



Human Consciousness Architecture

The CATSU Model of Professional Human Development

At BEabove Leadership, we've become increasingly aware that the time has come for the next wave of human development innovation, one that builds on the accomplishments and power of coaching (just as coaching built on counseling and therapy, and the personal growth movement), but takes us to the next pinnacle of effective development, sustainable change, and true transformation.

We have met many coaches, consultants, counselors and therapists who, like us, are feeling the constraints of our current systems, and are longing for a new conversation in the arena of human awareness. We want to dance out far beyond the limits and expectations of existing models, free to explore much more widely the powerful and paradoxical nature of growth and development.

Thus Human Consciousness Architecture and the CATSU model were born. Standing on the shoulders of the coaching profession, Human Consciousness Architecture provides a structure for an expanded range of professional human development.

History

Coaching emerged organically from the Human Potential Movement of the 1970s, and coaching models and programs were almost exclusively born intuitively, based more on the experience of the early adopters than

any scientific underpinnings. These models included exercises from improvisational theater, views of human development that trace back to psychologist Carl Rogers (people are naturally creative and resourceful), and ways of interacting learned in programs such as the est Training (now the Landmark Forum), which tended to focus on being with the other person beyond judgment or advice, and asking questions designed to activate the client's own internal wisdom. Throughout the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st, coaching models were developed, tested, polished and refined.

In 2011 to 2012, as the popular conversation around neuroscience was increasing, there began to emerge a related interest in whether or not science could justify coaching. Some coaching organizations and the International Coach Federation (ICF) started looking to neuroscience to explain, in a nutshell, why coaching works. In essence, this was a process of “retro-fitting” coaching with scientific background and explanation.

In addition, a few scientists such as David Rock, began to offer coaching programs specifically based in neuroscience, but because there was not a link to a deeper understanding of the intricacies of coaching itself, grounding in experiential learning, or a focus on the being as well as the doing of coaching, these programs often fell a little flat and generally have failed to take the coaching field by storm.

At BEabove Leadership, we began teaching an advanced coaching series based on neuroscience and human consciousness in early 2012. This brought us deep into the conversation around the role of science in coaching, and we were key players in the retrofit process, working intensively with the largest in-person coaching school in the world, the Coaches Training Institute (CTI) on a white paper in 2012 and a book (Integration) in 2015. In 2015 we were also the lead author of a scientific

review of the ICF coaching competencies, the standard of coaching that all accredited coaches and coach training schools must adhere to.

As we teased apart both CTI's Co-Active model and the ICF competencies, we kept seeing that, while these models and understanding of coaching were not at all ineffective or wrong, neuroscience and consciousness actually were pointing us in broader, more expansive directions. Coaching, with all its power and magic, was more limiting than it needed to be.

Some of the Limitations of Coaching

Many of the limitations of coaching are reactions to a faulty understanding of the human brain/mind. For example, coaches are rigorously trained not to give advice. In many ways, this was a huge breakthrough in professional human development, because people typically don't respond well to:

- Being given unsolicited advice or feedback;
- Being told what to do without first exploring what they want and what they have already tried; and/or
- Being judged, evaluated or labeled

Any of the above may activate what neuroscientist call an "away" state in the brain, where the person isn't emotionally open and primed to learn, or even trigger an amygdala hijack/threat response, where it can become difficult to impossible to even hear what is being said.

However, with strong relationship and mutual respect, in a context of self-empowerment on the part of the client, advice can be extremely helpful. After all, none of us knows everything, and hearing from someone who has already "been there/done that" can be valuable

beyond words. But for current coaches, providing this sort of advice either means breaking the rules or (more commonly) saying “well, I am taking off my coach hat now and putting my mentor hat on.” Awkward, clunky, and (in our opinion), unnecessary. What would be far more helpful would be to know *when* and *how* to offer advice so that it a) is not coming from the practitioner’s ego or assumptions, and b) lands in a way that the client can hear it, evaluate it, and choose to embrace it (or not).

