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## E-BROCHURE: LESSONS LEARNT FROM WORKING WITH PEOPLE



By The ILC Team  
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# Lessons Learnt from Clients: A Field Guide to Being Human

*A collective reflection by our coaching team, built on over 2,000 hours of real conversations*

We've sat across from hundreds of clients—leaders, visionaries, perfectionists, wanderers—each carrying their own stories, doubts, fears, and triumphs. With over 2,000 hours spent in deep conversation, a single truth rises to the surface: **our work is not about fixing people—it's about helping them become more deeply themselves.**

Coaching isn't a formula. There is no one-size-fits-all, no universal checklist for change. Each session is a bespoke partnership. Over time, patterns emerge—not because people are the same, but because they share common yearnings: to be seen, to be loved, to matter.

This guide curates the most profound lessons we've learned—distilled into 15 themes and underscored by the words of our coaches. These insights don't just illuminate what drives others—they shine a light inward, too.

## Theme 1. People Need to Be Heard

Listening isn't a technique. It's an act of service.

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**“In most cases, all that a person really needs is to be heard. Truly.”**

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We've learned that many lives go untouched by true listening. What most people call “listening” is simply waiting to speak. But when someone listens to you with full presence, without interruption or judgment, something shifts. The nervous system settles. The inner voice quiets. A deeper truth surfaces.

This isn't about being nice—it's about meeting a fundamental psychological need.

## Theme 2. Façade & Vulnerability

Humans are wired for connection. But we often wear armor.

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**“Vulnerability is a superpower... It takes a lot to get there and to own it.”**

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The outward strength you see in others often hides a tender, uncertain core. People protect themselves with titles, smiles, competence, even humour. Yet, it is **in the moments of raw openness**—the tear, the silence, the unpolished truth—that we feel truly close.

Neuroscience confirms that vulnerability and authenticity deepen social bonds and trigger empathy. What we fear will make us unlovable often becomes our bridge to belonging.

## Theme 3. Achieving Success

Success isn't about effort alone. It's about **psychological safety + belief**.

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**“Pain is the greatest driver of success. There is not a single person that we've met who has reached great heights unless they felt like not reaching them would cost too much.”**

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High performers rarely need more goals—they need to be reminded that **they're allowed to pursue them with joy**. Belief—especially borrowed belief from someone who truly sees them—acts as a catalyst. Telling someone to “lower expectations” might seem protective, but often it's a form of fear projection.

Instead, success flourishes in environments where people feel safe enough to stretch and resilient enough to fail.

## Theme 4. Reasons and Motivation

People always have reasons—even when they don't know what they are.

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**“Surface-level motivators are rarely what’s fundamentally driving decision-making.”**

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We all carry invisible scripts—childhood beliefs, inherited stories, inner critics. Behavioural science supports this: **up to 95% of our daily actions are driven by the subconscious**. Coaches are trained to listen between the words—to help clients name their true motives, even when they can’t yet articulate them.

People often chase goals not because they chose them, but because someone else did. The real transformation begins when we start asking: **Whose voice is guiding me?**

## **Theme 5. Changing Others & Yourself**

Change isn’t just possible—it’s inevitable. The question is: will it be intentional?

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**“People do change. They refine themselves... They change their beliefs, their behaviours, their habits.”**

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Despite the cultural myth that “people don’t change,” coaching has proven otherwise. We’ve witnessed transformations that defy logic. But change doesn’t come from force. It starts with **self-awareness** and requires **permission** from the self and from the people around us.

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**“The strongest, most healing thing you can do for someone is to believe in them more than they believe in themselves.”**

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Neuroscience shows that identity is malleable. Mirror neurons and neuroplasticity allow us to reshape thought and behaviour. Yet, without external support and accountability, internal shifts rarely stick. Change is relational—it happens *with* others, not in isolation.

## Theme 6. Bravery & Empowerment

Courage isn't the absence of fear. It's the willingness to act anyway.

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**“Bravery is a skill. Practicing to step up builds it up.”**

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Every meaningful act begins with discomfort. Bravery doesn't mean charging into battle; often it's speaking up in a meeting, setting a boundary, or making peace with the unknown. In our work, we've seen bravery ignite when people feel **respected, seen, and trusted**.

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**“When people feel valued, they give more of themselves.”**

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Empowerment isn't something you can hand someone—it's something you help them reclaim.

## Theme 7. Confidence

Confidence isn't a personality trait. It's a byproduct of emotional safety.

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**“There are no people that lack confidence. There are simply people who are scared.”**

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What looks like insecurity is often a fear of rejection, humiliation, or failure. When we help clients understand their fears—not bypass them—they become more resourceful. Confidence builds when **people feel safe enough to try**, not when they've mastered the outcome.

Psychologically, confidence correlates with self-efficacy: the belief in our ability to influence events. Coaches don't give people confidence—they help them remember where they've always had it.

## Theme 8. Emotions and Their Role

Emotions are messengers, not threats.

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**“Don’t push away your emotions... stop judging yourself for experiencing things you disapprove of.”**

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We live in a culture that fears emotional expression—especially in professional settings. But emotions are **data**. They show us what matters, what hurts, what needs. Suppressing them doesn’t erase them; it just makes them louder underground.

