



## LEADERSHIP –COACHING AND MENTORING PACK

### The Christmas Special Edition

(Established 2006)

I would like to start this edition with thanks and gratitude to those who have contributed to the monthly pack throughout 2020. I would like to thank Joyce who provides the quotes and who also has the onerous task of proofreading my blog posts and publishers letter to you at the beginning of each pack. I would especially like to thank everyone who sends me wonderful messages about both the Leadership & Engagement pack and blog posts 'Being Bettina's Dad' series. Your emails make my day! Thank you for your support.

Our highlights include three articles from our thought leaders: Damian Piper, Meike Beckford and Roger Whalley, and one of mine.

Opening this month's edition '**Making more of your 168 hours a week**' "The demands on our time often outstrip the 168 hours a week we all get. This can lead to things you want to achieve getting deprioritised, frustration and in some cases a real feeling of overwhelm" is this you? Damian our Resilience Coach, can help!

**Leading when you are not holding a Leadership Position.** "Not everyone in the organisation's email address directory is employed in a management position, however I believe their work influences people, and I consider them a leader, so this publication is as much for them as it is for managers. My youngest daughter Bettina who copes with a learning disability and autism is a leader, even though she doesn't have a leadership job title, and this latest article in 'Being Bettina's Dad' series explains how her leadership is significant.

An article from Meike Beckford is on **Human Rights** Day (10<sup>th</sup> December), Meike looks back at a topic that has interested her for a long time. Meike began to think about how this might relate to leadership. I think this is essential reading for all leaders, thank you Meike.

**'RESPECT'** a new article from Roger Whalley. RESPECT "you must give it to receive it. If you respect the people you lead; their beliefs, their abilities; their ambitions; their weaknesses; etc., you can begin to understand what the drivers are that bring them to work each day"

This month's quotes have been taken from my wife's @JoyceRaw1 and @livelikearaw twitter feeds – thanks Joyce.

Steve Raw FInstLM, FCMI, GCGI

**It's not about how good you are,**

**It's how good you want to be**

## **Making more of your 168 hours a week**

The demands on our time often outstrip the 168 hours a week we all get. This can lead to things you want to achieve getting deprioritised, frustration and in some cases a real feeling of overwhelm. As a result, we might work harder at filtering the tasks we take on, speeding up completion of tasks and evermore ruthless prioritisation of time. You might squeeze a little more out of each day, however that will often not be enough. So how do we break the 168-hour weekly limit? Delegation.

Delegation one of those words that has an allure about it. The promises seem great. More time to do the things that really matter to you. Opportunities to develop your team. A way to turn your 168 hours into hundreds more. However, like the conversation with a good timeshare salesperson the reality often falls short of your expectations. You end up spending more time correcting things not done how you want. Your team feel like you just add to their already stacked todo list. And you spend more of your 168 hours managing the fallout of unmet requirements than it would have taken to just do the thing yourself in the first place. Great...

Don't give up on delegation. It really is a route to shifting what you are able to achieve. Here are three areas you might want to consider to take your delegation skills to the next level:

- 1) Stepping back to explore and understand how your values and beliefs could help or get in delegations way. It's common that these two areas provide the underlying causes to delegation being a success or failure. For example, if we truly value family over career we are more likely to work harder at delegation. Or end up resenting the work you're doing as it's stopping you from doing what you want. Another common example of this area is a belief that what gets produced has to be to your 'right' standard. Having a proactive approach to support for your values and beliefs is time well invested.
- 2) Where are you delegating? Often people assume delegation means downward into their team. It's also worth considering upward and peer delegation. For example, using your line mangers influence to unblock and issue or agreeing with a peer that a particular activity fits better with them than you. Being prepared to reciprocate with the peer is often something worth thinking through.
- 3) The delegation conversation is pivotal to success. A downfall of many delegations is a lack of thought about the practicalities. It can help having a thought through set of questions to discuss. Here's a few to consider for a downward delegation conversation:
  - How might you have to reorganise your current priorities to take this on?
  - What resources do you think could help you?
  - How will we know if this is on or off track?

Stepping back, the logic and benefits of delegation are compelling. To increase the chances of success we might need to invest more of our thinking and effort up-front to ensure it delivers on its promise.

This is my last article for Steve's Newsletter of 2020. I wish you all as merry a Christmas as you can possibly have in the circumstances. Here's to a happy, healthy and effective 2021.