Another example of one of the limitations of coaching is that coaches are not supposed to teach their clients. So again, any time coaches want to share a crucial piece of information (for example, how the brain works, or a spiritual distinction) they once again have to “take off the coach hat” or break the rules. And because it is outside of the normal realm of coaching, again, how to do this well tends to be a trial and error process.

We want to point out that breaking the rules is of course not a big deal. After all, there are no coaching police, and generally, little evaluation outside of formal supervision (usually part of gaining a credential), exams, or within training programs themselves. But when a significant number of people are all breaking the rules, this may in fact speak to the emergence of a new paradigm. From conversations with many of our more sophisticated and masterful coach colleagues (who also confess to advising, teaching, and more) we believe this is what is occurring now.

In other words, we are not so much creating the field of Human Consciousness Architecture, as we are simply naming it.

The CATSU model

CATSU is an acronym that provides a structure for a broader scope of professional human development. It stands for:

C	A	T	S	U
Consciousness	Activating	Teaching	Science	Unique
Co-Creation	Advising	Telling	Spirit	Undefined

Consciousness and Co-Creation

The C of CATSU is the ground of being of the whole model, the scaffolding upon which the co-creative relationship is built. The first and most crucial aspect to becoming a Human Consciousness Architect is embracing the following beliefs:

- 1) Human Consciousness Architects (HCAs) base their work in a commitment to increasing levels of **consciousness** in themselves, their clients, and the world.
- 2) HCAs are passionately committed to the process of **co-creation**, so the HCA/client relationship is that of peers and equals, focusing on the client’s needs, issues and desires for the sake of learning and growth for *both* parties.

Consciousness

We believe consciousness is a critical – but missing or unspoken – part of the overall field of professional human development. Without understanding where a client is, and where it is possible for them to go, all interventions tend to be in the nature of throwing spaghetti at the wall hoping some will stick. Or understood in a very limited way as “good” or “better,” rather than targeted specifically for what is needed to increase in consciousness and therefore effectiveness.

In other words, why do we want to become less reactive and more in control of our fight-or-flight responses? Not simply because it is “good,” but because by doing so, and developing the capacity to do so consistently, we actually begin to move to a higher and more effective overall state of being.

In the CATSU model, we work with BEabove Leadership’s *Seven Levels of Effectiveness* as a way to understand and work with where the client is, what the brain and body response is there, where they want to go, and what interventions (based on both science and spirit – see below) will be most effective in helping them do so.

In addition, the consciousness aspect of this model honors that transformation is a non-binary process (in other words, it’s not an on/off switch to be activated in every session), but rather, is a long-term process of awareness, action, reflection, failure, forward movement, and “aha” moments. The HCA practitioner holds that, by setting the right conditions and intentions, transformation is a naturally occurring process of the co-creative work.

Co-Creation

Co-Creation is also an underpinning of the CATSU model. This belief and mindset of the practitioner honors a deep scientific and spiritual truth: we shape and are shaped by both our own internal drives, and the influence of each other. This aspect of the CATSU model highlights the special and somewhat paradoxical relationship of practitioner to client:

1. The client’s internal drive and commitment need to be activated (see activation, below) in order for growth and change to occur. The practitioner’s job is to co-create the relationship and structures in which this sort of activation can occur.

2. Everything that is occurring in the session/relationship is influenced by and influences both parties. In other words, the practitioner is growing and developing as well. The difference is, the client's life is the clay on the table and is the focus of the work. Thus, the client, while being served, also serves.

Co-Creation also honors the dynamic that occurs in deep and respectful relationship, where it feels like the wisdom emerges not from practitioner, and not from client, but from some sort of space between them, sometimes called the third entity, higher awareness, or voice of spirit.

In addition, because of this passionate belief in co-creation, HCAs hold that the client has responsibility, not only for their own life and growth, but also for the process of the engagement. HCAs train their clients in the CATSU model, developing an understanding that the practitioner will use different aspects as s/he sees they are needed, and that the client also has the responsibility to *ask* for different aspects of the model as they so desire and/or deem helpful.

Activating and Advising

Activating and Advising are two ways (along with Teaching and Telling) in which Human Consciousness Architects work with clients.

