

20 COACHING TOOLS

innovated for
online environment and group coaching

Introduction

This handbook presents **twenty coaching tools** in an innovated form. The innovation lies in the **systematic adaptation of established coaching techniques** to two contexts that define contemporary coaching practice: the **online environment and the group settings**. Most classic coaching tools were originally designed for face-to-face work with a single client. Here, each tool is elaborated in detail for remote delivery and/or group settings: video sessions, digital whiteboards, breakout rooms and for work with groups and teams, where individual insight is amplified by collective reflection, peer feedback, and shared commitment.

Why does this matter today? Coaching has moved decisively online: geographical distance, hybrid work, and the economics of youth work and organisational development all mean that a growing share of coaching conversations happen through a screen. At the same time, demand for group formats keeps rising: group coaching makes professional development accessible to more people, builds peer support structures that outlast any single session, and uses the group itself as a source of perspectives no individual coach can provide. A coach who can translate their toolbox fluently between in-person, online, individual, and group formats is simply better equipped for the reality of today's practice. These adaptations are not a compromise or a downgraded substitute; as many of the tools in this handbook show, the online and group versions often add possibilities the original format never had.

All participants of the CATCH webinars and trainings were actively involved in the creation of these tools. The methods were developed during a shared webinar, where participants worked in small teams: they described the tools, tested them in practice, documented their experiences, adaptations, and lessons learned, and presented the results to each other. This handbook builds on that collective work, it preserves the teams' practical insights and develops each tool into a complete, ready-to-use format. It is therefore not a theoretical catalogue but a practice-based collection, created by practitioners for practitioners.

Each tool is presented in a consistent structure: basic information (purpose, outcome, time, format, materials), step-by-step instructions, a detailed adaptation for online use, a detailed adaptation for the group setting, cautions and tips drawn from real practice, and the theoretical background. The tools can be used individually, combined into longer sessions, or woven into complete programmes.

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TOOL 01: Wheel of Life

A circular diagram divided into segments representing key life or project areas, which participants rate to gain an instant visual overview of balance and priorities.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To identify the most influential areas of a person's life (or the key components of a group goal), assess current satisfaction or progress in each, and reveal imbalances that call for attention.
- **Outcome:** A clear visual snapshot of the current situation, identification of priority areas, and a concrete action plan for moving each segment closer to the desired state.
- **Time required:** 40–60 minutes (individual); up to 90 minutes for groups (depending on size).
- **Format:** Both individual and group.
- **Materials needed:** Paper and coloured pencils, flipchart; online: a digital whiteboard (Miro, MURAL, Jamboard) with a pre-drawn wheel template, or a fillable PDF/slide shared on screen.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Draw a circle and divide it into 8 segments. Ask the client to label each segment with an important area of their life (e.g., health, relationships, career, finances, personal growth, fun, environment, contribution).
2. For each segment, the client rates their current level of satisfaction from 1 (centre) to 10 (edge) and shades or marks the segment accordingly.
3. Look at the completed wheel together. Explore: Which areas surprised you? Where is the wheel 'bumpy'? What connections do you see between low and high segments?
4. The client marks where they would like each segment to be within a defined time frame.
5. Choose 1-3 priority segments and define specific first actions for each, with a date and a way to measure progress.



Online adaptation

Prepare a wheel template in advance on a shared whiteboard or as a fillable slide so no session time is lost on drawing. Ask the client to keep their camera on while working silently; the coach observes body language during rating, which often signals emotionally loaded areas.

Use annotation tools or emoji stamps for rating: the act of physically dragging a marker replicates some of the kinaesthetic quality of pen and paper. Screenshot or export the wheel and send it to the client as a visual anchor; revisit the same file in follow-up sessions to make progress visible.



Group Coaching Adaptation

Best used with groups that have a genuinely shared goal. Start by defining the group goal together, then brainstorm the 6 - 8 components (segments) that must be achieved to reach it. The group rates each segment collectively, negotiating until consensus is reached, the negotiation itself surfaces different perspectives and hidden assumptions. Each member then marks their individual contribution or position within the segments, making visible how far along each person is and what they can offer. Mark the desired state for each segment and co-create an action plan with owners and deadlines. Close with a debrief: *What did we learn about each other? Where do we need to redistribute effort?*



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Make sure everyone in a group has a genuinely shared understanding of the goal before rating; in individual work, avoid letting the client choose only 'safe' areas and skip the uncomfortable ones.
- **Best used when:** A holistic overview is needed at the start of a coaching journey; a group needs alignment or effort is unevenly shared; the client feels vaguely dissatisfied but cannot name why.
- **Not recommended if:** The group does not share a common goal; the client needs to work on one narrowly defined issue where a whole-life view would dilute focus.



Theoretical Background

Rooted in holistic coaching and life-balance models popularised by Paul J. Meyer (Success Motivation Institute). The visual rating draws on scaling techniques from solution-focused practice and on the principle that externalising an internal state increases self-awareness.

TOOL 02: Mind Mapping

A visual tool that places the client's goal or theme in the centre and radiates connected ideas outward, revealing relationships between different areas of their situation.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To provide clarity and self-awareness, uncover connections between ideas and life areas, and support cognitive reframing :the 'aha' moment when the client suddenly sees their situation differently.
- **Outcome:** Improved awareness of resources, visible connections between previously separate topics, and often a spontaneous reframe of the problem.
- **Time required:** 30 minutes (individual); 45–60 minutes (group).
- **Format:** Both individual and group.
- **Materials needed:** Flipchart and markers, or a digital whiteboard (Miro, MURAL, Jamboard); optionally a short video demonstrating the technique.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Ask the client to place one image or word that captures their goal or theme in a central bubble.
2. Around the centre, the client draws the important areas of their life or situation connected to this theme, a maximum of about six branches to keep the map readable. Each branch is elaborated with symbols, colours, and more specific sub-branches and details.
3. Step back and observe together. Let the client find connections between branches: What affects what? What repeats? What is missing?
4. Close with powerful, introspective questions: What does this map tell you that you didn't know an hour ago? Which connection surprises you most? What would you like to strengthen or cut?



Online adaptation

Use a shared digital whiteboard where both coach and client can see the map grow in real time; the infinite canvas removes the space limits of paper. Let the client hold the pen, the coach resists the temptation to organise the map for them, even when digital tools make it easy. Use colour-coding and icons from the tool's library to replace hand-drawn symbols. Save the map and reopen it in later sessions; digital maps are easy to extend, which makes them excellent longitudinal tools across a whole coaching engagement.



Group Coaching Adaptation

Place a shared topic (team goal, common challenge, desired future) in the centre and invite participants to add related ideas one by one or in small groups. Cluster similar ideas and use colours or symbols for categories as the map grows. Ask participants to draw connections between elements, arrows and links between contributions from different people are where collective insight emerges. Step back as a group and reflect: *What stands out? What new perspectives do we see?* Conclude with each participant naming one takeaway or commitment.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Do not overload the map: keep to a reasonable number of main areas (about six). In groups, pace contributions so the map does not become chaotic; the facilitator curates without censoring.
- **Best used when:** The client is confused and does not know how to act, is stuck in a repetitive thought loop, or cannot see the situation from other perspectives; a group is trapped in linear thinking or needs to visualise complexity.
- **Not recommended if:** The client is already well oriented towards their goal; the group has very limited time or struggles with basic collaboration.



Theoretical Background

Adapted from Tony Buzan's mind-mapping method; in coaching practice it draws on NLP (Bandler & Grinder) representational systems, perspective change, and work with mental maps and on visual-thinking and creative problem-solving traditions.

