagree and 5 = totally agree

Below open question comments in the homework feedback from weeks 1-3.

What would you keep?

- Peer reflection
- Week 2 reflection
- Week 1 and 3 had in my opinion the best content
- All the exercises were good - could they be focused on shorter period of reflection time (day) or totally on few coaching sessions, maybe not? The first week’s exercise was so large it was difficult to start it. But I also learned that it’s better to read the home works before hadn, so that you can reflect better and even make some notes during the week
- I would keep it all

What would you change?

- I’m still waiting for some tools to use

- Structure the tasks a bit differently (more coaching related?) The last one was the easiest to do as there was clearer structure around it
- Nothing, depends on the student - for me exercises I and III did not give anything new
- The content for week 2 could potentially be revisited to see if there are ways of improving it further
- I'd like to see more about to actually facilitate behavioural change

Other comments?

- None

6.3 Workshop 2 – Active listening and motivational interviewing

6.3.1 Researcher's log

After the first workshop I came across with a sport psychology consultation video, where 3 sport psychology experts consulted the same client. I thought this was an excellent resource to be shared with the participants in order to orientate them towards listening and motivational interviewing skills. I asked them to watch this before the 2nd workshop, however I needed to apologize that I asked this of them only five days before the workshop, because I had not thought of this idea before. Nevertheless, three examples of experts was something I thought could provide very valuable lessons and seeds for discussions for the upcoming workshop.

The second workshop was held in a different space than the first one. This room was a lot smaller. Five participants were in the room, and 3 participants joined the workshop through online video meeting system. The slides that were presented were shared through the video system. I had some difficulties to get the technology working, for the TV in the room did not show a full picture of the presentation. Also, the audio was not good at the start, the online participants did not hear us perfectly well. The presentation computer was moved to the center of the table so the audio signal was better.

This workshop was started with a round of reflection about “how am I feeling today”. The question was supposed to prompt reflection of one's feelings in order to gain better

self-awareness of them, as well as to connect the group emotionally. Also, this was supposed to be an exercise to share one’s emotions (some of the coaches seemed to have challenges and reservations with this). The participants shared their feelings openly, mainly they talked about what’s happening at work and how their energy levels are. Most of them told they were very busy and they felt it in their energy and mood. The atmosphere was still quite positive and energetic one. As earlier mentioned, we also discussed about their experiences with the three weeks of homework. After these reflections, we continued to the actual agenda of the day (see below). We scheduled to use 4 hours for this workshop, with one official break in the middle of the session.

Table 8. Agenda for workshop 2.

Time	Theme	Method
13:00-13:15	Thoughts and feelings today	Group reflection
13:15-13:30	Reflecting homework – experiences and observations	Group reflection
13:30-14:15	Social Awareness & Autonomy-supportive coaching	Presentation & discussion
14:15-15:15	Active Listening & Motivational Interview	Presentation & discussion
15:15-15:30	Break + Coffee + snacks	
15:30-16:30	Motivational Interview	Long Practice
16:30-16:45	Debrief MI	Group discussion
16:45-17:00	Going forwards & feedback	

First on the agenda was talking about social awareness in social emotional learning and autonomy-supportive coaching behaviours. In my presentation, I connected the autonomy supportive behaviours to the practice of elite high performance coaches, highlighting their “athlete-centered” attitude towards coaching. I presented the self-determination theory to the participants and compared and contrasted autonomy-supportive coaching style to a controlling style, and what may be the psychological consequences of these styles. First task included the coaches to nominate both autonomy-supportive behaviours as well as controlling behaviours. This exercise did not feel very vital one, for it seemed to be almost self-evident for this group of people. I then presented an evidence based list of the above mentioned behaviours, and highlighted the agreement between what the coaches stated and what has been found in the literature. This part of the workshop felt dull and not very practically oriented, nor interesting for the coaches.

I then asked the participants to choose a peer and discuss how they felt about encouraging ego-involvement (i.e. focusing on winning and normative comparison) in high-performing clients. The pairs then shared their thoughts. Some of the most lively discussions were had around the following statements:

- Win yourself first, then others
- When ego becomes detrimental for the person, it needs to be managed

There seemed to be some agreement that only focusing on winning may actually hamper performance and that it is better to focus and compare one's own performances first and foremost. Also, there was discussion how ego can get in to the way of good preparation. The ego may take control and the athlete may become entitled and/or complacent and is not able to connect with the daily preparation work as a consequence.

We then went on to address social awareness from the SEL framework. We started off with talking about the 12 roadblocks for good communication (Gordon 2013). I asked the participants to share their experiences and dispositions with the roadblocks with a peer. The participants then shared their thoughts about their dispositions and seemed to agree that it is quite easy to sometimes fall to the trap of a roadblock. Especially advising and teaching, also moralizing, emerged as roadblocks that seemed to be familiar to these people. At this stage of the workshop, we were already 30 minutes behind schedule.

After the roadblocks discussion, I presented the concepts of active listening and we conducted a short 15min active listening exercise, where one person shared a problem, one listened and two people observed and provided feedback after. Finally, I presented motivational interviewing framework as well as some basic evidence-based information about facilitating behavior change. At this stage I felt I had to run these concepts through in a rush, so that there would be enough time for the most important practice, which was a long motivational interviewing session. I also felt that the energy was dipping in the room during the motivational interview and behavior change presentation, as people's body language was quite lethargic. After this presentation we had a 15 minute break.

After the break the I instructed the participants to pair up and conduct a 20-minute motivational interviewing session and a 5-minute reflection about the experience. The participants that were physically present, either went outside for the exercise or stayed in

the room. I did not monitor these discussions at all, for I wanted to give space to the participants to try out the exercise. After the task we had a group reflection about their experiences. The following statements emerged from the discussion:

- Important to consider how you start your interaction with client!
- Keep in mind the relationship between speaking and listening – aim to listen more
- Be mindful about what you share about yourself – there needs to be a purpose that benefits the client
- Listener needs to care for and show interest towards the speaker to create psychological safety and an openness to share
- Listener needs to be non-judgmental

There was some discussion around first impressions, that it is important to be inviting from the start and show you are there for the person. The discussion went to the three sport psychology expert consultations. The participants seemed to agree that it was useful to see these examples, as it helped them to see what good listening is in practice, and how different personalities conduct the same session. The discussion then moved to the life story interview experience, where the coaches felt that they were listened to very well. I asked the participants that what was it in the interviewer's style (in LSI) and manners that was most important for you to feel you've been heard. What emerged was that the interviewer seemed to have a caring attitude as indicated by his considerate comments like "you share just what you want to share" and "If something does not feel good it is ok to stop the interview or not share". Furthermore, the interviewer appeared truly interested about the participants, which came across due to his good and accurate follow up questions to the participant's comments. These two factors, care and interest, seemed to facilitate a feeling of being heard and also willingness to share and reflect oneself on a deep level. One of the participants mentioned how his peer was able to show a similar caring attitude coupled with a keen attitude to help, which seemed to facilitate openness to share and subsequently start to address some of the persons problems.

Post-workshop researcher journal reflection

The start of the session was not good, for I should have prepared before the workshop for the technological adjustments that occurred in the beginning of the workshop. What I did

just before the workshop, was carrying chairs to the room and moving table and other furniture so that we would have a nice round table space for us in the room. I also needed to bring TV to the room and connect it. All of this took my time and energy, and was definitely not optimal preparation for the workshop, I believe. Instead, I should prepare all the logistics and technology beforehand and have some time for myself to relax and to think about the workshop. This would help to start on time and be really focused on the participants and the content of the workshop. I also felt tired during the workshop. One factor is that the workshop was in the afternoon and I am not at my best during afternoons. This might have impacted on my critical thinking and decision making, which led to sticking too much to the original plan (which consisted of too much content), and not articulating the content optimally. Especially the self-determination theory had too much information, as well as the behavior change and motivational interview sections. I should've prepared with fewer slides and more focus on the actual practicing of listening skills, and discussions around these. I had 58 slides and four hours to use, which was clearly too much, specifically when considering the time that the exercises would take. Now the energy level of the participants seemed to drop especially towards the end, and also there was insufficient time to really practice the listening and share good learning experiences. I did not feel that I focused enough on the most important points, rather there was just too many points I tried to get across. Just focusing on the motivational interview could have been sufficient for a 4-hour workshop, for that concept is already very broad.

Nevertheless, the exercises seemed to stir discussion and advance the participant's learning even though the workshop time and energy management was not optimal. Also, the room was too small I believe for a good interaction during the exercises. Finally, having 3 participants online and 5 physically present was a challenge. Sometimes the online participants had difficulties in hearing our discussions, and many times I forgot to pay enough attention to the fact that there were online participants. I felt that the group dynamics was not optimal, we were like two separate groups that tried to come together from time to time. Better audio and better online participant consideration could help in these issues in the future. Still, probably having everyone present physically could be the best approach.

6.3.2 Participant feedback about workshop 2

Workshop 2 feedback highlights were discussion with other coaches and facilitators good knowledge of the topic. See below in table 9 how the participants perceived the workshop in more detail. Pace of the workshop was in the low end of the evaluations, which may be interpreted that the pace of the workshop was too fast.

Table 9. Workshop 2 acceptability and feedback (n=8).

Area	Mean	SD
The facilitator conveyed the workshop rationale well to group members	3,9	0,2
The facilitator provided clear structure and focus to the group	4,1	0,2
The facilitator had good knowledge of the topics covered today	4,4	0,8
The overall format of the workshop was good for my learning	3,6	0,8
The skills studied and learned today are beneficial to my personal coaching practice	4,1	1,1
The skills studied and learned today are beneficial for me outside coaching	3,9	0,9
Presentations helped in understanding the program concepts and themes	3,5	0,5
Presentations were helpful in developing my coaching practice	3,7	0,8
Discussions with other coaches were helpful in developing my coaching practice	4,6	0,5
The exercises done today were helpful in developing my coaching practice	4,2	0,8
The pace of the workshop was good (not too slow, not too fast).	3,4	1,0
Overall score for today's workshop	4,0	0,5
My energy level during the workshop	3,2	0,6

scale 1-5, where 1 = totally disagree and 5 = totally agree

The participants' answers to the open questions in the post-workshop questionnaire below.

What would you keep?

- Theory was good + practice & discussion
- Overall a good workshop. Good job!
- Everything
- The whole workshop content was good and interesting - I would still evaluate if there is too much materials or actually too large thematic areas it's so interesting and important as well that we should spend a bit more time on each of them
- Active listening is a good skill to possess. I think it probably comes naturally to a lot of the Hints coaches but it's a good refresher

What would you change?

- More time for motivational interview
- More conversations
- Less content of planned in a way that we don't have to run it through - we can digest that information better. Role play exercises - do they work really, there could be a pre case?
- More examples needed to bring to life the motivational interview. Self-determination theory and types of coaches (dictators and athlete-centred) was all repetition for me as I have covered it a lot in both university courses. Again I'd like to just jump to working examples where coaches have acted in a certain way to facilitate a change for certain client.

Other comments?

- In perfect world works better when all participants are in the same place physically, it was a bit difficult to follow the discussions and to do the homework remotely, but I understand the boundaries as well. Really interesting topics!
- This workshop felt more theoretical. And I understand the importance of basing our practices on science and research, however I will never turn the theory into working knowledge unless I use it/or have an example of someone else using it in a practical situation.

6.3.3 Week 4 homework – Active listening and motivational interviewing

This homework focused on listening skills and motivational interviewing. See the assignment in appendix 5.

