

A Call to Social Action

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has” ~ MARGARET MEAD

Provocative... the word I would choose to describe the last session I attended at this year’s International Coach Federation (ICF) Conference, titled Coaches as Leaders: A Call to Social Action. An important workshop for me, for the communities in which we live, and for our world.

Masterfully facilitated by Susan Wright and Carol MacKinnon, this session brought the whole conference together for each participant in the room. While the theme of the conference was most certainly global, with a much greater level of consciousness being evoked, this final session delivered the ultimate challenge. Susan and Carol inspired us to step into both our individual and collective power as coaches, to take action, to impact the world in which we live in through a commitment to being Coach Leaders.

An overview of social change needs, and the social evidence that points the way for collective action, compelled all participants in the room to consider the degree of influence we hold as coaches. While we can and do support individuals, teams, and organizations in change, there is a much greater opportunity at present. As a global social movement, we have the potential to commit our collective resources to social leadership using our principles, skills, and connections. In doing so, we encourage and inspire those around us to consider their own possibilities.

I often ask the person I’m coaching, “How do you want to show up, and be remembered?” Perhaps I am in fact presenting a greater challenge—an examination of values and the corresponding behaviour that reinforces ‘being’

rather than merely ‘doing’. And each time I ask, I am profoundly aware that while the question is posed to the individual, I am also exploring my very own values and behaviour as a matter of integrity.

It is at precisely this point that the awakening process begins once again and, as Rumi suggests, we “don’t go back to sleep.”

Being fully present at the moment in which Carol and Susan challenged our thinking, and more importantly, our awareness of the possibilities, it was clear. There is only one direction in which we can responsibly proceed. Through powerful role modelling, meaningful conversation in connection with others, and our very own action within our respective communities, we invite others to unite in a significant global innovation movement—in other words, to co-create social change for the positive, worldwide.

And, if you are already taking action, and making a contribution, why not share your stories? I invite you to visit www.oneworlddialogues.com, where you will find an international community of coaches, facilitators, change catalysts, and social innovators making a broader impact in the world. One World Dialogues meets on a quarterly basis in a variety of locations, to share in provocative, experiential community-building dialogue that challenges us to step into leadership roles, to begin where we are and to stretch beyond our current boundaries.

In the words of Gandhi, join in and “be the change you wish to see in the world.”

About The Author

Lara Masse, MBA, CEC, ACC is the founder of Higher Ground Executive Coaching, Inc., a professional coaching, leadership development, group facilitation, and assessment firm. With more than 20 years in frontline, senior management, and leadership role’s, Lara’s mission includes helping others to “aim high” and “discover new heights”, both personally and professionally. She is a credentialed member of the International Coach Federation and International Association of Business Communicators. Email feedback or questions to info@highergroundcoaching.ca.