Leading with Vulnerability: Dare to be Yourself”!

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School of Education at Indiana University
I Gotta Be Me
Overview

1. Vulnerability at the heart of your work and life for success
2. Moving from Autopilot to Awareness (Mindfulness)
3. What Emotional Intelligence has to do with it
4. Empathy and Compassion
5. Difficult Conversation and Generosity
6. I will end with Questions for you to ponder?
Our Work as HR Professionals, Educators and Leaders is all about the People – It’s a Human Intensive Experience (HIE)
The pace of our work lives is unrelenting. Cognitive, emotional, and social demands are feverishly delivered by devices – ringing, pinging, and chiming at us all day long.

The world changes or shift overnight. Expectations and preferences change with the advent of a new technology. A tweet can instantly precipitate a public relations nightmare.
Volatile
Uncertain
Complex
Ambiguous
47% Average time spent mind-wandering

70% Leaders report regularly unable to be attentive in meetings

02% Regularly make time to enhance personal productivity

Killingsworth, 2010; Mindful Leadership Institute, 2010
Result = “Autopilot”
Autopilot Traits

- Attention is in the past or future
- Distracted
- Reactive or judgmental
- Act based on habit patterns and assumptions
How to get off Autopilot?
“Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”
Mindfulness

“being present”
“Mindfulness means paying attention to what’s happening in the present moment in the mind, body and external environment, with an attitude of curiosity and kindness.”
Mindfulness Research Publications (PubMed)
3 Benefits
Outstanding Leadership
Happiness
Neuroplasticity: Changes in Attention and Mind-Wandering

**Default Mode Network (DMN)**
- Related to mind-wandering and self-referential thinking.
- **Less active** during meditation.
- Meditation practice → **greater connectivity** with attention management regions, even at when rest.
Mindfulness Practice:  
Less Anticipatory Stress, Faster Recovery

Novice vs Expert meditators responding to pain

- Less anticipatory amygdala activation
- Less self-reported unpleasantness afterwards

Amygdala
Search Inside Yourself
Mindfulness-Based Emotional Intelligence for Leaders
+ Emotional Intelligence
+ Neuroscience
+ Mindfulness

= Search Inside Yourself
Changes before SIY
(Compared to 4 weeks after)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Pre-Program</th>
<th>Post-Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“When in conflict with someone, I take time to fully understand what is driving their perspective.”</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>“I am able to pause before reacting.”</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>67%</td>
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Summary

• We need skills for a VUCA world

• Mindfulness is the movement from Autopilot ➔ Aware
Autopilot

Aware
Take time to reflect
Emotional Intelligence

“The ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions.”

Salovey & Mayer, 1990
• Self-Awareness
• Self-Management
• Motivation
• Empathy
• Social Skills
Self-Awareness
“Knowing one’s internal states, preferences, resources and intuitions.”

Daniel Goleman
50

Have a hunch

80

Figured it out

10

Palms sweat & behavior changes
“Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”
EXISTENTIAL

“I am angry”
EXPERIENTIAL

“I experience anger in my body”
Self-Management
Compulsion

Choice
Self-Management

The process of managing one's internal states, impulses, and resources.
It’s NOT

• Avoiding

• Denying

• Suppressing
How to respond to triggers?
Prefrontal Cortex

Amygdala

Hijack
• Stop
• Breathe
• Notice
• Reflect
• Respond

SBNRRR
Motivation
Alignment
Envisioning
Resilience
Pleasant life
Life of engagement
Meaningful life

Dr. Martin Seligman
What’s your best possible future?
Alignment
Envisioning
Resilience
“An ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change.”
Resilience in 3 Steps

1. Inner Calm
2. Emotional Resilience
3. Cognitive Resilience
Explanatory Style
Response to setbacks

**Pessimist**
• Presumption of personal helplessness
• Setbacks are long lasting
• Are due to their own inadequacies and cannot be overcome

**Optimist**
• Presumption of personal power
• Setbacks are temporary & are isolated to circumstance
• Can be overcome by effort and abilities
Cultivating Optimism

1. Become aware of negativity bias
2. Mindfulness
3. Transformation
Outcomes

- Leadership Ability
- Performance and Stability
- Happiness
Creating Transformational Leaders

• Must create leaders who are mindful with emotional intelligence because we get our work done through people. Our work is to inspire and to motivate, and to create a vision that individuals will become a part of in helping us achieve our goals.

