

12-16-2025

Navigating the Shadows: A Phenomenological Exploration of the Psychological Well-Being of Coachees From Strengths-Based Coaching

Lorenzo Moultrie
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu.

Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Lorenzo Moultrie, Jr.

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Binh Ngo, Committee Chairperson, Psychology Faculty

Dr. Amy Hakim, Committee Member, Psychology Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost

Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2025

Abstract

Navigating the Shadows: A Phenomenological Exploration of the Psychological Well-Being of Coachees From Strengths-Based Coaching

by

Lorenzo Moultrie, Jr.

MPhil, Walden University, 2024

MBA, Franklin University, 2005

BS, The Ohio State University, 1999

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Industrial and Organizational Psychology

Walden University

December 2025

Abstract

Organizations may experience negative impacts, such as the loss of valuable employees and disruptions in team dynamics, when coaching interventions lead to challenges against organizational norms or policies. Coaching industry leaders must understand the negative impacts as indicators of workplace vulnerability affecting employees and productivity. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore how coachees describe their lived experiences of strengths-based coaching (SBC) and its impact on their psychological well-being (PWB). The SBC's dual outcomes on PWB, using a conceptual framework that integrates positive psychology coaching, Ryff's model of PWB, and social exchange theory, grounded this study. The participants comprised seven U.S.-based adults aged 35 or older who had received at least 3 months of SBC. Data were collected using semistructured interviews. Interpretative phenomenological analysis revealed five themes: (a) interpersonal processes and identity development, (b) emotional and cognitive appraisal, (c) strengths engagement and application, (d) relational dynamics and social exchange, and (e) overarching well-being outcomes. Positive outcomes were enhanced self-awareness, resilience, purpose, and meaning, as well as the application of strengths and improved well-being. Negative consequences were the marginalization of weaknesses, relational conflict, unmet needs, and negative emotions. Mixed outcomes were ambivalence, identity shifts, and expectation-reality discrepancies. Balanced SBC fosters psychological flourishing but risks vulnerabilities if weaknesses are overlooked. The implications for positive social change include the potential for coaching leaders to use ethical coaching, promote growth, healthier workplaces, and resilient communities.

Navigating the Shadows: A Phenomenological Exploration of the Psychological Well-Being of Coachees From Strengths-Based Coaching

by

Lorenzo Moultrie, Jr.

MPhil, Walden University, 2024

MBA, Franklin University, 2005

BS, The Ohio State University, 1999

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Industrial and Organizational Psychology

Walden University

December 2025

Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation to my family and close friends. You were my steady ground when the work felt impossible, my calm when I was frustrated and short-tempered, and my loudest cheerleaders for every small milestone. Your belief in me never wavered, even when mine did. This degree belongs to all of us. Thank you for carrying me when I couldn't carry myself. I love you all more than words can say.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, all praise be to God! Father, without you, none of this would be possible. Thank you for giving me life, wisdom, and perseverance to pursue this terminal degree.

I am profoundly grateful to my committee chair, Dr. Binh Ngo, for his unwavering commitment to my success. His rigorous, direct, and always-constructive feedback—delivered exactly when I needed to hear it—pushed me to elevate the quality of this work and, more importantly, helped me navigate numerous setbacks and finally cross the finish line. This dissertation simply would not exist in its current form without his guidance, patience, and belief in me.

I also extend sincere thanks to Dr. Michelle McCartney, whose early and insightful direction during the proposal stage set me on the right path and gave me the foundation I desperately needed to move forward. To Dr. Amy Hakim, thank you for generously sharing your technical expertise and for the thoughtful questions and precise suggestions that strengthened the methodological rigor of this study.

Finally, my deepest appreciation goes to the seven participants who so generously gave their time and trusted me with their personal stories. Your openness, honesty, and willingness to speak about both the light and the shadows of your coaching experiences made this research possible and infinitely richer. This work belongs as much to you as it does to me.

Table of Contents

List of Tables.....	v
List of Figures	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study	1
Introduction	1
Background	2
Problem Statement.....	4
Purpose of the Study	5
Research Question	6
Conceptual Framework.....	6
Nature of the Study	9
Definitions.....	10
Assumptions	12
Scope and Delimitations	13
Limitations	14
Significance	15
Summary	17
Chapter 2: Literature Review	19
Introduction	19
Literature Search Strategy.....	22
Conceptual Framework.....	23
Positive Psychology Coaching	23

Psychological Well-Being	27
Social Exchange Theory.....	29
Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts.....	31
Coaching Approaches	33
Coaching Outcomes	42
Coaching and PWB.....	50
Coaching and SET	52
Summary and Conclusions.....	54
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	57
Introduction	57
Research Design and Rationale	57
Role of the Researcher	60
Methodology	61
Participant Selection Logic.....	61
Interview Protocols	64
Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection.....	67
Data Analysis Plan	68
Issues of Trustworthiness.....	71
Credibility.....	71
Transferability.....	72
Dependability.....	72
Confirmability.....	73

Ethical Procedures	73
Summary	75
Chapter 4: Results.....	77
Introduction	77
Setting	78
Demographics.....	80
Data Collection.....	81
Data Analysis	83
Initial Reading and Familiarization	86
Coding, Clustering, and Abstraction.....	87
Cross-Case Synthesis and Emergent Themes.....	89
Reflexivity and Bracketing.....	91
Evidence of Trustworthiness	92
Results.....	94
Theme 1: Intrapersonal Processes and Identity Development	100
Theme 2: Emotional and Cognitive Appraisal	106
Theme 3: Strengths Engagement and Application	112
Theme 4: Relational Dynamics and Social Exchange	116
Theme 5: Overarching Well-Being Outcomes	123
Summary	126
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations	129
Introduction	129

Interpretation of the Findings	130
Alignment With the Conceptual Framework	131
Relation to Existing Literature.....	134
Limitations of the Study.....	136
Recommendations.....	139
Recommendations for Future Research	139
Recommendations for Practice	141
Implications.....	142
Implications for Theory.....	143
Implications for Practice	145
Implications for Positive Social Change	147
Conclusion.....	148
References.....	151
Appendix A: Screening Questionnaire	175
Appendix B: Interviewing Protocols	176
Appendix C: Interview Protocol Matrix	178
Appendix D: Codebook	179
Appendix E: Audit Trail Extracts.....	182

List of Tables

Table 1. Basic Demographic Data and Interview Length.....	80
Table 2. Themes, Categories, and Codes.....	84
Table 3. Deductive Codes.....	89
Table E1. Interview and Storage Log.....	182
Table E2. Transcript Coding Sample of SBC01	183
Table E3. Sample Notes and Impact	184
Table E4. Decision Log Sample.....	186

List of Figures

Figure 1. Ryff's Six-Factor Model of Psychological Well-Being (2014)	28
Figure 2. Conceptual Framework.....	31
Figure 3. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Process.....	69
Figure 4. Coding Word Cloud.....	95
Figure 5. Column Chart of Code Frequency.....	96
Figure E1. Sample Reflexive Notes for SBC02.....	185
Figure E2. Conceptual Map	187

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Professional coaching, particularly strengths-based coaching (SBC), has emerged as a significant tool for enhancing personal and professional development across various sectors. This coaching approach focuses on identifying and leveraging individuals' inherent strengths to foster personal growth, job satisfaction, and overall well-being (Kauffman, 2006; van Zyl et al., 2020a). Despite the widespread application and reported positive outcomes of SBC, a critical need remains to explore the less-examined territory of its potential adverse effects, particularly concerning the psychological well-being (PWB) of coachees (Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). Understanding the benefits and drawbacks of SBC is essential to ensure the practical and ethical application of this developmental process.

The necessity of this study stems from the growing application of SBC in organizational settings, where the focus on strengths might inadvertently marginalize or invalidate experiences related to vulnerabilities or weaknesses. Such an oversight can have unintended consequences for coachees' PWB, potentially exacerbating underlying issues (Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). By examining these adverse effects, this study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the coaching process, ensuring that both positive and negative outcomes are considered in the development of coaching practices. This holistic understanding is vital for practitioners to mitigate potential harms and maximize the benefits of coaching interventions.

The social implications of this study are profound, as it addresses the need for ethical and effective coaching practices that contribute to individuals' PWB and, by extension, the health of organizations. By identifying and addressing the unintended consequences of SBC, this research can inform better coaching practices that promote not only professional growth but also the holistic well-being of individuals. Better-informed coaches can lead to more resilient, satisfied, and productive employees, ultimately enhancing organizational culture and performance.

In this chapter, I discuss the background of a social problem, PWB, and SBC. I highlight how a lack of understanding of the unintended consequences of SBC related to PWB exists. SBC emphasizes leveraging an individual's inherent strengths to foster growth, job satisfaction, and overall well-being (Freire, 2013). Adverse impacts on PWB could lead to poor physical health, low job satisfaction, or a decrease in one's ability to face challenges (Tatlıcioğlu et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2022). Additionally, I explain the purpose of the study, the research question, and the conceptual framework. I provide definitions of some essential terms and the necessary assumptions made to complete the study. Next, I discuss the study's nature, scope, and limitations. I conclude this chapter by describing the significance of this study.

Background

According to Horsfall (2012), a social problem is a condition or issue that affects many individuals within a society and is viewed as undesirable or harmful. It involves challenges or conflicts related to the well-being, functioning, and interaction of individuals or groups within a social context. PWB is a topic that is becoming

increasingly important today. It refers to an individual's overall mental and emotional state, encompassing both the presence of positive attributes and the absence of negative ones (Phaekwamdee et al., 2022). Change can also impact PWB. Since the coaching process involves change, exploring the unintended consequences of SBC on the coach's and coachee's PWB is essential to developing a 360° view of coaching.

Furthermore, existing literature on professional coaching predominantly emphasizes its positive outcomes, such as enhanced performance, job satisfaction, and overall well-being (Clayden & Appiah, 2025; Grant & Atad, 2022; Nicolau et al., 2023), particularly in educational contexts where positive psychology coaching (PPC) interventions have fostered resilience and social connectedness. However, studies focusing on its negative effects are sparse and primarily confined to specific populations, such as the German coaching community (Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). This gap in knowledge underscores the need for more comprehensive research that examines the unintended consequences of coaching on a broader scale, particularly within the United States.

In addition, although SBC has been lauded for its potential to enhance productivity, morale, and overall satisfaction in professional settings (Lai & Palmer, 2019; Longenecker & McCartney, 2020; Nicolau et al., 2023; Tsai & Barr, 2021), there exists a significant gap in the literature concerning its potential adverse effects on the PWB of both coaches and coachees (Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). Rooted in positive psychology, SBC emphasizes leveraging individual strengths for personal and professional growth (Corbu et al., 2021). However, this singular focus may inadvertently

overshadow or invalidate the experiences and feelings tied to one's vulnerabilities, weaknesses, or perceived shortcomings. Addressing this gap, this study seeks to provide a detailed understanding of how coachees' PWB is impacted by SBC, offering critical insights that can inform more balanced and ethical coaching practices. This gap in the literature raises a vital question: How do coachees experience the unintended effects of SBC on their PWB?

Problem Statement

The specific research problem addressed in this study is that it is not known how coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC as it relates to their PWB. Research has shown that SBC can significantly enhance individual performance, job satisfaction, and overall well-being (Grant & Atad, 2022; Nicolau et al., 2023). However, the potential negative consequences of coaching have received less attention despite growing recognition of their importance. Schermuly and Graßmann (2019) argued that all coaching interventions, including those focused on strengths, can lead to unintended adverse effects, such as increased anxiety, stress, and relational conflicts. Their discussion highlights the importance of a balanced understanding of coaching outcomes, which is essential for promoting ethical and effective coaching practices.

Additionally, de Haan (2021) noted that while coaching can foster personal and professional growth, it can lead to negative psychological impacts if not carefully managed. Similarly, Grant and Gerrard (2020) discussed the complexities of coaching and the necessity of addressing its potential negative side effects to ensure the well-being of coachees. The current gap in qualitative research exploring the lived experiences of

coachees regarding these negative outcomes, particularly in the context of the United States (Vourda et al., 2025), where interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) has revealed mixed personal impacts in similar well-being programs, underscores the relevance of this study. Addressing this gap will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of coaching practices and inform the development of strategies to mitigate potential harms, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and ethical standards of coaching interventions. Failure to understand or address the unintended consequences of this coaching approach could lead to decreased employee well-being, which in turn could adversely affect organizational outcomes (Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). Therefore, the specific research problem addressed in this study is the exploration of the unintended consequences of SBC on the PWB of coachees.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore how coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC as it relates to their PWB. Researchers use a phenomenological research approach to understand the essence of individuals' experiences by capturing their subjective perceptions and meanings (Peoples, 2021). This research paradigm is particularly suitable for investigating complex, nuanced phenomena where personal insights and detailed descriptions are crucial for understanding the underlying dynamics (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 2016; Vourda et al., 2025), such as in mixed-methods evaluations of student well-being programs that use IPA to uncover lived impacts on psychological flourishing. The phenomenological approach allows for an in-depth exploration of how coachees perceive and interpret the effects of SBC on

their well-being, providing rich, contextualized insights that quantitative methods may not capture. By capturing these experiences through in-depth interviews and employing thick descriptions in the analysis, this study aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of the dual nature of coaching outcomes, ultimately contributing to the development of more ethical and effective coaching practices.

Research Question

RQ: How do coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC regarding their PWB?

Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded in three primary concepts: PPC, PWB, and social exchange theory (SET). PPC integrates principles from positive psychology, emphasizing human strengths, virtues, and well-being to facilitate personal and professional growth (Kauffman, 2006; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). PWB extends beyond the mere absence of mental distress, encompassing a broader spectrum of positive psychological functioning, including self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relations, environmental mastery, and autonomy (Diener et al., 2009). SET explains social behavior through the exchange of resources, positing that human relationships are maintained based on the perceived benefits and costs of these exchanges (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1958).

The conceptual framework for this study integrates these three concepts to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dual nature of SBC outcomes. PPC aims to enhance well-being by focusing on positive emotions, engagement, relationships,

meaning, and achievement (PERMA; Seligman, 2011). Recent applications of PPC in educational settings, such as the “Start with the Heart” program, have demonstrated enhanced self-efficacy, resilience, and interpersonal relationships among teachers through SBC techniques (Clayden & Appiah, 2025), providing empirical support for its role in promoting PWB while highlighting the need for balanced explorations of outcomes. This framework is supported by research indicating that coaching can significantly improve job performance, decision-making abilities, and overall satisfaction (Grant & Cavanagh, 2007; Theeboom et al., 2014). PWB provides the evaluative criteria for assessing the impact of coaching on individuals, considering the broad dimensions of positive functioning and fulfillment (Ryff & Singer, 2008). SET offers insights into the relational dynamics between coaches and coachees, emphasizing the importance of trust, reciprocity, and perceived fairness in these interactions (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

These elements highlight the multifaceted impacts of SBC. PPC is an intervention strategy that leverages individual strengths to foster growth and well-being (Kauffman, 2006). PWB is the target outcome and the evaluative lens through which the effects of coaching are measured, encompassing various dimensions of personal and professional life satisfaction (Diener et al., 2009). SET underpins the relational context of coaching, elucidating how perceived benefits and costs, trust, and reciprocity influence the effectiveness of coaching interventions (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1958). Chapter 2 thoroughly explains how these theories interconnect and support the study’s objectives.

This framework helped guide the phenomenological investigation into the lived experiences of coachees. The phenomenological method was particularly suited for

exploring the nuanced and subjective impacts of SBC on PWB, capturing the depth and complexity of individual experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; van Manen, 2016). The research question “How do coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC regarding their PWB?” aligned with this framework by focusing on the coachees’ personal narratives and subjective perceptions, as influenced by PPC, PWB, and SET.

The conceptual framework also informed the development of the study’s interview protocols. The questions designed for in-depth interviews were grounded in these theoretical constructs, ensuring that the data collected aligned with the study’s objectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The structure of the interview protocols elicited detailed accounts of coachees’ experiences, focusing on how SBC influenced their PWB and the relational dynamics involved in the coaching process. This alignment ensured that the data collection process was valid and reliable in capturing the essential aspects of the participants’ experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Finally, the framework guided the data analysis by providing a structured approach to interpreting the interview data. The use of manual coding with IPA enabled the systematic coding and categorization of data according to themes derived from PPC, PWB, and SET, integrating idiographic, phenomenological, and interpretative principles to capture the lived experiences of participants in depth (Willig et al., 2017). This process involved deductive coding, based on the conceptual framework, and inductive coding, allowing new themes to emerge from the data (Saldaña, 2021). This dual approach ensured a comprehensive analysis that captured the richness of the participants’ lived experiences while maintaining a clear connection to the study’s conceptual foundations.

Nature of the Study

The selection of a qualitative phenomenological design for this study was grounded in the aim to deeply explore and understand the lived experiences of coachees undergoing SBC and its impact on their PWB. Phenomenology was well-suited for capturing the essence of individuals' subjective experiences and the meanings they ascribed to them (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 2016). This approach enabled a rich and detailed exploration of the nuances of coachees' experiences, focusing on their insights and reflections. The phenomenological design emphasized understanding the phenomenon from the participants' perspectives, which aligned perfectly with the study's intent to uncover the intricate dynamics between SBC and PWB (Peoples, 2021).

Grounded theory, while effective for generating theories grounded in data, was not selected because the study's objective is not to develop a new theory but to explore and describe the lived experiences of coachees. Grounded theory is more appropriate when the goal is to build a theoretical framework that explains processes or actions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Ethnography, which focuses on a particular group's cultural context and practices, was also not chosen, as the study aims to understand the individual experiences and psychological impacts of coaching, rather than its cultural aspects (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Similarly, a case study approach, which involves an in-depth analysis of a specific case within its real-life context, was deemed unsuitable because the research aims to explore a broader range of individual experiences rather than a single case or a few cases in depth (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The phenomenological methodology involved conducting in-depth, semistructured interviews to gather rich, narrative data from seven U.S.-based participants who had undergone SBC for at least 3 months. This approach enabled me to delve into the participants' subjective experiences, capturing the depth and complexity of their reflections on how coaching had influenced their PWB by conducting semistructured interviews. The data analysis followed a phenomenological reduction process, using IPA to systematically code and categorize the data, identifying core themes and patterns. This methodology ensured that the findings were grounded in the participants' lived experiences, providing valuable insights into the dual nature of coaching outcomes and contributing to developing more balanced and ethical coaching practices (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 2016; Vourda et al., 2025) , as demonstrated in recent applications of IPA to well-being programs, where it revealed diverse participant experiences and accessibility challenges.

Definitions

Coaching: A structured, goal-oriented process designed to enhance an individual's personal and professional development by leveraging their inherent strengths and fostering a supportive relationship that facilitates meaningful behavioral change (Grant & Cavanagh, 2007; Kauffman, 2006; Vandaveer & Frisch, 2022a).

Coaching outcomes: The measurable and subjective changes resulting from coaching interventions, including improvements in performance metrics, goal attainment, and skill development, as well as subjective enhancements in self-awareness, emotional

intelligence, motivation, job satisfaction, and overall well-being (Lai & Palmer, 2019; Nicolau et al., 2023; Vandaveer & Frisch, 2022a).

Coaching psychology: A branch of applied psychology that utilizes psychological theories and evidence-based practices to enhance personal and professional development, focusing on facilitating individuals' goal attainment, performance improvement, and overall well-being through structured coaching interventions (Grant & Atad, 2022; Lai & Palmer, 2019; Vandaveer & Frisch, 2022a).

Negative outcomes: The unintended effects that may arise from coaching interventions, which can include decreased self-esteem, heightened stress or anxiety, interpersonal conflicts, reduced job satisfaction, and adverse impacts on PWB (Berglas, 2002; Grant & Gerrard, 2020; Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019).

Positive outcomes: The beneficial effects that result from coaching interventions including improved performance, enhanced self-awareness, increased emotional intelligence, greater job satisfaction, and overall well-being, as well as the achievement of personal and professional goals, leading to a more fulfilling and productive life (Grant & Cavanagh, 2007; Theeboom et al., 2014; Vandaveer & Frisch, 2022b).

Positive psychology: A branch of psychology that focuses on the scientific study of positive human functioning, emphasizing the strengths, virtues, and factors that contribute to individuals and communities thriving and achieving a fulfilling life, including the promotion of happiness, well-being, and flourishing (Diener et al., 2009; Seligman, 2011; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Positive psychology coaching: An evidence-based approach that integrates the principles of positive psychology, focusing on enhancing clients' strengths, well-being, and personal growth by cultivating positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement (Kauffman, 2006; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; van Zyl et al., 2020a).

Psychological well-being: A multidimensional construct that encompasses positive functioning and a sense of fulfillment in life, characterized by self-acceptance, personal growth, autonomy, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and positive relationships with others (Ryff, 2014; Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Ryff & Singer, 2008; Seligman, 2011).

Social exchange theory: A sociological and psychological framework that explains human interactions and relationships as transactions aimed at maximizing benefits and minimizing costs, where individuals evaluate the rewards and costs of their interactions and maintain relationships based on perceived fairness, reciprocity, and mutual benefit (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1976; Homans, 1958).

Assumptions

I made several assumptions to guide the research design and methodology. Firstly, the study assumed that reality was subjective and constructed through individual perceptions, meaning each participant had a unique understanding of their experiences with SBC. This assumption was crucial for a phenomenological approach, which seeks to capture the richness and complexity of personal experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Another assumption was that participants could effectively articulate their experiences, as

this ability was essential for gathering rich, detailed data through interviews (Moustakas, 1994). The assumption that coaching interventions produce discernible and meaningful impacts on individuals was foundational to the study's investigation of positive and negative outcomes (Theeboom et al., 2014). Furthermore, participants were assumed to have sufficient self-awareness to identify changes in their PWB resulting from coaching, which was vital for capturing the nuances of their experiences (Peoples, 2021). I also assumed that participants would communicate honestly and openly during interviews, as trust and rapport were necessary to elicit truthful and comprehensive narratives (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study involved the lived experiences of coachees receiving service from a professional coach. Factors defining the study's parameters include: (a) participants living in the United States, (b) participants are adults aged 35 or older, (c) participants received 3 or more months of SBC, (d) participants had at least one coaching session per month, and (e) participants were open and honest in describing their experiences with coaching. These delimitations limited the scope of the study to the lived experience of coachees as it relates to their PWB. Coachees younger than 35 were excluded from this study as participants because their professional and life goals differ from those of older adults seeking professional coaching. Excluding other types of coaching was a rational choice, as part of the conceptual framework involved PPC.

The potential transferability of the study lies in its ability to provide insights applicable to other contexts and populations interested in the effects of SBC. Although

the findings are specific to the demographic and coaching approach studied, they may inform practices in different professional settings or with diverse populations. The emphasis on PWB dimensions and the subjective experiences of coachees allows for the potential adaptation of insights into various coaching interventions or educational programs aimed at enhancing personal development.

Limitations

The study on the lived experiences of coachees receiving SBC and its impact on their PWB acknowledges several limitations inherent in its design and methodology. Firstly, as a qualitative phenomenological study, the findings were limited by the subjective nature of the data collected through in-depth, one-on-one, semistructured interviews. Although this approach provided rich, detailed insights into individual experiences, it inherently limited the generalizability of the findings to broader populations. The focus on subjective experiences did not capture all possible outcomes or perspectives related to SBC, which could result in a biased understanding of its impact.

Methodologically, using a snowball sampling strategy, while effective for accessing specialized populations, could have introduced selection bias. Participants referred by others may have shared similar characteristics or experiences, potentially limiting the diversity of perspectives within the sample. Additionally, the study's reliance on self-reported data may have been influenced by participants' varying abilities to recall and articulate their experiences. The potential for social desirability bias was also present, as participants may have consciously or unconsciously presented themselves in a favorable light during interviews.

To address these limitations, the study incorporates several measures. To mitigate the effects of selection bias, efforts were made to recruit participants from diverse backgrounds and experiences within the target demographic. The interview protocols were designed to encourage open and honest communication, with assurances of confidentiality to minimize social desirability bias. I employed reflexivity, maintaining a reflective journal to identify and bracketing to mitigate personal biases throughout the data collection and analysis process (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Additionally, I employed member-checking, which allowed participants to review and validate the accuracy of the transcripts and interpretations, thereby enhancing the credibility of the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Despite these measures, the study acknowledges that its findings are context-specific and should be interpreted cautiously when considering their applicability to other settings. More specifically, the transferability of the study's findings should be approached with caution, considering the participants' specific cultural, professional, and individual contexts.

Significance

This study contributes to industrial and organizational psychology by providing a nuanced understanding of the dual nature of SBC outcomes on PWB. Whereas much of the existing literature emphasizes the positive impacts of coaching, this study offers a balanced perspective by exploring both the positive and negative experiences of coachees. By focusing on dimensions of PWB such as self-acceptance, personal growth, and purpose in life, the study enriches the existing body of knowledge with qualitative insights into how SBC influences these aspects (Ryff, 2014). This contribution is

particularly valuable as it addresses a gap in the literature regarding the adverse effects of coaching. This area has been underexplored, particularly in the context of the United States (Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019).

The findings from this study have practical implications for the coaching field by informing more effective and ethical coaching practices. By identifying how SBC can enhance or hinder PWB, coaches can tailor their interventions to maximize positive outcomes and minimize potential negative impacts. This study also highlights the importance of the coach–coachee relationship, emphasizing the need for coaches to possess adequate psychological expertise and to consider the broader organizational and cultural context in which coaching occurs. Moreover, the insights gained from this study could be considered for incorporation into coach training programs or implemented in various other social settings, such as educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and community organizations, regardless of the outcome. These actions can enhance the competence and preparedness of coaches to deal with diverse client experiences, challenges, and environments.

This study's potential implications for social change align with its focus on PWB and personal development. By illuminating the lived experiences of individuals who have undergone SBC, the study contributes to a broader understanding of how coaching interventions can support personal and professional growth. This understanding can empower individuals to make informed decisions about coaching, leading to more effective self-improvement strategies and enhanced overall well-being. At a societal level, promoting SBC that is effective and ethical can lead to healthier, more resilient

individuals and organizations. This enhanced PWB can foster a more supportive and productive workforce, ultimately contributing to societal well-being and productivity. The study's insights into the dual nature of coaching outcomes can also stimulate discussions on ethical standards and best practices within the coaching industry, driving positive changes that benefit individuals and communities.

Summary

This study examines SBC as it relates to PWB. Although the benefits of SBC are well-documented, there is a critical need to explore its potential adverse effects on coachees. This investigation aims to strike a balance between understanding the positive and negative outcomes, ensuring the ethical and practical application of coaching practices. By examining these adverse effects, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the coaching process, which is crucial for developing practices that mitigate potential harms and maximize benefits.

The research's social implications are profound, emphasizing the need for ethical coaching practices that support individuals' PWB and organizational health. Identifying and addressing the unintended consequences of SBC can inform more balanced practices that foster employee resilience and productivity, enhancing organizational culture and performance. With a clear understanding of the significance of SBC and the necessity of exploring its dual impacts on PWB, the subsequent chapter delves into the existing body of literature. Chapter 2 will provide a comprehensive review of the research on professional coaching, emphasizing the positive outcomes traditionally associated with this practice while also highlighting gaps in understanding concerning its potential

adverse effects. The literature review will establish the conceptual framework for the study, identifying key concepts and theories that inform the investigation into how SBC affects coaches' PWB.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Professional coaching has become a significant tool in enhancing personal and professional development across various sectors and within organizational contexts. Coaches with organizational savvy can help executives navigate complex organizational challenges, influence stakeholders, and align their leadership approach with organizational goals and priorities (Vandaveer & Frisch, 2022a). They can also provide insights into how the executive's actions and decisions impact the more extensive system. By demonstrating expertise in leadership development and organizational savvy, executive coaches can effectively support executives in achieving their goals, enhancing their performance, and driving positive organizational outcomes (Vandaveer & Frisch, 2022a). Most literature focused on the positive outcomes of the process (Grant & Atad, 2022; Grover & Furnham, 2016; Longenecker & McCartney, 2020; Nicolau et al., 2023; Savickaitė-Kazlauskė & Bendaravičienė, 2023; Theeboom et al., 2014; Tsai & Barr, 2021; Utrilla et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2022).

Despite its widespread acclaim and documented benefits, a critical need exists to examine the less explored territory of negative consequences associated with coaching (de Haan, 2021; Graf & Dionne, 2021; Graßmann et al., 2019; Schermuly, 2014; Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). Schermuly and Graßmann (2019) decided to review articles about the adverse effects of coaching. They argued that all changes have both positive and negative consequences, including both intended and unintended effects. The researchers examined nine previous studies, which had varying methodological designs.

The adverse effects of the interaction impacted coaches, clients, and organizations. Throughout the study, Schermuly and Graßmann contended that these adverse effects were not due to failures in the process but the consequences of behavioral changes.

In addition, although SBC has garnered praise for its potential to enhance productivity, morale, and overall satisfaction in professional settings (Lai & Palmer, 2019; Longenecker & McCartney, 2020; Nicolau et al., 2023; Tsai & Barr, 2021), a significant void persists in the literature regarding its potential adverse effects on the PWB of coachees (Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). Grounded in the principles of positive psychology, SBC focuses on leveraging individual strengths to foster personal and professional growth (Corbu et al., 2021). However, this emphasis on strengths may inadvertently marginalize or invalidate experiences and emotions related to vulnerabilities, weaknesses, or perceived shortcomings. This oversight raises a critical question: How do coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC regarding their PWB?

According to their literature review results, Schermuly and Graßmann (2019) identified more than 30 causes of adverse effects. Some major categories of these effects included psychological health, social integration, and undesirable changes in the client-coach relationship. Therefore, the specific research problem addressed by this study is that the relationship between coaches' lived experiences of SBC and their PWB remains unknown. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC as it relates to their PWB.

