

Therapeutic coaching:

your questions answered

With the launch of a series of online videos responding to your frequently asked questions, **Joanne Wright** and **Claire Hornsby** describe their respective journeys and offer some background to the project



Like us, you may have felt a sense of momentum building around therapeutic coaching over the past year. From our perspective, it feels exciting and a privilege to be working at the heart of this new and emerging discipline within BACP.

However, as with anything new, interest and excitement often give rise to an increasing number of questions, so finding an innovative way to address the growing volume of queries about this evolving practice was the motivation behind our video project.

Back in late 2022, feeling that we had answered the same question three times in one week, we realised it was time to gather our fellow organisers of the BACP Coaching division network meetings to explore more efficient ways to engage with our community, and respond to the most frequently asked questions we received. As coaches, naturally we asked ourselves what we could do that would be most effective in reaching as many of our members as possible, while creating a resource that would be ready and waiting for those just starting to think about dual or integrated coach-therapy practice.

Having been given the go-ahead for our video project, things quickly took a scary turn – who among us was going to step up in front of the camera? We assumed that people would be clamouring to come forward (and we all know what they say about assumptions). After all, who wouldn't want to be able to talk about something they love? Here we were presented with our first hurdle: our pool of specialists at the time was relatively small and our criteria for selection pre-determined. We had no option; this project would require us to do what we invite our clients to do – lean into our discomfort and get comfortable with the unknown.

Claire Hornsby: I have a long history of agreeing to projects and activities without fully appreciating the implication of what it will take for me to honour that commitment. This naïve enthusiasm for doing work I find meaningful is a mixed blessing. It is the gift that forces me to face my fears and push through my doubts about my ability, which feels amazing when I am on the other side, but it leaves me scrambling to learn new skills on the fly, getting uncomfortable and coaching myself like crazy to get through it.





Questions to answer

- Q1.** How would you describe your journey from therapist to coach (or coach to therapist)?
- Q2.** How would you describe your practice today?
- Q3.** On your journey from therapist to coach (or coach to therapist), what has been the biggest challenge?
- Q4.** What do you think are the benefits of being trained as both a coach and a therapist?
- Q5.** What advice would you give therapists interested in coaching or coaches interested in therapy?

The video project was yet another example of this. I was filled with enthusiasm when we discussed the initial idea; after all, how hard could it be to record a few three-minute videos about my own experience? I really wanted to do this, to provide the sort of information I had been seeking myself just a few years earlier, when I was trying to make sense of what it meant to me to be both a therapist and a coach; what I should call myself and how I would describe this way of working to potential clients.

After some months of procrastination, my failure to make progress became more uncomfortable than the fears the project raised. I focused on our collective 'why' to motivate myself to sketch out my ideas and as the words landed on the page I was drawn into deep reflection.

All journeys of growth evolve over time, and we often don't know the destination until we find ourselves there. We may not notice the gentle nudges created by all the small decisions, detours, serendipity, and fellow travellers met that shape us, our ideas and our story, until we look back and can connect them in a way that makes sense. As with any deep reflection there was insight, learning and discomfort, along with the challenge of trying to express this in a way I thought would be useful to our intended audience. Now I knew what I wanted to say, it was time to work out the technical bits.

I am not a person who has embraced living out loud in the digital world, so I had never recorded myself on video. I needed help to get me beyond overthinking about the equipment and my lack of skills. Fortunately, one of my sons got me through this ordeal, setting up what I needed and sitting patiently with me through stumbling takes as I practised, while he made suggestions to tighten up the wording. Despite my discomfort being in front of the camera, I loved that we had an opportunity to work together like this. It was both a beautiful and humbling experience as a parent as old roles were reversed and I saw I had raised a loving young man, ready to hold my hand and teach me with kindness and patience.

So, the videos are recorded and the first of these is out in the world, along with my hope that the people who need to hear our stories will find their way to them. But what of the

initial procrastination? Why was it so hard to get started? It was my longtime companion, that nagging, disempowering voice that told me no-one would be interested in what I had to say. This manifested as a long list of priorities ahead of this project, and when that failed there would always curiously be another pile of laundry to take care of. It is sad to acknowledge that despite my years of working to free myself from early conditioning to be quiet, to not embarrass others by sharing my ideas and opinions, the nagging voice can still get in my way. Nonetheless, I am committed to keep sharing my ideas about therapeutic coaching and my confidence is growing with each project. I sincerely hope the videos we have produced are of interest and help you find your way to the answers you are looking for.

Joanne Wright: My own approach was much less considered than Claire's. Upon reading Claire's reflections, I asked myself, did I just wing it? Maybe I will be kind to myself and simply refer to my process of working as more organic. I did have some strong feelings around privacy: did I really want to show myself that publicly? But growth comes when we move into the unknown and I love to learn new things.

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At this point, I would like to pass on huge thanks to some wonderful colleagues for offering their time to support this project, by featuring in our first series of videos:

Val Watson – Val recently stepped down as our BACP Coaching Executive Deputy Chair as sadly her three-year tenure had come to an end. We hope to be able to continue working with her on many other projects as she always radiates a calm knowledgeable presence.

Karen Ledger – I credit Karen's written contributions in *Coaching Today* with inspiring me to join BACP, and embrace and develop my own way of practising. Karen was a key member of the BACP Coaching Executive until recently, and she also led the Special Interest Group (SIG) for supervision.

Lucy Myers – As our current Chair of BACP Coaching, Lucy has championed this project from the very beginning, and we could not have achieved this without her valuable ongoing support.

Trish Kill – A former contributor to *Coaching Today*, Trish has worked with a number of us on a therapeutic coaching project for a large corporate organisation and charity.

Thank you all for contributing and making this collection of videos an eclectic mix of stories, journeys and inspiration for our members. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Both **Claire Hornsby** and **Joanne Wright** have been hosting the BACP network meetings, alongside their colleague **Yvonne Inglis**, since 2022.



Claire has been a member of BACP since training as a person-centred therapist in the UK 12 years ago. She currently lives in Cincinnati in the US where she has a private practice as a therapeutic coach, working with clients across the world. She also works as a Pilates instructor, specialising in helping clients gain physical strength and function after illness and injury.



Joanne is a registered member of BACP, a senior accredited member of the EMCC, a workplace mediator and specialises in working with people who are experiencing stress or conflict in the workplace. She is also a member of the BACP Coaching Executive, is an associate for a leadership development organisation and runs her own company, Wright Insight.

The video project

BACP Coaching division: our coaching and therapy journeys

You can see the first of the videos on our website at: <https://tinyurl.com/54mpr28y>

We would gratefully appreciate your feedback. If you have further questions, please post these on the Communities of Practice page, where you can get involved in discussions on dual practice at: <https://tinyurl.com/2aranry2>

BACP Coaching Network events

Wednesday 29 May, 6pm to 7pm
Location: Online
'Fees'

This is another opportunity for BACP members to come together and share experiences, challenges, success stories, business ideas and get to know other dual practitioners of both therapy and coaching. Our theme for this event will be the fascinating topic of 'Fees', as we explore if and how fees for integrated practice differ from those for counselling and psychotherapy.

For more information and booking see: <https://tinyurl.com/2z6v5kxd>