



Diversity, equity, and inclusion are at the heart of everything we do.

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Message from the Board

Dear Valued Members, Colleagues and Friends of ACTO,

This month, the ACTO Board revisits our “*Why*” for the ACTO STAND and our commitment to building an inclusive coaching community where everyone feels they belong.

Leadership coaching is evolving

A growing focus on social identity and social justice reflects not just a workplace trend but a wider societal shift toward true equity and inclusion. Today’s leaders are expected to go beyond managing teams—they must recognize systemic inequalities, build inclusive cultures, and model authentic and transformative leadership. This shift is reshaping what it means to lead and the need for new coaching competencies and approaches.

Addressing the need

ACTO is a community of coaches and coach trainers dedicated to co-creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive profession fully prepared to address the needs of a more socially conscious society. Through dialogue, learning opportunities, and collective action, we seed coaching excellence that values diverse cultural perspectives and actively works to eliminate bias and promote understanding of difference.

Commitment of ACTO Board Members

Being an ACTO Board member is not about holding a title or being a figurehead; it is about

a responsibility with commitment and purpose. As stewards of the ACTO mission, today's Board is providing the strategic guidance and fulfilling our fiduciary duties with renewed enthusiasm. Today, more than ever, your Board is leading with passion and advocacy by not only embodying a deep commitment to the mission, but also serving as ambassadors championing our values across the ever-expanding coaching community.

We, the members of the ACTO Board, are reinvigorated by the heightened interest across the coaching community to recognize that we are all human first—and that belonging is for everyone.

We stand united in our purpose and invite coaches and coach training organizations that share these values to join us. Together, we can create a coaching profession that truly makes a difference in building a more just and inclusive world.

Warmly
ACTO Board Members



Resource of the Month

Each month in this newsletter we will highlight a different facet of identity, and provide a resource in this area for our readers.

Coaching in the Fifth Domain

According to Wahl, Scriber & Bloomfield (2013), there are four commonly agreed-upon coaching domains identified by *holistically-focused* Accredited Coach Training Programs (ACTPs). These domains are:

- Cognitive
- Emotional
- Somatic
- Spiritual

Mayes and Pinnock Fitts (2020) have proposed a *fifth* coaching domain – the domain of Social Group Identity. For over two decades, this coaching domain has been in the blind spot of many coach training programs, as they have adopted the belief that if the Coach is agile in the above-listed domains, and is an active listener, attentive to the Coachee's agenda, and skilled in developing powerful questions, good coaching will necessarily emerge. This approach has proven to be incomplete, as sociocultural awareness in the coaching ecosphere has become an area of increasing focus for researchers.

Fifth Domain Coaching is a framework that acknowledges the influence of social group power dynamics and contextual awareness in the coaching process. It aims to make space for diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging skills in coaching discussions by emphasizing the importance of understanding how each Coachee perceives the world, based on their experiences as members of various social identity groups. The theory recognizes social identity groupings that include, but are not limited to, age, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, nationality, skin tone, religion, range of ability, sexual orientation, and socio-economic or caste status. Each of these groups – assigned and held in place by societies – enables “othering” behaviors that nurture the formation of in-groups and out-groups or dominant and marginalized social status. Fifth Domain Coaching equips Coaches with the skillset necessary to understand and navigate the social group identity cues and Coach/Coachee power dynamics.

Grounded in Applied Behavioral Science (ABS) principles, Fifth Domain Coaching is informed by Gestalt Theory, Group Power Dynamics, Social Identity Theory, Field Theory, the concept of Use of Self, and Coaching Theory. These theories, models, and concepts provide a framework for understanding the complexities of human behavior, group dynamics, social power, and system change. In this regard, Fifth Domain Coaching invites Coaches to expand their coaching practice in ways that help strengthen the human connection between themselves and the Coachees they seek to support.

By recognizing and valuing the Coachee's wholeness and lived experiences, Coaches are better equipped to meet Coachees where they are and thus build more trusting coaching partnerships. Ultimately, Fifth Domain Coaching aims to inform and equip Coaches to navigate social group power dynamics by using a DEIA/B lens to create a coaching environment that respects and affirms each Coachee's unique identity and experiences. *These group identity dynamics cannot be legislatively erased or organizationally suppressed and will continue to emerge in coaching conversations, no matter where in the world they take place.*

The Fifth Domain Coaching framework can support coaches in the following three ways:

- **Being attuned to the levels of system being explored:** The framework asks Coaches to recognize which level of system – intrapersonal, interpersonal, social group, or systemic – is showing up in a Coachee's story. This will help the Coach pick up on any social identity cues that have been shared and craft queries focused on the appropriate level of the system.

- **Creating a more trusting coaching container:** By working in the domain of social group identity, the Coach's awareness of meaningful socio-cultural differences can invite an exploration of these differences in the coaching conversation. Attention to this domain can help Coaches empathize with a Coachee's emotional reactions to experiences outside the workplace that may be impacting their performance or work relationships.

- **Enabling a deeper understanding of the Coachee's identities and worldview to better address the challenges they may be facing:** This framework is particularly important for Coaches working in diverse systems that aim to leverage that diversity to achieve a competitive industry or marketplace advantage. When Coaches lack the expertise to probe or inquire into this domain, Coachees may perceive this hesitancy and forgo working at a deeper level, potentially resulting in them exiting the coaching engagement feeling underserved or misunderstood.

