



PRESENCE-BASED®  
COACHING

# Presence-Based® Coaching Competency Model

This model articulates the core moves and practices of Presence-Based® Coaching and correlates them with the ICF Core Competencies. It is provided as a self-assessment and mentor coaching tool and articulates standards for certification as a Presence-Based® Coach.

## Key to the Model: A Sample Element

### 1: ICF Core Competency (Relevant Voice(s) from *The Mindful Coach*)

*The bold italicized text above the boxes is the general ICF description of each competency*

a. The boxes list the specific Presence-Based Coaching competencies that we train to, expect students to practice on their own, and assess in Mentor Coaching and certification processes.

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Description of the standards that we expect graduates of the Presence-Based Coaching Course to be able to demonstrate. These competencies are designed to meet or exceed the competency level assessed by ICF in the ACC credential exam.

**LIPCC/PCC Level:** Passing standards for Presence-Based Coach® certification. These competencies are designed to meet or exceed the competency level assessed by ICF in the PCC credential exam.

### 1: Demonstrates Ethical Practice (Master)

*Understands and consistently applies coaching ethics and standards of coaching.*

a. Demonstrates personal integrity, respect, and honesty in interactions with clients, sponsors and relevant stakeholders.	c. Maintains and operates from the distinctions between coaching, consulting, psychotherapy and other support professions.
b. Maintains confidentiality with client information per stakeholder agreements and pertinent laws.	d. In service to client, refers clients to other support professionals as needed.

**PBC2/ACC Level and LIPCC/PCC Level:** Presence-Based Coaching explicitly subscribes to the ICF Code of Ethics. All coaches must demonstrate and affirm commitment to the ICF Code of Ethics for ICF credentials and membership, and for Presence-Based Coach certification. See ICF website for current version and more details.

## 2: Embodies a Coaching Mindset (Master)

*Develops and maintains a mindset that is open, curious, flexible and client-centered.*

a. Illuminates choice points along the way, sharing responsibility for the process with the client.	d. Names own present moment experience and models self-awareness.
b. Demonstrates flexibility, allowing new awareness and learning about client, context, and culture to inform an emergent coaching process.	e. Makes clear requests and encourages client to do the same; responds directly to client's requests.
c. Demonstrates self-awareness and ability to self-correct own inner state.	f. Engages in self-development, including ongoing learning as a coach, a reflective practice and seeking support from outside sources when needed.

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach demonstrates capacity for self-awareness and ability to self-correct when their own or client's habits are showing up in a coaching conversation. Coach is committed and engaged in their own learning as a coach, and as a human.

**LIPCC/PCC Level** Coach's Doing and Being are integrated into a smooth and flexible style that serves the client's learning and development. Coach has experience working with their own emergent content and creates a network of ongoing support and trusted sources that can meet any additional needs that become relevant personally or impact their role as coach.

## 3: Establishes and Maintains Agreements (Partner)

*Partners with the client and relevant stakeholders to create clear agreements about the coaching relationship, process, plans and goals. Establishes agreements for the overall coaching engagement as well as those for each coaching session.*

a. Makes the coaching process itself transparent, educating client about process, responsibilities, and stakeholders. Ensures mutual understanding and agreement about what coaching is and is not, while partnering with the client to determine client-coach compatibility.	e. Helps the client identify specific competencies to develop that address project and/or curriculum levels of learning for individual sessions and the overall relationship.
b. Reaches agreement about the guidelines and specific parameters of the coaching relationship such as logistics, fees, scheduling, duration, termination, confidentiality and inclusion of others.	f. Holds the focus of the coaching agreement or makes joint decisions to depart from it.

c. Builds agreement around the focus, scope and specific outcome for a coaching conversation, including measures of success.	g. Uses an explicit structure (IDP) to articulate linkages between actions and commitment.
d. Supports client in developing clear descriptions and commitment around future outcomes and coaching goals for the coaching relationship.	

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach asks about and clarifies client's desired focus and outcomes for the session.

**LIPCC/PCC Level:** Coach asks about client's desired focus and outcomes and explores and clarifies conditions of satisfaction. Builds agreement about the session process itself and clarifies boundaries and responsibilities. Asks client to assess progress and create linkages between learning and client coaching goals.

#### 4: Cultivates Trust and Safety (Partner, Master)

*Partners with the client to create a safe, supportive environment that allows the client to share freely. Maintains a relationship of mutual respect and trust.*

a. Holds client in unconditional positive regard, and as creative and whole.	d. Asks permission to coach client in sensitive new areas.
b. Holds coaching moves lightly, and builds trust by demonstrating empathy, openness, transparency, and vulnerability.	e. Uses awareness of client's language, identity, and beliefs to connect on-going conversation to client concerns.
c. Demonstrates respect for client's perceptions and resourcefulness and adjusts to meet client where they are.	

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach demonstrates respect and regard for client both in language and way of being. Coach reflects client concerns and offers coaching moves and process lightly.

**LIPCC/PCC Level:** Coach demonstrates trust in client's resourcefulness in relation to coaching process, and invites client into own authority. Coach reflects awareness of client's perceptions and style and holds unconditional positive regard. Coach visibly co-creates the coaching process with the client, making joint decisions throughout.