Participant comments about the homework

We discussed about the listening skills homework in the beginning of workshop 3. The participants seemed to value listening skills and thought that practicing those is a very good thing for coaching. One participant said that it is very important to be able to challenge and ask questions from the client but do it in a non-judgmental way. This participant also said how timing is crucial in communication. This comment led to discussions around when and how to share the coaches' own experiences and stories to the client, if at all, for this may get in the way of good empathetic listening. One other

participant mentioned that it is good to share also some of your struggles and weaknesses, stating that people are impressed by your strengths and connect with you through your weaknesses. Participants seemed to agree, with one other coach saying how sharing is important in order to be authentic and to model sharing also ones' weaknesses, so that the client would be also encouraged to share. Nevertheless, another coach highlighted how it is very important to be careful and choose the right timing when disclosing personal information, and be mindful when this is useful and when not. We discussed about the word "why" and agreed how this may be judgmental if the timing is not right but could possibly be used if there's a good rapport between the coach and the client and if the timing and context is right.

6.3.4 Participant feedback about week 4 homework

Below the perceptions of the participants about homework for week four. Active listening was perceived as most beneficial homework exercise of all the homework exercises during the programme (rating 3,7/5,0). Motivational interviewing was among the most preferred homework exercises (rating 3,5/5,0). Nevertheless, there was high deviation in the answers of the individual participants (ranging from 2 to 5). This homework feedback was collected from six participants, two participants were not able to deliver the feedback.

Table 10. Homework feedback week 4 (n=6).

General feedback	Mean	SD
Journal reflection was beneficial for developing me as a coach	3,2	1,5
Peer reflection was beneficial for developing me as a coach	3,5	0,7
Peer reflection further aided my learning and/or helped in deepening my reflections	3,5	0,7
The exercises and reflections benefitted or will benefit me in my personal life	3,8	0,8
Week IV – Active Listening and Motivational Interview		
Active listening exercise was beneficial for developing me as a coach	3,7	1,0
Motivational interview exercise was beneficial for developing me as a coach	3,5	1,0

(scale 1-5, where 1 = totally disagree and 5 = totally agree).

What would you keep?

- Active listening exercise
- Peer reflection was the best part of the program for me. Journal reflections were not that useful, maybe we could develop the questions for the journal task a bit more so that they are clear and thought provoking.

What would you change?

- I'd like to do more of this, the peer to peer chats are great but it is only with one person so therefore lackst he strength of numbers in terms of diversity of experience/expertise/sex/age etc....
- Let's develop the exercise further. Overall, the balance in the workshops could be looked at – between lecture, discussion and practicing. Right now I have trouble remembering what exactly were the exercises in active listening and motivational interview. These are the “concrete tools” that would be useful for coaches.

Other comments? – none.

6.4 Workshop 3 – Coaching identity, relationship skills and responsible decision making

6.4.1 Researcher's log

This workshop was a 4-hour session which was held in the same room as the previous workshop. Initially this workshop was supposed to be held in a larger room in another location in Helsinki, but the participants actually had “Helsinki office” in their calendars for the venue, so people were not prepared to be in the other location. I learned about this calendar issue in the morning and we changed the location to Helsinki office in the morning at around 10:00. I prepared the office again one hour in advance, moving chairs, television and table so that there would be a good roundtable setup and TV screen visible to all. This time these logistics were quite fluent. Four participants were participating physically, and four were participating online through online video meeting system. One

participant brought a microphone that helped in the audio quality for the online participants. See below the agenda for the workshop.

Table 11. Agenda or workshop 3.

Time	Theme	Method
13:00-13:15	Me & my thoughts & feelings today	Group discussion
13:15-13:30	Reflecting active listening & MI exercises	Group discussion
13:30-13:45	Introduction for today	Presentation
13:45-14:45	Relationship skills - Dealing with conflict	Presentation + exercises + discussion
14:45-15:00	Break	
15:00-16:00	Responsible decision making - Values	Presentation + discussions
16:00-16:30	Peer evaluations	Exercise
16:30-16:45	Summary & Going forwards	Presentation + discussions
16:45-17:00	Feedback	

Reflecting thoughts and feelings was quite relaxed, people were laughing and joking when they shared how they were doing. One participant came twenty minutes late for he was coming from a client workshop, and we also listened to his thoughts and feelings. The coaches appeared busy, but still feeling quite well. The introduction for the day included my presentation about how it may be important for the high performance coach to have clear identity and values in order to be an efficient and able coach. I used example of John Wooden and his quote: “It matters not the subject taught, nor all the books on all the shelves, what matters most, yes most of all, is what the teachers are themselves”. This quote was used as an example of that clear identity and values are more important than any literal knowledge in the coaching process. I also presented an overview of relationship skills and responsible decision making domains from the social emotional learning framework. Relationship skills and responsible decision making dealt with the following tools and themes:

- Problem solving I-message
- Solving conflict of needs
- Solving conflict of values
- Ethical and constructive choices about personal and social behaviour
- Balance in responsibilities and communicating (needs, emotions)

I presented some examples about conflicts between individuals and also in teams, how these conflicts, when properly dealt with, seem to be important to strengthen relationships and team culture. Important feature in conflicts, as reported by successful high performance coaches (i.e. Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016), was that individuals needed to take responsibility for ones mistakes and communicate and adjust ones behavior rather than protect ones pride. I then presented the idea of conflict of needs, which means that the behaviour of the other person is preventing one from performing his/her duties, living his/her life or feeling well. In conflict of needs, one may submit, attack, or be positively assertive. I presented some examples how assertiveness was visible in the behaviour of the successful high performance coaches. I used for example this quote: “Coach is not always nice, but knew exactly when he was and when he wasn’t and plays whatever role he thinks is going to get the job done on that day” (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Finally I presented problem solving I-message, which consists of three parts:

1. Neutral description of the behaviour
2. The concrete consequences of the behaviour on me (i.e. how does it conflict with my needs)
3. My feelings

I then assigned an exercise to the coaches. I asked the coaches to write down three problem solving situations that the coach had had, and to write problem solving I-messages for the situations. I then asked the participants to write one of the messages to our mutual online communication channel (slack). Majority of the coaches’ messages in the communication channel related to the client coming too late to the meeting. It was curious for me as the coaches found it difficult to articulate their messages in this manner. In fact, only two of the eight messages consisted of all the three parts of the problem-solving I-message. The coaches had biggest difficulty in articulating how they felt about the behaviour of the client. In fact, actually three of the eight coaches described their actual feelings in their message. Here three example messages:

“I feel that coming late again to our meeting, you don’t respect me or our meetings. Our schedule is messed up AGAIN.”

“You keep giving up, too easily. When you do this it prevents you reaching your potential. As your coach I feel sad as I know you can reach a higher level.”

“You keep coming to our meetings 15-30 minutes late, without letting me know in advance. This means I'm losing efficient working time. I feel like you are not respecting our meeting, or my time.”

I thought these messages seemed to have a labeling connotation to them and addressed it with the group by asking that how they feel when someone uses expressions such as “you always” or “you keep doing”. I gave them an example of a relationship and said that I really don't like when my wife tells me that I always do something. I explained how this kind of expression may be a close estimation of the behaviour, but may not be exactly true as it is quite hard to “always” behave in certain way. Therefore using statements as “you always” may not be fair nor productive. The coaches talked about this with interest, it seems, and they appeared to reconsider how they would like to frame their messages so that it does not create unnecessary conflict. At this stage we were late of the schedule. We had a break at 15:15, instead of 14:45 as initially planned. During the break I decided to leave out “win-win” presentation and exercises, which was supposed to deal with finding a compromise in communication where both parties win as opposed the other party only feeling good about the situation. I did this for I wanted to have enough time for more important content and exercises.

After the break I presented about “shifting gears”, which dealt with shifting from confrontative message back to listening. I then presented their homework about dealing with conflict. See this assignment in figure 11 below. Next, I presented information about conflict of values. I introduced some of the literature about values, considering what they are and how they are formed. I then introduced ideas how to deal with a conflict of values in the following way:

1. Define value differences using active listening and I-messages
2. Can I accept the difference?
3. Can I or do I need to change? If not, do I want that the other person changes their behaviour with me?

I then asked the coaches to discuss what they think is good to do if they feel that the other person needs to change their values. After the discussion they shared how they felt that one cannot change other persons values, and especially a coach should not try to change the other persons values. I then explained how people may find compromise in how they behave around one another if their behaviour conflicts with the other's values, trying to highlight how behaviour is an accurate and changeable unit, whilst values are a lot harder to change. Finally, I presented how one can act as a model with one's values, which may or may not impact on value transfer to the other person.

At this stage we had one hour to go in the workshop, which I thought could be insufficient for what I had planned. The next task was to present "coaching values and wisdom" that each of the coaches had and felt resonating with them and their coaching identities. I first presented my thoughts of this to give an example. The comments from the coaches included the following:

- Creating an atmosphere of "we are in this journey together" with using we-language rather than you- or I -language.
- Empowering the clients to be self-sufficient
- Partnership with clients. Equally valuable contributions to the process from both parties
- Enjoyment, joy, strength-based coaching
- Brave to deal with conflicts
- Client-centered, coach-led process
- Process first, don't worry about outcomes
- Honest always
- Growing together with the client, enjoying the process
- Learning and developing, every day
- Person to person, heart to heart. Be yourself, be open, be vulnerable if needed. Step in to the shoes of others
- Help people set boundaries, help them to reflect
- Educate
- Be yourself, be honest, try to really care for the person

After these presentations by the coaches, we moved to responsible decision making. I asked the coaches how their values materialize in their responsible decision making in their coaching. The coaches discussed as a group how they sought to behave in the manner what they thought was right. The coaches seemed to put high emphasis on actually behaving according to their values, not just saying them out loud. Next, I presented Don Hellison's model of responsible decision making. I did this very promptly as we were short of time. As a final exercise I asked the participants to evaluate their peers in the 15 facets of trait emotional intelligence on a scale from 1-7. I asked the participants to form two groups of 4 people (one person of the group needed to be the same person they did their home work reflections with). I was intending to have a discussion around the TEIQue peer evaluations, but unfortunately we did not have enough time to do this. Instead, I instructed the participants to arrange a group session about the findings. In this session, the coaches would have the opportunity to share their TEIQue results and discuss how they felt and ask how other people feels about their results. This was supposed to advance their self-awareness, if the coach could get observer feedback of their behaviours in the domain of emotional intelligence. I did not feel so good about the fact that this important and challenging area was left unaddressed in the workshop. The workshop would have provided a good and safe opportunity to unpack the TEIQue results. Especially due to the fact that we had had good discussions and exercises around conflicts, for subjecting your TEIQue results could bring about conflict if your perceptions of your inter-personal behaviours differ from the perceptions of others. Actually, at least one of the coaches seemed surprised about the peer evaluations of himself, which would have merited a good unpacking of this. I offered that I could be present in their TEIQue group discussion sessions, so that there could be a "mediator" in the discussion who could also seek to facilitate a safe and constructive environment.

I presented a short summary of what we had been doing in the course so far, and also about the final tasks for the participants. I felt stressed for the timetable and was very prompt with this presentation. Final task for the participants was to write a positive I-message at some point to the communication channel.

Post-workshop researcher journal reflection

This workshop had poor time management, as did the previous one. I had hard time anticipating how much time the different presentations and exercises would take. Also,

there was too much content, 68 slides in total and considering there were many exercises it was just too much for a four-hour workshop. I had some flexibility during the workshop, which was improvement from last workshop, but there was just still too much content related to the time at disposal. I felt frustrated after this workshop as it was our last one, and I would've hoped to finish off well, and not in a rushed way. I felt that the best takeaway from this workshop was the dealing with conflicts and particularly using I-message for that. The coaches seemed to really encounter something new and unfamiliar, and they saw that there could be some sense to change some of their ways of communicating in order to deal with conflicts in a more constructive and efficient manner.