As Coaches, we must continue to evolve. The Fifth Domain offers an essential pathway to deeper coaching connections and transformation. By bringing awareness of social group identity into the coaching relationship, we not only honor the wholeness of each Coachee but also expand the impact of coaching as a practice that uplifts individuals, organizations, and communities. Embracing this domain strengthens our ability to create spaces where every voice matters, every story is valued, and true belonging can take root.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT COACHING IN THE FIFTH DOMAIN, VISIT:

<https://www.fifthdomaincoaching.com/>

References:

Wahl, C., Scriber, C., & Bloomfield, B. (Eds.) (2013). On becoming a leadership coach: A holistic approach to coaching excellence. (2nd Ed.) Springer Press.

Mayes, A. & Pinnock-Fitts, S. (2020). Coaching in the fifth domain: the importance of using an identity lens in coaching interventions. Choice Magazine Vol. 18, (1).

ACTO NEWS

ACTO Membership Renewal

It is membership renewal time for many ACTO members. To check your membership status, log in to the [ACTO website](#) and click on your name. You will be able to view your active membership and if there isn't one, you can renew from there. You will also have received separate emails with additional information about renewing if your membership has expired.

ACTO Monthly Community Conversations Calls

Please join us on Thursday, September 4 at noon EDT for our next call

If you would like to facilitate an upcoming call, [let us know](#). With community facilitation support, we can offer these calls at times that are more convenient for some in our global community.

Feel free to invite a colleague to experience this ACTO member benefit. You can learn more and see the full schedule [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

August Monthly English Forum: Writing Toward Peace: A Reflective Practice for Coaches

Date: August 27, 2025, 8:00 US PDT, 11:00 US EDT, 17:00 CEST, 20:30 IST (90 minutes)

[More Information](#)

Register

ACTO September Community Conversations Call

Date: September 4, 2025 Time: 12 noon EDT

[More information](#)

Register

September Monthly English Forum: Neurograph the Layers of Identity in Your Business for New Awareness and Possibility

Date: Sept 24, 2025, 8:00 US PT, 11:00 US ET, 17:00 CET, 20:30 IST (90 minutes)

[More Information](#)

Register

October Monthly English Forum: Coaching Candidly™: Mastering Transformative Conversations in a Divisive Era

Date: Oct 22, 2025, 8:00 US PT, 11:00 US ET, 17:00 CET, 20:30 IST (90 minutes)

[More Information](#)

Register

November Monthly English Forum: Coaching to elevate human dignity in times of erasure and moral injury

Date: Nov 19, 2025, 8:00 US PT, 11:00 US ET, 17:00 CET, 21:30 IST (90 minutes)

[More Information](#)

Register

Beginning in September 2025, the fee for ACTO Monthly Forums will be \$25 USD for prospective members. The forums will remain free for ACTO members.



ACTO STAND

ACTO is a community of coaches and coach trainers dedicated to co-creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive coaching profession. Through dialogue, learning opportunities, and change initiatives, we seed coaching excellence that values diverse cultural perspectives and eliminates bias and harm.

To read the full details of the ACTO Stand, please visit [our website](#).



VOLUNTEER WITH US

Join our committees! Volunteer with ACTO and help shape a more inclusive coaching profession. Visit our website to learn more and explore opportunities to get involved.

[Visit our Website](#)



September Multicultural Calendar

We invite you to acknowledge and explore a diversity of significant dates and cultural celebrations with us. These dates were sourced from [Diversity Resources](#). Please visit their website to learn more about each date's significance. If you have important dates from your culture that you'd like our community to learn about, please let us know!

Awareness

September - National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

September - World Alzheimer's Month

September 1 - Labor Day

September 10 - World Suicide Prevention Day

September 11 - Patriot Day

September 16 - National Working Parents Day

September 18 - International Equal Pay Day

Religious

September 1 - Ecclesiastical New Year (Orthodox Christian)

September 4 - Sundown, Mawlid an-Nabi (Islamic)

September 8 - Nativity of the Virgin Mary/Theotokos (Christian)

September 11 - Enkutatash (Ethiopian New Year) (Rastafari, Ethiopian Orthodox)

September 22 - Mabon (Imbolc) (Wicca, pagan) (Northern/Southern hemisphere)

September 22 - Navaratri (Hindu)

September 22 - Sundown, Rosh Hashanah (Jewish)

September 27 - Meskel (Ethiopian Eritrean Orthodox Christian)

September 29 - Michael and All Angels (Michaelmas) (Christian)

ACTO MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

We want to highlight and celebrate our members who embody the ACTO Stand for diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in their coaching practice and training. Would you or your coach training organization like to be featured in our Member Highlights section? We're looking for individuals and organizations whose stories inspire others in our community. [Reach out to us](#) to share your story!

Help Us Grow Our Community

Invite your coach friends and colleagues to join us! Share the benefits of [ACTO membership](#), including access to our informative monthly forums. They can also join our community calls as your one-time guests for a taste of what we offer. We appreciate your support in cultivating a vibrant community!



Share Your Feedback with Us!

We value your feedback. Please share your thoughts, ideas, and suggestions with

us at ACTO@ACTOonline.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

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