Damian

**Damian Piper**

Change coach and consultant

I've got a personal goal to do what I can to support people with performance development. Please subscribe to receive my thought-provoking updates designed to take your performance to the next level: <https://effectivechallenge.com/blog/>

While I have your attention - if you're more 🧠 than 👁️ then please listen to the Effective Challenge Podcast. Feel free to share if you think others may benefit from its content.



[www.effectivechallenge.com/podcasts](http://www.effectivechallenge.com/podcasts)

**“Do not lose hope, please believe that there are a thousand beautiful things waiting for you. Sunshine comes to all who feel rain” R.M. Drake**

## **Being Bettina’s Dad. Leading when you are not holding a Leadership Position.**



*Bettina takes a break from her work at her Garden Centre*

This weekend I am working on my monthly E-Leadership magazine. It is something I have been putting together for nearly 15 years (since February 2006). I include lots of positive articles, tips and ideas to support leaders and perhaps to provoke thought. As well as my worldwide leadership network, I also send it to each person within our organisation who has a company email address. Not everyone in the organisation’s email address directory is employed in a management position, however, I believe their work influences people, and I consider them a leader, so my publication is as much for them as it is for managers.

Related: Here is November 2020 edition of the ‘Leadership Pack’:

<https://leadershipintheraw.org/2020/11/18/leadership-coaching-and-mentoring-pack-november/>

For those checking into my blog and reading one of the posts about Bettina for the first time, may I introduce her to you. Bettina is a woman who happens to cope with a learning disability, autism and

epilepsy. She is our youngest daughter and Jennifer's sister. We cannot think of a day when 'B' has not influenced, moved or inspired us. As a family, Bettina defines us, and we are a tightknit family.

There is so much Bettina has taught me as a leader, and some of those lessons I share on my blog [www.leadershipintheraw.org](http://www.leadershipintheraw.org) Bettina is a leader, even though she doesn't have a leadership job title, and this is how:

- Bettina has always been a pioneer and a pace setter. Bettina was the first person in her school with complex autism and I believe how Bettina conducted herself set the pace and style of learning for people who came after her.
- Bettina has been, and continues to be, a game changer. People who spend time with Bettina tell us how she has made them see life differently. How people with autism were supported at her school developed as they learned from Bettina.
- Bettina shows random acts of kindness - not expecting anything in return. When you are least expecting it, Bettina offers kindness. She is not expecting this to be reciprocated and Bettina doesn't have hidden agendas.
- Bettina takes risks! I have often found people think leaders (including Bettina) lead charmed lives where everything goes well but this is rarely the case as failure is an integral part of success. When you can acknowledge that the risks are real, but the potential payoff is enough to counteract that, you're demonstrating leadership. If you jump blindly, that is recklessness. But if you evaluate the situation and take the risk anyway, that's leadership and courage.
- Because of the way Bettina conducts her life, she invites incredible: loyalty, passion, and commitment from others. Bettina never coerces, pressurises, or is demanding.

#### **What I have learned from Bettina.**

- What you say and how you say it is essential. Bettina has limited verbal communication (her first words were when she was 11) so she picks them wisely making each word count. When Bettina speaks, we all stop whatever we are doing and listen – I must admit I am still a work in progress, and I continue to have a lot to learn from Bettina on this. What you say can have influence on those around you.
- Bettina extends her influence by asking (verbally limited) questions, actively listening and being an avid learner. To survive in her confusing world, she endeavours to understand how people tick.
- For Bettina leadership is a choice – not a paid position – which she enjoys.
- To have a strong work ethic even on the days you don't feel like it.
- One of the most important lessons I learned from Bettina is that role models are important to her. There is a standard you must meet, and you must do this every day

Related: A Role Model for Bettina <https://leadershipintheraw.org/2018/10/02/being-bettinas-dad-a-role-model-for-bettina-2/>

#### **Bettina's Rule of 5**

1. **Seeing something that needs to be done** and when others are standing around, you step into the vacuum and just do it. If there are certain chores (such as restocking the loo roll) which need to be done, Bettina takes it upon herself to do them. Bettina's PA (& Job Coach) has told us she also does this at her supported employment place.

2. **Act with confidence** – it has never occurred to Bettina that someone might challenge her when completing tasks which are not necessarily her responsibility.
3. **Don't wait for someone else to act** just because you don't hold a rank or job title – step forward
4. **Don't ask for special treatment.** Your work should speak for itself (like Bettina) it does not need validation.
5. **Show gratitude** to those around you on your successes as it is highly likely your achievement was not achieved on its own.



