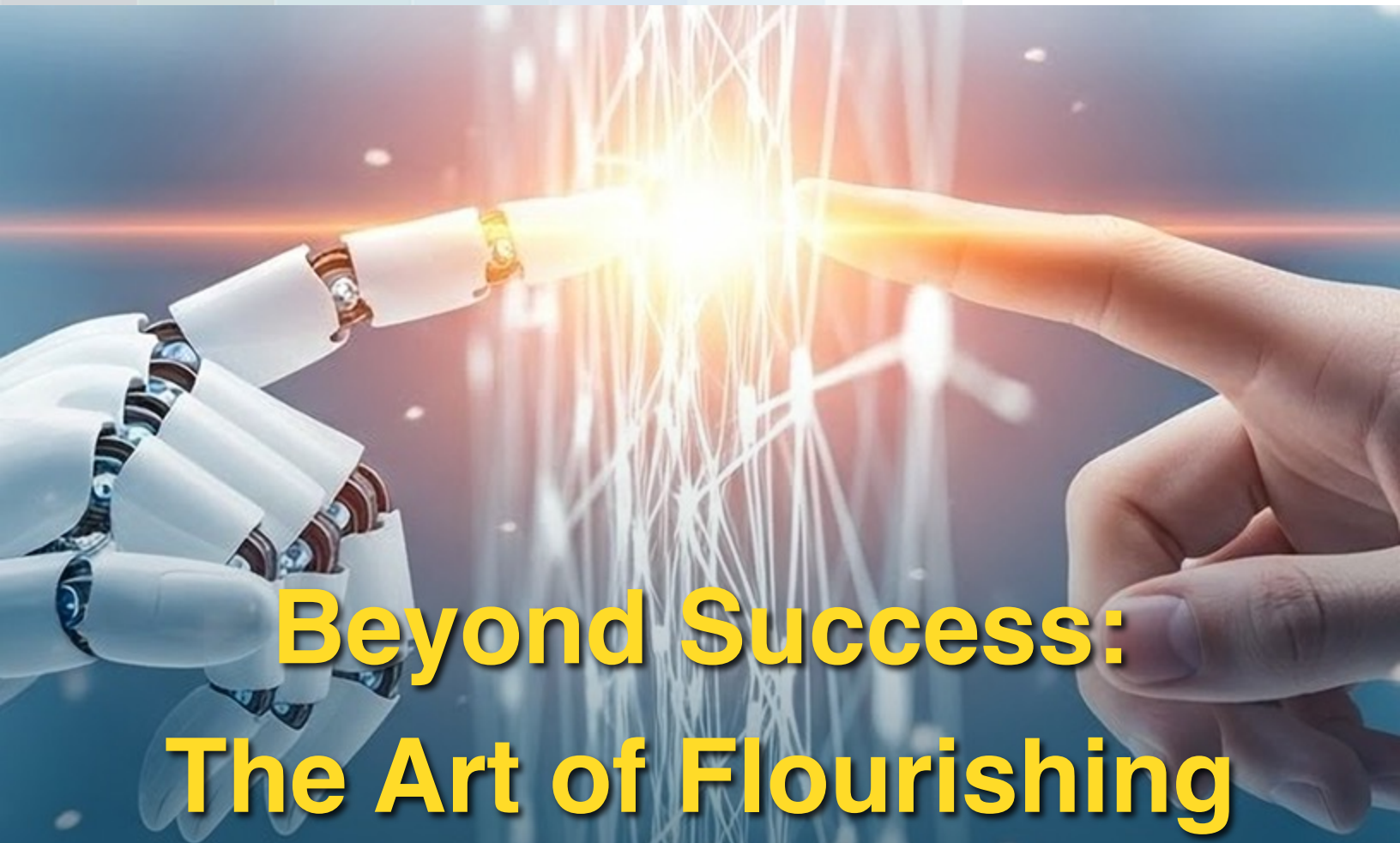




apac VOICE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ASIA PACIFIC ALLIANCE OF COACHES



Beyond Success: The Art of Flourishing

Rediscovering Our Humanity in an AI World

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President's Note



Dear APAC Family,

It is my pleasure to introduce this edition of our APAC newsletter, **Beyond Success: The Art of Flourishing — Rediscovering Our Humanity in an AI World.**

There has never been a more important time to revisit what it means to live well.

Across the Asia-Pacific region and beyond, we are witnessing rapid advances in artificial intelligence, unprecedented connectivity, and ever-increasing expectations of performance. These developments bring remarkable opportunities. Yet amidst the excitement, many of us are asking a deeper question: *What truly helps people flourish?*

This edition invites us to look beyond achievement as an end in itself and explore the human qualities that give success its meaning. As you journey through these pages, you will encounter reflections on purpose, presence, wisdom, wellbeing, leadership, relationships and coaching in an AI-enabled world. I hope the articles and reflections in this edition offer fresh perspectives, inspire thoughtful conversations and encourage us to look beyond achievement towards a deeper sense of purpose and fulfilment.



While each article offers a unique lens, together they point to a shared truth: Technology may expand our capabilities, but our humanity enables us to connect, inspire, lead with compassion and create meaningful impact.

You will read about the power of deep listening, the courage to embrace uncertainty, the importance of meaningful connection, and the lifelong journey of becoming more whole. These are not simply coaching competencies or leadership capabilities. They are qualities that help individuals, organisations and communities thrive.

As AI continues to evolve, perhaps our greatest opportunity is not to become faster or more efficient, but to become more compassionate, more conscious, and more deeply human.

May this edition inspire reflection, conversation and renewed commitment to helping ourselves and others flourish.

Warm regards,

Suyin Ong

SUYIN ONG

President, Asia Pacific Alliance of Coaches (APAC)

From the Editor



Beyond Success: The Art of Flourishing Rediscovering Our Humanity in an AI World

We live in a time of extraordinary acceleration.

Artificial intelligence is reshaping how we work, learn, create and connect. We are becoming more efficient, more informed and increasingly capable of doing things that once required distinctly human effort. Yet, amid all this progress, an important question remains:

What does it mean to truly flourish?

For much of our lives, success has been measured through achievement: what we accomplish, how much we produce, how quickly we progress and the impact we create. But perhaps flourishing asks us to consider something different.

Not only what we achieve, but who we become along the way.

Not only how efficiently we work, but how meaningfully we live.

Not only what technology can do for us, but what we choose to do with our humanity.

This edition of APAC Voice explores these questions from different perspectives.

Some of our contributors examine what it means to remain human as AI becomes increasingly present in our professional lives. Others invite us to think about leadership, coaching, relationships, difference, self-awareness and the moments when success does not look quite the way we expected.

Across these perspectives, a common thread emerges: flourishing cannot be reduced to optimisation.

It may be found in the courage to question ourselves. In the ability to listen deeply. In making space for another person's experience. In recognising that difference is not deficiency. In allowing ourselves to pause, reflect and reconsider what success means.

Perhaps flourishing is not a destination at all.

Perhaps it is an ongoing practice of becoming. Becoming more aware, more connected, more purposeful and, ultimately, more human.

As we enter a future increasingly shaped by AI, the question may not simply be whether humans can keep up with technology.

Perhaps the more important question is:

Can we remain deeply human as we do?

I invite you to read this edition not simply as a collection of perspectives, but as an invitation to pause and reflect on your own understanding of success, meaning and flourishing.

What does flourishing mean to you?

Sonali Bhattacharya

SONALI BHATTACHARYA

PR Chair and Chief Editor, APAC Voice
Asia Pacific Alliance of Coaches (APAC)



APAC Waves



Beyond Doing: Flourishing in an AI World Means Becoming More Human

by Camilla Cesari, MCC, ACTC, ESIA

We are living through a curious moment. Technology is becoming faster, more fluent and increasingly capable, while at the same time many of us are being asked to move faster too: to perform more, adapt more quickly, remain relevant and keep learning at a relentless pace.

Perhaps this is why the question of flourishing feels so important now.

Flourishing is not the same as succeeding.

Success is often measured through what we accomplish, while flourishing asks something deeper about how we are living, who we are becoming, the quality of our relationships, the meaning we experience and the degree to which we feel fully alive.

In an increasingly artificially intelligent world, this distinction matters more than ever.

From “Will AI replace me?” to “What human value do I create?”

Much of the conversation around AI in the coaching world is currently driven by concern. People are asking whether it will replace parts of their work, make their expertise less valuable, or require them to acquire yet another set of skills to remain relevant.

I have increasingly come to think that these questions, while valid, can keep us focused on the wrong problem. A more useful question might be: **What *human value* do I create, that cannot be replicated by robots?**

AI can perform many tasks extraordinarily

well. In coaching, for example, it can research, summarise, generate possible questions, suggest frameworks, identify action steps and offer practical ideas, and there is genuine value in using it for these purposes.

Rather than resisting what technology can do, the opportunity is to allow it to create more space for the aspects of our work that most require our humanity.

It is important to remember that while we can marvel at the ability of AI to write and talk like a human, **fluency is not awareness, and language is not wisdom.**

An intelligent-sounding response is not necessarily a wise one, and an empathic-sounding sentence is not the same as the deep presence of one human being with another.

From transactional to transformational

There are many moments in life when what we need is an answer. We may want support preparing for an interview, understanding our options, deciding on a sequence of actions or thinking through a practical problem, and AI may serve us extremely well in those moments.

“...fluency is not awareness, and language is not wisdom.”

Other questions are fundamentally different. Questions about identity, meaning, recurring patterns, fear, purpose or who we are becoming cannot always be resolved through information alone; they ask for reflection, awareness, courage and, very often, relationship.

In my work with coaches and leaders, I increasingly notice the distinction between transactional support and transformational work. Transactional work may provide solutions, strategies, frameworks and progress towards a defined outcome, but transformation is what touches identity, beliefs, fears, patterns, meaning and a deeper awareness of who a person is being and becoming.

