

Meyler
Campbell
Clear
Leaders

WHAT DOES COMMUNITY MEAN TO YOU?

At Meyler Campbell, community isn't just something we value – it's who we are. Our vibrant network of coaches, leaders, and learners is the foundation of everything we do. We wholeheartedly believe, as the Mental Health Foundation does, that safe, supportive communities are essential to our collective wellbeing.

Here are a collection of reflections from across the Meyler Campbell community, sharing what *community* means to them, and how it shapes both their personal and professional lives.

Let's celebrate a community that continues to be a space for connection, learning, support, and growth – for all of us, for many years to come.



**MENTAL
HEALTH
AWARENESS
WEEK**
12-18 MAY 2025

Meyler Campbell Community Contributions
for Mental Health Awareness Week 2025

Editor's Note

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Academic and practitioner in the field of coaching and organisational psychology.

"How can I help?" I have heard these words many times since I joined the Meyler Campbell community over a decade ago. While different people have said them to me, they perfectly capture why the Meyler Campbell community works as it does and some of the reflections that follow touch upon this.

The offer of service is the heartbeat of our community. It has been championed by our leaders, past and present, and it has snowballed with every new individual that joins; whether it is said in a telephone call, over a coffee, or in our Meyler Campbell Community WhatsApp group. I have seen, time and time again, individuals, organisations and charities express their needs and someone in the Meyler Campbell community answers the call. I feel privileged to be part of such a community; a place that provides me with learning, support and challenge when I need it.

So it didn't surprise me when we asked members of our community to share their thoughts and experiences around the theme of Community for Mental Health Awareness week, that we were met with an overwhelming enthusiasm to contribute. You will see that they echo the words above and so much more: the compassion, empathy, and enduring spirit of a community that will always welcome you to join.

This series is but a snippet of what we know our community holds so I would encourage you, in support of Mental Health Awareness week, to share your stories of community with us and those around you.

Thank you to our Mental Health Awareness Week contributors

The Importance of Community - Kirstan Marnane
Community - Richard Wade
"Are You Ok, Coach?" - Barbara Kearney
'Communities' - Mark Chamberlen
Community Matters - Ranti Williams
Coaching and Community - Sheldon Daniel
Community - Rhian-Anwen Hamill
Community - Saiyyidah Zaidi
Finding Your Community - Alana Giles

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY

Transitions

I joined Meyler Campbell as Faculty just as I left my full-time role in a large professional services firm to start my own business. Transitions are often when we are at our most vulnerable and so, a time when we truly need community (and I don't just mean job transitions). Quite simply, Meyler Campbell gave me a professional and collegial new set of friends who inducted me into teaching with grace, gentleness and rigour. My meetings with them, my questions to – and brilliant answers from – the wider Faculty group during that time were not only a source of learning but made me feel proud to belong to this warm, intelligent group of people. I never looked back and have widened my circle of friendships in the Meyler Campbell faculty group and found amongst them some of my dearest friends.

Professional and personal development

I have my own company but am also affiliated with a leadership development firm – Mobius Leadership – where I do much of my professional development, as well as client work. Most Mobius facilitators and coaches train together in the deeper skills required in our work – whether energy mastery, somatic work, deep facilitation techniques, Internal Family Systems work, etc. Because we train together, we understand one another at a deeper level. We also have a common language and skill set, and know what great looks like, having seen true mastery at work through incredible teachers and our colleagues. The result is that when we work together there is a strong bond and a unique flow.

We are beginning to do more learning together at Meyler Campbell – as coaching faculty, learning together can ensure not only continued high standards of teaching and cutting edge understanding of developments in our field, but also deeper community.

Belonging

I believe in the power of diverse groups and teams, but when they work best, people feel they belong. I agree with one of my teachers Thomas Huebl who says there are three fundamental human rights – to be, to belong, to become. When I worked for a large strategy consultancy I loved it, but the work I did with top teams and equipping leaders to drive change was considered a bit niche. The work was needed, but not always well understood by 'mainstream' consultants. It isn't as easy to calculate the return on investment in top team coaching as it is in cost cutting or system improvement. Nonetheless, there was a small team of us doing this work and we banded together, had lunch together, shared client scenarios to get help, and attended courses together. That helped a lot. We often felt pressure to prove our worth – I am not sure that always helped us do our best work. On the other hand, it may have made us better at times and there is a thrill in an 'us vs them' team – for a while. But for sure, what I will say is we had a sense of community among us that was very strong and needed.

