

When Expertise Is Not Enough: Who Do We Need to Be as Practitioners Today?



Jean-François Cousin

AI Coaching Coalition



“Our past is miserable,
our present is a catastrophe,
but luckily,
we have no future.”

ON



How are you today?





How are you being today ...
... as a practitioner ...
... compared to 2 years ago?





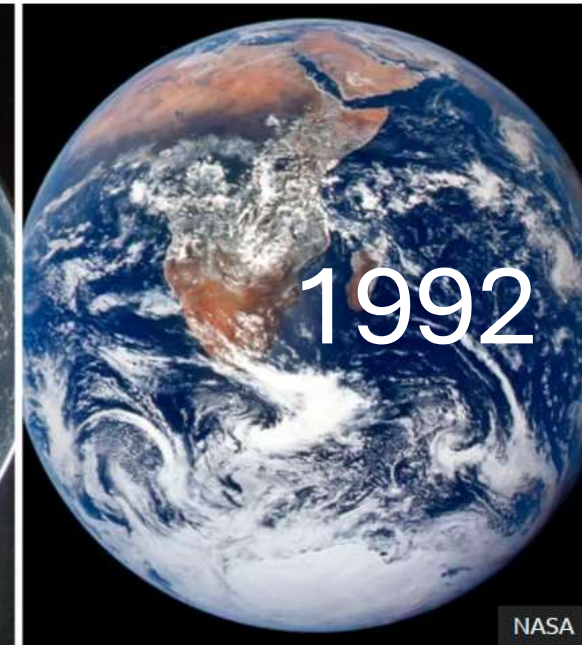
What / who is leading your evolution?

Who should? (lead your evolution)

The big picture

BBC

Artemis II crew now halfway to Moon as they take 'spectacular' image of Earth



Then and now: Earth, as seen in 1972 (right) and 2026 (left)

Artemis II leaves Earth's orbit on track for far side of the Moon

Watch: Artemis II's journey so far as it leaves Earth's orbit ... in 85 seconds



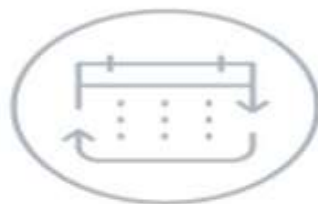


VUCA

vs.

BANI

From the **1980s**
shaped by the Cold War



From **2020**
shaped by climate and global
systemic change

serves to describe the situation of
ambiguity and **complexity**

- V**olatile
- U**ncertain
- C**omplex
- A**mbiguous

Instable
Incertain
Complexe
Ambigu

← THE ACRONYM →

serves to describe the situation of
the **Next Generation of Business**



„WORN-OUT“

„UP TO DATE“

Fragile
Anxiogène
Non-linéaire
Incompréhensible

- B**rittle
- A**nxious
- N**on-linear
- I**ncomprehensible

 Afternoon, JF

Hello,

What would you suggest as a core structure for a keynote titled "When Expertise Is Not Enough Anymore: Who Do We Need to Be as Practitioners Today?" at a conference themed "Beyond the Know: New Ways of Being, Becoming and Leading" for an audience of coaches, mentors, supervisors and leaders?

For reference, a proposed synopsis is: In a time of AI, complexity, and disruption, expertise alone is insufficient. This engaging keynote explores the ethics* and ways of being required of today's practitioners, highlighting the enhanced importance and impact of their partnership with clients' energy and emotional intelligence, and of the creation of psychological safety. Through reflection and dialogue, participants will enrich the 'power-for-good' of their 'being' as practitioners, strengthening our collective ability to be and act courageously, ethically, and with humanity.



Sonnet 4.6 Extended ▾



Recognized conversational task requiring structured keynote framework >

What a rich and timely keynote. Here's a core structure I'd suggest — built around a narrative arc that moves from *disruption* to *depth* to *collective becoming*:

What a rich and timely keynote.