Bettina has just arrived home from her work at the Garden Centre and as she warms her feet against the fire, she tells me about her day. No surprises that she mentions something she has accomplished that has made a difference for someone she has met.

Leading from where you are, without a formal title, will naturally lead to you being asked to fill titled leadership positions, so I hope Bettina's tips and lessons help you realise your leadership abilities and aspirations.



*Bettina getting her life back together after the second lockdown*

I look forward to sharing with you my first leadership lesson I learned (49 years ago!) with you soon.

Source: Bettina and Steve Raw [www.leadershipintheraw.org](http://www.leadershipintheraw.org)

## **Leadership and human rights**

The 10<sup>th</sup> December was Human Rights Day, which prompted me to look back at a topic that has interested me for a long time. I began to think about how this might relate to leadership – how would you apply a human rights perspective in your professional life? Here are a few brief thoughts on what human rights might mean for us as workers and leaders.

**Article 2: Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.**

This article has been developed and codified in many laws since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed in 1948 (such as the UK's Equality Act 2010), but they all have at their heart the same freedom from all kinds of discrimination. Clearly there is a direct application here to our practice as employers, but we can also expand this to think about our impact on our customers, beneficiaries and other stakeholders. Are your services open to all and how are they contributing to increasing or reducing discrimination? Are you concentrating on a particular group (which we all inevitably do to an extent through our marketing and business strategies) and is that indirectly discriminating against a particular group or making an assumption about who might benefit? Can you play an active part, through your work internally and externally, in breaking down barriers and promoting everyone's rights?

**Article 12: Right to family life and article 24: right to rest and leisure**

Particularly this year with the increase in home working, children being off school during lockdowns and our usual routines being thrown up in the air, how can we support each other at work to maintain family life, rest and leisure. As employers, managers and colleagues, we can think about supporting each other to maintain work/life boundaries to ensure sufficient rest and empower individuals to manage their work flexibly to accommodate other responsibilities. With the increase in home working, this can actually become easier, as long as it is well supported so that people can choose what is right for them and ask for additional support where needed. Tools like [Mind's Wellness Action Plan](#) may help here, to promote our own and others' wellbeing.

**Article 18: Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and 19: right to freedom of opinion and expression**

How do you support your staff team to express themselves in their work? Whether this be sharing personal experiences and cultural background with colleagues, or taking part in decision-making and influencing the direction of the company. As a manager, these rights also require you to create and protect space for people to express opinions in a safe environment and ensure they can practice their religion alongside their work. Even if you are not formally a manager, you can contribute to creating a culture of openness and challenge yourself to really listen to and value others' thoughts and experiences. Above all, we can all value diversity and welcome the challenge of different opinions and ideas that can come together to make a stronger, more reflective team of leaders.

**Article 23: Right to work inc. just and favourable conditions of work and article 26: Everyone has the right to education... [for the] full development of the human personality**

Our role as employers gives a clear and direct duty to ensure good employment conditions for our team, right from the first stages of recruitment and throughout their careers. This human right article however can challenge us to think more fundamentally about what 'just work practices' look

like and how we can further these, for example looking out for staff wellbeing, being mindful of indirect discrimination in promotions and enabling staff participation in decision-making. As we train our staff teams, we can use the right to education to support a growth mindset and culture for our staff teams that fosters continuous learning and encourages development not just in specific tasks but in their wider practice of leadership.

Recognising everyone's human rights and the broader principles in the articles above can give us an opportunity to reflect on our wider practice. Not just are we legally compliant, but are we acting in the spirit of the article and are we actively promoting people's rights? This perhaps comes down to our attitude to those we work with, recognising each individual and the valuable contribution they can bring, welcoming the challenge of different opinions and approaches (which isn't always easy!) and trusting others as leaders in their own right, that we can work together with.

Meike Beckford

Lead Director Dosh [www.dosh.org](http://www.dosh.org)

Find me @DoshTweets and @MeikeB88 on twitter.

To learn more about human rights, try this [YouTube video](#) from Amnesty / the Equality and Human Rights Commission and visit the [British Institute of Human Rights \(bihr.org.uk\)](http://bihr.org.uk).

