

Mindfulness and Leadership, December 9, 2015

Matt McPherson

Hi A Rising Tide:

This week we will be following up on everyone's meditation and mindfulness efforts over the last 90+ days. I want to thank Sami and Sean for their incredible persistence and generosity in sending out the daily reminders to keep us on track with this goal. Below I am sending information about how to prepare for the session. Also, although this should be a free flowing conversation, by tomorrow I will send out an agenda or list of questions to provide a bit more structure to our meeting. Thanks!

Matt

Session title: Meditation/Mindfulness/Stillness/Compassion/Happiness... What do all of these things have in common and what do they have to do with leadership?

Main Objective: Reflect, share, listen and learn about everyone's experiences with meditation and mindfulness and how it has impacted their lives personally and professionally.

Preparation: Three Steps

1. Try to be mindful over the next couple of days.
 - a. If you haven't been doing any practice, try today! Also please still participate in this session no matter what!
2. Reflect on your own experience with trying to establish a practice and to be more mindful on a daily basis.
 - a. Be prepared to share how your journey has been going, what you have learned and also any lessons related to leadership.
3. Read/listen or watch at least 2 of the following and think about the questions:
 - a. Daniel Goleman (psychologist that brought the notion of "EI" to prominence) *Why aren't we more compassionate?*
https://www.ted.com/talks/daniel_goleman_on_compassion?language=en
 - i. What may mindfulness have to do with compassion, success in speed dating, being 'pizzled' and leadership?
 - b. Neuroscientist Richard Davidson who is the founder of the Center for Investigating Healthy Minds at UW-Madison. This is an interview with him on Wisconsin Public Radio. <http://www.wpr.org/listen/800761>
 - i. Listen at minimum through the first break (10 minutes). How does your experience relate to what Davidson's studies suggestion about the impact of meditation and mindfulness including how it seems to change our brains?
 - c. Jon Kabat-Zinn (Professor Emeritus at U Mass Medical School and Founder of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction --more than anyone he is probably responsible for the recent popularization of mindfulness). *What is Mindfulness?*

<http://mrsmindfulness.com/9-mindfulness-videos/> (scroll down to video #2 – 5 minutes)

- i. How has your experience of mindfulness compared to what Kabat-Zinn describes in this short video?
- d. *Want to be Happy? Slow Down* A written interview with Matthieu Ricard (Happiest Man in the World) and Pico Iyer (author of *The Art of Stillness*)
<http://ideas.ted.com/want-to-be-happy-slow-down/>
 - i. What has your experience of stillness been as your meditation/mindfulness practice has evolved? Note: Both of these individuals have TED talks but the article distills much of their thinking in a shorter format.

P.S.: A few other mindfulness/meditation resources you may be interested in checking out:

David Gelles, NYT reporter very well-known these days for his book on mindfulness in American businesses. This is his talk *Mindful Work: How Meditation is Changing Business from the Inside Out* he did recently for “Talks at Google” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24BsHv0WIXY>

Website for Richard Davidson’s Center for Investigating Healthy Minds
<http://www.investigatinghealthyminds.org/>

Rick Hanson’s website. Author of very interesting book called *Buddha’s Brain* provides a series of interesting talks here about how to “Train your Brain”

<https://www.rickhanson.net/multimedia/audio/talks/train-your-brain/>