

What is the significance of emotions in coaching supervision?

Peter Duffell and
Carmelina Lawton Smith

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Aim – Raising the profile of emotion

- An exploration of how important emotions might be in coaching supervision?
- How we as supervisors, allow for emotions in supervision practice
- Gathering views and opinions from experienced coaching supervision practitioners

Emotions in supervision?

- From the supervision training you have been involved with, how much focus is given to dealing with emotions?
- How well do coach supervision models prepare supervisors for handling strong emotion?

How likely is emotion to arise in supervision?

- Coaches may be more self aware so more likely to raise and access emotions
- Issues brought to supervision are most likely to be those that have generated a strong reaction
- Supervisors asking about emotional reactions due to their personal knowledge/experience e.g. transference

Functions of Supervision

- Normative
- Formative/Developmental
- Supportive/Restorative
(Hawkins & Smith 2006 p.151)



Ashridge Executive Education (2016)
Coaching Supervision, Benefits and Purpose



European Mentoring and Coaching Council (2016)
EMCC Guidelines on Supervision

Most supervision models don't explicitly reference emotions, however neuroscience considers emotion to be a fundamental part of how the brain works

What is the problem?

- Training for supervision explain the processes and scope of the function but gives limited focus to practical approaches for dealing with the emotional realities that arise.

How are theory and practice different?

LOGIC

**REAL WORLD
VIEW**

Theory

Structured

Rationalise & explain

Segmentation is possible

Neutral

Practice

Messy

Emotions may not be rational

Memory is not accurate

Influence of Language

Working with emotion in coaching

Duffell & Lawton Smith (2015)

The challenges of working with emotion in coaching, *The Coaching Psychologist*, Vol. 11. No. 1

- How can I help the client see emotion as valuable and informative.
- How can I build a common understanding of the emotional experience with my client?
- What investigative strategies will help gain maximum insight?
- How might my own language be influencing our interactions?

Implications for coaches

- *Look for patterns* rather than focus on single events to avoid strengthening an inaccurate reconstruction of events.
- *Investigate the narrative* with interested curiosity rather than treat it as fact as strongly emotional events can be poorly recalled due to cognitive overload at the time.
- *Minimise assumptions and emotional language* to ensure the session works with the coaches meaning making not the supervisor's