This literature review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the positive and negative effects of coaching, integrating perspectives from positive psychology, PWB, and SET. By examining these conceptual frameworks, the review presents a balanced perspective that acknowledges the limitations of coaching practices while also highlighting their transformative potential. This review will first discuss the literature search strategy to help identify how information was located. It will then define and explain the conceptual framework of the research. The premise of the conceptual framework is based on PPC, PWB, and SET. To fully appreciate the nuances of each of these concepts, it is essential to understand their theoretical foundations and how they relate to the outcomes of coaching.

The integration of these frameworks highlights the complexity of coaching and the necessity of a balanced approach that considers both positive and negative outcomes. While coaching has the potential to facilitate significant personal and professional growth, it is equally important to recognize and address the factors that can lead to adverse effects (Lai & Palmer, 2019; McInerney et al., 2021; Pandolfi, 2020). Additionally, although the research on negative consequences is a popular topic in the German coaching community (Graf & Dionne, 2021), there is a gap in exploring this area within the English-speaking domain. This study aims to fill the existing gaps in research by providing a nuanced perspective on the dual nature of coaching (both its positive and negative impacts) in the United States, using a literature review to set the stage for this discovery. After defining the conceptual framework, the review will provide a breakdown of coaching approaches, coaching outcomes, the impact of coaching on PWB, and the

interaction between coaching and SET. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing more effective and ethical coaching practices that maximize benefits while minimizing potential harm to all parties involved in the coaching process.

Literature Search Strategy

Using the databases accessible through the Walden University Library and Google Scholar, I began my literature review with a broad search using the term “coaching” to understand the breadth of available material. This search encompassed databases from various fields, offering an interdisciplinary perspective on the concept. These resources led me to add qualifiers using the Boolean conjunctions “AND” and “OR” to include *evidence-based*, *evidence based*, *executive*, and *leadership*. I also added the terms “meta-analysis,” “literature review,” and “systematic review” to identify what had been previously researched.

I narrowed my parameters to include publication dates from 2019 to 2024 to identify more recent articles. These studies helped refine my research even more. I focused my literary search within psychological and business administration databases, including Complementary Index, Directory of Open Access Index, APA PsycArticles, APA PsycInfo, Academic Search Complete, and Business Search Complete. Terms involved in these searches included *well-being*, *psychological well-being*, *positive psychology*, *coaching outcomes*, *coaching efficacy*, *coaching effects*, *coaching results*, and *social exchange theory*. It is essential to note that I had to expand my publication date parameters beyond 2019 to locate relevant literature that would help inform the historical and conceptual framework of this study.

Conceptual Framework

Three components are used to develop the conceptual framework of this study: PPC, PWB, and SET.

Positive Psychology Coaching

PPC integrates the principles of positive psychology, emphasizing human strengths, virtues, and well-being, into coaching. Other terms that refer to PPC include positive coaching and SBC. It aims to facilitate individuals' journey towards a more fulfilling and happier life by focusing on enhancing positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement—components known as the PERMA model (Kovich et al., 2023). PPC is distinct in its evidence-based approach, leveraging research from positive psychology to apply interventions and techniques designed to foster resilience, gratitude, optimism, and personal growth (Biswas-Diener, 2020; Burke, 2018; Passmore & Oades, 2014; van Zyl et al., 2020a). This approach targets improving specific areas of an individual's personal or professional life, seeking to elevate their overall well-being and life satisfaction.

By employing tools and techniques such as strength identification and utilization, providing positive feedback, setting goals aligned with personal values, and practicing mindfulness, PPC helps clients build and sustain positive changes in their lives. It operates on the belief that individuals possess the capacity for self-improvement and growth and that focusing on positive attributes rather than deficits leads to more meaningful and lasting transformations (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). PPC practitioners work collaboratively with clients to identify their strengths and how best to

apply them, encouraging a mindset shift towards positivity and possibility (Ciarrochi et al., 2022). This coaching style not only aims at achieving specific goals set by the clients but also at instilling in them the skills and attitudes necessary for a resilient and joy-filled life, marking its significance as a transformative practice aimed at harnessing the best within individuals to foster a life of fulfillment and happiness (Kauffman, 2006). Thus, for this study, the definition of PPC is a coaching approach that utilizes evidence-based strategies from positive psychology to enhance an individual's well-being, strengths, and performance, to facilitate personal and professional growth and a more fulfilling life.

However, to fully grasp the true nature of PPC, one needs to understand the roots of this coaching approach. The theoretical roots of PPC are deeply anchored in positive psychology and coaching psychology. Positive psychology is a branch of psychology introduced by Martin Seligman (Seligman, 2007; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Coaching psychology is a specialized field within applied psychology. It is essential to dissect both disciplines.

Positive Psychology

Positive psychology focuses on studying positive human functioning and the factors contributing to a fulfilling life, such as happiness, well-being, and flourishing (Anstiss & Passmore, 2013; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The field owes its formal inception to Martin E. P. Seligman, who, during his presidency of the American Psychological Association in 1998, advocated for a shift in psychology's focus toward understanding and fostering the factors that allow individuals and communities to thrive. This philosophy marked a significant departure from the discipline's traditional emphasis

on pathology, aiming instead to explore positive emotions, strengths-based character, and healthy institutions (Brokaw, 2023; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Since its inception, the philosophy has grown beyond the traditional field of psychology and permeated other disciplines. For instance, within education, researchers are applying positive psychology to teaching methodologies to help enhance students' resiliency (Lentisco & Martínez, 2017). Smith et al. (2012) employed a phenomenological approach to understand the lived experiences of individuals undergoing coaching, providing deep insights into their transformations and challenges. Their study revealed that positive psychology has inspired a shift toward leadership models that prioritize employee well-being, engagement, and a positive organizational culture within the field of leadership theory and management.

Positive psychology is solutions-focused and grounded in empirical research (van Zyl et al., 2020a). Its foundation is based on theories from Maslow and Carl Rogers, as well as self-determination theory (Seligman et al., 2005). It uses the PERMA model (Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Achievement) to measure and increase the elements of well-being (Kovich et al., 2023; Passmore & Oades, 2014). This collection of theories and models emphasizes the importance of cultivating positive emotions, leveraging personal strengths, fostering a growth mindset, and fulfilling basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness as essential components for enhancing overall life satisfaction and achieving personal and professional growth.

Coaching Psychology

Coaching psychology is the other underlying discipline that underpins PPC, and practitioners define it differently. Vandaveer and Frisch (2022b) defined it as a field within applied psychology that applies psychological principles and techniques to the professional coaching of organizational leaders. According to Law (2013), coaching psychology is a domain within applied psychology that utilizes psychological principles and methods in the professional coaching of organizational leaders. In addition, the literature refers to coaching psychologists as coaches who possess an academic degree, postgraduate qualifications in psychology, or demonstrable equivalent experience, rather than formal qualifications, and maintain formal affiliation with a professional psychology body or association to uphold continuous development and practice standards (Moin et al., 2023). Therefore, for the purposes of this study, coaching psychology is defined as a field of applied psychology that focuses on enhancing personal and professional outcomes through evidence-based coaching practices, emphasizing the development of strategies for achieving specific goals, improving performance, and facilitating growth and change.

The discipline is anchored in the rich tapestry of psychological theories and practices. The field draws from the cognitive-behavioral, humanistic, and psychodynamic traditions, among others, to foster personal and professional development (Grant & Atad, 2022; Lai & Palmer, 2019). Coaching psychology embodies a client-centered approach, leveraging evidence-based methodologies to facilitate goal setting, personal growth, and behavioral change while underscoring the importance of psychological principles in

understanding human behavior, motivation, and the complex dynamics of change, positioning itself at the intersection of theoretical rigor and practical application (Grant & Atad, 2022; Lai & Palmer, 2019; Vandaveer et al., 2016; Vandaveer & Frisch, 2022a). Through a deep understanding of psychological mechanisms, coaching psychology aims to enhance individual well-being, performance, and leadership capabilities within organizational contexts, making it a pivotal field in the broader landscape of applied psychology.

Psychological Well-Being

PPC concerns itself with well-being. While PERMA, as defined by Seligman (2011), describes the five elements of well-being (i.e., positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment), it does not explain PWB (Passmore & Oades, 2014). PWB is a comprehensive concept that extends beyond the absence of mental distress to encompass a broader spectrum of positive psychological functioning. It is characterized by the presence of positive emotions and moods (e.g., contentment, happiness), the absence of negative emotions (e.g., depression, anxiety), and a sense of satisfaction with life, fulfillment, and positive functioning (Diener et al., 2009). PWB encompasses various components, including self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relationships with others, environmental mastery, and autonomy (Diener et al., 2009; Ryff, 2014; Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Tatlıcıoğlu et al., 2024). Figure 1 shows Ryff's six-factor model of PWB. These dimensions reflect an individual's ability to lead a fulfilling and autonomous life, develop meaningful relationships, pursue personal growth and development, manage their life competently, and accept themselves wholly.

Figure 1

Ryff's Six-Factor Model of Psychological Well-Being (2014)



The concept of PWB emphasizes the importance of an individual's subjective experience of their life circumstances, highlighting that well-being is not merely about favorable conditions but also how individuals interpret and engage with their environments. It is associated with numerous benefits, including improved physical health, a longer lifespan, healthier lifestyles, and enhanced coping strategies in the face of adversity (Aratthanage & Wijekoon, 2023; Jeannotte et al., 2021; Kovich et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2022). Additionally, since positive psychology focuses on the strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive, it aligns perfectly with PWB. As such, it is a critical focus for clinical and applied interventions to enhance individuals' quality of life and overall functioning within society.

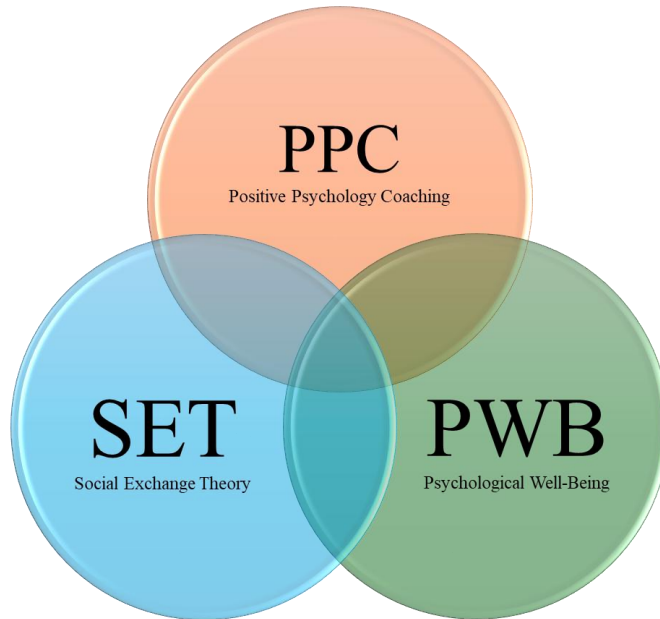
Social Exchange Theory

SET, the third component of the conceptual framework in this study, is a theoretical framework that explains social behavior regarding the exchange of resources between individuals or groups, including material goods, services, information, and emotional support (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1958; Miller, 2022; Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019; Zhang & Liu, 2024). Developed from the works of sociologists George Homans and Peter Blau, the theory posits that human relationships are formed and maintained based on the perceived benefits and costs associated with those relationships and heavily rely on trust and reciprocation (Anwar et al., 2023; Cooper-Thomas & Morrison, 2018; Rogelberg, 2007). According to SET, interactions are transactions that aim to maximize rewards and minimize costs, where rewards can be tangible or intangible benefits, and costs represent the resources expended in the interaction process. This cost–benefit analysis influences individuals’ decisions about whether to continue or terminate relationships.

A critical aspect of SET is the comparison level for alternatives, which individuals use to evaluate the worthiness of a relationship based on what they believe they could receive in alternative scenarios. This comparison of positives and negatives influences their satisfaction and commitment to the relationship (Cooper-Thomas & Morrison, 2018; Rogelberg, 2007). SET has been applied across various disciplines, including psychology, sociology, and organizational behavior, to understand interpersonal relationships, workplace dynamics, and group behavior. The theory illuminates how perceived equity and fairness in exchanges affect relationship

satisfaction, commitment, stability, and motivation to change (Graßmann & Schermuly, 2020; Rogelberg, 2007). Despite criticisms regarding its focus on self-interest and rational calculation, SET remains influential in providing insights into the complexity of social interactions and the underlying motivations that drive human behavior in social contexts (Kilroy et al., 2023; Vanzella-Yang & Abrutyn, 2022).

By integrating PPC, PWB, and SET (see Figure 2), this study benefited from a comprehensive framework that addressed both the positive and negative outcomes of coaching. This integration enabled a thorough understanding of how coaching impacts individual well-being and organizational dynamics, offering a nuanced perspective that acknowledges the dual nature of coaching interventions. The application of PPC, PWB, and SET in previous research has provided a solid foundation for understanding the multifaceted impacts of coaching. The current study benefited from this conceptual framework by providing a balanced and comprehensive perspective, addressing research gaps, and making contributions to both theoretical and practical advancements in the field.

Figure 2*Conceptual Framework***Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts**

The coaching field within an organizational context has undergone significant evolution over the past few decades, marking a profound shift in the development and management of human capital. There has yet to be an agreement on the origins of coaching. As an action or method of teaching, George-Feres (2015) and Rostron et al. (2014) highlighted the contributions of Socrates to coaching. Research on coaching dates back to 1937 (Grant, 2005). However, the roots of coaching can be traced back to the sports arena (Brock, 2009; Juliano, 2024; Stec, 2012), as seen in the seminal work of Tharp and Gallimore (1976). During this period, the primary focus was on enhancing physical performance, strategy, and competition. However, as the understanding of

human performance and potential expanded, the coaching principles permeated the business world. The transition into business and executive coaching gained momentum in the late 20th century, fueled by a growing recognition of the importance of leadership development, organizational culture, and the psychological aspects of performance in the workplace (Brock, 2009). This period marked the emergence of coaching as a distinct professional field, enhancing individual capabilities, leadership skills, and overall organizational effectiveness.

By the 1980s and 1990s, the formalization of coaching as a profession began to take shape through standardization, with the establishment of various coaching associations and credentialing bodies (Harris, 1999), such as the International Coaching Federation (ICF), which played a pivotal role in defining ethical standards, competencies, and accreditation processes for coaches (Boysen-Rotelli, 2020). This era also saw the integration of theories and practices from psychology, particularly positive psychology, organizational behavior, and adult learning theories, into coaching methodologies (J. Berger, 2006; Cannon-Bowers et al., 2023; Cox, 2006; Stec, 2012). Additionally, coaching methodologies began to emphasize reflective practice, self-awareness, and the development of emotional intelligence as critical components of effective leadership (Passmore & Yi-Ling Lai, 2019). Hence, the focus shifted towards empowering executives and leaders not only to achieve their immediate performance goals but also to develop a deeper understanding of their personal values, strengths, leadership styles, and the impact they have on their organizations.

In the contemporary landscape, coaching has established itself as a vital tool for leadership development, with broad recognition of its value in facilitating transformational change, enhancing strategic thinking, and cultivating resilient and adaptable leaders. The proliferation of research in the field has further solidified the evidence base for coaching effectiveness, demonstrating significant positive impacts on individual and organizational performance (Boysen-Rotelli, 2020; Cannon-Bowers et al., 2023; Passmore & Yi-Ling Lai, 2019). As the business environment continues to evolve with increasing complexity and uncertainty, the demand for skilled coaching that not only addresses the professional but also the personal dimensions of leadership continues to grow (Berry, 2021; Gan et al., 2021; Halliwell et al., 2022). The historical evolution of coaching reflects a broader shift towards a more holistic, person-centered approach to leadership and organizational development, underscoring the critical role of human factors in achieving sustainable success.

Coaching Approaches

Different coaching styles and approaches cater to the varied needs, personalities, and objectives of both coaches and clients. The diverse landscape of human experience and the complexity of individual goals demand a flexible and tailored approach to coaching. Every individual has unique motivations, learning styles, and challenges, making it essential for coaching methods to adapt accordingly. Additionally, the context in which coaching is applied—be it in personal life, executive leadership, or organizational settings—also influences the choice of coaching style. For instance, a directive approach may be practical in a corporate environment where specific outcomes

are needed quickly. In contrast, a more explorative approach might better suit personal development, where self-discovery and long-term behavioral change are emphasized.

Applying different styles enables coaches to address their clients' needs and goals effectively. For example, a coach might employ a cognitive-behavioral approach to help clients identify and modify destructive thought patterns and behaviors, which is particularly useful in performance and stress management. Conversely, a solution-focused coaching style empowers clients by focusing predominantly on solutions rather than problems, encouraging them to envision a desired future and map out practical steps to achieve it. This style is especially beneficial for clients who are goal-oriented and motivated by quick, forward-moving action. Coaches may also employ a transformational style that aims to challenge and transform the client's thinking, leading to profound shifts in perspective and making it valuable in leadership development. It is essential to understand some of the more common approaches to coaching.

Humanistic Coaching

The humanistic coaching approach is deeply rooted in the principles of humanistic psychology, which emphasizes the inherent value of the individual and the importance of fostering an environment conducive to self-exploration and personal growth (Bennie & O'Connor, 2010). This perspective views individuals as whole beings with the capacity for self-awareness and self-actualization. It is founded on the belief that people possess the internal resources needed for personal development and healing (Gregory & Levy, 2013). The coach's role in the humanistic approach is to facilitate a

supportive environment that enables clients to uncover these resources and utilize them to achieve their fullest potential.

Humanistic coaching prioritizes the development of a robust, empathetic relationship between coach and client, where the client feels genuinely heard, respected, and understood. This relationship is characterized by a non-judgmental attitude, empathy, and authenticity, creating a safe space where clients can openly explore their feelings, thoughts, and experiences (Stober, 2008). The coach employs active listening, reflection, and open-ended questioning to encourage deep self-reflection and insight. These techniques help clients identify their values, beliefs, and desires, guiding their decision-making.

This coaching style is particularly effective for clients seeking to achieve specific goals and enhance their overall well-being and quality of life. Results from a study by Connolly (2016) demonstrate the enhanced self-awareness, coping abilities, and maturity of students coached using this approach. The humanistic approach transforms the coach-coachee dyad by promoting a sense of trust, strong relationships, and support (Bennett et al., 2023). It is well-suited for addressing issues related to self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, and personal fulfillment, as it helps individuals align their actions with their authentic selves. By fostering a deeper understanding of oneself and one's motivations, humanistic coaching empowers individuals to make choices that are congruent with their true selves, promoting a sense of integrity and alignment that is essential for lasting personal growth and satisfaction.

Cognitive Behavioral Coaching

Cognitive behavioral coaching (CBC) is an approach that integrates principles from cognitive behavioral therapy into a non-clinical, goal-oriented coaching framework. This approach is predicated on the understanding that thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are interconnected and that altering one's thought patterns can lead to changes in emotions and behaviors (Palmer & Williams, 2013). CBC aims to help clients identify and modify dysfunctional or limiting beliefs and thought patterns, fostering more effective behaviors and emotional responses.

The process of CBC is solution-focused and involves several key steps. These include identifying goals, uncovering behavioral patterns and cognitive assumptions, and reframing these thoughts into more constructive and realistic ones. Techniques such as Socratic questioning, thought records, and cognitive restructuring are commonly employed to facilitate this mental shift, making it very effective in the organizational setting (David, 2016; Ratiu et al., 2017). By encouraging clients to examine the evidence for and against their entrenched beliefs, coaches can guide clients to learn to adopt more balanced and helpful thoughts.

CBC is particularly effective in addressing issues such as procrastination, stress management, and confidence building, making it a valuable tool in both personal and professional development contexts. Grant (2017) discussed how this technique can help organizations reduce workplace stress and increase employee resilience. In addition, Torbrand and Ellam-Dyam (2015) revealed the effectiveness of CBC in a group setting and how it helped students reduce their tendency to procrastinate. It empowers

individuals to become aware of their cognitive processes and control their thoughts, subsequently improving their emotional regulation and behavioral choices. In their study, Igu et al. (2023) showed that leaders could reduce workplace burnout and enhance self-efficacy. This approach supports immediate problem-solving and equips clients with lifelong skills to maintain their well-being and achieve sustained effectiveness in various aspects of their lives.

Motivational Interviewing

Another approach to coaching that originated in the early 1980s is motivational interviewing (MI). This approach is particularly effective in fostering intrinsic motivation to change behaviors by exploring and resolving ambivalence (Anstiss & Passmore, 2013; Pas et al., 2021). Initially developed in the clinical context by psychologists William R. Miller and Stephen Rollnick, MI has been adapted for broader applications, including coaching, which supports individuals in making positive behavioral changes (Passmore, 2022). Unlike more directive methods, MI is a client-centered, guiding style of interaction that emphasizes empathetic listening and the elicitation of the client's motivations for change.

The core of MI involves engaging with clients in a way that respects their autonomy and encourages them to discuss their reasons for change, concerns about their current behaviors, and life goals. The approach is based on four fundamental processes: engaging, focusing, evoking, and planning (Anstiss & Passmore, 2013). Engaging builds a trusting relationship between coach and client. Focusing defines the direction in conversations about change. Eliciting involves evoking the client's motivations for

change, and planning encompasses developing a commitment to change and formulating a concrete action plan.

In practice, MI employs several techniques that facilitate these processes, including open-ended questions, affirmations, reflective listening, and summarizing. These techniques help clients articulate their desires and motivations, explore their mixed feelings about change, and ultimately increase their readiness to make lasting changes. This method is highly effective in cases where resistance to change is significant, such as in lifestyle adjustments, addiction, and other behavioral issues (Hettema et al., 2014; Pas et al., 2021; Passmore, 2022). By helping clients explore and resolve their ambivalence, MI enables them to find compelling reasons for making substantial changes, thus aligning their behaviors more closely with their broader life values and goals.

Psychodynamic Coaching

The psychodynamic coaching approach draws on principles from psychodynamic psychology. This form of psychology focuses on unconscious thought processes and the influence of past experiences on present behavior (Sandler, 2011). The psychodynamic approach focuses on the client's internal emotional states and subconscious conflicts, positing that unresolved issues from the past can influence current behavior and interactions, particularly in a workplace or personal development context (Diamond, 2013; Rook et al., 2019; Sandler, 2011).

Psychodynamic coaching delves into these deeper, often unconscious, psychological forces to enhance self-awareness and insight. Coaches utilizing this method engage clients in exploring their emotional patterns, defense mechanisms, and the

relational dynamics they experience in their personal and professional lives (Diamond, 2013; Kilburg, 2004). This exploration is often facilitated by discussing past experiences, dreams, emotional responses, and significant relationships. The goal is to uncover hidden patterns influencing behavior, including unaddressed fears, unresolved conflicts, and unconscious motivations.

In practical terms, a psychodynamic coaching session might involve the coach encouraging the client to reflect on their reactions to specific workplace scenarios or interpersonal conflicts and identifying recurring themes or feelings. By bringing these unconscious elements into consciousness, clients can begin to understand and work through their internal conflicts, leading to more adaptive and effective behaviors and decisions. This approach can be particularly valuable for clients facing recurrent issues or those who feel stuck in specific patterns that they find difficult to change (Kilburg, 2004; Sandler, 2011). Through psychodynamic coaching, individuals gain a deeper understanding of themselves, enabling them to make more authentic and aligned choices in their personal and professional endeavors.

Gestalt Coaching

Gestalt psychology, which emphasizes understanding the human mind and behavior as a whole rather than in parts, is the foundation for the Gestalt coaching approach. This perspective focuses on the present moment and the client's current experiences within their environment, promoting awareness and insight into their thoughts, emotions, and actions (Lohmeier, 2022; Spoth et al., 2013). Gestalt coaching is

fundamentally experiential, aiming to enhance clients' self-awareness and self-regulation by directly and authentically exploring their immediate thoughts and feelings.

In practice, Gestalt coaching involves a process where the coach encourages the client to become more aware of how they interact with their surroundings and the impact of their behaviors on their personal and professional lives. The method employs various techniques, including role-playing, enactment, and the empty chair technique, which involves the client speaking to an imaginary person or a part of themselves seated in an empty chair (Stevenson, 2016; Thompson, 2018). These techniques help clients externalize their internal dialogues and conflicts, allowing them to understand and adjust their behaviors and thought processes.

Gestalt coaching is particularly effective in helping clients address unfinished business, resolve internal conflicts, and make holistic changes that reflect their entire being rather than isolated parts of their psyche (Lohmeier, 2022; Spoth et al., 2013; Thompson, 2018). By focusing on the "here and now," clients learn to recognize and trust their intrinsic ability to self-regulate and adapt to situations healthily and effectively. This approach fosters a deeper connection to oneself and one's environment, leading to more authentic and effective responses to life's challenges.

Strengths-Based Coaching

The SBC approach focuses on identifying, utilizing, and building upon an individual's inherent strengths and talents. Rooted in positive psychology, this approach fundamentally believes that people have significant potential for growth when they invest in developing what they naturally do best rather than solely focusing on correcting

weaknesses (Francis & Zarecky, 2016; Freire, 2013; Kauffman, 2006; van Zyl et al., 2020a). This perspective shifts the coaching conversation from a deficit-based to a capacity-building approach, which can significantly enhance motivation, performance, and satisfaction.

In practice, SBC involves identifying a client's strengths through assessments such as the CliftonStrengths or VIA Character Strengths, among others. These tools offer a structured approach to identifying and categorizing an individual's strengths and talents (Francis & Zarecky, 2016; Kauffman, 2006; Richter et al., 2021). Following this identification, the coach works with the client to explore how these strengths can be applied more effectively in their personal and professional lives. The goal is to create opportunities for clients to employ their strengths in new and expanded ways, increasing their effectiveness and fulfillment.

SBC is particularly beneficial in the context of organizational and leadership development. When leaders and teams operate from a place of strength, they are more engaged, productive, and resilient (Francis & Zarecky, 2016; Freire, 2013; Petrone et al., 2023; van Zyl et al., 2020a). This approach enables clients to understand their unique value and how to leverage it in their roles, thereby enhancing individual performance and contributing to more dynamic and successful teams (Passmore & Oades, 2014; van Zyl et al., 2020a). By focusing on strengths, this coaching style promotes a positive, affirming, and growth-oriented environment, encouraging individuals to excel in ways that align with their natural capabilities and passions.

Coaching Outcomes

Coaching outcomes encompass many benefits that individuals and organizations realize through structured, goal-oriented coaching interventions. At the individual level, these outcomes include enhanced self-awareness, improved performance, and the development of specific skills and competencies (Lai & Palmer, 2019; Vandaveer & Frisch, 2022a). Coaching facilitates a deeper understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses, enabling individuals to set and achieve meaningful goals that align with their values. This process often leads to increased job satisfaction, higher levels of motivation, and improved overall well-being (Nicolau et al., 2023). Additionally, coaching supports the cultivation of emotional intelligence, resilience, and effective communication skills, all of which contribute to professional and personal growth.

At the organizational level, professional coaching outcomes manifest in improved productivity, enhanced employee engagement, and a more substantial alignment between individual and organizational objectives. Organizations that invest in coaching often experience reduced turnover rates, as employees feel more supported and valued (Cannon-Bowers et al., 2023; Theeboom et al., 2014). Coaching can also foster a culture of continuous learning and development, encouraging innovation and adaptability. Moreover, leaders who undergo coaching are better equipped to inspire and guide their teams, resulting in more effective leadership and improved team dynamics (David, 2016; Halliwell et al., 2022; Rook et al., 2019). Consequently, the strategic implementation of professional coaching can drive significant organizational transformation, resulting in a sustainable competitive advantage.

Researchers of professional coaching have employed various methodological approaches to investigate the impacts and outcomes of coaching, each with its strengths and weaknesses. Quantitative studies utilize statistical methods to measure and analyze the effects of coaching. This approach is exemplified by McGovern et al. (2001), who surveyed a large sample of individuals to quantify the benefits of coaching on self-confidence and work performance. Schermuly (2014) surveyed German coaches, coachees, and supervisors to elucidate the adverse effects of the coaching process without focusing on a singular approach to coaching. Lastly, several studies have used this methodology to investigate CBC (Grant, 2017; Igu et al., 2023; Torbrand & Ellam-Dyson, 2015) and its impact on organizations, PWB, and students' tendency to procrastinate. However, there seemed to be a lack of focus on other coaching approaches, such as PPC or other forms of SBC.

Additionally, the strength of quantitative research lies in its objectivity and ability to generalize findings to larger populations. Using standardized measures, these studies can produce replicable results that contribute to the broader understanding of coaching effectiveness. However, quantitative studies may fail to capture the complexity and depth of individual experiences, as they rely on predefined variables and may overlook the nuanced, emergent aspects of coaching outcomes.

Qualitative studies have been a primary method for exploring the depth and complexity of coaching experiences. These studies focus on personal narratives and the lived experiences, providing rich and detailed insights into how coaching influences individuals. Kilburg (2004) explored psychodynamic coaching experiences to gain

insights into behavior change. In addition, Schermuly and Bohnhardt (2014) conducted 30-minute semistructured interviews with coaches to ascertain the adverse effects they experience from coaching. Lastly, Connolly (2016) used in-depth interviews and personal reflections to investigate the transformative impact of humanistic coaching. The strength of these qualitative approaches lies in their ability to capture participants' subjective, context-specific experiences, which quantitative methods might overlook. However, their main limitation is that they involve smaller sample sizes and can be subject to researcher bias, reducing the generalizability of the findings.

