Notes from TAM/S3: 15 Oct 2026

Using Gibbs' template for reflection.

Description of the experience

- What happened?
    - Coaching session. 3rd one.
- When did it happen?
    - Thursday 11am
- Where did it happen?
    - Online (both at home)
- Who was involved?
    - Me and TAM
- What did you do yourself?
    - Prepared in advance. Thought about the type of words I would listen out for and how I might respond in the moment to introduce more explicit challenge.
- What did others do?
    - Turned up on time. Ready to talk. Engaged with the process.
- What was the result of these actions?
    - We had a productive session.

Feelings and thoughts about the experience

- What did you feel leading up to the event?
    - A little bit apprehensive as I still find his goal a little limited and have found it hard to know how to challenge.
- What did you feel during and after the event?
    - I think our rapport is building. We are becoming more open in our communication. We both gave each other feedback. It feels as though our coaching relationship has moved into another level during this session. It felt very rewarding for me.

- How do you feel when you look back on the situation?
    - I feel this was our best session yet. I don't think that is because we went deeper into his beliefs and thoughts, but because we acknowledged and talked about the coaching and how it was going and what we would like to try next. It felt very open and honest and vulnerable.
- What do you think other people felt during the event?
    - I think he may have felt the same. He is aware that he would like to talk more and has given himself some challenges to speak out in meetings but also within our sessions in future to allow the conversation to go a bit deeper. I feel that he gave permission for this at the end of today's session.
- How did you think others will feel about it now?
    - I hope he feels that it was a thought-provoking session.

Evaluation of the experience, both positive and negative

- What went well during this activity?
    - I feel that I started very well with recontracting, asking questions and exploring what he was saying, and then contracting again at 13 minutes around what he wanted to talk about in the session. At the end I felt I was able to reference what he's talked about at the start of the session and evidence the themes I had noticed.
- Why was this?
    - It was nice to get feedback from him that he had found previous sessions useful. This made me feel calmer and more confident as we began the conversation. I had prepared some opening questions and although I didn't use them specifically, I think it allowed me to remain aware of not leading the session, but allowing him to say what he wanted to cover.
- What didn’t go so well?
    - I was a bit thrown when he asked me if I could give him feedback on his behaviours. I wasn't expecting the question.
- Why was that?
    - We only had 5 minutes left, which meant I rushed in a little and perhaps could have taken a bit more time to think about how to respond.
- What contribution did you make?

    - I emphasised that I could only reflect back themes that I had noticed, but I would have liked to have reminded him that these were just my observations and not rights or wrongs. I would have liked to have reminded him that he was free to contradict and disagree with me. I told him I'd noticed that his perception of himself and other people's perceptions seemed not to match perfectly. For eg, that he felt he was giving 50/50 suggestions that were risky, but everyone accepted them and implemented them. Maybe his ideas weren't as risky as he thought. Also that he felt confident he already had the skills for his promotion, but others didn't see that - evidenced with quote from discovery and session 2. Not sure if this was right thing to do.
- What contributions did other people make?
    - Listened, accepted feedback. We then talked about his desire to talk more openly and give longer answers during our coaching sessions, and I acknowledged that I could give him more space to think about his answers and elaborate. We contracted to try this in the next session.

Analysis to make sense of the situation

- Why did things go well?
    - Bonded, talked about the coaching relationship rather than just about his situation. Felt really good.
- Why didn’t it go well?
    - He threw me a curveball with 5 minutes to go.
- What sense can I make of the situation?
    - I am looking forward to our next session more than I have past ones.
- What knowledge from either me or others can help me to understand?
    - I think I need to speak to my coach mentor about options for handling questions like that again in future, so I can remain in coaching mode.

Conclusion about what you learned and what you could have done differently

- What did I learn from this experience?
    - I could have turned his question back to him. What do you think you've learnt about your behaviours through our coaching sessions. But did I have time for that? How could this have been more positive for everyone?
    - I could have left him more space to talk. The 'and what else' worked really well. Try that more next time, alongside time to think.

- What do I need to do to make this more effective next time?
    - I need to prepare in advance, to think about what we have contracted for, recontract around that at the start of the next session and think about other themes I might have noticed.
    - Make sure I honour our agreement to leave more space and dive a little deeper.
- What strengths will I take forward?
    - That talking about the coaching relationship can really deepen that relationship. It's not something we have to pretend isn't happening, but actually acknowledging that we are talking for a specific reason and in a specific way allows us to discuss and improve our way of working together.
- What else could I have done?
    - On reflection, I realise I could have acknowledged that it was a good question but that with five minutes left, it didn't give me time to give feedback there and then. I could have suggested we start the next session by looking at themes I had noticed. This would have given me time to prepare and allowed us time to discuss the observations and perhaps talk about whether those themes have appeared elsewhere in his life.

Action Plan for how you could deal with similar situations in the future, or additions to your Personal Development Plan (PDP).

- This has given me more confidence to talk about the coaching relationship explicitly with my clients. I am not sure that would have worked with this client in the discovery session, but perhaps at the start of session 2 would have been a good time to contract around challenge and what we can expect of each other during coaching.
- I will add this to my PDP as a step to take at the start of session 2 with every client. I think this could deepen my coaching relationship with my clients.