What is an agile coach, really?

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Radical thoughts…
Be detached from outcomes
Take it to the team
Be a mirror
Master your face
Let there be silence
Model being outrageous
Let the team fail
Be their biggest fan
Who is Lyssa?

Before Scrum

- 15-year career in project and program management
- PMO director
- PMP
- Six Sigma Green Belt

After Scrum

- All that + Certified Scrum Trainer and
  - a belief that teams really do know what’s best
  - a rabid focus on delivering business value
- Scrum Coach
- Co-active Coach
Many journeys...all are OK
An agile coach is...
What is an Agile Coach?

- Bulldozer
- Shepherd
- Servant Leader
- Guardian of Quality and Performance
An agile coach...

- Coordinating individual contributions
- Being a subject matter expert
- Being invested in specific outcomes
- Knowing the answer
- Directing
- Driving
- Coaching for collaboration
- Being a facilitator for the team
- Being invested in overall performance
- Asking the team for the answer
- Letting the team find their own way
- Guiding
An agile coach...

...someone who takes teams beyond getting agile practices up and running, into their deliberate and joyful pursuit of high performance.
That’s a lot of stuff…how?
Bring in the allied disciplines
How am I doing?
The yardstick...

Self-organizing

Consensus-driven

Team believes they can solve any problem

Team success

Empowered

Trust

Constructive Disagreement

Owns Decisions & Commitments

Highly-collaborative characteristics from Collaboration Explained, Jean Tabaka
What is an Agile Coach?

BULLDOZER

Shepherd

Servant Leader

Guardian of Quality and Performance
The value I delivered this week:

1. Helped product owner get in sync with sponsor. She didn’t see that she was giving the team direction separate from the vision.
2. Started program-level spaghetti diagram of all the ops impacts from the Agile teams’ deliveries. Everyone added to it and in one day we had a complete view. The program had been trying to get this view forever a month.
3. Helped PMO director use agile teams’ release plans to create her integrated “schedule.” She won’t be driving dates down to the teams anymore.
4. Taught a product owner and apprentice agile coach how to get started creating a product backlog for a new endeavor. They’re off and running now.
5. Started up a new team. They got a good start.
6. Convinced program-level change management team to work with the agile teams rather than sending “down” their list of deadlines. This is radical for them.
7. Agile manager recognized (by herself) that she was being too directive. This coaching thing works!
Agile coaching is...

40% doing
60% being

As an agile coach you model the key behaviors of a good agilist.

You ARE what you’re trying to teach them to BE.
Last words…
Don’t go it alone
GET INSPIRED
Inspiration Emails

GET GROWING
Join a Coaching Circle

GET SUSTAINED
Internal Agile Coach Development Program

Learn more: CoachingAgileTeams.com
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