• Transformational Leaders are: embodied EI skills; empathy, compassion, generosity, and data and use them all to build healthy productive teams for impact.

• Transformational Leaders must Lead with Vulnerability
Understanding Vulnerability

• “Vulnerability is the absolute heartbeat of innovation and creativity,” says Brown. “There can be zero innovation without vulnerability.”
• “Having the courage to face your fears and the wild uncertainty of the future”

• Myths:
  • Is not Weakness – Courage takes vulnerability (you must take risks)
  • You can’t opt out of it – You must deal with uncertainty – if not you do not influence
  • Sharing your challenges with those who can understand and support – Find your group
  • Not going it alone – Building a team where people feel comfortable to ask

  • Brene Brown – University of Houston Graduate School – Daring to Be Greatly
Vulnerability is required for authenticity. We know that authenticity helps build trust, which is especially valuable now, when trust in business and leaders in general is sorely lacking. And authenticity means being open and honest about your beliefs and values. Authentic behaviors include admitting mistakes, showing emotion, and not hiding behind a manufactured facade. It’s impossible to be authentic without being willing to be vulnerable.
How do leaders do this -

Leadership & Integration
Communicating with Insight
Leading with Compassion
What Google Learned From Its Quest to Build The Perfect Team.

1. Psychological Safety
   Team members feel safe to take risks and be vulnerable in front of each other.

2. Dependability
   Team members get things done on time and meet Google’s high bar for excellence.

3. Structure & Clarity
   Team members have clear roles, plans, and goals.

4. Meaning
   Work is personally important to team members.

5. Impact
   Team members think their work matters and creates change.
Remember how it feels to connect with others
Vulnerability, Empathy and Compassion for Impactful Communication
Empathy

(a) The ability to experience and understand what others feel

(b) while maintaining a clear discernment about your own and the other person’s feelings and perspectives.

Thompson, 2001
Journal of Consciousness Studies 8, 1-32
What Empathy is NOT

- Psychologizing
- Agreeing with people
Connecting with others

Empathy

Empathic Distress
- Self-related emotion
- Negative feelings: stress
- Withdrawal & non-social behavior
- Poor health, burnout

Compassion
- Other-related emotion
- Positive feelings: kindness
- Approach & prosocial motivation
- Good health

Adapted from Singer & Klimecki, 2014 Current Biology
Compassion may be defined as the capacity to be attentive to the experience of others, to wish the best for others, and to sense what will truly serve others.”

Joan Halifax
Compassion Makes Courage

“Having compassion for others frees us from fearing ... it turns our attention outward, expanding our perspective, making our own problems ... part of something bigger than us that we are all in together.”

Jinpa, 2015
Three Levels

1. CONTENT
2. FEELINGS
3. IDENTITY
   • Am I competent?
   • Am I a good person?
   • Am I worthy of love and respect?
Generosity is contagious

- Generosity is such a powerful practice that it simultaneously affects the person extending the generosity, the recipient of the generous act, and anyone who witnesses it. Generosity is an evidence-based way to boost well-being.

- Richard Davidson, founder of the Center for Healthy Minds at University of Wisconsin and member of the American Academy of Medicine.
Generosity continued

• “Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity” – Simon Weil

• Action to do immediately:
  • Give someone your undivided attention
  • Give a Compliment – “Thank You” are two powerful words together
  • Throw a life preserver – offer to help someone in need or stressed
  • Make it anonymous – (everyone is inspired – a win/win)
  • Forgive someone –

  • Mary Linda McBride (Mindful Leadership Website)
What is Your Work and Vision?

• How will you change the world?
• What will be your unique to contribution?
• From your history or histories, what is uniquely yours to offer the rest of us?
• How can we learn from your ways of collaborating with difficult conversations and histories as an institution of higher education?
• In honoring your uniqueness, how will our work emerge as enhanced?