The two do not need to compete with one another. Practical answers and deeper exploration can coexist. And perhaps flourishing requires both: the capacity to act effectively in the world, while remaining deeply connected to who we are and what gives those actions meaning.

The human qualities that cannot be replicated

One of the human capacities I am most interested in is listening. Not waiting for someone to finish so that we can respond, not listening for the problem we can solve, not listening in order to demonstrate that we understand, but listening with enough attention and spaciousness for something unexpected to emerge.

Real listening is responsive. It notices when

someone has stopped speaking but has not finished thinking. It notices a hesitation, a change of pace, a silence, a shift in energy, or an incongruence between words and what seems to be happening beneath them.

This quality of attention is difficult, even between human beings. It asks us to resist the instinct to rush towards resolution. To trust that not every silence needs to be filled and not every difficulty needs to be immediately solved.

There is something in this that is fundamental to flourishing. We often assume growth or self-development means adding: more knowledge, more capability, more tools, more achievement.

Yet, some forms of growth may require the opposite, asking us to become less attached to knowing, less hurried towards answers and more able to remain with uncertainty long enough for something important to become visible to us.

Flourishing is the shift from doing to being

For many years, I understood the concept of mastery as accumulation. I thought professional and personal development meant more models, more questions, more techniques and more knowledge. But over time, I came to understand the journey very differently: as one of becoming more present, more aware, more courageous, more trusting and ultimately more human.

That shift has changed the way I think about growth. *Doing* still matters, results matter, and

“To trust that not every silence needs to be filled and not every difficulty needs to be immediately solved.”

competence matters, but **flourishing cannot be reduced to doing more things successfully**; it asks us to consider how we want to show up, what part of us is leading, and who we are becoming through the experiences we are living.

In coaching, the deepest transformation happens in what I think of as the ‘living space’ created between two people. It emerges through presence, attention, trust, partnership and mutual responsiveness, with one person willing to reveal something real and another willing to remain fully present without taking over.

I suspect the same is true far beyond coaching. It is present in leadership, friendship, families, communities and perhaps even in the relationship we have with ourselves.

What do we want to become *more* of?

AI will continue to evolve, and I do not think our task is to resist that evolution or to compete with technology by trying to become faster, more informed or more productive than the machines we create.

We can make intelligent use of what technology does well and, at the same time, become more intentional about cultivating what we do not want to lose.

That may include presence, wisdom, discernment, embodiment, relationship, trust, curiosity and the courage to remain with questions before reaching for answers. It may also include the ability to see another person not as a problem to solve, but as a human being whose experience deserves our full attention.

As coaches, I believe that the way to future-proof our careers is to focus our efforts on becoming more human, more present and more embodied. This is what flourishing, and

supporting others to flourish, asks of us.

Perhaps the most important question is therefore not whether, when or how AI could replace us, but how can we *become more fully human*? As artificial intelligence becomes increasingly embedded into everything we do, I believe our humanity will become the most meaningful measure of success.



Camilla Cesari, MCC, ACTC, ESIA, is an international coach, educator, mentor and coaching supervisor with more than 10,000 hours of coaching experience across 40+ countries. She also holds the ICF Mentor Coaching Specialization at ACC, PCC and MCC levels. Camilla works with leaders, executives, teams and experienced coaches, bringing together business experience with a deeply relational, systemic and whole-person approach to development. She is the creator of *Mastery in Coaching*, an ICF-accredited Level 3 programme for experienced coaches, and has been mentoring coaches for more than a decade. Her work explores coaching mastery, presence, relationship, cultural humility and what it means to remain deeply human in an increasingly technology-shaped world.



Your Archetype Inner Board Team: Leading From Wholeness in the AI Era

by Dr. Sandy Chen

For much of our professional lives, we have been taught to ask a familiar question: How can I perform better?

We have built frameworks for productivity, leadership, resilience, strategy and personal effectiveness. We have learned to optimize our time, our teams and ourselves. Now, with AI increasingly capable of analyzing information, generating ideas and supporting decisions, our capacity to perform may expand beyond anything we have previously imagined.

But this very progress raises a question that performance alone cannot answer:

If AI can help us become more efficient, more informed and more productive, what does it mean to become more fully human?

This is the question that has increasingly emerged in my work with senior leaders.

For many executives, success has been built through a powerful and coherent identity: the strategist, the achiever, the protector, the expert, the visionary. These identities are



useful. They help us navigate complexity and create results.

But over time, what once served us can quietly become a constraint.

We become so identified with the part of ourselves that succeeds that we forget there are other parts of ourselves waiting to be developed.

This is where I have found Carl Jung's archetypal perspective particularly relevant to leadership—and perhaps even more relevant in the age of AI.

Beyond the One-Dimensional Self

Jung proposed that archetypes are deep patterns of human experience that appear across cultures and generations. They are neither personality labels nor fixed categories into which people should be placed.

Rather, they can be understood as **different human potentials within us**.

We may have the Ruler who creates order, the Sage who seeks truth, the Creator who imagines, the Caregiver who nurtures, the

Explorer who seeks freedom, or the Hero who rises to challenge.

Most of us have access to many of these energies.

Yet in professional life, we tend to rely heavily on a small number.

An executive who has built a successful career through the Hero may instinctively respond to uncertainty by working harder and pushing through. A Ruler may respond by taking more control. A Caregiver may absorb more responsibility for others. A Sage may retreat into analysis. A Creator may generate endless possibilities without committing to one.

None of these responses is inherently wrong.

The deeper question is:

What happens when our greatest strength becomes the only way we know how to lead?

This is where flourishing begins to differ from success.

Success often asks: *What can I accomplish?*

Flourishing asks: **Who am I becoming as I accomplish it?**

The Shadow of Success

Jung's idea of the *shadow* offers another powerful lens.

The shadow is not simply our "bad side." It includes qualities, needs and possibilities that have been pushed outside our conscious identity because they did not fit the person we believed we needed to be.

*"Success often asks:
What can I
accomplish?
Flourishing asks: Who
am I becoming as I
accomplish it?"*

A leader who has always been strong may have little room for vulnerability.

A highly rational executive may dismiss intuition.

Someone who has built a career through control may struggle with surrender.

Someone known for caring for everyone else may find it surprisingly difficult to receive care.

The paradox is that these less-developed qualities may contain precisely the capacity needed for the next chapter.

I remember working with senior leaders who had achieved almost everything they had once considered important—position, reputation, financial security, influence—yet found themselves asking questions that success could no longer answer:

What is enough?

Who am I beyond my role?

What do I want when I am no longer trying to prove anything?

What part of me has been left behind while I was becoming successful?

These are not necessarily signs of failure or dissatisfaction.

They can be signs that a deeper stage of development is beginning.

What once counted as success may no longer be large enough to contain who you are becoming.

From Awareness to Transformation

This distinction becomes especially important in an AI world.

AI is extraordinarily powerful at optimization. It can help us process more information, identify patterns, generate options and improve efficiency.

But human flourishing is not simply an optimization problem.

A meaningful life involves paradox, ambiguity, relationship, intuition, imagination, moral responsibility and the capacity to live with questions that do not have immediate answers.

This suggests that our response to AI should not be to compete with machines by becoming more machine-like.

It is to become **more integrated human beings**.

In my work with leaders, I use the Archetype Compass as one way of exploring this integration.

The starting point is awareness: *Which archetypal energies do I naturally rely on? Which ones have become overused? Which ones remain underdeveloped?*

But awareness alone is not transformation.

The journey moves from Awareness → Activation → Alignment → Adaptation → Sustenance → Integration → Transformation.

The goal is not to replace a dominant archetype with another one.

It is to expand our repertoire—to develop the capacity to choose the energy the moment requires rather than being unconsciously driven by our habitual one.

A Hero may need the wisdom of the Sage.

A Ruler may need the openness of the Explorer.

A Creator may need the grounding of the Ruler.

A Caregiver may need the boundaries of the Ruler and the courage of the Hero.

In this sense, archetypes become less like labels and more like an **inner leadership team**.

And perhaps this is one of the most important human capabilities in an AI age: not simply having more intelligence but having **more choice about how we use our intelligence**.

What Does It Mean to Flourish?

Flourishing is not the absence of difficulty. Nor is it the endless pursuit of happiness.

It may be closer to becoming increasingly capable of holding the fullness of being human—the strength and the vulnerability, ambition and surrender, individuality and belonging, certainty and uncertainty.

Jung called the lifelong movement toward greater wholeness *individuation*.
It is not about becoming someone else.
It is about becoming more fully oneself.

Perhaps this is why the question of flourishing feels so timely today.

As technology becomes increasingly intelligent, humanity may need to redefine its own form of intelligence.

Not intelligence as speed.
Not intelligence as information.
Not intelligence as optimization.

But intelligence as the capacity to **make meaning, hold paradox, connect deeply, imagine differently, choose consciously and transform us and the systems around us.**

The future may therefore require a different kind of leader.

Not simply a leader who knows more.
Not simply a leader who performs more.

But a leader who can access more of themselves.

Because the ultimate human advantage may not be that we can do what machines cannot.

It may be that, in a world where machines increasingly expand what is possible, **we have the responsibility to decide what is worth doing—and who we want to become while doing it.**

Perhaps that is the deeper meaning of flourishing.

Not becoming more successful versions of who we already are.
But becoming more whole.



Dr. Sandy Chen is Co-Founder & Chief Product Officer at CrystalMind Transconsulting, bringing over 3,000 hours of executive coaching experience and 16 years of global leadership in multinational corporations. She holds a PhD in Organizational Development and Change from Fielding Graduate University. As a leading voice in integrating Jungian archetypes with business coaching, Dr. Chen brings a rare and powerful synthesis of depth psychology, Eastern wisdom, and corporate strategy to transform leadership development in the AI era.

