

# Emerging Leaders Program Module 1

**"True leadership begins with knowing oneself deeply. Self-awareness empowers leaders to lead authentically, connect genuinely with their team, and cultivate a culture of honesty, accountability, and continual improvement."**

As we begin our journey in the Emerging Leaders Program it is important to firstly look at what is possibly the most important attributes of any great leader:

**Their ability to navigate their own inner world and their level of Emotional Intelligence.**

All great leaders spend time, energy and resources on understanding their prime drivers and exploring how they can be better humans as well as better leaders.

With this in mind, we will be using a tried and tested model to support you in developing your Emotional Intelligence (EI) and your ability to manage and explore your inner world.

At Evolutionary Intelligence we have taken the model developed by Daniel Goleman, a renowned psychologist and author, who developed a groundbreaking approach to personal development, through the lens of emotional intelligence.

His methodology revolves around four key pillars:

- **Self-awareness**
- **Self-regulation**
- **Connection**
- **Purpose**

The summary below begins to give an understanding of the value and benefits of these 4 key pillars, supported by relevant research. We have also where possible, included some research which supports the use of these keys.

## **Self-Awareness:**

- Goleman's emphasis on self-awareness as the foundation for personal development underscores the importance of understanding one's emotions, strengths, and weaknesses.
- Research suggests that individuals with high levels of self-awareness exhibit better emotional regulation, decision-making, and interpersonal skills (HBR, 2018).
- The ability to recognize and comprehend emotions allows for greater adaptability and resilience in the face of challenges (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

**Self-Regulation:**

- Building on self-awareness, Goleman advocates for self-regulation, the ability to manage and control one's emotions effectively.
- Studies demonstrate that individuals proficient in self-regulation experience lower stress levels, improved mental well-being, and enhanced overall performance (Goleman, 1995).
- Goleman's model aligns with research showing a positive correlation between emotional regulation and increased job satisfaction and productivity (Brackett et al., 2006).

**Connection:**

- The pillar of connection highlights the significance of fostering meaningful relationships and understanding the emotions of others.
- Research in social psychology suggests that strong interpersonal connections contribute to increased happiness, better mental health, and even longevity (Helliwell et al., 2019).
- Goleman's approach echoes findings that individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to have more satisfying and fulfilling relationships (Gottman & DeClaire, 1997).

**Purpose:**

- Goleman's framework culminates in the concept of purpose, emphasizing the need for a sense of meaning and direction in one's life.
- Studies reveal that individuals with a clear sense of purpose experience higher levels of life satisfaction, resilience, and overall well-being (Steger et al., 2009).
- Goleman's incorporation of purpose aligns with research highlighting its role in motivating individuals to achieve their goals and persevere in the face of adversity (Damon et al., 2003).

The value of using the above lies in its potential to foster individual growth, improve interpersonal relationships, and contribute to overall well-being. As empirical evidence continues to support the efficacy of Goleman's model, it stands as a valuable guide for those seeking a holistic pathway to personal development.

**"Leadership is about making others better as a result of your presence and making sure that impact lasts in your absence."**

**Sheryl Sandberg:**

## The Crucial Role of Self-Awareness in Leadership

As we begin the journey into the discovery of leadership and how to become the best leaders we can, the first step is in looking a little more deeply at self-awareness.

Here are some of the benefits of becoming more self-aware as leaders:

### **Enhanced Emotional Intelligence (EI):**

- Self-aware leaders possess a deep understanding of their emotions, strengths, weaknesses, and how they impact others. They are constantly reflecting on their own performance.
- Research indicates that leaders with high EI are better equipped to manage stress, resolve conflicts, and inspire their teams (Goleman, 1995).

### **Improved Decision Making:**

- Self-aware leaders are mindful of their biases and limitations, leading to more informed and objective decision-making processes.
- Studies show that self-awareness correlates positively with effective decision-making and problem-solving abilities (Musselwhite, 2017).