Supervisor Research

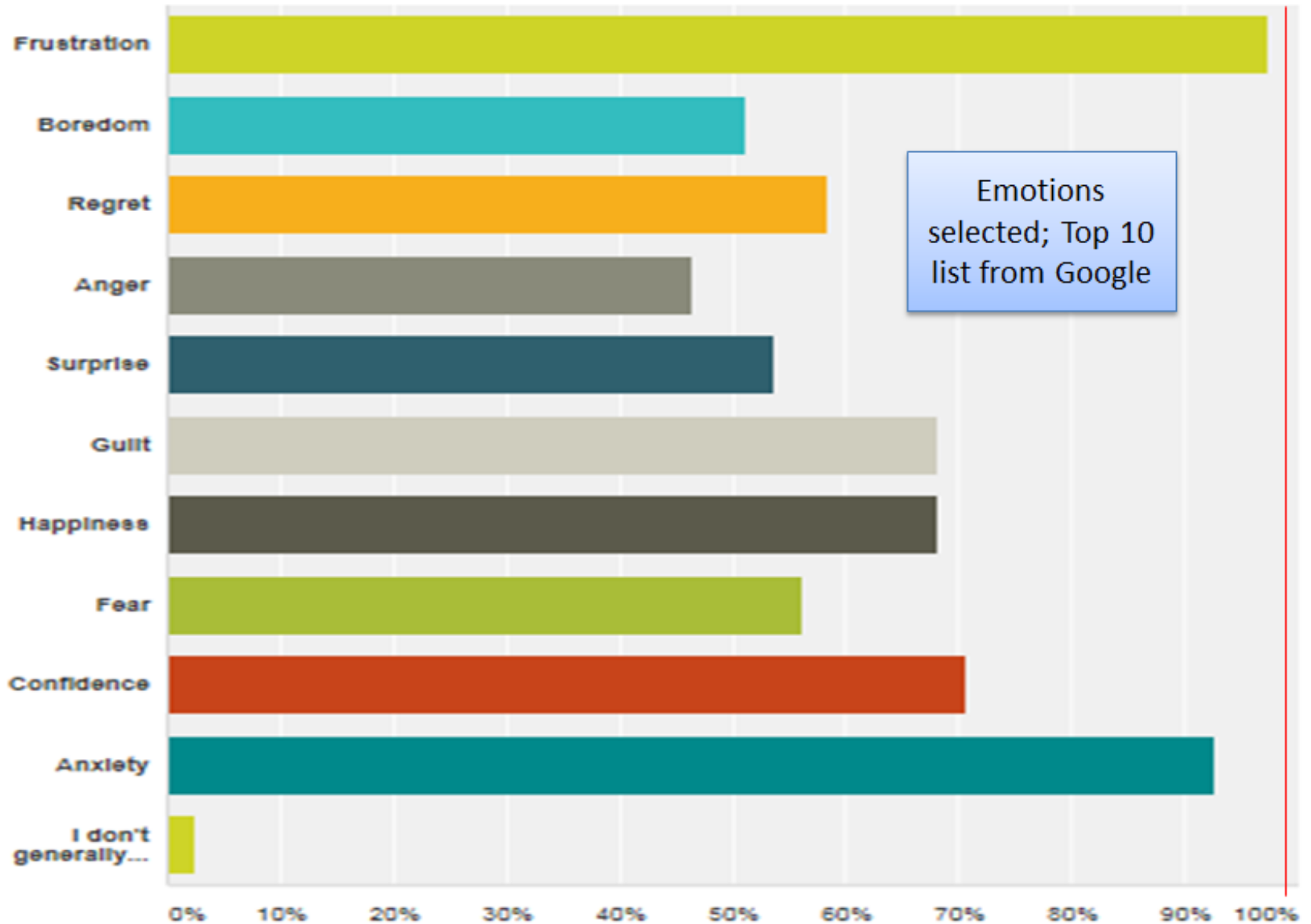
What we did:

- Questionnaire online, quantitative and qualitative
- 41 responses between January and April 2016
- European views
- Invitation via professional bodies for coach supervisors to respond
- Follow up to gather further information