"Some people feel the rain, others just feel the wet"

Bob Marley

## Roger Whalley

### Respect

In 1967 the legendary Otis Redding wrote a song which the equally legendary Aretha Franklin sang. It was a number 1 hit and resonates to this day. It is called R-E-S-P-E-C-T. I guess many of you have heard it and I also guess that at this moment the tune is in your head. I have always listened to this song with fond memories. My daughter was born in 1967 and the song was a hit at the time of her birth.

It's a great song and an equally great word which is relevant to my ongoing topic of leadership and management. It's what I call a two-way word. You have to give it to receive it. If you respect the people you lead; their beliefs, their abilities; their ambitions; their weaknesses; etc., you can begin to understand what the drivers are that bring them to work each day, and I don't mean Peter Kay and a Car Share!

There is an old story about how to make a donkey move which is either to lead it with a carrot or push it with a stick. If you consider that there is always an equal and opposite force according to Mr Newton, then you have to decide whether you use force or encouragement. To illustrate this can I spin for you a tale which might be apocryphal but was told to me some years ago and which illustrates the difference between the two.

I have never served my country with the military, but I do study military history and believe we have a lot to learn from people who can lead other people into battle and possible death. The story is in three parts and commences in 1916.

The commander of the British forces in France and Flanders in the First World War was General Douglas Haig. Another General, Lord Kitchener's picture appeared on posters all across Great Britain with the exhortation "Your Country Needs You". This campaign was to recruit civilians to join the army to fight the foe, which at the time was the Germans. There was a tremendous groundswell of patriotism which resulted in a large number of ordinary folks taking the King's Shilling. It almost became a competition between young men to be the first to "join-up". Many lied about their age so that they could become part of the British Expeditionary force.

In many towns and cities around the UK battalions and regiments were formed called "Pals". From the mill towns of the north, Lancashire and Yorkshire, hundreds of young men signed up to fight for their country. They were all shipped to France, for most of them this was the first time they had left their county let alone England. They were kept together in their groups as it was felt that they would have the support of their "Pals" if anything went wrong.

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1916 these "Pals" were near the River Somme and around 4.00am that morning the Battle of the Somme started. A whistle blew and by 8.00am every man and boy under the age of 30 from the town of Accrington in Lancashire had either been killed or mortally wounded. Accrington was not alone; thousands of young men lost their lives that day. There were 20,000 confirmed dead and another 40,000 wounded. All this happened before 8.00am on that bloody day.

Now, General Haig wasn't in the trenches, he was in a lovely French chateau about 20 or 30 miles behind the front line. When his batman and his Aide d'camp woke him around 8 o'clock with a cup of tea, probably on a silver platter he asked how the battle was going. Now this part is as I was told it by the son of one of the Accrington Pals. General Haig was told that approximately 20,000 had been killed. He replied, "Oh that's good, I was expecting 40,000". Now that's not much fun if you were the father or mother, brother or sister of one of the 20,000.

This part of the story is graphically described in the excellent book by Alan Clark "The donkeys". The phrase "Lions led by donkeys" described the brave young lions of the British army led by the out-of-touch, out-of-date Generals who were the donkeys.

For the second part of my story we go to the western desert in north Africa in the Second World War. In 1941 and 1942 the Suez Canal was vital to the Allied Forces. Food, fuel and armaments came through the canal to the Mediterranean whence it came via Gibraltar and the Atlantic to Britain. If the Germans took the Suez Canal, they could starve us into submission. In command of the British 8<sup>th</sup> Army "the desert rats" was General Auchinleck, one of the donkeys of the 1<sup>st</sup> World War. In 1942 he was relieved of this command and replaced with General Bernard Law Montgomery. He was tasked by Churchill to sweep the Germans out of North Africa. He firstly had to retake El Alamein and Tobruk.

But before he sent his men into battle, he insisted that they be re-equipped and rested before the fray. He also visited his men in their desert camps. Not for him the comfortable quarters in Cairo, he sat on the top of tanks and gathered his troops around him and explained just what the task was.

