

micro article
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Golden Seams: Applying Kintsugi in Coaching

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Kintsugi is the traditional Japanese art of mending broken ceramics using lacquer dusted with powdered gold.

Rather than disguising fractures, this technique intentionally highlights them, transforming a shattered object into something richer than its original form. Philosophically, it teaches that breaks and repairs are an essential part of an object's history - a story to honor rather than hide.

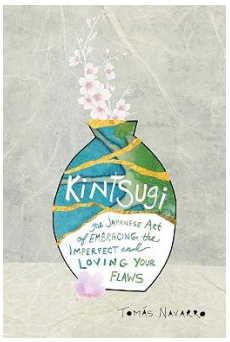
In mental wellbeing coaching, Kintsugi serves as a transformative framework for resilience and self-compassion. Hardship, trauma, or burnout often leave individuals feeling "broken," driving a desperate impulse to return to an unblemished past. Kintsugi shifts this paradigm, encouraging clients to view emotional scars not as marks of failure, but as evidence of endurance and deep personal growth.

Coaches can practically integrate Kintsugi into sessions through targeted interventions:

- **The "Golden Mapping" Exercise:** Ask clients to visually draw or map a major life rupture on paper. Guide them to identify the "gold"—the hard-won wisdom, renewed boundaries, and coping strategies gained during recovery—that fills those fractures.
- **Reframing Perfectionism:** When clients express shame over past setbacks, use targeted reflection to challenge the premise: "If this fracture ultimately expanded your capacity for empathy or self-awareness, how has it added value to who you are today?"
- **Tactile Anchors:** Bring images or physical Kintsugi artifacts into sessions. Visual and kinesthetic prompts help clients externalize their growth and drop the heavy burden of trying to appear untouched by life's difficulties.

Ultimately, Kintsugi coaching provides a powerful antidote to perfectionism and shame. By honoring every break, coaches empower clients to wear their mental scars with dignity, proving that healing isn't about erasing history, but integrating it to become whole.

Want to learn more?



You can purchase "Kintsugi: The Japanese Art of Embracing the Imperfect and Loving Your Flaws" by Tomas Navarro using this link:
https://amzn.to/3TckM4f