Findings

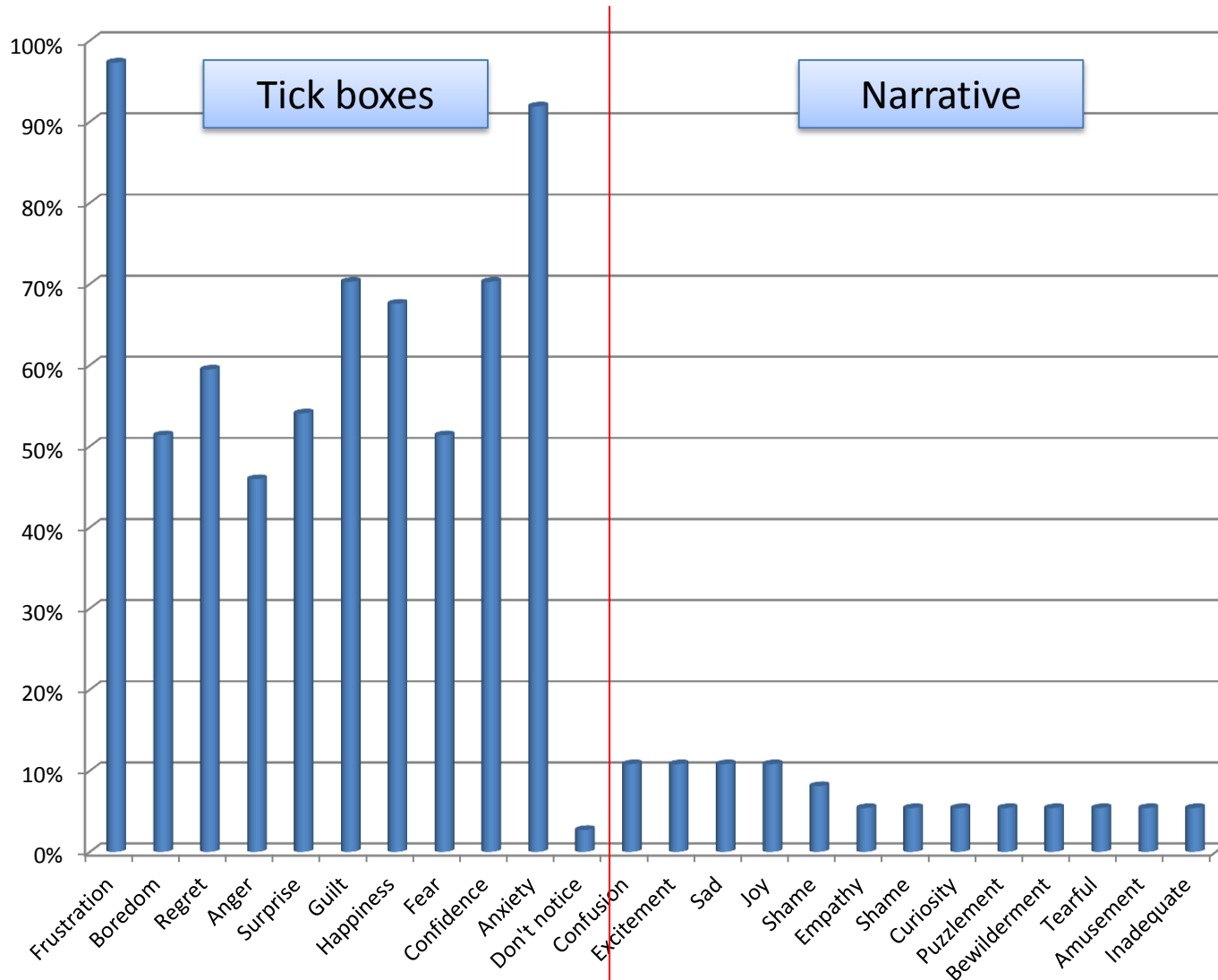
What emotions have you observed which coaches bring in to supervision? [please select all that apply]

Answered: 41 Skipped: 0



Findings

Emotions observed in more than 5% of responses



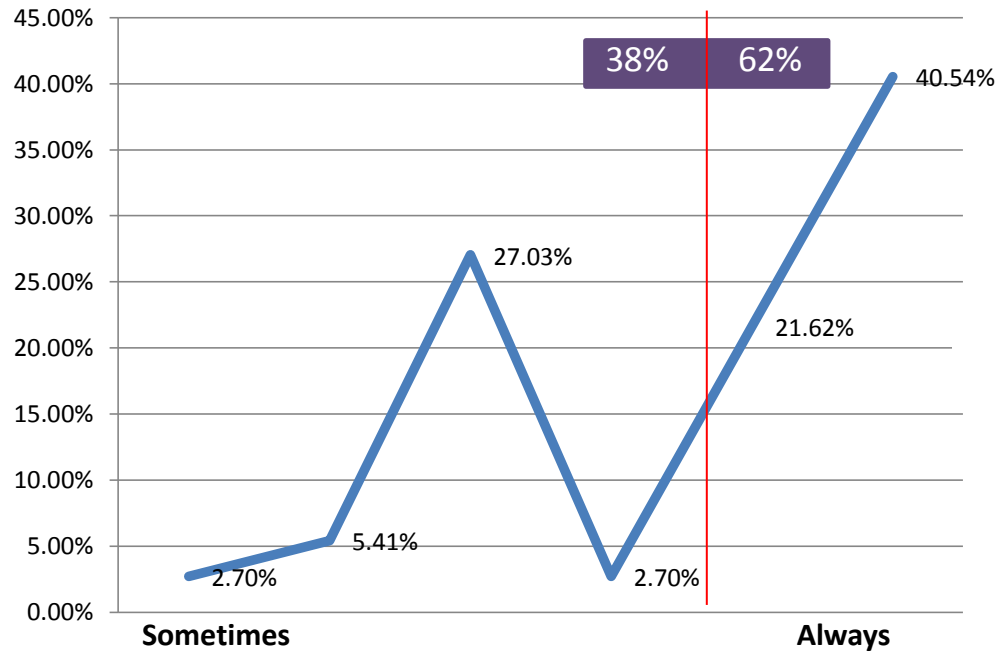
58 emotions were suggested in the free format text box