Advice for new coaches

My first piece of advice is to find a small community of like-minded people with whom you can share your ups and downs. For me, the purpose of communities like this needs to be about learning together because that ensures a non-hierarchical environment, but learning is not all that happens! Small supervision groups are fantastic for this.

COMMUNITY

Feeling a sense of belonging and community has always been important to me in my professional life. During my corporate career, I valued and benefited from being part of many different groups and communities – some formal, some informal. Most commonly I found myself in communities with others who did similar roles, or with common interests both within and outside of my organisation. Often these communities would be large in number, but I'd soon find the folks that I could build deeper relationships with. These are the people that I would learn from, share challenges with, confide in and seek support. It's only in the latter stages of my corporate career, as I learnt and understood more about mental health and wellbeing, that I consciously recognised how valuable these communities were to me.

When I was planning the transition from corporate life to that of an independent coach, I was very mindful that I would be leaving behind many of the communities that I had been part of. Given that this transition for me happened to coincide with the COVID pandemic, lockdown and a move to a virtual world, this could potentially have been an even greater challenge. In reality though, I found the transition much easier, largely because the whole world had moved virtual and all of us were suddenly faced with a new reality of having to connect in different ways.

I was starting out on my Mastered journey at the same time, and this immediately saw me part of several hugely valuable communities – from my own syndicate group of three, to my Mastered year group through to the much broader and extensive Meyler Campbell community. As I progressed through the programme, and then in due course became involved with a couple of other organisations as an associate coach, I soon found myself part of other communities, with like-minded people. Following my graduation, I became part of a supervision group and immediately benefited from the wisdom and support of fellow coaches.

As I reflect now, five years into my career as an independent Leadership Coach, I realise that being part of different communities is more important to me now than it probably ever has been. As with my time in corporate life, some are formal groups, others less so.

As a Meyler Campbell syndicate of three, five years on from our first meeting, we still meet once a quarter (and connect between meetings) to provide support, encouragement and feedback to each other. I am also hugely privileged to be part of a peer supervision group that has gone beyond pure coach supervision and involves a much deeper level of professional support for each of us. This has become a safe place where we all know we can share challenges and feel supported by others. Beyond these groups, I am also very thankful for the informal relationships that I have built with several fellow coaches.

My top tip for other independent coaches is to work hard at finding your community (or communities). Be intentional about "finding your tribe", where you can feel a sense of belonging and, as well as benefiting yourself, be in service to others in your community. Two questions to reflect on:

- Where are the people that you can engage with who will support you and help you to grow as a coach?
- Who are the folks in your professional network or circle that you can turn to, to celebrate success and call on when things get tough?

"ARE YOU OK, COACH?"

This is not really a question that business coaches like me are usually asked. After all, our industry is built on empowering others. We as coaches are often seen as resilient, driven, and unshakable. We are expected to be pillars of strength for our clients.

But beneath the surface, we also face our own mental health challenges. We often feel anxious about whether we are meeting our client's expectations. We worry about how we can continue to grow our business. We feel like imposters, questioning if we are truly making a difference. We juggle our own feelings while managing the high emotional labor that coaching is. And with coaching being a solitary profession, feelings of isolation may arise. Indeed, I've had my share of sleepless nights wondering if I'm doing enough, if I'm truly making an impact.

In a demanding industry where coaches are constantly supporting others – who supports us?

The answer lies in our coaching communities. Being part of a community is vital for our mental health and wellbeing. We thrive when we have strong and supportive communities around us.

My coaching community – from the larger Meyler Campbell community to my German alumni friends as well as my wonderful Group Supervision colleagues – they all have been an anchor for me. It is where I find connections, where I can ask for advice, and where I am reminded that I'm not alone on this journey. In this community, I've learned that it's okay not to have all the answers. My coaching community is not just a network; it's my support system, my inspiration, and my reminder that even as I help others, I am supported too.

