

For Immediate Release

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First International Coaching Research Forum Advances Burgeoning Profession www.coachingresearchforum.org

Harvard Forum Produces Research Initiatives to Advance the Emerging Field of Executive and Life Coaching

Cambridge, MA – Thousands of individuals all over the world say working with a coach makes a profound difference in their lives. But what, exactly, happens in a coaching session that produces a result?

For the first time, an international group of researchers and other professionals gathered to develop research initiatives that can answer those and other questions about executive and life coaching. The forum's objective is to elevate the coaching field so that it provides a consistent level of professionalism and impact.

Sponsored by The Coaching and Positive Psychology Initiative of Harvard Medical School, McLean Hospital, and The Foundation of Coaching, a project of the Harnisch Foundation, the International Coaching Research Forum hosted forty participants from seven countries at Harvard. The conference was co-chaired by Drs. Carol Kauffman and Mary Wayne Bush from the United States, and was facilitated by Dr. Sunny Stout Rostron from South Africa.

According to Dr. Mary Wayne Bush, Director of Research at The Foundation of Coaching, "This was the first global forum convened specifically for the purpose of identifying a strategic way to build the coaching profession and body of knowledge."

"The format of the 100 brief research proposals, which are available for anyone to read, were loosely based on the "G.R.O.W." model of coaching (Goals, Reality, Options and Way Forward)," said co-chair Dr. Carol Kauffman. "The ideas are 100 options leading to 100 possible ways forward for coaching research. Our hope is that coaches, students and researchers will be inspired by these study ideas to learn more about research or be inspired to create a project of their own."

The ICRF participants were challenged to co-create the list of 100 ideas, and to develop as many as possible into brief research proposal abstracts.

“The way to professionalism is through solid scientific, evidence-based research,” said Ruth Ann Harnisch, founder of The Foundation of Coaching and co-sponsor of the ICRF. “Coaching is a fascinating field with life changing possibilities. But because there are so many different concepts of coaching worldwide, there is no unity in the field, no system of governance. There’s no court of last resort for clients, no ‘ethics police,’ and no agreement on what makes a great coach. These international researchers are the people who constitute the academic gatekeepers. They hold the key to the research that will advance this emerging field.”

The forum began with each attendee offering five research study ideas they felt most critical for advancing the coaching field. Then, the researchers worked collectively to explore and define the best agendas to advance executive and life coaching as an evidence-based discipline. The 100 coaching research proposal ideas are posted at <http://www.coachingresearchforum.org/>.

The Coaching and Positive Psychology Initiative, based at Harvard Medical School’s McLean Hospital, is dedicated to the vision of developing an academic foundation of coaching psychology. Read more about The Coaching and Positive Psychology Initiative: <http://www.harvardcoaching.org/>

The Foundation of Coaching is dedicated to the development of coaching as a profession and as a way of making a positive difference in the world through the lives of individuals. The Foundation of Coaching has committed a million dollars over 10 years to fund coaching research. The Foundation also provides a mentoring program for coaching researchers, hosts an online coaching Research Repository and sponsors conferences and dialogues addressing coaching-related research. For more information on TFC: www.thefoundationofcoaching.org/

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