Moreover, researchers have conducted meta-analyses to investigate the outcomes of coaching. For example, in his meta-analysis, de Haan (2019) surveyed the literature to understand the effectiveness of coaching in various professional contexts. Schermuly and Graßmann (2019) reviewed multiple qualitative and quantitative studies to identify the adverse effects of coaching, offering a nuanced understanding of how these outcomes manifest. The strength of literature reviews is their ability to provide a broad perspective, identifying trends, gaps, and areas for future research. They are time-efficient and can guide the development of new research questions and methodologies. However, literature reviews rely on the quality and scope of existing studies, which may have inherent limitations or biases. The vast amount of literature available can also make it challenging to synthesize findings effectively, and the selection process for included studies may introduce bias if not systematically conducted.

Before delving into outcomes, it is essential to understand the concepts of positive and negative coaching outcomes. In the context of this study, positive coaching outcomes

will be defined as the favorable and constructive results derived from coaching interventions that promote individual and organizational development (Cidral et al., 2021; de Haan, 2021; Graßmann & Schermuly, 2016; Theeboom et al., 2014). Some examples of these outcomes include increased job satisfaction, greater self-efficacy, and improved mental well-being. Alternatively, negative coaching outcomes will refer to the detrimental effects that can arise from ineffective or poorly implemented coaching interventions (de Haan, 2021; Graßmann et al., 2019; Schermuly, 2014; Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). These effects include decreased self-esteem, confusion, frustration, decreased motivation, lower job satisfaction, and even emotional distress.

Positive Outcomes

Professional coaching has emerged as a potent developmental tool that significantly impacts individual performance, personal growth, and organizational change. Research in the field has documented various outcomes (de Haan, 2019; Nicolau et al., 2023; Simmons, 2023) that underscore the effectiveness of coaching interventions across multiple contexts, including executive leadership, career development, and personal life enhancement. The efficacy of coaching can be attributed to its personalized and client-centered approach, which directly aligns the coaching goals with the individual's or team's specific needs and aspirations. Empirical studies have consistently shown that coaching leads to marked improvements in job performance, decision-making abilities, and job satisfaction, as well as enhanced self-regulation and interpersonal effectiveness (Grant & Cavanagh, 2007; Theeboom et al., 2014).

One notable outcome of professional coaching is the enhancement of cognitive skills and emotional intelligence. Coaches work with clients to develop greater self-awareness, a critical component of emotional intelligence (Halliwell et al., 2022; Longenecker & McCartney, 2020). This process involves identifying emotional responses, understanding their origins, and managing them more effectively in personal and professional interactions. Increased emotional intelligence, in turn, facilitates better communication, conflict resolution, and relationship management—skills that are indispensable in leadership and collaborative environments (Offstein et al., 2020; Tsai & Barr, 2021; Wang et al., 2022). Moreover, coaching interventions that focus on cognitive aspects often employ strategies to enhance critical thinking, problem-solving, and creative ideation (Brown et al., 2021; Cannon-Bowers et al., 2023; Quinn et al., 2022). Ultimately, this leads to more innovative and effective leadership overall.

In organizational settings, coaching has been found to contribute positively to the culture and climate of the company. A study by McGovern et al. (2001) reported that nearly 80% of individuals who participated in coaching reported increased self-confidence, and over 70% benefited from improved work performance, relationships, and more effective communication skills. Additionally, organizations implementing coaching strategies often observe higher employee engagement and commitment (Gan et al., 2021; Ratiu et al., 2017). This organizational shift enhances productivity and fosters a workplace environment that promotes continuous learning and adaptability—a critical asset in today's rapidly changing business landscape.

However, the success of coaching outcomes also depends significantly on the compatibility between the coach and the coachee, as well as the commitment of both parties to the coaching process. Effective coaching requires a foundation of trust and mutual respect, which facilitates open communication and vulnerability (Cidral et al., 2021). Moreover, the coachee's readiness to engage in self-exploration and apply learned strategies plays a crucial role in realizing the benefits of coaching. Nevertheless, for all these positive outcomes, there should be an account for some negative consequences.

Negative Outcomes

Despite its numerous benefits, prior studies have shown that professional coaching can yield adverse outcomes that impact clients, coaches, and organizations. Methodologies of these studies include both quantitative (Graßmann et al., 2019; Graßmann & Schermuly, 2016, 2018; Schermuly, 2014), qualitative (Schermuly & Bohnhardt, 2014; Schermuly & Carolin, 2016), and a meta-analysis (Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019); these studies involved German coaches, coachees, and organizations. One significant negative outcome for clients is the potential for coaching to exacerbate underlying psychological issues (Berglas, 2002; de Haan, 2021; Grant & Gerrard, 2020). Berglas (2002) notes how clients might experience heightened anxiety, stress, or other mental health issues if the coach lacks the appropriate psychological training to recognize and address these problems. The triggering of these deep-seated issues can leave clients worse off than before, potentially leading to a decline in their overall well-being and job performance, life satisfaction, and self-efficacy (Ebner et al., 2020; Graßmann & Schermuly, 2016; Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). Situations like these require a certain

level of psychological expertise, which refers to a high level of knowledge, skill, and competence in the field of psychology and encompasses a deep understanding of psychological theories, principles, and research methodologies, as well as the ability to apply this knowledge in practical settings (Berman, 2019; Vandaveer et al., 2016). Ultimately, these phenomena underscore the importance of ensuring coaches possess adequate psychological expertise and supervision to mitigate such risks.

For this study, it is essential to understand what constitutes psychological expertise. Based on the studies from Berman (2019) and Vandaveer et al. (2016), psychologically adequate knowledge within coaching comes from individuals holding advanced degrees in psychology (preferably doctoral or professional), due to their ability to apply the theory of behavior change and understand people, as well as possess business acumen, the ability to evaluate individuals, and the confidence to challenge their clients. Interestingly, holding a certification did not appear critical to this expertise.

Another negative outcome for clients involves the dynamics of relationships, particularly in the workplace. Coaching can unintentionally lead to conflicts with colleagues or supervisors (de Haan, 2021; Graf & Dionne, 2021; Graßmann & Schermuly, 2016; Schermuly, 2014). For instance, a client might develop new assertive behaviors that clash with the expectations or norms of their work environment, resulting in strained relationships and even social isolation. Such disruptions can reduce a client's job satisfaction and hinder professional development (Graßmann & Schermuly, 2016; Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). These relational tensions underscore the importance of

coaches considering the broader organizational context and preparing clients for potential interpersonal repercussions.

For coaches, the adverse effects of coaching often manifest as emotional and psychological stress. Coaches can experience significant pressure to achieve positive client outcomes, which may lead to feelings of inadequacy, burnout, or emotional exhaustion (Graßmann et al., 2019; Schermuly, 2014). The close and empathetic nature of the coaching relationship can also result in coaches internalizing their clients' struggles, further exacerbating their stress levels (Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). This emotional toll can diminish a coach's effectiveness and well-being, underscoring the importance of regular supervision and self-care practices in maintaining their mental health.

Organizations can also suffer from the unintended consequences of coaching. When coaching leads to an employee's decision to leave the company, whether due to newfound career clarity or dissatisfaction sparked by the coaching process, the organization faces the cost of losing and replacing valuable talent (de Haan, 2021; Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). Additionally, if the coaching process results in an employee challenging organizational norms or policies, it can create friction and disrupt team dynamics (de Haan, 2021). These organizational impacts necessitate careful consideration of coaching objectives and outcomes, ensuring alignment with the company's strategic goals and cultural framework. Understanding these adverse outcomes is crucial for developing more effective and ethically sound coaching practices that benefit all parties involved.

Coaching and PWB

Coaching can have a significant impact on PWB by fostering personal growth, enhancing self-awareness, and promoting emotional resilience. PPC interventions often focus on identifying and leveraging individual strengths, facilitating a more profound sense of self-efficacy and purpose. This strengths-based approach aligns with the tenets of PWB, which emphasize the importance of self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, and positive relations with others (Nacif, 2021; Phaekwamdee et al., 2022). The study by Ciarrochi et al. (2022) employed qualitative methods to investigate the application of PPC techniques, including strength identification and utilization, in promoting individual well-being. Results showed that PPC can enhance overall life satisfaction and PWB by encouraging clients to explore and capitalize on their inherent strengths.

One of the primary mechanisms through which coaching enhances PWB is by increasing self-awareness and emotional intelligence. Coaches employ techniques, such as reflective questioning and feedback, to help clients gain insights into their thought patterns, emotions, and behaviors (Cidral et al., 2021). This heightened self-awareness enables individuals to understand their motivations and reactions better, leading to more effective self-regulation and emotional management (Jeannotte et al., 2021; Schermuly et al., 2021). Improved emotional intelligence, characterized by greater empathy, self-control, and social skills, contributes to better interpersonal relationships and reduced conflict, further bolstering PWB (Savickaitė-Kazlauskė & Bendaravičienė, 2023).

Moreover, coaching supports the development of coping strategies and resilience, essential components of PWB (Diener et al., 2009). Clients learn to identify and challenge negative thought patterns through coaching, develop problem-solving skills, and set realistic, achievable goals. These skills enhance the individual's ability to navigate personal and professional challenges, fostering a growth mindset where setbacks are viewed as opportunities for learning and development (Goodwyn et al., 2022; Jeannotte et al., 2021; Savickaitė-Kazlauskė & Bendaravičienė, 2023). This adaptive perspective mitigates the impact of stress and adversity on PWB, fostering a more resilient and positive outlook on life.

In addition to individual benefits, professional coaching can have a positive impact on organizational environments, contributing to the collective PWB of employees. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and development, coaching helps create supportive and collaborative workplaces where employees feel valued and empowered (Jeannotte et al., 2021). This supportive atmosphere enhances job satisfaction, reduces burnout, decreases stress, and increases overall well-being among staff (Gan et al., 2021; Goodwyn et al., 2022; Phaekwamdee et al., 2022). Furthermore, promoting well-being within organizations leads to higher engagement and productivity, creating a virtuous cycle that benefits individuals and the organization (Nacif, 2021). Overall, the integration of coaching practices into organizational development strategies underscores the profound and multifaceted impact of coaching on PWB.

Coaching and SET

By enhancing the quality and dynamics of relationships within organizational and personal contexts, coaching can influence SET. Recall that SET posits that human relationships are formed and maintained based on interactions' perceived benefits and costs (Graßmann & Schermuly, 2020). In coaching, the reciprocal nature of these relationships becomes evident as both the coach and the client engage in a mutually beneficial exchange (Cidral et al., 2021; Pandolfi, 2020). Coaching fosters trust, respect, and mutual support, critical components of effective social exchanges. It also strengthens relational bonds by facilitating open communication and emotional support, leading to more productive and satisfying interactions.

One of the primary impacts of coaching on SET is the enhancement of trust between the coach and the client. Trust is a foundational element in SET, as it underpins the willingness of individuals to engage in reciprocal relationships (Kilroy et al., 2023; Vanzella-Yang & Abrutyn, 2022). Professional coaching, through its emphasis on confidentiality, empathy, and non-judgmental support, creates a safe space for clients to share their thoughts and concerns openly. This trust-building process enhances the coaching relationship and encourages clients to adopt similar trusting behaviors in other professional and personal relationships (Grover & Furnham, 2016). As trust is reinforced, clients are more likely to engage in positive social exchanges characterized by higher levels of cooperation and collaboration.

Moreover, according to SET, coaching contributes to perceived fairness and equity in social exchanges, which are crucial for maintaining long-term relationships

(Cooper-Thomas & Morrison, 2018; Rogelberg, 2007). Coaches help clients develop a balanced perspective on their contributions and the rewards they receive in their interactions with others. By fostering self-awareness and assisting clients to articulate their needs and expectations, coaching enables individuals to negotiate more effectively and seek equitable outcomes in their relationships (Passmore & Yi-Ling Lai, 2019). This sense of fairness reduces resentment and dissatisfaction, which can erode relational stability. Consequently, clients experience more harmonious and sustainable relationships within and outside the organizational context.

In addition to individual relational benefits, coaching can have a broader organizational impact by fostering a culture of positive social exchanges. When coaching is integrated into organizational development practices, it promotes a supportive and collaborative work environment (Utrilla et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2022). Employees who have undergone coaching are more likely to engage in behaviors that enhance social capital, such as mentoring, providing constructive feedback, and supporting their peers (Cannon-Bowers et al., 2023; Gan et al., 2021; Halliwell et al., 2022). This positive organizational climate, characterized by mutual support and reciprocal exchanges, leads to higher levels of job satisfaction, engagement, and overall organizational effectiveness (Hagen & Peterson, 2014; Utrilla et al., 2015). Thus, professional coaching enhances individual social exchanges and contributes to a more cohesive and resilient organizational culture.

Summary and Conclusions

This literature review presents a nuanced examination of professional coaching, highlighting its dual nature by exploring both positive and negative outcomes. Drawing on the conceptual frameworks of PPC, PWB, and SET, this review elucidated the multifaceted impacts of coaching on individuals and organizations. It was shown that PPC aims to enhance well-being by fostering positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement. This approach significantly contributed to personal and professional development, leveraging evidence-based techniques to build resilience and foster growth.

However, the review also acknowledged the potential for negative consequences from coaching practices. These adverse effects could manifest in various forms, including exacerbation of underlying psychological issues, relational conflicts within the workplace, and emotional stress for both clients and coaches (Berglas, 2002; de Haan, 2021; Grant & Gerrard, 2020; Graßmann & Schermuly, 2016; Schermuly, 2014; Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). Additionally, new behaviors developed through coaching could clash with existing workplace norms, resulting in strained relationships and client social isolation (Graßmann & Schermuly, 2016; Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). These insights highlighted the critical need for coaches to possess adequate psychological expertise and to consider the broader organizational context during the coaching process.

The review also explored the negative consequences for coaches, who may experience significant emotional and psychological stress due to the high demands of

their role. Coaches may face pressure to deliver positive outcomes, which can lead to feelings of inadequacy, burnout, and emotional exhaustion (Graßmann et al., 2019; Schermuly, 2014). The empathetic nature of coaching relationships could further exacerbate these issues as coaches internalize their clients' struggles (Graf & Dionne, 2021; Schermuly, 2014), underscoring the importance of regular supervision and self-care practices for coaches to maintain their well-being and effectiveness. Moreover, the potential negative impacts on organizations were discussed, such as the loss of valuable employees or disruptions in team dynamics when coaching leads to challenges against organizational norms or policies (Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). Lastly, previous studies relied heavily on the German population. Further research is needed to investigate how other populations experience adverse effects.

Reviewing the literature reveals a notable gap in the qualitative analysis of unintended consequences associated with SBC for coachees in the United States. Although extensive research highlights the positive outcomes of coaching, such as enhanced leadership and personal development (Vandaveer & Frisch, 2022a), more studies are needed to examine the negative impacts. Existing literature, particularly in the German context, identifies over 30 potential adverse effects of coaching (Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). However, these findings have yet to be sufficiently explored through qualitative methodologies that delve into the lived experiences of coachees, particularly within the U.S. context. This geographical and methodological gap highlights the need for more in-depth, narrative-based research to fully understand the broader implications of SBC.

Furthermore, the current research landscape is predominantly quantitative or mixed-methods, focusing on measuring the positive impacts of coaching interventions (Grant & Cavanagh, 2007; Theeboom et al., 2014). The lack of qualitative studies limits the richness of insights into how coaching might adversely affect PWB and social dynamics among coachees. Addressing this gap through qualitative research provides a more comprehensive understanding of coaching's dual nature, balancing its benefits with a critical examination of its potential drawbacks. This approach contributes to the development of more effective and ethical coaching practices by ensuring that both positive and negative outcomes are thoroughly documented and understood.

Overall, this literature review has contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of professional coaching by integrating perspectives from PPC, PWB, and SET. It highlighted the importance of recognizing and addressing the positive and negative consequences of coaching. By doing so, the review aimed to explain the study's conceptual framework and ensure a clear understanding of essential terms, as well as the need for additional qualitative inquiry. The next chapter will provide an overview of the methodology employed in this study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC related to their PWB. In this chapter, I outline the research design, including the chosen phenomenological approach, to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' narratives and perspectives. The chapter outlines the participant selection process, emphasizing the criteria used to identify individuals who have undergone SBC. Additionally, the chapter discusses the role of the researcher and methodology, including the population, sampling, and selection strategy, as well as data collection methods such as in-depth interviews, and the techniques employed to ensure the rigor and validity of the findings. Finally, I address the data analysis procedures, highlighting how I used thematic analysis to identify and interpret critical themes related to PWB.

Research Design and Rationale

The central concept of this study is PWB. PWB encompasses self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relations with others, environmental mastery, and autonomy (Diener et al., 2009). SBC is a form of professional development that focuses on identifying and leveraging individuals' inherent strengths to foster personal and professional growth (Kauffman, 2006; van Zyl et al., 2020a). The central phenomenon of investigation is the unintended consequences of SBC. This study explores how the emphasis on strengths in coaching affects the dimensions of PWB.

In this study, I used qualitative phenomenology. Phenomenology is an approach that seeks to understand the essence of individuals' lived experiences concerning a particular phenomenon (Peoples, 2021). It involves an in-depth exploration of participants' narratives and subjective perceptions, aiming to uncover the core meaning and essence of their experiences. Since phenomenology explores lived experiences (Peoples, 2021), any study's research question must include lived experiences. Thus, my research question was as follows: How do coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC regarding their PWB?

The phenomenological approach was appropriate because it was well-suited for examining complex and nuanced phenomena, where personal insights and detailed descriptions are crucial for understanding the underlying dynamics (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This study's phenomenological approach allowed for a rich and thorough exploration of coachees' experiences with SBC and its impact on their PWB.

The rationale for selecting the phenomenological approach was its capacity to provide deep, contextualized insights into individual experiences. Unlike quantitative methods, which might offer generalizable data but lack depth, phenomenology delves into the subjective and often complex nature of personal experiences (van Manen, 2016). Given the study's focus on understanding the intricate relationship between SBC and PWB, a qualitative approach was necessary to capture the full range of participants' emotions, thoughts, and reflections. Phenomenology's emphasis on lived experiences and personal meaning made it an ideal fit for exploring how coachees perceive and interpret the effects of coaching on their well-being.

Furthermore, the phenomenological approach aligned well with the conceptual frameworks of PPC, PWB, and SET utilized in this study. PPC and PWB emphasize individual strengths, personal growth, and well-being, which are inherently subjective and best understood through detailed personal accounts (Seligman, 2011; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). SET, which involves understanding the dynamics of reciprocal social exchanges, is best illustrated through a phenomenological lens that can capture the relational aspects and perceived benefits and costs experienced by coachees (Anwar et al., 2023; Cooper-Thomas & Morrison, 2018; Rogelberg, 2007). The study holistically explored how SBC influences the well-being of coachees within their specific contexts and relationships, employing a phenomenological approach.

Although I chose phenomenology, I did consider other qualitative approaches. This approach was better suited for my study than grounded theory, which seeks to generate data-based theories. I wanted to capture the richness of personal narratives and the inherent meanings the individuals attribute to their experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The focus on lived experience allowed for a more nuanced understanding of complex, multifaceted phenomena that other qualitative methods might overlook.

Additionally, phenomenology's emphasis on bracketing—setting aside the researcher's preconceptions—enhanced the credibility and authenticity of the findings (Moustakas, 1994). This methodical rigor is less pronounced in ethnography or case studies, often involving the researcher's interpretation of cultural or contextual factors (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Phenomenology focuses on what participants say and feel, providing a more authentic and empathetic understanding of their experiences. This depth

of insight was crucial for exploring the intricate dynamics of SBC and its effects on PWB, making the approach a superior choice for my study's aims (J. Smith et al., 2022). By allowing participants to articulate their experiences in their own words, phenomenology provided a detailed, context-rich understanding that could inform more effective and ethical coaching practices.

Role of the Researcher

As a researcher employing a phenomenological approach, I served as a conduit for understanding and interpreting the participants' lived experiences. It involved engaging deeply with their narratives to uncover the essence of their experiences without allowing my biases or preconceptions to influence the data. To achieve this, I practiced bracketing, which involved consciously setting aside my assumptions and previous knowledge about the studied phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994; Peoples, 2021). Bracketing ensured that the insights and emerging themes genuinely reflected the participants' perspectives rather than my own. My role also involved creating a trusting and open environment during data collection, primarily through in-depth interviews, which allowed participants to share their experiences candidly and comprehensively.

Additionally, my role encompassed the meticulous analysis and interpretation of the data to identify common themes and patterns that captured the essence of the participants' lived experiences. This process involved phenomenological reduction, where narratives are distilled to their core meanings while maintaining the richness and depth of the original accounts (Peoples, 2021; van Manen, 2016). I also ensured the rigor and validity of my findings through member-checking, where participants reviewed and

confirmed the accuracy of my interpretations. Maintaining ethical standards, such as ensuring confidentiality and obtaining informed consent, was crucial throughout the research process. Through the snowballing process, some participants were associated with my workplace or came from my professional network. However, I had no authority over these individuals (i.e., I had no supervision or influence over them to impact their professional or personal performance); thus, there were no relationships involving power over them or conflicts of interest. Ultimately, my role as a phenomenological researcher was to faithfully represent the participants' experiences and provide insightful, authentic contributions to understanding the phenomenon being studied.

Methodology

This section outlines the methodological foundation of the qualitative phenomenological study, detailing the research design, data collection procedures, and analytic approach employed to explore coachees' lived experiences of SBC and its impact on PWB. It describes the rationale for participant selection, the development and use of the semistructured interview protocol, recruitment strategies, and the step-by-step application of IPA. By presenting these elements with transparency and rigor, the chapter enables other researchers to evaluate the study's trustworthiness and, if desired, replicate the process to generate similarly rich, idiographic narratives grounded in participants' subjective realities.

Participant Selection Logic

The study's sample population consisted of adults located in the United States. Individuals had to be adults in the mid-career stage (ages 35–49) or late-career stage

(ages 50 and above; see Mello et al., 2023). Participants were required to have received at least 3 months of SBC, with sessions held at least once a month. I used LinkedIn to recruit individuals by posting an invitation letter to complete an online screening questionnaire (see Appendix A). Those who did not qualify for the study were redirected to the “Not Qualified Thank You Letter.” If participants qualified after screening, they were presented with an informed consent form that required an electronic signature. Once the signed consent form was submitted, the participant was redirected to Calendly to schedule an interview. The online communication platform used was Zoom, which recorded the interview and transcribed the conversation using the platform’s auto-transcription feature.

Purposeful snowball sampling is an excellent choice for recruiting participants for a qualitative study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Peoples, 2021). Qualified participants were asked to refer other qualified individuals to obtain more recruits, who were also directed to the questionnaire. Using a snowball sampling strategy was justified and appropriate for my study of the lived experiences of SBC for several reasons. Snowball sampling is particularly effective in accessing hard-to-reach or specialized populations (Creswell & Poth, 2018), such as individuals who have undergone specific types of coaching. Given that SBC might not be a universally practiced or easily identifiable experience, snowball sampling allowed me to leverage the networks of initial participants to locate other individuals with relevant experiences. This sampling approach ensured that I gathered rich, in-depth data directly pertinent to my research objectives, thereby enhancing the quality and relevance of my findings (Patton, 2015).

Additionally, snowball sampling is beneficial in phenomenological research, where the depth and richness of individual experiences are more critical than the generalizability of the sample (J. Smith et al., 2022). I built a relevant and information-rich sample by starting with participants who had undergone SBC and asking them to refer others with similar experiences. This approach helped ensure that my study included diverse perspectives within the context of SBC, thus providing a comprehensive understanding of its impact on PWB. The iterative process of snowball sampling aligned well with the phenomenological focus on exploring individuals' nuanced, lived experiences (van Manen, 2016), making it a methodologically sound choice for the study.

An appropriate sample size for my phenomenological study would be between five and 15 participants. This range aligns with the typical sample sizes recommended for qualitative phenomenological research, prioritizing depth over breadth to uncover the richness and complexity of individual experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; J. Smith et al., 2022). The goal of this study was to obtain 10 to 15 participants. However, smaller samples are acceptable when the data provide sufficient variation to illuminate the central phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Dukes, 1984). My study included seven participants, which was consistent with methodological guidance for IPA, emphasizing depth of exploration over breadth. Scholars recommend purposive samples of approximately six to 10 participants for detailed idiographic analysis while supporting cross-case comparison (J. Smith et al., 2022). These seven interviews yielded recurring themes aligned with the conceptual framework, PPC, PWB, and SET, indicating thematic sufficiency.

Guest et al. (2006) found that core thematic patterns often emerge within the first six interviews, with additional participants primarily contributing minor variations rather than fundamentally new codes. My dataset reflected this pattern: participants provided consistent accounts of SBC as both empowering and, at times, challenging for their well-being, with variation captured in the nuances of relational dynamics, perceived pressures, and values alignment. In phenomenology, this repetition across diverse individuals strengthens the argument that you have adequately captured the phenomenon's shared essence (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In addition, my study's delimitations (i.e., U.S.-based adults over 35 with at least 3 months of SBC) defined a relatively homogenous participant pool; in homogeneous samples, fewer participants may be needed to achieve data saturation because the bounded context reduces experiential variation (Morse, 2015). Focusing on fewer participants allowed me to gather and analyze data more thoroughly, which was crucial for understanding the details of their experiences. This approach ensured that the study remained focused on the core phenomenon and provided a rich contextualized understanding that larger sample sizes might dilute.

Interview Protocols

I conducted a qualitative phenomenological study. Brinkmann (2013) contended that the interview guide is how the researcher connects the research question to a participant's lived experiences. Additionally, Rubin and Rubin (2012) stated that the guide should be based on an extensive review of past works. Thus, a good interview guide is informed by the literature, based on qualitative methodology, and designed to elicit the answers that address the research question. When developing the questions for

the qualified participants, I ensured that the questions were primarily open-ended and focused on their experiences (Peoples, 2021). Keeping the research question in mind, I developed questions that would create a conversation between the participants and me, ensuring that I captured all aspects of the underlying concepts within the study.

Using the Interview Protocol Refinement (IPR) model, as prescribed by Chenail (2011) and Castillo-Montoya (2016), I constructed 22 initial interview questions to facilitate a conversation. I then created an interview protocol matrix (Appendix C) to determine which concept each question addressed. I then recorded myself reading and answering the questions aloud, refined their sound, and condensed them to ensure they were easy to understand. I repeated this exercise three times over multiple days and at different times to provide fresh awareness during each session. This process helped me realize that using “strengths-based coaching” was complex for a conversation, so I changed it to “focusing on your strengths.” This technique also allowed me to reduce my initial 22 questions to 14 refined ones. I included these questions in my interview protocols (see Appendix B) to help elucidate each participant’s lived experience with SBC and its impact on their PWB. These protocols also allowed me to use follow-up questions to ensure I captured the true essence of their narratives. I used Zoom to conduct and record 60-minute, one-on-one interviews guided by the research question.

The interview protocols comprehensively explored the lived experiences of coachees undergoing SBC, focusing on its impact on their PWB. Questions about coaching experience and the process provided the necessary context, establishing the participants’ starting points and expectations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). By examining the

effects of coaching, the questions sought to identify specific behavioral changes and personal growth, directly addressing how SBC impacts various aspects of life. This approach ensured that the interviews captured a detailed understanding of the coachees' PWB, aligning with the phenomenological focus on uncovering the essence of lived experiences (van Manen, 2016).

Additionally, the questions about outcomes allowed participants to discuss benefits and challenges, ensuring a balanced view of SBC (J. Smith et al., 2022). Exploring relationships helped uncover the broader impact on interpersonal dynamics, which was crucial for understanding the comprehensive influence of coaching on PWB. The overall evaluation and final thoughts summarized experiences and additional insights, capturing all relevant aspects of the participants' experiences. This thorough approach ensured the collection of rich, detailed data, addressing the central research question about the impact of SBC on PWB (Moustakas, 1994).

Content validity refers to the degree to which an instrument comprehensively covers the construct it intends to measure, ensuring that the questions are relevant and representative of the topic under investigation (Markus & Smith, 2022). My study established content validity through a multifaceted approach grounded in rigorous methodology and a thorough literature review. Brinkmann (2013) and Rubin and Rubin (2012) highlighted that an interview guide must be carefully constructed to align the research questions with participants' lived experiences. Therefore, I created my interview guide by reviewing previous research on SBC and PWB, ensuring the questions were based on existing studies and theories to make them more relevant and thorough.

Using the IPR model, I systematically refined my questions to enhance clarity and coherence, thus improving their ability to elicit rich, detailed responses that capture the essence of participants' experiences. The iterative process of recording, reviewing, and refining the questions ensured they were easily understood and would resonate with participants, further contributing to content validity. Additionally, constructing an interview protocol matrix (see Appendix C) allowed me to explicitly map each question to specific concepts and constructs identified in the literature, ensuring comprehensive coverage of the study's key themes. I also looked for other emerging themes. Using open-ended questions and follow-up prompts in my interviews helped explore participants' stories in detail, capturing the subtle effects of SBC on PWB and ensuring the study's content was valid.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

I posted an invitation letter on LinkedIn with a link to Jotform to recruit participants. This survey (see Appendix A) served as the screening questionnaire to identify qualified candidates, as it addressed the inclusion criteria. Respondents who completed the online questionnaire and did not qualify were presented with the "Not Qualified Thank You Letter." Those who qualified were presented with an informed consent form that required an electronic acknowledgement. Once they submitted the informed consent forms, they were redirected to Calendly to schedule a 60-minute, semistructured interview session via Zoom. At the end of each interview, I also asked each participant if they knew anyone who had received SBC and asked them to share the

recruitment flier link, so that that person could enter the recruitment process. This recruitment cycle was open for seven months, at which point I achieved data saturation.