Core Structure: A Five-Movement Arc

Opening — The Ground Has Shifted (~5 min)

Start with an arresting provocation, not a slide deck. A question, a silence, a story. "*What if everything you've mastered is now just the entry ticket?*"

Establish the central tension: expertise built us, but it may also be limiting us. Name the forces at play — AI, complexity, polarisation, burnout — without catastrophising them. The goal is honest recognition, not alarm.

Movement I — The Expertise Trap (~10 min)

Unpack *why* expertise, alone, is no longer sufficient.

- The seduction of "knowing" — and what it costs our clients
- How expertise can create subtle power imbalances and close down curiosity
- The paradox: the more we know, the harder it can be to *be present*
- Brief reflection prompt: "*Where has your expertise recently got in the way?*"

This movement names something the audience already senses but rarely says aloud — which earns trust.

Movement II — Ways of Being: The Inner Shift (~15 min)

This is the philosophical and emotional heart of the keynote.

- The distinction between *doing* and *being* as practitioners
- Introducing the core qualities needed now: **relational courage, ethical attunement, presence, and epistemic humility** (the willingness not to know)
- The role of the practitioner's own emotional intelligence and energy as an instrument — not a background condition
- Psychological safety as something we *embody*, not merely *create*
- Honest exploration of the ethics of influence when clients are vulnerable and searching

Use dialogue here — paired reflection or a short audience exchange — to make this felt, not just understood.

Movement III — Partnership Over Performance (~10 min)

Shift from the inner to the relational.

- What it means to be genuinely *with* a client in uncertainty, rather than guiding them out of it
- The practitioner as co-explorer, not expert guide
- Energy and attunement: how we show up as the intervention
- The courage to sit with complexity, resist resolution, and trust the client's own becoming

A short story or case vignette works powerfully here to ground the abstract.

Movement IV — Collective Becoming (~8 min)

Widen the lens from individual practice to collective responsibility.

- We are not isolated practitioners — we are part of a field that shapes how people lead, relate, and make meaning
- The cumulative ethical weight of thousands of coaching/mentoring conversations
- What does it mean to lead *with humanity* in our field, right now?
- Introduce the conference theme directly: "*Beyond the Know*" — this is the invitation

This is where the keynote earns its place at a *conference*, not just as a standalone talk.

Closing — A Commitment to Being (~7 min)

End with agency, not answers.

- Return to the opening question — let the audience feel how they've moved
- One anchoring practice or commitment participants can carry forward
- A final provocation or image that stays in the room after you've left
- Optional: a brief collective moment — a shared breath, a spoken intention, a question to hold

"The world doesn't need more expert practitioners. It needs more deeply human ones."

Structural Principles Woven Throughout

- **Reflection built in**, not bolted on — two or three short pause-and-consider moments
- **Dialogue** at the emotional midpoint (Movement II) to shift energy and deepen engagement
- **Story and provocation** balanced with conceptual rigour — this audience thinks and feels **this audience thinks and feels**
- **Ethics** treated as a living, relational practice — not a code to comply with
- The arc moves: *Disruption* → *Depth* → *Relationship* → *Collective* → *Commitment*



&



&



* "change point"

Critical components of a Mindset that helps thrive beyond the known

Leaders & coaches must become 'e-CIA agents'!



- **E**nergy, for ownership, boldness and resilience
- **C**ollective **I**ntelligence, for positive disruption
- **A**gility, for fast progress



COACHING FOR GREATNESS

Jean-Francois Cou...
 Global Executive & Team Coach, MCC ■ Keynote Speaker ■ ...
 Bangkok City

Coaching for Greatness and 1-2-WIN Co., Ltd.