TOOL 03: Appreciative Inquiry

A strength-based group process that uses storytelling and positive questions to co-create a shared vision and concrete pathways forward.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To shift focus from problems to strengths, build collective energy, and design change based on what already works.
- **Outcome:** Stronger group cohesion, a shared vision for the future, and clear next steps rooted in existing strengths and past successes.
- **Time required:** 60–90 minutes; can be extended into a full workshop.
- **Format:** Primarily group; the appreciative questioning style also enriches individual sessions.
- **Materials needed:** Guiding questions, flipcharts or digital board, markers, sticky notes.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Introduce the Appreciative Inquiry philosophy: we grow in the direction of what we repeatedly ask questions about, so we deliberately study strengths and possibilities rather than deficits.
2. In pairs or small groups, participants share a story of a moment when they, or the group, were at their best.
3. Harvest the highlights on a flipchart or board: the strengths, values, and resources that made those successes possible.
4. Facilitate a visioning round: 'Imagine it is one year from now and our group is thriving, what exactly do you see happening?'
5. Map concrete ideas, actions, and steps that would bring that vision to life.
6. Close with each participant sharing one commitment or insight they take away.



Online adaptation

Use breakout rooms for the paired storytelling: small rooms of 2–3 create the intimacy the stories need. Harvest strengths on a shared board with sticky notes so every voice is captured verbatim, including quieter participants who prefer writing to speaking. For the visioning round, invite participants to switch off their cameras for two minutes of guided imagination, then return and type or speak what they saw. Record the final commitments in a shared document that is sent to everyone :online tools make the 'Destiny' phase unusually easy to document and follow up.



Group Coaching Adaptation

The method is inherently group-based; its power lies in the collective pattern that emerges when many success stories are laid side by side. Rotate pairs between rounds so participants hear multiple stories and cross-pollinate. Use the 5-D cycle (Define, Discover, Dream, Design, Destiny) as the session skeleton for longer workshops. Give the group a shared artefact at the end: one word, phrase, or image representing their collective energy.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Groups tend to slip back into problem-focused language; gently and repeatedly guide attention back to strengths and possibilities without dismissing real concerns.
- **Best used when:** The group has low energy, needs inspiration, or is planning a new project or change.
- **Not recommended if:** Urgent problems require immediate solutions. Appreciative Inquiry is exploratory and generative, not crisis management.



Theoretical Background

Appreciative Inquiry methodology (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987); positive psychology (Seligman); key concepts include the 5-D cycle, storytelling, strength-based change, and collective visioning.

TOOL 04: Visual Metaphor with LEGO® ("LE:GO = Connection")

A hands-on tool in which clients build models from LEGO bricks that represent their thoughts, challenges, and aspirations, making abstract inner experience concrete and discussable.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To make thinking visible, unlock creativity and emotions that are hard to verbalise, foster ownership of one's own path, and make coaching playful and inviting :especially for young people.
- **Outcome:** Clarity about self and direction, new perspectives gained by 'stepping back' from the model, increased motivation, improved communication confidence, and memorable insights anchored in a physical image.
- **Time required:** 85 minutes total: 10 min topic discussion, 10 min warm-up, 25 min individual build, 40 min group task and sharing.
- **Format:** Both; strongest in groups where models are shared and combined.
- **Materials needed:** A generous supply of mixed LEGO bricks and free table space; online: participants' own bricks or any household objects, plus a camera.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Introduce the group topic (e.g., 'time management skills') and discuss briefly what it means to each participant.
2. Warm-up build: 'Build a tower in 60 seconds' or 'Build a duck from six bricks', this lowers inhibitions and shows there is no wrong way to build.
3. Individual task: each participant builds a model representing their situation, challenge, or goal in relation to the topic.
4. Each person tells the story of their model. The coach asks about the model, not the person ('What is this bridge holding up?'), which keeps a safe distance from sensitive content.
5. Group task: participants connect or combine their models into a shared landscape, negotiating what the connections mean.
6. Debrief: *What did building reveal that talking would not have? What does the shared landscape say about us as a group?*



Online adaptation

Send a small brick kit to participants in advance, or invite them to use anything at hand: buttons, stationery, kitchen objects; the metaphor matters more than the material.

Ask builders to work off-camera during construction and then present their model to the camera, using a phone as a 'document camera' if needed. Photograph each model and paste the photos onto a shared board; the group task becomes arranging and connecting the photos into a shared map with drawn links. Keep build instructions extremely simple and time-boxed :online attention fragments faster than in the room.



Group Coaching Adaptation

The group version's core value is the shared landscape phase: individual metaphors become a collective one, which builds group identity and mutual understanding. Watch power dynamics closely: confident builders and speakers can dominate; give each model equal airtime. Use rounds ('everyone places one connection and explains it') to structure the combining phase. Close by asking the group to give the shared landscape a name.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Group power dynamics; cultural misalignment when the group lacks a common cultural background and metaphors are read differently.
- **Best used when:** The situation allows reflective exploration; a shared understanding of a complex situation is needed; group identity and cohesion need strengthening; communication barriers need breaking; creative problem-solving is required.
- **Not recommended if:** The topic requires precision and clarity; the group struggles with abstract thinking; the group is in acute emotional distress or trauma; there is risk of misinterpretation in an unknown group; the group intensely resists metaphors.



Theoretical Background

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980); experiential learning and constructivism (Kolb, Piaget); art therapy and expressive arts traditions (Natalie Rogers, Shaun McNiff); Gestalt and symbolic work in coaching (clean language, Jungian archetypes); neuroscience of dual coding :combining words and images enhances recall and insight.

TOOL 05: Reverse Timeline

Clients visualise their goal as already achieved and then map events backwards in time, from the accomplished future to the present moment, creating a pathway of action steps.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To clarify the way to a meaningful goal by working backwards, identifying key milestones, dependencies, and the very first action available today.
- **Outcome:** A clear step-by-step path of action that the client can start implementing immediately.
- **Time required:** About 30 minutes individually; noticeably longer for groups.
- **Format:** Both; individual work is the core, groups add collective inspiration.
- **Materials needed:** Paper, pens, and physical space to 'walk' the timeline; online: a whiteboard or document where the timeline is drawn or written.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Define the ultimate goal and its deadline, the end point of the timeline.
2. Visualisation: *'Close your eyes. Imagine yourself in the future: one year, five years from now at the moment your goal is achieved. What do you see around you? What do you hear? What do you feel?'* Use sensory questions to make the future vivid.
3. From that future point, look backwards: *What key milestone had to happen just before you reached this? And before that? Trace back step by step until you reach the present moment.*
4. Write the milestones down in order from future to present. Then read the whole roadmap aloud from present to future.
5. Identify the very first action the client can take now, confirm responsibility, and agree how progress will be checked.



Online adaptation

Replace physically walking the timeline with drawing or writing it: the client sketches the line on paper and shows it to the camera, or builds it on a shared whiteboard. For the visualisation, ask the client to turn off self-view (or close their eyes) to reduce screen self-consciousness. Use the chat for milestone capture in real time, the transcript becomes the written roadmap automatically. Keep time spans shorter online (up to six months works best); long horizons are harder to hold without physical space.



