

KATE RAMSAY AND THE AND COACHES WELCOME YOU TO OUR STAYING IN TOUCH NEWSLETTER.

In **Learning Moments** in this our first edition for 2022, we summarise two articles about leadership: the first lists 7 questions that leaders with high emotional intelligence ask themselves every day, and the second is about what the author calls 'the most important leadership principle'. In **Did You Know?** we turn to the Dalai Lama for 7 lessons he suggests we ponder when seeking more direction and meaning in our life. And then, for the readers amongst us, is the good news that neuroscience has now proven that reading changes the way our brains work - for the better! **And to Close** is a quote from Victor Frankl about the importance of pausing before taking action.

Learning moments

i Seven questions for effective leaders

Matthew Royse, in an essay published in the Medium Daily Digest on September 26, 2021, stated that 'emotionally intelligent leaders have motivated and happy teams and are excellent motivators, coaches and mentors.' He also states that leaders with high emotional intelligence (EI) are not only aware of their own needs, but also the needs of their team members as well. Royse suggests that in order to sustain this level of awareness of both themselves and their teams, leaders would do well to ask themselves these 7 questions every day:

- *Is the vision clear and consistent?*
- *Does my team feel empowered?*
- *Does my team feel like they have a purpose?*
- *Does my team enjoy coming to work?*
- *Do I listen well?*
- *Does the team feel like they can reach their goals?*
- *Are people on the team being recognised for going above and beyond?*

Royse explores the leadership aspects of each of these questions. He proposes that effective leaders with high EI:

- Set a clear and consistent vision and communicate this frequently to their teams.
- Empower their followers to take calculated risks and grow from their mistakes, as well as providing them with the space to do their jobs well.

- Know that their teams need to feel inspired and to have a purpose for what they do each day.
- Know that it's important that their team members enjoy coming to work and they lead by example in the knowledge that, if they show that they enjoy coming to work, their teams are more likely to as well.
- Know that good listening is about more than just hearing, and is a fundamental art of effective communication.
- Are aware of each team members' career goals and aspirations. During regular one on one meetings with all their direct reports, effective leaders ask each of their team whether they are learning and growing in their role.
- Are constantly on the alert for ways to show appreciation to their teams, and ways to recognise outstanding achievements.

In summary, Royse tells his readers that 'leaders with high emotional intelligence are constantly learning by asking themselves thought provoking questions that make them (and their teams) better every day.'

Why not give these 7 questions a try?

ii The most important leadership principle

Claire Lew posed the question *What's the most important leadership principle?* in her essay published in the Medium Daily Digest on July 19, 2021. Her answer? **Slow down.**

Lew elaborates on Royse's second dot point above, which is that it's important for leaders to provide team members with the space to do their jobs well. In order to achieve this, Lew argues that leaders must pause to help them to see things from differing points of view, to question their initial reaction, and to create the space that enables them to dig deeper in order to solve underlying root causes of ongoing challenges.

Lew cautions leaders that when they forget to slow down, they risk insulating themselves from opposing views, and potentially miss meaningful opportunities to connect with their teams. Lew concludes that, when leaders slow down, they are able to create the space for themselves to make thoughtful responses to their teams' queries. Further, by slowing down, they ensure that they have the time to regularly ask themselves, 'How am I creating an environment for my team to do their best work?'

If you can identify with the 'busy trap' in which you think that you just don't have the time to give to your team, Lew's advice to *slow down* and give yourself space, might be just what's needed. And if you have trouble doing this, an AnD coaching tool called the Pause Model (attached) has proved helpful to others.

Did You Know?

i The wisdom of the Dalai Lama

The Dalai Lama has dedicated his life to teaching us how to be better humans and to live happier lives. In another article published in the Medium Daily Digest, this time on June 16, 2020, Sinem Günel wrote:

Seven Quotes By The Dalai Lama That Will Change Your Mind:

- *Judge your success by what you had to give up: What do you genuinely want to achieve and what are you willing to quit to get there?*
- *Love and compassion are necessities: Are you surrounding yourself with enough love, or are you neglecting it for the sake of less important issues?*
- *In order to make peace with the outer world, make peace within yourself: Take time to practice self-reflection regularly and make sure to know yourself better than anyone else.*
- *Trust in the universe and that sometimes not getting what you want is a stroke of luck: Instead of pushing forward, step aside and lean back from time to time.*

- *Learn to solve conflicts peacefully: Instead of avoiding difficulties, educate yourself, and find humane ways of dealing with disagreements.*
- *Always aim to be better than your previous self: Stop comparing yourself to anyone else than you and always strive to be a better version of your former self.*
- *Take time to practice gratitude every morning: Every morning is a precious gift to our lives, instead of worrying about upcoming tasks and difficulties, honour the day and aim to be the best person you can possibly be.*

ii How reading rewires your brain

If you, like me, often feel guilty when you're 'only' reading, then you will be much cheered by the essay that Jessica Stillman had published in the Medium Daily Digest on March 31, 2021 headed *This Is How Reading Rewires Your Brain, According to Neuroscience*.

Neuroscientists differ on the details, but findings include the fact that reading is an 'empathy workout' in that, when we readers take the perspective of characters different from ourselves as we read, it boosts our emotional intelligence and this effect can be seen in our brain waves. For example, if a character in your book is playing tennis, your brain will light up as if you were physically on the court.

Other research has shown that 'deep reading' – the kind that we do when we curl up with a good book for an extended period – helps develop our ability to grasp complex ideas.

And a warning to those who don't enjoy reading – studies show that the less you read, (skim reading doesn't count), the more these positive results will dwindle. Stillman:

Reading isn't just a way to cram your brain. It's a way to rewire how your brain works in general. It strengthens your ability to imagine alternative paths, remember details, picture detailed scenes, and think through complex problems. In short, reading makes you not just more knowledgeable, but also functionally smarter.

What are you reading at the moment?

And to Close

Victor Frankl on the importance of slowing down:

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.