I acted as the interviewer and used Zoom to record the sessions, gathering data and ensuring that all information was received. Each interview was conducted on a separate day, allowing me to fully absorb the information from the session and take any necessary notes for later analysis. Upon completing the interview (see Appendix B), I thanked participants for their time and valuable contributions, reiterating the importance of their input to my research and providing an overview of how their data will be used. As part of my closing comments, I reminded them that I would contact them to follow up to ensure I had captured their true meaning. The member-checking process was conducted via email.

Additionally, I reminded participants about the confidentiality and name coding measures in place to protect their information. Finally, I informed them to contact me with any follow-up questions or concerns. Ensuring they can withdraw their data at any time, before data collection and analysis are completed, helped foster trust and respect for their involvement.

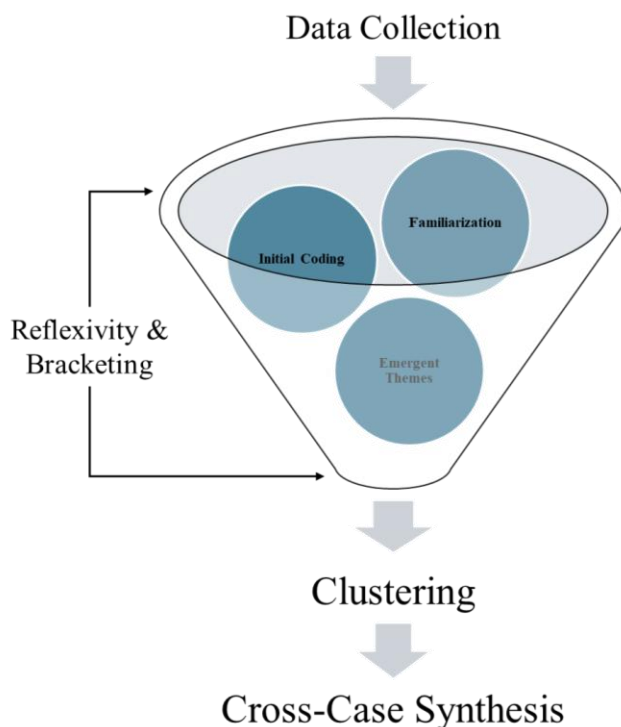
Data Analysis Plan

The data analysis plan for this phenomenological study utilized manual coding and IPA to systematically analyze interview transcripts and connect the data to the research question regarding the impact of SBC on PWB. I applied IPA as both an analytic framework and a guiding philosophical approach to examine the lived experiences of coachees in SBC. According to J. Smith et al. (2022), IPA emphasizes a double

hermeneutic, in which the researcher seeks to make sense of participants making sense of their own experiences. My process reflected this principle by engaging in close, line-by-line reading of the transcripts, identifying meaning units, and clustering these into codes that captured descriptive content and interpretative significance. In addition, I performed bracketing. Bracketing is a qualitative research technique where the researcher deliberately sets aside their beliefs, assumptions, and preconceptions about the study topic (Peoples, 2021). This process ensured that these biases did not influence the data collection, analysis, or interpretation. By “bracketing” my experiences and viewpoints, I engaged more fully with the participants’ perspectives and experiences, capturing the phenomenon being studied in its purest form.

Figure 3

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Process



Once I had identified the initial themes, I initiated the member-checking process by emailing the participants, asking them to review the transcript and my summary of their interpretation of the conversation. I gave them ten days to respond. Otherwise, I assumed their information was correct and continued with coding. During the member-checking follow-up email exchange, I ensured I captured their narrative correctly and asked them about my themes. None of the participants raised any concerns about my interpretations.

The coding procedure employed a combination of inductive and deductive coding. Deductive coding commenced with a predefined coding scheme based on the conceptual frameworks of PPC, PWB, and SET, as identified in the literature review (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Inductive coding allowed new themes to emerge directly from the data, ensuring that the analysis remains grounded in the participants' experiences (Saldaña, 2021). Codes were applied to segments of text, which were then categorized into broader themes that reflect the core aspects of SBC and its impact on PWB. Also, in the spirit of IPA, I began with data familiarization, in which I read and re-read the transcripts (J. Smith et al., 2022). I made notes detailing the descriptive content and potential insights. Next, I began to formulate themes. This process was done on each transcript separately. Once all transcripts were reviewed and annotated, I looked for connections and emergent themes across the interviews.

In line with established qualitative practice, particular attention was given to discrepant or negative cases, data or participant accounts that appeared to contradict or fall outside the emerging patterns and themes (Patton, 2015; J. Smith et al., 2022). Such

cases, if identified, would be subjected to intensive idiographic analysis to determine whether they reflected unique lived experiences requiring new codes or themes, warranted revision or refinement of existing codes, or indicated boundaries of the phenomenon under study. In the event that no fully discrepant cases emerged, this absence itself would be interpreted as meaningful evidence of the shared essence of the phenomenon across participants, rather than an oversight, and would be explicitly reported and discussed in Chapter 4. This dual approach, rigorous pursuit and transparent reporting of both convergence and divergence, ensured that the analysis remained nuanced, guarded against confirmation bias, and enhanced the overall credibility, confirmability, and phenomenological authenticity of the findings. Linking the final coded data and thematic structure to the central research question further guaranteed that the results provided a rich, substantiated account of how coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC in relation to PWB.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility

Establishing credibility in qualitative research is essential to ensure the trustworthiness and rigor of the findings. I used member-checking to help establish credibility. Member-checking involves returning to participants with the data, interpretations, and conclusions to ensure accuracy and resonance with their experiences. This process allows participants to verify the authenticity of the researchers' interpretations and provide feedback or corrections (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Vella, 2024). Member-checking enhances the accuracy of the data and empowers participants

by validating their perspectives and contributions to the research process. I also performed bracketing, as previously described in this chapter.

Transferability

Reliability or external validity ensures that the findings apply to other contexts, settings, or groups beyond the study sample. However, it is essential to understand that phenomenology is not an approach that establishes empirical generalizations or relationships (van Manen, 2016). Nevertheless, I employed a thick description to ensure the reliability of my study. Thick description offers a rich and detailed account of the research context, participants, and phenomena studied (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). By providing comprehensive and vivid details, researchers allow others to understand the depth and complexity of the situation studied. This detailed narrative enables readers to determine whether the findings apply to other contexts they are familiar with, thus enhancing the study's transferability (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Dependability

Dependability refers to the consistency and reliability of the research process and findings, ensuring that the study can be replicated with similar results under similar conditions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I maintained an audit trail. An audit trail provides transparent and systematic documentation that allows an independent reviewer to follow the steps taken and understand the rationale behind methodological and analytical choices (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This documentation includes raw data, field notes, memos, data reduction and analysis procedures, and final reports. By maintaining comprehensive records, researchers can demonstrate the consistency and rigor of their work, thereby

enhancing the reliability of their findings. Additionally, I adhered to Walden University's standards and guidelines, incorporating all suggestions and recommendations from my dissertation committee.

Confirmability

Dodgson (2019) contended that reflexivity is the act of a researcher acknowledging and expressing self-awareness of their role in the process. It involves the researcher continually reflecting on their biases, assumptions, and influence throughout the research process. By maintaining a reflexive journal, I recorded my thoughts, decisions, and reflections throughout the data analysis process, ensuring transparency (R. Berger, 2015). This process should enable other researchers to critically evaluate how my perspectives may have influenced the coding and interpretation of data, thereby enhancing the overall rigor and trustworthiness of the study.

Ethical Procedures

In quantitative and qualitative research, researchers face ethical challenges. Confidentiality, anonymity, and the ability to withdraw from a study are essential ethical requirements for both methodologies (Ngozwana, 2018). However, qualitative studies have some unique ones. Ravitch and Carl (2021) highlighted the importance of informed consent in qualitative studies. Orb et al. (2001) noted that qualitative researchers should be aware of ethical considerations when determining how they interact with the respondents (development of a relationship), their biases when interpreting data, and the research design. I completed the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research Training Module titled "Protecting Human Research Participants" to showcase

my understanding of and reverence for adhering to the highest ethical standards. Since LinkedIn is an interactive social website, no permission was necessary to gain access to potential participants. Nevertheless, I received institutional review board (IRB) approval (No. 11-12-24-1053909), as this study involved research with human participants. IRB approval ensured the research plan was ethical and maintained participant confidentiality.

This study adhered to the ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice as outlined by Walden University (n.d.) and the American Psychological Association's (2017) code of ethics. All participants were provided informed consent before participation, ensuring they understood the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. Participants were notified of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. Confidentiality was maintained by assigning unique codes to participants instead of using their names, and all data was stored securely on a password-protected personal computer accessible only to me.

Recruitment was conducted using ethical methods to ensure voluntary participation and avoid coercion. Potential participants were contacted through the professional network LinkedIn, where they were invited to complete an initial screening survey. After successfully qualifying, the informed consent form clearly stated that participation was entirely voluntary and that declining participation would not result in negative repercussions. Snowball sampling was also employed, where initial participants could refer others; however, it was emphasized that referrals must be voluntary and not subject to undue pressure. All recruitment materials included comprehensive information

about the study, allowing potential participants to make an informed decision about their involvement.

Data collection was conducted in a manner that respected participants' privacy and confidentiality. Semistructured interviews were conducted via Zoom, ensuring a secure and private setting for participants to share their experiences. Interviews were recorded with participants' explicit consent in a private Zoom meeting room with the following specifications: (a) required a unique passcode to enter, (b) disabled participant screen sharing, (c) turn off video for participants (I showed my video so that they can see that no one else is in the room; however, all participants wanted to turn on their video), and (d) enable end-to-end encryption. The names associated with transcripts were replaced with pseudonyms to protect their identities from those with whom I may need to share my analysis. The coding list was kept separate from the interview data. Participants were reminded that they could withdraw from the interview at any point until data collection and analysis were complete. Ethical considerations also included ensuring that the questions were respectful and non-intrusive and that participants were treated with dignity and respect throughout the process (see Appendix B). All collected data were securely stored, and any publications or presentations of the findings ensured the confidentiality of participants. Data are archived for 5 years and then will be destroyed by deleting the folder from the hosting computer and clearing the recycling bin.

Summary

This chapter outlined the qualitative phenomenological study to explore coachees' lived experiences of SBC and its impact on their PWB. The research design focuses on

understanding participants' narratives and perspectives through in-depth semistructured interviews. The chapter detailed the participant selection process, emphasizing the inclusion criteria for adults in the mid-career stage (ages 35–49) or late-career stage (ages 50 and above; Mello et al., 2023) who have undergone SBC for at least 3 months in the United States. It also describes the researcher's role in ensuring data validity, the methodology for data collection, and the techniques used to maintain rigor, including bracketing, journaling, and member-checking.

The rationale for using a phenomenological approach lies in its ability to provide deep insights into individual experiences, which is crucial for examining the complex relationship between SBC and PWB. This approach aligns well with the conceptual framework involving PPC, PWB, and SET. This framework emphasizes subjective experiences and personal growth. Moreover, the chapter discussed the appropriateness of snowball sampling for accessing a specialized population and achieving data saturation, thereby ensuring a rich and nuanced understanding of the phenomenon. Ethical procedures, including informed consent, confidentiality, and ethical recruitment and data collection methods, were also emphasized to ensure the study's integrity and the protection of participants. The next chapter will discuss the analysis of the data captured.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This phenomenological study aimed to explore how individuals experience SBC and how those experiences contribute to their PWB. Using IPA, I sought to capture the depth and nuance of participants' lived experiences while identifying themes illuminating how coaching interactions shape perceptions of self, relationships, and growth. The guiding research question asked is, "How do coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC regarding their PWB?" This chapter presents the analysis results of interviews conducted with seven participants. Each participant engaged in a semistructured interview to elicit rich descriptions of their experiences with SBC. The data were analyzed through iterative coding, clustering, and theme development cycles, consistent with the IPA methodology outlined by Smith et al. (2022). These analytic procedures enabled the idiographic examination of each case and the cross-case synthesis of emergent themes.

The organization of this chapter reflects the progression from contextual details to analytic outcomes. First, I describe the study setting and participant demographics to provide context for the findings that follow. Next, I describe the data collection procedures, including any variations from the plan detailed in Chapter 3. I then outline the data analysis process, illustrating how coded units were developed into categories and higher-order themes. Evidence of trustworthiness is then addressed, demonstrating how credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were established throughout the analytic process. Finally, the results are presented thematically, with participant

quotations to substantiate each theme. The results presented in this chapter represent the participants' voices, interpreted through the lens of IPA. Care was taken to maintain fidelity to participants' perspectives while situating their accounts within broader conceptual and theoretical frameworks. The chapter concludes with a summary synthesizing the findings and transitions to Chapter 5, where interpretations, implications, and recommendations are discussed.

Setting

All interviews for this study were conducted virtually through Zoom. The decision to use a secure online platform provided flexibility for participants, allowing them to engage in the study from their chosen environments. The interviews were scheduled on different days over 5 months, allowing each participant to select a time that best accommodated their personal and professional obligations. This distributed approach to data collection created a natural pacing that supported reflection while minimizing scheduling conflicts.

Participants learned about the study through a recruitment flyer or by referral from others who had reviewed the flyer. Four participants responded directly to a flyer posted on LinkedIn, whereas three were referred by participants (i.e., snowballing); 57 did not qualify for the study. Each participant received an electronic consent form before scheduling their interview, allowing them to review the study details independently and select their preferred interview time. This procedure supported voluntary participation and ensured that participants had autonomy over the logistics of their involvement in the study.

The interviews were conducted in a professional but conversational manner. As the researcher, I adopted a supportive and reflective tone, occasionally smiling and laughing along with participants to create a comfortable atmosphere. I also mirrored participants' tone and demeanor, facilitating rapport and encouraging openness. This intentional relational stance contributed to the richness of the data, as participants appeared willing to share their experiences candidly.

All participants conducted their interviews in private spaces. Although two participants experienced minor environmental interruptions (i.e., a spouse briefly entering the room in one case and a child playing quietly with headphones in another), these did not compromise confidentiality or the flow of the conversation. Each Zoom session was password-protected with a unique passcode, and participants were reminded to choose a private location to ensure their responses were safeguarded. These measures ensured that the interviews were conducted securely and ethically, consistent with institutional requirements for participant protection. Additionally, the interview context provided a secure and comfortable environment for participants to share their perspectives freely. With these conditions established, the next step is to situate the findings by presenting participant demographics. An overview of participants' backgrounds provides additional context for interpreting the results, while maintaining confidentiality through the use of pseudonyms and aggregated descriptors. This demographic profile helps illustrate the diversity of participants' experiences, grounding the subsequent thematic analysis and clarifying who took part in the study.

Demographics

Seven participants took part in this study. Of these, five were female and two were male. Based on visual estimation, participants appeared to range in age from approximately 36 to 70 years, offering perspectives from mid-career through late-career professionals. This age range contributed to a breadth of reflections, as some participants were navigating early leadership responsibilities, whereas others reflected on accumulated career and coaching experiences across decades. Table 1 shows the basic demographic data and interview lengths of each participant.

Table 1

Basic Demographic Data and Interview Length

Interview ID	Gender	Sector	Duration (minutes)
SBC01	Female	Self-employed	27
SBC02	Male	Government	40
SBC03	Female	Corporate	20
SBC04	Female	Government	36
SBC05	Female	Corporate	46
SBC06	Female	Corporate	20
SBC07	Male	Self-employed	47

Participants represented a variety of industries, including corporate organizations, government agencies, and self-employed or independent consulting practices. They span mid-level, executive, and leadership roles, as well as human resources professionals and coaching/consulting practitioners. This range allowed the study to capture diverse experiences of SBC within organizational, public service, and independent practice

contexts. All participants met the study criterion of engaging in at least 3 months of SBC (self-disclosed). Several had experienced multiple coaching engagements, and one participant described working with coaches who employed approaches beyond SBC. This variation in prior exposure provided opportunities to explore initial impressions of coaching and how participants compared SBC to other developmental approaches.

Participants also represented a range of educational attainment. One participant reported holding a bachelor's degree, four held master's degrees, and two held doctorates. These academic and professional contexts shaped participants' ability to reflect critically on the impact of coaching in their lives. All seven participants were in the United States, though their industries and organizational affiliations varied. The diversity of professional backgrounds and coaching experiences enhanced the richness of the findings while maintaining confidentiality through the use of pseudonyms in reporting.

Data Collection

I collected data from seven participants who met the inclusion criteria outlined in Chapter 3. Data for this study were collected through semistructured interviews with seven participants. All interviews were conducted via Zoom, allowing participants to engage in the study from their private settings. Each interview lasted an average of 33.71 minutes, with the shortest session lasting 20 minutes and the longest extending to 47 minutes (see Table 1). Once participants expressed interest, they received an electronic consent form to review and sign, which they then used to schedule their interview. This

process ensured that each individual had the opportunity to review the study's purpose, risks, and protections, and to plan their session at a time of their convenience voluntarily.

I adopted a professional yet conversational approach during each interview, as recommended in phenomenological research to foster authentic participant narratives (Peoples, 2021; van Manen, 2016), striking a balance between inquisitiveness and empathy to encourage openness. My role as the interviewer, guided by IPA principles for building trust and eliciting rich descriptions (J. Smith et al., 2022), included building rapport by mirroring participants' tone and demeanor, offering supportive verbal and nonverbal cues, and maintaining a reflective stance to ensure responses remained participant-centered and free from leading bias. This methodical stance aligned with qualitative guidelines for semistructured interviews, which emphasize rapport as a key facilitator of depth and validity while minimizing researcher influence (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), thereby enhancing replicability by documenting clear steps for establishing a safe, dialogic space that allowed coachees to explore their lived experiences without undue direction.

Upon completion of each session, recordings were securely stored and later transcribed for analysis. Although I had the latest virus protection, I did encounter an attack on my computer. Unfortunately, I lost two recordings (corrupted and infected); however, I was able to retrieve the transcripts. After reporting this situation to the IRB, it was determined that no further action was necessary, as outside entities had not accessed any participant data. The consistency of procedures across all seven interviews ensured methodological rigor. Furthermore, the conversational nature of the semistructured

format allowed participants to express their perspectives in ways that honored their individuality. These procedures align with the IPA approach, which emphasizes the co-construction of meaning through open-ended, reflexive dialogue.

Data Analysis

After obtaining these narrative data, I focused on systematic interpretation. I started with a list of codes based on the conceptual framework, which allowed me to apply deductive coding to my analysis. Data analysis followed the systematic procedures of IPA to capture the depth and meaning of participants' lived experiences with SBC and its perceived influence on Ryff's model of PWB. According to Smith et al. (2022), this procedure involves several steps: (a) line-by-line reading of transcripts; (b) taking notes with each reading of the transcript to capture conceptual observations; (c) formulating emergent themes from notes for each transcript; and (d) clustering related themes into superordinate categories, while continually cross-referencing the original data to ensure fidelity to participants' voices. I completed the first two steps independently for each transcript before identifying patterns of convergence and divergence across all cases. The analytic process involved multiple coding, clustering, and abstraction cycles to move from descriptive accounts to interpretative themes. Table 2 presents my themes, categories, and codes.

Table 2*Themes, Categories, and Codes*

Theme	Subtheme	Code
Interpersonal processes and identity development	Agency and mastery	Autonomy, environmental mastery, self-efficacy
	Awareness and insight	Self-awareness, sense-making
	Identity and meaning	Identity shift, self-acceptance
	Existential fulfillment	Purpose & meaning
Emotional and cognitive appraisal	Emotional responses	Ambivalence, negative emotion
	Expectations and discrepancies	Expectations vs. reality, unmet needs
	Evaluation of coaching	Perceived benefit, perceived cost
	Turning points	Critical incidents
Strengths engagement and Application	Recognition of strengths	Discovery of strengths
	Operationalization of strengths	Applications of strengths
	Reframing weaknesses	Marginalization of weaknesses
Relational dynamics and social exchange	Alliance and process	Coach–coachee relationship, coaching process
	Trust & safety	Trust & safety
	Supportive bonds	Supportive relationship
	Reciprocal exchanges	Reciprocity
	Challenges and ruptures	Relational conflict
Overarching well-being outcomes	Flourishing and positive affect	Enhanced well-being
	Interpersonal outcomes	Positive relations
	Trajectory of growth	Personal growth, resilience

Although the goal was to obtain 10 to 15 participants, my initial data saturation checks with seven participants allowed me to discontinue recruitment. I achieved data saturation with these participants, as recurring patterns and themes emerged across interviews. According to Fusch and Ness (2015), data saturation is achieved when no new information, codes, or themes emerge from additional interviews, and the data begin to exhibit redundancy. In this study, saturation was reached after interviewing seven participants, as recurring patterns of meaning consistently emerged across their narratives. Each new transcript confirmed and elaborated on the existing codebook, rather than introducing novel categories or themes. By the sixth and seventh interviews, participant reflections reinforced the primary thematic clusters without adding new conceptual dimensions. This iterative confirmation demonstrated that the dataset was sufficiently rich and comprehensive to answer the research question, supporting the decision to close recruitment.

Saturation was tracked using an iterative coding process, where each transcript was coded independently, and emerging codes were documented and compared against existing ones. Braun and Clarke (2021) suggested that saturation is defined not just as repetition, but as a point where additional data offers diminishing returns in terms of analytic insight. The final coding matrix and conceptual map illustrate that codes, categories, and themes stabilized, and participants' accounts consistently mapped onto these established structures. This iterative process, supported by member checking and reflexive notes, provided clear evidence that saturation had been reached (Saunders et al., 2018). In addition, this process gave me the confidence that the findings authentically

reflect the participants' lived experiences and the central dynamics of the phenomenon under study.

In addition, from an IPA perspective, this process emphasizes depth of exploration over breadth, focusing on a small, information-rich sample to examine the complexity of lived experience (J. Smith et al., 2022). For studies utilizing IPA, sample sizes of six to ten participants are typical and considered sufficient to achieve analytic depth while maintaining idiographic rigor (J. A. Smith & Nizza, 2021). This study aligns with these methodological guidelines, as the smaller sample allowed for detailed line-by-line coding, reflexive engagement, and clustering of codes into categories and themes, while ensuring that saturation was systematically monitored after each interview. Therefore, the final sample was appropriate for the phenomenological design and adequate to support rigorous analysis and interpretation.

Initial Reading and Familiarization

While listening to each interview, I edited the transcripts to make them more readable (e.g., eliminating unnecessary spacing and correcting errant words), following standard qualitative data preparation practices to ensure accuracy and clarity (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I then applied the IPA process of Smith et al. (2022). I engaged in repeated readings of each interview to become deeply immersed in the narratives, a step essential for capturing the idiographic essence of participants' lived experiences (van Manen, 2016). This stage included active listening to the recordings alongside the transcripts to maintain the nuance of tone, pacing, and emotional inflection, enhancing interpretive fidelity as recommended in phenomenological methodologies

(Moustakas, 1994; Peoples, 2021). I recorded preliminary notes during these readings to capture descriptive comments, observations about language use, and emerging reflections about participants' meaning-making, aligning with IPA's iterative approach to initial sense-making and thematic development (J. Smith et al., 2022; Willig et al., 2017). This process allowed me to delve into the meaning of each transcript.

Coding, Clustering, and Abstraction

Coding proceeded through a combination of deductive and inductive approaches. Although IPA emphasizes inductive processes to ensure that themes emerge organically from participants' lived experiences, scholars acknowledge that interpretation cannot occur in isolation from the researcher's prior knowledge and theoretical orientation. Smith et al. (2022) contended that analysis is always situated within a hermeneutic context, where the researcher brings disciplinary perspectives into dialogue with participants' accounts. This perspective legitimizes the inclusion of deductive codes, which function as sensitizing concepts that help connect participants' meaning-making to broader theoretical frameworks. In addition, Larkin et al. (2006) further argued that IPA's interpretative depth requires not only attending to participants' sense-making but also situating those experiences within established psychological constructs, thereby allowing for deductive engagement alongside inductive emergence. Similarly, Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014) described IPA as a dynamic process that involves oscillation between the data and theory, ensuring that interpretation remains phenomenologically grounded and conceptually meaningful. More broadly, Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) described this dual process as a hybrid approach to qualitative analysis, where theory-driven

sensitizing concepts guide deductive coding while inductive insights ensure fidelity to participants' voices. Saldaña (2021) likewise emphasized that qualitative coding rarely occurs in a purely inductive or deductive manner; instead, researchers move fluidly between these modes to balance theoretical relevance with idiographic depth. Together, these perspectives support a methodological rationale for employing both inductive and deductive coding in IPA: inductive coding preserves the idiographic richness of participants' accounts. In contrast, deductive coding situates those accounts within the broader theoretical discourse, thereby enhancing the rigor and relevance of the analysis.

Deductively, I applied sensitizing concepts drawn from the study's conceptual frameworks, including PPC, PWB, and SET, to identify codes that reflected theoretically grounded constructs such as resilience, self-acceptance, and perceived cost. Table 3 contains my deductive codes. Inductively, I allowed codes to emerge directly from participants' language and lived accounts, such as ambivalence, unmet needs, and identity shift. This dual approach ensured that the analysis remained firmly situated in participant experience while reflecting broader theoretical constructs. Appendix D contains my codebook. After initial coding, I examined the codes for connections, overlaps, and divergences. Related codes were clustered into subthemes. Through abstraction, these clusters were further synthesized into higher-order concepts pointing to shared meaning structures across cases.

Table 3*Deductive Codes*

Concept	Deductive code
Positive psychology coaching	Resilience, coaching process
Psychological well-being	Self-acceptance, personal growth
Social exchange theory	Perceived benefit, perceived cost
Strengths-based coaching	Discovery of strength, application of strength

Cross-Case Synthesis and Emergent Themes

In keeping with IPA's commitment to idiographic orientation, each case was analyzed individually before conducting a cross-case synthesis. This approach preserved the uniqueness of each participant's account while enabling the identification of converging themes, consistent with J. Smith et al.'s (2022) emphasis on beginning with detailed case-by-case analysis before moving to shared structures across cases. Eatough and Smith (2017) further affirmed that idiographic immersion followed by cross-case synthesis ensures that phenomenological depth is maintained while also enabling interpretative generalizability. Cross-case analysis highlighted commonalities (e.g., increased self-efficacy through SBC) and divergences (e.g., varying degrees of emotional ambivalence about coaching), which align with Pietkiewicz and Smith's (2014) guidance that IPA requires attention to convergence and divergence across cases.

The cross-case synthesis allowed me to identify superordinate themes from the clustered categories that captured the essence of participants' meaning-making across cases. The five emergent themes, (a) Intrapersonal Process and Identity Development, (b)

Emotional and Cognitive Appraisal, (c) Strengths Engagement and Appraisal, (d) Relational Dynamics and Social Exchange, and (e) Overarching Well-Being Outcomes, reflected the idiographic depth of individual cases and the shared structures of experience across participants.

In IPA, the identification and exploration of discrepant or negative cases serve as a critical mechanism for enhancing the credibility and depth of the thematic structure (Eatough & Smith, 2017; J. Smith et al., 2022). A discrepant case would be represented by a participant whose lived experience fundamentally contradicts or falls outside the emergent superordinate themes, thereby challenging the claimed essence of the phenomenon. In the present study, systematic examination of all seven transcripts revealed no such fully discrepant cases. At the same time, variation existed in the intensity and valence of reported experiences—most notably SBC03’s pronounced frustration with group-based delivery formats:

We’re being coached in a group. But candidly, oftentimes those are like a short series of sessions, and then you’re just out in the world together. Whereas it would be great if it was like a continued conversation where we get to really if we’re all on a team, let’s like, let’s just own it, and live in that space of like having that awareness and utilizing that information.

Also of note was SBC06’s explicit rejection of strengths-based approaches in dysfunctional team contexts: “There were some bad, just not a lot of synergies in the team, and it wasn’t just, I mean, it wasn’t strengths, wasn’t the good thing.” Every participant described a pattern of facilitative and adverse effects on PWB. This pattern

included enhanced self-awareness, purpose, and resilience alongside experiences of weakness marginalization, unmet needs, ambivalence, and occasional negative emotion.

Far from constituting outliers, these accounts enriched the superordinate themes, particularly “Emotional and Cognitive Appraisal” and “Strengths Engagement and Application,” by illustrating the inherent duality of SBC. The absence of participants who reported either exclusively positive or exclusively negative outcomes reinforces the central finding that the lived experience of SBC is characteristically ambivalent, supporting the assertion that psychological flourishing is contingent upon coaches’ deliberate integration of strengths with conscious attention to vulnerabilities (Schermluy & Graßmann, 2019; van Zyl et al., 2020b). This uniformity across cases, rather than weakening the analysis, underscores the phenomenological essence captured herein: a shared tension between empowerment and potential overshadowing of the whole self.

Reflexivity and Bracketing

I used bracketing practices throughout the analysis to manage bias and enhance confirmability. In phenomenological research, bracketing is widely recognized as a means of setting aside preconceptions to focus on participants’ lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994). Within IPA specifically, J. Smith et al. (2022) emphasized that while complete bracketing may be impossible, researchers must nonetheless engage in reflexive practices to critically examine how their assumptions may influence their interpretation critically. To this end, I employed reflexive memos and notebook entries to surface my assumptions, positionality, and emotional responses during analysis. For instance, these entries revealed my initial belief that SBC outcomes would predominantly be positive,

rooted in my own professional background in organizational development, which I bracketed to remain open to participants' reports of negative effects, such as unmet needs.