Group Coaching Adaptation

Each participant defines a personal future goal; the coach guides one collective visualisation ('*You are in the future and your goal has been fully achieved...*'). Participants trace their steps backwards individually, then share their timelines in pairs or small groups. Peers ask clarifying questions ('*What had to be true before that step?*'), which surfaces gaps the owner cannot see. Close with a round in which everyone names their first concrete action; hearing others' commitments strengthens each person's own. Note: a group version needs considerably more time and clear alignment on the process; a single shared group goal is possible but demands strong goal alignment first.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Long time spans dilute the method: six months is a practical maximum; explaining the 'backwards' logic clearly takes preparation, and clients who are not ready for action may stall at the first milestone.
- **Best used when:** The goal is clearly defined and measurable or deliberately when a goal seems unreachable and mapping it into reality exposes exactly where the difficulties lie.
- **Not recommended if:** The client is in crisis mode and needs to focus on the here and now; the client is highly anxious about the future; they already have a clear plan; the focus is not on goals or time management.



Theoretical Background

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980); experiential learning and constructivism (Kolb, Piaget); art therapy and expressive arts traditions (Natalie Rogers, Shaun McNiff); Gestalt and symbolic work in coaching (clean language, Jungian archetypes); neuroscience of dual coding :combining words and images enhances recall and insight.

TOOL 06: GROW Model ("GROW Your Energy")

A guided coaching structure: Goal, Reality, Options, Will applied here to help participants identify what energises and drains them, and commit to concrete energy-boosting actions.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To support participants in setting a goal around energy or motivation, exploring their current reality, brainstorming options, and committing to specific actions.
- **Outcome:** Clarity about personal energy sources and drains, plus a specific, achievable plan to increase motivation and wellbeing.
- **Time required:** 30 - 45 minutes.
- **Format:** Both individual reflection combined with pair or group discussion; works fully online.
- **Materials needed:** Video conferencing with breakout rooms, shared digital whiteboard or document, chat.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Goal (G): each participant identifies one goal related to personal energy or motivation, e.g., 'I want to feel more energised during my workday' or 'I want to reduce burnout.'
2. Reality (R): participants reflect on and share the current factors affecting their energy :what helps, what drains.
3. Options (O): in breakout rooms, brainstorm practical ways to increase energy: breaks, movement, changed routines, mindset shifts.
4. Will (W): each participant chooses one small, realistic action to try in the next 3 - 5 days and shares it with the group.
5. Optional: a short check-in message or session after 5 days to review what happened.

Online adaptation



Introduce the model briefly with one visual slide; frame the session around energy and motivation. Alternate individual silent reflection (cameras on, mics off) with breakout-room discussion :the rhythm keeps online energy high, which is itself a demonstration of the topic. Capture the 'Will' commitments in a shared document so they are visible and revisitable. Prepare your questions in advance but stay flexible; practice shows the model works as a process template into which the coach fits their own questions.



Group Coaching Adaptation

GROW scales naturally to groups when each stage combines individual reflection with structured sharing. Guard equal participation :dominant voices in the Options stage can crowd out quieter members; use rounds or written brainstorming. The shared 'Will' round creates gentle public accountability, one of the strongest effects of the group format. For teams, a shared goal version is possible: the team defines one collective goal and moves through R, O, and W together.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Unrealistic goals discourage participants; do not neglect emotional and mental energy alongside the physical; if the client cannot define the first step, loop back to the Goal :GROW only works when the goal has been genuinely clarified first.
- **Best used when:** Teams or youth workers feel fatigued or unmotivated; you want to build a culture of self-care and proactive energy management; you are facilitating online group coaching and need a clear, teachable structure. Excellent as a first-session tool for clarifying goals.
- **Not recommended if:** Participants require deeper mental-health support; time constraints prevent full exploration of each stage.



Theoretical Background

The GROW coaching model (Whitmore); energy-management theories from positive psychology; group coaching and peer-learning principles; Vygotsky's learning-by-doing.

TOOL 07: Scaling Questions

The coach asks the client to place themselves on a 0–10 scale in relation to their goal, turning vague feelings into a number that can be explored, compared, and moved.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To make progress and confidence measurable and discussable, break large goals into visible increments, and highlight resources the client already uses ('Why are you at 4 and not at 2?').
- **Outcome:** A concrete sense of current position, awareness of existing resources, and a defined 'plus one' step; what one point higher would look like.
- **Time required:** 5–20 minutes; usable as a stand-alone micro-tool or woven into any session.
- **Format:** Both.
- **Materials needed:** None required; optionally a drawn or on-screen scale, or physical floor markers.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Anchor the scale: '10 means your goal is fully achieved; 0 means the furthest you have ever been from it. Where are you today?'
2. Explore the current number appreciatively: 'What are you already doing that puts you at 4 rather than 2?' :this surfaces resources, not deficits.
3. Define the next increment: 'What would 5 look like? How would you notice you had arrived there?'
4. Identify the smallest action that moves the client toward the next number.
5. Optionally scale other dimensions: confidence in the plan, motivation, support available: differences between the scales are rich coaching material.



Online adaptation

Use annotation tools, polls, or simply typing a number in the chat; the low-tech nature of the tool makes it the most friction-free online technique of all. Draw the scale on a shared whiteboard and let the client drag a marker :the physical gesture of moving the dot online mirrors 'walking the scale' in a room. In video sessions, ask the client to show a number of fingers to camera for quick, playful pulse checks.



Group Coaching Adaptation

Live poll or 'constellation on screen': everyone posts their number simultaneously, making the group's spread instantly visible without exposing anyone's story. Interview across the scale: someone at 7 shares what got them there; someone at 3 names what a 4 would require :peers become resources for each other. Repeat the same scale at the start and end of a workshop to make the session's effect measurable. For teams, scale collective questions ('*How aligned are we on this decision?*') and discuss the variance, not just the average.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** The number is a door-opener, not a measurement instrument; never argue with a client's number or compare clients' numbers evaluatively. In groups, protect people at the low end from feeling exposed.
- **Best used when:** The client speaks in vague or absolute terms ('total chaos', 'nothing works'); progress needs to be made visible; a quick group pulse check is needed.
- **Not recommended if:** The client experiences the numbers as trivialising a deeply emotional topic; overuse has made the tool feel mechanical.



Theoretical Background

Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (de Shazer & Berg): scaling, resource orientation, and small-steps philosophy.

TOOL 08: Miracle Questions

The client imagines waking up tomorrow to find the problem has vanished overnight :and describes, in concrete sensory detail, how they would notice and what would be different.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To bypass problem-analysis and let the client construct a rich, detailed picture of the desired future, from which realistic first steps can be extracted.
- **Outcome:** A vivid description of the preferred future, awareness that parts of the 'miracle' already occur sometimes, and small actions that recreate those parts deliberately.
- **Time required:** 20–40 minutes.
- **Format:** Both; in groups as individual reflection followed by structured sharing.
- **Materials needed:** None; optionally paper or a shared document for capturing the miracle picture.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Set the frame slowly and seriously: *'Suppose tonight, while you sleep, a miracle happens and the problem that brought you here is solved. But you were asleep :you don't know it happened.'*
2. Ask: *'When you wake up tomorrow, what is the very first small sign that tells you something has changed?'* Insist on concrete, behavioural, sensory detail.
3. Widen the picture: *'What do you do differently that morning? What do others notice about you? How do they respond?'*
4. Search for exceptions: *'Are there moments; even small ones; when pieces of this miracle already happen?'*
5. Bridge to action: *'What is the smallest thing you could do this week to make a piece of the miracle happen on purpose?'*



Online adaptation

The intimacy of headphones and a familiar home setting can actually deepen the visualisation; invite the client to look away from the screen or close their eyes while imagining. Type key phrases of the client's miracle description verbatim into the chat or a shared doc; reading their own words back is powerful. Follow with a quick scaling question on-screen: *'How close is an ordinary day to this miracle picture, 0–10?'*



Group Coaching Adaptation

Guide the whole group through the miracle frame simultaneously, then let participants journal for five minutes before sharing in pairs or triads in breakout rooms. In the plenary, harvest only 'first signs' :one per person :onto a shared board; the collection becomes a group vision mosaic. For teams with a shared problem, ask the team miracle question: *'You all arrive at work tomorrow and the issue is gone; what is the first thing each of you notices?'* Differences between answers reveal what the problem means to each member. Close with each participant naming one exception they will deliberately amplify next week.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Rushing the setup kills the effect; the question needs a slow, almost ceremonial delivery; do not accept abstract answers (*'I'd be happy'*), keep asking for observable detail.
- **Best used when:** The client is stuck in problem-talk and cannot articulate what they actually want; a group needs a shared positive vision fast.
- **Not recommended if:** The client is in acute grief or crisis where the problem cannot 'vanish' (loss, serious diagnosis) :adapt to a coping version instead; highly rational clients who resist imaginative frames may need a different door in.



