

# Transformational **COACHING** for Early Childhood Educators

## Book Study Guide

by Constant Hine



**HORIZONS IN LEARNING**

*Teach, Coach, Lead for Change*

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# Book Study Guide

## Purpose

This *Book Study Guide* is written for individuals who want to follow a reflective practice as they read the book chapter by chapter; for professionals who come together for group discussion and a shared learning experience; or for a more formal book study group. Coaches, supervisors, directors, administrators, professors, and professional development specialists will find this guide helpful to consider what it will take to embrace transformational coaching and to become a change agent—not in just in theory but in practice, to identify professional actions to take and habits to change or strengthen.

This book study guide offers individuals the opportunity to build their professional practice of reflection, bridging from learning information to implementing new strategies and practical habits. This guide offers probing and provocative questions to support a metacognitive experience to expand awareness and engage the reader to clarify their values, observe and analyze their current practices, and witness shifts in their mindset and attitudes. This reflective process takes the content of the book and moves it from theory to practice.

This guide fosters reflective inquiry and discussion to encourage readers to focus, choose and implement next action steps—to “walk the talk” of improving professional practices. It is important for change agents to continue their own journey of sustainable, “sticky” change to get better at getting better. Ultimately this drives their positive effect on the early childhood educators they support, as the educators in turn enhance the quality of their programs and enrich the lives of the children and families they serve.

## Introduction

A book study group is successful when:

- Every member is involved because they have an interest in the topic and are motivated to learn more.

- All group members are involved in making decisions such as how frequently the group will meet, how long the book group will last, which structure and/or protocols will be used, and how growth and learning from the book group will be documented.
- Facilitation of each meeting can be rotated and shared between members. The facilitator can determine the meeting's structure, including the reflection and discussion protocol for each meeting.
- A study group does not require a leader, per se, but the group should decide who will be responsible for communication, sending meeting reminders, sharing any preparation or documents needed, and organizing meeting locations for each meeting.
  - Some groups choose to have a book study coordinator who manages the communication and logistics.
  - Some groups prefer to share the responsibility, asking each meeting facilitator to manage communication and logistics for the meeting they are facilitating.
- The group establishes norms and protocols for working together. This often happens at the first meeting.
- Each member comes prepared for each meeting, having read the chapter or material that will be discussed and coming prepared in whatever way the group or facilitator has requested.
- There is time for reflection, discussion, and celebration.

## Preparation and Set Up

You may find it helpful to complete the *Reflection in Action* worksheet at the end of each chapter in the *Transformational Coaching for Early Childhood Educators* book. These worksheets offer a starting reflection to share with your book study group.

The following questions or topics are intended to deepen and expand reflection and discussion for a chapter-by-chapter book study. Some suggestions drive reflection about the content presented in each chapter, asking you to consider each person's insights as well as the chapter's impact on each person and how it is relevant to them. In addition, questions and opportunities invite you to reflect on how the content affects current professional practices and how it might influence future actions or coaching practices. The goal is not necessarily to discuss each question for each chapter. Rather, the facilitator of each meeting should determine which questions to use, given goals of the group and the time allotted for the study group discussion.

There is a link on the Redleaf Press webpage for the *Transformational Coaching for Early Childhood Educators* book by Constant Hine that offers all the activity forms for each chapter of the book and each of the documentation forms discussed in Chapter 8. You can download these forms to use them with coachees or to review them in your book study. The link is: <https://www.redleafpress.org/downloads-tc.aspx>.

### **Foundation for Book Study**

1. What are your hopes or goals for yourself and your involvement in this book study?
2. What excites you or makes you feel challenged about doing this book study?
3. What questions do you have about coaching or your coaching practices and experiences?
4. Is there an aspect of coaching that you wonder about or specific challenges you are facing that you want to explore more deeply?
5. What are your current values or beliefs, or philosophy about coaching?
6. Do you feel your current coaching practices are aligned with your values and beliefs about coaching? Please explain why or why not.

### **Read Acknowledgments, Forward, and Introduction**

1. What brought you into the field of early childhood?
2. Has a specific person deeply influenced your professional journey? How did they affect you and how does this show up in your work and coaching?
3. What's your understanding of the difference between transactional and transformational coaching?
4. Have your coaching practices to date been more transactional or transformational in approach? Are your values aligned more with one or the other?
5. Have you experienced any conflict between your values and the direction your coaching initiative or program has directed or required you implement? In what ways?
6. What did you read that challenges your assumptions or beliefs or causes you concern?

