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Materials for One-on-One and Self CPS Facilitations

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Materials for One-on-One and Self CPS Facilitations

A Project in Creative Studies

by

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Abstract

This Master's project contains a description of a handbook designed to help facilitators use CPS for one-on-one or alone, titled: "CPS One-on-One: A Facilitator's Guide." My creative process is explained, and there is a bibliography of digital and traditional resources that should be helpful to those interested in learning more about CPS, creativity, coaching and mentoring. The appendix contains samples of tools, the slides from a PowerPoint presentation where the handbook was discussed and the handbook itself. Digital versions of this project are available at the International Center for Studies in Creativity.

Dedication and Acknowledgements

This project is dedicated to those friends and family members who have been there for me over the many years it has taken me to reach this point. The ones who held my hand, offered a shoulder to cry on, celebrated my successes, listened (patiently) to me rant and who did not take me seriously when I threatened to quit and be a cab driver instead. These are the people who have put up with my absences and creative explosions; they are the ones who keep the darkness away, and provide the stability I cannot. These are the people who always tell me the truth, even when I don't like it. These are the people who let me be me, and who love me unconditionally. These are the people who have always been there and who always will.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank my professors and colleagues at the ICSC, who have provided insight and support during the writing of this project and the creation of the handbook. Thank you to my editing team, and to everyone who has tested my tools and given me feedback. I would also like to thank my sounding board partners, without whom none of this would have worked at all. This was an extremely difficult and challenging semester and if not for all the above I really would be driving a cab right now.

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Background to the Project

Purpose and Rationale

The purpose of this project was to provide Creative Problem Solving (CPS) facilitators a format for conducting a session either one-on-one or alone. Most of the literature and aids that I came across in my studies of CPS were focused on working with groups, and there did not appear to be a great deal out there for those whose preference was to work either with a single client or alone. The handbook I created addressed the differences in the dynamic of a one-on-one session as opposed to one that has a Resource Group. It was intended to be used as a brief resource for using CPS one-on-one or alone. It is my hope that this project will be of use to CPS practitioners besides my clients and me. We have seen how CPS and creativity can have value and relevance to all fields and disciplines (Firestien, 1994); why not add to the field of coaching and the arena of personal growth and development? Not all problems can be appropriately brought before a Resource Group, so why not provide a format for these issues to benefit from a CPS approach? (Haggerty, 2004a)

Coaching and facilitating CPS one-on-one was also where my strengths and passions lay, and is the direction I would like to go in professionally. Eventually I would like to use the Handbook as the foundation for an interactive website that will be marketed toward coaches and anyone interested in finding out a little bit more about CPS. The handbook represents the structure of the CPS sessions I have been conducting with my own clients up until this point; this project will formalize my sessions and can do the same for others. While I have been successful thus far in a loose, conversational approach to CPS one-on-one, I can see how this would be impractical over the long term. (Haggerty, 2004b)

This project has provided me the opportunity to examine my own creative process and my process and style as a facilitator. I ended up immersing myself in tools and the CPS model, which added to my overall store of knowledge. Making the handbook showed me that I really do enjoy this sort of thing, and would like to do more in the arena of making useful materials and perhaps one day write a book. This project also represented the foundations of a coaching business and has given me a direction in which to look for future employment. (Haggerty, 2004a)

Description

The Handbook was designed as a guide for one-on-one and self CPS sessions. It describes the components of CPS, as well as the rules and roles of a CPS session as they apply to a one-on-one format, and it discusses the importance of deferring judgment. I provided suggestions of items to include in a facilitator's toolkit and ways in which to prepare for a session. The tools included in the Handbook are those that I have found most helpful when Generating Ideas and Planning for Action. There is a resource page at the end of the book for those who wish to learn more about CPS (See Appendix C). My other goal was to see what materials already existed in the areas of coaching and mentoring. I have assembled in the body of this paper, a bibliography of sources, especially websites, that I feel would be helpful to those interested in coaching or mentoring. (Haggerty, 2004a)

Because there already are many books and guidelines already in print that are geared toward introducing people to CPS and creativity (Firestien, 1994, 1989, 1988; Firestien, R.L. & Foucar-Szocki, D., 1983), I decided to make my handbook and this project for those who already have a background in CPS. My target audience was those who were accustomed to working with groups and who wanted to branch out into working one-on-one. This project was also meant as a foundation upon which I plan to build a coaching practice and my CPS website. The website will be for coaches who wish to use a CPS framework and for those who want to use CPS alone. As an aside, when the website is set up, I do plan to include links to the International Center for Studies in Creativity (ICSC) and brief tutorials about CPS and the construct of creativity. (Haggerty, 2004a)

