



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Thursday, Oct. 2, 2008

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McLean Hospital/Harvard Medical School Inaugural Coaching Conference Sells Out
Proves to be among the largest and most successful conferences for McLean Hospital

Belmont, MA—McLean Hospital, the largest psychiatric affiliate of Harvard Medical School, kicked off its Coaching and Positive Psychology Initiative, with a conference “Coaching: A New Horizon—Theory, Emerging Evidence & Practice” last weekend. Jointly sponsored by Harvard Medical School, the conference brought together the international founding contributors in the field, who introduced nearly 500 physicians, psychologists, health professionals, and coaches, to the theory, research, applications, and practices of coaching psychology and its application in the domains of executive, life, and health/wellness coaching.

According to Philip Levendusky, PhD, ABPP, director of Psychology at McLean, the conference sold out in record time and proved to be among the largest and most successful education programs organized by McLean.

“There was an obvious void in the health community with regards to coaching and positive psychology,” said Levendusky. “We have never experienced such a high demand for a conference or such positive feedback following an event. We are already planning on expanding next year’s conference and possibly taking it to different areas of the country.”

Carol Kauffman, PhD, ABPP, PCC, clinical staff associate for McLean and an assistant professor at Harvard Medical School, who developed the conference with Margaret Moore, MBA, a veteran of the biotech industry and founder of Wellcoaches Corporation, said she is not surprised by the feedback she has been receiving.

“This conference was groundbreaking. It was the first coaching psychology conference to be developed by a major medical facility worldwide and it focused on principles that have significant value in a variety of domains, including executive leadership and peak performance, life, health and wellness, applied positive psychology, and coaching research,” said Kauffman.

Conference highlights included:

- A three-hour workshop on an evidence-based model for coaching clients toward lasting change and transformation that applies cognitive restructuring, led by **Robert Kegan**, PhD, world-renowned adult developmental psychologist, professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and educational chair of the Institute for Management and Leadership in Education.

- Live coaching of a string quartet by internationally renowned conductor, teacher, and leadership speaker **Benjamin Zander**, while he was being coached by **Rosamund Zander**, his co-author of the Harvard Business School Press book, "The Art of Possibility." Together they beautifully displayed coaching in action using music to take us places where words cannot go.
- **Tal Ben Shahar**, PhD, renowned author and lecturer on positive psychology at Harvard University, presented on positive leadership and described how positive psychology can improve business performance. He inspired coaches to translate Ivory Tower findings by positive psychologists on what drives happiness and improves performance into results on Main Street.
- **Tony Grant**, PhD, the world's first coaching psychologist and founder of the Coaching Psychology Unit at the University of Sydney, summarized coaching research to date and described its accelerating pace of growth.

Scott Rauch, MD, president and psychiatrist in chief for McLean, was energized by the reaction of attendees. "Many reported that this was the best conference of their lives," he said. "It is gratifying to know that McLean's Coaching & Positive Psychology Initiative, founded last year to help develop an academic foundation for coaching, is already having a dramatic influence on the field."

Attendees also learned:

- An overview of the diverse theoretical foundations of coaching, including positive psychology, and how these foundations have been translated into an impactful skill set designed to help clients and patients reach their full potential.
- Practical coaching skills, techniques, approaches, and ways of thinking presented with concrete examples and opportunities for practice, which energized and will expand current practices.
- More understanding of the distinctions and similarities between coaching and therapy, in part driven by an appreciation of the differences in the ways coaches and therapists help clients process emotions – therapists explore the deeper roots of our emotions while coaches help clients build emotional competence to support change and growth.

"Participants also gained a sense of community, including new connections and increased hope. One participant said 'We're all in the same big canoe', said Moore. "Attendees left inspired by the potential of coaching to positively impact people, healthcare, and the world."

McLean Hospital is the largest psychiatric clinical care, teaching and research facility of Harvard Medical School, an affiliate of Massachusetts General Hospital and a member of Partners HealthCare. For more information about McLean Hospital, visit www.mclean.harvard.edu and McLean's Coaching & Positive Psychology Initiative, visit www.harvardcoaching.org.