

# Reflecting on The Transformational Coach's Way of Being

## The Six Ways of Being

As you read the following description of a Transformational Coach's Way of Being, highlight or underline phrases that resonate.

1. **Compassion:** Compassion is the ability to feel deep empathy for another being and to act on that empathy by, for example, communicating care, staying in relationship, or speaking up or quieting down. A deep sense of interconnectedness allows us to have compassion for all people, which in turn gives rise to an unconditional regard for others. A Transformational Coach demonstrates unwavering compassion for a client, their students, the client's colleagues and supervisors, for themselves, and for all living beings.
2. **Curiosity:** Curiosity is, in part, an emotional state that allows us to move into the unknown while reducing our tendency to form judgements based on preconceived notions. Because fear shuts down curiosity, staying curious requires that we recognize and navigate our own fear. It also requires that we manage our discomfort when we don't know something. Curiosity also implies hope—that in staying open and curious rather than moving into judgement we express hope that what is not yet known will offer insight, answers, solutions. Curiosity makes us question our beliefs, assumptions, ways of doing and being; it makes us question our world. A Transformational Coach is insatiably curious about others, about what is possible, and about one's own self.
3. **Trust in the Coaching Process:** Trusting the coaching process is about recognizing the many factors that play a role in personal transformation. Trust in the coaching process helps us remember that there will be times when we don't see evidence of change in a single conversation, or even over a short period. By trusting the process we remain open to possibility, recognize that the journey to transformation may be a long one, and refrain from acting on urgency in an unproductive way. A Transformational Coach understands that we might lay seeds of transformation that sprout in another season, and we become comfortable with the uncertainty of growth.
4. **Humility and Mutuality:** Transformational Coaches know that we have made just as many mistakes as our clients, and that we, too have areas for growth. We do not expect perfection of ourselves or of others; we value growth. We hold that we can learn from anyone and that anyone can learn from us; we have the nimble skill to coach anyone. Humility generates a deep appreciation for ourselves, our clients, and the process. A Transformational Coach values the reciprocal nature of learning and the potential for our own improvement through the coaching process.
5. **Learner Orientation:** Transformational Coaches regularly reflect on our own learning and development and actively seek out ways to develop our coaching skills, boost

our knowledge about education and equity, hone our emotional intelligence, examine and interrogate our beliefs, and strengthen these dispositions.

**6. Courage:** A Transformational Coach aspires to create just and liberated communities and builds reserves of courage to do so. We think about courage as a muscle we can build. We learn about how others amass courage, we learn about what gets in the way of acting with courage, and we understand how to engage with the fear that surfaces within us when we need be courageous. A Transformational Coach appreciates the power of courage and is committed to increasing their own.

**Reflecting on the Ways of Being**

For each way of being, reflect on how fully you feel you embody that disposition. If you want to rate yourself, of course—go ahead and do so. If rating yourself isn’t helpful, then don’t—you might just make notes in the margins to identify your strengths and areas for growth.

<b>Compassion</b>	<b>1-5 Scale</b>
I recognize that everyone is doing the best they can right now. I understand that people make choices that make sense to them, given their life histories and world view.	
I know the difference between pity, sympathy and empathy—and I know how I feel when I’m giving or experiencing these emotions.	
I feel empathy for people even when I disagree with their actions.	
When I feel empathy for someone I take action.	
I recognize when it’s hard for me to activate compassion and I have strategies to help me do so.	
I feel compassion for myself and I have strategies to act on those feelings of self-compassion.	
I see the interconnectedness between myself and others and this deepens my compassion for others.	
TOTAL	