The Handbook was based largely on observations I had been making about the way I was structuring one-on-one CPS sessions with my clients. There are no references to my clients or anything we were working on, but I did include tools that I developed while working with some of my long term clients. There is a word association tool that was designed to help in the Idea Generation stage, a sheet for determining Assistors and Resistors and how to use or overcome them, and a worksheet to determine the client's needs and goals of the session. There are also images to use in a VIR and suggestions of

what other images facilitators may wish to include on their own. These tools worked for me, and I have had good results with them and positive feedback from my clients. Currently, I am in the process of having them tested and used by other facilitators who work one-on-one. The tools can also be found in Appendix A of this paper (Haggerty, 2004a).

I made the Handbook in Microsoft Publisher in the student reading room of the ICSC at Buffalo State College. As each page was completed, I sent it to my editing team for feedback then made any necessary changes. The artwork included in the handbook was downloaded from http://www.artchive.com and each is cited at the foot of each page where it appears in the handbook. A main criterion for choosing artwork is that the work in question had to be public domain. Therefore the artists in question had to have worked at least 500 years ago. I chose to use work from the Italian Renaissance and the Baroque period because, apart from being in the public domain, I felt it would be inspiring as well as beautiful. Each piece chosen relates to the topic on the page in which it appears. For example on the page devoted to deferring judgment, I included "The Last Judgment" fresco by Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel, and the generating ideas page has Raphael's "School of Athens" fresco from the Vatican, Stanza della Segnatura in Rome. I suppose it is the artist and art teacher in me that can't resist adding art and art lessons to everything I do. But then it also seems appropriate to add the creative work of some of the most creative individuals from a most creative period in history to my handbook about CPS (Haggerty, 2004a).

What this Project Adds Creatively

The intent of the handbook was to help facilitators use CPS more effectively in a format that may be unfamiliar to them. It is my hope that in so doing CPS will add to the field of life-coaching and in the areas of personal growth. This will allow people to use CPS to improve the way they work and play and interact in the world, and to allow creativity to be an integral part of their everyday life.

On a personal level, the act of taking notes on my facilitating and coaching style and really looking at what I was doing and how it worked enabled me to develop tools for my clients. This added to my creativity in a way I had never thought of before because I

see myself as a creative artist, but tended to overlook how I am creative in other ways. I was also developing a book using a fairly new medium for me, namely the computer. I am not a graphic or computer artist, but it has been a good creative stretch for me to make something that is both beautiful and useful in such a new way. I will be stretching further when I develop the website and software because I have never done either of those things before. I find myself looking forward to the challenge.

Pertinent Literature

Introduction

The following section contains a bibliography of materials, primarily web-based although I did include books and articles that are in the area of self-help, CPS, creativity, and coaching and mentoring. I included materials that had either an interactive nature or could be considered informative to those interested in coaching or mentoring. Originally I Googled the words "coaching," "mentoring" and "motivation" and came up with over six million hits for each. I narrowed down my search by focusing on only the top twenty hits, and on recognizable names such as Deepak Chopra, Wayne Dyer, and Tony Robbins. I did not include booksellers or reviews of products and critiques as I do not feel this is the appropriate forum for that. My question to myself when I was compiling the bibliography was, "Will this be helpful to those interested in coaching and mentoring?"

Because I am interested in turning this project into an interactive website, I chose to keep my focus on what could be found on the Internet, rather than traditional A.V. materials. (Many of the websites do have a section where books and CDs can be purchased.) The Oprah website has a section where you can take a self-help class online for a small fee, although you can sample it free, which is what I did. There are also sites, such as http://www.cgu.edu/qlrc/research.htm which features current research by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. I hope that although this is not an introduction to creativity and CPS, it will provide places for interested people to go to learn more about those things.

