Coaching to Empower Couple: Training outline

I. Introduction—Hello, we are …welcome to OPE!

A. There's more than one way to do CCC - one is sharing from our experience and giving guidance. The other is asking questions and empowering people to come up with their own answers. It's natural and easy to give advice - it's what we do as friends. What's less natural is learning how to help people give themselves advice.(0:00-0:02) (K&D)

1. Group Share (0:02-0:07) (A&D)

a) What is some great advice you've received in coaching? What great advice have you given?

b) Has advice-giving ever backfired?

c) Have you ever received coaching that empowered you to come up with your own plan or solution? How was that?

B. Advice and guidance are NOT necessarily bad and have a place in our coaching sometimes. Today we are going to focus what we call Empowering Coaching: The OPE technique. (This coaching encourages the coachees to provide their own solutions. **Today we will explain how to empower couples rather than giving them advice.** (K&D)

C. This method has four steps 1: Stop giving advice - OPE! (explain acronym - "Opportunity to Provide Empowerment") 2. Elicit a specific couple commitment. 3. Look for a CCC Tool that will support the couple's commitment. 4. Have them generate their own action plan with specific promises. During this training, we will walk through each step and discuss how we can practice this technique. (0:07-0:08) (K&D)

II. **Step 1 -**Let's watch step 1 of OPE **- Stop giving advice and align on coaching.** (A&D) (0:08-0:10) Show video 02:50-04:43

A. Intro to discussion. Here the coaches were just thinking of an activity for them to do – a normal thing we do on most coaching calls. The OPE (empowering) method asks you to pause, align as Couple, and work to have the couple provide more of their own solutions.

B. Group Discussion: What types of coaching behaviors might you want to stop with an OPE? (eliciting details about an upset, focusing on an individual, immediately offering homework, etc) Discuss as a group how there are moments when these behaviors are fine. We invite you to try to pause and try step 2 sometimes. (0:10-0:13)

C. Discuss in couple: How do you catch yourselves as coaches when you are offering solutions? (0:13-0:15)

D. Group share: How do you resist the instinct to step in and help? (0:15-0:17)

III. **Step 2 - Elicit the couple's commitment.** (K&D)

A. Empowering coaching helps couples learn to generate Couple and alignment during the week when they are off the call. Also, their couple-generated solutions are easier for them to remember and commit to. The first step is for them to define what they are committed to together. Sometimes, as coaches, we unconsciously invent a commitment for our coachees because we are already committed to them and their relationship. For example, be nice to each other, feel love or connection, or even their declaration! It's important that they speak and agree on their own commitment. (0:17-0:18)

B. In the next clip you will see the coaches elicit an aligned-on commitment from the couple for this specific situation. Show video 04:58-06:05 (0:18-0:20)

C. Group Discussion: What did you notice the coaches did to help the couple identify their commitment once they stopped giving advice? (checked in with each other, asked them what they wanted, reflected their statements, summarized what they said). (0:20-0:24)

D. The coaches were able to elicit a commitment pretty easily in this situation, partly because the upset/issue was NOT between the individuals, but shared. Sometimes, it isn't so easy. In those cases, you could use a communication practice on the call to help them hear each other and align. Most often, it is more effective to give homework for them to align on a shared commitment (perhaps using a communication tool like 5 & 5 or reflective listening). Trying to do it on the call can lead down the rabbit hole of coaching individuals. We suggest you give homework that the couple use their favorite CCC communication tool to align on their commitment. (0:24-0:25)

IV. **Step 3 - look for a CCC Tool or Distinction** to help them achieve their new commitment. In this next video clip, the coaches ask how the couple's current declaration could source them in their shared commitment. (A&D)

A. Show video 06:18-11:10 (0:25-0:31)

B. Discuss in Couple: So, the coaches started by asking about their declaration to see if it would serve them in their new commitment. It wasn't a good fit for this commitment. Then they offered another tool: the mini-declaration. *What other other tools would you offer for your coachees to consider?* (0:31-0:34)

C. Group Discussion: What CCC Tools could couples use to embody/implement their commitment? ***(Distinctions**, Toolbox worksheets, communications practices).* (0:34-0:37)

V. **Step 4 - Have the couple generate their own action plan**, In this next video clip, coaches ask the couple to generate their own specific action plan and then give them homework based on it. An easy question to get at the plan is, "What promises would you like to make?" (K&D)

A. Show video 11:59 - 14:07 (0:37-0:40)

B. Group Discussion of video. How did the coaches get them to create their action plan? Did the homework they gave avoid giving advice? What else might the coaches have asked to help them add more value to their plan? (0:40–0:44)

C. If a couple chooses to use a distinction in Step 3, you as coaches could offer related tools from the toolbox as possible promises (e.g., Generosity as a tool to implement a commitment might lead to using generosity worksheets as part of their action plan). (0:45)

VI. **Part 2 - The Demo**:

A. Elicit areas for coaching: We want to demo this method and would like some ideas. (0:45-0:48) (A&D)
   1. What kinds of topics, issues, challenges or upsets do you or your coachees bring to the call as areas for coaching? Think of it as areas where your couple feels stuck or isn't progressing the way you want it to.
   2. Areas to consider: joint projects, parenting, money, etc.

B. Spend 25 going through all 4 steps, pausing to point out each step. Also, at step 2 (elicit the commitment) give the option of giving homework and doing the rest on the next call. (0:48-0:75) (K&D)

C. Group Discussion & Questions (A&D)

VII. Wrap up. Takeaways: resist the urge to offer advice and empower your coachees to chart their own course instead. What other takeaways did people have? (K&D)

VIII. Acknowledgements.

Background:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qb_-taYLRfY OPE with Charlie Berens (3:18)

Coaching to Empower Couple Video
https://www.couplescoachingcouples.org/members/resource-center/video-library/coaching-to-empower-couple/

00:00-2:50 Introduction -- Learn to recognize when you are giving advice, stop yourselves, and focus on finding another way to empower them.

02:50-05:00 Example with J&C -- we hear what they are up against and start to give advice, until we stop ourselves! (STEP 1)

05:00-06:04 -- we elicit their commitment with reflective listening as coaches (STEP 2)

06:04-06:18 – title card describing looking for a CCC tool (says step 2 but is actually step 3!)

06:18-11:10 -- we try to apply their current declaration to their commitment but it doesn't fit. We suggest looking for a mini-declaration that encapsulates their commitment. We listen to them and reflect, empowering them to create the mini-declaration in the moment. "We are catching waves." (STEP 3)

11:10-15:13 -- we use the commitment that they have generated to guide them to creating their action plan. They make specific promises and we give them homework to acknowledge how they are being successful at living into their commitment. We also suggest applying a distinction to the moment—they brought up "Couple as Source". (STEP 4)

15:13-16:36 --summary. 1. Stop giving advice. 2. Elicit a specific couple commitment. 3. Look for a CCC Tool that will support the couple's commitment. 4. Have them generate their own action plan with specific promises.