6.4.2 Participant feedback about workshop 3

Below the perceptions of the participants about the third workshop. Discussions and knowledge of the presenter got the highest ratings, whilst presentations and energy level got relatively lower ratings.

Table 12. Workshop 3 feedback (n=8).

Area	Mean	SD
The facilitator conveyed the workshop rationale well to group members	3,9	0,7
The facilitator provided clear structure and focus to the group	3,9	0,9
The facilitator had good knowledge of the topics covered today	4,4	0,8
The overall format of the workshop was good for my learning	3,9	0,7
The skills studied and learned today are beneficial to my personal coaching practice	3,9	0,4
The skills studied and learned today are beneficial for me outside coaching	3,7	0,5
Presentations helped in understanding the program concepts and themes	3,7	1,1
Presentations were helpful in developing my coaching practice	3,7	1,0
Discussions with other coaches were helpful in developing my coaching practice	4,3	0,8
The exercises done today were helpful in developing my coaching practice	3,8	0,8
The pace of the workshop was good (not too slow, not too fast).	3,9	0,9
Overall score for today's workshop	3,8	0,4
My energy level during the workshop	3,7	0,5

scale 1-5, where 1 = totally disagree and 5 = totally agree

What would you keep?

- Room for discussions. The values discussion.
- Content was very good, there was a lot of information to take in. I think that it might be a good idea to use as many different sources for quotes
- I really enjoyed this one, and think it is very relevant. Particularly thinking about my own coaching identity. It helps to give clarity, particularly as I find it closely links to my own identity and therefore my life story. I am looking forward to digging deeper into my coaching philosophy as I have never really done this and I believe it will massively help me as a coach with how I coach my athletes and what I want them to turn out like. Hope that makes sense. Linked to this the relationship skills are always interesting to think about. I think this is so individual and what works for some athletes/clients doesn't work for others. I believe a coach's biggest skill is to be a chameleon and adapt to the individual they have in front of them to maximize their performance. So the opportunities of this course where I have listened to others' experiences have been priceless. I would go even further and try to have regular workshops where we talk about just our experiences, tactics used, thought processes and get other coaches' opinions on these.

What would you change?

- A bit rushed at times, especially the end
- Think about the "peer evaluation" part. The format was not the best. I understand the meaning but would do it some other way (plus avoid word "evaluation"). Would switch the values & conflict part - discussing values first might help in deepening the conflict - discussion. Perhaps define the used concepts (like values and how behaviours, attitudes and values are linked together)
- It would be great to be face to face with the workshop
- I read on someone's feedback that they questioned the role play's effectiveness. As much as I agree with this I also believe it's the only way to really practice how to perform a new skill before you try on a client. I just think this area needs refining to make it as life like as possible. Maybe with some real life examples that we can all think of before the workshop or that you can provide us with. Especially as everyone seemed to pull up the same example of a client being late, which definitely narrowed our opportunity for learning in this area. Although on the flip side, it also helped get differing views/tactics on the same issue.

Other comments?

- Adding A&R active-constructive responding
- This program is a good starting point. We need to make sure there is a balance between discussion and useful tools & practising how to use these. The program and logistics needs a bit refining (send agenda in advance, make sure everyone knows where meeting takes place/send zoom links; be clear about tasks pre&post workshop, make sure the people in Zoom are included in discussion)
- Heikki, this process and workshops has been very valuable and I think something similar to this structure for new coaches and existing coaches would be very beneficial. The how of coaching is very much neglected area in my opinion. It's a good process linked to our core and the clients core... A topic within Hintsu I don't think we do enough work on. I'd like to do more of this, the peer to peer chats are great but it is only with one person so therefore lackst he strength of numbers in terms of diversity of experience/expertise/sex/age etc....

6.4.3 Week 5 homework – TEIQue peer group discussion

See the homework assignment for week 5 in appendix 6. Only one group conducted the TEIQue group discussion, and they preferred to do it just by themselves. I got feedback from two participants who conducted the discussion, that it was useful to hear comments from others from your inter-personal behaviours. There seemed to be a good agreement in the self- and peer assessments of these coaches but also some points that these two coaches had not considered before. I did not get any literal feedback about the TEIQue assignment, possibly due to the coaches having holidays then.

6.4.4 Week 6 homework – Dealing with conflict

See the homework assignment for week 6 in appendix 7. Specific literal feedback was not returned regarding the “dealing with conflict” homework, possibly due to the coaches having holidays then.

6.5 Post-programme feedback

6.5.1 Programme acceptability and feedback questionnaire results

Acceptability of the programme was assessed through programme feedback questionnaire (see appendix 8). The participants evaluated their perceptions of the different tools and methods and their utility to advance their coaching practice. See table 13 below for the quantitative feedback of the whole programme. One participant did not return the feedback for thus there were seven participants who answered to the programme feedback questionnaire. Life story interview, composing personal coaching practice framework and peer reflection got high ratings, whereas the trait emotional intelligence questionnaire and journal reflection got low ratings.

Table 13. Participant acceptability and feedback of the programme (n=7)

Area	Mean	SD
The how of coaching program met my expectations	3,6	0,8
The skills studied and learned have been beneficial for my personal coaching practice	3,5	1,3
The procedures and progression were clear during the program	3,6	0,5
The pace of the program was good (not too slow, not too fast)	4,1	0,4
The facilitator was professional	4,6	0,5
Life story interview was a good method to gain more awareness of myself as a coach	4,7	0,5
I would recommend the life story interview to coaches who want to improve their coaching practice	4,6	0,8
Completing and reflecting my trait emotional intelligence questionnaire (TEIQue) helped in developing my coaching practice	2,7	0,8
I would recommend completing and reflecting the trait emotional intelligence questionnaire (TEIQue) for coaches who want to improve their coaching practice	3,7	1,0
Composing personal coaching practice framework was beneficial for my coaching practice	4,1	1,1
I would recommend composing personal coaching practice framework for coaches who want to improve their coaching practice	4,5	0,5
Social emotional learning workshops were beneficial for my coaching practice	4,0	0,6
I would recommend social emotional learning workshops for coaches who want to improve their coaching practice	4,3	0,5
Reflections with a peer coach helped in developing my coaching practice	4,3	1,3
I would recommend peer reflection for coaches who want to improve their coaching practice	4,9	0,4
Keeping a journal of my social and emotional learning helped in developing my coaching practice	3,0	1,3
I would recommend keeping a journal of social and emotional learning for coaches who want to improve their coaching practice	3,6	1,1

scale 1-5, where 1 = totally disagree and 5 = totally agree

Participant answers to the open questions in the programme feedback questionnaire below.

What was the central objective of the programme?

- Develop awareness of our own coaching style (biases etc.) and learning how we can develop as a coach based on serial winning coaches; using specific practices.
- To help understand the how of coaching to enable us to become better coaches. To discuss different ideas with coaches and to think about different techniques
- To help us become better and more professional coaches.
- To improve our coaching skills and understand some of the theories behind our behaviours.
- Develop as a coach. See things from another perspective

What was especially good about the programme?

- Being able to share somewhat confidential coaching experiences with other coaches and analyzing our actions from different points of view (from other coaches). Also learning specific skills we can use to aid us in difficult situations in order to become a more effective coach.
- The variation in methods allow different types of contact and learning styles.
- Exploring together with others what it means to be a good coach and how to facilitate change in clients.
- Peer discussions help me to go deeper into the agenda and all the information about improving our social and emotional skills were really good.
- Life story interview
- Group discussions and sharing thoughts in different topics. Session about active listening is something that woke me up and I have been using that more in my coaching.

How could the programme be improved?

- I personally would like even more practice with the skills and techniques that were presented (e.g. active listening, confrontations, motivational interviewing etc.)
- Face to face meetings and workshops as much as possible. This allows us to create rapport with our peers and hence better conversations.
- Doing something for the first time always has some hick-ups, but overall the program was great. Using technology could be improved to enable remote participants to

participate better. The overall structure/flow/progression could perhaps still be clarified more as we go along. Some sections felt perhaps more relevant than others, but then again, others may have enjoyed different sections than I did. I think that we could spend time even more in the beginning to dig a little deeper into our own identity (although the life story interview was great).

- More practical training session could help to understand how to use these skills and information that was given to us.
- More group discussions and sharing experiences. I personally wanted to get more challenged in terms of my reflection journal.
- Make the program more simple in terms of the tools and the overall structure. Sometimes it was hard to know/remember what tools should be used and tasked to be done. The program could have only: 1. Life story interview, 2. Group workshops, 3. Coaching framework

Finally, I would like to say...

- A big thanks for involving me in this process, it was very useful, interesting and I would love to do more. I really feel it should form a regular part our Hintsä coaching practice in educating and developing coaches.
- Thanks for all your work on the area. And I hope that this is an area that is continued in the future.
- Thank you Heikki for pulling this together!! You did a great job!!
- Still needs to be improved a bit, but I see a lot of potential in the program. This topic is the key what differs coaches and us at Hintsä from others.

The programme feedback questionnaire (see appendix 8) also contained a section which evaluated the most preferred tools and methods in the programme. The questionnaire instructed to rank the different methods such as life story interview, trait emotional intelligence questionnaire, composing personal coaching practice framework, peer reflections, social emotional learning workshops, group discussions, and one method that the participants' could choose. See table 14 below how the coaches ranked the different tools and methods in terms of their perceived benefit for the coaches' coaching practice.

Table 14. Most preferred tools and methods in the programme.

Area	Rankings	Average ranking	SD
Life story interview	2,2,2,4,1,2,2	2,1	0,9
Peer reflection	4,1,4,1,4,4,3	3	1,4
Writing personal coaching framework	1,5,1,6,5,3,5	3,7	2,1
Group discussions	5,7,6,2,2,1,4	3,9	2,3
SEL workshops	7,3,5,3,6,5	4,8	1,6
Trait emotional intelligence questionnaire	6,6,7,5,3,7,6	5,7	1,4
Motivational Interviewing	3,1	2	1,4
Reflections with facilitator	3	3	0,0
Journal reflection	4	4	0,0

Rankings represent the individual preferences for the different learning tools and methods that were used during the programme (1 = most beneficial method/tool and 7 = least beneficial tool/method). Average ranking represents the average ranking of the specific learning tool/method.

6.5.2 Post-programme feedback discussion researcher's log

The final feedback group discussion was held 7.11.2018, approximately 3 months after the programme. The discussion was held through an online video meeting system. Five out of the eight participants made it to the call, as there was last minute illnesses as well as urgent client appointments. I started the discussion with a short words of welcome and introduction to the purpose of the call, which was to assess the strengths, weaknesses and the utility of the programme to improve the coaching practice of high performance coaches. See the manual for the discussion from appendix 14, with preliminary questions.

Strengths of the Programme

My first question was about the strengths of the programme. One participant talked about the life story interview (LSI), how it was a very good tool for reflection and analyzing own biases. This participant continued to talk how the LSI laid the foundation for the reflections during the programme, and how the peer reflections were useful for him to take introspection further. On a similar note, another participant commented that it was good to first do introspection through the life story interview as well as the different home work tasks, and then take these reflections to be discussed with the peer coach. All of the participants agreed about the utility of the LSI to enhance self-awareness. The coaches also concurred that the peer reflections were very useful to advance one's self-awareness and therefore coaching practice. Motivational interviewing, good structure in the

programme, active listening, working with the personal coaching practice framework as well as group discussions were also mentioned in the strengths discussion by one or two coaches.

