Getting practical:
You as a leader

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Priority Mgmt  Day 2 Day
Fragmentation  attn

Time to think about strategy
Power less leader
Resistance to change
Bureaucracy

Issues
Attention fragmented
Expectations extreme
Always there
Multiple hats
Ext demands + inst conflicting

Possible solns
Manage what you can see
Say no / turn off
Time block + name time
Know your tools

Principles
Avoid exploitation
Managing your time

Bringing best self, putting on your own mask first, being a role model...
Everything else

Sphere of Influence

Sphere of Control
Different types of stress, work overload, overwhelm

Different types of drowning in work

Obsessive passion
Workaholic
Extrinsic motivation

Burnout!

Harmonious passion
Love the work
Intrinsic motivation

Wear out!

Still drown...
Characterising the **sources** of overwhelm

Identifying the sources

**Imposed**

- Expected – by others

**Taken on**

- Passion, FOMO?

**Expected – by self**

- Perfectionism?
  - Imposter syndrome?
Time a fixed limited resource

86,400 secs/day

So ...

who/what/why are you saying yes to?

- Values
- Important areas

“A YES is nothing without the NO that gives it boundaries & form”

(Bungay-Stanier p.165)
Look after thyself

Creating conditions for optimal functioning ... unequivocal huge evidence base!

Eat
Sleep
Move
Play
Relate

Prioritise & schedule

What are your non-negotiables?
Language matters…

What is your real/realistic aim?

Work-life balance?

Work-life separation?

Work-life integration?

Alignment wrt values

Health-life agreement [Gulersen & Aycan, 2019]

3 domains (work, family, self)

4 profiles: harmonious, carefree, exhausted, nonharmonious

Love-loathe imbalance

[Buckingham & Goodall, 2019]
What are all the areas of your life that are important to you?

How well does your life currently honour your values, all the areas that are important to you, work to your strengths etc?

Eg...
- Family
- Work & career
- Recreation
- Health
- Creativity
- Spiritual
- Service
- Relationships
- Social
- Finance
- Etc...

Exercise / activity / reflection
Proactively plan - schedule

• Prioritise the ‘great work’, the work you really care about

• Put things in the calendar

• Start with the most important – block out time for them

• Explicitly schedule the great work, the longer-term value work

• Don’t forget to include your ‘things’
  • e.g. reading, sitting/thinking, exercise, social etc

*What are the things you’d love to find more time for? Schedule the time!*
Responding to requests/opportunities = the importance of creating a pause before responding

• Why?
  • Time to think and respond rather than react
  • Engages pre-frontal cortex – cognitive processing

• How? Strategy suggestions?
  • S.T.O.P. Literally pause, breathe in the moment
  • Use extra verbals ‘ah ha’
  • Ask for more information, get specific
  • Say you will think about it and get back to them (when)

• Other strategies to create a pause?
### Example: Managing commitments

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From Andy Ko’s blog post:

From Anna Cox’s blog post & template:

Consider…

Crafting your own ‘good life’

What areas/aspects of your life do you want to prioritise more?

How important are they to you (scale of 1-10, not important-very import)?

What can you do more/less of for your own wellbeing?
  • Eat, sleep, move, play, relate...

What strategies can you put in place around working hours that work for you?

What are you already doing well? Which areas do you want to develop?

Which one thing could make the biggest difference?

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Two simple hacks

For managing attention, getting perspective
Leader Hack: The power of the **breath** and the **purposeful pause**

At any time

Between context shifts ... 20 secs

Between listening and answering ... 2 secs

Shift from reacting to responding

Deep breath, lengthened exhale

Focus, presence
Example: S.T.O.P

Stop

Take a deep breath

Observe

what’s going on (thoughts, feelings, body etc)

Proceed

Only takes a minute!
(Feel free to breathe, reflect for a couple of minutes longer!)

STOP when feeling stressed
STOP before making a decision, shift from reaction to response mode
STOP before saying a ‘yes’ you really don’t want to say

STOP between back-to-back appointments to help shift focus
STOP before putting in the key in the lock, arriving home from work

STOP to savour, celebrate a success, something good…

Alternative: BOX breathing – count 4 in, 4 hold, 4 out, 4 hold

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Leader Hack: Example **self-distancing** techniques

Reflecting on social experiences from a self-distanced perspective

Visualising an experience from an **observer's** perspective

Talking to/about yourself in the **third person** (maybe not in company!)

Increases heart rate variability
Example evidence base on value of deep breathing

The science of slow deep breathing  (MacKinnon overview)

Parasympathetic stimulation – neural, chemical, physiological – Move from amygdala to PFC pre frontal cortex

Decrease cortisol/adrenaline, increase HRV & oxytocin

Breathing modulates brain activity and mental function (Zelano 2016)

“[Nasal ] breathing therefore modulates emotional recognition and memory recall, with both processes being more accurate during breathing in compared to breathing out.” (Costandi 2016)
Example evidence base on high HRV – heart rate variability

The science of HRV [Grossman et al 2016; Kross, 2019; various]

Higher HRV (cardiac vagal tone) linked to functioning of executive brain circuits

Increased by

Deep breathing, self-distancing techniques, mindfulness ...

Associated with better emotional self-regulation, working memory, broadened perspective, increased objectivity/less ego-centricity, wiser decision making/judgements,
Moving forward
Taking action
Who are you (or who do you want to be) as a leader?

Write your OWN leadership statement

Guided by my values of .................

I am leader who .................

In particular I use my strengths of ............... 

to .................

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Towards developing better conversations as a leader?

**What small actions could you try out?**

- What has resonated?
- Which one thing could make the biggest difference?
- What will you commit to trying?

**Send yourself an email**

**Make a calendar date to check in with yourself**