Profile viewers **333**

Post impressions **2,774**

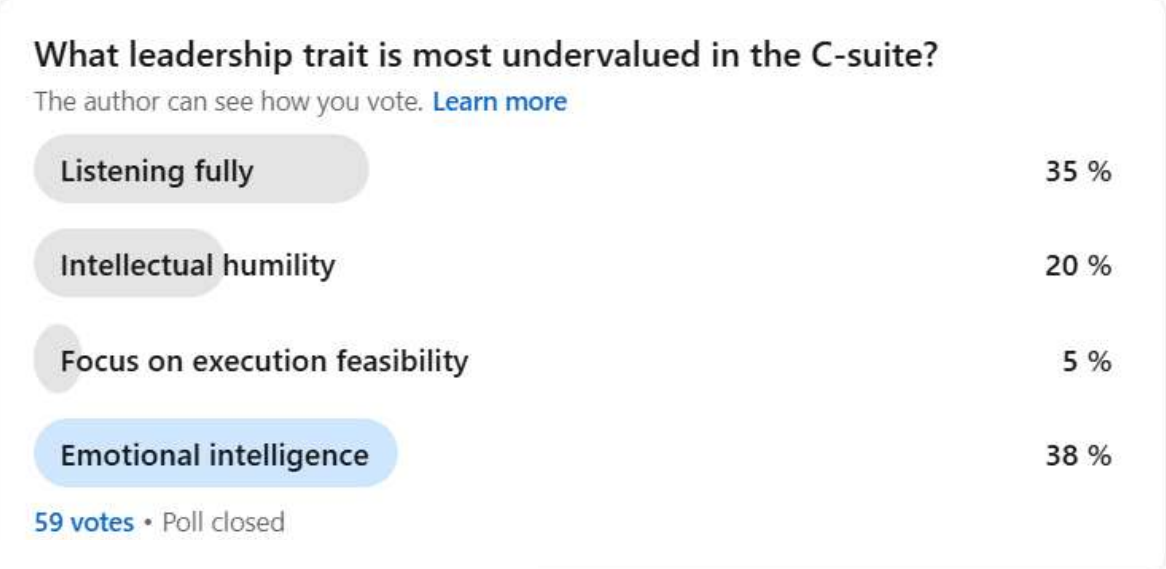


Jean-Francois Cousin • You
 Global Executive & Team Coach, MCC ■ Keynote Speaker ■ Author
 1mo • 🔒


GREATNESS POLL - APRIL 2026

What leadership trait is most undervalued in the C-suite?


1. Listening fully
2. Intellectual humility
3. Attention to execution feasibility
4. Emotional intelligence
5. Others (share in the comments!)



1,321 impressions



Jean-Francois Cousin
 Global Executive & Team Coach, MCC ■ Keynote Sp...



Zoom on practitioners



**“BEING DEEPLY LOVED BY
SOMEONE GIVES YOU
STRENGTH, WHILE LOVING
SOMEONE DEEPLY GIVES YOU
COURAGE.”**

LAO TZU

INSIGHT

#1

COACHING IS AN ACT OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Choose to love your client's
inner greatness... and it will
emerge!

In other words, when you
expect the best from your
clients, they bring it on





INSIGHT

#2

BE Co-Explorers...

**Unearth the client's
'Knowing', with the
humility of the 'not-
knowing'.**

**Challenge with
common sense and
moral compass**



INSIGHT

#3

Mobilize of the whole of the client's knowledge

The holistic "3 Brains:"

Head Brain: Logic, reasoning, and processing information.

Heart Brain: Emotional processing and values.

Gut Brain: Intuition, gut instinct, and "gut feelings" regarding safety and decisions.

Scientific research suggests the "3 Brains" are integrated networks.