Theoretical Background

Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (Steve de Shazer, Insoo Kim Berg); exception-finding and preferred-future construction.

TOOL 09: Values Card Sort

The client sorts a deck of value cards into piles; essential, important, less important; and gradually distils their five core values, then tests current life decisions against them.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To make personal values explicit and prioritised, so decisions, goals, and dissatisfactions can be examined against what genuinely matters to the client.
- **Outcome:** A ranked set of core values, insight into value conflicts behind current dilemmas, and criteria for future decisions.
- **Time required:** 30 – 50 minutes.
- **Format:** Both.
- **Materials needed:** A physical values card deck or coaching cards; online: a digital card set on a shared whiteboard, a shared slide with movable value labels, or a simple list to cut and paste.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Spread the value cards and ask the client to sort them quickly, by gut feeling, into three piles: essential / important / less important for me.
2. Narrow the essential pile to ten, then to five :the forced choices are where the real coaching happens ('What makes you keep this one and release that one?').
3. For each of the final five values, ask: 'What does this value look like in your everyday life when it is honoured? When was it last violated, and what did that feel like?'
4. Test a live decision or dissatisfaction against the five values: 'Which of these values does your current situation feed, and which does it starve?'
5. Agree one concrete change that would let a starved value breathe.



Online adaptation

Prepare the cards as movable sticky notes on a shared whiteboard; the drag-and-drop sorting preserves the tactile decision-making of the physical deck. Alternatively, send the client a list before the session and have them do the rough sort as pre-work, spending session time on the final five and their meaning. Screenshot the final constellation of five values and send it to the client as a decision compass.



Group Coaching Adaptation

Each member sorts individually (in silence, on their own board area), then pairs share their top five and the story behind one value. Team version: after individual sorting, the team negotiates a shared top five for the group :the negotiation exposes cultural assumptions and builds explicit team values. Map the team's current projects or rules against the agreed values: where are we living them, where are we contradicting them? Close with one commitment per person to honour one value more visibly next month.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Clients often sort for the person they think they should be; ask for recent concrete situations as evidence. In teams, prevent the values discussion from becoming abstract wordsmithing; anchor every value in observable behaviour.
- **Best used when:** The client faces a major decision, feels persistent dissatisfaction they cannot explain, or is at a life or career transition; a team is forming or renegotiating how it works.
- **Not recommended if:** There is an urgent operational problem to solve; the client has just done values work elsewhere and needs application, not another inventory.



Theoretical Background

Values clarification tradition (Raths, Simon); Acceptance and Commitment Therapy's values work (Hayes); person-centred approach :congruence between values and action as a source of vitality.

TOOL 10: Digital Vision Board

The client creates a collage of images, words, and symbols representing their desired future, turning an abstract goal into an emotionally charged visual anchor.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To engage imagination and emotion in goal-setting, clarify what the client is actually longing for beneath the stated goal, and create a daily visual reminder that sustains motivation.
- **Outcome:** A finished vision board, sharper emotional clarity about the desired future, and typically several surprises about what did - and did not - end up on the board.
- **Time required:** 45 - 60 minutes for creation; 15 - 20 minutes for coaching debrief.
- **Format:** Both; the debrief is where the coaching happens.
- **Materials needed:** Online: Canva, Miro, Pinterest, or any collage tool plus free stock-image sites; offline: magazines, scissors, glue, large paper.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Frame the horizon: *'Imagine your life 1-3 years from now, going the way you truly want.'* Optionally structure the board into areas (work, relationships, health, growth).
2. The client collects images, colours, and words that resonate :instruct them to choose by attraction, not by logic, and not to censor.
3. Compose the board: what belongs in the centre, what at the edges, what sits next to what.
4. Coaching debrief: *'Walk me through the board. What surprised you? What almost made it on but didn't? What is the board's title?'*
5. Anchor it: the client places the board where they will see it daily (phone wallpaper, desktop) and names one action the board is inviting them to take this month.



Online adaptation

The digital format is arguably stronger than paper: image search allows precise matches to inner pictures, and the result lives on the client's devices. Create the board asynchronously as homework and use session time for the debrief :or create live in session with screen-sharing, letting the coach observe choices and hesitations in real time. Use the tool's comment function for the coach's questions directly on board elements. Revisit the board after three months: what has moved from image to reality? What no longer resonates?



Group Coaching Adaptation

Participants build individual boards simultaneously in a shared session (music helps), then present them in small groups :presenting one's vision aloud to witnesses measurably strengthens commitment. Gallery walk online: all boards pasted into one shared canvas; participants browse silently and leave appreciative sticky notes or questions. Team version: the team builds one shared board of its desired future :negotiating images is a disguised, low-threat negotiation of strategy and values. Close with one action per person inspired by someone else's board.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Keep it a coaching tool, not an arts-and-crafts session; the debrief questions carry the value; watch for boards full of 'shoulds' (status symbols the client thinks they want) and gently probe what feeling each image represents.
- **Best used when:** The client is motivated but their goal feels flat or externally imposed; at the start of a year, programme, or life chapter; a group needs an energising, creative shared experience.
- **Not recommended if:** The client needs concrete operational planning now; the client dismisses visual-creative methods so strongly that resistance would consume the session.



Theoretical Background

Guided imagery and mental-rehearsal research; dual-coding theory (images plus words strengthen memory and motivation); goal-setting theory; vivid, emotionally salient goals sustain effort longer than abstract ones.

TOOL 11: Circle of Control and Influence

The client sorts their worries and challenges into three zones; what they control, what they can influence, and what concerns them but lies beyond reach; and redirects energy accordingly.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To reduce overwhelm and rumination by separating actionable concerns from unactionable ones, and to focus the client's limited energy where it produces results.
- **Outcome:** A visual map of concerns by actionability, relief from carrying the uncontrollable, and a short list of actions inside the circles of control and influence.
- **Time required:** 25 - 40 minutes.
- **Format:** Both.
- **Materials needed:** Paper with three concentric circles, or a whiteboard template; sticky notes physical or digital.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Brain-dump: the client writes every current worry, frustration, or challenge on separate sticky notes :one item per note, no filtering.
2. Draw three concentric circles: Control (my own actions, attitudes, choices), Influence (I can affect but not decide), Concern (matters to me but is beyond my reach).
3. Sort each note into its circle, thinking aloud; the coach probes borderline items ('What part of this, specifically, is yours?').
4. Examine the outer circle: 'What does it cost you to carry these? What would acceptance; not approval; look like?'
5. For the inner two circles, choose 2 – 3 items and define concrete next actions; notice how energy shifts when attention moves inward.



