

# Editorial: A Tribute to Professor Tony Grant PhD (1954 – 2020)

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## Article history

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In this special issue, we want to pay a huge tribute to Tony Grant, PhD, Professor of Coaching Psychology at the University of Sydney. Tony was a regular contributor and valued reviewer for the journal. He was also one of the original editorial board members for this journal and edited our [February 2005](#) issue. Without his help, encouragement and quality article submissions, especially in the early days, this journal would probably not exist – certainly the focus on evidence-based research would not be as manifest. Tony died on February 3rd this year and he will be greatly missed by us all.

One of the legacies of Tony's commitment to developing the evidence base of coaching (and mentoring) is this special issue dedicated to the research produced and presented by postgraduate and doctoral candidates who participate in our January conference. This year was the 16th year of the Oxford Brookes Coaching and Mentoring Research Conference and the papers produced are testament to the varied interests and engaging approaches participants chose to pursue to build the evidence base of coaching.

We have ten papers in this edition, all of which focus on coaching. The first paper by **Mark Jamieson** explores leadership evaluation from an inductive, interpretive approach to explore to paradoxes in the evaluation of leadership coaching. Using a lens of organisational ambidexterity, this study presents a novel investigation of a topical aspect of coaching research and offers valuable insights on developing strong collaborative relationships in leadership coaching in organisations. The second paper by **Asha Ghosh** explores the challenges of undertaking team coaching amidst shared leadership in organisations. Adopting an interpretive phenomenological approach, Ghosh is able to identify that team coaches co-create collective awareness and enthusiasm to enhance shared leadership in team coaching situations.

In our third paper, **Paul Berry** examines an under-researched area within coaching, that of coach decision-making, by adopting a case study approach to focus specifically on adaptive expertise. Through the separate video-ing and debriefing of two coaching sessions, this interesting paper offers insights on the role of sense-making in the decisions taken by coaches and encourages us to consider the non-conscious drivers of coach decisions further. The pressures and expectations managers face to coach are the feature of **Benita Mayhead's** paper on the emergent role of the coaching manager. Drawing on the interpretive phenomenology approach, and outlining some of the challenges of this methodology, Mayhead offers valuable evidence on why the coaching manager should be characterised as a separate construct in the growing body of coaching literature. A paper from **Peter Watson** continues the theme of coaching in organisations by

exploring how coaching may support managers in the charities sector. Adopting an emergent research design Watson undertook interviews with ten professionals in the charity sector and then completed a further ten interviews with senior leaders and managers in two national charities. Significant benefits were associated with coaching for individuals and charitable organisations, suggesting the need for further research in this important sector of society. In our sixth paper the context where coaching takes place again looms large. This time it is the world of children's social workers which is investigated through the doctoral work of **Suzanne Triggs**. This study highlights how coaching can sustain this group of important key workers and revive their confidence in their abilities and commitment to supporting children and families.

The seventh paper from **Kate Smith** offers valuable conclusions from her action research study into paternity coaching for the transition to fatherhood. This study contributes to a gap in the literature on the role of fathers in organisations and highlights the key issues for offering paternity coaching for this important transition to fatherhood. Sticking to the theme of transitions, **Tessa Dodwell's** article focuses on coaching to support retirement and identifies the complexity of this experience in her descriptive phenomenological study with six participants. The contributions from this study highlight the relevance of pre-retirement and post-retirement coaching and how coaching needs differ as part of this life stage experience. The role of coaching in supporting challenges is maintained in our ninth paper where **Caroline Duncan** explores experiences of workplace coaching whilst facing stressful life events at home. Key themes around disclosure and boundaries emerge in the findings and highlight the interplay between coaching and other therapeutic support highlighting coaching support as a wellbeing tool. Finally, our tenth paper by **Carl Tomlinson** deploys discourse- historical analysis to explore imagination in coaching through engagement with literature. This exciting paper offers a novel contribution to coaching research and challenges coaches to draw on the wider humanities and literature to foster their development and learning.

We hope you enjoy these ten articles and we end by dedicating this special edition of the journal to one of its founders, Professor Anthony (Tony) Grant who led the way in ensuring our commitment to developing the evidence base of coaching.

With best wishes,

Dr Judie M. Gannon on behalf of the Editorial team  
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