

PEER BULLETIN

Navigation Tools for the Heart, Mind, and Soul™

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Peer Resources 

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FROM THE SOURCEBOOK OF COACHING HISTORY COACHING CATCHES FIRE IN THE 1960S WITH “A LITTLE HELP FROM YOUR FRIENDS.”

VIKKI BROCK



(Editor's Note: Vikki Brock has graciously prepared a number of brief stories from her book: *The Sourcebook of Coaching History*. Each month during 2013, the *Peer Bulletin* is privileged to include one of these stories.)

The roots of coaching during the decade of 1960s were facilitated by the founding by Michael Murphy and Dick Price of [Esalen](#) in Big Sur, California to explore human potential; and Findhorn, founded by [Eileen Caddy](#), [Peter Caddy](#) and [Dorothy Maclean](#), in Scotland to explore spirituality. This was the period of the counterculture and the Beatles whose music brought Eastern philosophy to the masses and created an increased interest in techniques that result in self-awareness. The New Age Movement melded spiritual traditions and alternative medicine from the East and West.

Linda Goodman published her astrology books; Weight Watchers was founded; and in 1961 two Harvard psychologists started experimenting with mind-altering substances in the heart of academia. This decade ushered in an expansion of human consciousness and community.

Personal success literature published during this period included Maxwell Maltz's *Psycho-Cybernetics*, Jose Silva's *Silva Mind Control*, Thomas Harris' *I'm OK, You're OK*, and John Gardner's *Self Renewal*.

The first large group awareness training called “Mind Dynamics” was launched by Alexander Everett and spawned both est and Lifespring—all three organizations were focused on self-improvement, finding your inner voice, and positive affirmations.

The roots of business-focused coaching also came from the decade of 1960s including the emergence of National Training Laboratories (NTL) in Bethel, Maine and The Tavistock Institute in the UK, both of which focused on sensitivity training and organization development, with NTL using a human relations approach as developed by Kurt Lewin, and Tavistock using a psychoanalytic approach as developed by Anna Freud.

Management theories abounded from business experts [Douglas McGregor](#), [Edgar Schein](#), [Richard Beckhard](#), [Peter Drucker](#), [Warren Bennis](#), [Robert Blake & Jane Mouton](#), and [Paul Hersey & Ken Blanchard](#).

Edgar Schein's emphasis on “process consultation,” for example, parallels current descriptions of coaching today, and his focus on process began to significantly influence the world of organizational development which increased the use of consultants in business, many of whom used early executive coaching strategies.