Online adaptation

Prepare the three-circle template on a shared whiteboard with a sticky-note palette; sorting by drag-and-drop is quick and satisfying. The brain-dump can be pre-work in a private document, keeping session time for sorting and coaching. Export the finished map for the client; suggest they re-sort it whenever overwhelm returns: the template is reusable self-coaching.



Group Coaching Adaptation

Powerful for teams under external pressure (reorganisations, funding cuts): the team sorts shared challenges together and discovers how much energy is leaking into the Concern zone. Individual sorting first, then compare: items one person places in Concern, a colleague may place in Influence :these differences are the richest discussion points and often reveal untapped collective leverage. Agree as a group: which Influence items do we act on together, and which Concern items do we consciously stop debating in meetings? Revisit monthly; items migrate between circles as situations evolve.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Do not let the tool become a way of dismissing legitimate emotions about the outer circle; acknowledge feelings first, sort second; watch for clients who defensively place everything in Concern to avoid responsibility, or everything in Control out of perfectionism.
- **Best used when:** The client feels overwhelmed, powerless, or consumed by circumstances; teams face external change they did not choose.
- **Not recommended if:** The situation genuinely requires grief or emotional processing before problem-sorting; the client is in acute crisis.



Theoretical Background

Stephen Covey's Circles of Concern and Influence (The 7 Habits); Stoic distinction between what is and is not 'up to us'; locus-of-control research (Rotter); stress-appraisal theory (Lazarus).

TOOL 12: Walt Disney Strategy

The client examines their idea from three deliberately separated roles; the Dreamer, the Realist, and the Critic; occupying a different position (or breakout room) for each.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To prevent premature criticism from killing ideas and premature enthusiasm from skipping feasibility, by giving imagination, planning, and quality-checking each their own protected space.
- **Outcome:** A vision that has survived constructive criticism, a realistic implementation sketch, and a refined idea the client believes in on all three levels.
- **Time required:** 40 - 60 minutes.
- **Format:** Both; exceptionally well suited to groups.
- **Materials needed:** Three marked positions in the room (chairs, floor labels); online: three labelled frames on a whiteboard, or three breakout-room rounds.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Present the idea or goal, then explain the three roles: the Dreamer (everything is possible), the Realist (how exactly would we do it), the Critic (what could go wrong and how do we prevent it).
2. Dreamer position: the client describes the vision without any limits: budget, time, and probability do not exist here. The coach blocks every 'but'.
3. Realist position: the client translates the dream into steps, resources, timeline, and responsibilities :constructively, as if the decision to proceed had been made.
4. Critic position: the client stress-tests the plan; risks, weak points, missing pieces. Crucially, the Critic critiques the plan, never the Dreamer.
5. Return to the Dreamer with the Critic's findings and iterate once more; close by capturing the refined idea and the first step.



Online adaptation

Replace physical positions with visual and ritual separation: three background colours, three virtual backgrounds, or three labelled whiteboard zones the client 'enters' by clicking. Even simpler: the client physically changes seat or posture at home between rounds: announce each transition explicitly to preserve the state change. Capture each round's output in its own colour on the shared board so the three voices stay visibly distinct.



Group Coaching Adaptation

Assign roles to sub-groups: one breakout room dreams, one plans, one critiques; then rotate so every group inhabits every role. The rotation is the magic: habitual critics must dream, habitual dreamers must plan, and the group experiences how much richer the idea becomes. Strict sequencing and facilitation matter; no criticism in the Dreamer phase, ever; violations are gently but firmly stopped. Ideal for project kick-offs, innovation sessions, and strategic planning in teams.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** The separation is the tool :if the phases blur, it collapses into an ordinary discussion; give the Dreamer phase real time before moving on, as most groups rush it.
- **Best used when:** An idea needs development but keeps getting stuck between enthusiasm and doubt; a team's brainstorming is routinely killed by early criticism.
- **Not recommended if:** The decision has effectively been made and only execution details remain; the group is too large to keep the role discipline without co-facilitators.



Theoretical Background

Modelled by Robert Dilts (NLP) from Walt Disney's creative practice; perceptual positions work in NLP; psychology of divergent versus convergent thinking.

TOOL 13: Six Thinking Hats

The group examines one issue through six modes of thinking in turn; facts, emotions, risks, benefits, creativity, and process; with everyone wearing the same 'hat' at the same time.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To replace adversarial discussion with parallel thinking, ensure emotional and creative perspectives get equal airtime with facts and criticism, and de-personalise disagreement.
- **Outcome:** A rounded examination of the issue, decisions of higher quality, and a shared meta-language ('let's put on the yellow hat for a moment') the group keeps using afterwards.
- **Time required:** 45 - 75 minutes, depending on the issue.
- **Format:** Primarily group; individuals can use it as a structured self-check.
- **Materials needed:** Hat-colour overview visible to all; flipchart or shared board with six capture zones; optionally coloured cards or virtual backgrounds.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Define the issue precisely and introduce the hats: White (facts and data), Red (feelings and intuition, no justification required), Black (risks and caution), Yellow (benefits and value), Green (alternatives and creativity), Blue (process control and summary).
2. Blue hat opens: agree the sequence and time per hat for this particular issue.
3. Work through the hats one at a time :everyone thinks in the same mode simultaneously, and contributions outside the current hat are parked.
4. Give the Red hat a genuine turn: thirty seconds per person, gut feeling only :this legitimises emotions that otherwise leak out disguised as facts.
5. Blue hat closes: summarise what emerged under each colour and decide the next step.



Online adaptation

Create six colour zones on a shared whiteboard and capture contributions as sticky notes in the active zone. Signal the current hat unmistakably :a coloured slide, renamed meeting title, or participants changing virtual backgrounds; playfulness reinforces the discipline. Red-hat round works brilliantly as a simultaneous chat blast: everyone types their gut feeling at once and presses Enter together, preventing anchoring. For larger groups, run Green-hat brainstorming in breakout rooms and harvest in plenary.



Group Coaching Adaptation

The tool's core value is social: the shy participant's risk-spotting becomes legitimate under the Black hat, and the habitual sceptic must generate ideas under Green. Use it for charged decisions where positions have already hardened; parallel thinking dissolves the for/against trench structure. Assign the Blue hat to a participant rather than the facilitator in mature groups; it develops shared process ownership. Keep a visible parking lot for out-of-hat contributions so nothing is lost, only postponed.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Do not let the Black hat dominate by relabeling ordinary criticism as 'just wearing the hat'; equal time discipline is the facilitator's main job; the method feels artificial for the first ten minutes :persist past that point.
- **Best used when:** A group decision keeps circling, discussions are dominated by a few voices or by pure criticism, or emotions are influencing a decision without being named.
- **Not recommended if:** The matter is trivial and the overhead is not justified; the group is in open conflict that needs conflict resolution, not decision structure.



Theoretical Background

Edward de Bono's Six Thinking Hats and the concept of parallel thinking; group-dynamics research on production blocking and evaluation apprehension in discussions.

