Welcome to Coaching

CHRIS GAGNÉ · DEVELOPMENTAL COACHING · CHRISGAGNE.COM

Thank you for considering me as your coach. I'm honoured to partner with you, and I want you to know how the coaching runs before you say yes to it. This letter is that agreement in plain words.

QUICK SUMMARY

- **Purpose:** a confidential partnership focused on your professional and personal development.
- **Method:** Alētheia, a developmental coaching approach; the detail is below.
- **Your role:** you set the agenda; I hold the process.
- **Confidentiality:** strict for coaching sessions and the communication around them, with one narrow exception that hinges on intention and comes from the law.
- **Logistics:** sessions run about 50 minutes, usually every other week, on Zoom.
- **Next step:** confirm your availability for our first session.

Read on for the full terms, and ask me anything at any point.

WHAT COACHING IS, AND ISN'T

> *"partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential."*
>
> –International Coaching Federation

In coaching I keep my advice in my pocket (mentoring, teaching, and facilitation are different hats, and I name which one I'm wearing); the work is helping you find your own answers. We work on choices under pressure, the patterns that narrow what you can see, and how you show up with other people. Often the work is the strategic trade-off you've been avoiding.

THE METHOD

My primary method is Alētheia, which its founder Steve March describes as fourth-generation developmental coaching. Day to day it means parts work (the part of you that pushes and the part that brakes both get a hearing), close attention to the sensations in your body, and tracking how experience unfolds in the session. It starts from the question *what if nothing is missing?* and

works with what gets in the way: the aim is to genuinely update old emotional learnings rather than layer new habits over them. (Alētheia is a Greek word for unconcealment: the truth was always there, and the work is uncovering it.) I trained in other approaches first (Co-Active, motivational interviewing, MindTime, and mindfulness practices) and use Alētheia because, in my experience with real clients, it goes deepest. Alongside it, I make occasional use of techniques from Radix somatic work, Co-Active, and Motivational Interviewing as appropriate.

Emotion belongs in this work. I'm used to being with people when they're feeling something strongly, or even a little dysregulated; you don't have to arrive composed, and you don't have to hide anything from me. I see you as naturally whole, resourceful, and creative, and not in need of any improvement. The work starts from there.

CONFIDENTIALITY, AND THE TWO HATS

I adhere to the International Coaching Federation's code of ethics. Where I'm embedded in your organisation I wear two hats, and each carries its own rule, named before anyone tells me anything.

Coaching runs under the Vegas rule. What is said in an explicitly identified coaching session, and in the communication around it, stays there. I don't share it with your manager, your sponsor, or anyone else. There's only one exception, and I've never needed to invoke it: if you indicate an intent to harm someone, to commit an unlawful act, or to put people or the organisation at serious risk, I may need to escalate. That duty comes from the law and hinges on intention. Serious risk means harm to people, legal jeopardy for others, or material fraud; disagreeing with your board, making a lawful protected disclosure, or deciding to leave is never grounds for escalation.

Mentoring and advisory conversations run under the Chatham House rule. I may carry what I learn upward as pattern, never with a name attached. A pattern can still point at its source in a small leadership team, so I prefer to have heard a thing from more than one person before I carry it anywhere. This is how organisational problems reach the people who can fix them without any one person paying the political cost of naming them.

If a performance or capability review asks about you, that is the one exception to the no-names rule: I may offer a high-level read on growth potential, drawn from our mentoring and advisory conversations and never from a coaching session.

You remain responsible for your own well-being and choices; coaching supports your judgement rather than replacing it.

WHERE COACHING ENDS AND CLINICAL CARE BEGINS

I do developmental coaching, not therapy. The method is trauma-informed, but I don't diagnose or treat trauma or mental-health conditions. If the work gets heavier than coaching should carry, here is what happens next: we pause the coaching; I connect you with my standing referral, a licensed counsellor whose practice includes trauma work and who sees clients online, or help you look for care in your locale (your own health system or EAP will usually reach a licensed local clinician faster than I can from New Zealand); and if you are ever at immediate risk, your local emergency services and crisis lines come first, before any coaching process.

RECORDINGS, IF YOU AGREE TO THEM

With your written consent I record sessions, and I put the recordings to two uses. One is supervision: I'm in ongoing supervision (a more senior practitioner reviews my work), and the standard discipline is that a supervisor sometimes reviews session recordings; my supervisors are bound by the same ethics I am. The other is my own craft: I run the recording through an AI model (such as Claude) afterward to sharpen how I work and to surface follow-ups I didn't catch in the room. No model I use trains on your data. You can say no, and you can revoke consent at any time without giving a reason: I stop recording and delete what exists on request. I store recordings securely and delete them within 120 days, sooner when no longer needed. Declining changes nothing about the coaching you receive.

PRACTICALITIES

- **Sessions:** book an hour every other week; we'll spend up to 50 minutes coaching, then wrap up with a short meta-conversation about how the session worked. I'll often propose a few short integrating experiments to practise before we next meet; these won't need a significant time commitment.
- **Preparation:** you set the agenda. A day or two of reflection beforehand gives us more to work with. And give yourself a little space after each session if you can: the memory-reconsolidation research Alētheia draws on suggests the next five hours or so are especially good for letting new learnings settle.
- **Where:** Zoom, at ap.tips/zoom. Video is required, because part of the work is noticing what your body is doing; I make room for bandwidth, access, and privacy needs without ceremony. Coaching isn't possible while you're driving or similarly occupied.
- **Timezones:** I work from New Zealand. Americas, book your late afternoon; Europe/UK, your late evening; Australia and NZ, your afternoon; South-East Asia, your early morning. If scheduling is hard, tell me and we'll find a solution.

- **Between sessions:** the integrating experiments are small by design (journaling, brief check-ins, action experiments). You track these yourself and share what's useful.

ENDING

You can end coaching at any time; it should continue only while it serves you. I ask for one closing session, to consolidate what you've built and part with clarity. If your coaching sits inside an embedded engagement, it normally ends when that engagement ends, though in some cases I can continue working with you individually; we agree any handover or referral in writing, and no session content transfers without your explicit consent.

NEXT STEPS

Confirm your availability for our first session, reflect on what you'd most like to work on, and send anything you'd like me to see at least one full business day ahead. I'm honoured to work with you.

The public version of these practice terms, and how to vet me before we start, live at chrisgagne.com/coaching-practice and chrisgagne.com/vetting. Version: July 2026.