And as much as I value my coaching community, I also believe there's room for growth—especially when it comes to mental health, vulnerability, and addressing the challenges we all face behind the scenes.

One of the biggest gaps I see is the hesitation to talk openly about mental health. While we encourage our clients to be vulnerable and prioritize their well-being, we often feel like we must maintain a facade of strength. There's still a lingering fear that admitting to struggles might be seen as a weakness or a sign of incompetence.

We need more spaces within our communities where it's okay to say, "I'm not okay right now," without fear of being judged or seen as less capable. Vulnerability shouldn't just be encouraged for our clients—it should be something we embrace ourselves.

I would like to invite us all to – next to excelling at offering professional development – to also see how we can provide mental health resources into our community. Specifically, how can we integrate mental health more into our regular conversations and peer support systems?

By continuing in creating a culture where mental well-being is openly discussed, supported, and prioritized, we will not only strengthen our community – it will also make us better coaches. Because at the heart of every thriving coach is a human being who also needs care, connection, compassion and community.

'COMMUNITIES'

Needing to feel part of something is a basic human instinct. Whether it's a family unit, a workforce, a common cause or collaboration, a desire to belong to something is likely to exist in all of us. Knowing that I have access to others is important, but I like to be able to assess this from a distance, and sometimes from within my cave.

A large family, school, University, and corporate life constantly presented me with opportunities to feel part of a team. It wasn't until I ducked out of corporate life to establish my own coaching practice that I had to really consider where I would find my tribe.

Working from home for the first time is a real shock. The company of others, and access to all the associated opportunities to engage is easy to take for granted. Lockdown levelled this playing field because everyone was similarly constricted. I used this time as an opportunity to think about aspirations for my business and the constituents it would need to become successful.

Though I graduated as a business coach in 2010, and established CCS in 2016, I had barely connected with the Meyler Campbell Alumni network until the constraints of lockdown steered me in that direction. Discovering people on webinars that I already knew, and finding others whose ideas inspired me demonstrated how this group could enrich my thinking and feed my soul. That is what the community does. When we feel part of a group, leveraging the security and sense of well-being that just knowing you are part of something is the best feeling ever.

I am a partially sighted former Paralympian who has spent much of my working life in Executive Search. Generously offering thoughts and encouragement, The Meyler Campbell Community has actively supported my efforts to advocate for better inclusion at work. The DEI space is crowded and confusing, but with careful analysis of this landscape I have identified like minds with whom I now co-create programs designed to address issues that I hope will lead to sustainable change.

Community to me is re-assurance, generosity, creativity, friendship, love and respect and many more adjectives. We must all balance our own idiosyncrasies with the fact that humans are pack animals. We need the collaboration of others to be the best versions of ourselves. My contribution to Mental Health Awareness week is to try not to leave anyone else outside.

Specialises in coaching teams, founders and organisations looking to start or scale new ventures. Co-founder of Knowledge X – community and events for those who coach founders and investors. She is also the creator of ONION® – a framework for clearer thinking currently being developed into an AI-integrated thought partnership tool.

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Community is an overused word and underrated reality in our increasingly atomised world. Flourishing communities are fundamentally relational not transactional, providing and building mutually enriching, trusting connections as well as opportunities to both give and gain. Communities like this are invaluable as isolation becomes an issue in so many working lives.

Anyone who knows me knows that I am naturally collegial or, in MBTI parlance, an off-the-scale E. But even for the less gregarious among us, I suspect John Donne's famous meditation that "No man is an island..." resonates. It's a paradox that while coaches are generally "people people", when we are not working with our clients, many of us work alone.

As we hold space for others to reflect, grow and change, we ourselves need spaces of connection. We need places and people who will challenge and encourage us on our coaching journeys, people with whom we can spark and shape ideas as well as exchange the inevitable ups and downs of building a business. This is why I've come to value what I call 'connectworks' – small mutual support groups for those who otherwise lack obvious professional communities. I recommend connectworks to my individual clients – founders and leaders in often lonely roles – and I have sought to build them for myself.

