



13 NEW Crackers for Systemic Team Coaches Christmas 2021

Introduction

This is the fourth year that I am sending a range of Systemic Team Coaching Christmas Crackers out to the wide and growing global community of team coaches around the world. Each year I take one-line aphorisms that I have found myself using on my various trainings and make a short collection. This year I have included a few at the beginning about the necessary revolution in coaching more generally with the publication of my book this year on *Systemic Coaching* which I wrote with Eve Turner. Like mottos and jokes in Christmas Crackers, they are there to both amuse and help us see the world differently. I hope you enjoy them.

1. Don't do what the team can do for itself, or you can do for them

Discover what you can do together that neither you nor the team can do apart.

2. People don't notice what they are in the middle of

When your head is down and your shoulder is to the wheel, it is hard to see what is around you. Sometimes you need to stop pushing, pause and come up for air and a fuller perspective. When talking about organizational culture I often quote the Chinese proverb *the last one to know about the sea is the fish*. The culture is what we stop noticing when we have worked somewhere for three months as it becomes part of our way of seeing, hearing and acting. We absorb it and it becomes part of who we are.

3. Resistance is just energy flowing in a different direction from yours

Kurt Lewin, an early grandfather of organization Development taught *Force-field analysis*, if you encounter resistance don't push harder, for every force creates its equal and opposite force. Instead,

we need to create a connection between where our energy is flowing and the different direction their energy is flowing in.

4. Coach the connections not the people

The biggest challenges lie not in the individual people but in the connections between them and between one team and another and the organization and its stakeholders. Just coaching the individual world leader will not solve the climate crisis – we have the knowledge, the resources, the will, what we lack is the *We.Q*; the collective collaborative intelligence.

5. Coaching is always a three-way partnership between a coach, a coachee (or coachee team) and the challenges that life is providing the coachee

Coaching is not done by the coach, or even just by the coach and coachee in partnership, but by the partnership of the coach, coachee and the generous challenges that life is constantly providing.

6. Coach with compassion of the heart and a ruthless sword cutting through the discussion to what is truly necessary.

It is easy to have compassion alone or just ruthlessness. But far better to combine both in service of those you work with and what is required from their stakeholders requires mastery.

7. Comlaborate –compete with others in a way that co-creates greater value for both our separate and joint stakeholders

Good competition raises the quality of the performance of everyone who takes part. Bad competition is winning at the cost of the other.

8. The ecology is our shared home and the substance of our being, not a problem to be solved

Many at Cop 26 talked about the climate crisis as a technical problem to be solved but it is this approach to issues that has got us into our present mess. The environment is not a thing and is not external to us. We are just a small part of the ecology's greater whole.

9. Whatever you are part of, is also part of you

The ecology is present in every coaching room and in every individual, it flows through us in the air we breathe, the food we eat, and the thoughts and ways of being we absorb.

10. Selfishness is self-destructive

Any species that destroys its environmental niche ends up destroying itself. Any individual or team or organization that tries to maximise their success at the cost of others around them – will find their success is short lived. All sustainable success is co-created and co-owned.

11. Our boundaries and borders are never ours alone: they are always co-created with those on the other side of the fence

Governments talk about 'controlling our borders' and organizations talk about 'Protecting our IP' – but borders and boundaries always involve at least two sides, so it is always best to find out what works for all parties.

12. Generals, colonizers and evangelists have missions – organizations and teams have a purpose

We create our Mission but discover our purpose – which is what we can uniquely do that the world of tomorrow needs. If there was not a pre-existent need in the world, the organization and team would never be created. The purpose precedes the team.

13. If you just capture your learning in a notebook, you end up with a shelf of clever notebooks. If you embody the learning in action, your learning is alive and growing

I have found that one of the best ways to learn is teaching others what you have learnt. Learning sticks if you try it out in practice straight after the course.

Happy Christmas, Hanukah, Solstice, Dōngzhì Festival, Yuletide, Saturnalia, or December holidays to all my friends, colleagues, and Blog followers everywhere.

This coming year I will be running a number of Systemic Team Coaching 3-day intensives in 2022 as well as teaching on the one-year Diplomas in Systemic Team Coaching in London, Johannesburg, Americas, Beijing and Singapore and leading the programmes in Systemic Team Coaching for the GTCI hosted by WBECS. In addition, I will be holding Advanced Retreats for Coaches and Team Coaches during June and September as well as programmes on supervising team coaching, all in Bath, UK.

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