The result is history, as Winston Churchill said "Before El-Alamein we didn't win a battle, after we didn't lose one"

The final part of the story involves the invasion of Iraq in March 2003. After Iraq had themselves invaded Kuwait in 1990 the western world was determined to get Saddam Hussein out of power. This was probably the most publicised war in history. Film crews were embedded with the troops and journalists were ever present. On the eve of the allied troops crossing into Iraq, General

Schwarzkopf, "Stormin Norman", held a press conference and one of the journos asked the question "How will you sleep tonight"? his answer was "I won't sleep tonight in case one of my men breaks a finger nail tomorrow"

That's the story but I can't authenticate it. I have heard it from several people and several sources and I have pieced it together. One General who is relieved that "only 20,00 were killed", One General who briefed his men and trusted them to do the job and one General that worried about one of his men breaking a fingernail. The lesson behind the story is that you can push someone, you can encourage someone, or you can lead someone. The words push and pull sum up one of the basic arts of leadership. If you can learn to pull your people with you, you will all achieve more. There are a lot of aphorisms which are punted around about leadership and management, one that has always stuck with me is "There is no I in team".

Stormin Norman respected his troops, Monty trusted his troops, old Douglas Haig didn't really care about his troops. As a result, they didn't respect him, if Tommy Atkins had half a chance, he'd have used his trusty 303 to dispatch him. As Corporal Jones said, "They don't like it up them". If you've ever seen the excellent TV series "Blackadder goes forth" you will recognise some of the characters. If you get the chance do read "The Donkeys" by Alan Clark, it's available on Kindle and in paperback.

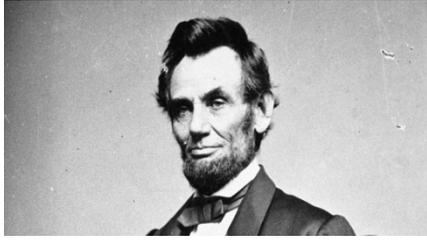
We all want to be respected, it's only natural, but respect is a two-way street. If you want to be respected, then you must show respect first. Showing respect starts by understanding what makes the other person tick. We all have what I call trigger points; the important things in our life; our families; our ambitions; our hopes and aspirations. If you can learn what the trigger points are of your staff, you can show an interest in them which helps you to get them respecting you. Once they respect you and recognise that you are "on their side" it's easier to get them to do their job properly and recognising that the part they play in achieving your joint objectives will pay off in the end.

Another benefit of respecting your people is that it makes you happier because you are not having a continual battle with them. Folk respond to the carrot more than the stick. Maybe you don't have too many carrots to offer. In these hard times you will probably have to be more ingenious in finding carrots. The finest carrot of all is a smile. A friendly smile can get you anywhere and there's no doubt that it makes you happier as well.

I've written about Ken Blanchard before, the third book in his series is "Leadership and the one-minute manager. At the end of the first chapter is a story which has always resonated with me. It roughly goes that on a Saturday morning the manager is in his office and he looks out of the window and sees members of his team teeing-off at the adjacent golf club. In other words, he is doing the work of his people. The main teaching points in this book involve the dark art of delegation. I would like next month to look further into leadership, which will also include ways in which you can help yourselves by delegating.

"Mistakes... are the portals of discovery"

James Joyce 'Ulysses'



Dear Steve

The first business book I ever read was *Winning Through Intimidation* by Robert J Ringer – 1974. The words on the jacket cover epitomise #nevergiveup as well today as they did then...

Lincoln's Incredible Journey to Become The Sixteenth President of The USA

And so it was that in 1832 young Abraham Lincoln lost his job. And the Discouragement Fraternity sneered and said unto him: "If you're so smart, why ain't you successful?". And Abe, intimidated, hung his head low and crawled back under yon rock from whence he came.

And so it was that, later in that same year, Abe ran for the Legislature of Illinois and was badly defeated. And the Discouragement Fraternity sneered and said unto him: "If you're so smart, why ain't you successful?".

And Abe, intimidated, hung his head low and crawled back under yon rock from whence he came.

And so it was that this pattern continued. He tried his hand at business in 1833 and went broke; he ran for Speaker in 1838 and lost; he was overwhelmingly defeated in a bid for nomination to Congress in 1843; he was rejected for appointment to the U.S. Land Office in 1849; he was soundly beaten for a U.S. Senate seat in 1854; he was defeated for nomination for Vice-President in 1856.

And after each failure, the Discouragement Fraternity, always more than happy to be of help, sneered and said unto him: "If you're so smart, why ain't you successful?". And each time, Abe, intimidated, hung his head low and crawled back under yon rock from whence he came.

