



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. Meeting Ethical Guidelines and Professional Standards

Presence-Based Coaching explicitly subscribes to this Code of Ethics. All coaches must 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: Establishing the Coaching Agreement (Partner)

*Ability to understand what is required in this specific coaching interaction and to come to agreement with the prospective/new client about the coaching process and relationship*

a. Asks, and builds agreement around, the focus, scope, process, and/or specific outcomes for the coaching conversation	c. Holds the focus of the coaching agreement, or makes joint decisions to depart from it
b. Makes the coaching process itself transparent, educating client about process	d. Asks client, on completion, to assess results of conversation against agreement

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach asks about client's desired focus and outcomes for the session, and checks back at end to see if client is satisfied.

**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 about takeaways at end.

## 3: Establishing Trust and Intimacy with the Client (Partner, Master)

*Ability to create a safe, supportive environment that produces ongoing mutual respect and trust*

a. Uses client's language to connect on-going conversation to client concerns	d. Holds client in unconditional positive regard
b. Illuminates choice points along the way, sharing responsibility for the process with the client	e. Demonstrates respect for client's perceptions, learning style, and resourcefulness
c. Holds coaching moves lightly, as an offer	f. Asks permission to offer assessments, or to coach client in sensitive new areas

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach demonstrates respect and positive 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.

#### 4: Coaching Presence (Master, Partner)

*Ability to be fully conscious and create spontaneous relationship with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible and confident*

a. Partners with client to create/enter a shared, present coaching space	e. Demonstrates self-awareness and ability to self-correct own inner state
b. Is willing to not know, to risk, and to experiment in the moment	f. Demonstrates flexibility, allowing new awareness and learning about client to inform an emergent process
c. Uses humor and lightness to invite perspective and dis-identification	g. Maintains ground and resourcefulness during client's strong emotions
d. Maintains awareness of session outcomes, timeframes, and larger context/relevance	

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach centers self, and demonstrates capacity to self-correct. Coach uses humor, and is open to client's ideas and agenda.

**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 in response to the client and the conversation, and shares own experience as relevant data.

#### 5: Active Listening (Reflector, Investigator)

*Ability to focus completely on what the client is saying and is not saying, to understand the meaning of what is said in the context of the client's desires, and to support client self-expression*

a. Summarizes and reflects the client's concerns, goals, emotions, language, and interpretations	d. Reflects in/congruence, observations, and assessments around voice, affect, tone of voice, and somatic shape
b. Creates relevance and immediacy between emergent data and the client's coaching outcomes	e. Invites clearing and/or finding new perspective in client's situation, rather than supporting existing narrative
c. Tracks and reflects client's emerging thread of discovery and learning	

**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. Coach works with client skillfully to open new perspective and possibilities.

## 6: Powerful Questioning (Investigator)

*Ability to ask questions that reveal the information needed for maximum benefit to the coaching relationship and the client*

a. Asks questions that develop creative tension through new understanding of situation, outcome and action	c. Asks curiosity-based questions that respond to the emerging thread, and that evoke discovery, commitment or action
b. Asks open-ended questions that invite witnessing of present-moment experience in levels of narrative, emotion, and sensation	d. Asks questions that reveal the client's habits in action

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach relies primarily on inquiry rather than telling. Questions are oriented towards evoking client understanding, rather than towards procuring information for the coach. Questions are asked with a sense of genuine curiosity.

**LIPCC/PCC Level:** Coach's questions explore the territory around the client's desired outcome, and bring client's attention into present moment witnessing and awareness. Questions are open and exploratory, rather than leading and directive. Questions incorporate client language and perspectives. Questions are sometimes uncomfortable for the client, and point client's attention into new, unexplored territory and forward towards new action possibilities.

## 7: Direct Communication (Reflector, Teacher, Partner)

*Ability to communicate effectively during coaching sessions, and to use language that has the greatest positive impact on the client*

a. Grounds assessments in present moment data from the conversation	d. Is clear, direct, precise, and succinct
b. Makes clear requests and encourages client to do the same; responds directly to client's requests	e. Uses metaphor and analogy to create new/additional understanding
c. Names client habits and identity in real time, offering present moment data to create immediacy and relevance	f. Uses contextually/culturally appropriate language with client, avoiding "jargon"

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach is concise and direct, offering assessments and interpretations based on data from the conversation. Coach uses language of requests and offers in coordinating with the client, both within and about the coaching relationship.