Weaknesses of the programme

One participant talked about the fact that two out of the three workshops were done through video system, which hampered his engagement and learning. This participant felt that the first workshop was a lot better than the two last ones, which were the remote sessions for this person. Another participant mentioned his eagerness to do reflection with a broader range of peer coaches, not just with one, in order to get more perspectives and versatility. One coach suggested to assign prework before the workshops to cover some of the content that would be addressed in the session, so that there would be more space for discussions and exercises in the actual workshops, as this coach felt that those were the most important parts of the workshops. A theme that seemed to spark lively discussion was the notion that quite a lot of the exercises and discussions revolved around life and relationships in general, and not enough to specific coaching related issues. This was perceived to bring more practical utility to the discussions and exercises. In fact, all of the coaches agreed that a more coaching-specific focus in the exercises and discussions would have improved the feasibility of the programme. Furthermore, all of the coaches said that more practical training would have been needed for example with I-messages as well as other tools. One of the coaches highlighted his eagerness to dive deeper to self-awareness and identity already at the start of the first workshops, stating that “there’s no need to beat around bushes”, but go straight to the point and challenge the participants. Other coaches seemed to agree as they were nodding their heads and making subtle agreeing sounds. This coach continued to say that whilst the life story interview was fresh in their minds it could’ve been discussed more and deeper in the first workshop to continue the good and beneficial self-awareness reflection. In fact, one participant proposed that each coach could have brought a theme to the group to be discussed, which they found interesting and useful about themselves when conducting the LSI.

Couple of the coaches mentioned how there could’ve been more examples from the corporate world, as vast majority of the research and examples in the presentations were from the sports world. This was thought as a hindrance as Hints coaching operates in both corporate and sports domains. Two participants mentioned about being

overwhelmed with content in the workshops, which was counterproductive to really focus on the most important topics. Finally, discussion around composing the personal coaching practice framework seemed to spark interest, for all of the coaches participated in this discussion and concurred that it would have been very practical and beneficial to start composing it already at the start of the programme, not only after all the workshops and homework. This would have helped the coaches to articulate their learnings from the workshops, reflections and homework, while they were still fresh in their minds.

Feedback of the tools and methods in the programme

Social emotional learning was perceived as a somewhat useful framework by the coaches, however some of the areas seemed to be less valuable than others, at least for two of the participants. These participants mentioned that responsible decision making seemed like common sense, and not that useful to address. The first workshop, which dealt with personality, self-awareness and self-management, was thought to be a good start to the programme, however most of the participants seemed to wish for more challenge straight from the start, as previously mentioned. Also, more work with values and understanding people with different values was mentioned as a development area. The participants talked quite extensively about the life story interview. The participants thought that this would be good for the coaches, but not necessary for clients, as it may trigger unwanted memories or even traumas, that the coach has no competence to deal with. One coach highlighted how the process of the LSI gave him a lot of clarity for his coaching, understanding better why he does things in a certain way. Another coach continued mentioning that it is very good to have clarity of “what brought me here”. Finally, the coaches mutually agreed that the LSI should be done with an external interviewer so that a perfectly safe and trustworthy environment would be allowed, which was seen as a mandatory prerequisite for a successful experience.

The second workshop addressed social awareness and motivational interviewing. This theme was seen as the most interesting theme of all the social emotional learning areas. The participants mentioned that they liked motivational interview a lot as a method to listen and motivate clients. The video of the three sport psychology experts consulting the same clients, that the participants watched before this workshop, was thought to be very good example of good listening skills and helped the coaches to see what it means in practice. They mentioned how this seemed to help to orientate them towards the listening

exercises that were done in the workshop. However, four hours was seen as too little time to go through this important topic. One coach actually proposed that a full day could be devoted to this alone, as it was one of the best and most useful parts of the programme, considering the practical coaching benefits gained. Other participants seemed to agree.

The third workshop, relationship skills and responsible decision making, was described to be somewhat useful but not always enough coaching-specific. One coach talked about how for example the I-messages are good for general communication, how it can be important to let people clearly know what your intentions are and what you stand for. Some people seemed to agree. Values were addressed more in this workshop, however the participants once again stated that this could have been done already in the first workshop.

There was lively discussion about physical versus video participation to the workshops. Most of the coaches mentioned how it would be best to have everybody face to face, as it was perceived to be the best way to interact on a deep level with the other participants, as well as to follow the presentations. The participants saw some challenges in having half of the group over video and half of the group physically present. Couple of the coaches mentioned how it was sometimes difficult to follow the presentations and discussions and do the exercises when participating via video system. These participants also thought that the physically present participants might have got more out of the workshops. The discussion ended to the mutually agreed notion that the workshops should be either face to face to all or over video to all, as this would ensure that all participants would have equal opportunities to benefit from the workshops. However, the participants thought that the first workshop should perhaps be one that everyone participates physically, so that good group dynamics could be established (i.e. connection with participants, safety).

As mentioned before, composing the PCPF was proposed to be useful by the coaches, however the participants thought this process should have started already in the beginning of the programme. This was thought to allow accurate “note-taking” immediately when some learning occur during the programme. One participant mentioned how it felt useful to have this sort of a structure to reflect ones coaching practice, however the structure could have been more concise. This coach felt there were some repetition in the questions, for example in the philosophy and people sections. Also, having the quotes that emerged

in the workshop in the PCPF assignment was seen beneficial by this coach. Some coaches seemed to agree with these notions, however one coach mentioned not liking the quotes so much and felt they did not have so much practical utility. One participant shared how writing is not “his thing” and proposed that this sort of task could be also done as a recording, as he felt his learning style was more auditive. Another coach continued this stating that it would be good to acknowledge the different learning preferences of people and offer different modalities to construct their ideas.

Overall, most of the participant felt that the time was well spent and specific what it aimed to do (i.e. especially advancing self-awareness). One participant said that there was some lack of commitment from his side as his work duties seemed to hinder him from engaging fully to the home work reflections and also the PCPF task. One coach mentioned how this was “new type of training”, and an exciting and important area to go into. Nevertheless, all seemed to agree that the programme should be more focused in the future (i.e. less content).

The peer reflections were already highlighted in many of our discussions as a very beneficial method to advance one’s self-awareness and coaching practice, and this notion was repeated again in this discussion. However, one participant pointed out how having some more versatility in reflection could have been good (i.e. more reflection partners).

The TEIQue received some mixed opinions. The main hindrance with the TEIQue was how it was deployed. The participants all thought there was not enough time to address this in the third workshop. The experience could have been better if this exercise would have been done in the workshop, and not assigning the debrief part of the exercise to be conducted after the workshop. In fact, four of the eight participants never had the debrief session. The participants that had the debrief, stated that it was beneficial to go through the findings to gain more knowledge of oneself. The participants all felt that this sort of exercise can be beneficial for coaches to advance their self-awareness, however it needs to be properly executed to get full benefits. Also, an alternative method, via character strength survey was proposed to investigate the trait area of personality of coaches.

7 DISCUSSION

Emotional intelligence may be improved through training in athletes (e.g. Campo et al., 2016; Crombie et al., 2011) and in coaches as well (Chan & Mallett 2010). Research has shown that all the different levels of EI may actually be improved (Laborde et al. 2016; Campo et al. 2015). However, there seems to be a gap in the literature about what type of training would be most effective and how the training could be implemented in practice. Thus the aim of this study was to plan, implement, and evaluate the feasibility and acceptability of a coach training intervention programme which focused on developing high performance coaches' intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills. In essence, the present research aimed to describe how the researcher and the participant coaches perceived the training programme. The focus in describing these perceptions was on the different tools and methods that were used, as well as on the process of implementation of the programme through the researcher's journal.

The main finding in this study was that high performance coaches perceived the training of intra-and interpersonal knowledge and skills through social emotional learning intervention, as well as exploring their narrative identities, as beneficial for their coaching practice. In more detail, the coaches found the life story interview narrative identity reflection and peer reflections as the most useful areas of the programme to advance ones coaching practice. Nevertheless, what is "beneficial for coaching practice" may mean a variety of different things. For some, it means better ability to facilitate performance in athletes. For some others, it may mean the holistic development of the human being, which is not only limited to athletic performance. The participants of the present research were Hints Performance coaches and the ethical code of Hints Performance state that coaching is about guiding the person holistically to live a better life and to perform better. Currently, also many of the other successful high performance coaches seem to have adopted an athlete-centered holistic approach to coaching, which fosters both the performance and holistic human development aspects. In fact, the recent coaches of one of the most successful teams in elite team sports, the All Blacks of New Zealand, highly endorsed "connections" and "character development" in their coaching philosophy, which they felt also contributed to performance (Hodge et al. 2014). Also, research on elite coaches seem to agree with this as most of these coaches focus on developing the person first and then the athlete (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016, Din et al. 2015). The

present study aimed to focus on the coaches as human beings and develop them so that they would be better equipped to develop others. The research programme used social emotional learning (SEL, Lintunen & Gould 2014) as a framework for the training. The SEL framework was complimented with Dan McAdams (e.g. McAdams 2013) three-layered approach to personality psychology (i.e. traits, strivings, narratives), as it has been suggested to be beneficial to advance the self-awareness of high performance coaches (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016).

The perceptions of the participants and the researcher about the strengths and weaknesses of the present intervention programme will be discussed next.

7.1 Strengths, weaknesses and limitations of the programme

The results of the present study may have been impacted by a “response bias” that occurs due social desirability reasons. This led to the fact that the researcher and facilitator of the programme was a colleague of the participants, which may have impacted on the participants responses, especially in the final feedback discussion. These coaches seemed to be quite outspoken and confident, which may help them to articulate their thoughts truthfully, even negative ones. However, also these coaches may have been influenced by social desirability when they were answering to questionnaires and speaking about their perceptions in the interview. Furthermore, a valid question to ask is that how well the results of the present study could be transferred to other groups of high performance coaches? The participants in the present study had somewhat good experience in coaching high performers (9,3 years on average), including elite athletes, which may relate to the high performance coach populations that have been previously researched (Mallet & Coulter 2016; Lara-Bercial & Mallet 2016; Mallet & Lara-Bercial 2016). Nevertheless, the difference with high performance coaches in previous research compared to the present study population is that the present research had participants who had not won world championship or Olympic medals, even though having athletes and corporate clients performing at the highest level in their environments. Thus, all the results of the present study, especially the transferability of the results to account for other high performance coaches, should be interpreted with caution.

The present research did not use other credibility checks with the qualitative data besides comparing and contrasting those with the quantitative results. For example, the qualitative data could have been subjected to a critical examination by an independent auditor or auditors, which could have increased the credibility of the findings of the study (Flick 2014). Nevertheless, the qualitative data was compared and contrasted with quantitative data, which can increase the trustworthiness of the findings (Barbour, in Flick 2014).

One other limitation in the findings in the present programme is that only those tools and methods that were used in this particular intervention programme were evaluated. A lot of other useful tools and methods could have been more beneficial than the ones that were used presently, however this research is not able to confirm this. Nevertheless, as the present study was an acceptability and feasibility study, it aimed to investigate the potential of a set of content and methods, that some authors have suggested, to advance the coaching practice of high performance coaches. The findings of this study may be used to further narrow what is most beneficial to deploy to HPC's who want to improve their intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills, which seems to be beneficial if a coach is to develop his/her coaching practice. Furthermore, the participants were volunteers who were very motivated and keen to learn about emotional intelligence, which may overemphasize their learning and positive perceptions of the programme. In fact, for example the findings by Tschannen-Moran and Carter (2016) verified the adult learning principle of choice, where volunteer participants learned and improved more in emotional intelligence compared to those who were required to take the training.

The participants perceived the life story interview, discussions with other coaches, peer reflection and the motivational interviewing as the most preferred tools and methods in the programme to advance ones coaching practice. LSI was perceived as a good introduction to the programme. Listening skills and motivational interview seemed to be among the most preferred practical coaching-related methods. Some of the used tools and methods emerged as more beneficial, on average, than others to advance the coaches' coaching practices. However, there were discrepancies between the individual participants about what was useful for each individual, as indicated by the rather high standard deviations in the rankings and ratings. One of the participant's comment in the programme feedback questionnaire fortifies this notion: "Some sections felt perhaps more

relevant than others, but then again, others may have enjoyed different sections than I did.”.