Then, in 1858, after once again being defeated for the U.S. Senate, and after once again enduring the Discouragement Fraternity sneering and saying unto him: "If you're so smart, why ain't you successful?" a funny thing happened on the way back to yon rock from whence he came:

Abe thought for a moment, scratched his head, then finally came to the conclusion that intimidators must have more fun than intimidatees. Thus concluding, he looked up at the Discouragement Fraternity and replied: "Stick thy finger up thy nose, and go fly thee a kite".

...and lo and behold, Abe, the ex-intimidatee, became President...and saved the Union.

And the members of the Discouragement Fraternity, fingers in noses and kites in hand, said unto Abe: "Bravo! We always knew you would be successful."

...Whereupon Abe displayed a gentle smile and walked quietly away.

With my love and best wishes to you all

David

**(David Taylor – Author of the Naked Leader books which I highly recommend to you)**

**"Flowers grow back even after the harshest of winters. You will too" Jennae Cecilia**

## **My Top 3 Presentations for December.**

Each month I check out presentations which I hope will inspire and motivate you. Here are my 3 picks for December:

### **1. How reverse mentorship can help create better leaders**

[https://www.ted.com/talks/patrice\\_gordon\\_how\\_reverse\\_mentorship\\_can\\_help\\_create\\_better\\_leaders](https://www.ted.com/talks/patrice_gordon_how_reverse_mentorship_can_help_create_better_leaders)

Employee diversity and inclusive leadership are goals for most organizations today, but how do we get there? Try a "reverse mentorship" program, which sets up junior team members to guide senior staff. Here are 6 tips to make reverse mentorship work, from executive coach and personal development advocate Patrice Gordon.

### **2. Holacracy: A Radical New Approach to Management | Brian Robertson**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJxfJGo-vkl> Holacracy is something my colleague Meike Beckford has introduced to [www.dosh.org](http://www.dosh.org) successfully this year.

### **3. The New 5 Second Rule: Redefining the First Impression | Quita Christison |**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=413\\_sACCuH8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=413_sACCuH8)

First impressions are the unconscious categorization of people. In order to change the outcome of first impressions, Quita Christison is redefining the "5 Second Rule" with a new 5 Second Rule: STOP, See The Other Person.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/carla\\_harris\\_how\\_to\\_find\\_the\\_person\\_who\\_can\\_help\\_you\\_get\\_ahead\\_at\\_work?utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=social&utm\\_source=linkedin.com&utm\\_content=2020-12-13](https://www.ted.com/talks/carla_harris_how_to_find_the_person_who_can_help_you_get_ahead_at_work?utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=social&utm_source=linkedin.com&utm_content=2020-12-13)

When you know who you are, you know there is always room for self-improvement and remain open to new insights. Lisa Broderick
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## **3 Important Lessons on Sustainable Well-being in Leadership**

CEOs and employees are both at greater risk of burnout during times of crisis, so now more than ever, self-compassion is crucial.

By Charlotte Wiseman, Wellbeing and Leadership Consultant & Trainer MAPPCP at Charlotte Wiseman Consultants

Recent challenges have triggered much interest in the "epidemic" of employee burnout. Articles and podcasts highlight that 76% of employees will experience burnout at some point in time, offering leaders tips to support their team's well-being and prevent such ends. However, as is too often the case, such studies fail to address that leaders, too, have limited resources. In fact, the last study into leadership burnout indicated that 96% of leaders will experience burnout at some point in their career. In the light of the unpredictable and unprecedented months ahead, burnout in leaders is as a risk that needs to be addressed.

I have spent the last six months speaking to CEOs who have experienced a crisis of well-being, asking them for their advice for fellow leaders. Here are their top tips:

### 1. **“You don’t need to be a superhero.”**

In a time when “servant leadership” has gained much attention, many leaders believe that looking after others is a priority, above attending to their own needs. This is futile. If you are not taking the breaks you need, making time for exercise, sleep and time with loved ones, then your brain simply cannot perform effectively. The amygdala, the emotional part of the brain most closely associated with the stress response, becomes more alert and sensitive. At the same time, the prefrontal cortex, the decision-making part responsible for regulating emotions and thinking rationally, works less effectively and, over time, can start to reduce in size. This means that you will not only be unable to think clearly, you are more likely to snap at those around you, your focus will diminish and your capacity to solve problems and think creatively will be inhibited. How can you truly serve your team in this state? You can’t. In this state, your company culture is impacted. This **is the fast track to a** workplace of fear, mistrust, and low morale. If you want to inspire and lead your teams, looking after your well-being needs to be a priority.

