

The Leader as Coach

Nik Knight

[@kninki](#)



“Coaching”

You keep using that word.

I do not think it means what you think it means.

A photograph of two women with curly hair, wearing dark long-sleeved shirts with 'AMRAN' and 'KARMA' printed on them, standing in a server room. They are both looking at white tablets. The server racks in the background are illuminated with blue light. The image is framed by a blue border on the left and right sides.

Coach as a “Thinking Partner”

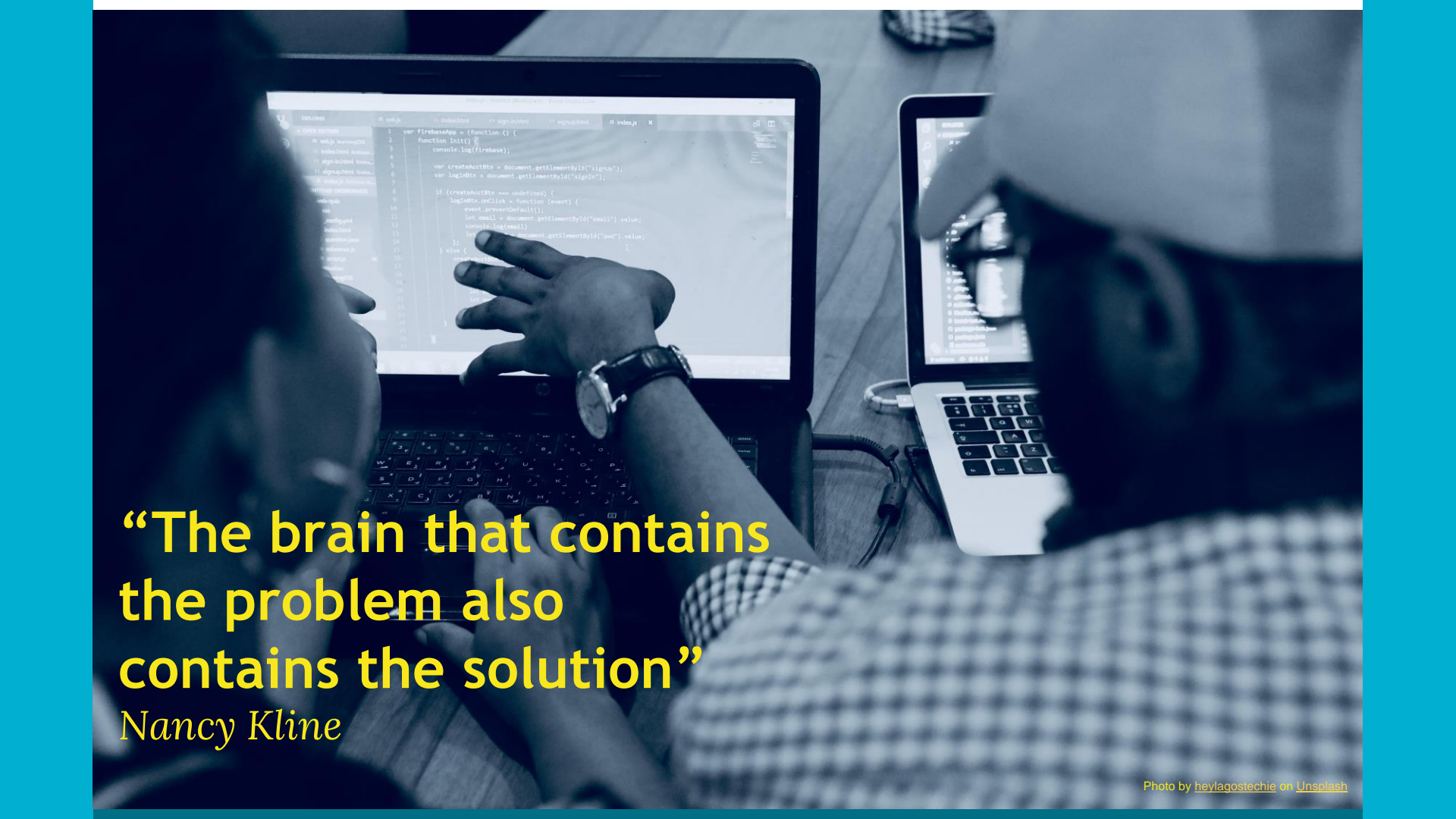
Photo by Christina @ wocintechchat.com on Unsplash



Use with care

A close-up photograph of a bright red ceramic mug with a matching handle, resting on a dark, textured wooden surface. The mug is the central focus, with the text 'I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR OPINION' printed in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The background is softly blurred, showing hints of a kitchen or dining area with light-colored walls and greenery. The lighting is warm and natural, creating a slight shadow on the table to the right of the mug.