7. The quote on page 4 says, “*The first step to being effective as a coach, then, is to do your own work, become self-aware, and walk your talk.*” What does this mean to you and what implications might this have for you and your own professional practices?

## **Chapter 1: The Role of The Coach**

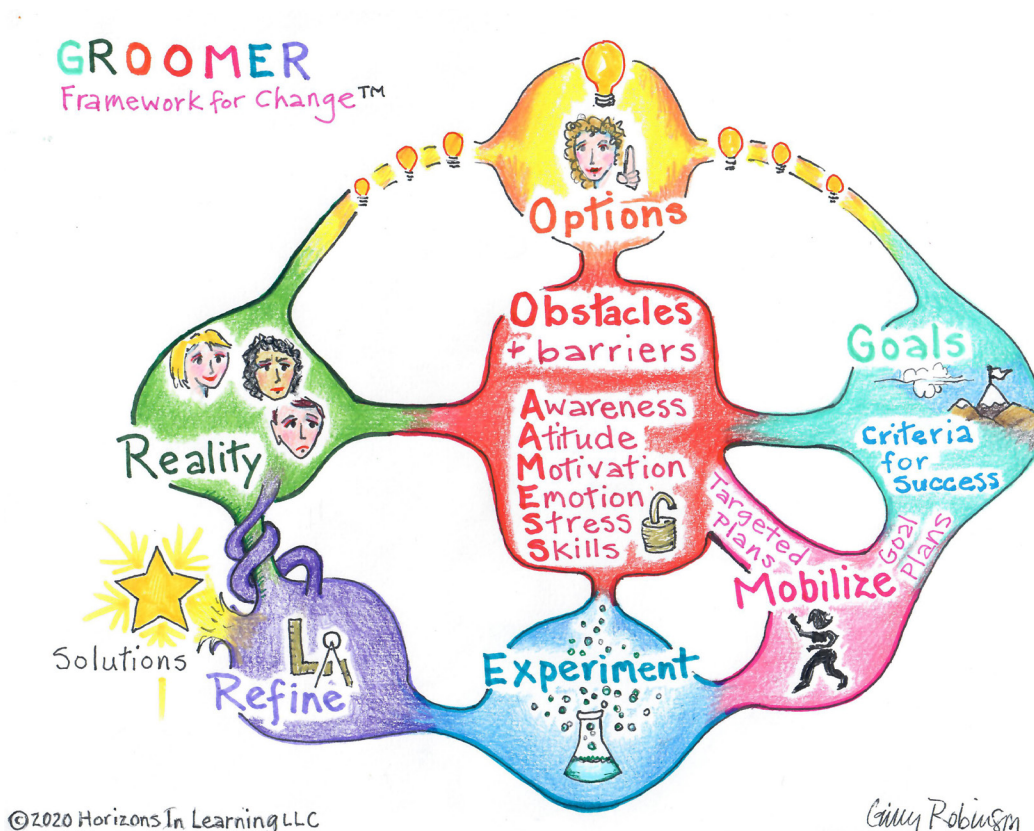
1. Which quotes or specific passages in this chapter stood out for you? Why are your selections particularly significant to you?
2. How does this approach to coaching compare to what you already do and how does it differ?
3. What elements in building trust and partnership (pgs. 8 & 9) resonate with you? Which would you like to work on?
4. How experienced or comfortable are you in “normalizing the challenges of the change process” for your coachees?
5. Do you find this to be an inclusive, culturally sensitive model? How so? Are there ways you may need reflect and modify how to apply this model for specific individuals or groups of professionals you work with? What might need some additional reflection to be sure it is?
6. How do you think the workforce would respond to this type of coaching?
7. How might you need to modify your introductory conversations with new or current coachees?
8. Assess yourself on the *Stages of Change Readiness* (pgs. 16 & 17). What did you find?
9. How does the information in this chapter have implications for your work and professional practices?
10. What change or support do you think you might need at a program or systems level to support this approach to coaching? How could you influence or advocate for such changes and supports?

## Chapter 2: Habits of Reflection

1. Which quotes or specific passages in this chapter stood out for you? Why are your selections particularly significant to you?
2. Have you had an experience like Constant described that set your philosophy or way of being? How did you become aware of your strengths and what comes naturally for you?
3. How can cultivating habits of reflection influence the exchange between the coach and coachee as well as mutually benefit the relationship?
4. What did you discover about yourself by completing the *My Frame of Reference* activity? (See page 27.) How do your personal filters and cultural perspectives created by your frame of reference influence your coaching practices?
5. In what ways does becoming more aware of your own personal, professional, and cultural perspectives support your ability to deal with differences of perspective? How can you become more responsible to reframe your own perspectives and embrace humility to be more effective as a coach?
6. What role do you think reflection has to intentionally and proactively counter the dominant culture narrative in programs, individuals, and yourself?
7. How did the chapter help you identify your philosophy of coaching or elements of what you believe and value?
8. Share your insights about the connection between reflection, “followership,” and how we know whether who we are and what we are doing as coaches is being effective.