TOOL 14: Six Thinking Hats

The client writes a letter to themselves at a defined future date; describing today's situation, hopes, commitments, and questions; to be opened when that date arrives.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To crystallise current intentions in writing, create an emotional bridge between present decisions and future identity, and build a built-in accountability and reflection point.
- **Outcome:** A written letter that sharpens commitments now and delivers a powerful reflection moment later; often immediate insight simply from the act of writing.
- **Time required:** 25 - 40 minutes writing; 15 minutes debriefing.
- **Format:** Both.
- **Materials needed:** Paper and envelope or a delayed-delivery e-mail service; a quiet setting.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Choose the time horizon together (3, 6, 12 months; matched to the client's goal cycle) and set the scene: *'You are writing to the person you will be on that day.'*
2. Offer scaffolding prompts: *What is true in my life today? What am I proud of? What am I committing to between now and when you read this? What do I hope you have let go of? What question do I want to ask you?*
3. The client writes in silence; the coach holds the space and does not read the letter unless invited.
4. Debrief without disclosure: *'What was it like to write? Which sentence surprised you? What did you notice yourself promising?'*
5. Seal and schedule: physical envelope with a date, or a scheduled e-mail; agree what the client will do upon opening it.



Online adaptation

Delayed e-mail services (or a scheduled message the client sends to themselves) make the future delivery automatic and reliable; a genuine advantage over the paper version. Writing during the session with cameras on but microphones muted creates surprisingly strong shared focus; soft music through screen-share helps. For clients who prefer speaking, a voice memo recorded now and calendared for future listening works equally well; hearing one's own past voice is remarkably moving. If the coaching engagement spans the horizon, schedule the opening into a session and coach the gap between predicted and actual.



Group Coaching Adaptation

At the end of a training programme or team milestone: all participants write simultaneously, seal their letters, and the facilitator sends or distributes them at the agreed date :a collective ritual that marks the moment. Optional pair element: participants exchange one sentence from their letters aloud, creating witnessed commitment without full disclosure. Team version: the team writes one collective letter to 'the team one year from now', negotiating what they promise each other :then reads it at the anniversary retrospective. The mass opening (everyone opens at the reunion or follow-up session) generates rich material for a review workshop.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Guard privacy absolutely; the letter's honesty depends on it never being read by others without consent; help clients avoid pure wish-lists by anchoring at least one concrete commitment in the text.
- **Best used when:** Closing a programme, a coaching engagement, or a year; before a major transition; when a client's motivation is high and you want to preserve it for the inevitable dip.
- **Not recommended if:** The client's near future is highly unstable and the horizon would feel threatening rather than motivating; used too frequently, which erodes its ceremonial power.



Theoretical Background

Expressive-writing research (Pennebaker); temporal self-continuity studies :people who feel connected to their future self make more future-friendly decisions (Hershfield); commitment devices from behavioural economics.

TOOL 15: Perspective Chairs (Empty Chair Work)

The client physically moves between chairs, each representing a different person or perspective in their situation, speaking from each position in turn.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To unlock empathy and insight by literally taking other positions; a stakeholder, a future self, an inner critic :and letting the client hear their situation described in other voices.
- **Outcome:** Softened rigid positions, understanding of another party's logic, frequently a visible emotional shift, and new options for a stuck relationship or decision.
- **Time required:** 30 - 50 minutes.
- **Format:** Primarily individual; adapted group versions work well.
- **Materials needed:** Two to four chairs and room to move; online: designated positions in the client's own room, or labelled frames the client symbolically 'sits into'.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Map the situation and choose 2 - 4 relevant perspectives (e.g., myself, my colleague, our shared project, myself in five years); assign each a chair.
2. The client begins in their own chair and states the situation from their position.
3. They physically move to the second chair, settle into it, and speak as that person or perspective :first person, present tense ('I am Ditus, and when I see this project...').
4. The coach interviews each perspective with curiosity, then invites movement to the next chair; return visits are allowed as the dialogue develops.
5. Close in a neutral 'observer' position: 'Having heard all the voices, what do you understand now that you didn't before? What will you do differently?'



Online adaptation

Ask the client to set up two or three actual chairs or cushions at home and angle the camera so movement remains visible :the physical relocation is worth preserving even on video. Minimal version: the client changes posture and a symbolic object (holding a different item per perspective); the coach marks each transition verbally to anchor the state change. A whiteboard variant for movement-averse clients: labelled circles the client 'enters' with their cursor while speaking from that position :weaker somatically, but workable. Online privacy can be an advantage: clients often speak more freely to an empty chair at home than in an office.



Group Coaching Adaptation

Stakeholder panel: for a team decision, chairs represent affected parties (clients, management, the newest team member, the team in one year) and volunteers sit in and speak from them while the group listens. Rotation deepens it: after each round, participants move one chair to the left and must continue the previous occupant's perspective :enforced perspective-taking. Use for team conflicts only with care and ground rules: perspectives may represent roles or interests, but absent colleagues are not impersonated mockingly. Debrief in plenary: which voice was missing from our usual discussions? What does it need from us?



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** This tool can open more emotion than expected :hold it lightly, keep sessions in the coaching (not therapy) register, and always end back in the client's own integrated position; never force a client into a chair they resist.
- **Best used when:** The client is stuck in a conflict or a decision involving others, keeps rehearsing one side of a dialogue, or needs to consult their future self.
- **Not recommended if:** The material touches trauma or clinically relevant content; the client finds enactment excessively artificial after a genuine attempt; group trust is low.



Theoretical Background

Gestalt therapy's empty-chair technique (Perls); psychodrama and role reversal (Moreno); NLP perceptual positions; perspective-taking research in social psychology.

TOOL 16: Strengths Spotting Circle

Each participant in turn receives a concentrated round of specific, evidence-based strengths feedback from every other group member.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To make invisible strengths visible through witnesses, correct the negativity bias of self-assessment, and build group trust through structured appreciation.
- **Outcome:** Each participant leaves with a documented list of strengths seen by others, usually including at least one they had discounted, plus a task for deploying a signature strength deliberately.
- **Time required:** About 6 - 8 minutes per participant plus setup; 60 - 75 minutes for a group of eight.
- **Format:** Group (three to ten participants); a coach-to-client version exists for individual work.
- **Materials needed:** Note cards or a shared document with a page per participant; optionally a strengths vocabulary list (e.g., VIA classification) to sharpen language.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Prime the group: briefly introduce strengths language and the rule of evidence; every strength named must come with a concrete observed example (*'I saw your calm when the server crashed during the demo'*).
2. One participant becomes the receiver; they may only listen and take notes; no deflecting, minimising, or joking away.
3. Every other member names one or two strengths with their evidence; the facilitator ensures specificity and stops generic praise (*'you're great'*).
4. The receiver closes their round by naming which reflection surprised or moved them most.
5. After all rounds, each participant chooses one named strength and designs a concrete way to use it more deliberately in the coming two weeks.



Online adaptation

Written-then-spoken hybrid works best: participants first type strengths with evidence into the receiver's page of a shared document, then each speaks their top item aloud :the receiver keeps a permanent written artefact. Breakout rooms of 4 - 5 keep rounds intimate and time-efficient for larger cohorts. Cameras on for the receiving round; being seen while receiving appreciation is a large part of the effect. The persistent document becomes a resource clients report rereading months later; a unique advantage of the online format.



Group Coaching Adaptation

This tool is group-native: its power is precisely that the feedback comes from many independent witnesses, which makes it hard to dismiss. Works best in groups with some shared history (a training cohort mid-programme, an established team); the evidence rule requires having actually seen each other act. For teams, add a second layer: which of our collective strengths as a team did this exercise reveal, and where are we underusing them? Excellent as a closing ritual for long programmes; schedule it when trust has been built, never as an icebreaker.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Enforce the evidence rule ruthlessly; without concrete examples the exercise degrades into flattery and loses credibility; watch receivers who visibly struggle to accept positive feedback and normalise their discomfort explicitly.
- **Best used when:** A cohort or team has shared history and needs consolidation, confidence, or a dignified closing; individuals systematically underrate themselves.
- **Not recommended if:** The group is newly formed or contains active conflict; time pressure would force superficial rounds; a rushed version does damage.



