



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

COMPANION WORKSHEET

Your Oxygen Mask First



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.

Your Oxygen Mask First – Chapter Summary

Many senior leaders are plagued by self-criticism and self-judgment. Research shows that that is a poor mental and emotional state for achieving excellent performance. Chapter 4 dives in to how to silence the inner critic and embrace strong self-compassion as keys to leading others with wise compassion.



“To be a wise and compassionate leader, it is imperative that we are up for the task; that we have the courage and strength to do hard things in a human way.”

As a leader, what is your approach to self-care and self-compassion? Think of a time when you felt depleted; how did it affect your decisions and relationships? What about a time when you were able to recharge your batteries before tackling a hard situation?

“All businesses are people businesses. It just doesn’t matter how much money you move or how many strategies you alter, it will always be the people you affected that will impact you the most.”

What does this quote mean to you? What do you want to take from it, and how do you incorporate that into your thoughts, feeling, and actions as a leader?

“The key is to recognize the reality of the natural loneliness that comes with the role [of a leader] and ensure you have someone you can talk to and feel a sense of true connection with.”

What makes you feel lonely at your workplace? Is there a way to remedy that situation? What relationships in and outside of work can you rely on for a sense of true connection?



“Although inner criticism can be a wise teacher, it can also be a terribly unkind and unhelpful friend.”

Do you know what your inner critic’s voice sounds like? In what situations is it likely to show up? How could you respond compassionately towards yourself the next time the inner critic comes out?

“Leadership can be exhausting. It is easy to get weighed down by the impact of the decisions you need to make. Because of this, leaders need to know how to recharge their batteries.”

How do you replenish your energy, beyond the basics of sleeping, eating well, and exercising? Reflect on your life outside of work: what are the things that have meaning to you, bring you joy, and make you feel like you are making a difference?

“Taking time for yourself allows you to be a good role model for your people so that they do the same.”

Does your company culture support or discourage self-care? What could you do to encourage yourself and others to have and exhibit more self-compassion?