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Process Plan

Contingencies and Background Information

My process this semester was somewhat hampered by my back surgery in January. I was not able to get to the library as much as I would have liked, and I lost the entire month of February because that was my recovery month. That is why I decided to focus on what I do, how I structure my one-on-one CPS sessions, how I have modified and created tools, what they are for and why. That is another reason why my bibliography has such a heavy emphasis on web-based materials: I was not able to actually get to the library or to bookstores to really look at CDs or paper workbooks as thoroughly as I would have liked. However I think that aspect worked out for the best; I want to develop this project into an Internet business, so a search of what already exists online is a good idea, and something I would have needed to do anyway. The Handbook is a reflection of my work with clients and hopefully it will be of benefit to other facilitators.

It is interesting that a side product of this project was how to continue with what has to get done when life gets in the way. This semester and this project forced me to focus on what is really important to me, and to face my value system and question why I do what I do. I was faced with the very real possibility of never walking unaided again; I lost my freedom and independence for a while and had to come up with some way to cope and still do what I felt I needed to do. Continuing with the semester and with this project were my choice, no one coerced me or told me this was what I had to do. I chose this topic and decided the criteria by which it is to be judged. In hindsight, I probably could have made different decisions and put different plans into effect that would have made things a little bit easier for me, but that is what I learned from having the experience. There is no way I could have predicted anything that happened this past semester.

Timeline and Outcomes

The conception of this project happened before my operation in January. This was a good thing because if I had conceived this afterwards, I shudder to think of what would have happened to the timeline. As things stand now, having everything completed in time to meet deadlines has been a creative challenge. But I met with Dr. Murdock in

mid-January and we discussed what I wanted to accomplish, and some ways in which I could accomplish them. These include the search for what already exists in the areas of one-on-one CPS facilitations, coaching, and mentoring and to include these materials in my bibliography. I chose especially to look at the audio-visual work of Roger Firestien because his work provides not only information of what CPS is, but instructions for conducting CPS facilitations as well as helpful worksheets of CPS tools. This work is adaptable for use with groups, one-on-one, and alone (1994, 1989, 1988, 1987; Firestien, R.L. & Foucar-Szocki, D., 1983). My focus was to provide useful materials for those who are already familiar with CPS and who facilitate CPS either one-on-one or alone. The Firestien material was helpful because it showed me how others have created useful materials and how my work could enrich the field.

In the first weeks of March, my support team helped a lot in alleviating some of the depression I was starting to feel at this time; I questioned the validity and relevance of everything I was doing. But they assured me that all was well, they reminded me that this project was approved, and that all would work out in the end. Thus refreshed, I began my web-search again and began to bookmark sites. I reviewed my books from my facilitation classes and conducted a library search. I looked at everything and was not limited to CPS or creativity specifically. The search turned up more than I was able to include in my bibliography, however, because I was still unable to actually get to the library to look at the books and materials.

At this time I began seeing clients again, and began to take notes on my facilitation style and to save everything I made for my clients to use. I developed questions to ask new clients, which can be found in the appendix of this paper. My Process Plans are still very similar to those I make when working with a group. The nature of the client's challenge determines the part of the CPS model that will best help them overcome that challenge. I made a "Mindfulness Chart" to help determine all aspects of a particular challenge, and charts to strengthen solutions and determine assistors and resistors (See Appendix A).

I had also been thinking a great deal about how to help generate ideas without a resource group. Remembering at all times to defer judgment and to stretch is not always enough. Visuals are a big help, but was there anything else I could do? This was

when I developed my Word Association tool and the Mindfulness Chart (See Appendix A). It works pretty much the same as does a Forced Connection item or image: What ideas do you get from this word? Clients can use it as an incubation tool and write word associations on the sheet. They can write words that have some specific relevance to the challenge, or the facilitator can read the words aloud while s/he and the client brainstorm and use the tool as a memory trigger in a similar way as the images do. So far, my results with the tool have been favorable, and it is currently in use by other facilitators. Feedback has been positive thus far.

In April I refined my web-search and began eliminating resources that did not have relevance to the project. This is especially true in the area of coaching. For example, a Google search of the word "coaching" will bring up pages that have to do with athletics along with pages about life coaching. My focus for this project was on dealing with individuals or working alone, therefore I did not include material that focused specifically on groups. I also set more specific Google criteria as I was coming up with approximately six million hits every time I searched for something. For keywords such as "coaching," I only looked at the first three Google pages since they tend to get the most hits. My rationale was that such websites were more likely to stay active for long periods of time because of their popularity and would therefore be a more valuable resource than a site that had few hits and was deactivated.