**I DON'T CARE
ABOUT YOUR
OPINION**



**“The brain that contains
the problem also
contains the solution”**

Nancy Kline

Project Oxygen

Garvin et al, 2013



A photograph of a forest with a tree trunk in the foreground showing a teal-colored mark on its bark. The background is filled with many other tree trunks, some of which also have similar teal marks. The lighting is soft, and the overall tone is somewhat muted.

Be Curious

What?

So What?

Now What?

Facts and context

Analysis and conclusions

Options and actions

A glowing neon sign in the shape of a speech bubble is mounted on a dark, textured wall. The sign is bright white and has a classic speech bubble shape with a tail pointing towards the bottom left. The background is dark, making the neon sign stand out prominently.

Collect open questions



Be Quiet

A person with long dark hair, wearing an orange life vest and pink shorts, is seen from behind, sitting in a blue canoe on a vibrant turquoise lake. The person is holding a black paddle. The lake is surrounded by steep, forested mountains, and in the distance, a large, snow-capped mountain range is visible under a blue sky with light clouds.

*The “thinking
journey”*



Be Kind

Create safety & trust



The *GROW* Model

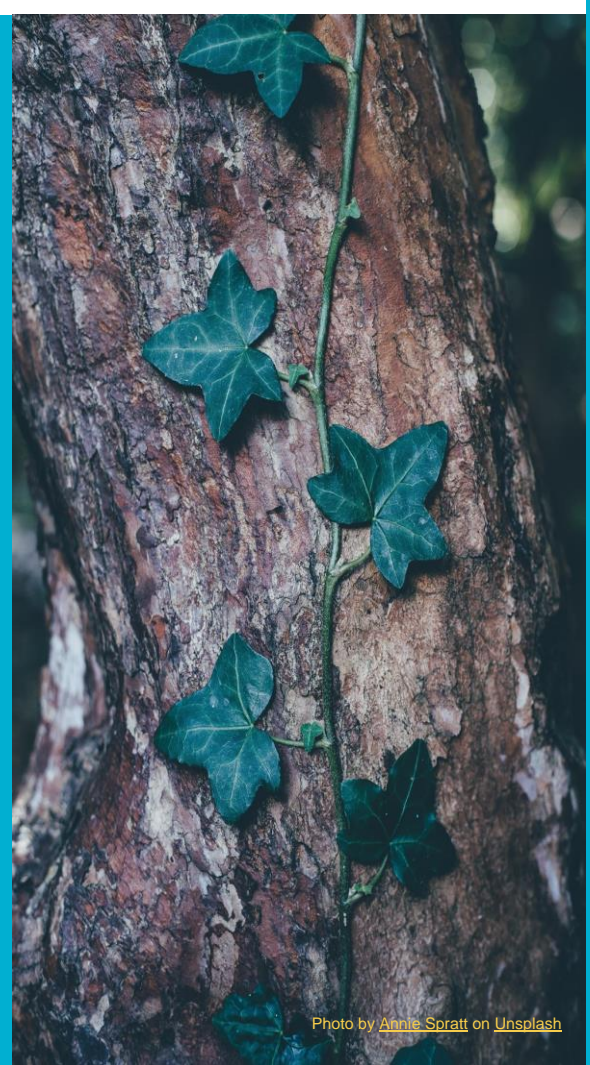


Photo by [Annie Spratt](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Goal