From the moment I enrolled on Mastered, I have been struck by the intentionality of the Meyler Campbell community. It goes beyond 'networking' or 'lifelong CPD' to something deeper and more needful – it is genuine, warm, welcoming and profoundly human. Whether at the always excellent events, speaking to the amazing office team or Catherine's thoughtful introductions, I have been supported and built up in my coaching in many ways.

It was an introduction by Catherine to Jennifer, another Mastered graduate, which led to us co-founding Knowledge X – community and events for those who coach founders – which has connected coaches IRL in mutual collaboration, contribution, support and fun.

Our biannual Knowledge X events, year-round WhatsApp group and annual Christmas lunch have spawned further connections including commercial collaborations, peer coaching supervision and monthly "Business of Coaching" groups. My Business of Coaching group meets monthly to discuss the challenges and opportunities in each of our coaching businesses; we also meet for quarterly Strategy Days. The four of us talk strategy, finances, BD and positioning but also support each other's wider lives and wellbeing – celebrating each other's progress and wins as well as advising and helping each other in more challenging times.

A typically whirlwind IRL introduction by the wonderful Anne Scoular to another Mastered graduate has even led to my first ever book group. Meeting regularly to talk about books with a great fellow coach/bookworm has definitely contributed to my wellbeing at work – as well as being lots of fun.

As a Christian, I believe that we are designed for connection and community; there's plenty of evidence—empirical, biological and psychological—to support that. Ongoing meaningful connection at work is not a luxury but a necessity for both our own wellbeing and the wellbeing of those we support.

This Mental Health Awareness Week, I am grateful for the professional communities which support me and in which I play a part, and I invite you to consider: who are the people with whom you think, work, and grow? And how can you ensure that others do not journey alone?

COACHING AND COMMUNITY

Coaching can be isolating. While creating a safe space for myself and my clients is rewarding, it can also be lonely. Client confidentiality and the personal nature of coaching add to this feeling, especially when working individually rather than in a collective coaching business. Supervisors help, but the focus remains individual.

The Meyler Campbell community has been invaluable in addressing this isolation. As a member of the learning syndicate, alums, and now faculty, I find solidarity in a group of like-minded individuals who believe in helping others perform better by accessing their internal and external resources. This commonality is refreshing in a world where many prefer to tell rather than listen. It fosters connections with people from diverse backgrounds, allowing open discussions on behavioural change, psychology, and leadership. As a result, I am a better coach.

The learning aspect is another significant benefit. It's easy to connect with colleagues or alums to discuss coaching issues. For example, hearing how alums use AI in their practice is fascinating. I value the learning aspect of being part of a community, constantly pushing myself to try new methods and techniques. I incorporated AI-generated images into my practice after seeing an example at a Meyler Campbell event. This playful, creative, and non-corporate method helps unlock thinking. Asking a client, "What does that feeling/blocker/limitation look like?" now has a whole new meaning.

One aspect of mental health that I see coming up regularly is resilience, especially among minorities. Reviewing their 'life story' and highlighting their agency in professional and personal lives brings a renewed sense of power and optimism. Coaching can illuminate how they have shown up for themselves in ways they may not have considered or dismissed as 'just me'. In that regard, I feel coaches can support our clients' mental health, allowing them to see themselves in a new light and providing a renewed sense of possibilities and power.

Addressing exclusion in professional communities is crucial. There is a misguided belief that networks centred on care, empathy, and listening are free from exclusionary practices. Sharing professional interests does not eliminate social differences or structural barriers affecting minorities and marginalised groups. Exclusionary behaviours can induce stress and contribute to mental health challenges for those expecting these communities to be more enlightened. We must work to make these communities more inclusive by welcoming diverse voices and perspectives. Failing to do so can foster stress and disconnect among minority groups.

I also think it is vital to ensure that, as individuals, we try to access as wide a range of 'communities' as possible. Every community we are part of will, by its nature, provide a sense of belonging to parts of us – not all of us. My tennis community offers something very different from Meyler Campbell, but they are both essential to my well-being. We must actively seek out groups and communities that allow us to fully be ourselves and be realistic about our expectations from any one community.