Additionally, I identified a tendency to overemphasize relational harmony in coach-coachee dynamics, prompting me to revisit data for evidence of conflicts and ensure balanced theme development. Such practices reflect the guidance of Finlay (2002), who argued that reflexivity enables researchers to remain attentive to participants' voices as the primary data source while acknowledging the interpretative role of the researcher. These reflexive strategies thus enhanced the confirmability and transparency of the analytic process.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research requires careful attention to credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In this study, multiple strategies were employed to establish rigor and transparency, aligning with the methodological commitments of IPA. Credibility was supported by sustained engagement with the data, which involved repeated readings of the interview transcripts, iterative coding, and thematic clustering. Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified prolonged engagement and persistent observation as central techniques for establishing credibility, whereas Shenton (2004) emphasized the use of participant quotations to substantiate interpretive claims. In keeping with these recommendations, direct participant quotations are presented throughout the results to illustrate the themes and validate interpretations. Member checking further enhanced

credibility, consistent with Merriam and Tisdell's (2016) guidance that participants' feedback assures accuracy and resonance. In this study, participants received their transcripts and thematic interpretations by email and were invited to confirm or contest them. No participants raised objections, and several expressed affirmation that the interpretations accurately captured their experiences.

Transferability was enhanced by providing thick, descriptive accounts of the study context, participant demographics, and setting. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Shenton (2004) argued, thick description enables readers to determine the applicability of findings to other contexts. Accordingly, details regarding gender, estimated age ranges, industries, roles, educational backgrounds, and coaching exposure are provided, allowing readers to assess how the findings may apply to their own contexts. Dependability was ensured by maintaining a detailed audit trail that documented analytic decisions throughout the coding and theme development stages. Audit trails, as recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and reinforced by Nowell et al. (2017), enhance dependability by making analytic decisions transparent. This trail (see Appendix E) included reflections on coding decisions, category clustering, and justification for theme construction.

Finally, consistent with recommendations of Merriam and Tisdell (2016) and Patton's (2015) to actively seek and address discrepant or negative cases, all seven transcripts were systematically examined for data or participant accounts that contradicted or fell outside the emergent thematic structure. No fully discrepant cases were identified; every participant described both facilitative and adverse effects of SBC on PWB. Rather than indicating analytical oversight, this consistent duality across the

sample was interpreted, in keeping with IPA (J. Smith et al., 2022), as phenomenologically significant, reinforcing the shared essence of the lived experience and further strengthening the confirmability and overall trustworthiness of the findings.

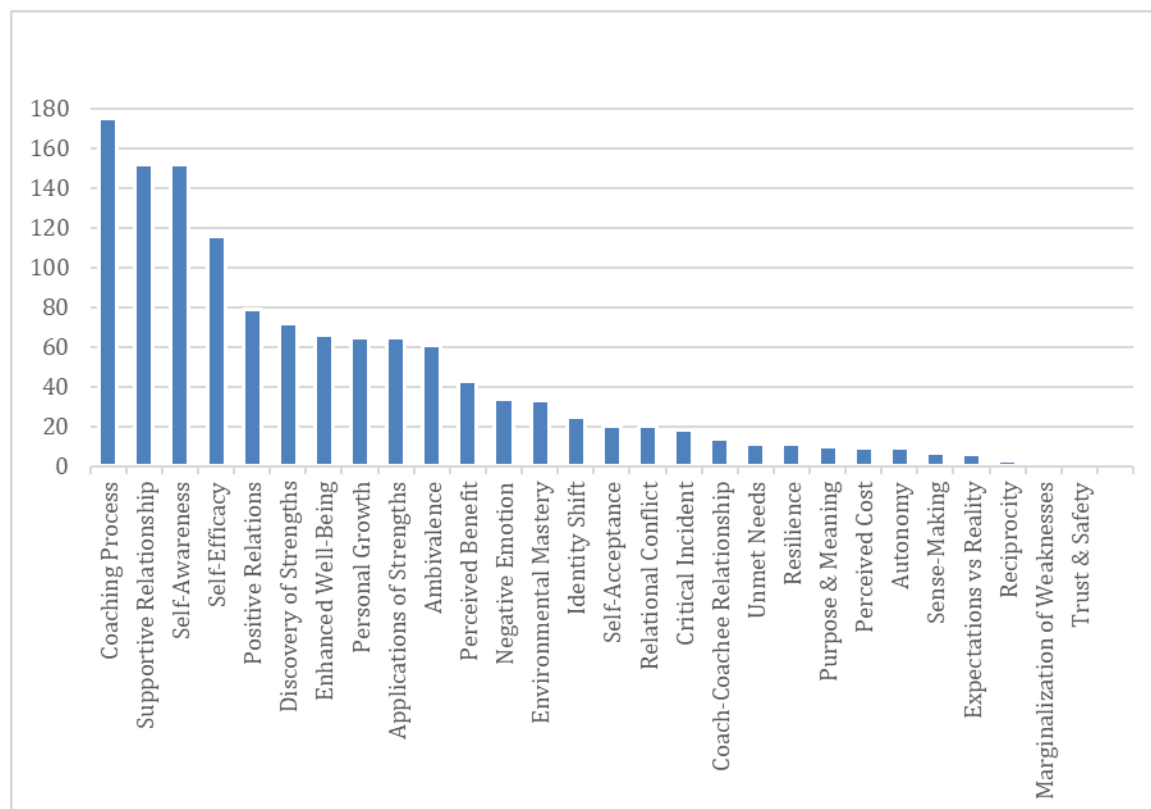
Confirmability was supported through bracketing, in which I maintained reflexive memos and notebook entries that surfaced my assumptions, biases, and emotional responses during the analytic process. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described reflexivity and audit trails as key strategies for enhancing confirmability, whereas Finlay (2002) emphasizes the importance of reflexive practice in ensuring that the researcher remains attentive to participants' voices as the primary source of data. By explicitly acknowledging and holding preconceptions in abeyance, I reduced the risk of imposing my perspective on participants' accounts. Combined with the dual deductive–inductive coding strategy and member checking, these practices ensured that the findings were grounded in participant narratives while interpreted with methodological rigor.

Results

The results of this study are presented thematically, consistent with the analytic process described in the preceding section. Using IPA, I engaged in iterative cycles of deductive and inductive coding to move from detailed descriptions of participants' accounts toward interpretative themes that captured shared structures of meaning. Deductive coding drew on the conceptual frameworks of PPC, PWB, and SET, which sensitized the analysis to constructs such as resilience, self-acceptance, perceived benefit, and discovery of strengths. At the same time, inductive coding ensured that participants' voices remained primary, allowing concepts such as ambivalence, unmet needs, and

Figure 5

Column Chart of Code Frequency



The thematic structure that resulted from this process consists of five superordinate themes: (a) Intrapersonal Process and Identity Development, (b) Emotional and Cognitive Appraisal, (c) Strengths Engagement and Appraisal, (d) Relational Dynamics and Social Exchange, and (e) Overarching Well-Being Outcomes. These themes reflect the idiographic depth of individual cases and the broader patterns that cut across participants' experiences. According to J. Smith et al. (2022), the inclusion of verbatim extracts is crucial in IPA to illustrate how interpretations remain grounded in participants' lived experiences. Similarly, Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014) highlighted that

quotations serve to illustrate convergence and divergence across cases, whereas Shenton (2004) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016) noted that presenting participants' words strengthens credibility by enabling readers to trace the connection between data and interpretation. To ensure transparency and trustworthiness, representative quotations are presented within each theme to substantiate the interpretations and demonstrate the grounding of analytic claims in participants' narratives.

In keeping with IPA's idiographic orientation, each case was first analyzed individually before themes were synthesized across cases. J. Smith et al. (2022) emphasized that IPA requires detailed engagement with each participant's account before conducting cross-case analysis. In contrast, Eatough and Smith (2017) noted that this idiographic immersion preserves phenomenological depth before the abstraction process. This approach honored the uniqueness of each participant's lived experience while allowing for the identification of converging and diverging elements across the sample.

Additionally, as Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014) explained, IPA demands attention to both convergence and divergence across cases, ensuring that individual voices remain visible within shared experiential structures. Systematic attention was devoted to the identification and exploration of potential discrepant or negative cases, consistent with Creswell and Poth's (2018) recommendation that such scrutiny is essential for strengthening trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry. Thorough examination of all seven transcripts revealed no fully discrepant cases; every participant described a combination of facilitative and adverse effects of SBC on PWB. This uniform duality, far from reflecting analytical oversight, provided further evidence of the phenomenon's shared

essence across the sample and enriched the interpretative depth of the findings. Together, these trustworthiness practices yielded a nuanced understanding of how SBC shaped participants' perceptions of themselves, their relationships, and their overall well-being. The sections that follow present the five superordinate themes in detail. Following J. A. Smith et al.'s (2022) guidance for IPA, each theme is accompanied by interpretative commentary and supported by verbatim participant quotations that illuminate both convergent and divergent experiences within the common phenomenological pattern.

Before introducing the themes, it is essential to reveal the participants' feelings about SBC. Below are the quotes for each participant regarding the question: "Overall, on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is extremely effective, how would you rate the effectiveness of SBC in your life and why?"

- SBC01: "I would rate it at 10, and especially having had other coaching as well...I not only did I set goals, which I think that's a great thing that coaching helps with is setting goals. But I set them. I exceeded them regularly...I felt better after."
- SBC02: "I'll say a 9. And the reason I say 9, I think, is back to that uh, sometimes feeling it feels a little messy and overwhelming with using strengths in balance with other tools."
- SBC03: "Yeah, for me, 7 comes to mind. That's because again, I'm bought into it. I'm here for it...But again, that gap for me, of just like what I would love in all of those situations, is to like have it as a community, and ongoing. But for me individually, the 7, maybe that's a 7.5. It's like a C+, because I

find it helpful.... So, okay. I'm gonna give it an 8, because the 8 is a B. But I still stand by my explanation. So an 8!"

- SBC04: "I would say like a solid 8. I would rank it very high. I think for someone like myself, who, I guess, had imposter syndrome most of her career—um, also working in male-dominated industries most of her career, too. Um. The coaching really helped me kind of balance, or like balance my, like my weaknesses, my discomforts, and the challenges that I needed."
- SBC05: "There's no other way... So, having a framework and different tools like radical candor and strengths-based coaching, where you can learn more about yourself with Cliftons. I'd say it's a 10 for me. I find strengths-based coaching in my life and at work has been a great avenue, um, to understand what I need as non-negotiables, too."
- SBC06: "I would say at 8 because I'm able to use it on a personal level and professional level. I don't think it's just words on the page whenever I read [it], when I study it. It fits me."
- SBC07: "I think it's at least a 9... So I got that other kind of reaffirmation about, you know, how I have evolved, and how much of that has been really clearly attached to what I believe were strengths. Um, I have reason to believe we're strengths."

All participants rated the effectiveness of their SBC as 8 or higher. The average rating was 8.86. Their accounts indicate that their experience with SBC had a lasting impact on their lives.

Theme 1: Intrapersonal Processes and Identity Development

The first superordinate theme, Interpersonal Processes and Identity Development, emerged as a foundational aspect of participants' lived experiences with SBC. This theme encapsulates how coachees navigated the interplay between their evolving sense of self and their relational contexts, fostering a deeper integration of personal agency and identity. Drawing on the conceptual framework, this theme aligns with the emphasis of PPC on leveraging strengths for growth (Kauffman, 2006), while incorporating Ryff's (2014) dimensions of PWB, particularly those related to self-direction and relational fulfillment. Participants described SBC not merely as a tool for skill-building but as a transformative process that reshaped their intrapersonal narratives and interpersonal dynamics, often revealing a tension between empowerment and the need for balanced self-understanding. Four subthemes constituted this overarching theme: *Agency and Mastery*, *Awareness and Insight*, *Identity and Meaning*, and *Existential Fulfillment*. Each subtheme is illustrated below with idiographic excerpts from participants' narratives, highlighting the nuanced ways SBC influenced their developmental trajectories.

Agency and Mastery

Participants described SBC as a catalyst for enhanced control over their environments and decisions, embodying autonomy, environmental mastery, and self-efficacy. This subtheme underscores how coaching empowers coachees to navigate challenges with greater confidence, aligning with PWB's emphasis on self-directed functioning. For instance, one participant reflected on leveraging SBC to address personal limitations proactively:

So when people have told me over the years things like I appreciate you listening to me, I mean, I can just suck that stuff up. So, just listening to feedback from around me, but also listening to feedback and saying, 'Hey, you're not that great in that area.' And so I'm much better from a coaching standpoint, as an example, a much better coach. (SBC07)

This narrative illustrates a shift toward mastery, where the identification of strengths prompted practical adaptations in professional settings.

Another coachee highlighted initiative in workplace interactions:

So I wasn't sure if I needed to write it for you, or if you were gonna write it. So I allowed time to go ... So I guess the ball was in my court ... So I wrote it, and I said it just like that to her. (SBC05)

Here, SBC fostered autonomy by encouraging assertive problem-solving amid relational dynamics. A third participant noted team-level application:

If you have everybody on your team, because then you can ... we did this, we mapped out everybody's strengths on the team, and we could see where we had, Oh, look! A lot of us have the same strength. Only one person has this, and oh, think we have a gap and a strength ... So, I mean, I think it's a good team-building tool. (SBC04)

This participant was emphasizing how mapping strengths enhanced environmental control, though subtly revealing the need for balance to avoid overreliance on positives. Collectively, these experiences portray agency as an emergent outcome, where SBC

equipped participants with tools for resilient adaptation, yet implied potential gaps if vulnerabilities remained unaddressed.

Awareness and Insight

This subtheme captures the heightened self-awareness and interpretive processes participants underwent, often leading to profound personal revelations. Rooted in sense-making and self-awareness codes, it reflects the phenomenological essence of uncovering hidden facets of one's psyche through SBC. One participant articulated early gains: "And, helps me, you know, gain some insights about myself and things like that" (SBC02), illustrating how coaching prompted reflective clarity on personal patterns.

Echoing this, another described stylistic discernment: "I had so many, like there were probably 10 or 12 supervisors at the time when I was coming in, and everyone had different styles, and I was shadowing coaching sessions" (SBC05), where observation via SBC sharpened intuitive understanding of one's approach. A third coachee shared an initial intuitive draw: "But I had met this person, and I felt like this was the person I wanted to work with, probably because she was positive in nature" (SBC01), highlighting emergent awareness of preferences that deepened relational self-insight. These accounts demonstrate how SBC served as a mirror for internal dynamics, fostering insight that contributed to PWB, while underscoring the study's call for integrating challenges to prevent superficial self-views.

Identity and Meaning

Participants frequently narrated SBC as a transformative force in reshaping self-concept, blending identity shifts with self-acceptance. This subtheme aligns with PWB's

self-acceptance dimension, revealing how coaching challenged negative narratives while promoting integration of strengths and flaws. One coachee described overcoming internalized doubts: “I learned to push myself out of my comfort zone and fight imposter syndrome” (SBC04), exemplifying an evolution of identity toward authenticity.

Building on this, another reflected on embracing limitations: “I got some weak spots. Then the question becomes, what’s the impact of those weak spots?” (SBC07), where SBC encouraged a balanced self-narrative. A third participant noted innate acceptance: “I was just born like that. So when people accept who they are, I appreciate that about it” (SBC06), illustrating how strength recognition solidified a congruent identity. These lived experiences highlight SBC’s dual potential: empowering identity reconstruction while risking marginalization if weaknesses are overlooked, thus informing the ethical implications of coaching.

Existential Fulfillment

At the core of this theme, participants expressed SBC’s contribution to a more profound sense of purpose and values alignment, evoking existential fulfillment as a pinnacle of identity development. This subtheme, tied to purpose and meaning codes, reflects PWB’s purpose-in-life facet, where coaching clarified life’s direction. One coachee linked it to career trajectories: “Um, as I kind of explored career options, I really just ended up in a position, and in a role, in organizational development and coaching, where the opportunity presented itself to um get certified” (SBC02), demonstrating alignment with vocational mission.

Another described mantra integration:

I think over the years, too, it's been more a bit more clarity when people would say, What are you...what do you want to do, and what strengths do you bring?... What are the gifts? That's in my mission statement with the gifts God gave to you. Gave to me...I give to you. (SBC07)

This statement revealed how the participant's strengths reframing infused purposeful living. A third highlighted collective purpose:

It can be really powerful in groups, if it's bought in and continued on, I'm gonna leave you with that, as my opinion... The most recent one that I did was in my current role in my current department, and it was across our entire team of, I think, like there's 4 or 5 people, maybe right. And so, it was great to like come together on our off-site and see how it shakes out across the different attributes, the different types of roles within our group. (SBC03)

This statement shows extending fulfillment to shared endeavors. These narratives affirm the SBC's capacity for holistic growth, yet emphasize the need for a balanced approach to sustain long-term PWB and social resilience.

Analytic Synthesis

Across cases, Interpersonal Processes and Identity Development illustrates SBC's capacity to weave personal agency with relational identity, yielding profound developmental outcomes that extend beyond isolated skill enhancement to holistic self-reconstruction. Participants' narratives, rich with idiographic detail, reveal how strengths identification not only amplified individual competencies but also recalibrated relational dynamics, fostering a symbiotic evolution where self-mastery informed interpersonal

authenticity and vice versa. These subthemes, encompassing *Agency and Mastery*, *Awareness and Insight*, *Identity and Meaning*, and *Existential Fulfillment*, collectively affirm the conceptual framework's emphasis on balanced growth, as articulated by Grant and Atad (2022), who underscore the role of coaching in integrating positive psychology principles to cultivate sustainable well-being without negating life's inherent complexities.

However, this theme also issues a cautionary note against overlooking the relational nuances that shape fulfillment, such as the potential for identity shifts to unsettle established social bonds if not navigated with intentionality (Schermyly & Graßmann, 2019). For instance, although SBC propelled participants toward greater autonomy and purpose, it occasionally surfaced tensions in self-acceptance when strengths-focused dialogues inadvertently sidelined vulnerabilities, echoing Ryff and Singer's (2008) multidimensional model of PWB, which posits that proper flourishing demands equilibrium across self-directed agency and warm, trusting relations. This duality highlights SBC's transformative potential as a relational scaffold for identity work. Yet, it underscores the ethical imperative for coaches to attune to these interpersonal undercurrents, ensuring that developmental gains do not come at the expense of emotional coherence. Ultimately, by illuminating these processes, the theme contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how SBC can catalyze eudaimonic growth (Seligman, 2011), informing practitioner strategies that honor both the light of strengths and the shadows of relational interdependence.

Theme 2: Emotional and Cognitive Appraisal

The second theme, Emotional and Cognitive Appraisal, delineates the evaluative and affective dimensions of participants' engagements with SBC, revealing the interpretive lenses through which coachees processed their experiences. This theme foregrounds the psychological undercurrents of coaching, where cognitive reflections on expectations and outcomes intersect with emotional responses, often yielding a spectrum from affirmation to disquietude. Grounded in the study's conceptual framework, it draws upon SET's emphasis on perceived costs and benefits in relational transactions (Blau, 1964) and PPC's focus on emotional regulation for well-being (Kauffman, 2006). Participants' accounts illuminated how SBC prompted critical self-appraisals, sometimes amplifying positive affect but also surfacing dissonances that challenged unexamined assumptions. Comprising four subthemes—*Emotional Responses*, *Expectations and Discrepancies*, *Evaluation of Coaching*, and *Turning Points*—this theme highlights the importance of attending to these appraisals to ensure the ethical integrity of coaching interventions.

Emotional Responses

Coachees articulated a spectrum of emotions, ranging from ambivalence to outright negative affect, as SBC's strengths-centric approach evoked conflicting feelings that tested their resilience. This subtheme, encompassing ambivalence and negative emotion codes, highlights the "shadows" of coaching, where positive intent sometimes clashed with lived realities, per Schermuly and Graßmann's (2019) warnings on adverse effects. One participant conveyed a mix of empowerment and doing too much:

If I have a strategic thinking mindset, this is going into overusing it, in the sense that it's collecting that data and having to have all of this to kind of ease my mind, thinking that, and since I support executives, I want to be, I always want to be ready. So I over-index on getting too much information quite often, because I'm trying to prepare for 12 different executives, because I don't know what they're gonna ask of me. And so that way, mentally is not always good, because I need to get a better balance...because I will just keep collecting data, studying, reviewing, and just gathering to try to be prepared. (SBC06)

This statement illustrates the emotional toll of sustained effort amid perceived gains.

Another expressed frustration from mismatched group dynamics:

When we did a breakout, we did the breakout as just our administrative teams, not the people who actually work together. And it felt like such a gap because we were asked specific questions of, oh, how do you think this will help you work together better? And we're like, we literally are never gonna work together. (SBC03)

These words reveal negative emotions tied to overlooked relational contexts. A third coachee reflected initial uncertainty: "Well, that's an interesting question. I was seeking coaching for the 1st time, and didn't really know too much" (SBC01), capturing ambivalence in early engagement that evolved into deeper processing. These narratives highlight how emotional responses influenced PWB, advocating for coaches to address this duality to mitigate strain and foster genuine flourishing.

Expectations and Discrepancies

This subtheme explores the gaps between anticipated and actual SBC outcomes, where unmet needs and reality mismatches prompted reevaluation and, at times, disappointment. Grounded in expectations versus reality and unmet needs codes, it reflects SET's cost-benefit dynamics, as participants weighed idealized coaching against practical limitations. One coachee described exhaustion:

Um, constantly being the manager and the leader at work, and then coming home and being the leader again, and not having anything else to give. Um. So the well runs dry, and that's what I found by focusing on my strengths so much at home and at work, there was a lot of knocking on doors at work, and even virtually when we weren't in the Gainesville or in the Des Moines site, or in the brick and mortar of [my house]. (SBC05)

The participant highlights the discrepancies in access that hindered full engagement.

Echoing this, another noted unexpected avoidance:

Um. I take on a lot of others' emotions, so I can calm down a situation, you know, like the best of them. But then I can really realize I dodged the actual, direct conversation I needed to have, because I want them to feel better. I want everybody to be happy and be positive, and be in a good mood. But, by doing that, I'm diverting what really needs to be said. (SBC04)

The statement shows how initial empathy gave way to conflict avoidance. A third participant pointed to relational boundaries and getting overwhelmed: "I think if strengths was the only thing I used all the time, it'd be easier, like from a life perspective, it's

definitely become part of my thinking and things like that. But in a professional setting, there's other tools and certifications, and resources that we use. So sometimes, I can get a little bogged down in how do those blend and interact" (SBC02), underscoring unmet desires for clarity in interactions. These accounts reveal how discrepancies influenced cognitive appraisals, reinforcing the need for adaptive coaching practices to bridge such gaps and enhance PWB.

Evaluation of Coaching

Participants engaged in balanced assessments of SBC's value, weighing perceived benefits against costs in a manner evocative of SET's reciprocal exchanges. This subtheme captures evaluative judgments that informed overall satisfaction, often revealing the tension between professional gains and hidden drawbacks. One coachee highlighted certification advantages after receiving SBC:

When I was with 'Company A', they gave us um as HRVPs, they had trainers to train-the-trainer. And, I could facilitate strengths, and I did the top 5. But, Company B gave me the opportunity to get the true certified, or the true Gallup.
(SBC06)

The participant emphasized the tangible benefits in skill enhancement.

In contrast, another described inefficient processes:

I'll just say to like, I'm bought into focusing on strengths... But like for me, it's really like where I fit in a system of others. So that's...that's like the struggle for me of like, okay, I'm trying to understand if I'm this strength or base archetype, what is someone else like if I'm interacting with them on a regular basis? And

that kind of goes back to the coaching of like, okay, we're being coached in a group. But, candidly, oftentimes those are like a short series of sessions, and then you're just out in the world together. (SBC03)

These words highlight the perceived costs such as wasted effort. A third expressed bureaucratic frustration: "So send out a Bravo or Thank You, or an impression...A monetary bravo, had to go to an AVP vote, Okay? Like, give me a f\$&@ing break, the budget's \$5,000...throw a manager a hundred dollars, will you" (SBC05), illustrating emotional and temporal investments that tempered positives. These evaluations underscore SBC's dual nature, informing implications for ethically grounded practices that maximize benefits while minimizing relational and psychological costs.

Turning Point

Turning Points emerged as pivotal junctures where appraisals crystallized, often catalyzing shifts in perspective or behavior. This category, aligned with the critical incident code, reflects phenomenological pivotal moments that amplified cognitive reevaluation, as per de Haan's (2021) insights on the complexities of managed coaching. One participant recounted a team realization: "Only one person has this, and oh, think we have a gap and a strength. And maybe we have a project coming up, and we need to find somebody with that strength because nobody on our team has it" (SBC04), marking a transformative awareness of imbalances.

Another described early exposure: "I was probably working for um, group or somebody, and so, just in that sphere of we ought to...we ought to take the things that we

recommend” (SBC07), as a catalyst for self-application. A third noted a shifting mentality, highlighting behavioral pivots in interactions:

And, after learning my teammates’ strengths and mine, how we’re different. But we’re a good team. I pivoted. And asking so many questions, in the sense that I need that to fill my bucket, they don’t need it. So I pause more than I used to.

(SBC06)

These incidents demonstrate how appraisals drove adaptive growth, yet emphasize the study’s call for careful navigation to prevent negative PWB impacts.

Analytic Synthesis

Across participants, Emotional and Cognitive Appraisal elucidates the evaluative scaffolding of SBC, where affective resonances and cognitive reckonings converge to appraise its profound yet precarious influence on well-being. Participants’ idiographic disclosures, from ambivalent undercurrents to pivotal realignments, portray coaching as a double-edged dialectic—affirming growth while exposing fissures in expectation and equity. This theme reinforces the framework’s integration of PPC’s aspirational ethos with SET’s pragmatic scrutiny (Emerson, 1976; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), highlighting how unaddressed discrepancies may outweigh the benefits, as illustrated in de Haan’s (2021) cautionary analysis of the psychological complexities of coaching. Yet, it also spotlights opportunities for resilience, where turning points catalyze adaptive reevaluations, harmonizing emotional flux with cognitive clarity in pursuit of eudaimonic equilibrium (Ryff, 2014). By foregrounding these appraisals, the theme advocates for

coaching praxis that embeds reflexive dialogue, mitigating shadows to amplify sustainable flourishing and relational reciprocity.

Theme 3: Strengths Engagement and Application

Strengths Engagement and Application elucidates the mechanisms by which participants identify, utilize, and reframe their inherent capabilities within the context of SBC. This theme emphasizes the active mobilization of strengths as a core driver of personal and professional efficacy, while also highlighting potential pitfalls in overemphasizing positives at the expense of a holistic self-view. Anchored in the conceptual framework, it integrates PPC's focus on virtue amplification for optimal functioning (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) with Ryff's (2014) eudaimonic well-being, wherein strengths serve as conduits for purposeful engagement. Participants portrayed SBC as a dynamic process that transitioned from mere awareness to practical deployment, yet this often entailed navigating the tension between empowerment and the inadvertent diminishment of challenges. Encompassing three subthemes (*Recognition of Strengths*, *Operationalization of Strengths*, and *Reframing Weaknesses*), this theme reveals SBC's role in fostering adaptive behaviors while underscoring the ethical imperative for balanced integration.

Recognition of Strengths

This subtheme centers on the initial discovery and affirmation of inherent strengths, often marking a foundational "aha" moment that sets the stage for deeper engagement. Rooted in the discovery of strengths codes, it reflects PPC's emphasis on leveraging positives to build self-awareness, as noted by Kauffman (2006). One

participant highlighted consistent self-identification: “Interestingly enough, my number one strength is learner. And I’ve taken it several times through the years, and it always pops as my number one” (SBC06), underscoring the validating power of repeated recognition.

Another described contextual emergence: “Yeah, I’d say, in most cases, ‘cause I think I’ve experienced it mostly in professional settings. Maybe in college, but in all of them, it wasn’t that I was seeking it [SBC] out” (SBC03), illustrating how organizational introductions sparked awareness without prior intent. A third coachee tied it to historical development:

But, a lot of organizations were purposefully strength-based organizations. So all that notion, probably in the eighties, or seventies, or eighties, or nineties, about development. Let’s um build on empowering strengths. And um, so that...that’s where I 1st got into it. (SBC07)

This statement evokes long-term realization of strengths as enduring assets. These experiences affirm SBC’s role in unveiling latent potentials, yet hint at the need for inclusive approaches to encompass weaknesses for holistic PWB.

Operationalization of Strengths

Participants vividly recounted applying the strengths they had discovered in real-world scenarios, bridging theory to practice and enhancing their performance amid challenges. This subtheme, drawn from the application of strengths codes, aligns with SET’s resource exchange, where strengths became currency for adaptive behaviors. One coachee emphasized the importance of pushing boundaries: “You can push yourself and

deal with harder situations that don't necessarily fall in our natural strengths" (SBC04), demonstrating proactive use in discomfort zones.

Echoing this, another integrated it into leadership: "What resonated with my um, I guess my personality was really the strengths-based coaching. So after observing, um, and there wasn't any kind of new hire training, or anything like that for supervisors at the time" (SBC05), where personalization filled training voids. A third noted lasting integration:

Throughout the whole experience, and I think beyond right, like I think this super connector thing, or you know some of the other strengths, like I always have the more top of mind. And that like will always remain, which I think is pretty amazing. (SBC01)

This participant's words reflect enduring application in daily life. These narratives showcase SBC's efficacy in operationalizing positives for resilience, while implying ethical considerations to prevent overextension that might exacerbate unmet needs.

