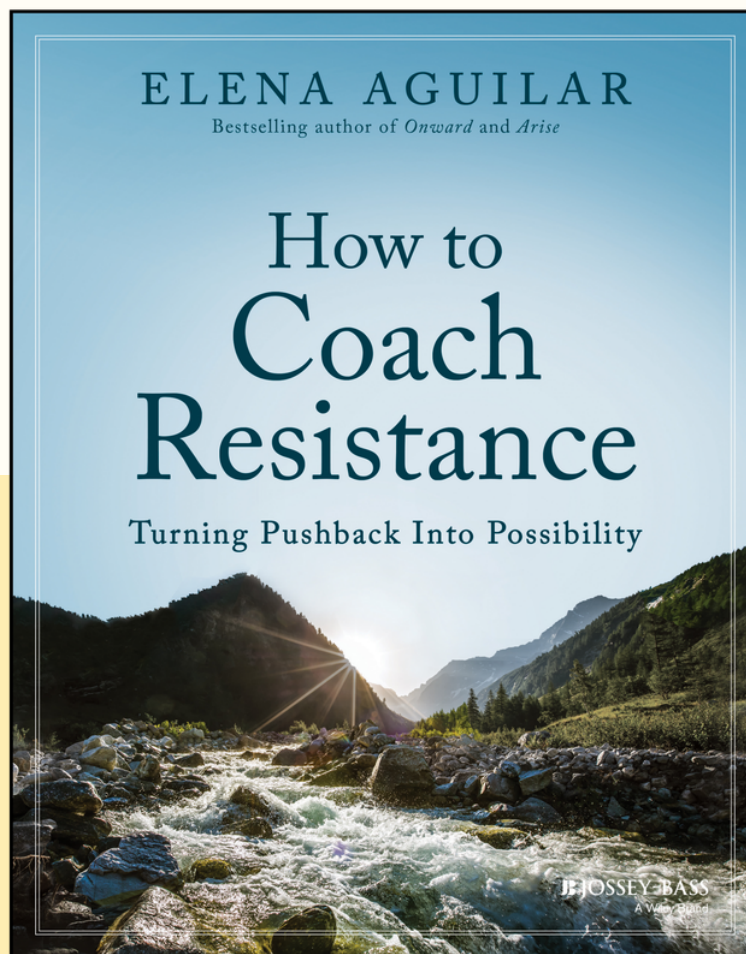


TOOL

The Three Moves Framework



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Curiosity creates possibilities that judgment cannot.

Welcome. Resistance often creates urgency.

Someone pushes back.
Someone disengages.
Someone challenges us publicly.

When those moments happen, our instinct is often to respond immediately. We defend, explain, persuade, justify, or move on.

The Three Moves Framework offers another approach.

Rather than reacting to resistance, it invites us to slow down, understand what is happening, and respond intentionally.

This framework is adapted from Chapter 6 of [How to Coach Resistance](#). In the chapter, I explore how coaches, facilitators, and leaders can respond skillfully when resistance arises in group settings and in one-on-one conversations.

The framework is simple.

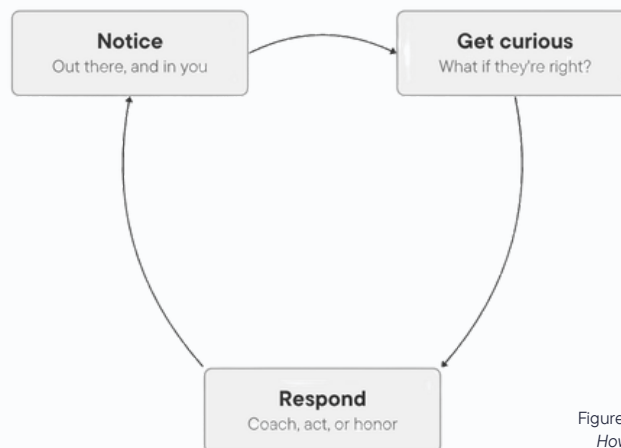


Figure 6.1: Where Resistance Lives © Elena Aguilar, *How to Coach Resistance*. Jossey-Bass, 2026

The practice is learning how to move through those steps in real time.

Let's begin.

Elena



1

MOVE 1: NOTICE

Out there, and in you.

Before deciding what resistance means, notice what is happening.

Notice the behavior.

What are you actually observing?

Notice your own reactions.

What emotions are coming up?

What assumptions are you making?

What story are you telling yourself about what is happening?

The first move is not interpretation.

The first move is observation.

Reflection Questions

- What am I noticing?
- What evidence do I have?
- What assumptions am I making?
- What is happening in me right now?



2

MOVE 2: GET CURIOUS

What if they're right?

Resistance often contains information.

Sometimes people are protecting a core human need.

Sometimes they are naming a legitimate concern.

Sometimes they are responding to a condition in the system.

Sometimes they are communicating something they don't yet have language for.

Curiosity helps us move beyond judgment and toward understanding.

Reflection Questions

- What might be underneath this behavior?
- What concern is being expressed?
- What need might be at stake?
- What am I not yet understanding?



3

MOVE 3: RESPOND

Coach, act, or honor.

Once you've noticed and gotten curious, decide what the moment requires.

Sometimes the best response is to coach.

Ask questions.

Explore what's underneath.

Create understanding.

Sometimes the best response is to act.

Clarify.

Adjust.

Address a concern.

Change course.

Sometimes the best response is to honor.

Acknowledge the concern.

Recognize the emotion.

Respect the perspective.

Allow the person to make their own choice.

Not every moment requires the same response.

The work is learning to discern what the situation needs.

Reflection Questions

- Does this moment call for coaching, action, or acknowledgment?
- What response would serve both the individual and the larger purpose?
- What would a skillful response look like here?



Applying the Framework

Think about a recent experience in which you encountered resistance.

Briefly describe the situation:

What did you notice?

What became possible when you got curious?

Did the situation call for coaching, action, or honoring?

(Continued)



Applying the Framework

What would you do similarly next time?

What would you do differently?



WHAT'S NEXT

Keep Learning with Bright Morning



Join Elena Aguilar for a live [Coaching Resistance workshop](#)

If you've ever wished you could sit beside Elena as she coaches through resistance in real time, this is your opportunity. Learn directly from the author of *How to Coach Resistance* as she demonstrates how to navigate pushback, coach emotions, and transform challenging conversations into opportunities for growth.



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