COMMUNITY

Alana asked me to reflect on the Meyler Campbell community and to write something about how it's helped me personally and professionally. This hasn't been difficult because I've really appreciated my five years as part of Meyler Campbell - it's warm, supportive, and jam packed with learning and great people. I've found 'professional companionship', stretching ideas and joy, both via the organised programme and informal networks. Before doing Mastered, I studied at Tavistock and later with the Kets de Vries Institute. Both were great - but it's to Meyler Campbell that I keep coming back.

The 'homestead' is of course the syndicate; formed at the start of the pandemic and under the (beady but twinkly!) eyes of Anne Scoular and Saverio Grazioli Venier, the online tutorials gave us a positive trajectory which 'held' us and saw us through those confusing years. On a day-to-day basis, we were living the very liminality we were learning about in Working Identities - everything was changing, and no one quite knew where we would land. This was complicated for me by the illness of my father who then died around the time of my T5, by which time I'd left London and decamped to Llangollen. Being with him in that intensely bittersweet period, while also walking the Mastered path with my syndicate, helped me see that my father had been a kind of parent coach - and to appreciate how profoundly valuable this had been to my security and development. He always had time, was keen to hear what I thought the solution was, did not judge, and offered his perspective eloquently when asked. The impact of that unconditional positive regard on a person is something I internalized while doing Mastered - and really matters, both in coaching and relationships.

Since then, I have been at many fantastic CPD events, parties, online chats, interventions, coffees, lunches. I bedded this into my coaching practice in a way that felt safe and supported. My supervisor is part of the Meyler Campbell family, and I'm closely in touch with my syndicate members and tutors. I nominated the winner of one of Meyler Campbell's John Stopford Scholarship recipients. I took part in a pro-bono scheme for a school. I was honoured to give a masterclass on family businesses, my area for twenty years. I am part of a Meyler Campbell book club and have become close to faculty members and graduates from other syndicates - all giving me horizontal, vertical, and diagonal relationships! I was even lucky enough to join a second syndicate a few times (long story!). I find both the formal and informal points of contact give me a superb sense of learning and progress. I have turned to colleagues for many, many things - psychometrics, vision days, chemistry sessions that didn't go my way, HBR articles, books, bereavement coaching, AI, team coaching assignments, pricing data... I could go on.

My kids are in the thick of A-level revision right now and it's miserable but the 'revision' and renewal that Meyler Campbell events give me are anything but... it's just GREAT to be reminded of simple but transformational ideas I encountered during Mastered. Like what? Well, for a start... the maxim that performance is equal to potential minus interference. Genius! Often, the thing holding us back from our best performance is ourselves - I think of that very often. How about the simple but profound deployment of active listening techniques? Genius again! Facilitating difficult meetings with Nancy Kline techniques... Triple genius! Each time I go back to Meyer Campbell, something key comes back to the fore and something new emerges.

New peer groups, rich ideas, dear friends - MC gave them to me in spades!

COMMUNITY

In a world that often feels fragmented and isolating, the importance of community cannot be overstated, particularly as we find ourselves in Mental Health Awareness Week. This year's theme of 'community' is really important to me personally. Being in supportive networks helps to develop and sustain mental wellness. Being in spaces that we actually wish to be in offers a sense of belonging, safety, and purpose—elements essential for overall well being. My experience within the Meyler Campbell community exemplifies how connection and support can transform individual growth and resilience. It helps to have people to share experiences with in times of challenge as well as joy.

This community has been an important part of my professional coaching journey. The camaraderie and exchange of ideas have significantly influenced my personal growth. There is often open dialogue as well as the ability to respectfully disagree—elements fundamental to mental health. My interactions with fellow coaches remind me that I am not alone.

I believe that maintaining connections with like-minded professionals is crucial for growth as a coach. We all know that coaching can be a lonely profession, and it is all too easy to retreat internally during challenging times. However, by actively engaging within the community one is able to access a network of support that counters feelings of professional solitude and encourages collective growth. Regularly participating in community discussions and events has strengthened my skills (yes, even as a coach with 15 years of practice!) and provided a platform to share experiences and solutions—creating an environment of giving and receiving.