Reframing Weaknesses

Amid strengths engagement, coachees occasionally confronted the reframing (or marginalization) of weaknesses, where a singular focus risked dismissing vulnerabilities and straining outcomes. This subtheme, based on the marginalization of weaknesses code, echoes Schermuly and Graßmann's (2019) concerns on adverse effects, highlighting SET's cost imbalances. One participant stressed balance by questioning a strengths-only focus:

That slight mindset shift of taking a look in and a deeper dive into skills, versus just like a list or strengths. Versus just defaulting and thinking about, oh, I could do so much better at this; I just need to focus on that. But also knowing there's balance. (SBC03)

Another pointed to avoiding weakness until it festers: "I like to push things off to the side. I avoid it until it becomes urgent. Um. I think that I mean it's definitely not ideal in leadership, but...and I have had to try to check myself on that" (SBC04), revealing overlooked relational flaws. A third described session abandonment: "It wasn't the right thing for that, because it doesn't help um ... It just didn't help. That was the one session that I had to actually stop and didn't even complete it" (SBC06), underscoring dysfunction when weaknesses were sidelined. These accounts advocate for integrated coaching to mitigate shadows, fostering comprehensive PWB and social change through resilient practices.

Analytic Synthesis

Strengths Engagement and Application portrays SBC as a potent engine for self-actualization, wherein recognition ignites potential, operationalization fuels agency, and reframing navigates complexities, collectively advancing eudaimonic trajectories (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Participants' idiographic vignettes, from workshop awakenings to delegated adaptations, depict strengths as relational artifacts, malleable tools that, when applied judiciously, harmonize individual virtues with contextual demands, as Lai and Palmer (2019) integrate in their review of coaching psychology. However, this theme also unveils a dialectical edge, where marginalization risks eclipsing vulnerabilities,

potentially fracturing the reciprocity essential to SET (Blau, 1964) and diluting PPC's aspirational breadth (Kauffman, 2006). For example, although operational successes amplified efficacy, unchecked reframing occasionally bred superficiality, mirroring de Haan's (2021) admonition that coaching must transcend positivity to embrace psychological depth, a perspective that underscores the risks of one-dimensional approaches leading to incomplete personal growth. This interplay advocates for a tempered praxis, wherein strengths serve not as panaceas but as scaffolds for resilient, multifaceted flourishing, ensuring applications honor the intricate weave of human capabilities and constraints, as Seligman (2011) illustrates through his emphasis on balanced well-being models that integrate positive experiences with realistic challenges to achieve lasting fulfillment.

Theme 4: Relational Dynamics and Social Exchange

The fourth theme, Relational Dynamics and Social Exchange, highlights the interactive and transactional aspects of SBC, where coachees negotiate value, trust, and mutuality within and beyond the coaching dyad. This theme foregrounds the relational scaffolding that underpins coaching efficacy, revealing how exchanges of support and reciprocity influenced perceived equity and interpersonal harmony. Informed by the conceptual framework, it leverages SET to frame coaching as a reciprocal process of costs and benefits (Emerson, 1976; Homans, 1958), intertwined with PPC relational emphasis for fostering well-being (Kauffman, 2006). Participants' narratives exposed both the fortifying bonds and latent frictions of these dynamics, often manifesting as collaborative alliances or disruptive conflicts that reshaped social contexts. Comprising

five subthemes—*Alliance and Process, Trust & Safety, Supportive Bonds, Reciprocal Exchanges, and Challenges* and *Ruptures*—this theme underscores the pivotal role of relational quality in modulating the transformative potential of coaching.

Alliance and Process

This subtheme encompasses the foundational rapport and procedural flow of SBC sessions, where collaborative structures shaped the coach–coachee bond and facilitated meaningful exchanges. Aligned with Vandaveer and Frisch’s (2022a) coaching psychology tools, this approach reflects SET’s relational investments, yielding mutual growth. One participant described external coaching by illustrating how external coaching helps with deeper insights:

30 women a year get to go through it. So, with that, it came with the strengths-based coaching... and somebody outside of your network as well, because you do want that unbiased opinion. ‘Cause I’ve had coaches inside Company C as well. They know you. They know what you can do. So they’re gonna also stay away from a lot of that tougher conversation, too. (SBC04)

Another highlighted the assessment and coaching model:

It was really the GROW model that this coach used. I remember doing several assessments in the very beginning, and, you know, giving a lot of background information. One thing that did stand out in the beginning was completing the VIA. I mean, I did other assessments as well, but that one was really interesting. And I think, so really, I want to say, like it was the GROW model... I think her

bringing out my strength because I don't think I was very good at doing that when I 1st started the process. (SBC01)

This participant emphasized how repeated assessment and consistent use of a coaching model deepened procedural trust. A third coachee noted feedback from coaching:

So just getting some feedback about having a high need for power, and then reframing that as a high need for influence and impact. So the whole um, ah, conceptual modeling about, um, motives, which is in some ways a version of play into one's strengths. I mean that's what drives you, that satisfies you, that energizes you. (SBC07)

These words underscore the criticality of feedback from the coach. These narratives reveal SBC's potential to cultivate supportive processes, yet imply the need for flexibility to prevent relational mismatches that could undermine PWB.

Trust and Safety

Participants emphasized psychological safety and transparency as cornerstones of effective SBC, enabling vulnerability and honest dialogue. This subtheme, tied to trust and safety codes, echoes Cropanzano and Mitchell's (2005) SET insights on trust as a relational currency essential for positive outcomes. One coachee reflected on initial transparency from the coach: "And the 1st person that I guess attracted me, I didn't really know it was strengths-based coaching right until she told me exactly what she did" (SBC01), highlighting trust built through clear communication.

Another shared leaning into strengths to build connections: "If I said you need to meet 'person X', then you all assume it's a done deal, and there's something about the

connectivity about it. So I would say that's the other space, just connecting people" (SBC0), demonstrating how his relationship building from strengths helps people trust his suggestions. A third described the importance of psychological safety:

If they were open, if they were open to being vulnerable, and you can only be open to being vulnerable if you have psychological safety on your team, and if you don't put in the work for that, then it's all garbage, and they're blowing smoke up your ass because they're playing a role. They're not being themselves. They're not being authentic. (SBC03)

This statement illustrates that relational safety can only be established once you are being authentic. These accounts affirm the role of trust in enhancing PWB, while advocating for safeguards against breaches that might exacerbate unintended emotional strains.

Supportive Bonds

This subtheme explores affirming relationships that extended SBC's impact, often fostering growth through empathetic connections within and beyond sessions. Grounded in supportive relationship codes, it aligns with PPC's relational pillars, as per Kauffman (2006), where bonds amplify the utilization of strengths. One participant noted personality alignment: "And what resonated with my um, I guess my personality was really the strengths-based coaching" (SBC05), revealing supportive coach matches that nurtured development.

Another described institutional networks: "I think it was probably back in a point where, um, I don't know if I attribute it to Gallup" (SBC07), emphasizing affirming organizational ties. A third coachee highlighted career-affirming roles: "Um, as I kind of

explored career options, I really just ended up in a position, and in a role, in organizational development and coaching” (SBC02), illustrating bonds leading to professional validation. These experiences underscore supportive dynamics’ contribution to resilient communities, yet highlight the ethical imperative to sustain them amid potential vulnerabilities.

Reciprocal Exchanges

Coachees described SBC as a mutual give-and-take, where fairness and balance influenced engagement and outcomes. This subtheme, based on reciprocity codes, directly invokes SET’s principles of equitable exchanges (Blau, 1964), balancing benefits with investments. One participant recounted recognition-driven inclusion: “Another leader at Company C that recognized my abilities and put me in this program” (SBC04), exemplifying reciprocal nomination in access to coaching.

Another noted relationship building:

So if I was meeting with a supervisor that didn’t report to me, I would, after a day or 2 days I would, set myself a follow-up to recognize them, or thank them for their time. And give them, I don’t know if it’s feedback, or kudos, or whatever it is... Thank you for doing that for me. I totally appreciate that. And then I had guess what, a new relationship that I could delegate to. I had someone else I could add to the list that was open to doing things for me. (SBC03)

This statement reflects reciprocal exchanges. A third highlighted family reciprocity, indicating ongoing reciprocity with family:

They're not speaking in the language of, say, strengths, or, you know, constraints, talents. But, and I'll even say, especially with my daughters, there's just a neat maturity there where I think that they know the work I do... But I think there's a level of maturity in the language and conversations that we have, because, and I think they...I think they see something there that's intentional towards them. Um, and I get to maybe experience the reciprocal side of that in the way that they talk to me and ask questions, and um, you know. (SBC02)

These narratives demonstrate how reciprocity enhances PWB, but also cautioning against imbalances that could lead to relational costs and diminished well-being.

Challenges and Ruptures

Amid relational positives, participants encountered tensions and conflicts that disrupted exchanges, often stemming from mismatched approaches or unaddressed issues. This subtheme, drawn from relational conflict codes, aligns with de Haan's (2021) views on managing coaching complexities to avert negative impacts. One coachee described approach mismatches: "They needed, like the 5 dysfunctions of a team versus a strength session, but nothing beyond that" (SBC06), revealing ruptures from inadequate framing.

Another shared confrontational resolution: "We've been working together for 5 years, and she's like, you're right" (SBC05), illustrating tensions in long-term dynamics. A third noted self-imposed boundaries: "Don't take, you know, a high-pressure project, when you know you're not ready to step up the urgency" (SBC07), highlighting internal

conflicts affecting relations. These accounts highlight the importance of proactive rupture repair in SBC to protect PWB and foster ethical, resilient practices.

Analytic Synthesis

Across cases, Relational Dynamics and Social Exchange delineates SBC as an intricate web of alliances and transactions, where supportive bonds and reciprocity propel mutual growth. However, ruptures expose vulnerabilities in the exchange calculus (Homans, 1958). Participants' idiographic reflections (from trusting alliances to conflicted advocacies) portray coaching as a relational crucible—forging resilience through equitable interplay while risking disequilibrium if imbalances persist, as Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) illustrate in their SET synthesis. This theme integrates PPC's relational optimism with SET's pragmatic lens (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), highlighting how unaddressed challenges may erode trust, in line with Vandaveer and Frisch's (2022b) call for catalyzed excellence through harmonized dynamics. For instance, although reciprocal icebreakers enriched bonds, ruptures in dysfunctional teams underscored the need for adaptive safeguards, aligning with Ryff and Singer's (2008) advocacy for multifaceted well-being through harmonious relations. This duality impels a refined praxis, wherein coaches cultivate reciprocal safety nets, transforming potential fractures into opportunities for deeper exchange and eudaimonic cohesion (Ryff, 2014), thereby elevating SBC from transactional tool to relational catalyst for enduring social flourishing.

Theme 5: Overarching Well-Being Outcomes

The fifth and culminating superordinate theme, Overarching Well-Being Outcomes, synthesizes the holistic repercussions of SBC on participants' psychological landscapes, manifesting as elevated flourishing and sustained trajectories. This theme encapsulates the summative fruits of coaching, where affective uplift and interpersonal enhancements converged with developmental resilience, often yielding profound life satisfaction. Rooted in the conceptual framework, it embodies Ryff and Keyes's (1995) multidimensional PWB model, augmented by PPC's pursuit of PERMA elements (Seligman, 2011), while acknowledging SET's influence on outcome perceptions (Blau, 1964). Coachees articulated these outcomes as enduring legacies, tempered by the interplay of gains and residual shadows, emphasizing SBC's capacity to nurture flourishing vitality. Comprising three subthemes (*Flourishing and Positive Affect*, *Interpersonal Outcomes*, and *Trajectory of Growth*), this theme affirms coaching's potential for transcendent well-being while advocating for inclusive practices.

Flourishing and Positive Affect

This category reflects the enhanced emotional states and life satisfaction that participants attributed to SBC. It aligns with PPC's PERMA elements (Seligman, 2011) and PWB's concept of positive functioning. Coachees described joy in self-realization:

So I do think that the strength-based model really had an impact. And I think a lasting impact, right, on knowing your strengths and how to use them, how they can help the connection between that, and helping me and my business. So I

would say positive emotions, doing more, so like more of the behaviors I wanted to see. (SBC01)

This statement captures the affective uplift from strength insights.

Another noted team-building positivity: “My experience with it...It’s a great team-building activity. Like just in a, in a work setting” (SBC04), linking collective engagement to overall contentment. A third expressed affirming closure:

To help others, and to kind of be, so that even though someone; if I’m just having a casual, casual conversation with you, um, and you’ve never heard of Clifton Strengths, or taken this stuff, or anything like that, the knowledge and understanding of what that, the whole premise behind, what if we, what if we went and tried to figure out what was good with people rather than what’s wrong with them, which is kind of the whole premise of coaching strengths. (SBC02)

These words extend positive affect to interpersonal validations. These narratives highlight SBC’s capacity for sustained flourishing, yet emphasize the need for balanced approaches to prevent superficial gains that overlook emotional shadows.

Interpersonal Outcomes

Participants highlighted strengthened social ties as key dividends for well-being, where SBC fostered positive relations, as per Ryff’s model, thereby enhancing communal harmony. One coachee described group cohesion, illustrating relational improvements through shared strength mapping:

If say it was a smaller group of, I don't know, like 5 or 6 people, one person was really like bought into it like I was, and they were like, Oh, like they would kind of try to tailor to my way of thinking or perceiving things. (SBC03)

Another reflected organizational ripple effects: "Better-informed coaches can lead to more resilient, satisfied, and productive employees, ultimately enhancing organizational culture and performance" (SBC07), tying coaching to broader workplace bonds. A third noted peer admiration: "And I said, Oh, really...What was the vote? We all agreed, but everyone was like, Wow, that was ballsy" (SBC05), demonstrating enhanced connections via assertive growth. These outcomes underscore SBC's role in relational PWB, informing implications for healthier communities through inclusive practices.

Trajectory Growth

This subtheme captures ongoing personal evolution and resilience, where SBC propelled adaptive trajectories aligned with PWB's growth and mastery dimensions. One participant conveyed motivational shifts: "3 Emotions... Well, I think I mean definitely like happy, accomplished, motivated, inspired" (SBC01), reflecting sustained developmental momentum. Another emphasized enduring traits: "I stand behind the report, and I...I love it" (SBC06), linking learner strengths to resilient paths. A third described program-driven progress: "I had to go through the program to get the coaching" (SBC04), illustrating structured growth fostering long-term efficacy. These experiences affirm SBC's contribution to flourishing trajectories, yet advocate for holistic integration to sustain outcomes amid life's vulnerabilities.

Analytic Synthesis

Overarching Well-Being Outcomes crystallizes SBC's legacy as a beacon for holistic flourishing, intertwining affective radiance with relational warmth and resilient evolution to forge eudaimonic tapestries (Ryff & Singer, 2008). Participants' vignettes, ranging from emotional buoyancy to adaptive fortitude, depict well-being as a dynamic harvest—reaped through the cultivation of strengths yet vulnerable to incomplete integrations, as Schermuly and Graßmann (2019) caution in their review of coaching effects. This theme harmonizes PPC's aspirational PERMA with SET's reciprocal underpinnings (Emerson, 1976; Seligman, 2011), illustrating how unbridled positivity may yield relational dividends but risks superficiality if growth trajectories overlook ruptures in relationships. For example, although team-building amplified connections, resilient advocacies underscored the need for inclusive resilience-building, resonating with van Zyl et al.'s (2020a) tools for positive classification. This synthesis propels an ethical imperative: coaches must steward these outcomes toward equilibrium, transforming short-lived gains into enduring well-being symphonies that honor human wholeness (Diener et al., 2009), thereby elevating SBC to a vanguard of societal vitality.

Summary

The results of this study revealed that participants experienced SBC as a multifaceted process that shaped their sense of self, relationships, and overall well-being. Through iterative cycles of deductive and inductive coding, five superordinate themes emerged: (a) Intrapersonal Growth and Self-Understanding, (b) Emotional and Cognitive Appraisal, (c) Strengths Utilization and Development, (d) Relational Dynamics and

Support, and (e) Overarching Well-Being Outcomes. These themes reflect the depth of participants' individual experiences and the convergence of shared patterns across cases.

The findings demonstrate that intrapersonal growth was expressed through transformative identity shifts and incremental increases in self-awareness and confidence. Participants' emotional and cognitive appraisals highlighted the importance of expectations, perceived benefits and costs, and the balance between empowerment and fatigue. Strengths utilization and development were central, as participants discovered, applied, and aligned their strengths with personal values while reframing weaknesses. Relational dynamics emphasized the significance of trust, reciprocity, and even conflict in shaping developmental outcomes. Ultimately, the overarching well-being outcomes demonstrated how participants integrated these dimensions into accounts of holistic flourishing, resilience, and purpose.

Systematic attention to potential discrepant or negative cases, combined with ongoing reflexive bracketing, strengthened the trustworthiness of the findings by safeguarding against the privileging of enthusiastic, eloquent, or value-aligned accounts. Thorough examination of all seven transcripts revealed no fully discrepant cases; rather, every participant articulated a nuanced interplay of facilitative and adverse effects on PWB. This consistent duality, far from reflecting researcher bias or sample homogeneity, served as further evidence of the phenomenon's shared phenomenological essence and enriched the interpretative rigor of the analysis. The themes suggest that SBC supported participants' PWB in complex and varied ways, reinforcing theoretical constructs from PWB and SET while highlighting novel insights unique to participants' lived

experiences. Chapter 5 builds upon these results by providing an interpretation of the findings in relation to the conceptual framework and existing literature. In doing so, it considers the implications of SBC for theory, research, and practice, as well as the potential contributions to positive organizational change and individual well-being.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore how coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC as it relates to their PWB. As detailed in Chapter 1, the study addressed a gap in the existing literature, which has predominantly focused on the positive outcomes of SBC while underexploring its potential unintended consequences, such as the marginalization of weaknesses, relational strain, or unmet needs (Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). Guided by a conceptual framework that integrates PPC, Ryff's multidimensional model of PWB, and SET, the central research question was: How do coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC in relation to their PWB?

In Chapter 4, the findings from semistructured interviews with seven U.S.-based adults who had received at least 3 months of SBC were presented using IPA. The analysis revealed a duality of outcomes, encompassing positive themes such as enhanced self-awareness, resilience, values alignment, application of strengths, and improved overall well-being; negative themes, including marginalization of weaknesses, relational strain, unmet needs, and negative emotions; and mixed themes like ambivalence, identity shifts, and discrepancies between expectations and reality. These findings underscore the complexity of SBC, highlighting its potential to foster psychological flourishing when balanced appropriately, but also risking vulnerabilities if weaknesses are overlooked.

This chapter interprets these findings in relation to the conceptual framework and existing literature, discusses their implications for theory, practice, and positive social

change, addresses the study's limitations, and provides recommendations for future research. The chapter concludes with a synthesis of the study's contributions to the field of industrial and organizational psychology, emphasizing the need for holistic, ethically grounded coaching approaches that integrate both strengths and challenges to promote authentic growth and well-being.

Interpretation of the Findings

The findings from this phenomenological study illuminate the multifaceted impact of SBC on coachees' PWB, revealing a duality of positive, negative, and mixed outcomes that both align with and extend the existing literature and conceptual framework. Through IPA of semistructured interviews with seven participants, the study captured the essence of lived experiences, emphasizing how a strengths-only focus can foster growth through enhanced self-awareness, resilience, values alignment, application of strengths, and improved overall well-being, but simultaneously introducing vulnerabilities such as marginalization of weaknesses, relational strain, unmet needs, and negative emotions. Mixed outcomes, including ambivalence, identity shifts, and discrepancies between expectations and reality, further illustrate the complexity, where coachees navigated empowering transformations alongside lingering doubts or relational tensions. This section interprets these findings in relation to the conceptual framework, integrating PPC, Ryff's (2014) multidimensional model of PWB, and SET, and compares them to prior research, highlighting convergences, divergences, and novel insights.

Alignment With the Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework provided a robust lens for understanding the dual outcomes of SBC. PPC is rooted in positive psychology principles (Kauffman, 2006; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). It posits that focusing on strengths enhances well-being through elements like PERMA (i.e., positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement; Seligman, 2011). The positive themes identified (enhanced self-awareness, resilience, values alignment, application of strengths, and improved overall well-being) directly support these principles. For instance, participants described heightened self-awareness as a catalyst for personal growth, aligning with PPC's emphasis on leveraging strengths to build engagement and meaning. One participant (SBC01) noted that an outcome of focusing on strengths, "I think it's helped me with my professional development, for sure, because I've learned so much through, like, you know, recognizing the strength I have in connecting with other people, then connecting more with people," which echoes PPC's goal of fostering flourishing (van Zyl et al., 2020b). The application of strengths in daily life further amplified this, as coachees reported tangible improvements in well-being, such as greater confidence and purpose, reinforcing PPC's transformative potential.

However, the negative and mixed outcomes reveal limitations in a purely strengths-based approach, suggesting that PPC may inadvertently create imbalances if not integrated with attention to challenges. Themes such as marginalization of weaknesses and unmet needs highlight how an exclusive focus on strengths can lead to feelings of incompleteness or frustration, potentially undermining the holistic well-being PPC aims

to promote. For example, participants expressed negative emotions, such as disappointment, when weaknesses were overlooked, leading to ambivalence, a mixed state where the empowerment from strengths coexisted with unresolved relational strain. One participant expressed that focusing on her harmony strength tends to make her avoid conflict:

Let's say that's kind of, I guess, then the negative side of it, because I tend to do short-term solutions versus long-term, like, let's fix this right here. And 'the problem' I haven't addressed. I would say that that's how it's most influenced my life, like emotionally or physically, or when I get not physically but emotionally, it's draining. (SBC04)

This duality highlights the need for a more balanced approach to PPC, where strengths are amplified without overlooking vulnerabilities, as suggested in critiques of positive psychology for its tendency to ignore negative experiences (Grant & Gerrard, 2020). Identity shifts, another mixed outcome, often emerged as coachees reconciled heightened self-awareness with discrepancies between their expectations and reality, suggesting that PPC could evolve to accommodate these transitional phases.

Ryff's (2014) model of PWB, encompassing six dimensions (self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relations with others, environmental mastery, and autonomy), served as an evaluative criterion for the findings. Positive outcomes were strongly linked to several dimensions, including enhanced self-awareness and value alignment, which supported self-acceptance and a sense of purpose in life. At the same time, resilience and the application of strengths bolstered personal growth and

environmental mastery. Participants' reports of improved well-being often reflected increased autonomy, such as making independent decisions aligned with their strengths.

Conversely, negative themes, such as relational strain and negative emotions, indicated disruptions in positive relationships and self-acceptance, where overlooking weaknesses led to interpersonal conflicts or self-doubt. For instance, unmet needs manifested as relational strain, eroding the quality of interactions with others and challenging environmental mastery. Mixed outcomes, including ambivalence and identity shifts, suggest transitional states in PWB, where coachees experienced growth in one dimension (e.g., personal growth through identity exploration) at the expense of another (e.g., temporary relational instability or discrepancies between high expectations of flourishing and the reality of lingering negative emotions). These findings extend Ryff's model by demonstrating how coaching interventions can dynamically influence PWB dimensions, sometimes creating trade-offs that require careful navigation (Ryff & Singer, 2008). They also emphasize the interplay between strengths-driven empowerment and the vulnerabilities that arise when weaknesses are marginalized.

SET framed the relational dynamics of coaching, viewing interactions as exchanges of resources with perceived costs and benefits (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1958). The findings affirmed SET's principles: positive outcomes arose from reciprocal, trusting coach-coachee relationships that yielded high benefits, such as emotional support and growth, fostering long-term relational equity (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Enhanced self-awareness and resilience often stemmed from these balanced exchanges, where coachees felt valued and supported in applying their strengths. However, negative

themes, such as relational strain and unmet needs, illustrated the perceived costs, where coachees felt the exchange was imbalanced (e.g., investing time and vulnerability without adequate addressing of their weaknesses). One participant expressed,

You can overuse certain things and find yourself being an easy button for a husband, for a family. Um, constantly being the manager and the leader at work, and then coming home and being the leader again, and not having anything else to give. (SBC05)

Mixed outcomes, such as those between expectations and reality, highlighted discrepancies in perceived fairness, where initial high expectations (benefits) clashed with actual experiences (costs), potentially eroding trust and evoking ambivalence or negative emotions. This interpretation advances SET by applying it to coaching contexts beyond traditional organizational applications, as outlined by Rogelberg (2007), which reveals how imbalances in exchanges can manifest as psychological vulnerabilities, such as the marginalization of weaknesses amplifying unmet needs, and offering fresh insights for integrating relational dynamics into positive psychology frameworks.

Relation to Existing Literature

The study's findings both corroborate and challenge prior research on SBC and coaching outcomes. Much of the literature emphasizes the positive effects, including improved performance, job satisfaction, and overall well-being (Grant & Atad, 2022; Nicolau et al., 2023; Theeboom et al., 2014). The positive themes align with this, particularly in how SBC enhances resilience and self-awareness, consistent with studies showing strengths-focused interventions boost engagement and flourishing (Lai &

Palmer, 2019; Petrone et al., 2023). For example, participants' application of strengths in real-world scenarios aligns with findings from meta-analyses indicating the efficacy of coaching in skill development and motivation (Wang et al., 2022), whereas values alignment contributes to sustained improvements in well-being.

However, the negative and mixed outcomes address a critical gap identified in the literature review (see Chapter 2), where the adverse effects of coaching are underexplored, especially in the U.S. context (de Haan, 2021; Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). Themes of marginalization, weaknesses, and negative emotions resonate with Schermuly and Graßmann's (2019) review of unintended consequences, such as increased stress or relational conflicts, which they attribute to overlooked vulnerabilities in strengths-based approaches. This study extends their work by providing qualitative depth through lived experiences, revealing mechanisms such as ambivalence, where coachees felt empowered by enhanced self-awareness yet incomplete due to unmet needs, that quantitative studies often overlook (Berglas, 2002; Grant & Gerrard, 2020). Identity shifts, a mixed theme, add nuance, suggesting SBC can prompt transformative self-reconceptualization, akin to findings in PPC on meaning-making (Passmore & Oades, 2014; Quinn et al., 2022), but with potential emotional costs not fully addressed in prior research, such as the relational strain from discrepancies between expectations and reality.

Divergences from the literature include the prominence of mixed outcomes, which highlight the complexity of SBC beyond binary positive-negative dichotomies. Although some studies have noted the relational risks of coaching (Rook et al., 2019),

this study's emphasis on expectations versus reality highlights how mismatched perceptions can amplify vulnerabilities, offering a novel perspective for refining coaching models (Ostrowski & Potter, 2023). Overall, the findings advocate for a more balanced literature that integrates dualities, aligning with calls for ethical, holistic coaching practices (Vandaveer & Frisch, 2022a), and explores the interplay between enhanced well-being and the shadows of marginalization and negative emotions.

In essence, the interpretation reveals SBC as a double-edged sword: potent for enhancing PWB through resilience, self-awareness, and values alignment when balanced, yet risky if strengths overshadow challenges, leading to relational strain, unmet needs, and ambivalence. These insights enrich the conceptual framework by demonstrating interplays among PPC, PWB dimensions, and exchange dynamics, while contributing to the literature by filling gaps in understanding unintended consequences. The following sections build on these insights to discuss implications, limitations, and recommendations.

Limitations of the Study

This phenomenological study provides valuable insights into the lived experiences of coachees with SBC and its dual impacts on PWB; however, several limitations must be acknowledged, particularly in relation to the interpretation and applicability of the findings. These limitations stem from the study's design, methodology, and sample, and they influence how the revealed themes, such as enhanced self-awareness, marginalization of weaknesses, relational strain, and ambivalence, can be generalized or applied.

First, the qualitative phenomenological approach, although ideal for capturing rich, subjective narratives, inherently limits generalizability. The findings, derived from in-depth interviews with seven participants, reflect idiographic experiences rather than broad, representative patterns (J. Smith et al., 2022). For instance, the positive themes of resilience and values alignment may be amplified in this sample due to participants' self-selection as individuals who had engaged in at least 3 months of SBC, potentially overlooking those who discontinued coaching early due to adverse outcomes. Similarly, negative themes such as unmet needs and relational strain may not fully represent diverse coaching contexts, as the study's focus on U.S.-based adults aged 35 or older excludes younger demographics and international perspectives, where cultural factors could alter PWB dynamics (e.g., collectivist vs. individualist orientations influencing relational exchanges under SET).

Second, the use of snowball sampling introduced potential selection bias, as three participants were referred through networks, leading to a sample with shared characteristics, such as professional backgrounds in organizational settings. This approach may have homogenized perspectives, affecting the diversity of mixed outcomes, such as identity shifts and discrepancies between expectations and reality. For example, if the sample skewed toward high-achieving professionals, as discussed in qualitative research methodologies by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), the reported ambivalence could underrepresent more severe vulnerabilities in less resilient populations, thereby limiting the transferability of the findings to broader groups and highlighting the need for more diverse sampling strategies in future studies.

Third, reliance on self-reported data through semistructured interviews posed risks of recall bias and social desirability bias. Participants might have retrospectively emphasized positive outcomes, such as improved well-being, but also downplayed negative emotions to align with societal expectations of coaching as a beneficial process. The reliance on self-reporting could have softened the intensity of themes such as negative emotions or relational strain, potentially underestimating the unintended consequences of SBC (Schermyly & Graßmann, 2019). Although member-checking and reflexivity were employed to enhance credibility, these measures do not eliminate subjective influences.

Additionally, the study's scope was limited to SBC, excluding comparisons with other coaching modalities (e.g., cognitive-behavioral or holistic approaches), which might have provided contrasting insights into PWB outcomes. This limitation is directly tied to the duality of the findings. Without comparative data, it is challenging to attribute relational strain solely to the differences between strengths-focused and general coaching dynamics. Finally, the small sample size ($N = 7$), although sufficient for IPA's in-depth focus, constrained the saturation of emergent themes, possibly missing nuanced variations in how PPC principles interact with PWB dimensions across larger or more varied cohorts. Thus, these limitations highlight the context-specific nature of the findings and underscore the need for cautious interpretation. They do not invalidate the results but suggest avenues for future research to address these gaps, as discussed in the following section.

