Tell the story of how I left the agile world, got into professional coaching, and then came back to Agile in the corporate sphere. Tell the story about meeting Bud and my discovery that what I learned in my coaching training program alone was not what Bud needed... that he needed my unique perspectives, the thoughtful dialog we were having, and my reflections on how agile could be helpful to him.
Roadmap for This Session

Discussion

Coaching Demo

The Parameters of Executive Coaching

Foundational Assumptions & Biases
First, I want to establish some basic assumptions for this presentation....
Defining ‘Executive’ Leader

- Lead & manage other leaders
- Responsible for P & L of an organization
- Focus is on strategy and capability-building in an organization

- You lead and manage other leaders and managers
- You are responsible for an entire organization or department
- Your focus is on strategy and building capability, as opposed to operational execution – the day-to-day operations of a given part of the organizations
Defining ‘Executive’ Coaching

• In the context of your role as Enterprise Agile Coach
Defining *Agile* Leadership

The ability to grow adaptive capability across all aspects of an enterprise.

This is, in a phrase, the ability to *Sense* and *Respond* to your environment.
My bias regarding organizational agility is that it is not just a different way of getting work done. It isn’t just about the things we do technically at the organizational level, such as value stream mapping, lean practices, customer development. Yes, it is all those things.

But, it is also a different way of being—as individuals—and of being together—as teams, as organizations. Agile leadership is as much about changing who we are as it is about changing how we work. In fact, it is hard for me to see how the latter is even possible without the former.
The ‘Inner’ and ‘Outer’ Game of Leadership

Outer Game
- Setting Direction
- Growing Capability
- Overcoming Obstacles

Inner Game
- Meaning Making
- Emotional Intelligence
- Self-Identity
Action (Outer Game)

Psycho-Activates

Determines

Being (Inner Game)
Coaching executives is about helping senior leaders grow in complexity in the areas of both Being and Action.
The *Parameters* of Executive Coaching
In our agile coaching classes, we treat coaching as a way of facilitating another person’s process of inner learning and growth. “It is a way of effectively empowering people to find their own answers, encouraging and supporting them on the path as they continue to make important life-giving and and life-changing choices.” In the world of professional coaching, telling your client what to do, or in some other way mentoring them is generally not practiced, in an effort to truly facilitate the other’s inner process.

In my experience with senior leaders it is this and something else as well.....
Executive Coaching builds upon these foundations, but also adds a couple of other pieces.
What **Bud** Needed From Me, as His Coach…

- Someone to think through tough problems with.
- Someone who will call him on his ^!t.
- Someone who can mentor him in deep agility.
- Someone to be there even when the going gets tough.
- Someone who can hold his inner process.
- Someone to provoke him with new & challenging perspectives.
Building upon the essential coaching stance, are four ‘personas’ of the executive coach....
Example: Throw in a new word. E.g ‘ontological’. Or periodically change the dynamic of your interaction pattern (e.g. if you normally start the conversation, wait for them to do so).

What if you were to think of this problem as though it were jazz? There are moments of disharmony which naturally fall into harmony, however momentary; and there need to be times when one member of the band has to musically *fight* with another.
So let’s go to a white board and think through this (handing him a whiteboard marker)....
Example: You know you espouse the value of people being fully engaged in this agile transition, and yet you have never shown up to single agile meeting. Any thoughts about that?

Or ...
Teach Agile, as it applies to the executive’s domain of work.
Being in relationship, no matter what. Staying connected emotionally.
Coaching Demo

5 Coach Personas...
- Disorienting partner
- Thinking partner
- Truth-teller
- Mentor
- Hand-holder
What You Might Do

Develop Basic Coaching Skills (Fully Listening, Asking Powerful Questions)

Hone and Deepen Your Knowledge in Organization Development, Systems Thinking, Design Thinking, etc.

Continue to Grow Your Leaderfullness

Cultivate Your Own Brand of *Weirdness*
Helping Executives Become Agile Leaders
Coaching the Executive Leader