

# Out of the Box Coaching Newsletter

## Switzerland? by Clarence Thomson

### **\*New E-Book\***

#### ***Out of the Box: Coaching with the Enneagram***

For the first time, a pdf version of our book is available at both our sites (below), for only \$10.95.

(For those with plenty of shelf space, Amazon.com has the hardcopy version for \$12.21 + shipping.)

### **\*New E-Book\***

#### ***More Out of the Box Coaching***

Our new e-book contains exciting ideas from our 2002—2007 newsletters, organized for easy access according to topic. Available at both our sites (below): the most up-to-date practices to bring about transformational change.

Sometimes I worry my suggestions are a little over the top, like last month when I suggested my California client make a pilgrimage to Switzerland. It all started with medieval piety, of course. Really. In the Middle Ages, when there was only one Christian church, people made pilgrimages. Muslims still do. A pilgrimage is not a vacation trip, any more than a retreat is a vacation. The physical journey was and is understood to be a metaphor for the inner journey. It's a time of exertion, of focus and of bodily expression of one's willingness to change. Pilgrimage is a metaphor for conversion.

My client is a Nine and Nines learn very well by immersion, by a kind of osmosis. As the center of the body types, they learn through and with their body. My Nine son gave as his reason for dropping out of college (where he was excelling) that he didn't need to read the books. He wanted to remodel homes and all he needed to know from books/school was the code specifications. He would "just do" the rest of it. And he did it and did it well. Typical Nine learning pattern.

So when my Nine client was having a hard time trying to decide what kind of livelihood he wanted to pursue, I suggested a number of places he could go. He was motivated and idealistic, so I mentioned several "green" companies near him. I knew his location in California and the places were within easy driving distance. I asked him to visit these companies, see the cutting edge approaches they were using and then pay close attention to how his body felt as he did this. Nines are usually physically sensitive. Their bodies record their intuition. Mr. Sony, the richest man in Japan, was asked why he was able to make such good deals for his company. His answer was standard Nine: "When I am offered a deal, I swallow it. If it is sweet in my stomach, I take the deal. If it is sour, I reject it." Lovely way of saying he operated intuitively.

That's why I appealed to my Nine client's intuition. He needed an environment that would teach him. But as we talked, he told me of his attraction to Rudolph Steiner's works (my client and I are both fierce gardeners) and his mysterious attraction to Switzerland where he'd been a number of times. The more I asked him about his experience there and the more we discussed Steiner the more excited he got about going to Switzerland.

When a Nine gets excited, the wise coach gets out of the way. He did go to Real Goods, a green manufacturing and distribution company and I think he's actually going to go to Switzerland. If he does, I've instructed him to study contrasts between the way Steiner's group does things and the American corporate model. He's to journal about and take pictures of things that strike him. I suggested pictures because Nines often have trouble seeing clearly. Thinking about one's livelihood is often called "having a vision." When we plan for the future, we use our visual capabilities. (Continued on page 2)

## Switzerland? (continued)

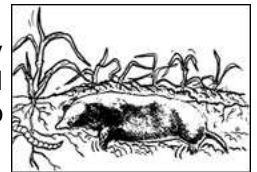
Nobody talks about “hearing” or “feeling” the future. We “see” the future. So I want him to translate his bodily intuitions into pictures, to open his visual channel of learning a bit.

If you'd like to see how a Nine thinks kinesthetically, check out the documentary *Sketches of Frank Geary* – a world-class architect. Notice how he designs, not on paper but with physical models. Or watch Robert Hass at poets.org trying to feel his thoughts with his hands as he accepts a poetry prize.. He's articulate, but his speech is like a heavy plane taking off. It gets there, but you can sense the labor. The hand gestures are for him, not for us. He's not explaining, he's groping.

When you coach clients, learn as quickly as you can their preferred methods of learning. Learning styles are not entirely Enneagram-specific, but the general patterns hold up quite well. Nines learn by doing, by immersion, by physical activities and metaphors. They learn by reading or listening, too, of course, but for power and especially for change, their strongest suit will usually be doing.

## Follow My Nose by Mary Bast

I once told a friend “I'm like a mole, I have to smell my way along.” I might have added “*swim* my way along” - an interesting parallel to Clarence's note that Nines learn by *immersion*. Moles have small eyes and lack external ears. To compensate, their long snouts and paddle-like forefeet allow them to “swim” through the soil.



Case in point that Nines often prefer kinesthetic to auditory or visual channels for learning: I'm determined to learn Adobe InDesign so I can self-publish e-books. I have the software. I have the InDesign book. I have a video tutorial. I am NOT swimming along.

In contrast, Clarence – a visual Seven – says “Give me a book and I can learn anything.”

An excerpt from *Dimensions of Music Teaching Style* beautifully conveys the importance of coaching to someone's learning style using auditory, visual, and/or kinesthetic metaphors:

“Musical notation represents how the music is to sound only to the extent of certain objective attributes, such as pitch, rhythm, dynamics, phrase, articulation, and tempo. Between the black notes and symbols lies an expressiveness that is subjectively interpreted and individually understood. For instance, rice being spilled in a stream on the floor creates both a visual and auditory image of a quiet yet intensely constant musical line. A kinesthetic metaphor that conveys a swift *marcato* section is ‘perform this as if on a horse at full gallop.’”

When I wanted to create my own web site ten years ago, I bought a package deal, for the consultant to spend a few hours with me setting up the web site and showing me the basics, then to be available to answer my questions. Don't take “showing” literally. He quickly saw how important it was for me to put my fingers on the keyboard and try things out myself. A whole variety of kinesthetic metaphors would fit here. I paced. I tore out my hair. I stumbled. But bit by bit I got the “feel” for it. I nosed my way into it.

Surely somewhere in the city of Gainesville, there's an InDesign coach. Maybe I'll let my fingers do the walking.

**PODCAST of Tom Fox's NCR Interview with Clarence: <http://ncrcafe.org/node/801>**

**OUT OF THE BOX COACHING FIELD GUIDE and OUT OF THE BOX SELF-COACHING WORKBOOK at Mary's web site below.**

**ONE-ON-ONE COACHING TELECLINIC WITH MARY OR CLARENCE (sites below): Apply out-of-the-box coaching principles and practices to your own situations. Enrich your life and/or help others by learning how to accelerate transformational change.**