

Leading through a Crisis

A selection of activities and prompts to help you navigate uncertain times.

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Address the elephant in the room

One of the most effective actions to take in times of stress is to openly acknowledge the thoughts and feelings floating through your head and to do so without trying to find a solution. Speaking our fears and concerns out loud helps us and others feel less isolated and releases the pressure of believing we need to keep it together at all costs. Below are some questions you can ask yourself and your teammates to help give shape to whatever might be causing anxiety at the moment.

Which words best describe what you are feeling right now?

What has you most concerned at the moment?

What kind of help would you find most beneficial right now?

Re-evaluate your shoulds

As we progress through our life journey, we all pick up beliefs about what is right or wrong and how things should and should not be. While on one hand, these rules might provide a structure to how we navigate our lives and businesses, they can also become a cage that limit our maneuvering space. Below are some prompts for you to reflect on and help identify where in your life you might be self-limiting your possibilities.

Where in your life and business are things not flowing smoothly?

Which areas of your life and business feel okay? And what would it take to make them great?

What thought or action have you been holding on to that is not actually serving you?

When embarking on a new endeavour that scares you, who's voice do you hear in the back of your mind? And how much of what that voice is saying that is actually true?

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Focus only on the next step

When dealing with stressful situations, it is common to feel overwhelmed by all the tasks that need to be completed and the responsibilities that seem to multiply by the minute. One of the most effective ways to counter overwhelm is to focus on the situations and tasks over which you have control. The following activity will help you determine the factors of your current situation that are within and beyond your control and to take action on the factors over which you have tangible influence.

First step is to consider the situation you would like to change and frame your 'ask' in a way that points to your desired outcome (e.g. I want to feel more relaxed vs I want to experience less stress).

Complete the following:

I want to

Now, with relation to the situation you would like to change, on the left list everything that is within your control, while on the right you'll list everything that is beyond your control.

Within your control

Beyond your control

Let's sort the lists. From the list that is within your control - what can you do more of to improve your current situation? Put a circle around them. Which of your strengths could you lend to others to build a partnership? Put a rectangle around those.

From the list of the factors beyond your control, place a **1** next to the ones you can **avoid**, a **2** next to the ones you can **challenge**, a **3** next to the ones you can **make due without**, a **4** next to the ones you can **seek help** with, and a **5** next to the ones you can turn into an **opportunity**.

With the new awareness you've gained from this activity, what is one first step you can take to move your situation towards resolution?

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Look for the light

In difficult times, when we are feeling less equipped to deal with whatever life throws at us, focusing our attention on our strengths, the aspects of our life and business that are working and the possibilities this new circumstance has created, can help us navigate the rough waters of uncertainty with less anxiety and a stronger sense of purpose. Below are some questions to get your creative juices flowing.

What business idea have you had on the back burner that you finally have the time to flesh out?

How might you repurpose your business / service / product to create a new stream of revenue?

What resources do others have that you aren't using?

What have you learned about yourself and how you make decisions?

Which items do you want to put on your to-do list, but never seem to get there?

When faced with an overwhelming obstacle, what's your "go to" way to overcome it?

Focusing on the things you would like to change. Are there any parts of it – no matter how small – that are already happening these days?