Beyond Success: What Special Needs Has Taught Me About Flourishing in an AI World

by Elizabeth Lee

There is a question I often return to: What if we have been measuring success incorrectly?

As the founder of Horizon Leaf Education & Counselling Hub, I have had the privilege of walking alongside children, young people and families whose journeys do not always fit society's conventional definition of achievement. Through this work, I have learned that a person can make little visible progress by conventional measures and yet flourish in deeply meaningful ways.

I remember working with a child who was learning to communicate his needs and share his experiences. After a visit to a theme park,

he was not yet able to recount the experience in a coherent story, as a conventional Show and Tell or storytelling activity might require. However, he was beginning to identify and name his feelings, and he was willing to share snippets of his experience with me. That willingness became the foundation of our connection. What might have been considered an incomplete performance under a standard rubric was, in reality, a meaningful step towards communication, emotional awareness and trust. Yet, the bond we were building, and the progress he was making in finding his voice, could never be fully captured by the assessment criteria.



This experience reminded me that meaningful progress is not always visible, and what matters most cannot always be measured.

A child who learns to express a need after years of frustration is flourishing. A young person who finds the courage to enter a room where they once felt excluded is flourishing. A parent who stops comparing their child with others and begins celebrating individual progress is flourishing.

These moments may never appear on a performance dashboard, but they represent profound human growth.

When We Forget What Matters

We have become remarkably good at measuring grades, revenue and productivity. Artificial intelligence (AI) is accelerating this trend, enabling us to analyse information, identify patterns and optimise decisions with unprecedented efficiency.

Yet, in our pursuit of measurable outcomes, we risk valuing people primarily for what they produce rather than recognising who they are.

“This experience reminded me that meaningful progress is not always visible, and what matters most cannot always be measured.”

We ask ourselves: How productive am I? How successful am I? How quickly am I progressing?

Perhaps we should also ask: Do I feel connected? Can I be myself without constantly performing? Does my life have meaning?

These questions move us beyond achievement towards flourishing. A meaningful life is not defined solely by what we accomplish, but also by how we grow, how we relate to others and whether we have the autonomy to reach the self-actualisation stage.

Seeing the Person Behind the Difference

My work in special needs education and counselling has taught me that difference is not a deficiency.

We live in a world quick to identify what someone cannot do. Developmental milestones and standardised assessments can offer useful guidance, but when we focus too heavily on comparison, we risk overlooking the whole person.

Behind every diagnosis is an individual with strengths, preferences, fears, relationships and dreams. Behind a behaviour may be an attempt to communicate. Behind resistance may be fear; behind withdrawal, overwhelm; and behind frustration, an unmet need.

When we focus only on behaviour, we can miss the person.

At Horizon Leaf, supporting children and young people with special needs means

looking beyond challenges to understand what they are communicating, recognise their strengths and create opportunities for growth. Sometimes, progress begins not by asking why a child cannot do something, but by asking what might help them succeed in their own way.

This may involve adapting an environment, offering alternative ways to communicate, building confidence gradually or helping parents understand their child with greater compassion.

Children do not develop in isolation. Their progress is shaped by relationships, expectations and opportunities. When parents, educators and support professionals work together, they create conditions in which children can thrive.

The question shifts from “How do we change this person?” to “What does this person need in order to flourish?”

This principle extends beyond special needs. Every individual deserves to be understood as more than a collection of achievements, limitations or labels.

In an AI-Driven World, Seeing Beyond the Numbers

The more sophisticated our technology becomes, the more intentional we must be about preserving our humanity.

AI can process information, identify patterns and make predictions. These capabilities can strengthen educational support, inform decisions and help us respond to individual

“The question shifts from ‘How do we change this person?’ to ‘What does this person need in order to flourish?’”

needs. But a pattern is not a person, and a metric is never the whole story.

Data may tell us what is happening, but it cannot always explain why. It cannot fully capture someone's lived experiences, motivations, fears or hopes. In education and counselling, information is valuable, but understanding also requires context, thoughtful questions and a willingness to listen.

If AI can generate words, we must remember when words alone are insufficient. If it can identify patterns, we must remain curious about those who do not fit them. And if technology can simulate empathy, we must become more intentional about practising genuine empathy.

Technology should support human judgement, not replace our responsibility to understand people in their individual contexts.

As AI automates more tasks, we must also consider what we will do with the time we gain. Will we use it to pursue even greater productivity, or to listen more closely, connect with our children and be present with our

families? The opportunity is not simply to do more with technology, but to make more room for what matters.

Creating Conditions for Flourishing

These ideas have important implications for education, coaching and leadership.

A flourishing leader does more than develop high-performing teams. They notice who has become quieter, whose ideas are overlooked and who may be struggling beneath the surface. They create environments where people can contribute in different ways.

Inclusion communicates a powerful message: *You do not have to become someone else to have value here.*

A child who struggles in one environment may thrive in another. When we accommodate different ways of learning, thinking and communicating, we create opportunities for

individuals to participate, contribute and realise their potential. This applies not only to schools, but also to workplaces and communities.

Coaching helps people move beyond external expectations, reconnect with their values and pursue meaningful goals. In an AI-driven world, thoughtful questions and deep listening become even more valuable. The aim is not to abandon achievement, but to balance it with wellbeing, purpose and fulfilment.

Coming Back to What Makes Us Human

What if we asked children not only what they want to become, but how they want to feel, who they want around them and what makes life meaningful? Perhaps adults need to ask themselves the same questions.

Achievement without wellbeing can lead to exhaustion. Success without connection can leave us lonely. Productivity without purpose can feel empty.

At Horizon Leaf, I have learned that meaningful progress often lies in small, almost invisible moments: a child finding their voice, growing confidence or a parent feeling understood. For families raising children with special needs, every step towards greater understanding, communication and belonging matters.

Self-actualisation is not about meeting society's expectations, but realising our potential and becoming more fully ourselves. Our role is to create environments where



everyone can discover their strengths and flourish in their own way.

As AI becomes better at measuring, predicting and optimising, we need to remember that what can be measured is not all that matters. Our humanity lies in our capacity to connect, show compassion and see beyond the numbers.

Perhaps the question is not simply, “How successful can we become?” but “**How human can we remain while we succeed?**”

Beyond success, that is where true flourishing begins.



Elizabeth Lee, Founder of Horizon Leaf Special Needs Education and Counselling Hub, believes that caring for individuals with special needs begins with seeing the person beyond the diagnosis. In an increasingly AI-driven world, she believes technology can create meaningful opportunities through personalised learning, assistive communication, greater independence, and improved access to support. However, Elizabeth firmly believes that technology should enhance, never replace, human connection, empathy, and compassion. Her vision is to bring together responsible innovation and genuine human care to create a more inclusive society where every individual is recognised for their strengths, supported in their journey, and given the opportunity to thrive.

Staying Human in an AI-Driven World: Rethinking Success and Flourishing

by Sean Chew

Introduction

What does it mean to be successful? For many of us, success has long been measured through visible milestones: qualifications, career progression, recognition, financial security and the ability to do more in less time. These achievements can be meaningful. Yet, in my work as a psychotherapist and professional counsellor, I have often been reminded of an uncomfortable paradox: a person may appear successful on the outside while feeling exhausted, disconnected or uncertain of who they are on the inside.

As Artificial Intelligence (AI) reshapes how we learn, work and communicate, this paradox deserves renewed attention. Technology offers opportunities to increase efficiency and access to information. But a deeper question remains: are the lives we are building ones in which we can genuinely flourish?

Flourishing is more than performing well

Flourishing should not be confused with constant happiness, relentless positivity or the



absence of struggle. Ryff's (1989) model of psychological well-being highlights purpose in life, positive relationships, self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery and personal growth. These dimensions invite us to consider the quality of our inner and relational lives, not merely our outward performance.

Self-determination theory similarly identifies autonomy, competence and relatedness as basic psychological needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Someone may be highly competent and productive yet feel depleted when their choices no longer reflect their values or their relationships lack depth. Achievement matters, but achievement alone does not guarantee well-being.

Success through an Asia-Pacific lens

Across the Asia-Pacific region, ideas about success are shaped by diverse histories, cultures, communities and economic realities. In some families and workplaces, educational attainment, professional status, financial stability and fulfilling responsibilities towards loved ones carry deep significance. These aspirations can reflect care, sacrifice and collective commitment, rather than mere social pressure. At the same time, they may leave little room to ask what the individual wants.

Growing up and practising in Singapore, I recognise how readily the language of achievement can become entangled with duty, comparison and the desire not to disappoint others. We should avoid portraying any culture as uniform: within every community, people differ in what they value and how they negotiate expectations. The coaching opportunity is therefore not to dismiss family obligations or champion individualism, but to help clients discern which commitments remain meaningful and which have become costly or constraining.

A client striving for promotion, for instance, may be pursuing both personal fulfilment and a sense of responsibility to their family. The goal is not to tell them which motive is ‘right’. It is to create space for a more conscious choice.

The coaching conversation beneath the goal

Clients commonly approach coaching with

“The goal is not to tell them which motive is ‘right’. It is to create space for a more conscious choice.”

goals involving confidence, leadership, performance or career advancement. Those goals deserve respect. Yet a thoughtful conversation may reveal a quieter question: ‘Whose definition of success am I trying to fulfil?’ Coaches can help clients distinguish between an outcome they genuinely value and a standard they have learned to meet without examination.

One practical approach is to invite clients to describe what success would look like if external recognition were removed. A coach might ask: ‘What would still matter if nobody applauded this achievement?’ ‘Which expectations feel chosen, and which feel inherited?’ or ‘What is the cost of pursuing this goal in your health, relationships and sense of self?’ The aim is not to lead clients away from ambition but to make ambition more intentional.