Cephalic Brain



Enteric Brain



Cardiac Brain



INSIGHT

#4

Drop the clutter

Simplify to the essence.
“If you can’t express it simply,
you don’t understand it fully.”
(Albert Einstein)





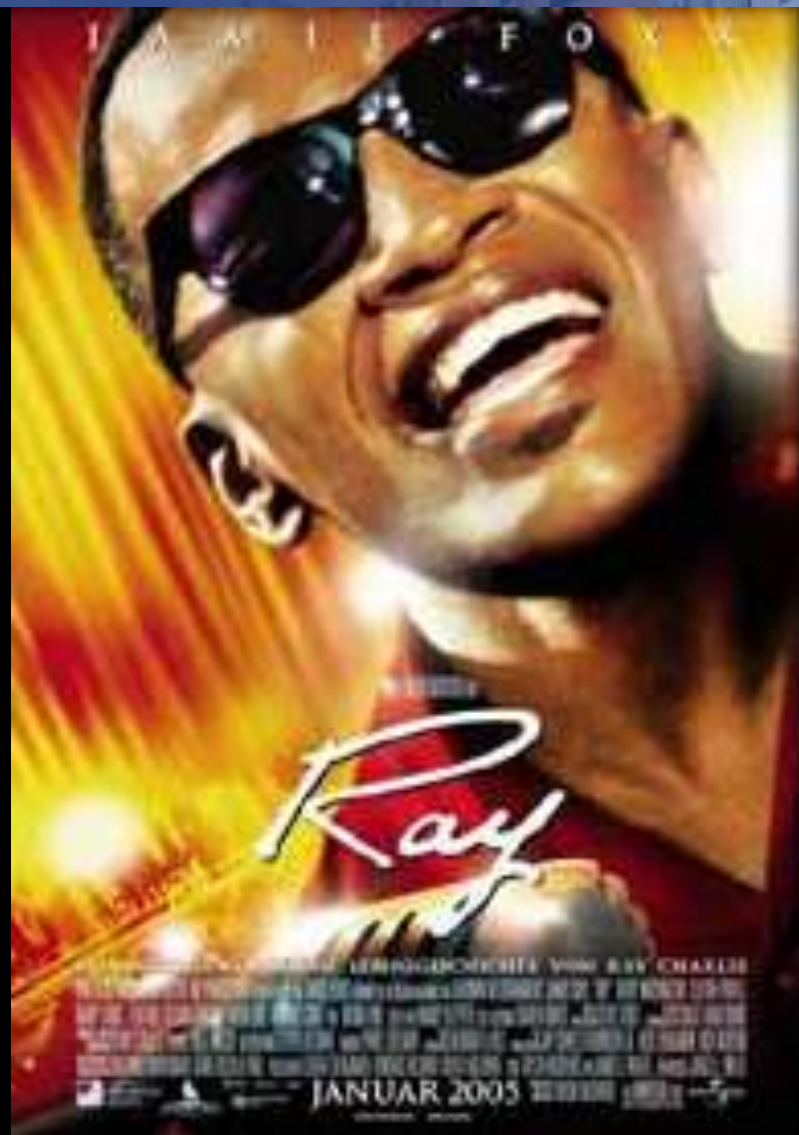
Zoom on each of us, as practitioners

EMCC
GLOBAL

EMCC
Croatia

EMCC
Slovenija

EMCC
Serbia





"The way
to do is to
be."

Lao Tzu



"Knowing
when not to
do anything,
is the key to
having
everything
done."

~Wu Wei

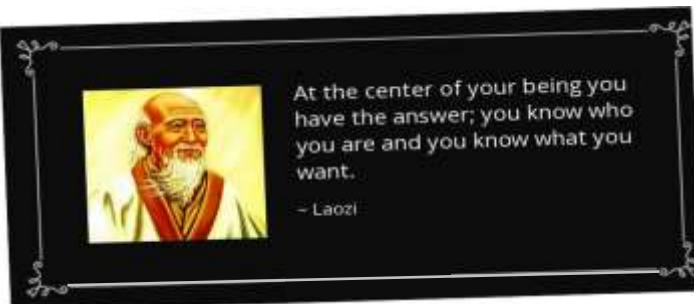
What will happen... if we discard the 'doing' of coaching and nourish our 'being' with just 3 beliefs?