### **Building Authentic Relationships:**

- Leaders who are self-aware build trust and credibility by demonstrating authenticity and vulnerability.
- Research suggests that authenticity in leadership fosters positive workplace relationships, leading to higher employee engagement and satisfaction (Hannah et al., 2014).

### **Continuous Growth and Development:**

- Self-awareness prompts leaders to seek feedback, reflect on experiences, and actively pursue personal and professional development.
- Studies have shown that leaders who engage in self-reflection and seek feedback are more likely to adapt and thrive in challenging environments (Ancona et al., 2007).

### **Effective Communication:**

- Self-aware leaders are adept at understanding how their words and actions impact others, enabling them to communicate with clarity, empathy, and respect.
- Research highlights that effective communication is crucial for building cohesive teams and achieving organisational goals (Hogan et al., 2010).

### **Resilience and Adaptability:**

Self-aware leaders possess the resilience to navigate setbacks and failures with grace, learning from adversity and adapting their approach accordingly.

- Studies suggest that resilient leaders foster a culture of innovation and agility within their organizations (Luthans et al., 2006).

**"Leadership is not about titles, positions, or flowcharts. It is about one life influencing another."**

**John C. Maxwell**

Below we have put together some well known leaders' perspective on the importance of Self Awareness. These leaders' reflections on self-awareness provide valuable insights into how introspection and self-understanding can drive effective leadership and contribute to organisational success.

**Sheryl Sandberg** (COO of Facebook):

- Sandberg has emphasized the importance of self-awareness in her leadership journey, particularly in understanding her own strengths and weaknesses. She often discusses how self-awareness has enabled her to navigate challenges and make impactful decisions, both personally and professionally.

**Satya Nadella** (CEO of Microsoft):

- Nadella frequently speaks about the role of self-awareness in leadership and how it has shaped his approach to leading Microsoft. He has highlighted the significance of empathy and self-reflection in fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration within the organisation.

**Brene Brown** (Researcher, Speaker, and Author):

- Brown, known for her work on vulnerability and courage, often talks about the importance of self-awareness in leadership. She emphasises the need for leaders to cultivate self-awareness to build trust, connect authentically with others, and lead with integrity.

**Bill George** (Former CEO of Medtronic):

- George is a vocal advocate for authentic leadership and has written extensively on the subject. He frequently discusses how self-awareness forms the foundation of authentic leadership, enabling leaders to align their actions with their values and inspire others to do the same.

**Angela Ahrendts** (Former Senior Vice President of Apple Retail):

- Ahrendts has spoken about the role of self-awareness in her leadership journey, emphasizing the importance of staying true to oneself while adapting to changing circumstances. She believes that self-awareness enables leaders to lead with authenticity and empathy, fostering stronger connections with employees and customers alike.

**"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."**

**Maya Angelou**

### **Presence - The Beginning**

The degree to which we are aware of our own issues can affect our availability to listen to others. If we are unaware of our own values and feelings, it's possible to project our own values onto them, and see them through our own lens. As we are unable to truly listen to others, their needs are not heard and we cannot fully know how best to help them.

Presence is the art of being fully in the moment. It is the result of focussed attention on the inner and outer world. Presence is the very foundation of relationships and good leadership, It allows us to access the 4 keys which support connection and healthy relationships in all areas of our lives:

- Self awareness
- Self regulation
- Empathy/Engagement/Connection
- Motivation/Purpose

We spend most of our time worrying about the past or anxious about the future. We can't change the past, the only place we can affect the future from is the present. The Present is the only place we can actually ever be.

The cultivation of Presence actually creates the perception within ourselves that time slows down. Instead of reacting immediately to an external stimulus, we find that there is time to notice what is happening and choose a response that is more in line with our values.