Coaches can then translate reflection into action: identify one value the client wishes to honour, one boundary that protects it and one small, observable step to take before the next session. When a client is weighing competing responsibilities, the coach can explore trade-offs without assuming that either personal aspiration or collective duty should prevail. In

this way, flourishing becomes part of goal setting rather than an afterthought.

The human need to be seen

One of the most valuable elements of a supportive professional relationship is being heard without immediately being evaluated or fixed. In therapeutic work, I have observed how people can become so accustomed to meeting expectations, caring for others or appearing resilient that they gradually lose touch with their own needs. Sometimes, meaningful change begins with permission to acknowledge vulnerability.

Coaches and leaders may recognise this tension. In workplaces that reward speed and decisiveness, slowing down can appear inefficient. Yet listening may be what makes wiser action possible. Waldinger and Schulz (2023), drawing on the Harvard Study of Adult Development, emphasise the importance of close relationships for well-being. Human connection is not a decorative addition to success; it is central to how we experience a good life.

Staying human alongside AI

AI can assist with brainstorming, organising information, summarising documents and generating alternative perspectives. Used appropriately, it may free time for the interpersonal dimensions of professional practice. But a polished response is not the same as a trusting relationship, and an instant answer does not necessarily produce insight. Human conversations involve emotion, cultural meaning, uncertainty and

responsibility to the person before us.

For coaches, this requires both curiosity and discernment. The International Coaching Federation's Code of Ethics, effective in 2025, addresses responsibilities involving technology and AI (International Coaching Federation [ICF], 2025). Coaches should consider informed consent, confidentiality, data protection and professional judgement before using such tools. It is especially important not to upload identifiable client information into an AI system without an appropriate lawful and ethical basis.

AI might help a coach prepare general reflective prompts, but during a session the coach must still notice hesitation, remain curious about emotion and resist rushing towards an answer. That attentive presence is difficult to reduce to a checklist. Technology can support the process without taking over the relationship.

A more intentional measure of success

Flourishing is not an endpoint attained once



and possessed permanently. It is a continuing practice of alignment, care and intentional choice. For coaches and leaders, the challenge is to ask not only 'What are we accomplishing?' but also 'What is this pursuit asking of us, and what kind of person or community are we becoming along the way?'

As 2026 draws to a close, perhaps progress can be measured not simply by how much we have achieved, but by whether our ambitions deepen purpose, sustain relationships and leave room for rest. AI will continue to change our tools. It need not decide the values by which we live. Being human is not a limitation to overcome; it is the foundation from which meaningful success can grow.

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Artificial Intelligence in Coaching: Developments, Ethics and Partnering for Human Flourishing

by Dr. Suresh Nanwani

As coaches, we are increasingly working alongside Artificial Intelligence (AI) in our profession. The question is how we continue to flourish, improving ourselves while continuing to serve our clients with humanity.

Different worlds over the past decades

When I started my formal coaching classes just before the COVID-19 pandemic, I

encountered the world of VUCA — volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. The pandemic, followed by the emergence of AI in the early 2020s, ushered in what has been described as a BANI world — brittle, anxious, non-linear and incomprehensible.

AI continues to grow beyond the digital platforms we first encountered. Yet one important distinction remains: **AI is not a sentient being.**

As coaches affiliated with coaching bodies, the codes of ethics of EMCC Global and the International Coaching Federation (ICF) now include clearer provisions concerning AI.

Absence of technology in earlier ethics codes

The first [Global Code of Ethics \(GCE\) \(version 1, 2016\)](#) and [earlier versions of the ICF Code of Ethics](#) did not explicitly address AI or the use of emerging technologies in coaching. Their provisions focused primarily on the confidentiality, security and appropriate handling of client records.

EMCC Global

The current [GCE \(version 4, 2025\)](#) explicitly recognizes a changing world and provides clearer guidance on the use of technology, including data technologies and AI in Section 3, Professional conduct. Prior informed consent is key to ensuring compliance with these provisions.

International Coaching Federation

The [2020 ICF Code of Ethics](#) referred to “technology-associated coaching services” in Part 4, section 1.7 but did not specifically name AI or AI tools. It nevertheless reminded coaches to use emerging technologies appropriately and to remain aware of how ethical standards apply.

Fast-forward five years, and the [2025 ICF Code of Ethics](#) explicitly references AI in Part 4, section 2.5 and emphasises the importance of prior informed consent when coaches use technology-assisted coaching tools, systems, databases, platforms, software and AI.

Rediscovering ourselves with ethics and standards

The real challenge now, in 2026, with the clear acknowledgement of AI in coaching, lies not in defining ourselves as coaches, whether or not we are affiliated with coaching entities. It is timely for us coaches, as human beings, to revisit and rediscover ourselves through coaching and the visible presence of AI.

Ubuntu coaching and partnering

I start with my Ubuntu coaching where I was

taught by **Nobantu Npotulo**. It is grounded in the African indigenous philosophy of Ubuntu (“I am because we are”). I attended her classes in 2024 with passion, enamored of her enchanting refrain as it symbolizes connectivity and flourishing through an African philosophy and community value system. The “7 Cs” in her Ubuntu coaching are compassion, caring, courage, co-creation, curiosity, connectedness, and commitment to action, markers that we coaches are familiar with. **Dumi Magadlela**, co-founder of the Ubuntu Coaching Foundation at the Coaching Centre in South Africa, acknowledged in [2025](#): “We need to partner with the technologies today, with AI especially.”

The message is unambiguous: partnering is needed so we can be better coaches, to keep up with the times and technologies, while focusing on our coaching and mastering it. This message also resonates with the coaching from these two Ubuntu leading corporate coaches through these themes: “connect” with conscious greeting and relationship-building; “systems” by recognizing the interconnectedness of things; and “humanize” by creating a safe space where everyone can express their unique gifts.

Jazz Rasool, an executive coach and pioneer in AI-enhanced coaching, highlights how AI increasingly surrounds the way we work, learn and interact. What is needed is to demystify AI and understand how we can shape its increasingly pervasive presence in our lives through better understanding of ourselves and by ensuring compliance with the ethics codes we have signed up to as coaches.

This introspection requires us to understand better what coaching is about. Where AI can do things better than us, such as producing summary notes of coaching discussions, we should not be afraid of these AI-generated notes. They are not definitive, and it is up to us to explain to the client, after obtaining their prior informed consent to the use of AI tools, that these notes are an AI-generated version and not “final”, as we can update them for clarity or other reasons.

Are human beings less relevant with AI interventions?

The answer is a resounding “no”. The reason is simple: **we coach as human beings**. That is the gift we bring to our clients, in the name of humanity and human flourishing.

The coaching context need not be confined to a room. It may be arts-based — a walk in the countryside, through urban streets, or in a museum. Our human strengths and resilience, together with the qualities we bring to coaching, can draw out the best in our clients and support them in becoming their authentic selves through deep listening and reflective inquiry.

Overcoming fears

I have learnt – and am still learning – to work with my fears of AI, but through my coaching journey with **Marcia Reynolds** and **Julius Ordoñez**, I remain resolute about one critical human intervention: our humanity.

Humans are irreplaceable as coaches, with the proviso that we continuously improve

ourselves to stay present, curious, bold in our inquiry, and willing to share what we notice.

That is the art of flourishing. We, in turn, bring out the authentic selves of our clients, with whom we partner as equals, creating a space where they feel safe and trusted as they discover themselves and rediscover their humanity.



What's next?

There is no fixed recipe for success. The answer lies within us. We must continually strive to develop ourselves while partnering with AI. As we continue our mastery in coaching and interact with clients through human flourishing, we rediscover our humanity in the AI world.

The author acknowledges thanks to Lise Bruynooghe, David Clutterbuck, Dorota Raniszewska, Jazz Rasool and Eve Turner. The views in this piece are his own.



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AI Has Answers. Humans Have Issues.

*The human work of growing, leading
and flourishing*

by Joyce Koh

Behind every transformation journey is a human story.

As coaches, we are invited into these stories at moments of *transition, ambition, uncertainty, identity, and growth*. We sit with people as they explore who they are, who they are becoming, and what they are being called to contribute. We listen not only to their goals, but also to their beliefs, fears, strengths, patterns, and possibilities that lie beneath them.

In a world increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence, this work has never felt more important.

AI is changing how we learn, work, lead, communicate, and make decisions. It helps accelerate productivity, generate content, analyse patterns, and provide answers at remarkable speed. It can support our development in powerful ways.

But it cannot replace the **deeply human space of coaching**.

- AI cannot fully sense the pause before a client speaks.

- AI cannot feel the weight behind a carefully chosen word.
- AI cannot hold silence with compassion.
- AI cannot create the relational trust through which a person feels safe enough to see themselves more honestly.

AI can help us access information. Coaching helps us access wisdom.

This distinction matters.

Beyond Success

Much of the world still defines success through external achievement: the promotion, title, qualification, performance metric, visible milestone, or carefully crafted profile of progress.

As coaches, we know these markers can be meaningful. Achievement can reflect discipline, commitment, aspiration, and growth. Yet we also know that success, when disconnected from self-awareness and wellbeing, can become fragile.

We have all encountered people who look successful on the outside but feel depleted on the inside: leaders who are performing but not thriving, students who are achieving but anxious, professionals who are progressing while quietly wondering whether the path still belongs to them. I know this feeling well, having experienced it myself.

This is why our work must extend beyond simply being coaching professionals.

A more important question is this: Are we becoming the kind of people and coaches we want to be?

“AI cannot create the relational trust through which a person feels safe enough to see themselves more honestly.”

This question feels especially urgent in an AI-shaped world. More people are turning to AI not only for answers, but also for conversation, comfort, and emotional support. A 2026 Pew Research Center survey found that “one in five adults under 30 in the U.S. say they get emotional support from chatbots.” Closer to home, research from City University of Hong Kong surveyed 1,041 people about chatbot adoption for emotional support, while the *South China Morning Post* has reported a growing trend of Hong Kong residents turning to AI chatbots to manage emotional stress.

