

REFLECTIONS IN ACTION LEARNING



I do believe that Action Learning is one of the greatest approaches when it comes to solving a problem, but there is more. Once, about 6 years ago, I was a part of the group of Action Learning coaches that got together to solve a problem one of them had. It was an incredible experience: as if a team of superhumans went grocery shopping. It takes much less than they are truly capable of: but this did not discourage, it did the opposite, it inspired them. There was everything: enough pauses for listening and building on each other's questions, lots of enthusiasm and grace in living it through, there was a real concern and care for the problem presenter and the rest of the team. It was so that the coach who played the role of a coach, had difficulties with reasons for interventions, as they were practically not needed.

I remember that very moment, it felt as if a group of real friends got together to enjoy the company of each other, but suddenly decided to solve an urgent and important problem, without losing the vibe of a joyful and resourceful happening. The reason I recalled this episode was another session, that I recently ran myself in the role of the Action Learning coach. It was the demo session for the participants of the Annual Conference that were very new to Action Learning and had never experienced it first hand.

One of the participants happened to be an individual coach, and incidentally, the core of the problem the team was solving was in finding personal resources and the right attitude to move on. It was a similar experience, when everything was happening elegantly, seemingly effortlessly. An individual coaching methodology encapsulated into a team coaching methodology: what a pair! But at first I got cautious: there was a likelihood that the coach would take a lead and imbalance the group, so I got ready to intervene, but soon realized that the coach really knows how to wait and let everyone else think, make conclusions and share them with others. Soon I could hardly imagine what else I can do but to follow the script, and perhaps, add my share of enthusiasm with my voice and my presence: the coach inside of the setting was a great role model for the rest of the team.

I believe that the main takeaway from the two sessions of Action Learning is this: If you are a client, get one of the members of your coaching setting to be a coach besides the one who is leading the session. If you are a coach, collaborate and invite other coaches into your sessions, this very likely will double the outcome.

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