<b>Curiosity</b>	<b>1-5 Scale</b>
I am aware of underlying intentions behind the questions I ask.	
I am aware of how genuine my questions are (and that some might be more or less genuine than what I intend) and of how open I am to the way someone else responds to them.	
I'm aware of what's going through my mind when I ask questions and when I listen to the response.	
When listening to a client I notice when my judgement arises and I have strategies to manage that reaction so it doesn't obstruct my curiosity.	
I'm aware of my emotions when someone speaks, and I have strategies to engage with the emotions that surface that could block my curiosity.	
When someone says something that I disagree with, I get curious about my own values, beliefs, and experiences.	
I have strategies to engage with my fear.	
TOTAL	

<b>Trust in the Coaching Process</b>	<b>1-5 Scale</b>
I am patient.	
I have strategies to manage my impatience and anxiety.	
I recognize the many steps that lead to change, and I know we're on the right track because I see my client taking those steps.	

I can sense urgency in myself but don't act on it in a way that causes harm to others. I know that people can only be where they are and that I can't <i>will</i> them to be elsewhere.	
I recognize that I can't see every factor that plays a role in someone's learning journey, and I accept that positive change may occur when I can't see it.	
In my coaching work, I recognize my spheres of influence and control and can let go of what is outside of my control.	
I don't have personal desired outcomes or agendas when I'm coaching someone; I hold loose attachment to co-constructed outcomes and coach towards an organization's vision and mission.	
TOTAL	

<b>Humility and Mutuality</b>	<b>1-5 Scale</b>
I learn just as much as my clients do within a coaching relationship.	
I recognize that my work as a coach furthers my own journey of growth and transformation.	
I know that I have made just as many mistakes as my clients, and that I have just as many areas for growth.	
I don't expect my client to be perfect, and I don't expect perfection from myself.	
I know that I can learn from any client that I work with and I'm open to and eager for those learnings.	
I know that any client can learn from me.	
I can be humble <i>and</i> confident (and not insecure or arrogant).	
TOTAL	

<b>A Learner Orientation</b>	<b>1-5 Scale</b>
I plan for coaching conversations and practice them with colleagues.	
I invite clients to give formal feedback on my coaching a couple times per year and I ask for feedback in conversations.	
I reflect on coaching conversations to analyze which coaching moves were effective and to determine how I can improve my coaching next time.	
I read books and articles about the content I coach in, about educational equity, and about the equity issues facing the students I serve.	
I interrogate my own beliefs about education, coaching, equity, race/racism and identity, emotions and ways of being, and find colleagues who help me do so.	
I recognize and reflect on my emotions regularly; I hone my ability to navigate my emotions and engage with them in a healthy and productive way.	
I reflect on how I show up and how I embody the transformational coach's ways of being; I identify how I can strengthen the way I embody these ways of being.	
TOTAL	

<b>Courage</b>	<b>1-5 Scale</b>
I know what I feel, look like, and sound like when I'm being courageous.	
I understand and appreciate how courage enables me to be a Transformational Coach and I value building my courage.	

I know how to access my own courage and do so when I want.	
I recognize courage in others and draw inspiration from their courage.	
I have strategies to resist the pull to comfort and can manage my discomfort when I'm accessing courage.	
When I don't feel courageous, I have strategies to explore and remove the blocks to my courage.	
I value exploring fear and vulnerability as I know they are related to the courage I can access.	
TOTAL	

Way of Being	Total Score
Compassion	
Curiosity	
Trust in the Coaching Process	
Humility and Mutuality	
Learner Orientation	
Courage	

## **Reflect**

Which way of being do you feel strongest in? Why do you think that's the case?

If you asked others which way of being they think you're the strongest in, would they choose the same one?

Which way of being do you find the most challenging? Why do you think that's the case?

Which way of being would you like to make the biggest growth in? Why? What might it look like and sound like for you to make growth in this area?

What do you think others would say about how you hold these ways of being? What would you want to change about that, and why?

Whose feedback could you solicit on how you demonstrate these ways of being? Why?

Whose feedback would you be afraid to ask for? Why? What could change that?

What's a next step you could take to continue developing these ways of being? Jot down a time-stamped commitment associated with that step.