For those of us working across Singapore, Hong Kong, and the wider Asian region, this is a reminder that AI is changing not only how people work, but also where they turn **to be heard**. Beneath the convenience lies a very human longing to be understood, supported, and accompanied. Cost is also a factor. AI tools can be far less expensive than working with a human coach.

AI may offer a response. But human flourishing still requires real connection, self-awareness, and the courage to live in alignment with who we are becoming.

The Human Edge in an AI World

AI can be a powerful partner in learning and transformation. It can help clients reflect, prepare, research, organise their thoughts, practise scenarios, and broaden their perspectives. As coaches, we do not need to resist technology. We need to learn to use it well, as a co-pilot.

The question is not whether AI belongs in the future of coaching and leadership development. It already does. The more important question is: how do we ensure that human development remains deeply human?

Because transformation is not simply the transfer of information.

A client does not change because they receive a better answer. They change when they see differently, feel differently, choose differently, and begin to relate to themselves and others differently.



That kind of change calls for us to be fully present, build trust, listen with care, and honour the client's pace. It means staying curious rather than rushing to offer solutions.

AI may simulate conversation, but coaching is more than conversation.

Coaching is relationship. Coaching is presence. Coaching is partnership.

Coaching is transformation in motion.

In an AI-shaped world, I believe coaches have a profound responsibility: to help people stay connected to what makes them human - purpose, values, emotions, relationships, intuition, imagination, ethics, meaning, and care.

When the world accelerates, we help people pause. When answers multiply, we help people ask better questions. When performance pressure grows, we help people reconnect with wellbeing. When technology expands capability, we help people examine responsibility.

This role is especially important for the next generation.

In September 2026, I completed a professional readiness programme for students enrolled in the MSc in Business Analytics at The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST). I had the privilege of designing and delivering a tailor-made workshop titled "The Data Strategist's Playbook: The Human Edge in an AI World." Across seven modules delivered over seven weeks, the programme focused on

strengthening students' professional readiness and maturity as they prepared to enter the workplace. I worked with approximately 200 students.

The workshop responded to an important insight from corporate partners and hiring managers: early-career performance gaps often arise not from technical ability alone, but from capabilities such as **professional execution, structured thinking, effective communication, sound judgement, deep listening, problem framing, strategic preparation, persuasive communication, accountability, and long-term thinking.**

Through workplace simulations and case scenarios, students explored how the business world operates and what it means to show up with discipline, clarity, and confidence.

What stayed with me most was not simply the curriculum.

It was their willingness to show up.

They asked questions. They participated. They challenged themselves. They supported one another. They took time to understand who they are becoming.

Looking at them, I saw more than students completing a programme. I saw future data strategists, decision-makers, collaborators, leaders, and problem-solvers beginning to recognise their own potential.

That is where coaching becomes powerful.

It helps people see that readiness is not perfection. Readiness is self-awareness.

“Looking at them, I saw more than students completing a programme. I saw future data strategists, decision-makers, collaborators, leaders, and problem-solvers beginning to recognise their own potential.”

Readiness is courage. Readiness is the willingness to learn, adapt, and grow.

Purpose, Wellbeing and Relationships

In coaching, purpose often emerges quietly. It may not arrive as a grand declaration. It may appear in a client's energy when they describe meaningful work, in frustration when something they value is being violated, or in a repeated longing that asks to be heard.

As coaches, we help clients reconnect with the “why and what” beneath their goals.

Purpose gives direction to capability. It helps clients make decisions that are not only intelligent, but aligned with their passion.

Wellbeing is equally essential. It is not a soft add-on, a luxury, or something to discuss only after burnout has arrived. Wellbeing is a foundation for sustainable growth.

In high-achievement cultures, many people learn to override their own signals. They push through fatigue, normalise stress, and treat rest as something to earn. Coaching can interrupt this pattern. We can help clients notice their energy, examine assumptions about productivity, and design rhythms that support both ambition and sustainability.

In a digital and AI-mediated world, human connection requires **intentional protection**. We can be highly connected and still feel unseen. We can communicate constantly and still avoid meaningful conversation.

Our Work Is Only Beginning

The leaders of the future will need more than technical fluency. They will need the capacity to hold paradox: efficiency and empathy, innovation and ethics, ambition and wellbeing, data and intuition, automation and humanity, performance and purpose.

This is where coaching has a vital role to play.

We help people slow down enough to notice their impact. We help them examine not only what they achieve, but how they achieve it. We support them in developing the inner maturity to lead through uncertainty with courage and care. For coaches, this is our defining moment.

AI will continue to evolve. Organisations will continue to transform. Careers will continue to shift. The next generation will need to navigate possibilities and pressures we are only beginning to understand.

Our role is not to have all the answers. Our role is to hold the space where better questions can

emerge - questions of purpose, wellbeing, identity, ethics, contribution, and humanity.

Perhaps, in an AI world, this is why coaching matters more than ever.

To help people remember who they are beneath the noise.

To help them grow into who they are capable of becoming.

And to ensure that the future we are building remains not only intelligent and efficient, but profoundly, courageously, and beautifully human.

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Joyce Koh is a transformation leader, coach, and HK Ambassador for APAC who believes growth should be meaningful, human and preferably not achieved through burnout and too much coffee. She currently serves part-time as Chief Operation Officer of a Hong Kong technology and marketing solutions company, while also running her own coaching business, The Harmony Code, where she helps people make sense of their strengths, purpose, wellbeing, and next steps in life.

Joyce works mainly with undergraduate, postgraduate and junior executives, particularly through her coaching work with Hong Kong University Science & Technology in Hong Kong, supporting them as they navigate confidence, communication, professional readiness, and the big question of “What am I becoming?” Combining corporate leadership, coaching, and a healthy respect for real-life messiness, Joyce is passionate about helping young people grow into future-ready humans not perfect ones.

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As AI Gets Smarter, Let's Stay Human

Rethinking Success, Leadership and Connection in the Age of AI

by Valerie Chow

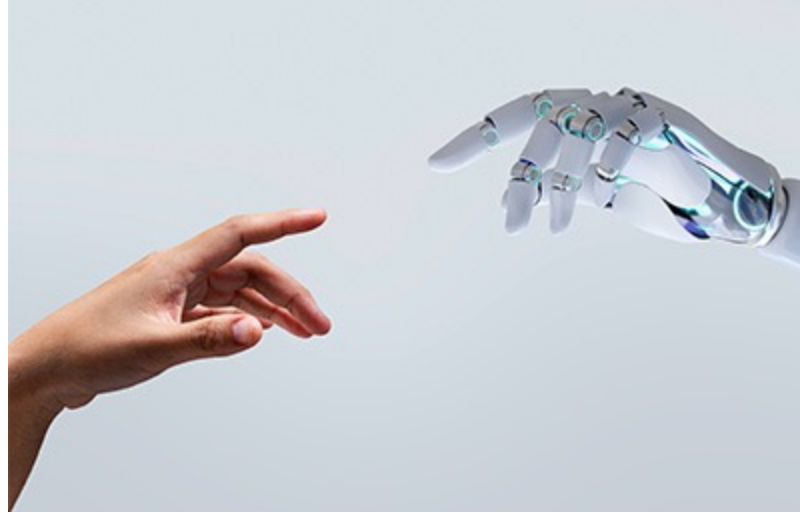
As I embrace artificial intelligence (AI), I find myself caught between excitement and concern. As a marketer, I see how AI helps us work faster, think bigger and achieve what once seemed impossible. As a leader, I see opportunities to grow ourselves and others. Yet I wonder: in our race to become better, faster and more efficient, are we forgetting what makes us human?

To me, flourishing means more than achieving success. It is about living with purpose, nurturing relationships and growing as leaders without losing our humanity along the way.

Purpose: Are We Still Thinking for Ourselves?

I use AI daily in my marketing work, from developing strategies and creating content to testing ideas and analysing data. It helps me clarify my thoughts, generate ideas and turn complex information into meaningful business stories. Tasks that once took days can now be completed in minutes, allowing me to create greater value.

Yet when AI can provide an instant answer to almost any question, do we still take time to think for ourselves? Do we challenge its suggestions and form our own opinions, or



simply copy and use what it gives us? We may become more productive, but are we becoming better thinkers?

AI can help us achieve our goals, but it cannot decide what truly matters to us. Purpose must come from our values, experiences and aspirations. We must not become so caught up in doing more that we forget why we are doing it in the first place.

Relationships: Connected Digitally, but Are We Closer?

Digital tools allow us to communicate across the world in seconds, yet we can struggle to make time for the people sitting beside us. In my own work, digital collaboration brings flexibility and efficiency, but deeper relationships can be harder to build when face-to-face interactions are limited.

There is so much we learn beyond words: a change in tone, a facial expression, a moment of hesitation or a silence that tells us something is not quite right. Spontaneous conversations over coffee, laughter at lunch and water-cooler moments may seem insignificant, but they help us see one another as people, not simply colleagues with tasks to complete.

AI may respond instantly, but human relationships require mutual care, patience, vulnerability and the willingness to show up for one another. Sometimes, putting our devices aside and giving someone our full attention is the most meaningful thing we can do.

Leadership: Leading with Our Minds and Hearts

AI can suggest ways to manage conflict, motivate a team or handle difficult conversations. But leadership is not simply about knowing the right things to say. It is about responding when someone is struggling, rebuilding trust when things go wrong and bringing people together when opinions differ.

Empathy develops through experience and practice: listening, making mistakes and trying to understand another person's perspective. Trust is built through our actions, consistency and willingness to have honest conversations, even when they are uncomfortable.

Leaders must embrace AI, learn how to use it and help their teams become more capable.

“AI may respond instantly, but human relationships require mutual care, patience, vulnerability and the willingness to show up for one another.”