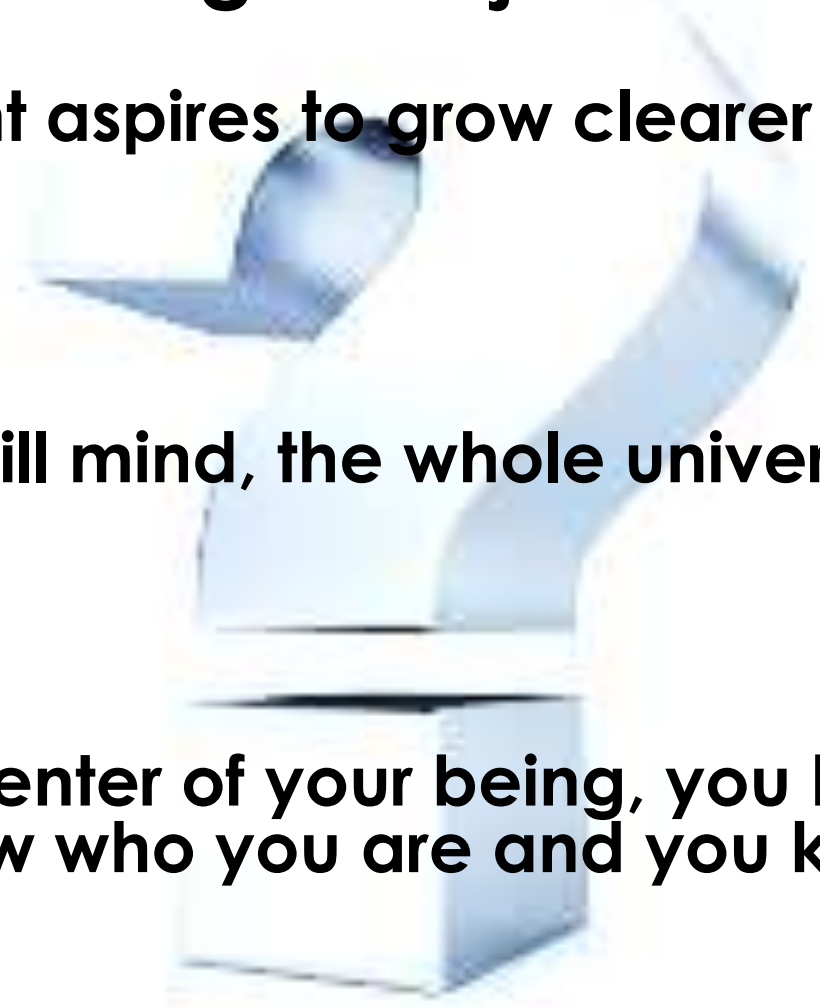
1. The client aspires to grow clearer and stronger



2. 'To the still mind, the whole universe surrenders'



3. 'At the center of your being, you have the answer, you know who you are and you know what you want'



Trust the vibes,
energy never lies.



**“Everything is energy and that’s all there is to it. Match the frequency of the reality you want and you cannot help but get that reality. It can be no other way. This is not philosophy. This is physics.”
-Albert Einstein**

Coaching holistically without knowing

- *Who* are you, as a practitioner?
- *How* are you evolving, as a practitioner?
- *Who* do you need to become, as a practitioner?
- How will you *lead* your evolution toward the practitioner you need to become, in harmony with your moral compass?

Coach with or without understanding the language of your 'coachee' 😊

Maintain unspoken psychological safety, only ask minimalist questions about energy, energy shifts, emotions and moral compass, to unearth the whole body's knowledge, and challenge with common sense

What are features of 'being the coach' that can hugely expand our impact in sessions?

being

Leverage Artists'
freedom in
reinventing the future.

“Art is not what
you see,
but what you
make others
see.”

- Edgar Degas

3 features of 'Being the Coach' that magnify the impact of our sessions



❖ Be **Inspired** by clients



○ Be **Still**
And then...



✓ Be **Fearless** in stretching clients



Ways of Being will facilitate the emergence of your 'Artistry' in Coaching

To 'Be' the coach & make your coaching a fine Art...