- 1) HCAs **activate** the client's own inner knowing by engaging in deep curiosity and asking open-ended questions.
- 2) HCAs **advise** the client based on the HCA's own intuition, experience and expertise.

Activating

Activation is the heart of the work of a Human Consciousness Architect. If Activating, Advising, Teaching and Telling are all books in the library of the practitioner, Activating is the encyclopedia. And in fact, the other three cannot be effectively explored unless the client has already been activated and is open, ready, and emotionally engaged. We estimate that approximately 80% of a session with an HCA practitioner should involve various manners of activation, in order to work with the client's brain/mind in the most strategic and transformational way.

There are a myriad of skills available to the HCA, each with a particular impact on the client's brain and being. HCAs learn the A-Z of Being (the come-from place of Activation) and the A-Z of Doing (the skills of Activation) in their training.

Since no one can easily remember 26 ways to be and 26 ways to do, these are broken down into five larger and more easily remembered categories, and HCAs learn how and when they may want to activate a different response in their client's brain:

1. **Activating a receptive brain**—creating relationship and trust with client; opening receptivity to advising, teaching, and telling.
2. **Activating higher cognitive skills**—connecting the reactive response to the higher brain for resilience and recovery; working with the impact of stress.
3. **Activating the right hemisphere**—helping the client expand and explore meaning, purpose and values; considering the human component of any issue; developing empathy and holistic thinking.
4. **Activating the left hemisphere**—helping the client focus and plan; develop logical processes; access resilience and positivity.

5. **Activating mind-body-spirit connection**—helping the client integrate all parts of their being; engaging the body’s wisdom; exploring deep purpose.

Advising

HCA’s understand that advising is a spice to be used sparingly. This aspect of the model relies on what we call the three Rs:

1. **Relationship**— Advising **MUST** take place in the context of a trusting relationship. The practitioner and client must feel connected to each other and the client needs to truly understand that the practitioner has only his/her best interests at heart.
2. **Respect**—Respect here is a two-way street. First, the practitioner must respect the client’s inherent creativity and resourcefulness, and not simply dish out advice as if the client was clueless about their own life. Additionally, the practitioner must establish credibility that a) they have useful advice to give and b) this advice is not being offered to bolster their own ego.
3. **Restraint**—The practitioner must not rush in with advice prematurely. The client’s brain needs to be in a receptive mode, which can only occur through a process of activation before advising (e.g. through listening, curiosity, warmth and openness).

HCA’s are trained to offer their advice at the right time (based on positive brain activation), in limited doses, and completely without judgment or attachment. Further, they learn how to activate the client’s engagement with the advice, so that, if embraced, it moves from someone else’s external idea to their own internal commitment (often changing and morphing to something completely different in the process).

It's important to note that while we highlight the “three Rs” under Advising, they in fact are actually key in every aspect of this model.

Teaching and Telling

Teaching and Telling are two ways (along with Activating and Advising) in which Human Consciousness Architects work with clients.

1) HCAs **teach** our clients about their brains, consciousness, and more, in order to build the client's own capacity for self-knowledge and self-direction.

2) HCAs **tell** our clients stories, ideas, and sometimes even what we would do in their shoes. Extremely occasionally we may even tell them what to do.

HCAs also learn very specifically *when* and *how* to teach and tell based on neuroscience in order to elicit the most effective response from the client. They ensure that the brain has been activated to a positive emotional attractor state where teaching and telling become interesting, relevant, and helpful.

Teaching

As Human Consciousness Architects, we believe we are *all* teachers for one another, and as such, it would be inauthentic and unfair to not share our knowledge. All HCAs acquire basic knowledge about the brain and consciousness during their training, and most also bring other learnings from years of study and/or experience.

HCAs learn how to share what they know for the client's sake, without attachment, and not from a desire to build their own egos. The focus of

sharing knowledge is framed by the question: *what does the client need to know to help them build their **own** capacity?*

Telling

For almost 200,000 years, humans were tribal, moving in small groups as food and game were available. While some left pictographs behind, the primary way our ancestors communicated was by telling stories around the campfire. Character-driven stories actually release oxytocin in the brain, creating feelings of bonding and belonging. Stories of inspiration are partially processed by the brainstem itself, whose primary function is to keep us alive, signaling us that on some level, stories may well be a key part of our survival.

