

Embrace Strategies for Leadership & Wellness

Becoming a Heart-Centered Leader

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Thought Book



embrace strategies



Key Terms

Heart-Centered Leaders are mindful of their own well-being, fostering good environments for other people, and are diligent about modeling healthy behaviors in themselves for others. When you work on your internal self, you can lead from a solid place. Empathy and compassion will flow naturally. It speaks to the importance of focusing on one's self being rooted in peace, love, and truth and cultivating internal security, strength, and intentionality.

Emotional Wellness is a combination of strength, grit, endurance, intelligence, and maturity as it relates to ourselves. It is having the self-awareness needed to own your mistakes and reach out for help, the ability to cope with difficult situations, and cultivate a growth mindset to life's challenges. We have to understand that our emotional wellness is a priority just as important as our other priorities. We can care for ourselves and strive for wellness even when we are sad or grieving.

Rest: Pang (2018)

Taking time to rest is essential to live well. Rest includes time for contemplation, inspiration, and reflection. We should see work and rest not as separate things, but more as different points in a wave. They're bound together; deliberate rest makes us more productive and creative, and makes our lives richer and more fulfilling. Rest is not just about not working. It is active and deliberate; it is a skill that can be learned and nurtured. It strengthens the brain, enhances learning, enables inspiration, and makes innovation sustainable. Our resting brain is much more active than we even realize. There is a lot of work our brain does when we rest which benefits our health, productivity, and development.

Key Quotes

Rest is restorative
& imperative.



Healing & growth, hurt.

Peace is a
position of power.



Ride your emotions
like a wave.



May I be
strategic with my
enterprise.



Emotional wellness
is a leadership skill.



I am a
sustainable source of
peace.



May I move forward
with a sense of
purpose and meaning.



Boat Exercise

We are in this together, but we are not in the same boat. We are going to use this boat metaphor to check-in with ourselves and gain a deeper understanding of what needs attention. Once we understand, we can plan ways to care for ourselves. Feel free to draw or write out a description as you go through each prompt.

Let's check-in:

What does your boat look like right now?

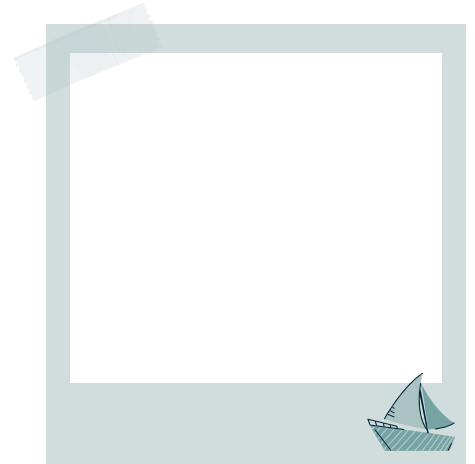
*Consider this: What is the color, size, wear and tear, and strength of your boat?
Are there any sails? Are there any holes in the boat?*

What is in the boat?

Are there any life jackets, resources, tools, garbage?

Who is in the boat?

It could be people that are in your home, people who are no longer living, pets, etc.



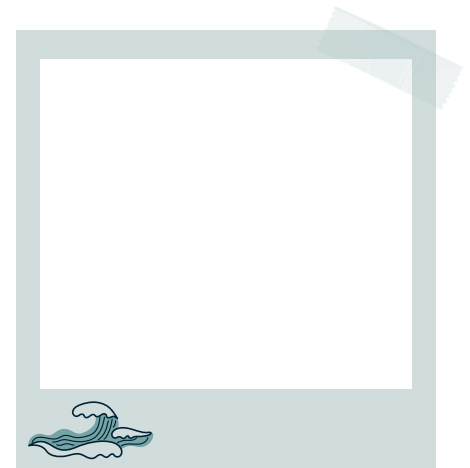
Now let's zoom out:

What is the weather like?

Is it cloudy, stormy, or calm? Can you see the sun? Is there any lightning?

What are the waves like?

Are they calm? Are there tidal waves?



Consider the following:

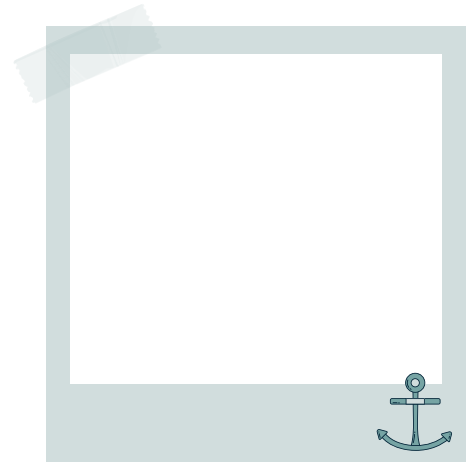
Are there any anchors grounding you?

Can you get a sense of what's on the horizon?

Are there any life savers?

Are there any additional resources you need?

Is there care you can provide to your boat?



Ten Strategies for Rest

1 - Take rest seriously

Hard work and deliberate rest are partners – each sustains and supports the other. Rest helps restore our mental and physical well-being, gives us energy, focus and resilience, and helps us be more productive. Downtime is also when we're most likely to have ideas, inspiration, and creative breakthroughs.