7.1.1 Life story interview

The LSI was highly valued when asked about if they thought the LSI was a good method to gain more awareness of myself as a coach in the programme feedback questionnaire. There was also very low standard deviation, showing high congruence between the coaches. The coaches especially liked the fact that they could put themselves to the shoes of the client, so that they could better see what it feels like to be really listened to. The group discussions revealed that the interviewer’s success was mainly attributed to the interest that was expressed by the interviewer by good follow up questions to the coaches’ comments as well as a caring attitude. The caring attitude by the interviewer was conveyed by supporting the autonomy of the coaches by reminding the coaches several times during the interview that they don’t have to say what they don’t want to say and that they may say whatever they want, and they may stop the interview whenever they want, if they feel like it. The accurate questions seemed to help to get the introspection further than what the coach could go by themselves.

Mallett & Lara-Bercial (2016) suggested the use of the LSI as a tool to advance HPC’s self-awareness, and it seems to be a sensible notion according to the present research. Nevertheless, the participants in the present research would have liked even more challenge in the workshops in terms of the life story interview. One of the coaches mentioned in the final feedback discussion that there is “no need to beat around bushes” with this group of people, referring to the fact that they were population who wanted to be challenged also in group setting, even concerning confidential personal issues. Other participants seemed to agree. Another comment in the final feedback questionnaire highlights this notion: ”I think that we could spend time even more in the beginning to dig a little deeper into our own identity (although the life story interview was great).” I was approaching the first workshop with a careful attitude about how far the participants could and should be challenged with regards to their personality dispositions. I thought that better not to prompt too deep self-disclosure for example about the life story interview but see what they want to share and talk about. However, this may have been a

misjudgment from my side. These coaches are very eager to learn more about themselves and others and could have benefited from a deeper reflection and sharing already from the start. For example, prompting a peer discussion in the first workshop about the LSI and the personal stories that are impacting on ones coaching behavior today could have been beneficial and acceptable for this group of people. These coaches seemed particularly keen to advance their self-awareness and were open to share their stories and experience to aid their learning and the learning of their peers. In fact, self-awareness has been asserted to be the cornerstone for other areas of emotional intelligence (Hopkins 2011) and the serial winning coaches (SWC) highly endorsed the utility of good self-awareness to efficient coaching (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016). Also, the SWC's had a high self-awareness indicated by the high congruence in athlete and coach reports of their behaviours (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016).

7.1.2 Personal coaching practice framework

Writing the personal coaching practice framework was considered beneficial to advance one's coaching practice and there seemed to be quite high agreement with five of the coaches. Furthermore, six coaches highly recommended the PCPF task for coaches who want to develop their craft. However, one coach specifically mentioned in the final feedback discussion that "writing is not my thing" and that he prefers talking and listening as learning methods over writing. Thus, it seems to be important to offer both auditive as well as literal opportunities for reflection to meet the different learning preferences of coaches. However, it may be worth to encourage the development of some sort of tangible personal coaching practice framework as the participants rated this task highly and were very eager to recommend it to other coaches. This framework could be, by default, a literal product according to the feedback of the present study, however the opportunity for an audio-recording may be worth providing as people differ in their learning preferences. Finally, all coaches concurred that it would have been very practical and beneficial to start composing the PCPF already at the start of the programme, not only after all the workshops and homework. This could have helped the coaches to articulate their learnings from the workshops, reflections and homework, while they were still fresh in their minds. Also, the participants mentioned that the PCPF assignment had too many questions and some of the areas were somewhat overlapping. Thus, it seems that the

assignment would need to be simplified further. The PCPF assignment is available on request from the author of this paper, but the framework is based on the research paper of Lara-Bercial and Mallet (2016) so the basic frame this task can be also found from there.

7.1.3 Social emotional learning workshops

The social emotional learning workshops were found beneficial by the participants, however the workshops got slightly lower overall ratings compared to specific methods (i.e. peer reflection, LSI). The first workshop was the most preferred one whereas the second and third workshop got a bit lower overall rating. The highest ratings in the workshops were for workshop 2 “discussions with other coaches”. The second workshop also got high rating for “the exercises done today were helpful in developing my coaching practice” question. These notions may be the consequence of the coaches finding listening skills and the motivational interviewing framework especially beneficial for their coaching practice. In fact, active listening and motivational interviewing were among the three most highly rated homework exercises, and these methods were highlighted in the “what would you keep” section in the post workshop 2 questionnaire as well as in the post programme feedback questionnaire. Also, the final feedback discussion included a mutually agreed mention about motivational interview as one of the strengths of the programme. See a quote below by one of the coaches in the post programme feedback questionnaire:

“Session about active listening is something that woke me up and I have been using that more in my coaching.”

The notion of advancing listening skills has not emerged in high performance coaching literature to the knowledge of the author of this paper. Thus, this would be an interesting area to study further, especially considering how improved listening skills might impact on the coach-athlete-performance relationship.

In the final feedback discussion, two of the participants mentioned that responsible decision making seemed like common sense, and not that useful to address. Nevertheless, the coaches seemed to like the discussions around values, which is part of the responsible

decision making. It seems that the delivery of the third workshop was not optimal for it got the lowest overall rating (see table 17 below). There might be a need to improve this area of SEL intervention, especially by making it more coaching-related and less about general life.

A broadly accepted statement was that more practical work with the skills and tools was desired in all of the workshops. These two comments in the programme feedback questionnaire echo this notion; “I personally would like even more practice with the skills and techniques that were presented (e.g. active listening, confrontations, motivational interviewing etc.)”, “More practical training sessions could help to understand how to use these skills and information that was given to us.”. In practical terms, more than half of the time could be used for exercises when the aim is to develop intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills, as the present study used less than half of the time for exercises and more than half of the time for presentations and discussions.

It was curious for me that the coaches found it difficult to articulate their confrontative I-messages. In fact, only two of the eight messages consisted of all the three parts of the problem-solving I-message. The coaches had biggest difficulty in articulating how they felt about the behaviour of the client. In fact, only three of the eight coaches described their actual feelings in their message. Here one example message (see other messages in chapter 6.4.1). “I feel that coming late again to our meeting, you don’t respect me or our meetings. Our schedule is messed up AGAIN.”. Even though the third workshop was perceived as least useful by the coaches, the HPC’s in this study seem to have a need to practice articulating their emotions in a clear and constructive manner. However, this notion would need more empirical support. Also, it would be interesting to study that how improved emotion expression may impact on the coach-athlete-performance relationship. The skill of emotional expression through problem solving I-message may be useful for athletes for energy management, for it may be easier to set boundaries to resist excessive demands of others if the athlete is skilled in these. Consequently, the coaches should be able to use this skill in order to model it and teach it to their athletes.

Arguably, high performance coaching revolves around the needs and feelings of the athlete, and the coach may be used to neglecting their own emotions as a consequence, or at least finding their own emotions as irrelevant. However, this notion would need more

research. Nevertheless, the serial winning coaches highly endorsed the importance of self-care and taking their own time, which may imply that they took care of their (emotional) needs elsewhere and leaving those out of the coach-athlete relationship. In fact, the discussions in the present programme indicated that a high performance coach is responsible for the coaching process in a way that the needs and feelings of the coach need to be mostly dealt with elsewhere. Whilst it is important to express ones emotions to create close and trustworthy relationships and I-messages provide a good tool for this (Lintunen & Gould 2014), communicating in this manner may not be beneficial when looking at motivating and encouraging the high performer. The I-message consist of the non-labeling statement of the behaviour of the other, consequences of the behaviour on me and my feelings. This type of communication may not always serve the coaching process, as the consequences on a coach and the feelings of a coach may not always be relevant for this. These messages can help the coach to build good personal boundaries and model rules and ways of communicating. But if the aim is to encourage the high performer, tying the client behaviours to the goals and values of the athlete may be a more suitable approach. This sort of values-based motivational approach to commit to change behaviour is used for example in motivational interviewing (Miller & Rollnick 2013) and acceptance and commitment therapy (e.g. Hayes 2004). Also, Lara-Bercial and Mallett (2016) stated that serial winning coaches can act as chameleons, doing what seems beneficial in each context and with each person. Below a quote by one of the athletes of a serial winning coach that illustrates this point:

“(the coach) wasn’t always nice, but knew exactly when he was and when he wasn’t and plays whatever role he thinks is going to get the job done on that day” (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016).

Furthermore, Mallett & Lara-Bercial (2016) report that the athletes of the serial winning coaches values were very connected to their performance, which provides the coaches a sort of a mandate to be very demanding towards them. This, in turn, hints to the direction that I-messages would sometimes need to be coupled with questions about what are the outcomes of the athlete behaviour for their performance, and not just on the coach. After all, the coach has responsibility to build an optimal coaching process with the athlete, whereas the athlete has responsibility of their performance. In some cases the coaches feelings that arise due to certain athlete behaviours, may not be relevant to be expressed

to the athlete, if this expression is counterproductive for the coaching process. Instead, coaches should always reflect when to express and when not to express their feelings to their athletes, as indicated by the above quote by one of the athletes of a serial winning coach.

One of the biggest weaknesses in the workshops seemed to be time and content management which sometimes compromised optimal learning experience for the participants. The first workshop was fairly good in terms of time and content management, but still some content could've been removed as indicated by the participant feedback. The participants rated "the pace of the workshops was good" lower than all the other elements of the post workshop feedback questionnaire. Furthermore, one participant wanted more discussions and another suggested that less content would have been better in the workshop. There were more challenges in the time and content management in the second and third workshops. The pace of the workshops two and three were rated to the low end compared to other questionnaire elements. In the "what would you change" section of the post workshop feedback questionnaire for the second workshop the participants responded that they wanted more time for motivational interview, more conversations and less content, as well as having less theoretical emphasis (see chapter 6.3.2 for more details). Similarly, one of the participants perceived the third workshop as "a bit rushed at times, especially the end". Other participants did not comment more on the time management of the third workshop and it is somewhat in conflict with the researcher's log as the notion there was that there was too much content and too little time. Furthermore, the rating was somewhat high for the pace of the workshop for the workshop three. Perhaps some of the participants did not find the time and content management as an issue in the third workshop.

In practical terms, workshop one had 13 slides per hour, workshop two had 15 slides and workshop three had 15 slides per hour. When looking at these numbers, one could draw a rough conclusion in terms of how many slides per hour could be feasible when implementing workshops that are focusing on practical intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills training for high performance coaches. When synthesizing quantitative feedback and the perceptions of the researcher as well as those of the participants, the first workshop seemed to have the best slides per hour ratio. However also this seemed not be optimal. Thus, as a simple rule of thumb, although it's difficult to

know exactly as facilitators are different, somewhere around 10 slides per hour could be a feasible target when conducting these workshops. This would allow more time for concrete practice of the intra- and interpersonal skills as well as more focus for discussions and presentations. This would meet the learning needs of the coaches more accurately as discussions with other coaches and practical exercises were highlighted in the post-workshop feedback questionnaires as helpful in developing one's own coaching practice.