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**“We are not our emotions. We can feel one thing, think another, and do a third.”**

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This separation is crucial. Emotional literacy—the ability to name, regulate, and express emotions—is a core skill for personal and professional growth. When we learn to listen to our feelings without fusing with them, we access a wiser, more grounded self.

## **Theme 9. Purpose in Life**

Happiness isn’t the goal. Meaning is.

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**“The most miserable people seem to be the ones who’ve wanted to be happy the most.”**

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Clients come to us with existential questions cloaked in career goals or relationship dilemmas. Underneath it all lies the universal longing: **to feel our lives matter**.

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**“The meaning of life is loving and being loved... in the many forms that this comes in.”**

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Purpose is often misunderstood as a grand external mission. In reality, it lives in moments of connection, contribution, and presence. Brain science

confirms this: dopamine (reward) spikes when we experience a sense of impact, especially beyond ourselves.

Joy is not the absence of struggle. It's the feeling that we're aligned with something bigger.

## Theme 10. Navigating Paradoxes

You can be both brave and afraid. Both logical and emotional. Both lost and powerful.

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**"People are paradoxical... and life is unfair."**

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We are full of contradictions—and that's not a flaw. It's the human condition.

Clients often struggle when they feel pulled in different directions: ambition vs. rest, stability vs. risk, freedom vs. structure. But peace doesn't come from eliminating these tensions. It comes from **learning to hold them**.

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**"Strive to understand multiple perspectives  
and still be able to stand firmly in your own."**

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This ability to toggle between grey and black-and-white thinking is vital. It requires psychological flexibility, a key predictor of mental health and resilience.

And at the end of the day, we must remember: we all have **free will**. Opting out is a valid choice.

## Theme 11. "Reading" People

The truth is: we never fully *know* another person. But we can choose to understand them better.

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**"The profession taught us that we know nothing about people."**

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Despite all the techniques—body language, facial microexpressions, NLP—nothing replaces presence, humility, and real-time attention. Every person is a story still unfolding, and our assumptions too often close the book prematurely.

True insight comes not from decoding people, but from staying deeply curious.

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**“Remain open-minded and play dumb in your own head.”**

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It’s counterintuitive but vital. The moment we think we “get” someone, we risk no longer listening. Great leaders, coaches, and partners practice **empathetic uncertainty**—the posture of *I might be wrong, and I want to learn more*.

## Theme 12. Intuition & Empathy

Some things can’t be proven. But they can be felt.

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**“Following my intuition is more important than simply applying a strict set of methods.”**

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There are moments in coaching when logic runs out—and something else takes over. A hunch. A gut feeling. A pull to ask the uncomfortable question. This isn’t mystical—it’s often our brain’s ability to process patterns at lightning speed. But it requires trust.

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**“Empathy is the key ingredient in successfully working with others.”**

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Empathy is the bridge between self and other. It’s not about agreeing—it’s about **understanding from the inside**. And when paired with intuition, it creates connection that no framework can replicate.



There's a kind of wordless intelligence—what one coach called “a sixth sense”—that we all carry. Listen to it.

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**“There are people who, by their mere presence, make you feel OK... Listen to your inner compass.”**

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## **Theme 13. Self-Awareness and Ego**

Self-awareness is uncomfortable. That's why most people avoid it.

But it's the root of all real growth.

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**“People often protect their inner world and only let a selected few in.”**

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Ego is not just arrogance—it's the protective shell around our wounds. It's the identity we perform to feel safe, seen, or superior. But in doing so, it keeps us small.

The work of self-development often looks like peeling away defenses. Seeing not just how we *are*, but how we *pretend to be*. And then choosing honesty instead.

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**“To show your vulnerabilities... that's not weakness. It's great strength.”**

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Self-awareness doesn't mean self-blame. It means choosing clarity over comfort.

## **Theme 14. Inner Dialogue & Self-Talk**

The way we speak to ourselves becomes the soundtrack of our lives.

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**“Everyone we've worked with ultimately wants to be loved—by others and by themselves.”**

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Most people have never consciously examined their inner voice. Is it critical? Kind? Demanding? Dismissive?

This matters more than we think. Research in cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) shows that **changing self-talk changes behavior**. You cannot become your best self while talking to yourself like your worst enemy.

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**“Stop judging yourself for experiencing things you disapprove of.”**

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The most powerful transformation happens when we shift our inner voice from punishment to partnership.

## **Theme 15. Relationships as Mirrors**

Human connection is both the hardest and the most healing part of life.

Every relationship—romantic, professional, familial—is a mirror. It shows us parts of ourselves we can’t see alone.

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**“When we are open and vulnerable, we create much deeper connections.”**

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What makes relationships work isn’t perfection. It’s **repair**—the willingness to keep showing up, listening, adjusting. We’ve learned that the best relationships are not ones without conflict, but ones where people grow from it.

And perhaps the most radical insight of all:

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**“Everyone is looking in the same direction: to be loved, and to love.”**

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This truth unites every client we’ve worked with—no matter their background, status, or struggle. The desire to belong, to be known, and to make life meaningful through others.

## **Closing Words**

We hope these lessons serve as both insight and invitation. Growth isn't linear. It's not always gentle. But it is always worth it.

In our 2000+ hours of coaching, what's been proven true again and again is this:

**You are capable of change. You are worthy of love. And you are not alone.**