2 - Focus

Build more focused time in your day to help you be more creative. Create space for rest by structuring daily scheduled time around unbroken periods of focused work. Concentrate your morning on your biggest, most cognitively demanding tasks; put off meetings until after lunch; check emails a couple times a day. Remember, multi-tasking is a myth.

3 - Layer work and rest

Super creative people alternate periods of intensive work with periods of deliberate rest. By resting immediately after a period of focused work, you can give your subconscious mind time to discover solutions to problems that are eluding your conscious effort. After focused work, try letting your mind wander, go for a walk, or journal and watch the creativity flow.

4 - Get an early start

Many creatives get their most important work done in the early morning. There are fewer distractions, so it's easier to focus. An early start also gives more time during the day for rest. A regular morning routine pays off, just make sure to claim back some time later in the day for rest.

5 - Detach from work

Pay attention to the quality of your rest. Psychologists find that people who keep busy during their free time, who don't check their email at night and on weekends, and who truly leave work behind when they go on vacation, are happier, more productive, and more resilient at work. They call it detachment, and the more you have it, the more restorative your downtime will be. It is a matter of not doing certain things. It is about doing things that occupy your time enough to keep work from intruding. These activities will keep work in its place by creating a positive and enjoyable alternative.

6 - Detach from devices

To experience the kind of rest that recharges our bodies and minds and fuels creativity and productivity, we need to detach from work. It is not enough to refrain from checking our devices or putting them on vibrate. We have to actually disconnect from our devices and have space where they are not there.

7 - Take a week off every season

Science has shown that happiness and relaxation on a vacation peaks after a week, while the psychological benefits last up to two months. The ideal vacation schedule is a week off every three months. This will increase the amount of vacation based energy that you can use for work. The key is to make it a real vacation, and not just a week of working in a place with more sand.

8 - Practice deep play

People who live long and happy lives practice deep play. It is especially important for people who don't have a lot of control over their daily schedules, have to work long hours, or who love their jobs but are prone to overdoing them. Deep play is valuable because it provides a more compelling alternative to work than sitting on the beach. It is a hobby or sport that offers the same psychological rewards as your job, but in a different setting, such as mountain climbing.

9 - Get plenty of exercise

Lots of accomplished, creative people are physically active. Office work is actually very physically demanding. The more movement you have in your life, the better your brain can perform. Exercise also makes us more resilient, better able to handle stress, and helps us live longer, healthier lives. Just move – including regular movement throughout the day.

10 - Get plenty of sleep

Sleep doesn't just provide physical rest; it's actually a time of incredible mental activity, giving our brains time to consolidate memories and skills, and clear our toxins. Sleep deprivation leads to underperformance, mistakes, emotional reaction, and overlooking details.

Ride Your Emotions Like a Wave

Observe Your Emotion

- NOTE its presence.
- Step BACK.
- Get UNSTUCK from the emotion.

Remember: You Are Not Your Emotion

- Do not ACT on the sensation of urgency.
- Remember when you have felt DIFFERENT.
- Describe your emotion by saying "I have the feeling of___", rather than, "I am___".
- Notice the OTHER feelings that you have at the same time you feel the strong emotion.

Experience Your Emotion Fully

- As a WAVE, coming and going.
- Try not to BLOCK the emotion.
- Try not to PUSH the emotion AWAY.
- Don't try to KEEP the emotion.
- Just be a witness to your emotion.

Practice Respecting & Loving Your Emotion

- Don't JUDGE your emotion.
- Practice WILLINGNESS with your emotion.
- Radically ACCEPT your emotion.



Loving Kindness Practice:

1. Start by placing both hands on your heart, pause and feel warmth.
2. Breath in and out.
3. Say these words to yourself out loud or silently in a warm and caring tone:

This is a moment of suffering.

Suffering is a part of life.

May I be kind to myself in this moment.

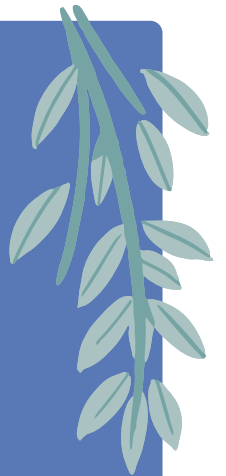
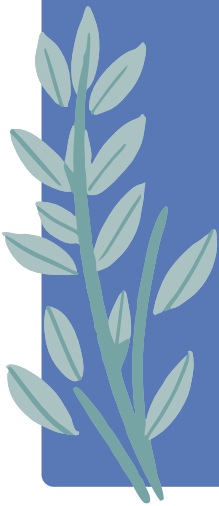
May I give myself the compassion I need.

May I love myself as I am.

May I be truly happy.

May I be free of all fear.

May I be free of worries.



5 things:

- 5 things you can see.
- 4 things you can touch.
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste.

What other well wishes do
I want to give myself?