Recommendations

Building on the interpretations and limitations discussed, this section provides recommendations for future research and practice. These suggestions are grounded in the study's findings, which highlight both the strengths and potential vulnerabilities of SBC in influencing PWB, thereby addressing gaps in the existing literature. By implementing these recommendations, scholars and practitioners can contribute to more holistic coaching approaches that prioritize ethical considerations and long-term well-being in industrial and organizational psychology settings.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of this study highlight the complexity of SBC outcomes; however, the small sample size and phenomenological focus limit the study's broader applicability. To address these gaps, future research should employ mixed-methods designs to combine the depth of qualitative research with the breadth of quantitative research. For instance, integrating surveys measuring Ryff's (2014) PWB dimensions pre- and post-coaching could validate the duality observed here, such as the interplay between enhanced resilience and relational strain, across larger cohorts (e.g., $N > 50$). Longitudinal studies tracking coachees over extended periods (e.g., 6–12 months post-coaching) would elucidate the sustainability of positive outcomes, such as values alignment, and the long-term effects of negative themes, including the marginalization of weaknesses. These effects could be assessed using repeated measures analysis of variance to evaluate changes in PWB over time.

Additionally, comparative research is recommended to contrast SBC with other modalities, such as cognitive-behavioral coaching (Ratiu et al., 2017) or holistic approaches that explicitly address weaknesses. These comparisons could reveal whether relational strain and unmet needs are unique to strengths-focused methods or inherent to coaching dynamics, informing refinements to PPC frameworks (van Zyl et al., 2020a). Expanding demographic diversity is crucial: future studies should include younger adults (under 35), international participants, and underrepresented groups (e.g., from diverse ethnic or socioeconomic backgrounds) to explore cultural influences on PWB outcomes, such as how collectivist values might amplify relational exchanges under SET (Vanzella-Yang & Abrutyn, 2022). Incorporating coaches' perspectives through dyadic interviews could provide a fuller view of exchange imbalances, addressing the current study's coachee-only focus.

Finally, research should investigate moderating factors, such as coach expertise, organizational context, or coachee personality traits, using advanced quantitative methods, such as structural equation modeling, to test how these variables mediate ambivalence or identity shifts and influence overall PWB outcomes. These factors could provide deeper insights into why some coachees experience pronounced relational strain while others report seamless values alignment, allowing for more tailored theoretical models. Given the evolving nature of coaching (Ostrowski & Potter, 2023), studies on virtual versus in-person SBC could examine the role of technology in fostering trust and reciprocity, particularly in the post-pandemic era. For example, experimental designs comparing platforms like Zoom with face-to-face sessions might reveal how digital

interfaces affect the perception of exchange imbalances under SET, potentially highlighting barriers to building rapport or amplifying unmet needs in virtual settings. Such investigations would not only refine PPC applications but also guide the development of hybrid coaching formats that optimize resilience and self-awareness across diverse modalities.

Recommendations for Practice

Although effective coaches inherently employ a client-driven agenda supported by powerful questioning that considers the whole person, the study's findings underscore the need to explicitly emphasize the integration of strengths with intentional attention to weaknesses within SBC to mitigate vulnerabilities, such as negative emotions and unmet needs. Coaches could enhance this by incorporating hybrid models, such as blending PPC with elements from Gestalt or humanistic coaching (Stober, 2006; Thompson, 2018), to promote balanced self-acceptance and environmental mastery. For example, session protocols might include dedicated time for exploring challenges, using tools like strength-weakness mapping exercises to align with Ryff's (2014) PWB dimensions and prevent marginalization.

Ethical training for coaches is essential, emphasizing awareness of unintended consequences (Schermyly & Graßmann, 2019). Professional development programs, such as those offered by the ICF or Walden University, should include modules on SET principles to enhance relational equity, teaching coaches to assess perceived costs and benefits through regular feedback loops (e.g., mid-coaching check-ins). According to the ICF's and Walden's websites, which discuss pathways to accreditation or certification,

core competencies, and an overview of associated programs and educational courses, there is no mention or allusion to any education on SET (Burtis, n.d.; ICF, n.d., 2025). The ICF Core Competencies, which accredited programs must align with and teach, focus on practical skills such as ethics, building trust in relationships, effective communication, and facilitating client growth, with no reference to SET or similar theoretical frameworks. Accredited program requirements emphasize a minimum number of training hours (e.g., 60+ for Level 1), coverage of these competencies, mentor coaching, and observed sessions, but do not mandate or mention specific theories, such as the SET framework.

At a broader level, workplaces can foster positive social change by embedding balanced coaching into employee development initiatives, promoting resilient teams and healthier cultures. For instance, leadership training programs could train managers in SBC techniques while emphasizing inclusivity, ensuring that the strengths application supports collective well-being without exacerbating interpersonal conflicts. Ultimately, these practices can lead to more authentic growth, aligning with the study's call for ethically grounded interventions that enhance PWB across personal and professional domains.

Implications

The findings from this phenomenological study on the lived experiences of coachees in SBC reveal a nuanced duality of outcomes and PWB, offering significant implications for coaching psychology knowledge and positive social change. By highlighting positive effects such as enhanced self-awareness, resilience, values alignment, application of strengths, and improved overall well-being alongside negative

ones like marginalization of weaknesses, relational strain, unmet needs, and negative emotions, and mixed outcomes including ambivalence, identity shifts, and discrepancies between the participants' expectations and realities, the study underscores the need for balanced approaches in coaching. These implications extend the conceptual framework by integrating PPC, Ryff's (2014) multidimensional model of PWB, and SET, and inform broader applications in industrial and organizational psychology, emphasizing how SBC can empower individuals through their strengths while also risking vulnerabilities if challenges are overlooked.

Implications for Theory

This study advances theoretical understandings of coaching by integrating and expanding upon PPC, PWB, and SET, demonstrating their interconnected roles in explaining the dual nature of SBC outcomes. PPC, which emphasizes leveraging strengths for flourishing (Kauffman, 2006; Seligman, 2011), is enriched by the findings that reveal limitations when a strengths focus marginalizes vulnerabilities, such as through unmet needs or negative emotions that undermine the intended benefits of enhanced self-awareness and resilience. This duality challenges overly optimistic views in positive psychology literature, proposing a more holistic model where PPC incorporates "shadow" elements, unintended consequences like relational strain or ambivalence, to better account for mixed outcomes, such as identity shifts where coachees experience empowering transformations alongside lingering doubts about expectations versus reality (Grant & Gerrard, 2020). For instance, the application of strengths may foster engagement and meaning in PERMA (Seligman, 2011); however,

when paired with the marginalization of weaknesses, it can evoke negative emotions, suggesting theoretical refinements as proposed by van Zyl et al. (2020b), that include mechanisms for addressing these imbalances to sustain long-term flourishing and better integrate dual outcomes in coaching models.

Ryff's (2014) PWB model is similarly extended, as the findings illustrate dynamic interplays among its dimensions: positive outcomes, such as value alignment and improved well-being, bolster self-acceptance, personal growth, and a sense of purpose in life, whereas negative themes, including relational strain and unmet needs, disrupt positive relations with others and environmental mastery. Mixed outcomes further highlight the transitional dynamics, where ambivalence arises from gains in autonomy (e.g., through resilience-building) at the potential cost of self-doubt stemming from overlooked weaknesses, prompting theorists to explore contextual moderators (e.g., the coach–coachee fit) that influence these trade-offs (Ryff & Singer, 2008). These mixed outcomes imply a need for PWB models to incorporate coaching-specific variables, such as how discrepancies between expectations and reality can temporarily hinder autonomy or positive relations, providing a more nuanced framework for evaluating developmental interventions.

For SET, the study highlights how perceived imbalances in coaching exchanges (i.e., high benefits from trust and reciprocity yielding enhanced self-awareness and the application of strengths versus costs, such as relational strain and negative emotions) manifest as psychological vulnerabilities (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Positive exchanges foster relational equity, supporting improved well-being. However,

when unmet needs or the marginalization of weaknesses tip the balance, they evoke ambivalence and erode trust, as seen in participants' experiences of identity shifts amid strained interactions. This application to coaching contexts advances SET beyond traditional organizational exchanges, suggesting new theoretical constructs for relational equity in developmental relationships, such as "exchange ambivalence" to capture the mixed outcomes where perceived fairness clashes with reality (Rogelberg, 2007; Vanzella-Yang & Abrutyn, 2022). Overall, these theoretical implications call for an interdisciplinary integration that bridges positive psychology with relational and phenomenological theories to develop comprehensive models of coaching efficacy, addressing dualities such as empowerment through resilience alongside the risks of negative emotions (de Haan, 2021; Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019). Future theorizing could formalize these interplays into predictive frameworks, enhancing the explanatory power of PPC, PWB, and SET in diverse settings and accounting for how strengths-driven approaches can both align values and strain relations.

Implications for Practice

The study's revelations provide additional knowledge to the current literature, which, after future studies, could provide practical implications for coaches, organizations, and training programs, advocating for ethically grounded, holistic SBC practices that mitigate risks while maximizing benefits. However, in the interim, coaches should adopt balanced protocols, such as hybrid sessions that alternate strengths amplification (fostering enhanced self-awareness and resilience) with intentional exploration of weaknesses to prevent marginalization and address unmet needs, thereby

reducing negative emotions and relational strain (Petroni et al., 2023; Stober, 2006). For example, incorporating tools like reflective journaling on discrepancies between expectations and reality could support identity shifts in a supportive manner, aligning with SET's emphasis on reciprocity and trust to improve coach–coachee dynamics and promote values alignment without evoking ambivalence (Vandaveer & Frisch, 2022a). This approach ensures that the application of strengths leads to authentic improvements in well-being, rather than superficial gains that overlook vulnerabilities.

Organizations implementing SBC in employee development should prioritize ethical guidelines, including pre-coaching assessments, to set realistic expectations and minimize mixed outcomes, such as ambivalence. This approach ultimately enhances workplace resilience and reduces turnover, as improved PWB correlates with higher job satisfaction and productivity (Nicolau et al., 2023; Theeboom et al., 2014). By incorporating strategies to address relational strain, such as team-building exercises that integrate individual strengths with collective challenges, organizations can foster environments where positive relationships thrive, countering the potential for negative emotions resulting from unmet needs (Ostrowski & Potter, 2023). Training programs for coaches, such as those offered by Walden University or professional bodies like the ICF, should incorporate modules on identifying unintended consequences. Based on the participants' lived experiences shared in this study, future training modules for coaches might draw from the study's themes to explore ways of addressing identity shifts and integrating strengths with weaknesses, as supported by existing literature on coaching competencies (Passmore & Yi-Ling Lai, 2019). For instance, these modules could

include scenario-based training on navigating ambivalence, ensuring coaches are equipped to facilitate holistic growth that encompasses all PWB dimensions. These practical implications promote safer, more effective coaching, ensuring that interventions contribute to comprehensive PWB, through enhanced self-awareness, resilience, and values alignment, rather than inadvertently causing harm from marginalization or relational tensions, ultimately supporting organizational cultures that value balanced, equitable development.

Implications for Positive Social Change

Beyond theory and practice, the study offers potential implications for positive social change by contributing exploratory insights from coachees' lived experiences, which highlight the duality of SBC in relation to individual and communal well-being. Based on the narratives shared by the seven participants, the findings suggest that acknowledging both the benefits of SBC—such as enhanced resilience, self-awareness, and values alignment—and its challenges, including marginalization of weaknesses, relational strain, unmet needs, and negative emotions, may inform more balanced approaches to personal development, potentially supporting healthier self-concepts, stronger relationships, and greater autonomy (Ryff, 2014). These qualitative insights from a small sample could encourage broader societal discussions, such as viewing mixed outcomes like identity shifts as possible opportunities for growth rather than sources of ambivalence, thereby fostering empathetic communities and proactive well-being strategies without establishing proven coaching effectiveness.

At an organizational and societal level, adopting a holistic SBC approach could cultivate inclusive workplaces and communities that prioritize mental health, thereby mitigating negative emotions and relational strain to build resilient teams and reduce societal burdens, such as stress-related illnesses, ultimately improving overall productivity and equity (Phaekwamdee et al., 2022; Tatlıcioğlu et al., 2024). For underserved populations, the emphasis on ethical coaching implies expanded access to tailored interventions, such as community-based programs that blend strengths application with weakness exploration, to foster environmental mastery and positive relations in diverse groups, addressing discrepancies between expectations and reality in real-world contexts (Savickaitė-Kazlauskė & Bendaravičienė, 2023). This emphasis on ethical coaching could extend to educational and healthcare settings, where balanced coaching promotes lifelong learning and emotional support, contributing to societal resilience. Ultimately, these changes align with the mission of positive psychology to enhance human thriving (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), creating a society that values psychological flourishing through integrated approaches that honor both strengths and weaknesses, leading to more supportive and equitable environments where improved well-being benefits all. The implications for positive social change include the potential for coaching leaders to use ethical coaching, promote growth, healthier workplaces, and resilient communities.

Conclusion

Ultimately, this qualitative phenomenological study has provided a comprehensive exploration of how coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC in

relation to their PWB, addressing a critical gap in the literature by illuminating both the benefits and unintended consequences of this approach. Guided by the integrated conceptual framework of PPC, Ryff's (2014) multidimensional model of PWB and SET was employed, and the central research question—How do coachees describe their lived experiences of SBC regarding their PWB?—was addressed through IPA of semistructured interviews with seven U.S.-based adults. The findings revealed a duality of outcomes: positive themes such as enhanced self-awareness, resilience, values alignment, application of strengths, and improved overall well-being; negative themes, including marginalization of weaknesses, relational strain, unmet needs, and negative emotions; and mixed themes like ambivalence, identity shifts, and expectations versus reality. These results underscore SBC's potential to foster psychological flourishing when applied with balance but also highlight vulnerabilities that arise from overlooking challenges.

The study's contributions extend beyond the immediate findings, enriching theoretical models by advocating for holistic integrations that account for dualities in coaching dynamics, informing practical enhancements for ethical and effective coaching practices, and promoting positive social change through more resilient individuals and organizations. By navigating the “shadows” of SBC, this research underscores the importance of balanced, ethically grounded interventions that incorporate both strengths and weaknesses to promote genuine growth. As coaching continues to evolve in industrial and organizational psychology, future efforts must prioritize this equilibrium to maximize well-being and minimize harm, ultimately contributing to healthier workplaces

and communities. This study serves as a foundational step toward more nuanced understandings and applications of SBC, inviting ongoing dialogue and investigation in the field.

References

- American Psychological Association. (2017, January 1). *Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct*. <https://www.apa.org/ethics/code>
- Anstiss, T., & Passmore, J. (2013). Motivational interviewing approach. In J. Passmore, D. B. Peterson, & T. Freire (Eds.), *The Wiley-Blackwell handbook of the psychology of coaching and mentoring* (pp. 339–364). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Anwar, M. Z., Muafi, Widodo, W., & Suprihanto, J. (2023). Consequence of psychological distress on performance achievement: A social exchange theory perspective. *Intangible Capital*, 19(2), 93–109. <https://doi.org/10.3926/ic.2128>
- Aratthanage, K., & Wijekoon, J. (2023). Effects of the organizational knowledge management systems on psychological well-being among employees in private large-scale it organizations in Sri Lanka. *2023 3rd International Conference on Advanced Research in Computing (ICARC)*, 220–225. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ICARC57651.2023.10145679>
- Bennett, J. L., Hao, S.-W., & Tan, T. X. (2023). Humanistic coaching as a collaborative practice: Perspectives on help seeking from coaches and undergraduate students with foster care experience. *Journal of College and Character*, 24(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2194587X.2022.2157439>
- Bennie, A., & O'Connor, D. (2010). Coaching philosophies: Perceptions from professional cricket, rugby league and rugby union players and coaches in

Australia. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 5(2), 309–320.

<https://doi.org/10.1260/1747-9541.5.2.309>

Berger, J. (2006). Adult development: Theory and executive coaching practice. In D. R. Stober & A. M. Grant (Eds.), *Evidence based coaching handbook* (pp. 77–102). John Wiley & Sons.

Berger, R. (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 15(2), 219–234.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794112468475>

Berglas, S. (2002). The very real dangers of executive coaching. *Harvard Business Review*, 80(6), 86–92.

Berman, W. H. (2019). Coaching c-suite executives and business founders. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice & Research*, 71(2), 75–85.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/cpb0000128>

Berry, P. (2021). An alternative conceptualisation of coach expertise. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 14(2), 202–213.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17521882.2020.1853189>

Biswas-Diener, R. (2020). The practice of positive psychology coaching. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 15(5), 701–704.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2020.1789705>

Blau, P. M. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. John Wiley & Sons.

- Boysen-Rotelli, S. (2020). Executive coaching history: Growing out of organisational development. *Coaching Psychologist, 16*(2), 26–34.
<https://doi.org/10.53841/bpstcp.2020.16.2.26>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. SAGE Publications. <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/thematic-analysis/book248481>
- Brinkmann, S. (2013). *Qualitative interviewing*. Oxford University Press.
- Brock, V. (2009). Professional challenges facing the coaching field from an historical perspective. *International Journal of Coaching in Organizations, 17*(1), 27–37.
- Brokaw, D. W. (2023). Positive psychology. In *Salem Press Encyclopedia of Health*. Salem Press.
- Brown, R. P., Varghese, L., Sullivan, S., & Parsons, S. (2021). The impact of professional coaching on emerging leaders. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring, 19*(2), 24–37.
- Burke, J. (2018). Conceptual framework for a positive psychology coaching practice. *Coaching Psychologist, 14*(1), 16–25.
<https://doi.org/10.53841/bpstcp.2018.14.1.16>
- Burtis, S. (n.d.). *Academics: College of management and human potential: Certificates: Graduate certificate in evidence-based coaching*. Retrieved November 12, 2025, from <https://academics.waldenu.edu/catalog/management-and-human-potential/certificates/graduate/evidence-based-coaching>
- Cannon-Bowers, J. A., Bowers, C. A., Carlson, C. E., Doherty, S. L., Evans, J., & Hall, J. (2023). Workplace coaching: A meta-analysis and recommendations for

advancing the science of coaching. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14.

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1204166>

Ciarrochi, J., Hayes, S. C., Oades, L. G., & Hofmann, S. G. (2022). Toward a unified framework for positive psychology interventions: Evidence-based processes of change in coaching, prevention, and training. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12.

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.809362>

Cidral, W., Berg, C. H., & Paulino, M. L. (2021). Determinants of coaching success: A systematic review. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 72(3), 753–771. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPPM-07-2020-0367>

Clayden, D., & Appiah, R. (2025). ‘Start with the heart’: An exploration of teachers’ experiences and impressions of a positive psychology coaching and well-being programme. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17521882.2025.2570685>

Connolly, G. J. (2016). Applying humanistic learning theory: The “art” of coaching. *Strategies*, 29(2), 39–41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08924562.2016.1135651>

Cooper-Thomas, H. D., & Morrison, R. L. (2018). Give and take: Needed updates to social exchange theory. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 11(3), 493–498. <https://doi.org/10.1017/iop.2018.101>

Corbu, A., Peláez Zuberbühler, M. J., & Salanova, M. (2021). Positive psychology micro-coaching intervention: Effects on psychological capital and goal-related self-efficacy. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12.

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.566293>

- Cox, E. (2006). An adult learning approach to coaching. In D. R. Stober & A. M. Grant (Eds.), *Evidence based coaching handbook* (pp. 193–218). John Wiley & Sons.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S. (2005). Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management*, *31*(6), 874–900.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279602>
- David, O. (2016). The foundations and evolution of cognitive behavioral coaching in organizations: An interview with Dominic Dimattia. *Journal of Rational - Emotive & Cognitive - Behavior Therapy*, *34*(4), 282–288.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10942-016-0257-8>
- de Haan, E. (2019). A systematic review of qualitative studies in workplace and executive coaching: The emergence of a body of research. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, *71*(4), 227–248.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/cpb0000144>
- de Haan, E. (2021). The case against coaching. *Coaching Psychologist*, *17*(1), 7–13.
<https://doi.org/10.53841/bpstcp.2021.17.1.7>
- Diamond, M. A. (2013). Psychodynamic approach. In J. Passmore, D. B. Peterson, & T. Freire (Eds.), *The Wiley-Blackwell handbook of the psychology of coaching and mentoring* (pp. 365–384). John Wiley & Sons.
- Diener, E., Scollon, C. N., & Lucas, R. E. (2009). Assessing well-being: The collected works of Ed Diener. In E. Diener (Ed.), *The evolving concept of subjective well-*

being: The multifaceted nature of happiness (pp. 67–100). Springer Science.

https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1007/978-90-481-2354-4_4

Dodgson, J. E. (2019). Reflexivity in qualitative research. *Journal of Human Lactation*, 35(2), 220–222. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0890334419830990>

Dukes, S. (1984). Phenomenological methodology in the human sciences. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 23(3), 197–203. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00990785>

Eatough, V., & Smith, J. A. (2017). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In C. Willig & W. S. Rogers (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research in Psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 193–209). SAGE Publications.

<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526405555>

Ebner, K., Soucek, R., & Kauffeld, S. (2020). Incongruities between values, motives, and skills: Exploring negative effects of self-exploration in career coaching. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 48(4), 454–476.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2020.1742286>

Emerson, R. M. (1976). Social exchange theory. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2(1), 335–362. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.02.080176.002003>

Fereday, J., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1), 80–92.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500107>

- Finlay, L. (2002). Negotiating the swamp: The opportunity and challenge of reflexivity in research practice. *Qualitative Research*, 2(2), 209–230.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/146879410200200205>
- Francis, S., & Zarecky, A. (2016). Working with strengths in coaching. In *The SAGE Handbook of Coaching* (pp. 363–380). SAGE Publications.
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473983861>
- Freire, T. (2013). Positive psychology approaches. In J. Passmore, D. B. Peterson, & T. Freire (Eds.), *The Wiley-Blackwell handbook of the psychology of coaching and mentoring* (pp. 426–442). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Fusch, P., & Ness, L. (2015). Are we there yet? Data saturation in qualitative research. *Walden Faculty and Staff Publications*, 20(9), 1408–1416.
- Gan, G. C., Chong, C. W., Yuen, Y. Y., Yen Teoh, W. M., & Rahman, M. S. (2021). Executive coaching effectiveness: Towards sustainable business excellence. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 32(13/14), 1405–1423.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14783363.2020.1724507>
- George-Feres, D. (2015). *The lived experiences of executive coaching practitioners: A phenomenological study* [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.
<https://www.proquest.com/pqdtlocal1005747/docview/1728321093/abstract/98DCDCB8E0A94337PQ/4>
- Goodwyn, N., Beech, N., Garvey, B., Gold, J., Gulliford, R., Auty, T., Sajjadi, A., Arrigoni, A., Mahtab, N., Jones, S., & Beech, S. (2022). Flying high: Pilot peer

coaching to champion well-being and mitigate hazardous attitudes. *European Journal of Training and Development*, 48(1/2), 214–233.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/EJTD-09-2021-0136>

Graf, E.-M., & Dionne, F. (2021). Coaching research in 2020—About destinations, journeys and travelers (Part I). *International Coaching Psychology Review*, 16(1), 38–53.

Grant, A. M. (2005). *Workplace, executive and life coaching: An annotated bibliography from the behavioural science literature* [Unpublished paper].

https://groups.psychology.org.au/assets/files/article_annotated_biblio.pdf

Grant, A. M. (2017). Solution-focused cognitive-behavioral coaching for sustainable high performance and circumventing stress, fatigue, and burnout. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice & Research*, 69(2), 98–111.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/cpb0000086>

Grant, A. M., & Atad, O. I. (2022). Coaching psychology interventions vs. positive psychology interventions: The measurable benefits of a coaching relationship. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 17(4), 532–544.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2021.1871944>

Grant, A. M., & Cavanagh, M. J. (2007). Evidence-based coaching: Flourishing or languishing? *Australian Psychologist*, 42(4), 239–254.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00050060701648175>

Grant, A. M., & Gerrard, B. (2020). Comparing problem-focused, solution-focused and combined problem-focused/solution-focused coaching approach: Solution-

- focused coaching questions mitigate the negative impact of dysfunctional attitudes. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 13(1), 61–77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17521882.2019.1599030>
- Graßmann, C., & Schermuly, C. C. (2016). Side effects of business coaching and their predictors from the coachees' perspective. *Journal of Personnel Psychology*, 15(4), 152–163. <https://doi.org/10.1027/1866-5888/a000161>
- Graßmann, C., & Schermuly, C. C. (2018). The role of neuroticism and supervision in the relationship between negative effects for clients and novice coaches. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 11(1), 74–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17521882.2017.1381755>
- Graßmann, C., & Schermuly, C. C. (2020). Understanding what drives the coaching working alliance: A systematic literature review and meta-analytic examination. *International Coaching Psychology Review*, 15(2), 99–118.
- Graßmann, C., Schermuly, C. C., & Wach, D. (2019). Potential antecedents and consequences of negative effects for coaches. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 12(1), 67–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17521882.2018.1489870>
- Gregory, J. B., & Levy, P. E. (2013). Humanistic/person-centered approaches. In J. Passmore, D. B. Peterson, & T. Freire (Eds.), *The Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of The Psychology of Coaching and Mentoring* (pp. 285–297). John Wiley & Sons.
- Grover, S., & Furnham, A. (2016). Coaching as a developmental intervention in organisations: A systematic review of its effectiveness and the mechanisms

underlying it. *PLOS ONE*, *11*(7), 1–41.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0159137>

Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How Many Interviews Are Enough?: An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability. *Field Methods*, *18*(1), 59–82.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05279903>

Hagen, M. S., & Peterson, S. L. (2014). Coaching Scales: A Review of the Literature and Comparative Analysis. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, *16*(2), 222–

241. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422313520203>

Halliwell, P. R., Mitchell, R. J., & Boyle, B. (2022). Leadership coaching's efficacy and effect mechanisms – a mixed-methods study. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, *15*(1), 43–59.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17521882.2021.1884110>

Harris, M. (1999). Practice network: Look, it's an I-O psychologist...No, it's a trainer...No, it's an executive coach! *The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist*, *36*(3), 38–42. <https://doi.org/10.1037/e577012011-005>

Hettema, J. E., Ernst, D., Williams, J. R., & Miller, K. J. (2014). Parallel processes:

Using motivational interviewing as an implementation coaching strategy. *The Journal of Behavioral Health Services & Research*, *41*(3), 324–336.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11414-013-9381-8>

Homans, G. C. (1958). Social behavior as exchange. *American Journal of Sociology*, *63*(6), 597–606. <https://doi.org/10.1086/222355>

Horsfall, S. T. (2012). *Social problems: An advocate group approach*. Taylor & Francis Group.

Igu, N. C. N., Onyishi, C. N., Amujiri, B. A., Binuomote, M. O., Modebelu, M. N., Okafor, I. P., Awe, B. A., Fausta, M., Obih, S. O., Eke, D. O., Ezemoyin, M. C., Uzoma, B. N., Ugwu, J. I., & Mbon, U. F. (2023). Raising leadership self-efficacy and minimizing organizational burnout among school administrators in a grow model of cognitive behavioral coaching. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 30(4), 464–482. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15480518231171748>

International Coaching Federation. (n.d.). *ICF accreditation: Become an ICF-accredited coach*. Retrieved November 12, 2025, from <https://coachingfederation.org/for-coach-educators/icf-accreditation/>

International Coaching Federation. (2025). *2025 ICF core competencies*. <https://coachingfederation.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/icf-cs-core-competencies-2025.pdf>

Jeannotte, A. M., Hutchinson, D. M., & Kellerman, G. R. (2021). Time to change for mental health and well-being via virtual professional coaching: Longitudinal observational study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 23(7), e27774. <https://doi.org/10.2196/27774>

Kauffman, C. (2006). Positive psychology: The science at the heart of coaching. In D. R. Stober & A. M. Grant (Eds.), *Evidence based coaching handbook: Putting best practices to work for your clients* (pp. 219–254). John Wiley & Sons.

- Kilburg, R. R. (2004). When shadows fall: Using psychodynamic approaches in executive coaching. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice & Research*, 56(4), 246–268. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1065-9293.56.4.246>
- Kilroy, J., Dundon, T., & Townsend, K. (2023). Embedding reciprocity in human resource management: A social exchange theory of the role of frontline managers. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 33(2), 511–531. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12468>
- Kovich, M. K., Simpson, V. L., Foli, K. J., Hass, Z., & Phillips, R. G. (2023). Application of the PERMA model of well-being in undergraduate students. *International Journal of Community Well-Being*, 6(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42413-022-00184-4>
- Lai, Y.-L., & Palmer, S. (2019). Psychology in executive coaching: An integrated literature review. *Journal of Work-Applied Management*, 11(2), 143–164. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JWAM-06-2019-0017>
- Larkin, M., Watts, S., & Clifton, E. (2006). Giving voice and making sense in interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 102–120. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp062oa>
- Law, H. (2013). *Coaching psychology: A practitioner's guide*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Lentisco, C. S., & Martínez, O. L. (2017). Educación, psicología y coaching: Un entramado positivo. *Educatio Siglo XXI*, 35(1), 145–164. <https://doi.org/10.6018/j/286261>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. SAGE Publications.