### **Some Research into the Benefits of Presence**

The Institute of Heartmath, a globally recognised research and education organisation, has demonstrated that spending more time in a coherent and integrated (Present) state enhances positive emotions leading to:

1. Improved performance and achievement
2. More creativity and innovation
3. Better decision making
4. More flexibility in the way you think
5. Improved memory
6. Improved immunity
7. Improved hormonal balance
8. Longer life span

(The Inside Story, 2002, HeartMath LLC)

By learning to focus our attention on each moment fully, we develop the ability to observe and regulate ourselves. Research carried out by Wendy Hasenkamp Ph.D., shows that different areas of the brain are used during the four events of focussed attention. Firstly, focussing on something continuously uses one area, and then as our minds begin to wander, another part actually notices the wandering. We then use a different area of the brain to detach our mind from whatever thought has distracted us, and yet another area brings our attention back (Wendy Hasenkamp, Lawrence W Barsalou (2012) Effects of Meditation Experience on Functional Connectivity of Distributed Brain Networks).

Continued practice of Presence strengthens these neural circuits, making it easier to direct our attention over time and stay focussed on the task at hand. Our brain actually changes shape and function.

The research into Mindfulness (Presence) shows us how being fully present, or Mindful in each moment allows us to become less anxious and experience more positive emotions. The research also shows how becoming fully aware of what is happening in our body also leads to increased empathy:

It is vital as a leader to be able to show empathy for those in our team and any stakeholders we may have. It shows on a fundamental level we are able to understand what may be happening for them.

Richard Davidson and Jon Kabat-Zinn conducted the first major study into Mindfulness in a business setting. After eight weeks of attention training, participant's anxiety levels were measurably lower. Electrical activity of the participant's brains was recorded, showing significantly increased activity in areas of the brain associated with positive emotions. Increased immunity was also recorded by measurements of antibodies to the vaccine.

Also...

The Insula is an area of the brain that experiences and recognises bodily sensations. An active insula means that there is awareness of the Body. Interestingly, people with active insulae also have high levels of empathy,

Because the brain and physiology entrain themselves to others, and empathy works by physiologically mimicking the other person. A study by John Gottman and Robert Levenson found that the more self-aware we are, the more empathy we have. Bringing mindful attention (Presence) to your body is known to strengthen the insula, which in turn improves self-awareness and empathy.

(Chade-Meng Tan, Author of Search Inside Yourself, 2012)

## More on Presence

You know how you can feel energised after spending time with someone - for an unknown reason? Or conversely, how being with another person leaves you feeling drained or tired? Every interaction we have with someone else is an interplay of energy. In fact ultimately, science tells us that our very nature is energy.

These interactions take place constantly, and for most people, unconsciously. Becoming fully present in the moment, and listening to our body's unique intelligence allows us to develop moment by moment awareness of what we are doing with our own energy, and also how our energy is interacting with others.

And herein lies a magnificent empowerment tool - we can consciously choose how we want our energy to interact with others. Once we are aware of our energetic reaction to someone, we can take steps to change our reaction, if we choose. We can modulate our energy in any given situation.

As you choose to respond differently energetically, the responses of those around you will also change. As you become more and more present, your Energetic Presence will change and affect others in positive ways.



### **Exercise: Observing Thoughts**

Observe your thoughts for ten minutes, and appportion a percentage of unconscious, negative and self-sabotaging thoughts

## Focus

How much of you is actually reading the online article that is in front of you? Are you checking your emails, texts or thinking of what you feel like for lunch? Studies show that a reader's mind typically wanders between 20-40% of the time whilst reading.

*(Goleman, Focus: The Hidden Driver of Excellence, pp. 19)*

Imagine if we could focus our attention fully on what we are doing at any given moment. Full absorption in what we are doing feels good, and we enter the state of **flow** in these pleasurable moments.

Our current technological reality demands much of our attention, in a constant and unrelenting way. By choosing to focus our attention entirely on the matter at hand, we need to give up on the idea of multi-tasking. Cognitive science tells us that we are actually switching attention rapidly, which takes energy away from full concentrated engagement.

### **Multitasking is a myth.**

Better then, to dedicate chunks of time where we don't check our phones or emails, so that we can focus entirely on what we are trying to accomplish.

### **Focus and Presence go hand in hand.**

We need to develop focussed attention in order to stay present for any length of time. Conversely, by practising we are simultaneously developing focussed attention.