### Chapter 3: GROOMER Framework for Change



This color version of the GROOMER Framework for Change is available on the Redleaf Press site at [www.redleafpress.org/downloads-tc.aspx](http://www.redleafpress.org/downloads-tc.aspx), in the Chapter 3 folder under the Download PDFs by chapter. This GROOMER framework graphic is also available as a postcard at [www.constanthine.com/shop](http://www.constanthine.com/shop).

1. Which of the seven GROOMER framework components were familiar and which were unfamiliar?
2. How did learning that this is not a sequential model and there is no “right” place to start in the GROOMER framework inquiry process affect you? Did this cause any unease or relief? Why?
3. How did the idea of following the coachee rather than leading them strike you? Did it empower or challenge you?



4. Consider James Flaherty's quote: *"Coaching, you see, is not telling people what to do; it's giving them a chance to examine what they are doing in light of their intentions."* How does it change your understanding of how to use the GROOMER framework?
5. What is the value of integrating the GROOMER framework with other initiatives or areas of focus in early childhood education? How can you envision beginning this process?
6. What are your strengths in using the GROOMER framework? What are your challenges?
7. What will you do with this information? How might it be useful in your own growth or in support of coachees?

#### **Chapter 4: The Continuum of Professional Development Facilitation Strategies**

1. Which quotes or specific passages in this chapter stood out for you? Why are your selections particularly significant to you?
2. Which facilitation strategy (Tutoring/Teaching, Consulting/TA, Mentoring, Coaching) do you use most often? Why?
3. Share a personal experience that you think would be an example of each of the different strategies. Discuss as a group to verify your understanding and form a consensus about how each of these strategies are unique.
4. Discuss in what ways each strategy promotes reflection, transformation, and sustainable change for the coachee. How effective is each strategy?
5. In what circumstances do you think one strategy would be better to use than another? Why?
6. Why is it important to learn to slide the continuum intentionally? What would help you to do this more fluidly?
7. What is your understanding of how issues of power, authority, and equity can influence which of these strategies we unconsciously or intentionally choose to use?
8. Can you think of specific personal examples in which rethinking the strategy you use might make a significant difference?

## **Chapter 5: Universal Facilitation Tools**

1. Which quotes or specific passages in this chapter stood out for you? Why are your selections particularly significant to you?
2. Which tools feel least developed for you or cause you to struggle the most? Why?
3. Which tools feel most essential for your success as a coach? Why?
4. What insights can you share about the value of using the eight types of open-ended questions? How could they deepen your coaching practices?
5. How could you use the *Art of Inquiry Questions* activity (pgs. 98 & 99) as a form of self-coaching or use this with a coachee?
6. How might your current style of asking questions actually inhibit reflection or unintentionally shift the power dynamic in the coaching relationship in a negative or less effective way?
7. How can you use a data-driven investigation approach to examine your own progress as a coach? How could you start documenting or gathering data on tools you use most/least frequently? How can gathering such data about your own habits and behaviors help you improve your coaching practices?
8. How can you be accountable for your own personal and professional growth?

## **Chapter 6: Targeted Facilitation Tools**

1. Which quotes or specific passages in this chapter stood out for you? Why are your selections particularly significant to you?
2. Which of these tools were familiar to you, and which do you feel confident using? Which were new or offer options of additional tools you could use and implement?
3. What's your understanding of the specific targeted tools specifically connecting to each of the facilitation strategies on the continuum? (See page 109.)
4. Which targeted tools do you want to practice using? Why do you think they might be beneficial?

5. How do these targeted tools expand your thinking about which continuum strategies to use and why it's important to slide the continuum?
6. How did the comment "*Even open-ended questions are a form of expectations . . .*"(pg. 120) inform your insights about coaching?
7. How could Talking Informatively become a tool to transfer power to the coachee, and what value would there be in doing so?
8. What was your impression of the GROOMER Feedback Protocol? (See page 116.) How is this similar to or different from to your current approach to offering feedback?
9. What implications does using targeted tools intentionally have for your goals for yourself and your coaching practices?

