

Capturing the Essence of Mindful and Compassionate Leadership...

BY Caryn M. Wells

Mindfulness is a vehicle to build human agency in leaders where they are nurtured by practices that can increase the qualities that build their sense of effectiveness in areas that matter.

A mindful moment can break the cycle of '24/7' connectivity by offering peace and stillness in the smallest sliver of time.

Finding calm in the middle of a storm is possible when one enters into stillness, allowing the calm of the moment to enter into awareness.

Even in times of challenge, mindfulness teaches us to lean into the storm, allowing for insights to surface.

Mindfulness helps leaders gain perspective, leading with compassion, attention, and listening while the winds of the storm blow.

Failures are not final- self-compassion and mindfulness practice makes this very clear.

Mindfulness constructs come to life through experience and practice.

The pain of failing can be a great teacher.

Mindful awareness lets leaders know that they can be knocked down and still stand tall.

Leaders may experience chronic stress; mindfulness teaches how not to react to it.

Mindfulness teaches how to develop spaciousness around problems.

Leaders who practice self-compassion give themselves the gift of self-care.

Mindfulness teaches that there is life after cynicism, feeling of inefficiency, or depersonalization.

Living mindfully in the moment means accepting *what is* as opposed to *what was* or *what will be*.

A self-compassionate voice whispers, “/understand” allowing for leaders to move forward and stay in their roles as leaders.

The power of listening is *listening to hear*, instead of to interrupt, argue a point, add another point, or dismiss.

Listening to hear can be the greatest gift in a time of need; people want to be listened to.

Listening adds S-P-A-C-E to a crowded agenda or noisy world.

Leaders who practice self-compassion realize the natural limitations of the self.

Mindfulness teaches a way of accepting what is happening, not as passive resignation, but to gain awareness of *what is*.

Leaders may feel that time is the enemy, not the resource; mindfulness flips that- the *time spent in mindfulness practice becomes the resource*.

Hope is an incredibly powerful influence that leaders can offer. Mindfulness teaches that all happenings in life offer insights and learning, and that can be a foundation for hope.

The stillness of mindfulness is a retreat into discovery, allowing what surfaces without judgment or criticism, and without giving more attention to preoccupation and distraction.

Leaders' failures, mistakes, and miscommunication are all played out in front of an audience; mindfulness teaches self-compassion and nonjudgment of these disappointments, allowing time to gain insight, awareness, and resilience.

By paying attention, on purpose, to the present moment, leaders develop the ability to observe, sense, and notice, being fully present for the people in the workplace.

With mindfulness, time becomes the resource, not the enemy.

Mindfulness can be a way of leading, living, reading, and relating.

Mindfulness helps to focus attention on the present moment, and importantly, to be fully present for it.

Compassion is like fuel to a leaders' engine- it empowers, lifts, and sustains in a time of crisis.

Mindfulness helps leaders to stop and listen to hear, learn not to judge, learn patience, develop spaciousness around problems and issues, become truly aware of what is happening in the moment, accept what is happening instead of denying or avoiding it, develop compassionate understanding, generate self-compassion for their own shortcomings or missteps, and importantly learn to let go of things that are in the past or those that cannot be changed.

Mindfulness practice teaches people to turn in to the problem instead of running from it, seeing what is there to be seen, becoming aware of, and noticing the present moment.

Leaders who mindfully project hope, encourage others not to worry about the next agenda, or regret actions of the past- the work is in the present tense.

Mindfulness provides influence that is quiet, deep, and reflective.

Mindful leaders want to know what others think, believe, and feel- it matters to them.

Letting go is something that only one can give to him or herself- no one can do that for another.

Mindfulness trains people to listen- to all of the glorious and often not heard communication that fades in the back of a busy and preoccupied world.

Mindfulness can help leaders realize that after burnout, or problems, there can be an encore, comeback, second chance, or redemption.

Compassionate leading shines a light on the path of understanding and sets empathy into action.

Compassionate leadership models the way of being that includes, builds, and sustains a deep level of caring, support, and partnership.

Compassionate leadership demonstrates *“I want to hear you, know you, and encourage you.”*

Compassionate leaders influence the culture of the organization by their belief in others and the ways they find to serve while leading.

Leaders know that there will be storms. Storms are OK. They allow you to use your anchor.