Human Consciousness Architects become skilled in identifying key teaching stories from their own lives or wisdom traditions, and sharing them in compelling but brief ways that keep the focus on the development and learning of the client.

HCA's also learn when (and when not) to share ideas, examples, and personal reflections on the topic at hand, always keeping the focus on the client's development and transformation. They learn the difference between the "me, too!" of friendship bonding and the resonant sharing of experience—for the client's sake—that moves things forward powerfully.

On extremely rare occasions, an HCA may also tell a client what to do. This is probably the least commonly used aspect of the model, and is used to challenge or "call forth" the client into a new, more powerful space. Clients are always free to say yes, no, or make a counteroffer.

Science and Spirit

Science and Spirit are the theoretical frameworks supporting the work of Human Consciousness Architecture, and practitioners stand in deep reverence of both, working to align and integrate the fields of both logic and magic.

1) The work of Human Consciousness Architecture is based in cutting edge, empirically verifiable science, with a focus on neuroscience and human biology.

2) The work of Human Consciousness Architecture also honors the deep wisdom of the spiritual traditions of our world, and leaves room for and embraces the mystery of what is not yet measured or is, perhaps, immeasurable.

Science

HCAAs are trained in basic aspects of the human brain, mind and body intelligence, and have the option to continue with (and receive a certification in) advanced training in neuroscience and consciousness. All aspects of the CATSU model are grounded in cutting-edge, current neuroscience and biology, including the model of consciousness, the Seven Levels of Effectiveness. HCAAs learn how to effectively share key information on the brain for the benefit of their clients (see Teaching, above), and also gain the confidence that comes from knowing the skills and tools they are using are based on science.

Spirit

As Human Consciousness Architects, we believe that all wisdom seeks to find a unified truth. That is, in the words of French theologian Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, “everything that rises must converge.” Thus, we

honor the convergent aspects of spirituality, as distinct from any particular religion, knowing that they help illuminate truth. There is much of importance in this world that is (not yet) understood, quantified or measured by science, and by holding deep respect for Spirit as well as Science, this model leaves room for magic and mystery even while embracing logic and what is proven to be true.

Unique and Undefined

The U of CATSU stands for Unique and Undefined. This creates a space for whatever else the HCA has available to bring to the relationship, as well as the gifts of their client. It also allows for the case that working with an HCA may not serve the client best at any given time or in every situation.

Unique

- 1) No two Human Consciousness Architects will ever work in the same way with the same tools.
- 2) HCAs work to help clients discover their own uniqueness -- the deep purpose and gifts they have to share with the world.

Every Human Consciousness Architect is different. Each brings a full and rich background of experience and knowledge, no matter what their age or education. Each has passions and interests, which might range from Human Resource Management to working with horses, poetry or art. HCAs are encouraged to find and fully step into their most resonant place, learning how their own interests and expertise can be shared with their clients to help create engagement and transformation. In doing so, the HCA creates a niche market and a personal brand, key components to business success.

In addition, HCAs learn how to help their clients a) find their own deep passion and purpose, and b) weave it more fully into their lives and work.

Undefined

As professionals in the field of human development, we need to be aware that there can be issues or states of consciousness where working with an HCA in general (or a specific HCA) is not in the best interests of the client. They may need different support, even if only for a while. HCAs are taught how to recognize this “undefined” area and help their clients distinguish what is needed. Part of the ethic of the field is to hold that the client’s interests, growth and needs are paramount.

Conclusion

Human Consciousness Architecture is a new and therefore emergent field. We have done our best to begin outlining the core model and beliefs supporting this field, but we know much more will come to light as practitioners are trained and begin to explore the process of transformation with their clients. To this, we say, HOORAY! and BRING IT ON!

We can’t wait to discover the full power and possibility of being a Human Consciousness Architect.

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