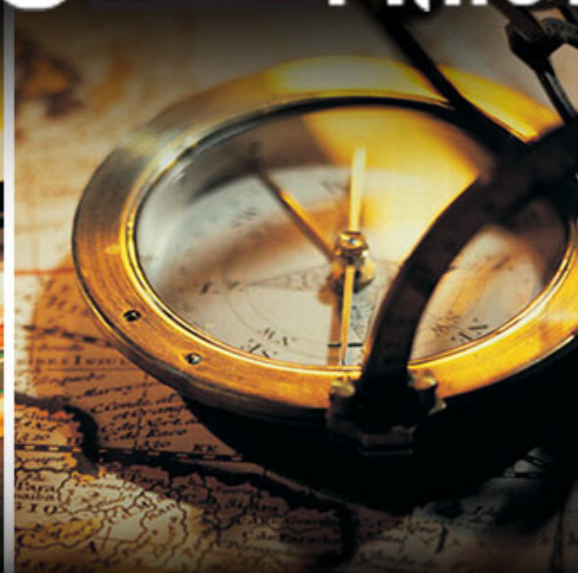


# DIG COACHING PRACTICE



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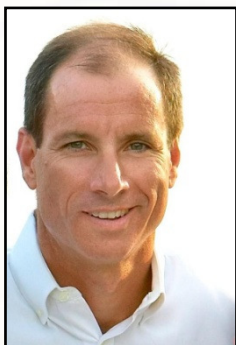
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## **Paradigms: Defined, Illustrated, and Applied**

DIG Coaching is the leading coaching practice for adults and children looking to manage attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms and attention deficit disorder (ADD) symptoms. We focus on managing symptoms of attention deficit disorder, adults with ADD, or adults who have children with ADHD. DIG Coaching, led by attention coach Jeff Copper, helps adults and children (particularly those diagnosed with or impacted by attention deficit disorder or its symptoms) in life or business who are stuck, overwhelmed, or frustrated. DIG Coaching helps adults and children get unstuck and moving forward by helping to open their minds and pay attention to what works.

# Paradigms: Defined, Illustrated, and Applied

By Jeff Copper, Manager & Head Coach, DIG Coaching Practice LLC



*"The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results."—Benjamin Franklin*

I have always loved this quote! It delivers such a powerful message in one simple sentence. The delivery is so simple, humorous, and in a context we all can identify with. Interestingly,

I think most people get the literal meaning but miss it on a deeper level. **As a coach I would refine it to read:**

*"The definition of insanity is using the same **paradigm** over and over and expecting different results."—Jeff Copper, Coach*

A **paradigm** is a set of beliefs, assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that constitutes a way of viewing reality for the community that shares them, especially in an intellectual discipline. A **paradigm shift** is when you change to another pattern (i.e., paradigm shift), and form a new underlying structure for viewing the past, present, or future.

I like to think of a **paradigm** as a mental model. Individually and culturally, we build them to accelerate learning, communications, and our interaction with the world. In many respects they serve us well, so well, in fact, that we have come to rely on them. As a coach, I find most people are so dependent on them they are oblivious to them, even when existing paradigms are the very obstacle getting in their way.

I'd like to share an experience to illustrate a **paradigm** through the innocent eyes of a child.

I once witnessed an art teacher teaching a first-grade class how to draw. A picture of just the front of a horse was posted in the front of the classroom. In other words, you could NOT see the south end of the northbound horse. The art teacher walked around the room, repeating to the students, "Look at the picture and draw only what you can see." Sounds simple, right?

After some time had passed, the art teacher approached one of the students. She asked him, "Are you drawing just what you see?"

"Yes," the student replied.

"Are you sure?" she asked.

Again the student answered, "Yes."

The teacher asked, "Can you see the tail of the horse?"

The student was silent for a moment and then said, "No."

The teacher asked, "Then why does your drawing of the horse have a tail? Remember, I told you to draw only what you see."

I questioned the teacher afterwards. She explained the student was NOT drawing what he *saw* but rather what he *believed* the horse looked like. Simplistically, the drawing exercise was designed as a tool for the child to discover a new way of observing the horse to draw the picture more accurately. Without the discovery, any drawing would be consistently inaccurate. Put differently, the child needed to change his mental model of a horse to draw it accurately. In this instance, the teacher was shifting the child's paradigm.

Children are constantly learning and discovering new paradigms. As we become older, the learning process slows down and we become dependent on old or inherited paradigms without even realizing it. Attachment to these inaccurate or inherited paradigms can resemble **insanity**. I'd like to illustrate by sharing an excerpt from a previous newsletter on modalities:

**Stacy** had no conscious knowledge that her modality was **verbal processor** (i.e., she thinks out loud). She needs to say her thoughts out loud for them to register. For example, Stacy has lost days, and sometimes weeks, searching for misplaced keys. Now, she simply tells her daughter where she puts the keys upon her arrival home, which is enough for her to remember where they are

when she needs them. Imagine the relief in learning that all she has to do is “say it to remember it.” Stacy has used this modality to revolutionize her life.

Prior to coaching, Stacey unknowingly was dependent on a conventional wisdom paradigm that she just had to put her keys in the same place every time she walked into the house. Unconsciously, she repeatedly attempted to resolve her struggles using the same paradigm by trying various locations and reminders in an attempt to condition herself to conform to dominate cultural paradigms. Failing repeatedly and **questioning her sanity**, she came to coaching. Success and **sanity**

returned the moment Stacy let go of her grip on her old paradigm in favor of a new paradigm that more accurately reflected how she naturally does things.

Like the art student finding success in drawing what he actually saw, Stacy’s success was based on observing how she naturally worked.

As a coach, I can’t “fix” or “change” anyone. But for those individuals and businesses replicating an undesirable outcome, I can help them find new paradigms to move them forward!

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