



Home > News > 3 Ways to be a More Mindful Leader

23133 reads

Share

347



At the end of the day it's not about what you have accomplished...it's about who you've lifted up, who you've made better. —Denzel Washington

3 Ways to be a More Mindful Leader

--by Janice L. Marturano, syndicated from agenda.weforum.org, Feb 18, 2015



It's been more than a decade since I started exploring the intersection between excellence in leadership and contemplative practices like meditation. The leaders I worked with, first as vice-president of a Fortune 200 company, and then in my work as executive director of the Institute for Mindful Leadership, came from different cultures, professions and backgrounds. They were influencers in small and large organizations, teams, community groups and even their own families.

Despite their differences, they had some things in common. They had bright minds, warm hearts and were drawn to leadership roles because they wanted to make a difference. They were also often overbooked, overwhelmed, exhausted and spent much of their life on autopilot, struggling to get through the day.

Can training in mindful leadership cure all these problems? Of course not. But there are many ways it can help. Here are my top three:

1. How can it be 6pm already?

You know the feeling - you glance at your watch and it says 6pm. That can't be right. Where did the day go? You feel tired from all the running around but you aren't quite sure what you did all day. And you're sure that not much of what you did actually reduced the items on your to-do list.

When you're distracted and unfocused, your day goes by in a blur. Your body is in the room but your mind is rarely fully attentive to anything you're doing. As you begin to train your mind, you notice more quickly

Quote Bulletin

A little nonsense now and then is relished by the wisest men.

Willy Wonka

Search by keyword: Happiness, Wisdom, Work, Science, Technology, Meditation, Joy, Love, Success, Education, Relationships, Life

Contribute To Upcoming Stories

Subscribe to DailyGood

We've sent daily emails for over 16 years, without any ads. Join a community of 245,211 by entering your email below.

Email:

Subscribe

Unsubscribe?



DailyGood 503K likes

Like Page

Be the first of your friends to like this

Trending DailyGoods

May 27: Turning Rain, Ice and Trees into Ephemeral Works (5,318 reads)

May 3: Last Lecture (15,094 reads)

Apr 24: How to Hardwire Resilience into the Brain (11,554 reads)

May 20: The Importance of Quiet Time (15,070 reads)

Apr 22: Why Your Brain Needs to Dream (10,154 reads)

More...

Related DailyGoods

when it becomes distracted and you learn to redirect your attention. Imagine how much more thoughtful your contributions might be if you gave every meeting, conversation and project your full attention. Imagine how much more efficient and effective a meeting might be if everyone was actually paying attention.

2. Something is missing ... the win-win-win

The project is over, the expectations were met and you're moving on to the next assignment. You take a moment to think about the finished project. Everyone says you did a good job but you feel as though something is missing: it wasn't your best work. If you'd had a little more space, you could have brought more of your expertise, creativity or passion to the project. I would hear this so often that it even inspired me to write a book on mindful leadership, *Finding the Space to Lead*.

Cultivating this space in your day is another part of mindful leadership training. As you train and step out of autopilot, you can begin to see the things that are creating clutter. Sometimes those things are in your environment (culture of too many meetings, redundant assignments) and sometimes those things are within you (tendency to over-analyze, emotions that isolate you). As we learn to cultivate the space needed to be our best, we are more likely to find the "win-win-win" solutions that are good for the organization, good for the employees and good for the community. In other words, we begin to find what is missing.

3. I hadn't seen the stars in 20 years

Technology helps us do our jobs and keep track of our lives. But increasingly, our lives, and our potential to lead with excellence, are being adversely affected by our need to check our smartphones every waking minute. Critical human connections are lost when we become addicted to this form of connectivity. If you are in a meeting, can the best work be done if half the room is checking their phone under the table? (And do people really think nobody will notice?) If you're trying to get your son to really listen to you, do you think your efforts will succeed if you allow yourself to be interrupted by texts?

One of the most poignant realizations of the need to have boundaries with technology came on a mindful leadership retreat I led a few years ago. Participants were asked to put away their smartphones for the evening. At a loss as to what to do without his phone, the president of a large organization took a walk outside and looked up at the night sky. He later admitted that he was shocked to realize that he hadn't seen the stars in 20 years. He asked himself what else he had been missing while he was staring at his phone.

We need to develop deep connections - to ourselves, to those around us and to the world - if we are to fulfil our potential to lead, and live, with excellence. When we are connected to each other and the world primarily through technology, some of the most important aspects of those connections are neglected and can wither away before we know it. Can watching a YouTube video ever replace seeing the night sky? Can reading texts replace the sound of a human voice? As we become more aware of our behaviour, we have the chance to make conscious choices about how we want to lead and live, and which connections we need to prioritize and strengthen.

This article originally appeared in [Agenda](#), an International Institution committed to improving the state of the world through public-private cooperation. The article is republished with permission. The author, Janice L. Marturano, is Executive Director at the Institute for Mindful Leadership.

Loved This? Pass It On!



347



159



1



65



Print

Check These Out Next



[10 Tips for Effective Communication](#)



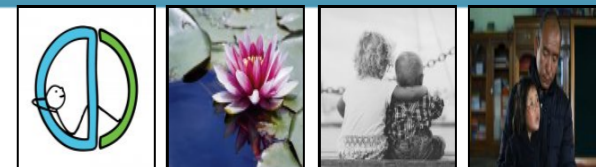
[Five Invitations: What Death Can Teach About Living](#)



[Three Things that Matter Most in Youth and Old Age](#)



[Anne Lamott \(Author\) Writes Down Every Single Thing She Knows, As of Today](#)



Nov 21: [Do You Like Me? Do I?](#)

Nov 6: [How to Find the Good in a Nasty Election Cycle](#)

Jul 8: [Why We Should Teach Empathy to Preschoolers](#)

Sep 20: [Tashi & The Monk' Wins an Emmy!](#)

[Read More](#)

About Us



DailyGood is a portal that shares inspiring quotes and news stories that focus on the "good" we can find in our world daily along with a simple action to continue that goodness. Since 1999, it has delivered positive news to subscriber inboxes for free by volunteers every day.

Other Projects by [ServiceSpace](#)