I have always sought to embrace the vulnerability that comes with sharing one's professional journey. Reflecting on my time within the Meyler Campbell community, I recall challenging moments of self-doubt and professional uncertainty – it was through sharing experiences and hearing from others that I felt affirmed and was able to lean into the full range of feelings that can arise for a coach! Peer to peer conversations are so fulfilling and hundreds of these discussions have contributed to the coach I have become! A community which encourages, stimulates fresh insights, and a renewed sense of purpose is important. We develop resilience as we draw from each other's experiences.

However, despite the benefits, building and nurturing a professional community comes with its hurdles. As many coaches work independently, potential barriers such as lack of time, resources, or the fear of vulnerability can inhibit the formation of relationships and community. I would encourage anyone reading this to recognise that time spent with others in community is only going to be time well spent! As business coaches we have the unique opportunity to normalize conversations around mental well-being. By openly addressing our challenges and seeking support, we can dismantle the stigma surrounding the coaching profession and mental health, creating a more inclusive and understanding atmosphere.

To new—and established—business coaches, my advice is to invest time in finding or creating strong support networks. Attend the Meyler Campbell events in person and virtually so you meet people with whom you have a shared history (you've completed the Mastered journey). The true value of a coaching community is not only in one's professional development but also in the support it provides for mental tenacity, a sense of belonging, and knowing that you are not alone!

I believe when we come together and discuss our experiences the outcome can only be collective growth—and we can cultivate an environment that prioritizes well-being while driving success.

FINDING YOUR COMMUNITY

When I saw that Mental Health Awareness week this year was focusing on Community, I was immediately delighted. Community isn't just something that Meyler Campbell values - it's rooted in who we are as an organisation.

Everyone deserves the opportunity to find their community. For some, it's outside the professional world: a book club discussing your love of stories, volunteering time in your neighbourhood community, or playing social sports with others. For others, it's found through lifelong learning - connecting with people who share a passion for growing their knowledge and skills. Personally, I consider myself lucky to have found many welcoming communities throughout my life.

For me, I have always enjoyed playing team sports. I did this throughout all my school years and have continued this into my adult life. Now, I regularly play hockey (field hockey for any American readers) for a large hockey club, complete with weekly training sessions and Saturday matches throughout the season. And I think it's important to remind ourselves that being part of such a team doesn't need to be just about the sport and physical exercise - it's a way to connect, grow, and thrive emotionally, mentally, and socially.

Last year, I suffered a major knee injury: a complete ACL rupture that required reconstructive surgery and a long recovery. I feared it might end my hockey career. The physical rehab was challenging, but it was the emotional and mental toll that surprised me most. Suddenly, I wasn't training with my teammates or playing matches on Saturdays. I felt isolated.

But my hockey community never left me behind. They checked in regularly, offered encouragement, and celebrated every milestone of my recovery. When I returned to play 10 months later, their joy in welcoming me back was overwhelming. That support gave me the resilience to keep going - it reminded me that community isn't just about showing up when things are good, but about standing beside each other when things are hard.

That same spirit is what I've experienced within the Meyler Campbell community over the last seven years. It's a network of generous, purpose-driven people who genuinely want others to succeed. Whether it's a listening ear, a connection, or a kind word, the support is real and lasting. Within a professional learning community, like Meyler Campbell, we can share knowledge, challenge one another's thinking, and provide support in a way that fosters continuous development.

In the end, being part of a community - personal or professional - does wonders for mental health. It gives us connection, purpose, and the reassurance that we're not alone. And that, to me, is invaluable.

Meyler Campbell Clear Leaders

Who are we?

Meyler Campbell was founded in 1999 as a centre of excellence for training leadership coaches of the highest calibre. We support our community of trained coaches with continued learning, professional development and networking opportunities.

Guided by a faculty of around 20 tutors, our generous, lively and diverse coaching community now boasts around a thousand senior leaders, who work around the world and across all sectors.

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