Be a white canvas



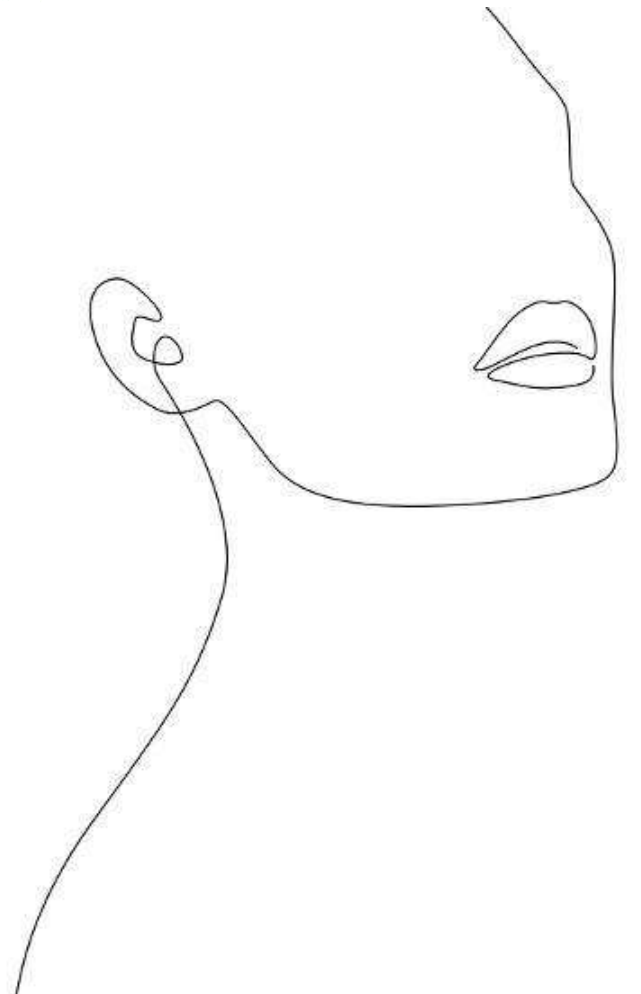
We learn and coach at our best when we don't know

Invite your client to draw on the canvas, and outside of it too!



To 'Be' the coach & make your coaching a fine Art...

Be a minimalist



Drawings by Pablo Picasso

To 'Be' the coach & make your coaching a fine Art...
Disrespect the codes





“There is a crack in everything...

...that's how the light gets in.”

Leonard Cohen

To 'Be' the coach & make your coaching a fine Art...
Search for the 'light' behind the fine cracks



kintsukuroi

(n.) (v. phr.) "to repair with gold"; the art of repairing pottery with gold or silver lacquer and understanding that the piece is more beautiful for having been broken

To 'Be' the coach & make your coaching a fine Art...

