

# Why Mindful Leaders need Emotional Intelligence

Based on the work of  
Dan Goleman

# The relationship between mindfulness and emotional intelligence



*The Dalai Lama encourages his followers to do 3 things:*

One is to gain an inner composure that is to be calm so you can be clear.

The second is to adopt an attitude of caring or concern or compassion.

The third is act now in whatever way you can to influence the world in a better direction, so it's that first step the inner composure

## From a neuro point of view

The interaction between the **prefrontal cortex** (that's the part of the brain right behind the forehead this is) the brain's executive Center is where we comprehend, where we analyze, where we learn, where we think things through, make good decisions.

Aim for this not to be a constant tension (with something in between the ears) the **amygdala** as this is the trigger for the emotional centers in the brain to fight flight or freeze.

In evolution and today we do more or less the same biologically, although the triggers that we encounter are in a symbolic reality and not a physical threat to us.

# Emotional hijacks

This is what the amygdala does and are less likely if you're practicing mindfulness.

When you tend to think about the danger or the perceived threat or that unfairness around you, it's very hard for you to keep your eye on the task at hand let alone the goal.

# Leaders need three types of attention

- An inner attention, **self-awareness**
- An attention to other people which is **empathy**
- Awareness to the people around you, the self-awareness is the basis of **self-management**
- A larger awareness is also needed which is the systems or understanding of the environment in which they are operating.
- Under stress you lose all those kinds of focus and you focus instead on that threat that one thing that you think is the problem.

# Leaders need to stay calm

Leaders need to master the ability to stay calm under crisis, under pressure, under stress because in any human group people look to the leader in that group to know how worried should I be, should I be freaking out or is everything okay?

That's why the coaching done with leaders actually radiates out it ripples out in an organization.

# Resilience

Resilience is defined technically in psychology not as being totally unflappable nothing bothers me not at all, it's that you have a reaction that's normal that's natural but then you recover quickly and the quickness of your recovery means you're more resilient.

Research was done at Emory University which found that mindfulness makes people or allows people to have a more rapid recovery which means that even though you get hijacked your amygdala quiets down sooner.

# The ability to appraise

When it comes to changing habits, there is an action sequence which is very automatic goes on most often out of awareness and spontaneously.

When you're coaching someone you can help them notice what their habits are which gives them this faith to change them.

# Multi tasking

The technology and the world we live in for leaders and anyone these days gives us constant choices of where we put our attention.

If you're going to do something well you need to pay sustained attention you need concentration.

When you multitask, when you answer that text or you check your email or you take a phone call, what you're doing is actually not multitasking

The mind doesn't do things in parallel it switches very rapid, every time you switch and then you go back to that original focus is much diminished and it takes a while for you to ramp up again to the level you were before unless and this is very interesting this is new data from the University of California at Santa Barbara.

# Goleman 12 competencies



# The essence of coaching

## 5 basic steps

1. Ask the person being coached **Do you care? does it matter to you?** and this is where motivation becomes so important because if it doesn't matter if they don't care I would stop right there, it's going to take some time it's going to take some effort to learn well how to be a better leader.
1. What are these leaders strengths what are these leaders limits? where would they get most bang for the buck from focusing on learning? I think it's important to be sure that your assessment matches other people's. Use an objective assessment such as a 360.

# The essence of coaching

## 5 basic steps

3: Take that feedback from the objective assessment and develop it into a learning plan, this is a contract that the coachee has with himself or herself so that they can say every time this situation comes up I'm going to be mindful, I'm not going to do with the old way, I'm going to try it the new way that you the coach are helping me with.

4: Use a coach to unpick this with you.

5: Practice new behaviours at every opportunity. When they reach a point where they do the new thing in the new way completely automatically without having to think about it, that's a neural landmark.