At the same time, we must question its outputs, exercise due diligence and make responsible decisions. For me, leadership in an AI world is about balance: use AI to sharpen our thinking, but do not surrender our judgement; use it to improve performance but never forget the people behind the numbers.

Flourishing: The Future Is Still in Our Hands

We cannot compete with AI by trying to process information faster than a machine. Instead, we can use it to expand our capabilities, free up time and create opportunities that were once beyond our reach.

But we also need to pause and reflect. Are we using the time saved by AI to spend more time with people we love? Are we using the knowledge it gives us to become wiser and more curious, or simply filling our days with even more things to do?

Flourishing is about growing without losing sight of who we are: pursuing success while protecting our wellbeing, building our careers while nurturing relationships, and becoming better leaders while remaining compassionate human beings.

AI will continue to evolve, and we have a part to play in shaping how it is used and what kind of future it creates. Let us use AI to move forward without sacrificing our humanity. Behind every data point is a person; behind every business outcome is human effort; and behind every great leader is the ability to understand and inspire others.

Ultimately, our success will not be measured only by how fast we work or how intelligently we use AI. It will also be measured by whether we build a life worth living, relationships worth cherishing and a future in which people can thrive. AI may help us become more capable, but it is our humanity that gives those capabilities meaning.



Valerie Chow is a 360° marketer, business builder and AI practitioner with experience across consumer retail, insurance and financial services. She has worked on brand growth, go-to-market strategies, customer acquisition and business performance for brands including Nike, AXA, Etiqa and StoneX. A speaker, coach and trainer, she is passionate about career pivots, personal branding, leadership and adapting to change. She is the Amazon bestselling author of *Shaken, Stirred but Not Deterred* and explores how technology can unlock possibilities while championing human-centred marketing.

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Learning to Trust the Coaching Conversation

by Kar Teong Ng

Adapted from the coaching journal originally composed in Simplified Chinese by Coach Kar Teong, this article has been translated into English with the assistance of ChatGPT.

I believe I have become a capable coach. I listen carefully, ask questions with curiosity, and respect my clients' ability to make their own choices. Yet after some sessions, I sit quietly and wonder whether I have shown the attitude and behaviours expected of a capable coach. Sometimes I replay a question I asked. At other times, I feel uneasy about a period of silence because I did not know how to respond.

Gradually, I have become more honest about these doubts. Some come from wanting to support and help my clients more effectively. Others come from wanting reassurance that I am doing a good job. Developing a coaching mindset, which means remaining curious and willing to keep learning, also involves recognising this difference. When I focus too much on my performance, I find myself preparing the next question instead of truly listening. Learning to pause and bring my attention back to the client has therefore become an important part of my practice.



One experience shook my confidence and made me question the value I offered when a client did not achieve the outcome he had hoped for. He was a father of two who had lost his job when he was nearly fifty. He worried about his mortgage and his children's education expenses. His main goal was to find work quickly. However, after several sessions, he still had no job offer and began questioning whether our conversations were helping.

My first reaction was to think about the progress I believed he had made. He seemed clearer about his strengths and more willing to ask others for help. However, I soon realised that I was defending the coaching. I paused, acknowledged his disappointment, and asked

what mattered most to him at that moment. I also asked what making progress and achieving results meant to him.

He took a deep breath and thought for a while. Then he shared the concerns he had been carrying and explained that he had not yet let go of the things he missed from his past. These feelings were making it difficult for him to move forward. We revisited our coaching agreement and continued to return to it as we reviewed his progress. This deepened my understanding of the ICF competency, Establishes and Maintains Agreements, which involves working together to clarify goals, expectations and how progress will be recognised.

We explored what was within his influence and what support he needed. We also discussed how to fit these actions around caring for his children, along with other behaviours that could affect the goals we had agreed on. I invited him to reflect on how helpful these actions were, rather than judging their value for him. This experience reminded me to keep the client's practical needs at the centre of our work and allow room for honest disappointment.

Another experience made me reconsider what client satisfaction really means. A newly promoted manager sought coaching because she felt overwhelmed. She often accepted extra work, answered work messages during family meals, and struggled to switch off after working hours. At the end of one session, she said she felt much better.

“This experience reminded me to keep the client’s practical needs at the centre of our work and allow room for honest disappointment.”

I was pleased and initially saw her response as a sign that the session had been successful. When I asked what had helped, she explained that she rarely had the chance to speak openly about her worries and challenges without someone immediately offering advice. For her, being listened to quietly and attentively was the best way to release stress. This was why she felt so satisfied with the coaching conversation. I wondered whether I should feel pleased about this. At the very least, I could feel encouraged by her appreciation.

At our next session, however, she told me she had continued working late throughout the previous week. I noticed my disappointment and reminded myself that, although her working habits had not changed, the relief she had felt was real. With her permission, we explored what she truly wanted. Gradually, she understood why she was afraid to refuse other people's requests and gained a deeper understanding of the concerns behind that fear. She then decided to discuss competing work priorities with her manager. Over time, she adjusted the pace of her life and found greater peace of mind.

This reflected Facilitates Client Growth: supporting clients to apply their learning through actions they choose. Her positive feedback helped me understand what had been valuable in that session. Understanding its wider effects required further conversations. I learned to appreciate client satisfaction while remaining interested in what happened afterwards, including the actions a client felt unable or unwilling to take.

A third experience challenged an assumption I had been making: that a session had to feel productive to me to be useful to the client. I was coaching a woman who worked full time while caring for her ageing mother. She often paused before answering, and several times she simply said she did not know.

As the silence continued, I felt pressure to find a question that would move the conversation forward. I noticed that I was becoming more concerned about the session's progress than about her experience in that moment. I took a breath and stopped trying to fill every pause. Instead, I asked how she needed me to support her. She said she needed some time to think.

The ICF competency of Maintains Presence, which involves giving the client my full attention and responding to what is happening in the moment, became very practical for me. I stayed quietly with her and allowed her to continue at her own pace. Eventually, she explained that she always felt she had to finish everything before she deserved a rest.

I reflected her words back to her and asked what she noticed when she heard them again.

She began to question whether that expectation was possible to meet. Here, I drew on the ICF competency Evokes Awareness: supporting clients to gain a new understanding of their thinking or experience. I asked whether she wanted to explore this discovery further or consider what it might mean for the coming week.

She decided to ask her older brother to care for their mother for one evening. Before we finished, I asked what had been helpful and what remained unresolved. She said the quiet had helped her recognise how little space she allowed for her own needs. Yet that same quiet had briefly made me feel that I was failing. Her feedback showed me how differently we could experience the same conversation.

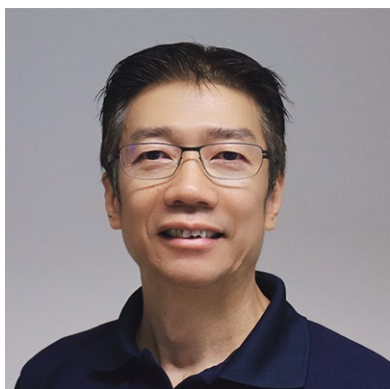
These sessions changed my understanding of success. I still care about results, and I want clients to receive value from our work together. I have also learned to ask what success means within the realities of their lives.

For me, succeeding without being attached to success means letting go of the need to prove myself through every session. Succeeding without fearing failure means being able to listen when a client says my approach has not helped, acknowledge it honestly, and make adjustments.

Now, I reflect on when I truly listened, when I rushed, and how my expectations influenced the conversation. I invite specific feedback from clients and review our agreed goals with them. These habits help me take responsibility

for my work while respecting their choices.

I expect that I will continue to experience moments of self-doubt. I hope to meet them with honesty and curiosity. The coaching conversations I value most are those in which clients can speak freely, make sense of their experiences, and decide what matters next. When I can support that process without turning it into a judgement of my own worth, I feel closer to the coach I want to be.



Kar Teong Ng is the Founder of LTB Academy and Principal Consultant & Certified Master Performance Coach, helping organisations strengthen leadership capability and team performance. He is also a Licensed NLP Coach. He partners with HR leaders and management teams to design structured, practical development initiatives that drive measurable workplace results. Focused on clarity, accountability, and sustainable behavioural change, he works with leaders and professionals committed to elevating performance and building stronger workplace cultures.

Embrace AI, Stay Human

by Tinku Gupta

Will artificial intelligence ever replace human intelligence? It is a question every leader driving transformation today must face, because AI now sits at the heart of almost every enterprise journey. Here is my personal perspective, shaped by years in senior leadership roles across business and technology in high-stakes, regulated environments.

AI has made success faster and easier to measure than ever. Yet the more time I spend with AI systems, the more convinced I become of one simple truth: what matters most is often what the models cannot see. That is why, for the foreseeable future, human intelligence must stay in the loop.

The Lesson of “Structural Blindness”

In my work on human-in-the-loop frameworks,

I use a phrase that has stayed with me: *structural blindness*. An AI tool learns only from what has been recorded. But what about the unrecorded contributions that hold an organisation together, what I call *tacit value*?

Imagine an AI talent system that recommends an “Exit Pathway” for a long-serving employee because their learning velocity metric is low. On paper, the logic is sound. But their leader knows something the data does not: this person carries decades of institutional memory that quietly keeps a critical financial system running. None of that shows up in a dashboard.

If we follow the machine, we lose them. If a human pauses, questions and overrides, we keep more than an employee. We keep the dignity of recognising a person for who they actually are.



That, to me, is the difference between success and flourishing. Success optimises what is measurable. Flourishing honours what is meaningful. It also raises a practical question: if AI cannot see everything, what should we let it do?

AI Makes Recommendations; Humans Make Decisions

In simple terms, AI plays four roles in a business:

- The fast worker: handling repetitive work at speed, such as sorting thousands of invoices in an hour.
- The forecaster: spotting what may happen next, such as a cash shortfall or a surge in demand.
- The smart filter: highlighting what matters, such as customers who seem about to leave.
- The digital assistant: taking on the drafting “drudge work”, so people can focus on judgment and empathy.