#### 5: Maintains Presence (Master, Partner)

*Is fully conscious and present with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible, grounded, and confident.*

a. Partners with client to enter and create a shared, present coaching space.	d. Maintains awareness of session outcomes, timeframes, and larger context/relevance.
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b. Is willing to embody curiosity, to not know, to risk, and to experiment in the moment.	e. Uses humor and lightness to invite perspective and dis-identification.
c. Maintains ground and resourcefulness during client's strong emotions.	

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach centers self and invites client into the coaching container. Coach demonstrates openness and curiosity around client's ideas and agenda. Coach manages session timeframes with awareness.

**LIPCC/PCC Level:** Coach is present and responsive to own inner state, and to the inner state of the client. Coach demonstrates flexibility in the emergent conversation, inviting the client to shape the conversation. Coach is visibly learning and changing as new data emerges.

## 6: Listens Actively (Reflector, Investigator)

*Focuses on what the client is and is not saying to fully understand what is being communicated in the context of the client systems and to support client self-expression.*

a. Considers the client's context, identity, environment, experiences, values and beliefs to enhance understanding of what the client is communicating.	d. Reflects in/congruence and offers observations around voice, affect, narrative, somatic shape and behaviors.
b. Summarizes and reflects the client's concerns, goals, emotions, language, and interpretations.	e. Communicates in a manner that's clear, direct and succinct.
c. Tracks and reflects client's emerging thread of discovery and learning.	f. Notices trends in how the client is showing up across sessions to discern themes and patterns.

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach reflects understanding of client's communication at face value, and summarizes what client is saying. Coach will focus on solving the problem and will have little focus on deeper learning.

**LIPCC/PCC Level:** Coach listens deeply, reflecting and developing meaning with the client as the conversation emerges. Coach offers interpretations and new perspectives lightly, working with client to create relevance and immediacy. Listening and reflection includes more than simply content, and coach demonstrates awareness of patterns of emerging data in self and client.

## 7: Evokes Awareness (Investigator, Reflector, Teacher)

*Facilitates client insight and learning by using tools and techniques such as powerful questioning, silence, metaphor or analogy.*

a. Asks curiosity-based questions that respond to the emerging thread, and that evoke discovery, commitment or action.	g. Invites client to make internal processes explicit, and to identify somatic resources.
b. Asks open-ended questions that develop creative tension through new understanding of situation, outcome and action.	h. Creates relevance, immediacy and linkages between micro (emergent data or experience) and macro (contextual or coaching outcomes) threads.
c. Offers grounded observations, perceptions or intuitions, to create present moment client awareness of habit nature.	i. Offers new distinctions, information, and knowledge that illuminates or reframes the client's situation and creates possibilities.
d. Invites client to witness and experiment in the moment with somatic, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral shifts that reveal possibilities.	j. Invites client awareness of capabilities, potential, and resources.
e. Distinguishes between narrative/interpretation and objective facts that reveal beliefs/identity/habits in real time that are incongruent with declared commitments.	k. Asks meaning-making questions, e.g. "What are you learning so far from this conversation?"
f. Invites clearing and/or finding new perspective in client's situation, rather than supporting existing narrative.	

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach relies primarily on inquiry rather than telling. Coach makes relational moves that build awareness of present moment client experience. Coach spotlights habits in the context of client outcomes and commitments. New awareness and possibilities are oriented towards fulfilling on these commitments.

**LIPCC/PCC Level:** Coach creates relevance and immediacy both to specifically stated commitments and to a larger developmental context. Coach works with client skillfully to open new perspective and possibilities at both the micro and macro levels. New awareness is oriented towards specific commitments, the client's underlying way of being, and the trajectory of the client's development.

## 8: Facilitates Client Growth (Guide, Contractor)

*Partners with the client to transform learning and insight into action. Promotes client autonomy in the coaching process.*

a. Invites the client to consider how to move forward, including resources, support, potential barriers, and accountability.	g. Asks for a clear client commitment about what actions client will take following the session. Coach uses SMART criteria for actions (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant, Time-bound).
b. Follows up with client about actions and learning since previous conversations.	h. Tests for fit and commitment around fieldwork.
c. Reveals and normalizes breakdowns; works with breakdowns as emergent coaching content.	i. Partners with client to summarize learning and insight within the session, and to explore results of conversation related to session agreement.
d. Balances and integrates client's discovery and learning in the moment with broader coaching goals and outcomes.	j. Celebrates the client's progress and successes.
e. Partners with client to commit to fieldwork in multiple domains of learning (e.g., self-observation, somatic practices, relationships, and environment) and supports client to identify potential learning from these actions.	k. Partners with the client to close the session.
f. Designs actions with client that address both project and/or curriculum levels of learning and are at the appropriate level of "stretchiness."	

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach supports client in designing fieldwork and actions, that address multiple domains and ways of learning. Coach tests for fit and commitment, while ensuring there is a clear agreement about fieldwork and client accountability.

**LIPCC/PCC Level:** Coach explicitly engages client in joint fieldwork design that includes the client's overall development as relevant context for designing actions. Both project and curriculum levels of learning are addressed. Coach jointly designs systems for accountability. Coach follows up with agreed upon action steps, celebrating success and using breakdowns as an opening into emergent coaching content. Coach balances commitment and attention to outcomes with a willingness to jointly refine both outcomes and process with the client.