Finally, feedback discussion, final feedback questionnaire as well as post-workshop feedback all revealed some insights about preferences for conducting workshops rather face to face than over video. Two of the three workshop were delivered over video format for half of the participants. In fact, one participant consistently addressed the issue of participating via video in all of his feedback opportunities. The other online participants in the two workshops were less vocal however they also reported that online participation hindered their ability to fully engage and learn. Nevertheless, all but one of the participants concurred in the final feedback discussion that this sort of workshops could be done efficiently over video as well, but the first workshop would be important to be face to face to ensure the building of good connections in the working group. The skills of the facilitator in using the video conference system of the present programme may have hindered the learning experience of the remotely participating coaches. One participant also commented this issue: "Using technology could be improved to enable remote participants to participate better." For example, audio connection was poor in the second workshop and the different functionalities of the Zoom video system could have been utilised better to facilitate the group discussions and pair work more efficiently. Furthermore, the participants concluded in the final interview that for the online video workshop to be successful, all of the participants should participate through video. This would allow an equal learning opportunity for all as in this case all participants would get equal attention from the facilitator. There has been research conducted over video-format on emotional intelligence training in instructional coaches, and it seems that emotional intelligence may be improved also through video method (Tschannen-Moran & Carter 2016).

7.1.4 Trait emotional intelligence questionnaire

The trait emotional intelligence questionnaire (TEIQue) was found less useful in developing the participants coaching practice compared to the other tools and methods in the programme. The coaches rated “completing and reflecting TEIQue helped in developing my coaching practice” by far the lowest of all of the different elements in the programme. Also, the participants preferred this tool the least when compared to other tools and methods in the programme. However, the participants seemed to want to recommend the use of these tool to coaches who want to improve their coaching practice. This discrepancy between the personal experience and recommendation may be explained through the unsuccessful delivery of this tool. In fact, the participants all thought there was not enough time to address this in the third workshop. The experience could have been better if this exercise would have been done in the workshop, and not assigning the peer debrief part of the exercise to be conducted after the workshop. Furthermore, four of the eight participants never had the debrief session. The participants that had the debrief session stated that it was beneficial to go through the findings to gain more knowledge of oneself. The participants in the final feedback discussion all felt that this sort of exercise can be beneficial for coaches to advance their self-awareness, however it needs to be properly executed to get full benefits. Also, an alternative method, via character strength survey was proposed to investigate the trait area of personality of coaches.

7.1.5 Homework

Keeping a journal about the homework seemed to receive mixed perceptions by the coaches. Some of the coaches did not like it at all, some seemed to value it highly. This discrepancy can be seen through the high standard deviation in perceiving the journal reflection as beneficial. In fact, one participant reported being very “auditive” person and found talking and reflecting with a peer very useful, but writing was something that he felt did not aid his learning at all. There was a tendency for all the coaches to favour talking to writing as a method of reflection, but one of the participants actually mentioned preferring writing as a reflection method. In general, apart from the reflective peer discussions, the home work exercises themselves did not get very high ratings compared to other elements in the programme. Emotion recognition as well as emotion management

got the lowest ratings whereas active listening and strivings got the highest ratings. Nevertheless, there were quite high standard deviations also in these perceptions, which, again, highlights different preferences of different coaches.

7.2 Conclusions and practical applications

Research on the training of high performance coaches (HPC) intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills is in its early days. The present research aimed to develop a training programme and evaluate tools and methods that had been used in high performance coaches before. However training studies in high performance coaches have been very limited. Therefore, the present research relied mostly on recommendations from different authors. For example, Mallet and Lara-Bercial (2016) suggested using life story interview, personal strivings matrix and learning from other coaches and reflecting with them, in order to gain more self-awareness which may serve as a crucial cornerstone for the HPC's coaching practice. The TEIQue appeared to be a potentially beneficial tool to examine the trait-level of the HPC's personality as it had been previously used in emotional intelligence training research in sporting context (e.g. Campo et al. 2016). Finally, Lintunen and Gould (2014) proposed that social emotional learning could be a useful framework to use in the training sports coaches. The present study integrated personality psychology (traits, strivings, narratives) to the self-awareness element of the SEL framework. The fact that there has not been empirical evidence to support the selection of most relevant and efficient tools to train the intra-and interpersonal knowledge and skills of the HPC's poses a major limitation for the findings from this study. It may be, that there could be more suitable methods and tools, but there is just no knowledge available of these in the literature. Thus, the participants in this study were not able to rate the tools and methods in this study against all the tools and methods that may be out there. However, there is more than fifty years of experience in training of SEL-skills successfully to teachers, managers and parents (Gordon 2018).

Nevertheless, as the present study was an acceptability and feasibility study, it aimed to investigate the potential of a set of tools and methods to advance the coaching practice of high performance coaches. Furthermore, as these coaches were already rather experienced ones (average high performance coaching experience 9 years) and coaching

high performers at present, it may be safe to say that they had had some exposure to different learning methods in the area of intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills. Still, most of the participants surprisingly struggled with articulating their feelings, which could be a sign that exposure to training the intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills may have been limited.

The participants seemed to like the overall programme, and it seemed to benefit their coaching practice as indicated by their quantitative programme feedback as well as their anecdotes from feedback discussions. SEL may be a good framework to deploy to high performance coaches, however, there needs to be high individual consideration in the implementation of this framework. In fact, one of the main and very consistent finding was the fact that the individuals had very different learning needs and preferences. In practice, there was high variance in the preferences of the different SEL areas as well as between the specific tools and methods that were used. Nevertheless, some consistencies were also found. From the SEL workshops, the second workshop that focused on listening skills training, was perceived as one of the most practically useful methods in the programme by all of the participants. This was an interesting notion and one that has not emerged in the HPC literature. Thus, it would be interesting to study how improving listening skills might impact on the coaching practice of the high performance coaches. From the individual tools, the life story interview (LSI) and peer reflections were seen as very beneficial methods to advance ones coaching practice by all of the coaches. In fact, the life story interview was the most preferred method in the programme and the peer reflection the second most preferred method. Furthermore, there was quite high agreement between the coaches as indicated by the low standard deviation when ranking these tools. These notions are consistent with the suggestion of Mallet & Lara-Bercial (2016) to use life story interview with HPC's training, as well as with the finding from the serial winning coaches' preference for peer and mentor learning (Lara-Bercial & Mallett 2016, Mallett et al. 2016). Thus, it seems safe to say that life story interview is a feasible tool to use in high performance coaches training and the training programmes should have a strong emphasis on peer interactions and deep reflections that target higher self-awareness, as well as enough time for practical exercises.

One of the practical applications of the present study was to use the findings to compose a "How of Coaching Handbook" for Hints Performance coaches. This product serves as

a manual for interacting with clients, with high emphasis on listening and motivational skills. Furthermore, the findings from this study can serve to further narrow what is most relevant and efficient way to implement a high performance coach training programme to advance intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills. The present research was an effort to implement something that seems beneficial according to present literature and rank-order the tools and methods and assess the feasibility and acceptability of the whole programme. More research is needed in this area, so that the training of high performance coaches would be implemented with most useful and practical tools and methods. Nevertheless, some of the tools and methods used in the present research programme seem to be worthwhile considering if the target is to enhance the coaching practice of high performance coaches.

The strength of social emotional learning is that it addresses all areas of intra- and interpersonal knowledge and skills, which helps in filling potential gaps that an individual may have. However, different individuals have different gaps, which makes it difficult to organise a programme that would benefit all participants equally. In future research and when organising similar programmes, there could be separate modules where coaches could choose from which would fill their potential gaps. However, this may also be problematic because of the fact that can a person be always aware of what (s)he is not aware of? Thus, according to the present research, one practical recommendation could be to address all the areas of SEL in order to make sure each individual gets the chance to investigate potential gaps in their knowledge and skills, even though the price to pay is that some of the modules may not always be useful for all individuals. Nevertheless, there could be a high focus on self-awareness and listening skills as the importance of the former has been highlighted in the present research as well as the current literature, and the latter was something that the participants in the present study highly endorsed. Nevertheless, more research is needed in this area in order to help high performance coaches be better equipped to develop their athletes in a holistic and sustainable way.

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APPENDIX 1 Post workshop feedback questionnaire

Post-workshop feedback

Date: _____

Choose the score which best describes your opinion

The facilitator conveyed the workshop rationale well to group members
Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

The facilitator provided clear structure and focus to the group (i.e. establish session goals, redirect group members as necessary).
Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

The facilitator had good knowledge of the topics covered today
Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

The overall format of the workshop was good for my learning
Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

The skills studied and learned today are beneficial to my personal coaching practice
Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

The skills studied and learned today are beneficial for me outside coaching
Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Presentations helped in understanding the program concepts and themes
Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Presentations were helpful in developing my coaching practice
Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Discussions with other coaches were helpful in developing my coaching practice
Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

The exercises done today were helpful in developing my coaching practice
Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

The pace of the workshop was good (not too slow, not too fast).
Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Overall score for today's workshop
Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent
Excellent

My energy level during the
Weak 1 2 3 4 5

What would you keep? _____

What would you change? _____

APPENDIX 2 Homework week 1

Week 1 - Emotions and Self-Awareness

30.4-13.5

Please reflect on how the below unfold in your personal and coaching life. The purpose of the critical reflection is to give you an opportunity to review your dispositions and at times challenge yourself and your thinking. It may cause “periodic confusion”, as you may notice something new in your thinking, which may potentially conflict with your previous thoughts and beliefs. Equally this reflection may reinforce some of your previous reflections and consolidate your beliefs and thinking patterns. You are the author of your story and your thoughts, and the critical reflection merely reassesses what is going on in your mind and in the end you decide what the outcome of the reflection will be. Some of the topics/questions are naturally more meaningful for someone, whilst other topics are more meaningful for some others. Thus you may choose some topics that you focus more on, whilst you may use less time to some other points which you feel are not so relevant for you. Also, as always, everything you reflect is voluntary and confidential, and you may choose not to reflect if you wish so.

- For one whole day, pay attention to what emotions you experience
- What emotions you experienced?
- How did you express your emotions?
- Write down all the emotions others expressed today
- Try some means for managing emotions.
- What emotions you aimed to manage?
- How did you try to manage them?
- What worked and/or didn't work?

What do you think the above reflections tell about you?

How do you think your emotion recognition and management is connected to your “Life Story”?

APPENDIX 3 Homework week 2

Week 2 – Positive I-message and Needs

14.5-20.5

Please reflect on how the below unfold in your personal and coaching life. The purpose of the critical reflection is to give you an opportunity to review your dispositions and at times challenge yourself and your thinking. It may cause “periodic confusion”, as you may notice something new in your thinking, which may potentially conflict with your previous thoughts and beliefs. Equally this reflection may reinforce some of your previous reflections and consolidate your beliefs and thinking patterns. You are the author of your story and your thoughts, and the critical reflection merely reassesses what is going on in your mind and in the end you decide what the outcome of the reflection will be. Some of the topics/questions are naturally more meaningful for someone, whilst other topics are more meaningful for some others. Thus you may choose some topics that you focus more on, whilst you may use less time to some other points which you feel are not so relevant for you. Also, as always, everything you reflect is voluntary and confidential, and you may choose not to reflect if you wish so.

Give a Positive I-message to someone

- I feel (feeling)...When you (behavior)...Because (effects)...
- How did it feel to use I-message?
- How did the receiver react?

How do you feel about how you recognized your personal needs this week?

What do you think about the manner how you took care of your personal needs this week?

What do you think the above reflections tell about you?

How do you think the above reflections are connected to your “Life Story”?

APPENDIX 4 Homework week 3

Week 3 – Personal Strivings

21.5-27.5

Please reflect on how the below unfold in your personal and coaching life. The purpose of the critical reflection is to give you an opportunity to review your dispositions and at times challenge yourself and your thinking. It may cause “periodic confusion”, as you may notice something new in your thinking, which may potentially conflict with your previous thoughts and beliefs. Equally this reflection may reinforce some of your previous reflections and consolidate your beliefs and thinking patterns. You are the author of your story and your thoughts, and the critical reflection merely reassesses what is going on in your mind and in the end you decide what the outcome of the reflection will be. Some of the topics/questions are naturally more meaningful for someone, whilst other topics are more meaningful for some others. Thus you may choose some topics that you focus more on, whilst you may use less time to some other points which you feel are not so relevant for you. Also, as always, everything you reflect is voluntary and confidential, and you may choose not to reflect if you wish so.