We focus our attention on the present moment, and inhabit our **Observer Self** in order to listen fully to ourselves and make conscious choices.



**The difference between Presence and Focus is this:** When we **focus** our attention fully on what we are doing, our brains wire themselves so that emotions do not distract us. There are 2 main varieties of distraction – sensory and emotional. Remaining focussed on one target occurs neurologically in the prefrontal regions. Circuits boost the strength of the incoming signals that we want to concentrate on, and dampens the others.

*(Goleman, Focus: The Hidden Driver of Excellence, pp. 15)*

When we are energetically **present**, we inhabit our **Observer Self** and are simultaneously aware of what we are doing, feeling, sensing and thinking. So we notice our emotions and listen to our body, heart and spirit intelligence in order to become more self-aware, emotionally intelligent and make choices aligned with our purpose and values. We need our brains to have the ability to **focus** in order to keep our attention centred in the **Observer**



### **Exercise: Observing Your Breath**

Observe and follow your breath for 5 minutes. Each time your attention wanders, bring it back gently to your breath, This exercise is literally creating new neural pathways.

## Fear and Love: Our Choice in Each Moment

Our experience as humans can be categorised in 2 ways – fear or love. Essentially you can roll up all the underlying emotions that we experience into these two categories. When we go into fear, we take on one of three roles in the drama triangle below. It is important to point out that fear is not bad, and love good – it's just what we do as humans. The purpose of this framework is to facilitate awareness that there is choice – not that one is right and one is wrong. Fear is most often chosen unconsciously. It is restrictive and reactive rather than responsive.

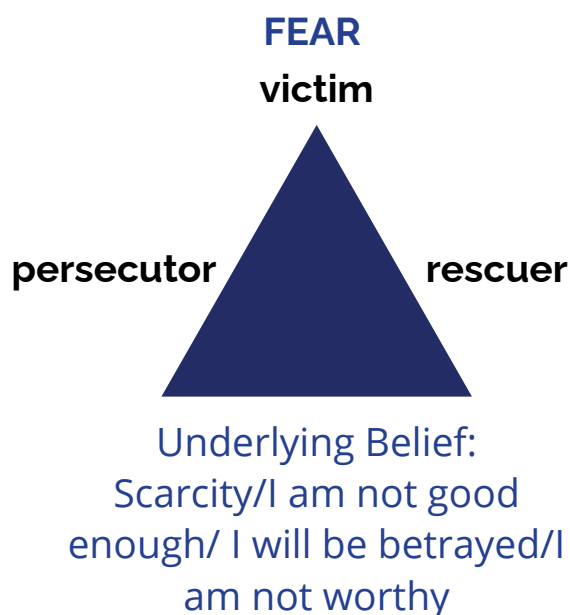
Whichever role we take on as our primary role creates disempowerment - both for ourselves and those around us. For example, if we take on the role of rescuer, then we need to find victims and persecutors to interact with. Fear creates disempowerment.

This drama triangle plays out in our external environment, and also in our internal environment. The most important area to explore is how this plays out in our internal environment – we create these 3 roles within ourselves. What we create internally is what shows up externally – this is why we begin with our internal environment.

How do we know when we are in fear? We feel it in our bodies. When we are in fear, the first thing that we do away with is empathy. The energetic signature that underlies fear is scarcity – not enough time, money, love, etc.

The underlying beliefs are:

- I am not good enough
- I will be betrayed
- I am not worthy



## Closing the Loop

Misunderstandings or unresolved issues between people can have a real effect on how people connect and collaborate in the workplace. If left unresolved it can severely affect people's level of engagement and connection. It is far better to have the conversation to clear anything that may be unresolved no matter how small.

Take some time at the end of each day to assess if there are any loops that may still be open that need to be closed. The most important reason to close the loop is that it will take a load off your mind and allow you to be present.

What closing the loop conversations can you have later today and tomorrow?



**The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers.**

**Ralph Nader**



**NOTES**

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