R

O

W

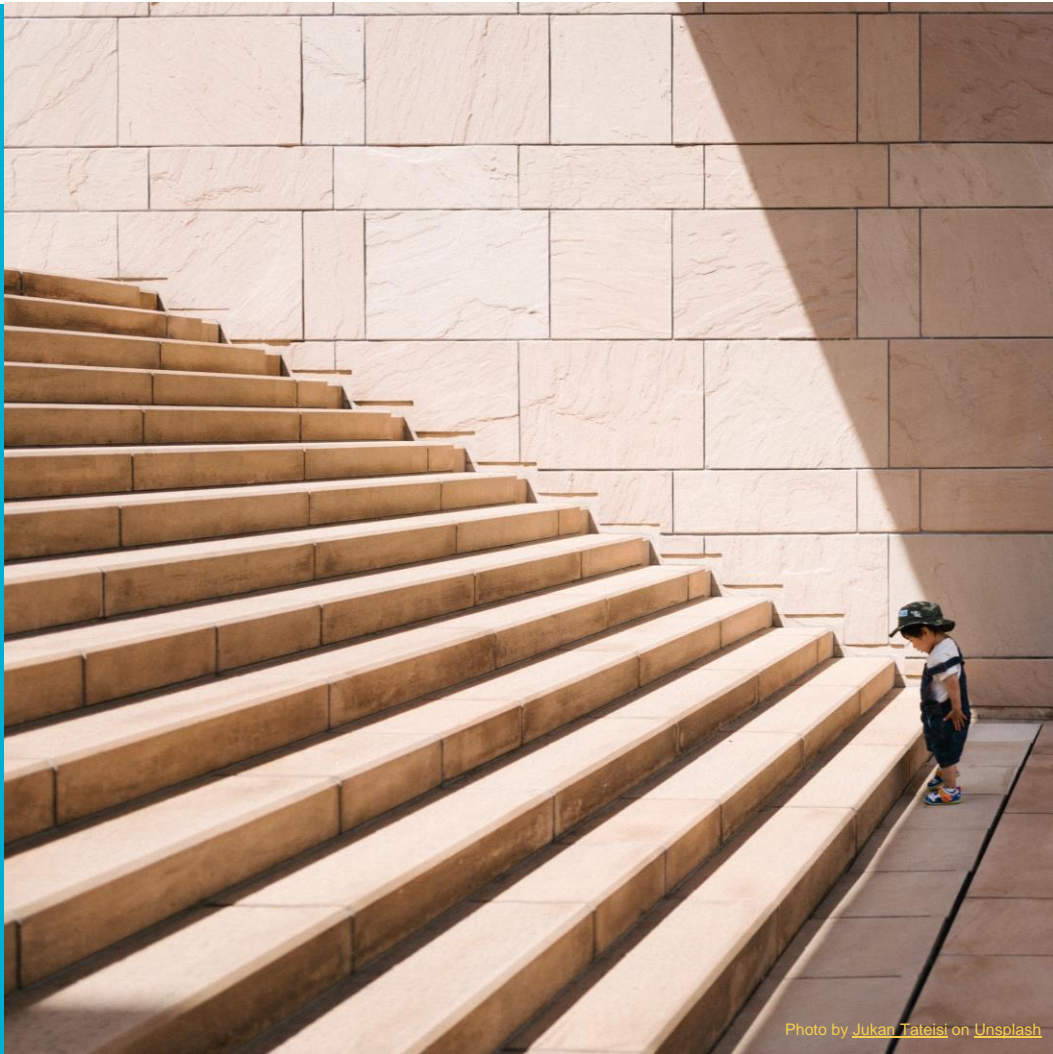


G

Reality

O

W

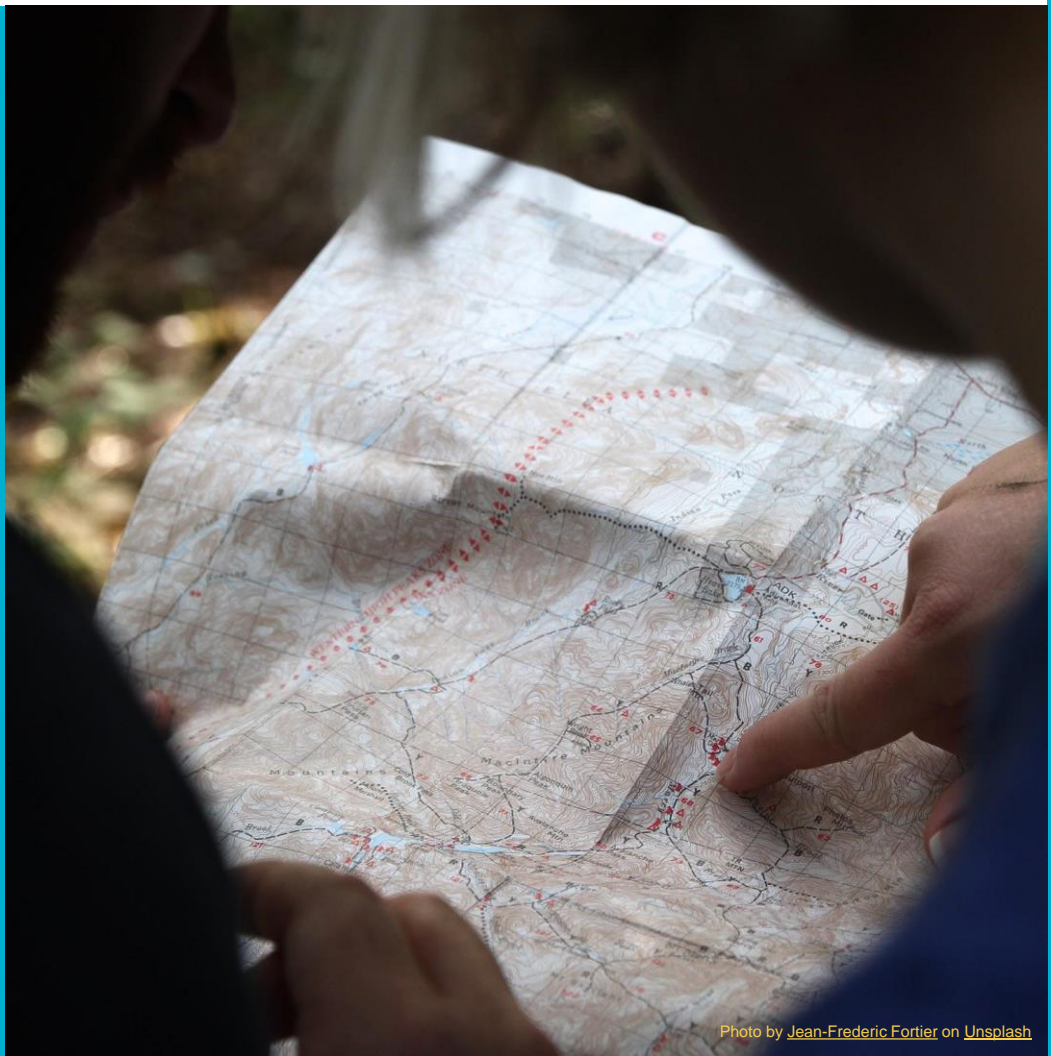


G

R

Options

W



G

R

O

Will



Photo by [Neora Avlon](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Goal

Reality

Options

Will



Coaching Dojos



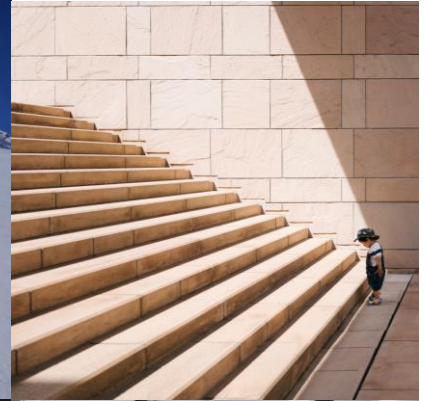
Photo by [David Clarke](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Gather
some
folks



Photo by Luke Porter on Unsplash

Talk
through
GROW



Coach Player Observer



Photo by [Hunter Newton](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Share your
insights



What?

So What?

Now What?

What happened?

*What does that tell
me?*

What will I do next?

Some Useful Links

What is Coaching? Back to the Basics by Cathy Liska

<https://www.td.org/insights/what-is-coaching-back-to-the-basics>

The GROW Model in Action by Dee Wilkinson (video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6f3X2PEsV-Q>

Coaching Dojos - Your Guide on How and Why to Use Them by Steven Wallace

<https://www.drivetoimprove.com/blog/coaching-dojos>

Books:

[Effective Modern Coaching by Myles Downey](#)

[Time to Think by Nancy Kline](#)

Oh, the places you'll go



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