
Connect, Reflect and Recharge – A Time to Exhale Leaders Resources

Please find the following resources, in order to support ourselves, our colleagues and our team members to create space to reflect, connect and recharge in challenging times.

1. [Hopeful Mindset – Resilience Tool](#)
 - Individuals can complete this personal reflection worksheet, as the starting point to uncovering what strengthens them, deepens their aliveness and hopefulness and guides their way forward.
2. [The Four Agreements](#)
 - Begin team meetings by setting the conditions to create psychological safety.
3. [Micro-Mindfulness Resources](#)
 - Access to Mindfulness recordings, podcasts and related resources.
4. [Check-in and Check-out Questions for Leaders](#)
 - Check-in” and “check-out” questions, provide an opportunity to build a deeper connection, trust and supportive relationship with team members.



Resilience is about how you recharge, not how you endure.

– Harvard Business Review

Hopeful Mindset – Resilience Building Reflection Process

Adapted from Active Hope – Joanna Macy & Dr. Chris Johnstone

Hope isn't unrealistic or even wishful thinking. Instead, it's a mindset that embraces the possibility of positive change. Hope is an optimistic state of mind; it's a belief that something good will happen.

In the wake of a pandemic, we are living in unprecedented times. You might think, "OK, what have I got to be hopeful about?" While we can't control the big-picture stuff, there is a lot we can do to develop a sense of hopefulness about the future. Whatever situation we face, we can choose our response. When facing overwhelming challenges, we might feel that our actions don't count for much. Yet the kind of responses we make, and the degree to which we believe they count, are shaped by the way we think and feel about hope.

The reality is tomorrow will be different from today; you can't make a decision today about your future without thinking about how the world might be different. Even in times of turmoil, when you might feel as though you have little control over today's outcomes, it's imperative not to lose hope — because it's people like you, who shape the future.

If you are struggling right now to embrace a hopeful mindset, work your way through this personal reflection process to help guide your way forward. See this as the starting point of an amazing journey that strengthens you and deepens your aliveness and hopefulness. Engage with these following steps again and again, whenever you need to shift from hopelessness to hopefulness.

GROUNDING EXERCISE (PREPARING YOURSELF)



Before moving into the five (5) reflection questions, you can begin with the following grounding activity in order to become fully present in your reflection process.

- *Take a moment to come into your body by taking three breaths with awareness. Notice that when you breathe in, your breath is cool and when you breathe out, it is warm. [Breathe three times]*
- *Now allow your awareness to drop from your head to our heart -- like a feather that's drifting slowly downward.*
- *Feel your heart open, and from that place, notice something you're grateful for.*

1. REFLECT ON YOUR JOURNEY, SO FAR



Reflecting on your journey so far, allows you to recognize what has challenged you, what have you overcome and what's important that you celebrate.

Reflect on these questions.

- i. *If you could go back in time to the beginning of the pandemic, and prepare your past self for the months ahead, what would you say &/or do?*

- ii. *What did you learn about yourself from this experience?*



2. CONNECT WITH GRATITUDE



Connecting with gratitude calms our nervous system, connects us to ourselves and creates safety and connection. Take a deep breath and connect to something you are thankful for.

Reflect and complete these statements.

- i. *Some things that bring me joy and meaning, in my personal life &/or at work are...*

- ii. *What I'm grateful for in myself, in others, in my team is ...*

- iii. *What I am celebrating about myself, others, my team and/or our work is...*



3. HONOR YOUR PAIN AND DISCOMFORT



Reflecting on what concerns, or pains you, helps you to understand yourself, your values, what you truly care about and how you want to be. It allows you to reconnect with what is important in your life. By sharing your concerns and pain, you can become more connected with others. Pain can tell you what's important to you and what you must change to move forward. We need to honour that, but we don't want to stay there.

Reflect and complete these statements.

- i. *What concerns me most today about my personal life, our team and/or our work is...*

- ii. *Looking into the future we are heading into, I fear ...*

- iii. *Feelings I have about this include...*



4. CREATE NEW PERSPECTIVE



Creating a new perspective is about the future. Identifying what you hope for. You shift your mindset to a new perspective, so you become aware of what is available to you, which moves you towards action. By reflecting on what you truly care about, and what concerns you deeply, you can become aware of peoples shared experiences. Use this knowledge to shift into a new perspective that can inspire you to move from the pain.

Reflect and complete these statements.

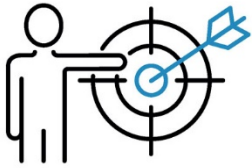
- i. *What really matters to me is...*

- ii. *Something that inspires me to do things differently is ...*

- iii. *A possible change or a different perspective, moving forward, could be ...*



5. CLARIFY YOUR VISION AND ACTION TO MOVE FORWARD



Clarifying your vision and identifying practical action steps helps move your vision, and what you hope for, forward. There is no step too small, any movement forward is in the right direction.