Theoretical Background

Positive psychology and the VIA character-strengths framework (Peterson & Seligman); reflected best-self research (Roberts et al.); strengths-based development (Buckingham, CliftonStrengths).

TOOL 17: World Café

Participants explore a big question in rotating small-table conversations, cross-pollinating ideas as they move, until the whole group's collective intelligence becomes visible.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To engage every voice in a large group on questions that matter, connect diverse perspectives through rotation, and harvest patterns no single conversation would produce.
- **Outcome:** A harvested map of the group's collective thinking, unexpected idea combinations, broad ownership of the conclusions, and networked relationships across the group.
- **Time required:** 60 – 120 minutes: three rounds of 15 – 20 minutes plus harvest.
- **Format:** Group (from about twelve participants up to hundreds).
- **Materials needed:** Tables of 4 – 5 with paper tablecloths and markers; online: breakout rooms each paired with its own whiteboard frame or slide that persists across rounds.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Craft one to three genuinely open questions that matter to the participants; question quality determines everything.
2. Round one: small tables converse on the first question, doodling and noting key ideas on the tablecloth.
3. Rotation: everyone moves to a new table except one 'table host' who stays, welcomes newcomers, and summarises the previous conversation before the next round begins.
4. Rounds two and three deepen or shift the question; ideas travel with the travellers and combine with what each table already holds.
5. Harvest in plenary: table hosts report patterns, the facilitator clusters insights on a wall or board, and the group identifies themes and next steps together.



Online adaptation

Assign each breakout room a persistent whiteboard frame; this replaces the paper tablecloth and lets ideas accumulate visibly across rounds. Rotate participants between rooms while hosts stay; most platforms allow manual reassignment, or use the simpler 'everyone returns to plenary and is re-sorted' rhythm. Shorten rounds slightly (12 – 15 minutes) and reduce table size to four; online conversation fatigue arrives sooner. The digital harvest is superior to paper: all tablecloths are instantly visible side by side, and clustering happens live with the whole group watching.



Group Coaching Adaptation

World Café is inherently a large-group method; in coaching contexts it shines for communities of practice, organisational visioning, and programme cohorts processing shared learning. Frame it with café etiquette: contribute your thinking, listen for insight, connect ideas, doodle freely :the informal register is functional, not decorative. Choose hosts deliberately: they need to summarise faithfully, not steer. Follow through visibly on the harvest; nothing damages future participation like insights that disappear into a drawer.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Weak questions produce polite small talk; invest real preparation in question design; keep logistics crisp, because rotation chaos consumes goodwill; ensure the harvest is captured and returned to participants.
- **Best used when:** A large group must genuinely think together :strategy, community issues, programme-wide reflection; and hierarchy or plenary dynamics would silence most voices.
- **Not recommended if:** The group is smaller than about twelve (a single facilitated circle works better); a concrete decision must be made today; the café generates, it does not decide.



Theoretical Background

The World Café method (Juanita Brown & David Isaacs); dialogue theory (Bohm); collective-intelligence and large-group intervention research.

TOOL 18: Brainwriting 6-3-5

Six participants silently write three ideas in five minutes, pass their sheet on, and build on each other's ideas; producing over a hundred idea-variants in half an hour without anyone speaking.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To generate a large volume of ideas while neutralising the classic brainstorming problems: dominant voices, production blocking, evaluation anxiety, and anchoring on the first loud idea.
- **Outcome:** Up to 108 written idea-variants (6 people × 3 ideas × 6 rounds), with the strongest concepts already iterated several times by different minds.
- **Time required:** 30 minutes generation plus 20 – 30 minutes clustering and selection.
- **Format:** Group; scales by running parallel six-person sets.
- **Materials needed:** Prepared grid sheets (3 columns × 6 rows) per person; online: a shared spreadsheet or whiteboard with one grid per participant.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Define the challenge as a concrete 'How might we...?' question visible to all.
2. Each of the six participants writes three ideas in row one of their sheet; five minutes, in complete silence.
3. Sheets rotate one position. Each person reads the ideas received and writes three more in the next row: developments of what they read, combinations, or entirely new ideas.
4. Repeat until every sheet has passed through all hands (six rounds, about thirty minutes).
5. Cluster the results together, mark favourites (e.g., dot-voting), and select 2 – 3 concepts to develop further with owners and next steps.



Online adaptation

The method is arguably better online: a shared spreadsheet rotates instantly (each person moves one tab or column over), handwriting legibility disappears as a problem, and results are digital from the start. Enforce the silence: cameras on, microphones off; which online settings make effortless and even relaxing. Use a visible shared timer for the five-minute rounds. Dot-voting with emoji or stamps makes the selection phase fast and playful.



Group Coaching Adaptation

In group coaching, use it whenever the 'Options' phase of any model (GROW, solution-focused) needs genuine breadth before convergence. The silent format is a gift to introverts and non-native speakers, and it equalises hierarchical groups :the intern's idea is indistinguishable from the director's. Debrief the process itself with teams: what did we notice about how ideas improved as they travelled? What does that say about how we usually run meetings? For groups that are not a multiple of six, adjust rows and rounds :the numbers are a convention, not a law.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Ideas must be written concretely enough for the next person to build on :model a good example first; do not skip the convergence phase, or the group leaves with a wall of ideas and no commitment.
- **Best used when:** A group needs many options fast, participation is uneven, the topic attracts premature criticism, or the group is online and 'talking brainstorms' keep failing.
- **Not recommended if:** The problem needs deep sequential reasoning rather than breadth; fewer than four participants (the passing dynamic collapses).



Theoretical Background

Method 635 (Bernd Rohrbach, 1968); research on production blocking and evaluation apprehension in group ideation (Diehl & Stroebe); nominal-group technique tradition.

TOOL 19: Somatic Check-In (Body Scan for Coaching)

A short guided attention journey through the body at the start or turning point of a session, using physical sensations as information about the client's real state and priorities.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To bring clients out of their heads and into present-moment awareness, surface what actually needs attention beneath the prepared agenda, and teach the body as an ongoing source of coaching data.
- **Outcome:** Grounded presence, frequently a revised session agenda (*'my shoulders told me what the real topic is'*), and a growing client capacity to read their own somatic signals between sessions.
- **Time required:** 5 – 15 minutes as an opener; expandable to a full somatic session.
- **Format:** Both; in groups as a collective opening ritual.
- **Materials needed:** None; a chair and relative quiet suffice.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Invite (never instruct) the client: *'Before we start with words, would you be willing to check in with your body for a few minutes?'* Eyes may close or soften toward the floor.
2. Guide attention slowly: feet on the floor, weight in the chair, breath without changing it, then a slow scan; legs, belly, chest, shoulders, jaw, face; simply noticing, not fixing.
3. Ask for a report in sensory language: *'What do you notice? Where is there tension, warmth, heaviness, ease?'*
4. Bridge to coaching: *'If that tightness in your chest could speak, what would it say? What does it know about what we should work on today?'*
5. Return at the session's end for a comparative scan: *'What has changed in your body during this hour?'* ;the difference is feedback on the session itself.



Online adaptation

Works fully online and is especially valuable there: clients arrive at video sessions straight from other screens, and the check-in creates the transition ritual that a commute or waiting room used to provide. Invite the client to look away from the screen or close their eyes; the coach keeps their voice slower and lower than usual. Suggest the client turns off their self-view; watching oneself relax is a contradiction. Offer a recorded version for use between sessions; a two-minute audio scan before difficult meetings is a practical takeaway.