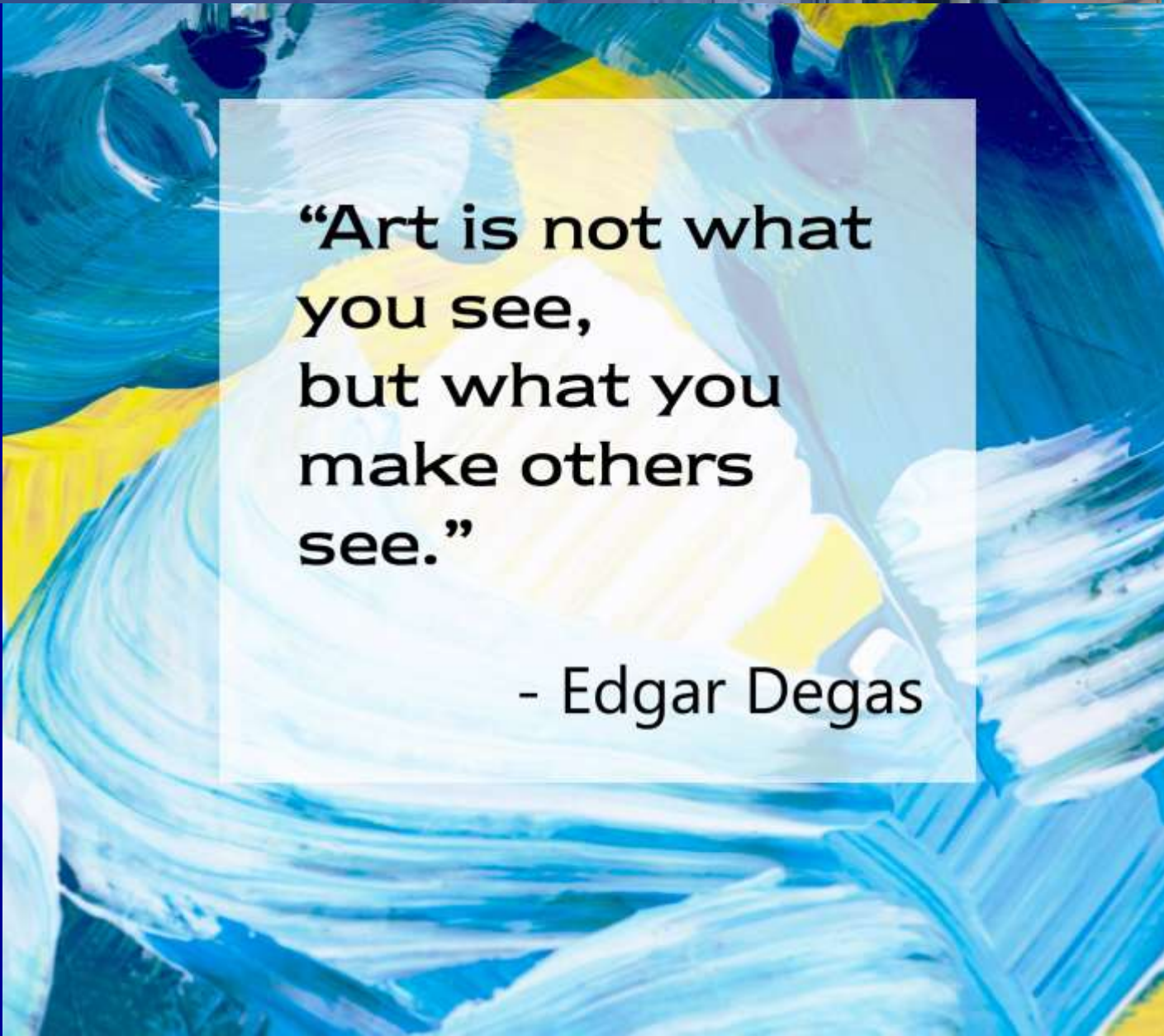
Be loving

**Coach every time as if
you are seeing your coachee
for the last time ever**



Leverage Artists' freedom in reinventing the future.

Let's make Coaching an Art discipline!



“Art is not what you see, but what you make others see.”

- Edgar Degas

A woman with long, wavy brown hair and glasses is looking down at her smartphone. She is wearing a dark jacket over a light-colored top. In her left hand, she holds a black coffee cup. The background is a blurred city street at night with warm lights and buildings.

**"The world doesn't need more expert practitioners.
It needs more deeply human ones." (Claude.ai)**

Our past is memory,
our present is a catalyst, and luckily,
we are co-creating a future with
our being, becoming and leading

How will you

Mobilize the *Power-for-Good* of your Being, today?

Prepare to master your Becoming, tomorrow?

And prepare to elevate your Leading, from Day 3?

Your insights!
Your great practices!
Your questions!

A photograph of a cityscape at sunset, viewed from a balcony. In the foreground, there is a metal railing and lush green foliage on the left. The middle ground shows several buildings with red-tiled roofs. In the background, a large church with two prominent spires is visible against a golden sky.

Thank you so much for your energy and love! 😊

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Who Do We Need to Be as Practitioners Today?**

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