



Compassionate Leadership: How to Do Hard Things in a Human Way

COMPANION WORKSHEET

Busyness Kills Your Heart



Compassionate Leadership Mantras

Humans have chanted mantras for centuries, intending to invoke prosperity, peace of mind, intuition, and other benefits. In a modern context, mantras can serve actors, speakers, leaders, and really anyone looking for a tool to help them consciously focus on positive intentions.

The book, “Compassionate Leadership: How to Do Hard Things in a Human Way”, leverages mantras to teach the principles of wise compassionate leadership. This series of worksheets will accompany you on the journey towards integrating them into your leadership practice.

How to Use This Worksheet

As a way to dive deeper into the mantras introduced in the “Compassionate Leadership” book, we have created a series of worksheets, each with a focus on one chapter and its associated mantra. These worksheets are intended to help you better understand the individual mantra and to make it your own.

Find a moment when you are not rushed to take in the statements and respond to them. You are welcome to use the questions below each quote to guide you. You can also start with spontaneous writing before you turn to the questions to get into the right frame of mind. Considering the prompts will help you attach personal meaning to the mantras and infuse your leadership with more compassion for yourself and the ones you lead.

Busyness Kills Your Heart – Chapter Summary

We’re all busy juggling many priorities. But that does not mean we have to feel busy inside. In today’s fast-paced culture, being busy is a badge of honor. But busyness is a choice—and a bad choice, at that. Busyness kills our heart and thereby our ability to do hard things in a human way. Chapter 5 of the “Compassionate Leadership” book provides strategies for how wise compassionate leaders can recognize and avoid the busyness trap.



“Busyness is seductive because we confuse an active mind with a productive mind.”

Would you describe yourself as busy? Consider for a moment what that means for you. Does it mean you are under a lot of pressure and have more tasks to do than time to do them? Does it mean you don't have time for other activities or people that are important?

“Numerous studies show that task overload, mental stress, and busyness are associated with physiological hyperreactivity, including increased blood pressure and impaired connectivity between the heart-and-brain response.”

Take a moment to reflect on the sensations that show up in your body when you experience busyness. What happens to your heart rate and your breath? How do you think that affects you in the short and in the long term?

“In today's work context, being busy is equated with being important. If someone says they are not busy, we assume they are lying, lazy, or incompetent.”

Imagine having a week which doesn't feel busy. How might this affect your self-perception? In your company, is being busy and under pressure the norm? What would it take for your organization to place more value on not being busy?



“When we are in this state of busyness, we are not as caring or attentive to people around us.”

Do you sometimes find that you are too busy to focus on supporting and developing others? Take a moment to reflect on your to-do list. How many items on it are related to you doing things versus you enabling others to do things? Are there opportunities for you to cancel things to give more time for people?

“Sometimes, not taking action can be the wisest and most compassionate thing we can do to create space for people to figure things out on their own.”

What is your typical response when someone comes to you with a problem? If you jump in to try and solve it, can you challenge yourself next time to not take any action? How could that impact your busyness?

“Ultimately, overcoming busyness and enabling our compassionate nature to come to the forefront is about managing how our mind deals with hard things.”

How can you cultivate a sense of relaxation during your workday? How can you reduce mental clutter and create more clarity of mind?