



Wellbeing Insight

A Recipe for Change

“The connections between people’s strengths represented through real stories of lived experience and their aspirations for something better is the key to every successful action for change.”

These words from Wayne McCashen, *The Strengths Approach*, resonate powerfully with us at **my manifesto**. In all facets of our work, including our recently published book, *My Manifesto: a compassionate guide to reveal your best life*, we see this play out. In a coaching context, beginning the work of change with an awareness and recognition of personal strengths, is a powerful concept. Too frequently, change personally, or organisationally, is suggested, demanded even, as a result of a deficit perceived. Already, before the real work of change begins, a person or a team is backfooted, and feels a power imbalance. What is the likelihood of meaningful or lasting change, arising from this situation?

Beginning by a revelation of strengths and a recognition of their value to the individual and to the overall organisation, is a ‘power-with,’ rather than a ‘power-over’ stance which is likely to create relationship and build trust and unlock the desire to do the work to create positive change.

Proposing connecting ‘real stories’ and ‘lived experience’ with strengths is such a breath of fresh air! Wisdom arising in this way can be viewed lessor than credentials or scholarship, maybe even devalued or overlooked when it came to a person’s contribution. Wonderful to embrace the whole of life’s learning and allow everyone who has lived a life a place at the decision-making table, to be a potential change-maker. What a socially just proposition.

Add “Aspirations for something better is the key to every successful action for change.” It is part of the human condition, that every person longs for ‘something better;’ Imaginative dreaming is the driver for human innovation. It is the precursor to growth. Unlocking aspiration, linking it to activating strengths, is an exciting springboard for meaningful change.

Let us allow Richard Boyatzis, Smith and Oosten, “Helping People Change” to bring ‘hope’ into the mix. They write:



Great coaches ignite a deep sense of meaning and hope. ...Effective coaches therefore help create that sense of hope, instilling a sense of confidence in the people they coach that the ideal future they envision is indeed achievable with intentional, focussed effort.

In summary, the recipe for a successful action for change is:

- A measure of people's strengths
- A generous portion of peoples' unique lives
- A soupcon of hope.

Go well.

Sue