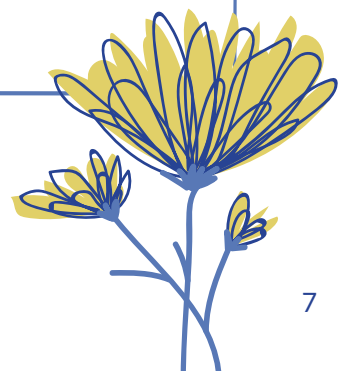


The Power of a Positive "No"

A positive no helps you say "yes" to what counts, including your needs, values and priorities. The art of leadership is about saying "no" to get to the right "yes."

Start with a "yes" to what is important to you,
then to a clear neutral "no."
End on a "yes" with a constructive positive proposal.

Practice your own here:





THINGS NOT TO DO LIST

Give your attention only to things that you can change. Protect your "yesss." When you need help, ask for it. Establish limits and boundaries.

Other's responsibilities

Things I can't control

What's okay to be left undone

Things that drain me







Reflection Prompts

Rest



What are some ways I can give myself permission to slow down and rest?

Five things that cause me a lot of anxiety:

Five ways to cope that will bring more peace:

Five things I can do to improve my self-care:

Where do I get my energy? What kind of down time do I need?

Heal



How can I support myself more when I am stressed?

Three qualities I really love about myself are:

Five things that are clearly not working:

Five ways I can care for myself more:

Five things I am grateful for:

Grow



This month, I can nurture my creativity by:

Ten things I have always wanted to try:

What can I get rid of to create space for the new?

Three things I need to do to create the life I want:

Three changes I can make to get closer to my goals:

Warm-hearted

Free

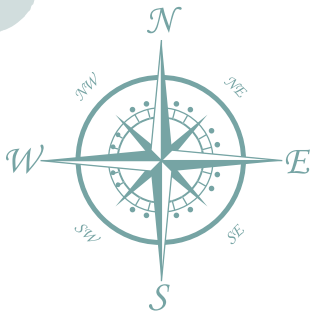
Restored

Courageous

Fearless

Brave

Kind



Compass

I hope that you move forward with a sense of purpose and meaning. A compass is empowering because an individual chooses how to move forward with a sense of purpose and optimism.

Pick two words that compress your story into a succinct guide to instill insight and meaning. The two words will target your future intentions and purpose.

Examples: focused & fearless, loosen up & let go.

What two short words will remind you how to apply what you're learning? Add your own in the blanks.

Bold

Strong

Creative

Calm

Passionate

Peaceful

Grateful

Centered

Strategies

for building a culture of wellness.

Create moments of connection

Revamp outreach efforts to be inclusive and innovative

Empower employees with tools

Respond to community needs

Please feel free to use any of the following resources as inspiration. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions about implementing heart-centered leadership strategies with your team. Remember a little goes along way. Start small. Start somewhere.

[Distressed Colleague Map](#)

[Navigate Program](#)

[New Parent Bingo](#)

[Self-compassion video](#)

[Wellness Toolkits](#)

[Pause for self-reflection & Worksheet](#)

[Kindness Cards](#)

[Pause to check-in & Worksheet](#)

[Resources for Work and Life](#)

[My Emotional Strength & This isn't what I signed up for](#)



*[Additional content and prompts on LinkedIn](#)

Presentation List



What is Embrace Strategies?

Embrace Strategies offers opportunities and solutions for individual and organizational wellness.

Embrace Strategies for Leadership & Wellness

Becoming a Heart-Centered Leader

In this program, participants will walk through a reflection exercise to become more aware of their own needs for their wellness and leadership. The focus will be on three core leadership lessons: rest, healing, and growth. Participants can expect to walk away with tangible skills to cultivate their emotional wellness in an effort to become a heart-centered leader.

Emotional Strength Training

Growing and building emotional muscle as a change management strategy and to foster resiliency

We understand the importance of physical conditioning; what about emotional conditioning? How strong and resilient are we during stressful and trying times? How do we handle the constant pressure to perform in rapidly changing environments?

This training focuses on strengthening emotional well-being, which is accomplished by caring for ourselves. Much like a physical regimen, this experience intends to build emotional muscle through self-compassion and increased emotional agility. Be prepared to work through personal or work-related situations, and leave with a tangible process to approach situations in the future.

Interpersonal Effectiveness

Be empowered by taking ownership of your role in communication

Need to have a difficult conversation, but don't know where to start? This training will develop tools to help communicate effectively and address barriers of effective communication. Participants will learn how to use mindfulness to manage emotions that can interfere during interpersonal communication, and how to validate and listen more effectively.

During the training, all participants will be able to use real life examples to practice using the skills they learned. They will work through a script that will help them hone in on their message.

Objectives:

- Increase self-awareness through a variety of reflection practices
- Identify practical takeaways to implement into daily routine and practice
- Provide a framework for cultivating emotional intelligence

Objectives:

- Learn tools for self-care and self-compassion
- Be able to apply emotional strength tools for dealing with change
- Leave having started a personal emotional strength plan

Objectives:

- Increase self-awareness in communication
- Engage in solution-focused dialogue
- Speak and listen thoughtfully
- Understand wise communication