As the month of April went on, I kept reviewing and eliminating websites. I also looked at popular culture sites such as http://www.oprah.com, http://www.drphil.com, and http://www.montelshow.com. The Oprah and Dr. Phil websites were relevant in and of themselves, as well as excellent reference sites and the Montel site was a good resource for other places to look. These sites provide information about the persons who visit the television shows; who they are, background information, and sometimes reference materials on the subject discussed and where to go for further information. These websites also have areas devoted to the areas of self-awareness and how to enhance the quality of life and relationships. Known figures in the realm of self-help also have websites that proved helpful. These include Wayne Dyer and Tony Robbins among others. My thinking in including materials of such figures was that they are well known and have traceable sources.

In my personal life, April was the month I stopped taking the heavy pain medication, and this helped me a lot because I now had more energy and did not fall asleep as easily. I also had to adjust to different pain levels, but as I was actually able to remember what I read for more than a couple of hours at a time, I wasn't complaining. Of course, this is also when the coursework for my other classes became more intense, so I had quite a balancing act going on to get everything turned in on time and stay at least somewhat on track with this project. This was also the time when I remembered that this is a three credit project and I am not assembling data for review, and that took a lot of my self-induced pressure off. I then assembled my editing team, and began to send them parts of the handbook to review for me.

I appropriated the Reading Room at the ICSC and made my layout for the handbook in Microsoft Publisher. I chose the artwork and began to cite the paintings. As my editors returned copy, I would make changes and send it back for another look, or I would add it to the waiting pages. When the book was finally assembled, I printed it and made additional revisions and necessary cosmetic changes.

This brings us into May. The fifth was when I was due to present my project and turn in the handbook. I spent the first week making sure the handbook was ready, and in preparing a PowerPoint presentation of what I did, why I did it, and any key learning from putting all of this together. The toughest part of the month of May was that I knew I would have to put this project on the back burner while I wrapped up my other classes and prepared for the arrival of the Distance Students and summer classes. But everything was ready to be written up, and will be turned in on time. The handbook will be printed and bound along with the rest of the project when my final revisions are turned in.

Key Learnings

Introduction

This was a beneficial project for me in that I learned as much about myself as I did about CPS. This learning came about because of the difficult circumstances I had to deal with as a result of my surgery and my overall course load. Although I would tell anyone else in similar circumstances to persevere because things have a way of working out, I

would not advise anyone to knowingly take on this much unless they had an extremely good support system in place. In order to make all of this happen, I had to make a lot of sacrifices and that was not easy. Graduation day was the first time since Christmas that I had the opportunity to see my friends who are not connected to the ICSC. I took very few days off and gave up my social life completely. A lot of what I gave up was because of my physical limitations; I probably would not have had to give up quite so much had I been able to recover from a long day more easily. What I was forced to do was focus on what truly mattered to me and put my energy there. My friends assured me that they will still be there when the project is finished, and hope to be there with me when it is signed.

Learning Goals

I honestly did not expect my surgery to have as large an impact as it did; if I had, I may have chosen a different topic or made this one smaller. A large part of my creative process was dictated by my pain level at the time, and doing things like going to the library were dependant on when I could get a ride, or if I could walk at all. One of my original learning goals included making an interactive CD ROM to go with the manual; it became very clear, very quickly that I would not be able to do both. I chose to only make the manual because I already had the skills to do that, where I would have had to learn how to write software to make the CD ROM and I simply did not have the time to do that.

Considering the conditions I had to work with, I still managed to meet my other goals. One was to immerse myself in CPS in order to better understand CPS tools and how to modify them in a one-on-one or self-facilitation. This goal was met by digging deeper into the available literature, reviewing my course materials and by looking at my own facilitator notes. This was a good thing for me to do because it showed me just how much I have learned as a student at the ICSC. Another goal was to learn how to create useful materials, such as tools; reviewing my course work and noting my facilitation style showed me how I have been doing this all along. The difference is that I now I make handouts and tools to help a client and not just because it was part of an assignment. This project also allowed me the chance to fine tune my skills in Microsoft

Publisher, the software I used to make the handbook. I now know how to make a handbook, which was another learning goal. This handbook can be modified by me at a later time for use as an interactive website and downloadable software. A side accomplishment is that I have since found people who may be able to help make the software part happen. My final goal was to see what kinds of materials already existed in the area of facilitating CPS alone or one-on-one, coaching and mentoring. While physical limitations did not allow for as broad a search as I would have liked, I still was able to assemble a bibliography. This is especially true in the case of the web-based materials. I think that had I not been physically constrained my web search would not have been as extensive as it turned out to be. Overall my goals were achieved, although not as I originally intended (Haggerty, 2004a).