## **Chapter 7: Tools for Busting Obstacles and Barriers**

1. Of the six most common obstacles—Awareness, Attitude, Motivation, Emotions, Stress, and Skill (AAMESS)—which obstacles do your coachees experience most frequently? How do you know?
2. Which of the obstacles are you most comfortable dealing with? Which are more challenging for you to address?
3. Which of the suggested tools in this chapter feel like your go-to tools? Why do they feel natural or safe for you?
4. Select one tool you would like to become more proficient using or one that causes you to stretch even if it causes some discomfort to practice it. Why did you select this tool, and how might you and your coachees benefit if you could develop your skill in using this tool?
5. Is it triggering for you personally when a coachee is challenged by any of the AAMESS obstacles? How does this impact your effectiveness and efficacy in coaching?
6. How do notice these same AAMESS obstacles influence your own professional development as a coach?

7. Reflect to clarify your own sources of stress and generate possible actions that could help you bust stress obstacles and barriers. Refer to pages 155–160 and complete the reflection activities to identify your current sources of stress, your symptoms of stress, and possible strategies to mitigate your stress from the *Prevention Practice: Domains of Responsibility of Self-Management* options. Discuss with your colleagues or share with a friend what you discovered about yourself.
8. What kind of self-reflection and targeted action plans could be useful in helping you deal with your own AAMESS obstacles?
9. How might your team or other colleagues support you in expanding your skillset and your comfort in addressing AAMESS obstacles within yourself or with your coachees?

## **Chapter 8: Documentation: Making Transformation Visible**

1. What are your current strategies and documentation methods for collecting data about your coachees' progress and outcomes? Are they useful in tracking and documenting progress, challenges, outcomes, and success? How do you know?
2. Review the documentation forms offered in this chapter in the book. (You can download all the documentation forms from Chapter 8 at [www.redleafpress.org/downloads-tc.aspx](http://www.redleafpress.org/downloads-tc.aspx).)
3. Identify which forms look as if they would be useful to you. How might you need to modify any of these forms?
4. How do you track and document your own coaching practices' progress, challenges, outcomes, and successes? Would any of these forms be helpful to you?
5. Review the *Coaching Log* in the Chapter 8 folder—Assessing Coach Outcomes and Progress ([www.redleafpress.org/downloads-tc.aspx](http://www.redleafpress.org/downloads-tc.aspx)). Discuss how this form might be helpful for reflecting, tracking, and documenting coaching practices. How might using this form help you assess the effectiveness of your behaviors in relation to the coachee's progress and outcomes?

6. Do you have a professional action plan for your own growth and development? Who could support you in implementing this plan?
7. Who benefits from the type of data and information you currently collect and document? With whom do you share the data—the funder, coaching initiative, coach supervisor, coach, provider, coachee, or others? What kind of additional information and data could you collect that would be more helpful for the different stakeholders?
8. What changes at a program, coaching initiative, or state level might be needed in order to collect data and documentation that would be actually helpful for all stakeholders? Where might your advocacy be needed?

## **Summary**

1. How might a coach's professional practices, especially their own self-reflection practices, be affected by cultural experiences and the current social context for issues about equity?
2. What is your perspective about the importance of decreasing the focus on compliance and outcomes and expanding your work in facilitating the process of change and learning? How will this promote continuous quality improvement in programs, providers, and coaches?
3. What's your understanding now of transformational coaching and shifting our mindset to being a change agent, rather than just being a content expert?
4. What benefits are there to using a transformational coaching approach?
5. What challenges might you face in shifting to a more transformational coaching approach?
6. How can you use the GROOMER Framework for Change not only with individuals and yourself but also to support program or systemic change?
7. What are your values and beliefs about coaching? Did your values and beliefs about coaching shift after reading this book?

8. In what ways have you become aware of the importance of walking the talk and using this transformational coaching approach and the GROOMER Framework for Change to support your own professional development in practice?
9. Are there any ways you have experienced a change in how you view the importance of coaching, how you regard our field of early childhood education, or how you feel called to action or advocacy?

## PROTOCOL RESOURCES

Here are a couple resources featuring a variety of protocols for reviewing and discussing readings:

The Texas Association of School Personnel Administrators ([www.taspa.org](http://www.taspa.org)) offers these four very simple and easy to follow Book Study Protocols—Quiet Leadership. <https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.taspa.org/resource/resmgr/Docs/BookStudyProtocolsQuietLeade.pdf>.

National School Reform Faculty has created and refined more than two hundred protocols and activities to use in Critical Friends Groups, communities, meetings, and more. Several of their protocols are targeted for discussing readings, text, and books and may be useful resources for your book study. <https://nsrfharmony.org>.