PERSONAL STRIVINGS (Emmons, 1989)

1. Consider the things that you typically or characteristically are trying to do in everyday behaviour (e.g., “What is an example of something that you are typically trying to accomplish or attain?”). Some examples include: “trying to seek out new and exciting experiences”; “trying to avoid being noticed by others”; “trying to avoid being noticed by others”; “trying to outperform my peers” “trying to be physically attractive”

Note: strivings can be positive (approach) or negative (avoidance); also base statements upon actual *intended* behaviour, rather than *resultant* behaviour; finally, list should include striving activities that are engaged on a regular basis (i.e., no one-time concerns).

- Task: provide **10-12 stems** of “**On a daily basis I typically try to...**”

2. Rate how you think about each striving as identified on a 0-5 scale. 0 = not very =very

Typical Coach Behaviours 'On a daily basis I typically try to...	How committed are you to this behaviour?	How important is this striving to you?	How likely is it that you will be successful in doing it?	How challenging will this striving be for you?	How much satisfaction does it bring to you when you achieve it?
1	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
2	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
3	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
4	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
6	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
7	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
8	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
9	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
10	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
11	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
12	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
13	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
14	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

How do you think cultural and social forces have impacted on your strivings?

How do you feel your life story and the meanings in your story may be related to your strivings?

APPENDIX 5 Homework week 4

Week 4 – Motivational Interview and Active Listening

4.6-10.6

Please reflect on how the below unfold in your personal and coaching life. The purpose of the critical reflection is to give you an opportunity to review your dispositions and at times challenge yourself and your thinking. It may cause “periodic confusion”, as you may notice something new in your thinking, which may potentially conflict with your previous thoughts and beliefs. Equally this reflection may reinforce some of your previous reflections and consolidate your beliefs and thinking patterns. You are the author of your story and your thoughts, and the critical reflection merely reassesses what is going on in your mind and in the end you decide what the outcome of the reflection will be. Some of the topics/questions are naturally more meaningful for someone, whilst other topics are more meaningful for some others. Thus you may choose some topics that you focus more on, whilst you may use less time to some other points which you feel are not so relevant for you. Also, as always, everything you reflect is voluntary and confidential, and you may choose not to reflect if you wish so.

Seek to engage (when the opportunity presents itself) in an “active listening” situation, where the other person (friend, client, spouse etc.) has a problem and a need to be heard.

Seek to:

1. Care and accept the other person and his/her problem as it is
2. Will to understand what the other person is communicating
3. Reflect back: a restatement and your best-guess interpretation of what the other person is trying to convey to you (thoughts and feelings)

How did this make you feel? How did the other person feel?

Seek to engage in a “motivational interview” situation – a situation where you are in a position of an authority. This situation could either be an authentic coaching situation or an agreed consultation situation where the other person is seeking your guidance in order to overcome an issue and change something in his/her thinking/behaviour. You are the coach who has responsibility to help and motivate the individual. Seek some inspiration and guidance from the “Motivational Interview video”. You might’ve spotted some things

you also want to do in your practice, and equally some behaviours that you feel are not part of your personal approach. Aim to empower the person by (see also “empowerment” in the next page):

1. Exploring concerns by active listening
2. Setting personal focus by asking and listening (i.e. “what is the problem that necessitates change?”)
3. Clarify the value of the change for the individual by asking and listening
4. Help to plan and set goals towards the change by asking, listening and informing

How did this feel for you and what were the outcomes? How was the client’s readiness to change, confidence to change and his/her perceived importance of the change?

Did you notice some personal dispositions that seemed to interfere with either active listening or motivational interview? How do you find the positive and negative impacts of your life story on the practice of active listening and motivational interview?

APPENDIX 6 Homework week 5

Week 5 – Trait emotional intelligence peer evaluation

12.6-24.6

Please reflect on how the below unfold in your personal and coaching life. The purpose of the critical reflection is to give you an opportunity to review your dispositions and at times challenge yourself and your thinking. It may cause “periodic confusion”, as you may notice something new in your thinking, which may potentially conflict with your previous thoughts and beliefs. Equally this reflection may reinforce some of your previous reflections and consolidate your beliefs and thinking patterns. You are the author of your story and your thoughts, and the critical reflection merely reassesses what is going on in your mind and in the end you decide what the outcome of the reflection will be. Some of the topics/questions are naturally more meaningful for someone, whilst other topics are more meaningful for some others. Thus you may choose some topics that you focus more on, whilst you may use less time to some other points which you feel are not so relevant for you. Also, as always, everything you reflect is voluntary and confidential, and you may choose not to reflect if you wish so.

Please arrange a debrief session about the TEIQue evaluation with the relevant person(s) as soon as possible after the 2nd workshop.

- Before the debrief session, please compare the evaluation (average) to your self-assessment results (in Dropbox in your folder)
- In the debrief, please conduct the discussion so, that each individual will bring up only those areas of the TEIQue that the individual him/herself wishes to discuss & clarify about themselves - Please do not go through each of the 15 facets separately, one by one, looking at each number - rather aim to learn more about yourself and how other people perceive you as opposed to how you perceive yourself. People have the right to perceive other people as they perceive them, but no right to claim their perception is the accurate one - however the perceptions of others may help us to uncover something new and/or strengthen what we already know about ourselves.
- This exercise takes a lot of courage - this always involves a seed for conflict, which is a seed for growth or decay - you choose how it will be.
- In the debrief, please bear in mind the common rules we assigned in the first workshop:

No judgments – Doers do mistakes, don't criticize about making decisions

Confidentiality

Listen to others

Share openly

Be on time

Have fun, enjoy

Diversity - respect the individuality of people

Commitment – You get if you give

- This is a great opportunity to practice I messages (positive and confrontative), conflict of values, as well as active listening

How did this make you feel? Did you find some disagreement between your evaluations and those of the peers? Did you learn something?

APPENDIX 7 Homework week 6

Week 6 – Dealing with conflict

25.6-1.7

Please reflect on how the below unfold in your personal and coaching life. The purpose of the critical reflection is to give you an opportunity to review your dispositions and at times challenge yourself and your thinking. It may cause “periodic confusion”, as you may notice something new in your thinking, which may potentially conflict with your previous thoughts and beliefs. Equally this reflection may reinforce some of your previous reflections and consolidate your beliefs and thinking patterns. You are the author of your story and your thoughts, and the critical reflection merely reassesses what is going on in your mind and in the end you decide what the outcome of the reflection will be. Some of the topics/questions are naturally more meaningful for someone, whilst other topics are more meaningful for some others. Thus you may choose some topics that you focus more on, whilst you may use less time to some other points which you feel are not so relevant for you. Also, as always, everything you reflect is voluntary and confidential, and you may choose not to reflect if you wish so. If/when opportunity presents itself aim to deal with conflict situation – needs or values – by being assertive and shifting gears (see next page) – Using confrontative I message and listening at the appropriate times. The conflict need not to be a big one, but a situation where two parties have different needs and/or values and good communication is needed. If ”natural” conflict situation is not to be found, seek to talk with a person that you feel has completely different values than you – Aim to listen and reflect your experience afterwards.

In your I-messages aim to:

1. Neutral description of the behaviour
2. The concrete consequences of the behaviour on me
→ how does it conflict with my needs?

3. My feelings

When listening aim to:

1. Care and accept the other person and his/her problem as it is
2. Will to understand what the other person is communicating
3. Reflect back: a restatement and your best-guess interpretation of what the other person is trying to convey to you (thoughts and feelings)

How did this make you feel? Did you manage to listen to another and get some agreement?

APPENDIX 8 Programme acceptability questionnaire

Programme Feedback – Acceptability Questionnaire

Date: _____

Choose the score which best describes your opinion

The how of coaching program met my expectations

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

The skills studied and learned have been beneficial for my personal coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

The procedures and progression were clear during the program

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

The pace of the program was good (not too slow, not too fast)

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

The facilitator was professional

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Life story interview was a good method to gain more awareness of myself as a coach

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

I would recommend the life story interview to coaches who want to improve their coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Completing and reflecting my trait emotional intelligence questionnaire (TEIQue) helped in developing my coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

I would recommend completing and reflecting the trait emotional intelligence questionnaire (TEIQue) for coaches who want to improve their coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

TEIQue peer evaluation was useful for developing my coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Composing personal coaching practice framework was beneficial for my coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

I would recommend composing personal coaching practice framework for coaches who want to improve their coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Composing personal coaching practice framework was beneficial for my coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

I would recommend composing personal coaching practice framework for coaches who want to improve their coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Social emotional learning workshops were beneficial for my coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

I would recommend social emotional learning workshops for coaches who want to improve their coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Reflections with a peer coach helped in developing my coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

I would recommend peer reflection for coaches who want to improve their coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Keeping a journal of my social and emotional learning helped in developing my coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

I would recommend keeping a journal of social and emotional learning for coaches who want to improve their coaching practice

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Please rank the following four methods in order of importance, so that number 1 accounts for the most beneficial method in improving your personal coaching practice, and number 7 the least beneficial method: Life story interview, trait emotional intelligence questionnaire, composing personal coaching practice framework, peer reflections, social emotional learning workshops, group discussions, one method of your choosing.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

What was the central objective of the programme?

What was especially good about the programme?

How could the programme be improved?

Finally, I would like to say...

APPENDIX 9 Homework feedback questionnaire weeks 1-3

Date:

Choose the score which best describes your opinion

General feedback

Journal reflection was beneficial for developing me as a coach

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Receiving additional comments for my journal reflections further aided my learning and/or helped to deepen my reflections

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Peer reflection was beneficial for developing me as a coach

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Peer reflection further aided my learning and/or helped in deepening my reflections

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

The exercises and reflections benefitted or will benefit me in my personal life

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Week I – Emotions and Self-Awareness

Paying attention to what emotions I experienced and expressed was useful exercise for developing me as a coach

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Trying to manage emotions and reflecting my own emotion management practices was useful for developing me as a coach

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Week II – Positive I-messages and Needs

Positive I-message exercise was useful for developing me as a coach

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Reflecting the recognition and management of my needs was useful in developing me as a coach

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Week III – Strivings

Completing and reflecting upon my “personal strivings” was useful in developing me as a coach

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

What would you keep?

What would you change?

APPENDIX 10 Homework feedback questionnaire week 4

Date:

Choose the score which best describes your opinion

General feedback

Journal reflection was beneficial for developing me as a coach

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Peer reflection was beneficial for developing me as a coach

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Peer reflection further aided my learning and/or helped in deepening my reflections

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

The exercises and reflections benefitted or will benefit me in my personal life

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Week IV – Active Listening and Motivational Interview

Active listening exercise was beneficial for developing me as a coach

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

Motivational interview exercise was beneficial for developing me as a coach

Totally disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Totally agree

What would you keep?

What would you change?

APPENDIX 11 Informed consent form

DEVELOPING “THE HOW OF COACHING” IN PERFORMANCE COACHES: AN ACTION RESEARCH CASE STUDY

INFORMATION SHEET FOR RESEARCH SUBJECTS AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

The present study aims to plan, organize and evaluate the feasibility and acceptability of a coach training intervention adapted for high performance coaches, which focuses on developing the coaches' identity and self-awareness, as well as his/her socio-emotional skills. We will present the details of this research program in more detail below.