Content

I really liked that I was able to look critically at my facilitation style and note what I do, when I do it and why. This process made me look at my notes and Task Appraisals and find common themes in my questions and choices of tools. I was able to organize what I do and put it into a format that would help other facilitators. Looking up coaching and mentoring was really interesting and I learned a lot. I feel I have a good grounding in what is available to coaches and mentors and what they can offer their clients. I am confident that there is plenty of room for a CPS approach to coaching, particularly in the area of personal growth and development. The bibliography I have assembled is a good starting place for anyone interested in coaching, mentoring, creativity and CPS.

If there was anything I could have done differently, it would have been to have a broader bibliography. Had I taken my physical situation more seriously in December, I would have begun the library phase of this project then. I also wish I had thought to put together a more reliable transportation system and that I had insisted on a handicapped parking sticker from my doctor. That would have enabled me to get to the library and to bookstores more and I would not have been so reliant on other people's schedules to get anything done. Although I really like what I found on the Internet, I would have liked to include more in the way of traditional materials. But this is the benefit of

hindsight, and while there are some things I would do differently, I am still pleased with how this turned out.

Process

The tools I developed for my clients were a nice take away from this project. Had I chosen a different topic, I would never have looked so closely at what I was doing and would have continued to be informal in my approach to CPS one-on-one. I like my word Association tool, and am looking forward to additional feedback from other facilitators. I enjoyed the opportunity this project gave me to really look at tools and the CPS process, and I feel I have enriched my store of knowledge by quite a wide margin. When I talk about CPS to people who are new to the ICSC, I am amazed at just how much I have learned. At the recent Expert to Expert conference I was pleasantly surprised that I was able to contribute intelligently to the discussions, particularly about coaching and CPS one-on-one.

Of course I wish I had had the chance to read more. Although I feel I did a great deal of reading and that I learned a lot, I still feel that there is so much more I need to know. This also speaks to my regret that I did not put enough into place to overcome my physical difficulties at the beginning of the semester. I am also very aware that this is a three credit project and there is only so much reading a person can realistically hope to do in one semester, limited or not.

Conclusion

Probably the most important thing I have learned about creativity is that there are always new forums in which to explore it, and in which creativity can flourish or die. Things did not go as I expected them to when I began this project. I needed to be creative in how I went about completing it. I had to deal with my physical situation because it was the context in which I had to work. I had no choice but to accept the circumstances as they were. I had no idea how adaptable I could be until I was forced to. I did not like it at all, but I did it anyway, and things turned out alright. Had I not been creative in the way in which I conducted my life, I would have quit and my creativity would have stagnated. I really wonder if I would have been able to pick up again next

fall, after all my friends in the program moved forward and graduated without me. So I learned that while creativity is part of the human condition, using it to better one's life overall is a conscious choice. It may have been easier to take a semester off, but in the long term it would have damaged me inside.

What I learned about leadership is that a good leader asks for help and accepts it graciously when it is offered. Leaders, particularly in a situation where there is change, must be very aware of all the circumstances related to their situations in order to make sure everyone gets through intact. In terms of coaching, a change leader enables his or her clients to weather changes and to learn how to rely on the expertise of others. Sometimes even a leader must stand back and let someone else take over when necessary. Speaking for myself, I was reared to believe that asking for help is a sign of weakness and that for a woman showing weakness is a very dangerous thing to do. I was out of my comfort zone for the entire semester. It was not easy, but I did it. I was able to do it because I had an amazing group of people to work with, and because I persisted.

What I plan to do next is take my project and begin to turn it into a business. I have been talking about it and have showed the handbook to people just to see what they think, and I am encouraged by what I am hearing. I need to learn how to make a website, and how to develop software. When I am formally finished with my graduate work, I plan to develop a business plan so I can at least set up a coaching business. Because I have been a student for so long, I need to get a job so I expect that it will take awhile before I can be self-employed and really take off on the CPS website. But you never know, one of the things creative people do is stay flexible and look for opportunities. There may be one waiting for me now.

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