In every one of these roles, AI is helping, not deciding. When I designed an AI–Human Decision Blueprint for high-stakes compliance work, that principle sat above all others: AI acts as a co-pilot, while humans keep the final say and the final responsibility. No automatic approvals. Nothing sent out without a person checking it first.

Some may see that as caution slowing progress down. I see it as a statement of values. A machine can tell us what is likely; only a person can decide what is right. Keeping people in charge, however, asks

something new of those who lead them.

Leadership in an AI World: Building Visibility, Not Perfection

When the first draft of a decision comes from a machine, it is no longer enough to ask, “Is the system accurate?” Leaders must also ask, “Can someone explain how it reached this answer? Can my team question it? And if it is wrong, who takes responsibility?” If we cannot understand an answer, we cannot truly own it.

So, leaders behave differently in three ways. They keep a record of every time a person overrules the AI, and why. They make it clear who to call when something looks wrong, all the way up to the Board. Most importantly, they invite challenge, building teams where anyone feels safe to say, “I think the system is wrong here.”



Good AI leadership is not about having a perfect system; it is about seeing clearly and answering honestly for what it does. And those recorded overrides turn out to be more valuable than they first appear.

Coaching the Machine, and Coaching Each Other

Human overrides should not be treated as errors. They are lessons. When a leader overrides a recommendation and explains why, that reasoning can be fed back to the system, so it learns to notice the quiet, human signals it once missed.

In a sense, we are coaching the machine, and I find that a powerful metaphor for how we should treat one another. Good coaching is not about correcting someone into compliance. It is about helping them see what they missed, with patience and context. If we are willing to do that for an AI system, surely, we can extend the same care to our colleagues and the people we mentor.

That care, though, needs time, and time is exactly what a faster world threatens.

Wellbeing and Relationships in a Faster World

AI promises speed, but speed without reflection can quietly erode wellbeing. When every task is accelerated, we risk forgetting to pause: to think, to listen and to connect.

For me, staying human means protecting those pauses, using the time AI gives back not for more output, but for conversations, relationships and judgment. An analyst freed

from hours of document review should have more time to understand the client's story. That is where AI genuinely contributes to flourishing: when it gives us back our capacity to be present.

Relationships are built on trust, and trust is built on understanding. We trust systems we can question, and we trust people who see us beyond our numbers.

Conclusion: Embrace AI, Stay Human

AI is real, and it is here to stay. It already reads our documents, forecasts our risks and drafts our reports. Pretending otherwise, or keeping it at arm's length, would be a mistake.

But AI is not a replacement for humans. It can process what has been recorded, yet it cannot feel the weight of a decision, read the room, or recognise the quiet value a colleague brings. It cannot take responsibility, and it cannot care. Those remain ours.

The real opportunity lies in embracing AI, not fearing it. When we let it carry the routine, the repetitive and the data-heavy, we free ourselves for the work only people can do: leading with judgment, coaching with patience and building relationships with empathy. In our professional lives, it can sharpen our decisions. In our personal lives, it can give us back time for the people and purposes that matter most.

So, the answer to my opening question is clear. Artificial intelligence will not replace human intelligence. Used wisely, it amplifies it.

When we embrace AI with our values intact, we do not become smaller. We become more powerful, more present and more human.

Beyond success lies flourishing, and that remains a human choice.



Tinku Gupta has over 30 years of leadership experience in financial market infrastructure and technology. Most recently, she spent a decade as CIO and CTO of SGX Group, where she held pivotal roles across business, technology, operations, and cybersecurity, combining commercial acumen with deep technical expertise to deliver growth, resilience, and innovation.

Based in Singapore, she now advises enterprises through her practice, Ekam Consultancy, helping them shape transformation strategy, put change into practice, and build talent resilience in a technology-driven economy. She serves on the Board of the Singapore Institute of Management (SIM) and the Board of Trustees of the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), and is a co-opted member of the Technology Committee at Singapore Pools.

She holds a Master's degree in Electronics and Telecommunications Engineering and is a certified AI Senior Executive from NUS.



APAC Community Announcements & Updates



APAC Xpressions



Arun Krishnaswamy

Chair – Team Coaching, APAC
Singapore

What attracted you to coaching?

My corporate leadership experience proved to me that my self-work as a leader on being empathetic with and empowering my teams, paid off handsomely in outstanding business results, along with inspired team growth and people development. I saw a connect between my working on my spiritual quotient, building selflessness and security in oneself, with attracting, building and retaining talent who still remember our relationship and time together, years after I ceased being their leader. Reflecting back, I had unconsciously been a leader-coach with my ecosystem, not only my team but with my peers and bosses as well. After I decided to stop full-time work, I came across coaching in its pure form, which only amplified strengths I had displayed. At the same time, there were areas of improvement I had to work on, such as patience, listening

deeply and actively, non-judgment and not solutioning. These were muscles that were challenged in corporate life, where there was a premium for quick problem-solving and decision-making. Having resisted that with a relentless focus on empowered delegation and risk-taking, I felt encouraged that I could dive into the deep end of coaching.

How has it affected you personally?

My biggest critic, my wife, admitted somewhat grudgingly that I am improving as a person even as I worked through the process of coaching, certification and ICF credentialing. Glancing occasionally at a headphoned me on Zoom calls, she mentioned, "I am not sure if those other people are benefiting, but I sure see them helping you become a better person!" My mentor exhorted me to make every conversation a coaching conversation. After my wife said, "Don't even try!" I somehow managed to hold somewhat valuable conversations with my 28-year-old son. He said so. I believe him. This, more than anything else, told me that coaching was drawing out the nobler me, in service of humans, leaders, executives who are thirsting for clarity and self-awareness in a safe space. Drawing upon my work and life experience, I have judiciously led with coaching blended with some requested mentoring, to be an instrument enabling moments of insight, of transformation for clients. The real work is by them in the space they and I have co-created for better outcomes. The less I have a sense of agency, the more impactful the outcomes seem to be.

Describe a pivotal moment in your coaching journey.

Early on in my independent coach work, I was called upon to mentor a senior executive in a global MNC. I flipped the conversation and mentioned coaching. The executive, a left-brained analytical person, was however curious and piqued but open. The impact, 6 sessions and 9 months later, can be best summarised in his words: "Coaching with Arun was transformative... one where vulnerability becomes strength, and trust unlocks a new level of introspection... Arun's support has challenged me to listen deeply, reflect thoughtfully, and embrace gut instincts alongside data in my decision-making, especially during uncertain times... I'm used to data-backed decisions, but my conversations with Arun helped me recognize that gut-feel intuition can be equally powerful... Under his guidance, I've learned to value those instinctive responses, which can guide us when clear data isn't available, but our instincts pick up signals that matter." This gave me the boost that I was on the right track and I have not looked back ever since. I am fortunate and grateful to hang around in wonderful communities like Asia Pacific Alliance of Coaches and urge like-minded people to join and enrich the conversation!



Julie Yeap

Honorary Treasurer, APAC
Singapore



What attracted you to coaching?

I have always enjoyed helping people learn, grow and improve. Even when I was an auditor with Ernst & Young (EY), one of the parts of my work that I enjoyed most was coaching my juniors and seeing them become better at what they did.

My interest in coaching grew when I moved into Learning & Development at EY. I was fortunate to work with experienced L&D colleagues who introduced me to coaching and helped me see how powerful it can be as a development approach. Unlike simply giving someone the answer, coaching creates the space for people to reflect, gain clarity and discover their own solutions.

What continues to attract me to coaching is the opportunity to help people recognise their own potential and work towards the performance they aspire to achieve. I particularly enjoy those “lightbulb” moments when a client gains a new perspective and realises what they can do differently.

How has it affected you personally?

Coaching has changed the way I interact with people and, perhaps more importantly, the way I look at myself. It has taught me to listen more deeply, ask better questions and resist the temptation to immediately give advice or provide solutions.

It has also made me much more aware of my own assumptions and perspectives. The coaching mindset has reminded me that people are capable of more than we sometimes assume, and that my role is not always to have the answer, but to create the space for others to find theirs.