### 2. **“Know your reference points.”**

We all know the importance of meaningful work. It is the foundation of our motivation and fulfilment. In times of change and uncertainty, understanding personal, shared, and company values is more important than ever. It is what drives resilience, innovation and ethical leadership. The CEOs I spoke to all described how easy it is to get “swept along” a career path of quick promotion and new opportunities without stopping to reflect on your personal values. In times of stress, this is accentuated. It can feel like you don’t have time to think, leading to snap decisions which may not align with your values or vision of success. These CEOs explained how becoming aware of what was meaningful to them was “transformational.” This simple process was what enabled them to overcome their crisis and, subsequently, empowers them to turn stress into a positive influence in their lives. If you have never thought of your core values, this download might help.

### 3. **“Find someone to speak to.”**

As we break the stigma of mental health at work, many organisations proudly promote to their staff that “it’s OK to not be OK.” But how many leaders are actively role-modelling this message? It is understandably hard for C-suite executives to express vulnerability when, historically, this has been such a taboo subject. However, it is time to start. Every CEO spoke about the challenge of being honest with others about the challenges they were facing. They all also emphasised that finding someone to speak to about their well-being and emotions is fundamental to them now sustaining their performance, health and happiness. Furthermore, the explained how in doing so on a regular basis, they have been able to manage challenges as they arise, support their teams more effectively while also maintaining healthy personal lives. For some this person was a family member, for many this was a coach or mentor, and for others it was their employees. There is never a “one-size-fits-all” when it comes to well-being but there is always the need to find a size to fit you.

As we move into Q3 and there is so much unknown lying ahead, now is the time for leaders to step up and ensure they are looking after themselves. As one CEO said, “commitment is vital” and if you don’t learn to take care of yourself “something will break.” So, if you want to sustain your well-being and performance over the months ahead, and to act as a positive role model to your team, now is your chance.

<https://thriveglobal.com/stories/lessons-sustainable-well-being-future-of-leadership/> — Published on July 2, 2020

## **The One Way To End A 'Blame Culture' – and you can do it today**

**Time to read: 1 minute 10 seconds**

Dear Steve

Before Naked Leader, I was in Information Technology (IT), most recently as Head of IT in Cornhill Insurance – now Allianz.

Every month I would be invited into the Business Executive Meeting to give our team's update. My preparation for this included donning an American Football Outfit, because all that ever happened during these 30 minute session was I had the proverbial kicked out of me.

In one particular meeting, I knew in advance that my punishment was going to be more severe than normal – The 'System' had been slow and 'down', 3 major projects were running late and we were becoming even more disliked than usual.

The phone rang, they were 'ready for me' and in I went.

The CEO went straight for the jugular, he looked straight at me and said: "David, what on earth is going wrong with the Claims system, I mean, whose fault is it?"

I don't know how or why I said what I did – probably out of sheer desperation at the last 4 words, so commonly asked in so many organisations.

I replied – "It's my fault, I'm sorry and I will get it sorted."

(Long pause)

The FD chimed in – "And my system was down yesterday, was that your fault as well?"

"Yes" I responded – George – FD – and I got on very well, and my single word caused him to give me a wry smile.

The COO tried a different tack: "I was very pleased with the service on the Help Desk yesterday – was that down to you David?"

"No" I said, "thank you, but that was down to Rachel – I will pass on your thanks if I may?"

And so it went on – everything that was going wrong was my fault, while everything that was going well was thanks to someone else, whom I named each time.

Somehow, in doing so, I stumbled upon something very special:

As a leader, take the blame for everything and the praise for nothing...

...In 'public'.

What happens in private, one to one, is up to you.

In Naked Leader we are often asked how to get rid of a blame culture.

The answer is getting your leaders to do this – it works in person; it works on Zoom – it always works.

David (David Taylor, author, broadcaster and Leadership Guru)

## **If You're Searching for Purpose, Ask Yourself These 5 Questions**

By Steve Knox <https://www.success.com/if-youre-searching-for-purpose-ask-yourself-these-5-questions/>

We are all searching for a purpose, a career and a life that really matter. So, if you feel stuck, trapped or hopeless—if you want *more*—ask yourself these five questions to get your life back on track:

*Related:* **How to Find Your Purpose**

### **1. Why am I here?**

Seriously. Right now, whatever coffee shop, classroom, cubicle or conference room you might be sitting in, why are you here?