45 were mentioned only once, such as:

- Rage
- Passion
- Gratitude
- Relief

Findings

How often emotion encountered?

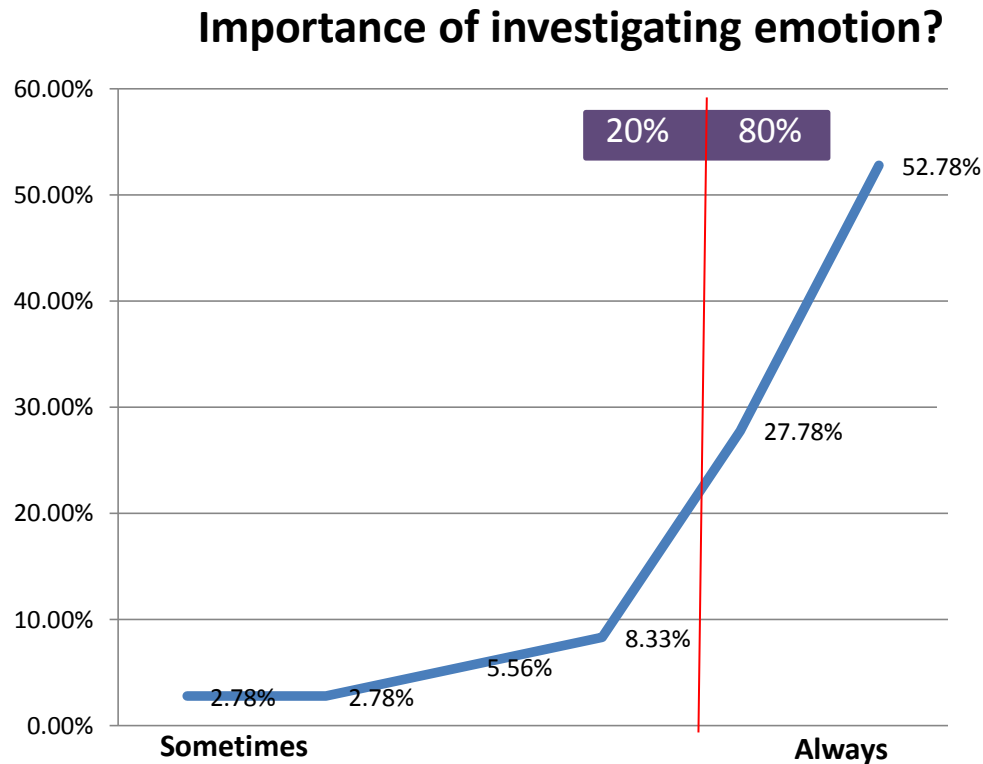


“Often starts as mildly presented emotion, but as explored the underlying emotion emerges”

“It was the tone and unconscious emphasis placed on emotive words”

“I am noticing some emotions in you. What is happening? What just happened?”