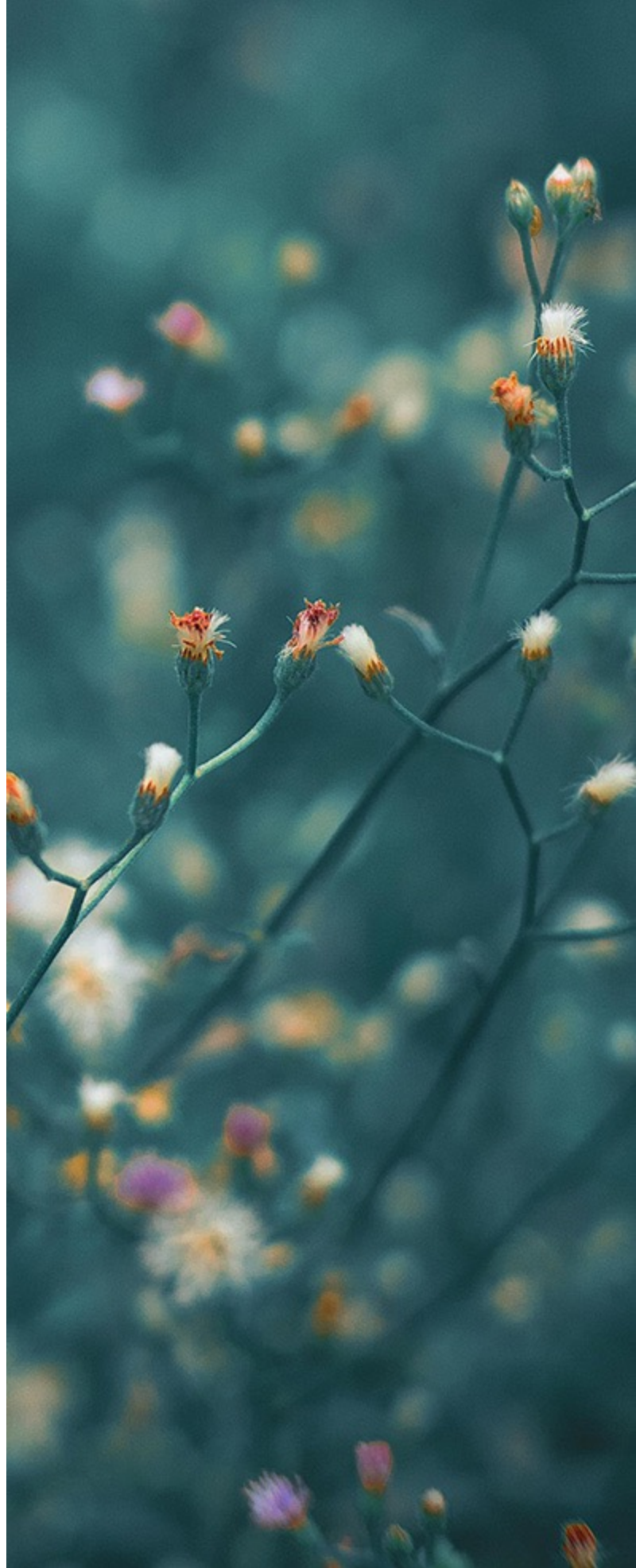
I think this mindset has also made me more reflective and intentional in my own continuous development. I regularly ask myself what I can learn from my experiences, what I could have done differently and how I can continue to improve as a coach, educator and leader.

Describe a pivotal moment in your coaching journey.

A pivotal moment was when I completed my first executive coaching certification with the Institute of Executive Coaching and Leadership (IECL). I had already been working in L&D and coaching people informally, but the certification gave me a much deeper appreciation of what it really means to adopt a coaching mindset.

It helped me understand that effective coaching is not about having the right answers or telling someone what to do. It is about being genuinely curious, listening without judgement and helping the client become more aware of what may be helping or holding them back.

That experience fundamentally shaped how I approach coaching today. It also reinforced something I continue to believe strongly: as coaches, we need to hold the belief that our clients have the potential to achieve what they aspire to, and create the space for them to unlock that potential themselves.





Community Highlights

In the past few months, we've brought our community together through virtual experiences.

We held three insightful webinars: "Leadership Coaching for Innovation and Change Using a Systemic Lens" with Dr. Henry Toi and Thomas Lim, "How to Be a Thinking Partner: Using Time To Think©" with Eve Turner, and "Yogic Insights for Coaches" with Raghu Ananthanarayanan and Steve Correa.

Coming up next is our webinar "Identifying and Handling Resistances in Coaching: A Gestalt Approach" with Chantelle Wyley, PCC.

More learning opportunities are on the way, including the Team Coaching Circle led by Clémence Blondel and Suman Balani. Stay tuned as we continue to learn, grow, and support one another as a community.

Ways to Get Involved

If you have contacts or opportunities for individual pro bono coaching, or organisations interested in exploring team coaching, we warmly invite you to reach out. These partnerships allow us to extend our impact, support underserved communities, and create meaningful development opportunities for our members.

We also welcome your feedback and suggestions on how APAC can better serve your needs. Your voice shapes our direction and strengthens our community. Please feel free to write to us at info@apacoaches.org

Upcoming Events

For the full list of events and more details, visit our website:

<https://apacoaches.org/events/>

APAC AGM 2026 (members-only)

When: Tuesday, 27 October 2026 at 7PM – 8:30PM SGT

[Learn more and register >>](#)

Virtual APAC Retreat I The Authentic Homecoming: A Journey Back to Your Core

Facilitators: Ann Kirati, Vilva Anthony, and Amelia Hirawan

When: 30-31 October 2026

[Learn more and register >>](#)



Identifying and Handling Resistances in Coaching: A Gestalt Approach

Speaker: Chantelle Wyley, PCC

When: Wednesday, 4 November 2026 at 6:30PM – 8PM SGT

[Learn more and register >>](#)



Team Coaching Circle: Bring Your Questions!

Team Coach Supervisors: Clémence Blondel, PCC and Suman Balani, PCC

When: Monday, 16 November 2026 at 7PM – 8:15PM SGT

[Learn more and register >>](#)



Walk & Talk

Where: East Coast Park, Singapore

When: Friday, 27 November 2026, 8AM – 10AM SGT

[Learn more and register >>](#)

APAC AGM 2026

Our Annual General Meeting is on Tuesday, 27 October 2026 at 7PM – 8:30PM SGT.

This AGM will be an opportunity:

- For the Executive Committee to share with you the many exciting developments and achievements during the past year.
- For sharing of ideas on how we can better serve the coaching community in the region, and how you can get involved.

This is a members-only meeting. Please log into your APAC account to register and access the AGM agenda and documents at:

<https://apacoaches.org/apac-agm/>

Walk & Talk

Calling all coaches!

Step away from the screen and join us for a refreshing morning of **movement, meaningful conversations and new connections**.

We will begin with a relaxed one-hour walk along East Coast Park – an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, exchange ideas and get to know fellow coaches in an informal setting. After the walk, we will head to a nearby cafe for coffee and networking.

Whether you are an experienced coach, newly certified or building your practice, come as you are. Bring your curiosity, your stories and a comfortable pair of walking shoes!

This session is complimentary for all coaches who are interested in meeting and networking with other coaches in Singapore.

Walk together. Share perspectives. Grow your coaching community.

Venue: East Coast Park, Singapore

When: Friday, 27 November 2026, 8AM – 10AM SGT

Estimated Duration: 2 hours

Meeting Point: Katong Park MRT station, near ticketing area (Thomson-East Coast Line)

Please register so that we know to expect and to look out for you on that day.

<https://apacoaches.org/walk-and-talk/>



The Authentic Homecoming

A JOURNEY BACK TO YOUR CORE

VIRTUAL APAC RETREAT

30-31 OCTOBER 2026 | ZOOM

Join us for the Virtual APAC Retreat—a dedicated, two-day sanctuary designed for coaches to step away from the "doing" and return to "being." Grounded in presence, acceptance, and love, this retreat is an invitation to realign with your purpose and deepen your practice in a community of peers.



30 October 2026: 1:00PM – 4:00PM SGT

31 October 2026: 9:00AM – 12:00PM SGT

Times shown are in Singapore Time (SGT, UTC+8)



**Immersive Virtual and Interactive Session
(Zoom)**

	APAC Members	Non-APAC Members
Regular Rate	SGD 55	SGD 60
Colleague Duo Rate*	SGD 45 per person	SGD 50 per person

**Come duo and save: Double the value, shared experience.
Pricing based on the membership status of the primary registrant.*



Learn more and register at:
<https://apacoaches.org/apac-retreat/>

Welcome

A **WARM WELCOME** to our new members who joined us between July and October 2026, since the publication of the previous issue of APAC Voice. We wish you a long and fruitful association with APAC!

Our **SINCERE THANKS** to the introducers as well! Thank you for supporting us in continuously growing this professional, diverse, learning, serving, and engaging community. Your help is highly appreciated!

New Member (1):

LOCATION	NAME	INTRODUCED BY
AUSTRALIA	Heather Wringe	Jane McCormack



Membership Overview

TOTAL NO. OF APAC MEMBERS

As of 19 October 2026, APAC has 125 current members.

Australia	Philippines
China	Singapore
Germany	Taiwan
Hong Kong	Thailand
India	United Arab Emirates
Indonesia	United Kingdom
Japan	United States
Malaysia	

JOIN US AND HELP APAC GROW!

Share your benefits and recommend your colleagues to join us today! Share your skills and experience and become a sub-committee member! Contact us at membership@apacoaches.org

- Coaching voice of Asia Pacific
- Unique regional community
- Professional development & support
- Pro bono coaching and R&D projects
- Newsletter – APAC Voice
- “Find a Coach” listing
- APAC Coaching Conference

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

By renewing your APAC membership, you are supporting APAC in making a positive impact on society through coaching.

Advertise With Us

Advertising opportunities are available for both APAC Voice (our newsletter) and our website. If you're interested and for more information, please contact Sonali Bhattacharya at sonali@invictus.expert

View the APAC Ad Guidelines at: <https://apacoaches.org/apac-ad-guidelines/>

APAC VOICE (NEWSLETTER)					
AD SIZE	MEASUREMENTS (in inches)	1x	2x	3x	4x
FOR MEMBERS					
Full Page	8"w by 10.5"h	120	105	100	90
Half Page	8"w by 5"h	60	45	40	35
¼ Page	3.75"w by 5"h	30	25	20	15
FOR NON-MEMBERS					
Full Page	8"w by 10.5"h	200	180	160	140
Half Page	8"w by 5"h	100	88	80	75
¼ Page	3.75"w by 5"h	60	50	40	35

Pricing per insertion/quarter and in SGD. Pricing valid through 31 January 2027.

APAC WEBSITE			
AD SIZE	MEASUREMENTS (in inches)	3 months	6 months
FOR MEMBERS			
Leaderboard (top)	8.13"w x 0.94"h	800	1500
Leaderboard (bottom)	8.13"w x 0.94"h	400	750
Rectangle (medium)	3.13"w x 2.6"h	450	800
FOR NON-MEMBERS			
Leaderboard (top)	8.13"w x 0.94"h	1200	2100
Leaderboard (bottom)	8.13"w x 0.94"h	660	1140
Rectangle (medium)	3.13"w x 2.6"h	720	1200

Pricing per insertion in SGD. Pricing valid through 31 January 2027.

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<https://www.apacoaches.org>



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