Contact information of researchers

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Research background information

The study will be conducted in Helsinki in Sodexo meeting rooms in Lapi talo in Lapinlahdenkatu 1, as well as remotely in the respective locations of the participants. The study is done in cooperation with University of Jyväskylä and Hintsa Performance, a company specialized in high performance coaching <https://www.hintsa.com/>. The MSc student (Heikki Huovinen) will be delivering most of the training intervention and will complete his masters' thesis in sport and exercise psychology as a part of this research, in addition to composing an international research article. Taru Lintunen, a specialist in social and emotional learning, as well as Montse Ruiz, specialist in emotion regulation in sport, will be providing advice and support for the MSc researcher, especially concerning workshops conducted during the study. The collection of the data will begin in end of April 2018 and final data collection sessions will be held in December 2018. Hintsa Performance will fund the research in terms of meeting rooms, logistics and meals during the workshops.

Purpose, target and significance of the research

The present study aims to facilitate the development of coach identity and self-awareness through social emotional learning (SEL, Lintunen & Gould 2014) intervention adapted for high performance coaches, as well as by composing a personal coaching practice framework proposed by Lara-Bercial & Mallett (2016; philosophy, vision, environment, people). The SEL intervention includes 3 facilitated workshops, dialogues with fellow coaches in a group, reflecting the learnings in a journal and with a peer coach. In addition to the previous, the coaches will be composing a personal coaching practice framework as well as completing several questionnaires. All these methods are outlined and described in detail below. The possible benefits of the study include learning social and

emotional skills and becoming more aware of the personal coaching practices. There are no known harms as a consequence of the study. The theoretical background for the study is rooted in the social emotional learning framework (e.g. Lintunen & Gould 2014), self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci 2000) and McAdams third layer of personality (McAdams 2013, i.e. narrative identity).

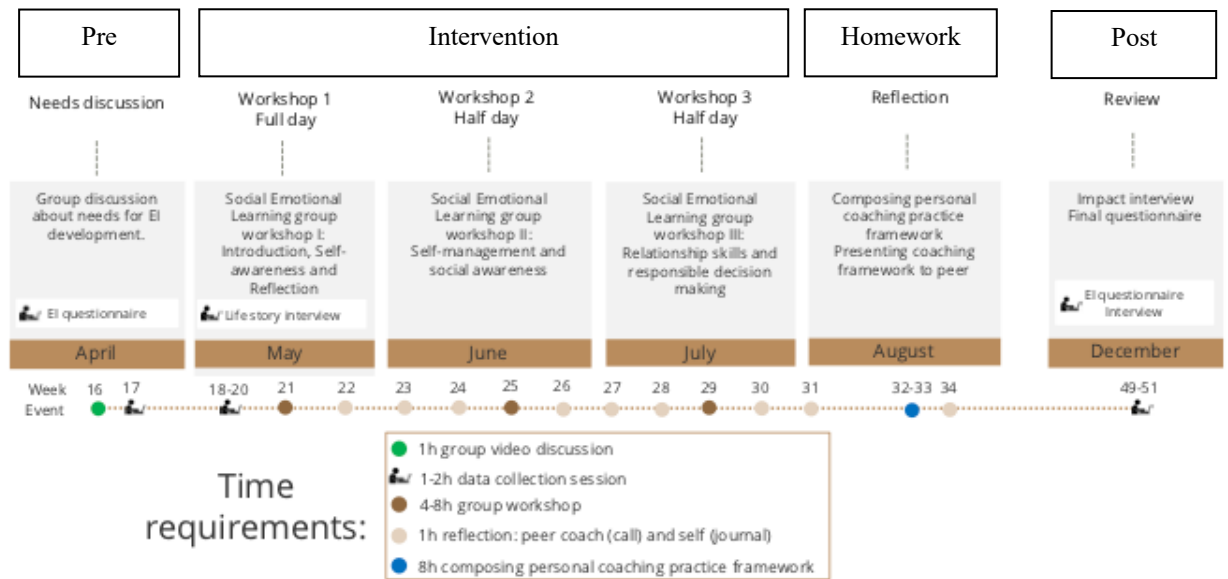
Purpose of use, handling and storage of research data

The research data will be anonymously used in the composition of an international research article as well as a master's thesis (Heikki Huovinen). The thesis as well as the article will provide background information for Hints Performance coach training programs. The original data files will not be distributed outside the research group. The researchers will be responsible for storing the data securely so, that no information of the study and/or the individual participants will be distributed to people external to the research group. The manual logs will be destroyed after they are transferred to digital form. The manual questionnaires will be securely stored in a locked cupboard in the faculty of sport and health sciences in university of Jyväskylä. These manual questionnaires will be destroyed after they have been transferred to digital form, latest by end of December 2019. All the digital data will be stored in the personal computer of the MSc student, protected by a password, and will be destroyed latest by end of the year 2025. The digital data will be anonymized so that no identities are revealed in the data files.

Procedures targeted to the research subjects

The research intervention includes 3 facilitated workshops (8h+5h+5h), dialogues with fellow coaches in a group, reflecting the learnings weekly in a journal (30min) and with a peer coach (30min). Before the intervention the participants will participate in a roundtable needs discussion in order to steer the content of the workshops to more accurately meet the needs of these particular coaches. This discussion will not obligate the participants to join the study. See the research design in more detail in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Research design



Total time investment to the research by the individual participant will be no more than 45 hours, excluding any travel time. The final dates of the workshops will be defined based on availabilities of all of the participants. The first full day workshop will be in-person in Helsinki for all of the participants, thus demanding travel for the coaches who are coming outside Helsinki. Hints Performance will fund all travel and accommodation costs for the participants. The half-day workshops will be in person for the Helsinki based coaches, and the outside Helsinki participants will join these workshops via video conference method, conducting the exercises in their respective locations with a peer coach.

A tool to examine one’s narrative identity, “The Life Story Interview” (McAdams 2013), will be conducted prior the first workshop. See full description of the interview here: (<https://www.sesp.northwestern.edu/foley/instruments/interview/>). This interview takes approximately 2 hours and will be conducted through an online meeting by the assistant researcher. This interview will not be recorded nor analyzed, unless the individual participant wishes so, rather this dialogue is used as a foundation for the reflective discourse during the intervention. Furthermore, the participants will fill a questionnaire which takes 25 minutes, before the SEL intervention begins. After the workshops, participants will complete a short post-workshop evaluation questionnaire, as well as a post workshop reflection form. Finally, after the SEL intervention, the coaches will compose their personal coaching practice framework rooted in their narrative identity (i.e.

life story interview and reflections during the SEL intervention) as a homework, to serve as a cornerstone for their day-to-day coaching practice in the future. The questionnaire will be assessed again 4 months after the composition of the personal coaching practice framework. Semi-structured interviews (maximum 1h) will be conducted after the training intervention by Heikki Huovinen. Furthermore, a program feedback questionnaire will be completed by the participants in the end of the program.

Benefits and potential risks to subjects

The possible benefits of the study include possibility to learn social and emotional skills and to become more aware of values that impact coaching and personal life. This may help the coaches to be more sustainable in their coaching practice and to be able to understand and develop their athletes (and themselves) in the best possible way. The coaches also get to share their experiences with other professional coaches, which may be helpful for the coaches' learning. The study methods have been used in several scientific studies, and no major adverse effects have been reported.

Use of research results

The research data will be anonymously used in the composition of a master's thesis (Heikki Huovinen). The results may also be presented in national and international scientific congresses. The original data files will not be distributed outside the research group. The participants will get their copy of the master's thesis when it is ready.

Rights of research subjects

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate in it, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. The organization of the research and the reporting of its findings will be done so that your identity is treated as confidential information. No personal information that is collected during the research will be disclosed to anyone else besides you and the research group. When the results of the research will be published, no information will be included that

would reveal your identity. At any point, you will have the right to receive further information about the research from the members of the research group.

Insurance

As you are an employee of Hints Performance, you are insured during the research intervention against any accidents or illnesses that are occurring during or due to the study.

Consent to participate in research

I have been informed of the purpose and content of the research, the use of its research materials, and the potential risks and problems it may cause to myself as a research subject, as well as of my rights and insurance protection. I hereby agree to participate in the study in accordance with the instructions given by the researchers. I can withdraw from the research or refuse to participate in a test at any time. I give my consent to the use of my test results and the data collected on me in such a way that it is impossible to identify me as a person.

YES, I will participate to the research ____ NO, I will not participate to the research ____

Date

Signature of the research subject

APPENDIX 12 Final semi-structured feedback discussion manual

(small talk)

Introduction: The purpose of this interview is to explore your thoughts and feelings related to the “how of coaching” coach development program. The answers will be anonymized and the data files will be stored in the researchers computer protected by a password. The interview focuses mostly on assessing the feasibility of the how of coaching program in the context of developing your personal coaching practice. In other words, was this programme useful for you? What were the strengths and weaknesses of the program in developing yourself as a performance coach? The interview will take around 1 hour, but you may quit this interview whenever you feel like it. Do you wish to proceed?

1. How would you summarize the strengths and of the program in the context of developing your personal performance coaching practice?
2. How would you summarize the weaknesses of the program in the context of developing your personal performance coaching practice?
3. Did you find social emotional learning (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision making) as a useful concept for high performance coach development? If so, why? If not, why? Did you prefer some of the modules more than the others? If so, why?
4. Did you find it feasible and useful to compose the personal coaching practice framework? If so, why? If not, why? Do you think that social emotional learning and composing personal coaching practice framework work hand in hand, complementing each other, or do you think they are not related and rather are two separate concepts?
5. Did the life story interview help you somehow in developing your coaching practice? Do you think it is useful and feasible to conduct a life story interview when developing one’s personal coaching philosophy and practice? If so, why? If not, why?
6. Do you feel the time invested to the course was worth it? Do you think something could’ve been removed or could the program been shortened somehow? Anything you would like to add?
7. How feasible/useful you feel the peer reflections were for you as a coach? Do you feel there were too many of those or too little, or just enough?
8. How did you feel about the Trait Emotional Intelligence questionnaire? Do you feel it was relevant tool to assess the areas that were touched during the social emotional learning workshops? Should we repeat this?
9. How likely would you recommend this coach development program for your fellow coaches?
10. What do you think would be the best target population for this kind of coach development program? (i.e. age, experience, team-sport vs. individual sport, competition level, etc.)
11. Anything else you would like to add? Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX 13 Life story interview feedback of the participants

1. Please outline the expectations formed? What were you expecting from the interview?

- go through my life story
- discussion about my past
- Discussion on how I have evolved as a person

2. Evaluate the overall success of the interview delivered to you. **average: 6** (scale 1-7)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Poor						Great

3. Evaluate the consultant's overall performance in delivering the interview. **average: 6,6** (scale 1-7)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Poor						Great

4. Think about the gained benefits from working with a consultant. Which part of the interview helped you and how?

- Story-format was helpful
- Life as a book was a nice idea
- Structure helped to probe many areas
- How own experiences can be used to help others
- How past experiences have influenced the person I am and the values I hold today
- In the beginning it was described what are we going to do which helped to grasp the purpose of the interview

5. What did you like the most in your interview with the consultant?

- Safe environment
- Progressing through the interview without feeling rushed
- Good discussion and reflection overall – no new insights though
- Talking about early experiences and how they have shaped the direction of my life
- Discussion in general
- Relaxed feeling, even though talking with a stranger
- Easy to talk to
- Good questions

6. What did you like the least in your interview with the consultant?

- Time is quite long, although it went really fast
- Would be better face-to-face

7. How would you describe the consultant's approach/behavior toward you?

- Great listener
- Open
- Interested
- Good balance of official and formal but also understanding and approachable
- Straightforward but gentle
- Didn't feel forced - up to me how much I wanted to share
- Professional
- Easy to talk to
- Knew what to do

8. What did you gain from the interview?

- Nothing in terms of new insights.
- Feels good to share
- Helped and encouraged me to reflect more on my past and my behavior
- Rewarding experience
- Reflection didn't bring too much new insight
- What is important to me and what should I focus on in the future

9. Were there some expectations or needs that were not met in the interview?

No