Group Coaching Adaptation

As a workshop opener, a three-minute collective scan lands the whole group in the room and audibly changes the quality of the first discussion. Follow with a one-word weather report per person ('foggy', 'buzzing', 'heavy-but-here'); fast, non-invasive, and it calibrates the facilitator to the room. In long online workshops, insert micro-scans (sixty seconds) after breaks to counteract screen dissociation. Always frame participation as optional and offer an alternative (quiet sitting, gazing out of a window); bodily attention is not neutral for everyone.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** For clients with trauma histories, body attention can be activating rather than grounding; keep it short, keep eyes-open as an explicit option, and never push past visible discomfort; keep the practice in the coaching register and refer onward if strong material emerges.
- **Best used when:** Clients or groups arrive rushed, scattered, or 'all head'; sessions keep starting with performative agendas that dissolve twenty minutes in; online fatigue is degrading presence.
- **Not recommended if:** The client has clearly declined somatic approaches; acute distress requires stabilisation by a qualified professional; cultural or personal context makes closed-eyes group work unsafe.



Theoretical Background

Mindfulness-based approaches (Kabat-Zinn's body scan); somatic coaching and focusing (Gendlin's felt sense); interoception research linking body awareness to emotional granularity and decision-making (Damasio's somatic markers).

TOOL 20: Peer Coaching Triads

Participants rotate through three roles; coach, client, and observer; in structured rounds, so everyone both receives coaching and develops coaching skill in one session.



Basic Information

- **Purpose:** To multiply coaching capacity within a group, give every participant real coaching on a real topic, and develop coaching competence through immediate observed practice and feedback.
- **Outcome:** Each participant leaves with progress on their own topic, hands-on coaching practice, and specific observer feedback on their coaching behaviour :three learning layers in one exercise.
- **Time required:** 60 – 90 minutes: three rounds of 15– 20 minutes coaching plus 5 minutes feedback each.
- **Format:** Group, in sub-groups of three; the backbone of many training programmes and communities of practice.
- **Materials needed:** A simple structure card per triad (timings, role descriptions, observer checklist); private spaces or breakout rooms.



How It Works: Step by Step

1. Form triads and explain the three roles: the Client brings a real, current topic; the Coach coaches using an agreed simple structure (e.g., GROW); the Observer stays silent and notes concrete coach behaviours :questions asked, silences held, moments the energy shifted.
2. Round one runs for the agreed time; the facilitator keeps global time for all triads.
3. Feedback sequence after each round: first the Client ('what helped me'), then the Coach's self-reflection, then the Observer's specific observations :evidence, not evaluation.
4. Rotate roles and run rounds two and three so everyone occupies every seat.
5. Plenary harvest: what did we learn about coaching from all three seats? What will each person try in their next real conversation?



Online adaptation

Breakout rooms are tailor-made for triads: private, timed, and instantly re-formable; the facilitator visits rooms briefly like a walking supervisor. Broadcast time signals into rooms so triads keep the rotation honest. Give observers a shared digital checklist; typed observer notes handed to the coach afterwards are a lasting artefact paper rarely becomes. Recordable practice (with explicit consent of all three) allows coaches to review their own questioning; an option only online formats make trivially easy.



Group Coaching Adaptation

Triads convert a passive training group into a practice community: every participant is simultaneously learner, contributor, and witness. Insist on real topics, not role-plays :realness is what makes the practice transfer; provide a topic-sizing guideline (*'important enough to matter, not the heaviest thing you carry'*). The observer role is the secret engine: observing skilled and unskilled moves in others accelerates one's own development faster than being coached. Standing triads that re-meet between workshop modules (peer-coaching circles) extend the format into an ongoing support structure; the natural evolution of this tool.



Cautions & Tips

- **Watch out for:** Protect confidentiality explicitly; what is said in the triad stays there; keep feedback behavioural and specific, stopping observers who drift into advice on the client's topic; watch the clock, because round three routinely gets squeezed.
- **Best used when:** Training coaches, youth workers, or leaders in coaching skills; sustaining a community of practice between formal sessions; a programme needs participants to experience both giving and receiving coaching.
- **Not recommended if:** Trust in the group is insufficient for real topics; participants have no shared basic structure to coach with yet (teach one first); time allows fewer than three full rounds :an incomplete rotation frustrates.



Theoretical Background

Peer-learning and co-coaching traditions; Kolb's experiential learning cycle (act, observe, reflect, apply); deliberate-practice research (Ericsson); immediate specific feedback as the engine of skill development; social learning theory (Bandura).

CONCLUSION

This handbook was written, above all, for coaches who hesitate. Perhaps you are one of them: you trust your tools in the room, with a flipchart at hand and a client across the table, but the online format still feels like a lesser version of the real thing: flat, technical, harder to hold. If the twenty tools gathered here demonstrate anything, it is that this hesitation, while understandable, is no longer justified. Every single technique in this collection, from the Wheel of Life to Peer Coaching Triads, has a fully workable online form, and in a surprising number of cases the online version is not a substitute but an upgrade: shared whiteboards preserve every map and timeline as a living document, breakout rooms create intimacy on demand, the chat captures a client's own words verbatim, a scheduled e-mail delivers a letter to the future with perfect reliability, and clients often speak more freely from the safety of their own room than they ever would in an office.

The same is true of the second hesitation this manual addresses: the move from individual to group coaching. Working with a group is not simply coaching several people at once, it is a different craft, in which the group itself becomes the coach's most powerful instrument. Peers spot strengths the individual has discounted, other people's timelines inspire one's own, a shared wheel exposes misaligned effort, and a public commitment spoken in front of witnesses carries a weight no private resolution can match. The group adaptations in this handbook show, tool by tool, how to release that power deliberately rather than hoping it emerges by accident.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS MANUAL

- **The tool is not the format.** Purpose, structure, and good questions carry every technique; paper, screen, room, or breakout room are interchangeable vehicles. A coach who understands why a tool works can translate it into any setting.
- **Preparation replaces improvisation online.** What a flipchart absorbs spontaneously, the online session needs prepared in advance: templates on the whiteboard, timed rounds, clear transitions. The practice teams' most repeated lesson was simple: prepare beforehand.
- **Online offers genuine advantages, not just workarounds.** Persistence of artefacts, effortless documentation, silent and written participation formats, instant polls, recorded practice, and asynchronous pre-work are capabilities the physical room never had.

- **The group is a resource, not an audience.** Structured sharing, rotation, peer feedback, and collective visualisation turn individual exercises into multiplied insight but only when the facilitator protects equal participation and psychological safety.
- **Safety rules scale with the setting.** Every tool in this manual lists when not to use it. Online and in groups, the coach sees less and controls less, so contraindications: acute distress, low trust, missing shared goals deserve even more respect, not less.
- **Small and simple beats complex and impressive.** Scaling questions typed into a chat, a three-minute body scan after a break, one 'Will' commitment spoken aloud: the lightest tools often move clients the most, especially online where attention is fragile.

Innovation is a collective act. These tools were developed, tested, and refined by all participants of the training during a shared webinar. The manual itself is proof of its own thesis: a group, working online, produced something no individual would have produced alone.

So if you are still weighing 'online: yes or no?', let this handbook settle the question in practical terms: yes, with preparation; yes, with the adaptations described here; yes, starting with one tool you already trust. Choose one technique, run it in your next online or group session, notice what works, and adjust. Twenty tools are waiting: the only step this manual cannot take for you is the first one.

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