Findings



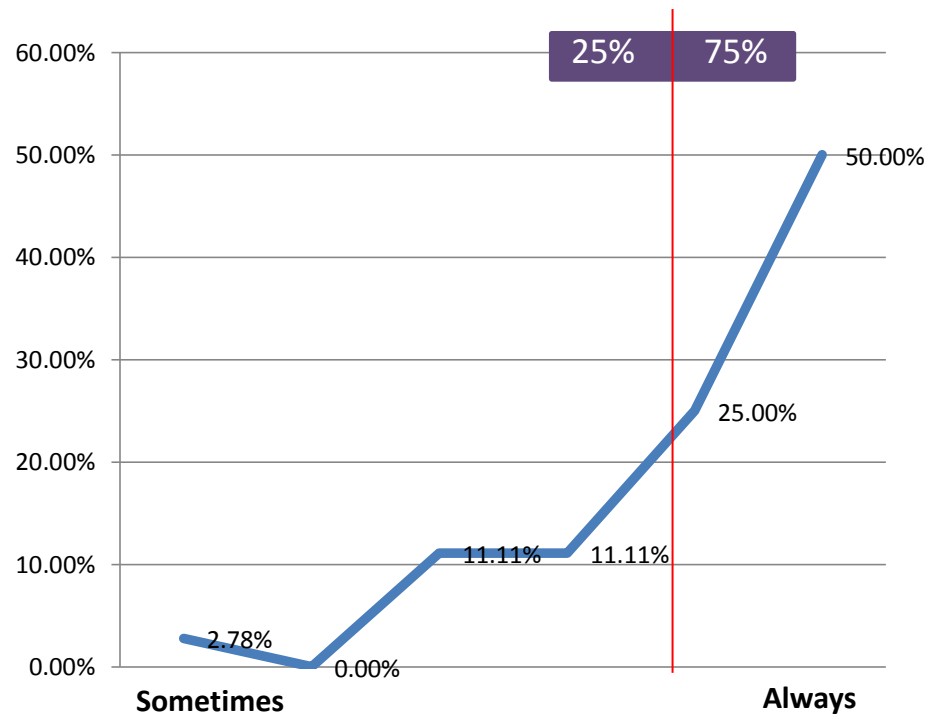
“Go deeper with the coach as to what might be the underlying triggers for the emotion – beyond the presenting obvious”

One of the issues is the ‘meaning’:

“I try to be careful to have the coach give the emotion a name and put words on how they’re experiencing it and what it means, rather than labelling it myself”

Findings

Preparedness to investigate emotion?



“Felt that they would take away/divert focus from the issues which the coach had raised”

“Once raised, they serve their purpose”

“Sometimes the emotion does not seem strong enough to focus on it”

Brief Summary of Research

The indications so far:

- Emotions are frequently encountered in Coach Supervision
- Supervisors are prepared to investigate emotion in Coach Supervision
- Coach Supervisors very strongly feel that the emotions that Coaches bring in to Supervision need to be investigated

Questions for discussion

Group 1 (Peter)

- In what ways do you or your supervision practice influence how or what emotions surface?
- What if anything does the profession need to accommodate emotion?

Group 2 (Carmelina)

- How do you decide if the emotion is relevant to the goal stated and should therefore be discussed?
- How can supervisors learn the skills needed to deal with emotion?

Organisation

Please join the group discussion on your side of the room (split down middle)

GROUP DISCUSSION

Can we have a volunteer spokesperson from each group to briefly summarise their discussion

10 minutes for discussion

Discussion De-brief

Group 1

In what ways do you or your supervision practice influence how or what emotions surface?

- What if anything does the profession need to accommodate emotion?

Group 2

- How do you decide if the emotion is relevant to the goal stated and should therefore be discussed?
- How can supervisors learn the skills needed to deal with emotion?

Implications for Supervisors

- Multiple meanings
- Impact of memory
- Impact of relationship (Jedi problem)
- Power of language

Advice for supervisors:

- Use patterns not single events
- Avoid labelling what we see
- Emotion is a valuable source of information (emotions have a point)
- Emotions are implicit, should they be explicit in supervision practice?

Thank you

Peter Duffell

peter@westwoodcoaching.co.uk

Carmelina Lawton Smith

carmelinalawtonsmith@gmail.com