- *What brought me to this moment?*
- *What strengths, personality, creativity and talent do I have at my disposal?*
- *Without placing blame or making some sort of rationalization, what the heck am I doing with my life today?*

Who you are becoming far outweighs who you are. If what you are doing today is not making you a better human being or the world a better place, you are probably on the wrong path.

I often have my coaching clients write a letter to their future self. If you invest the time to describe in vivid detail the type of person you would like to be a year from now, three years from now or even 30 years from now, then you will be giving yourself an unbelievable gift: the gift of hope.

With a compelling picture of the future, you have a target to aim for.

### **2. What is my story?**

Stories are powerful, regardless of whether they are true. They give you a narrative to live by and life lessons to pass on, that shape and inform the person you are becoming.

One of the reasons you might be experiencing unrest and frustration in life today is that you might not have a better story shaping your life. You need a heroic narrative. A story that calls out your best and highest self. A narrative that demands you bring your full attention, strength and personality to the task at hand, creating a life of significance and substance.

This requires that you acknowledge the *good and* the bad of your story up to this point. A big part of this is learning how to let go of past guilt and regret, and to start living your life with conviction.

You cannot change your past, but you can create a better future. Make a conscious decision today to stop defining yourself by what you are not. Today is a new day with new opportunities, so start living a better story.

Be accountable to your future self. Live with a deeper sense of responsibility with the amazing talents, genius and strengths you have been given.

### **3. Who do I need?**

You will never reach your full potential without the help of others. Whom you spend time with determines the person you become. Investing in the right relationships and surrounding yourself with the right people is crucial to your success.

It sounds a bit harsh, but there are some necessary endings that you need to embrace—friends who are not really friends, people who suck the life out of you.

- *Who in my life is holding me back from becoming my best self?*
- *Who do I need to ask for help?*
- *Do I have any honest voices (mentors, coaches or heroes) in my life?*

You are built for relationships. You have a calling in your life and a role to play within your team, family and community. Define whom you are fighting for and who is fighting for you.

Grab three friends or mentors in your life and ask them what they think is holding you back in life and how they see you overcoming it. Take notes, do not get defensive and thank them for being in your life.

#### **4. What is at stake?**

- *What upsets me about the world today?*
- *What frustrates me?*
- *What problem do I want to solve?*

These are clues to your calling. Windows into your soul. Why? What frustrates you reveals what you care about most. The only way to live life with passion is to discover, name and fight for what matters most to you.

Without something at stake—a cause, person or compelling future—you will merely keep surviving and never experience success, let alone significance. Deep down you know what matters most to you. Who matters most to you.

Procrastination literally means to waste the sacred. Every time you make an excuse, place blame or get distracted from going to work on your life, you move toward an apathetic and happenstance existence.

So stop.

#### **5. How can I help?**

The first law of thermodynamics states that energy can be transformed from one form to another, but cannot be created or destroyed.

In layman's terms, your life can impact and influence others in meaningful ways. Even small ways. A smile, a hug, a thank you, a high-five, eye contact, an email or kind word. All energy transferring in the form of hope from you to another. How beautiful is that?

But you have to start. Commit to serve someone else in some small way. Give more than you take. Listen more than you talk. Write an email or letter of encouragement to someone who has helped you. Get your focus off yourself and onto others.

I guarantee you will surprise yourself with how good it feels to fight for something that matters. For someone who needs your help. If you make a conscious choice to practice empathy, compassion or generosity, then that single choice creates a ripple effect in the lives of others.

You might even spark something in them that causes them to do something for someone else.

Imagine that.

These five questions matter, because you matter. Your life is not your own. The world needs you to discover what makes you come alive and for you to use that in service to a cause bigger than yourself.

Related: [Answer 6 Questions to Reveal Your Life Purpose](#)



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Steve Knox is the founder of [imprinttest.com](#), a leadership coach and author. For the past 12 years, he's helped people all over the planet discover a different way to live and work. His latest book,

*Confidence: The Science & Art of Self-Belief*, is available online and in major bookstores.

“We cast a shadow on something wherever we stand....(so) choose a place where you won't do harm – yes, choose a place where you won't do very much harm, and stand in it for all you are worth, facing the sunshine.” From *a Room with a View* by E.M Forster (English Novelist, 1879-1970)