**LIPCC/PCC Level:** Coach is direct and does not soften/qualify assessments. The coach offers concise assessments that invite the client into present-moment awareness of habit, narrative, sensation, and emotion. The coach offers intuition and interpretation lightly as subjective rather than objective "truth." Coach is clear, direct, and embodied when communicating, coordinating and making joint decisions with client.

## 8: Creating Awareness (Teacher, Reflector)

*Ability to integrate and accurately evaluate multiple sources of information, and to make interpretations that help the client to gain awareness and thereby achieve agreed-upon results*

a. Distinguishes between narrative/interpretation and objective facts, and reveals actions/beliefs/habits that are incongruent with declared commitments	f. Provides new distinctions, information, and knowledge that illuminates or reframes the client's situation and possibilities in new ways.
b. Offers grounded assessments to create present moment client awareness of habit nature	g. Invites client to witness and experiment with somatic, narrative, emotional, and behavioral shifts that reveal possibilities
c. Creates relevance and linkage between micro (immediate experience) and macro (contextual) threads.	h. Names own present moment experience and models self-awareness
d. Directs the client's attention towards capabilities, potential, and resources	i. Asks meaning-making questions, e.g. "What are you learning from this conversation?"

e. Invites client to make internal processes explicit, and to identify somatic resources	
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**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach makes relational moves that build awareness of present moment client experience. Coach spotlights habits in the context of relevancy to immediate 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. New awareness is oriented towards specific commitments, the client's underlying way of being, and the trajectory of the client's development.

## 9: Designing Actions (Guide)

*Ability to create with the client opportunities for ongoing learning, during coaching and in work/life situations, and for taking new actions that will most effectively lead to agreed-upon coaching results*

a. Identifies, jointly, fieldwork in multiple domains of learning, relevant to client commitment	d. Tracks how considering certain actions affects client's present moment experience
b. Designs self-observations and/or somatic practices around habits and/or new behaviors	e. Designs actions with client that address both project and/or curriculum levels of learning
c. Asks client to experiment with a new behavior within the coaching session	f. Designs actions with client at an appropriate level of "stretchiness"

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach jointly designs fieldwork and learning actions that address multiple domains and ways of learning. Fieldwork includes self-observations, somatic practices, and domains-specific practices.

**LIPCC/PCC Level:** Coach explicitly engages client in joint fieldwork design, and holds action possibilities lightly. The coach includes the client's overall development as relevant context for designing actions, which address both project and curriculum levels of learning. Some actions and practices are ontological in nature, and will likely have implications for areas of the client's life beyond specific commitments.

## 10: Planning and Goal Setting (Partner, Guide)

*Ability to develop and maintain an effective coaching plan with the client*

a. Uses an explicit structure (IDP) to articulate linkages between actions and	c. Supports client in developing clear descriptions of future outcomes and goals
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commitment	
b. Helps the client identify specific competencies to develop that address project and/or curriculum levels of learning	d. Develops commitment to outcomes/actions that create new “facts on the ground”

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach and client create a specific action plan relevant to the outcomes sought by the client. Planning and goal setting address the client’s habits in relation to the immediate situation and commitments.

**LIPCC/PCC Level:** Coach engages in a broader level of conversation, jointly developing plans and goals that incorporate a developmental perspective beyond the client’s declared commitments.

## 11: Managing Progress and Accountability (Contractor, Partner)

*Ability to hold attention on what is important for the client, and to leave responsibility with the client to take action*

a. Creates clear and specific agreements about what actions client will take following session; uses SMART criteria for actions	d. Follows up with client about actions and learning since previous conversations
b. Tests for fit and commitment around action steps	e. Balances and integrates client’s discovery and learning in the moment with broader coaching goals and outcomes
c. Supports the client to define and measure progress at both Project and Curriculum levels	f. Reveals and normalizes breakdowns; works with breakdowns as emergent coaching content

**PBC2/ACC Level:** Coach supports client in designing specific action steps, testing for fit and commitment, and ensuring that there is a clear agreement about fieldwork.

**LIPCC/PCC Level:** 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.