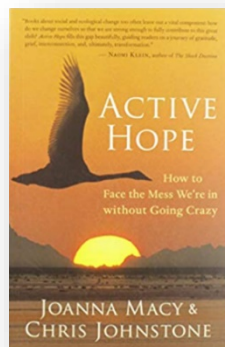
Reflect and complete these statements.

i. *Something I'd love to do to make a difference is ...*

ii. *An action going forth that I am going to take is ...*

iii. *What next step(s) will I commit to taking that leads me towards my vision/hope...*

If you are interested in learning more about the Active Hope practice, click [here](#) to check out *Active Hope* by Joanne Macy and Chris Johnstone.



The Four Agreements

To begin any team meetings (formal or informal) set these conditions in order to create a space where, all those present, can share openly and honestly. If anyone in the group objects to, or would like to add agreements, discuss this with the group and ensure there is agreement before moving forward.

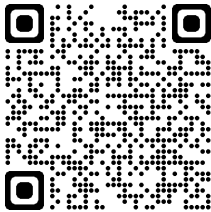
1. **Authenticity:** We commit to showing up as we are, the authentic expression of what we need to say. It is also authentic not to speak if we don't need to say anything.
2. **Respect:** We respect our differences and each other.
3. **Trust:** We trust ourselves and we extend trust to each other, knowing we all have the best intentions for our team members.
4. **Confidentiality:** We don't share anything that is not ours to share. We speak for ourselves and allow others to do the same, if they chose.



Micro-Mindfulness – A Guided Practice to Reducing Empathic Distress

Click [here](#) to access resources such as mindfulness recordings, podcasts and related resources, to utilize for yourself and to share with others.

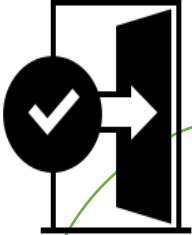
You can also scan the QR-code in order to access the Micro-Mindfulness resources.



Mindfulness is a way of being present: paying attention to and accepting what is happening in our lives. It helps us to be aware of and step away from our automatic and habitual reactions to our everyday experiences. – Elizabeth Thornton

Meeting Check-in and Check-out Questions for Leaders

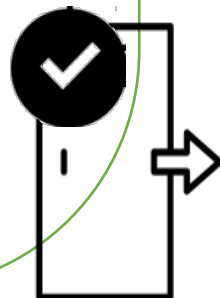
Take a moment in begin and end your team meetings (formal or informal) with “check-in” and “check-out” questions, providing an opportunity for team members to share how they are showing up and feeling in the moment. Ultimately, checking-in and checking-out with your team creates an opportunity to build a deeper connection, trust and supportive relationship.



IT'S NOT ABOUT HAVING THE ANSWERS, IT'S ABOUT FEELING HEARD.

Check-in and Check-out question examples:

- What's up for you, in your life? What's one new and interesting thing you've been thinking about lately?
- What's one thing that brings you energy and joy?
- What kind of a day have you had so far today?
- What is your personal weather status (cloudy, foggy, sunny breaks etc.)?
- What's one thing that you're proud of that you'd like to share with the group?
- Why did you accept the invitation to join this gathering?
- What are you seeking to learn and contribute?
- What's become apparent since we last met?
- What question is being asked of you (or through you) right now?
- What words would you use to describe where your head is? And where your heart is?
- What are you noticing in your environment that relates to this project?
- What are you willing to set aside in order to be present with this conversation?
- How are you arriving today?
- How has the last gathering impacted you and your work?
- What is the crossroads where you find yourself at this stage of your life or work or in the project around which we are assembled?
- Why are you really here?
- What makes you tremble as you look ahead? What worries or fears are bubbling up in you?
- What would it take for you to be fully present in this room?
- If you could invite someone you respect to sit beside you and support you in making this meeting successful, whom would that be?
- What's one thing you hope to get accomplished at today's meeting?
- What is one interest of yours that others in this group might not know about?
- What task or concern would you like to set aside so that you can fully concentrate on our work today?
- What is a recent success you've experienced?
- What aspect of your job brings you the most satisfaction?
- Given our work so far, what do you feel best about?
- What do you like best about _____ (weekends, vacation, the current season, etc.)?
- Why are you interested in being part of this core team and what do you hope to learn or benefit from in being a part of it? (ask group, each person share)
- Share a one, or two-word intention you hold for today's meeting.
- What is something you came across recently that gave you hope or inspiration?



“When you dare to tell your team about the issues you struggle with, they will follow suit.”