- Lohmeier, J. (2022). Toward a societal perspective for working with Gestalt: An alternative systems theory. *Gestalt Review*, 26(2), 141–169.
<https://doi.org/10.5325/gestaltreview.26.2.0141>
- Longenecker, C., & McCartney, M. (2020). The benefits of executive coaching: Voices from the C-suite. *Strategic HR Review*, 19(1), 22–27.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/SHR-06-2019-0048>
- Markus, K. A., & Smith, K. M. (2022). Content validity. In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Research Design* (2nd ed., Vols. 1–4, pp. 284–287). SAGE Publications.
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071812082>
- McGovern, J., Lindemann, M., Vergara, M., Murphy, S., Barker, L., & Warrenfeltz, R. (2001). Maximizing the impact of executive coaching: Behavioral change, organizational outcomes and return on investment. *The Manchester Review*, 6(1), 1–9.
- McInerney, E., Giga, S., & Morris, A. S. (2021). Does it last? A systematic review of the enduring effects on managers from executive coaching. *International Coaching Psychology Review*, 16(2), 22–50. <https://doi.org/10.53841/bpsicpr.2021.16.2.22>
- Mello, R., Suutari, V., & Dickmann, M. (2023). Career success of expatriates: The impacts of career capital, expatriate type, career type and career stage. *Career Development International*, 28(4), 406–425. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-07-2022-0196>
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.

- Miller, S. P. (2022). Social exchange theory. In *Salem Press Encyclopedia*. Salem Press.
- Moin, T., Giraldez-Hayes, A., Stopforth, M., Lynden, J., & Rees-Davies, L. (2023). Who is a coach and who is a coaching psychologist? Professionalising coaching psychology in the United Kingdom. *The Coaching Psychologist, 19*(1), 4–18. <https://doi.org/10.53841/bpstcp.2023.19.1.4>
- Morse, J. M. (2015). “Data were saturated. . . .” *Qualitative Health Research, 25*(5), 587–588. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732315576699>
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. SAGE Publications.
- Nacif, A. P. (2021). BeWell: A group coaching model to foster the wellbeing of individuals. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring, 15*(Special Issue), 171–186.
- Ngozwana, N. (2018). Ethical dilemmas in qualitative research methodology: Researcher’s reflections. *International Journal of Educational Methodology, 4*(1), 19–28.
- Nicolau, A., Candel, O. S., Constantin, T., & Kleingeld, A. (2023). The effects of executive coaching on behaviors, attitudes, and personal characteristics: A meta-analysis of randomized control trial studies. *Frontiers in Psychology, 14*. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1089797>
- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 16*(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>

- Offstein, E. H., Dufresne, R. L., & Childers Jr, J. S. (2020). Executive coaching explained: The beginnings of a contingency approach. *Journal of Management Development, 39*(9/10), 1041–1056. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-01-2020-0023>
- Orb, A., Eisenhauer, L., & Wynaden, D. (2001). Ethics in qualitative research. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship, 33*(1), 93–96. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1547-5069.2001.00093.x>
- Ostrowski, E. J., & Potter, P. (2023). A call for clarity and pragmatism in coach education. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 18*(2), 96–107. <https://doi.org/10.53841/bpsicpr.2023.18.2.96>
- Palmer, S., & Williams, H. (2013). Cognitive behavioral approaches. In J. Passmore, D. B. Peterson, & T. Freire (Eds.), *The Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of The Psychology of Coaching and Mentoring* (pp. 319–338). John Wiley & Sons.
- Pandolfi, C. (2020). Active ingredients in executive coaching: A systematic literature review. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 15*(2), 6–30. <https://doi.org/10.53841/bpsicpr.2020.15.2.6>
- Pas, E. T., Borden, L., Herman, K., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2021). Leveraging motivational interviewing to coach teachers in the implementation of preventive evidence-based practices: A sequential analysis of the motivational interviewing process. *Prevention Science, 22*(6), 786–798. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-021-01238-3>
- Passmore, J. (2022). Motivational interviewing: Reflecting on ethical decisions in MI. In D. Tee & J. Passmore (Eds.), *Coaching practiced*. (2023-08301-029; pp. 277–283). John Wiley & Sons. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119835714.ch28>

- Passmore, J., & Oades, L. G. (2014). Positive psychology coaching—A model for coaching practice. *Coaching Psychologist, 10*(2), 68–70.
- Passmore, J. & Yi-Ling Lai. (2019). Coaching psychology: Exploring definitions and research contribution to practice? *International Coaching Psychology Review, 14*(2), 69–83. <https://doi.org/10.53841/bpsicpr.2019.14.2.69>
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Peoples, K. (2021). *How to write a phenomenological dissertation: A step-by-step guide (qualitative research methods)*. SAGE Publications.
- Petrone, C. G., Luzynski, C., Petrone, A. B., Holmes, M. H., Dagen, A. S., & Lockman, J. A. (2023). Effectiveness of a strengths-based leadership coaching program for women: Journal of leadership education. *Journal of Leadership Education, 22*(1), 38–50. <https://doi.org/10.12806/V22/I1/R9>
- Phaekwamdee, M., Ayuthaya, S. D. N., & Kiattisin, S. (2022). The effects of coaching techniques on well-being of digital-technology users. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity, 8*(4), 170. <https://doi.org/10.3390/joitmc8040170>
- Pietkiewicz, I., & Smith, J. A. (2014). A practical guide to using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis in qualitative research psychology. *Czasopismo Psychologiczne – Psychological Journal, 20*(1), 7–14. <https://doi.org/10.14691/CPPJ.20.1.7>

- Quinn, T., Trinh, S., & Passmore, J. (2022). An exploration into using LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® (LSP) within a positive psychology framework in individual coaching: An interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 15(1), 102–116. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17521882.2021.1898427>
- Ratiu, L., David, O. A., & Baban, A. (2017). Developing managerial skills through coaching: Efficacy of a cognitive-behavioral coaching program. *Journal of Rational - Emotive & Cognitive - Behavior Therapy*, 35(1), 88–110. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10942-015-0225-8>
- Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, N. M. (2021). *Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Richter, S., van Zyl, L. E., Roll, L. C., & Stander, M. W. (2021). Positive psychological coaching tools and techniques: A systematic review and classification. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 12, 667200. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2021.667200>
- Rogelberg, S. G. (2007). Social exchange theory. In *Encyclopedia of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (Vol. 2, pp. 734–736). SAGE Publications. <https://sk.sagepub.com/reference/organizationalpsychology/n301.xml?PageNum=733>
- Rook, C., Hellwig, T., Florent-Treacy, E., & de Vries, M. K. (2019). Workplace stress in senior executives: Coaching the “uncoachable.” *International Coaching Psychology Review*, 14(2), 7–23. <https://doi.org/10.53841/bpsicpr.2019.14.2.7>

- Rostron, S. S., Sampaio, D. M., & Van Rensburg, M. J. (2014). *Business coaching international: Transforming individuals and organizations* (2nd ed.). Karnac.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). *Qualitative interview: The art of hearing data* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Ryff, C. D. (2014). Psychological well-being revisited: Advances in science and practice. *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*, 83(1), 10–28.
<https://doi.org/10.1159/000353263>
- Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69(4), 719–727.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.69.4.719>
- Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. H. (2008). Know thyself and become what you are: A eudaimonic approach to psychological well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 9(1), 13–39. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-006-9019-0>
- Saldaña, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Sandler, C. (2011). *Executive coaching: A psychodynamic approach*. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Saunders, B., Sim, J., Kingstone, T., Baker, S., Waterfield, J., Bartlam, B., Burroughs, H., & Jinks, C. (2018). Saturation in qualitative research: Exploring its conceptualization and operationalization. *Quality and Quantity*, 52(4), 1893–1907. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0574-8>

- Savickaitė-Kazlauskė, E., & Bendaravičienė, R. (2023). Exploring effects of interventions on aspiring entrepreneurs' psychological capital, creative self-efficacy, and well-being. *Organizacijų Vadyba: Sisteminiai Tyrimai*, 90(1), 100–116. <https://doi.org/10.2478/mosr-2023-0015>
- Schermuly, C. C. (2014). Negative effects of coaching for coaches: An explorative study. *International Coaching Psychology Review*, 9(2), 165–180. <https://doi.org/10.53841/bpsicpr.2014.9.2.165>
- Schermuly, C. C., & Bohnhardt, F. A. (2014). And who coaches the coaches? - Negative effects of business coaching for coaches. *Organisationsberat Supervision Coaching*, 21, 55–69. <https://doi.org/DOI%252010.1007/s11613-014-0355-3>
- Schermuly, C. C., & Carolin, G. (2016). Die analyse von nebenwirkungen von coaching für klienten aus einer qualitativen perspektive. *Coaching: Theorie & Praxis*, 2(1), 33–47. <https://doi.org/10.1365/s40896-016-0012-2>
- Schermuly, C. C., & Graßmann, C. (2019). A literature review on negative effects of coaching – what we know and what we need to know. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 12(1), 39–66. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17521882.2018.1528621>
- Schermuly, C. C., Wach, D., Kirschbaum, C., & Wegge, J. (2021). Coaching of insolvent entrepreneurs and the change in coping resources, health, and cognitive performance. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 70(2), 556–574. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12244>

- Seligman, M. E. P. (2007). Coaching and positive psychology. *Australian Psychologist*, 42(4), 266–267. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00050060701648233>
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2011, April 1). Building resilience. *Harvard Business Review*.
<https://hbr.org/2011/04/building-resilience>
- Seligman, M. E. P., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology: An introduction. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 5–14. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.5>
- Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress: Empirical validation of interventions. *American Psychologist*, 60(5), 410–421. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.60.5.410>
- Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22(2), 63–75.
- Simmons, P. (2023). Coachees' experiences of strengths-based coaching when identifying their strengths with the VIA Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS). *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, 17, 179–192.
- Smith, J. A., & Nizza, I. E. (2021). *Essentials of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*. American Psychological Association.
- Smith, J., Flowers, P., & Larkins, M. (2022). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research* (2nd ed.). SAGE.
- Smith, M. B., Bryan, L. K., & Vodanovich, S. J. (2012). The counter-intuitive effects of flow on positive leadership and employee attitudes: Incorporating positive

- psychology into the management of organizations. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 15(3), 174–198. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10887156.2012.701129>
- Spoth, J., Toman, S., Leichtman, R., & Allan, J. (2013). Gestalt approach. In J. Passmore, D. B. Peterson, & T. Freire (Eds.), *The Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of The Psychology of Coaching and Mentoring* (pp. 385–406). John Wiley & Sons.
- Stec, D. (2012). Using history to comprehend the currency of a passionate profession. *Journal of Management History*, 18(4), 419–444. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17511341211258756>
- Stevenson, H. (2016). Coaching at the point of contact: A gestalt approach. *Gestalt Review*, 20(3), 260–278. <https://doi.org/10.5325/gestaltreview.20.3.0260>
- Stober, D. R. (2006). Coaching from the humanistic perspective. In D. R. Stober & A. M. Grant (Eds.), *Evidence based coaching handbook: Putting best practices to work for your clients* (pp. 17–50). John Wiley & Sons.
- Stober, D. R. (2008). Making it stick: Coaching as a tool for organizational change. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 1(1), 71–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17521880801905950>
- Tatlıcioğlu, O., Kılıç, A., Apak, H., & Koçak, O. (2024). How job satisfaction is associated with psychological well-being among social workers in Turkey: The mediating role of meaning in life. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 50(1), 92–106. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01488376.2023.2276134>
- Tharp, R. G., & Gallimore, R. (1976). What a coach can teach a teacher. *Psychology Today*, 9, 75–78.

- Theeboom, T., Beersma, B., & van Vianen, A. E. M. (2014). Does coaching work? A meta-analysis on the effects of coaching on individual level outcomes in an organizational context. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 9*(1), 1–18.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2013.837499>
- Thompson, R. (2018). A Qualitative Phenomenological Study of Emotional and Cultural Intelligence of International Students in the United States of America. *Journal of International Students, 8*(2), 1220–1255.
- Torbrand, P., & Ellam-Dyson, V. (2015). The experience of cognitive behavioural group coaching with college students: An IPA study exploring its effectiveness. *International Coaching Psychology Review, 10*(1), 76–93.
<https://doi.org/10.53841/bpsicpr.2015.10.1.76>
- Tsai, L., & Barr, J. (2021). Coaching in small and medium business sectors (SMEs): A narrative systematic review. *Small Enterprise Research, 28*(1), 1–22.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13215906.2021.1878384>
- Utrilla, P. N.-C., Grande, F. A., & Lorenzo, D. (2015). The effects of coaching in employees and organizational performance: The Spanish case. *Intangible Capital, 11*(2), 166–189. <https://doi.org/10.3926/ic.586>
- van Manen, M. (2016). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- van Zyl, L. E., Roll, L. C., Stander, M. W., & Richter, S. (2020a). Positive psychological coaching definitions and models: A systematic literature review. *Frontiers in Psychology, 11*. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00793>

- van Zyl, L. E., Roll, L. C., Stander, M. W., & Richter, S. (2020b). Strengths-based positive psychology interventions: A randomized controlled trial of workplace coaching. *Frontiers in Psychology, 11*, Article 1208.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01208>
- Vandaveer, V. V., & Frisch, M. H. (2022a). Coaching psychology tools, methods, and techniques. In *Coaching psychology: Catalyzing excellence in organizational leadership*. (pp. 53–105). American Psychological Association.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0000293-004>
- Vandaveer, V. V., & Frisch, M. H. (2022b). Introduction. In *Coaching psychology: Catalyzing excellence in organizational leadership*. (pp. 3–10). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000293-001>
- Vandaveer, V. V., Lowman, R. L., Pearlman, K., & Brannick, J. P. (2016). A practice analysis of coaching psychology: Toward a foundational competency model. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice & Research, 68*(2), 118–142.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/cpb0000057>
- Vanzella-Yang, A., & Abrutyn, S. (2022). Tastes, emotions, and social cohesion: Toward a cultural theory of social exchange. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 52*(2), 315–335. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jtsb.12323>
- Vella, J. (2024). In pursuit of credibility: Evaluating the divergence between member-checking and hermeneutic phenomenology. *Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy, 20*(7), 665–669.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sapharm.2024.04.001>

- Vourda, M.-C., Collins, J., Kandaswamy, R., Bevilaqua, M. C. do N., Kralj, C., Percy, Z., Strauss, N., Zunszain, P. A., & Dias, G. P. (2025). A mixed-methods evaluation of a wellbeing programme designed for undergraduate students: Exploring participants' experiences using interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Education Sciences, 15*(5), 604. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15050604>
- Walden University. (n.d.). *Walden research ethics and compliance policies*. Retrieved July 27, 2025, from <https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/research-center/research-ethics/policies>
- Wang, Q., Yi-Ling, L., Xu, X., & McDowall, A. (2022). The effectiveness of workplace coaching: A meta-analysis of contemporary psychologically informed coaching approaches. *Journal of Work-Applied Management, 14*(1), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JWAM-04-2021-0030>
- Willig, C., Rogers, W. S., Eatough, V., & Smith, J. A. (2017). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526405555.n12>
- Zhang, Z., & Liu, F. (2024). Gift-giving intentions in pan-entertainment live streaming: Based on social exchange theory. *PLOS ONE, 19*(1), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0296908>

Appendix A: Screening Questionnaire

- 1. Which of the following best describes your current career stage?**
 - a. Early career (34 or younger)
 - b. Mid-career (35-49 years old)
 - c. Late career (50 or older)

- 2. Are you currently residing in the United States?**
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

- 3. Have you participated in strengths-based coaching sessions?**
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

- 4. How long have you received strengths-based coaching?**
 - a. Less than 3 months
 - b. 3 months or more

- 5. How many strengths-based coaching sessions have you had?**
 - a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3 or more

Appendix B: Interviewing Protocols

Interview Session Info

Start Time:

End Time:

Interviewee Code:

Introductory Statement

Thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule to participate in my study. I sincerely appreciate your cooperation and support for my research. As the informed consent form mentioned, this study seeks to understand your experience with strengths-based coaching and its impact on your psychological well-being. For my study, I define psychological well-being as the presence of positive emotions or the absence of negative ones. It includes self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relationships with others, environmental mastery, and autonomy. I am trying to answer the research question: *How do coaches describe their lived experiences of strengths-based coaching regarding their psychological well-being?* I provided you with a sample of the questions. I will ask you to describe the specific characteristics and behaviors you feel were essential to your strengths-based coaching experience.

Before we begin, I assure you that your data and this conversation will remain private and confidential. There is no time limit on your responses, so do not feel rushed to answer any questions. Take as much time as necessary to provide a thorough response. Lastly, please do not feel pressured to participate. You retain the right to stop the interview at any time. Any questions or concerns before we begin?

Interview Questions

Main Interview Questions

Initial Experience with Coaching:

1. What motivated you to seek strengths-based coaching?
2. Walk me through a typical coaching session.

Impact on Life:

3. Describe specific changes in your life that you attribute to focusing on your strengths.

Psychological Well-Being:

4. How has your psychological well-being been affected by focusing on your strengths?

5. Share any experiences where focusing on your strengths significantly influenced your emotional or mental state.

Outcomes:

6. What are some outcomes you have experienced from focusing on your strengths?
7. What challenges have you experienced from focusing on your strengths?

Relationships:

8. How have your interactions with others changed because of focusing on your strengths?
9. What changes have you experienced in how others treat you?

Overall Evaluation:

10. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being exceptionally effective, how would you rate the effectiveness of strengths-based coaching in your life and why?

Final Thoughts:

11. Is there anything else you want to share about your experience with strengths-based coaching?
12. Do you have any additional comments or insights that you think are important for this study?

Closing

Thank you again for taking the time to participate in this research study.

13. Do you have any follow-up questions for me?
14. Do you know anyone who has received similar strengths-based coaching who would be interested in participating in this study?

Lastly, I want to reiterate that these interviews are confidential, and the insights I gather will only be used for research purposes. Your contribution is invaluable to my research. I will send you the transcript and my summary of your interview to review. Data collection and analysis will be complete by August 31, 2025. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. Again, thank you for your time and conversation!

Appendix C: Interview Protocol Matrix

Research Question: How do coachees describe their lived experiences of strengths-based coaching regarding their psychological well-being?							
Interview Question #	Experience with Coaching	Impact on Life	PWB	Outcomes	Relationships	Overall	Catch-All
1	X						
2	X						
3	X						
4	X						
5	X						
6		X					
7			X				
8			X				
9				X			
10				X			
11					X		
12					X		
13						X	
14							X
15							X
16							X
17							X

Appendix D: Codebook

Interpersonal Processes and Identity Development

This theme encompasses how SBC influences coachees' internal growth, self-perception, and sense of agency, highlighting the interplay between personal development and relational contexts.

- **Agency and Mastery:** Sub-theme focusing on coachees' sense of control, competence, and ability to navigate life effectively through SBC.
 - Autonomy: Instances where coachees described increased independence, self-direction, and decision-making freedom as a result of SBC.
 - Environmental Mastery: Narratives reflecting improved ability to manage external demands, adapt to challenges, and shape one's surroundings via coaching insights.
 - Self-Efficacy: Expressions of heightened confidence in one's capabilities to achieve goals and handle situations, fostered by strengths identification and application.
- **Awareness and Insight:** Sub-theme capturing deepened understanding of oneself and one's experiences through reflective processes in SBC.
 - Self-Awareness: Reflections indicating greater recognition of personal emotions, behaviors, patterns, strengths, or vulnerabilities during coaching.
 - Sense-Making: Accounts of coachees interpreting or assigning meaning to their coaching experiences and their broader implications for life.
 - Identity and Meaning: Sub-theme involving transformations in self-concept and personal narratives influenced by SBC.
 - Identity Shift: Descriptions of changes in self-perception, roles, or identity as a result of integrating strengths or confronting weaknesses through coaching.
 - Self-Acceptance: Narratives of embracing one's whole self, including strengths and limitations, leading to greater psychological integration.
- **Existential Fulfillment:** Sub-theme addressing deeper purpose and life satisfaction derived from SBC.
 - Purpose & Meaning: Instances of increased clarity on life goals, values alignment, or sense of mission emerging from strengths-focused reflections.

Emotional and Cognitive Appraisal

This theme reflects coachees' evaluative judgments, emotional reactions, and cognitive processing of SBC experiences, including balances between positives and negatives.

- **Emotional Responses:** Sub-theme capturing affective reactions to SBC, both positive and challenging.
 - Ambivalence: Expressions of mixed or conflicting feelings about SBC, such as simultaneous appreciation of benefits and concerns about limitations.

- Negative Emotion: Reports of adverse feelings like frustration, disappointment, stress, or anxiety associated with coaching experiences.
- **Expectations and Discrepancies:** Sub-theme highlighting gaps between anticipated and actual SBC outcomes.
 - Expectations vs. Reality: Comparisons between coachees' initial expectations of SBC and their actual lived realities, including alignments and mismatches.
 - Unmet Needs: Descriptions of areas where SBC failed to address expectations, such as overlooked support for weaknesses or emotional gaps.
- **Evaluation of Coaching:** Sub-theme involving coachees' assessments of SBC's value and trade-offs.
 - Perceived Benefit: Positive outcomes attributed to SBC, such as personal growth, clarity, or enhanced motivation.
 - Perceived Cost: Narratives of drawbacks or sacrifices from SBC, including time, energy, or relational strains.
- **Turning Points:** Sub-theme identifying pivotal moments that shaped SBC experiences.
 - Critical Incidents: Key events or realizations during coaching that acted as catalysts for change, insight, or reevaluation.

Strengths Engagement and Application

This theme focuses on how coachees discovered, utilized, and reframed strengths within SBC, emphasizing practical integration and potential oversights.

- **Recognition of Strengths:** Sub-theme describing the identification and awareness of personal strengths through coaching.
 - Discovery of Strengths: Moments where coachees became aware of, named, or recognized inherent strengths via SBC processes.
- **Operationalization of Strengths:** Sub-theme capturing the practical use of identified strengths in everyday contexts.
 - Application of Strengths: Instances of coachees applying their strengths to solve problems, enhance performance, or achieve goals in real-world settings.
- **Reframing Weaknesses:** Sub-theme addressing how SBC handles or overlooks areas of vulnerability.
 - Marginalization of Weaknesses: Situations where a strengths-only focus led to the neglect, minimization, or dismissal of weaknesses or challenges.

Relational Dynamics and Social Exchange

This theme explores the interpersonal and transactional aspects of SBC, encompassing coach–coachee interactions and broader relational implications.

- **Alliance and Process:** Sub-theme detailing the structure and dynamics of the coaching relationship.
 - Coach–Coachee Relationship: Descriptions of rapport, trust, collaboration, and quality in the coaching partnership.

- Coaching Process: References to the methods, structure, flow, or techniques used in SBC sessions.
- **Trust & Safety:** Sub-theme focusing on foundational elements of security in coaching interactions.
 - Trust & Safety: Narratives emphasizing psychological safety, confidentiality, and trust as enablers of effective SBC.
- **Supportive Bonds:** Sub-theme capturing affirming and nurturing relational elements.
 - Supportive Relationship: Evidence of positive, encouraging interactions with coaches or others that facilitated growth during SBC.
- **Reciprocal Exchanges:** Sub-theme involving mutual give-and-take in relationships influenced by SBC.
 - Reciprocity: Instances of perceived balance, fairness, or mutual exchange (or lack thereof) in coaching or related relationships.
- **Challenges and Ruptures:** Sub-theme highlighting tensions or breakdowns in relationships.
 - Relational Conflict: Accounts of strain, disagreements, or interpersonal tensions arising from or during SBC.

Overarching Well-Being Outcomes

This theme synthesizes broad impacts on PWB, encompassing flourishing, social connections, and developmental trajectories from SBC.

- **Flourishing and Positive Affect:** Sub-theme addressing overall positive psychological states resulting from SBC.
 - Enhanced Well-Being: Statements of improved happiness, life satisfaction, or psychological functioning attributed to coaching.
- **Interpersonal Outcomes:** Sub-theme focusing on social and relational improvements.
 - Positive Relations: Evidence of strengthened relationships, better social connections, or improved interactions with others due to SBC.
- **Trajectory of Growth:** Sub-theme capturing ongoing personal development and adaptability.
 - Personal Growth: Reflections on learning, progression, or evolution in personal or professional life tied to SBC.
 - Resilience: Demonstrations of increased adaptive capacity, persistence, or recovery from challenges supported by strengths.

Appendix E: Audit Trail Extracts

This appendix provides a transparent record of the research process, documenting how data were collected, coded, analyzed, and interpreted throughout the study. In qualitative research, particularly within IPA, transparency is essential for demonstrating rigor and ensuring trustworthiness. By maintaining an audit trail, I sought to establish credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The materials included here—data management records, coding documentation, reflexive and bracketing notes, decision logs, and integration artifacts such as the representative quotes matrix, conceptual map, and word cloud—illustrate the systematic process by which themes were derived from participants’ narratives. Together, these documents allow readers to trace the path from raw interview data to the final interpretation of findings, thereby reinforcing the integrity of the analytic process.

1. Data Management Records

This section documents how participants were recruited, how data were collected, and how files were stored. Table E1 includes a log of interviews conducted for this study.

Table E1

Interview and Storage Log

Interview ID	Date & duration	Recruitment source	Storage note
SBC01	2/27/25, 27 min	Flyer - Direct	Cloud secured
SBC02	3/4/25, 40 min	Flyer - Direct	Cloud secured
SBC03	6/27/25, 20 min	Flyer - Direct	Cloud secured
SBC04	7/5/25, 36 min	Flyer - Direct	Cloud secured
SBC05	7/9/25, 46 min	Flyer - Referral	Cloud secured
SBC06	7/14/25, 20 min	Flyer – Referral	Cloud secured
SBC07	6/20/25, 47 min	Flyer - Referral	Cloud secured

2. Coding Documentation

The coding process combined deductive codes (derived from frameworks: PWB, SET, PPC) and inductive codes (emerging from participants' narratives). Table E2 is a sample of transcript coding for SBC01.

Table E2

Transcript Coding Sample of SBC01

Transcript word	Code
I would give...I would rate it at 10, and especially having had other coaching as well, like I kind of have this point of comparison, and I, when I was working with the strengths-based coach, right.	Perceived benefit
I not only did I set goals, which I think that's a great thing that coaching helps with is setting goals. But I set them.	Perceived benefit
I exceeded them regularly.	Autonomy
So, like that was great.	Environmental mastery
And you know, I really felt like the relationship I had with this coach was, I think, stronger than others, because it was strengths-based, like I looked forward to it more.	Enhanced well-being
I felt better after.	Coaching process
	Enhanced well-being

3. Reflexive and Bracketing Notes

Reflexive memos and bracketing notes were maintained throughout analysis. These notes helped surface assumptions and avoided privileging articulate or enthusiastic participants over quieter accounts (see Table E3). Figure E1 is a sample of actual notes.

Table E3

Sample Notes and Impact

Interview ID	Reflexive note	Impact on analysis
SBC01	Felt swept up in the enthusiasm	Re-read transcript for neutrality
SBC02	Such a cool job and place to work	Disregarded the job and just read transcript
SBC03	Feel as though she is holding something back	Didn't think about how she said things; understood the words
SBC04	In awe of her battle with imposter syndrome and happiness	Paid attention to the complexity in her story and leaned into her challenges
SBC05	I could get lost in her stories and I love servant leadership	Reminded myself that it was not about servant leadership and leaned into her growth
SBC06	I am a learner, too	It is not my experience as a learner; leaned into her brand explanation
SBC07	I enjoy talking to older people, and he is very eloquent	Forgot that he was a seasoned person; balanced his narrative with others

Figure E1

Sample Reflexive Notes for SBC02

SBC02

Feeling relaxed; excited to get more data

Profile: male, works @ NASA, likes working w/ people → coaching, Masters

poised lots of reflection
increased confidence empowered
consideration of others engaging
rich authentic deeper relationships
gracious enthusiastic helpful
rewarding excited

Overall = 9

Emotions = gratitude, excited,
confident, freedom

Mood = reflective empowered

4. Decision Log

Key analytic and methodological decisions were documented in a log. This record shows how the final structure of themes was reached (see Table E4).

Table E4

Decision Log Sample

Date	Decision	Rationale
7/21/2025	Reducing anxiety, etc. impacts well-being	Not a benefit but a psychological state
7/21/2025	Coded Perceived Cost	Want to capture negatives
7/23/2025	Coded Unmet Needs for group coaching frustration rather than relational conflict	It's an unfulfilled expectation rather than interpersonal breakdown
7/23/2025	Coded Ambivalence	Want to capture negatives
7/24/2025	Finalized sample size at 7	Saturation reached; no new codes emerging
7/29/2025	Marginalization of Weaknesses, Negative Emotion, Relational Conflict, Resilience, Self-Awareness, Self-Efficacy, and Unmet Needs under Effects of SBC	I felt participants were describing consequences of coaching; not just how they thought about it, but what they actually experienced
8/2/2025	Effects of SBC has 2 Thematic Inferences	Intrapersonal Growth & Self-Understanding → when effects were positive, reflective, or developmental Emotional & Cognitive Appraisal → when effects were evaluative or ambivalent.

5. Conceptual Map

This conceptual model (see Figure E2) illustrates the five superordinate themes and their associated sub-themes identified through interpretative phenomenological analysis of

participants' experiences with strengths-based coaching. The map depicts the thematic hierarchy and conceptual flow beginning with intrapersonal processes and identity development, followed by emotional and cognitive appraisal, strengths engagement and application, relational dynamics and social exchange, and culminating in well-being outcomes. Arrows represent the developmental progression across themes, reflecting how participants described moving from internal awareness, appraisal, and the use of strengths toward relational meaning-making and broader psychological well-being. The model demonstrates the interconnected and iterative nature of participants' sense-making as they engaged in coaching and integrated its effects across personal and professional domains.

Figure E2

Conceptual Map

