

# ABCs of Mindful Leadership

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## Mindfulness 101

A photograph of a large, gnarled tree with no leaves, standing on a grassy hill. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The tree is the central focus of the image.

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“Mindfulness is simply being aware of what is happening right now without wishing it were different; enjoying the pleasant without holding on when it changes (which it will); being with the unpleasant without fearing it will always be this way (which it won’t).” – James Baraz

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“Mindfulness has never met a cognition it didn't like.”  
— Daniel J. Siegel, MD

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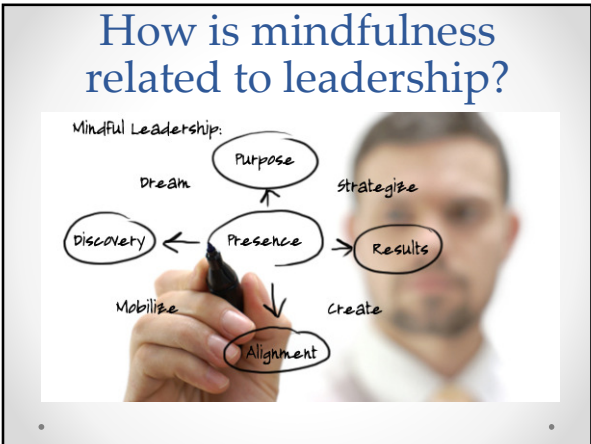
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## Mindful Purpose

The diagram for 'Mindful Purpose' features a central large oval labeled 'Inherited Leadership Wisdom'. To its left is a smaller circle labeled 'Heart to Wisdom'. To the right of the central oval are three stacked ovals, each containing the labels 'Leaders', 'Attributes', and 'Advice'.

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## Focused Vision

- Accepting, curious, and humble
- Masters of change
- Authenticity
- Creativity

A photograph of two green street signs on a black pole. The top sign reads 'VISION AV' and the bottom sign reads 'FUTURE ST'. The background is a blue sky with white clouds.

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## Calm, Aware, Composed

- Your own internal compass
- Respond to a situation as it arises
- Respond to reality of constant change
- Presence of mind to face a situation's reality

A photograph showing a pair of hands holding a small, round, silver compass. The hands are positioned as if presenting the compass.

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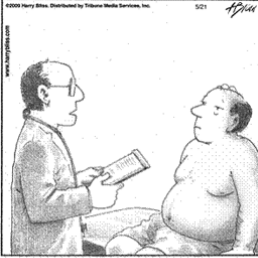
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## Clear Communication



"Well, yes, I suppose I could explain the test results in 'plain English' — but then you'd know how sick you are."

- Gifted listener
- Courageous Conversationalist

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## Inspiration

**today isn't just another day. today I'll create something beautiful.**

- A mindful leader inspires others to greatness, to achieve beyond their expectations.

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## Awaken the Intrigue



*What is intelligence?*

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*"You are your brain. If you want to understand why you feel the way you do, how you perceive the world, why you make mistakes, how you are able to be creative, why music and art are inspiring, indeed what it is to be human, then you need to understand the brain."*

Jeff Hawkins

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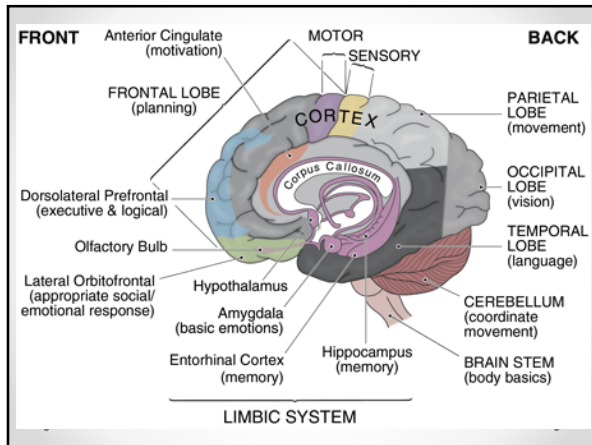
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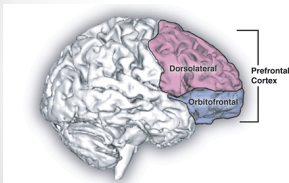
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## 9 Functions of the Prefrontal Cortex (PFC)



- Body Regulation
- Attunement
- Emotional Balance
- Response Flexibility
- Empathy
- Insight or Self-knowing Awareness
- Fear Extinction
- Intuition
- Morality

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## Ear and Nose Switch

1. Stand up.
2. Take your right hand and grab your left ear. Keep your right arm close to your body.
3. Now take your left hand and touch your nose.
4. Uncross your arms and move your left hand to your right ear and your right hand to your nose. Your left arm should now be closest to your body.
5. Switch back and forth as fast as you can.



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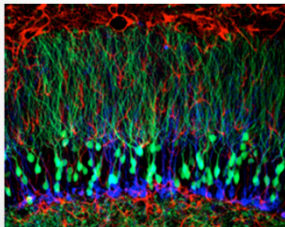
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## Neurogenesis (growth of nerve cells)



- Humans can and do learn throughout the lifespan, not just in early childhood.
- Some studies indicate that exercise or high levels of oxygenation help the survival rates of new brain cells.

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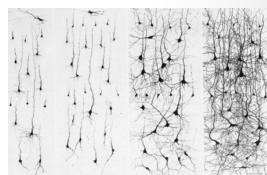
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## Neuroplasticity

- Brain's ability to change throughout life
- ALL learning is characterized by the connection of brain cells that were not previously linked.
- Brain can readjust and relocate brain functions from one area to another due to damage.



"Neurons that fire together, wire together"

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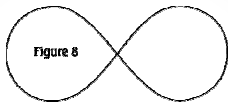
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### Brain Gym® Activity



1. Begin by swaying your body from side to side in a rhythmic motion
2. Let your arms sway too, from side to side further out than your body
3. Now stretch your hands forward in front of you and make a SIDEWAYS figure 8 or an INFINITY sign with your arms...
4. Go up and over on the right, circle down, then up and over on the left, circle down, then again up and over to the right.
5. Continue drawing sideways figure 8's in this way twisting at the waist in the direction you are reaching.

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## Build a Culture of Reflection



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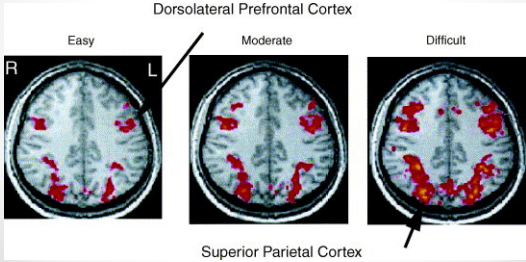
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## fMRI: Problem Solving



Dorsolateral Prefrontal Cortex

Easy Moderate Difficult

R L

Superior Parietal Cortex

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## Taking a Reflective Position



A photograph showing two hands against a white background. The hand on the left is giving a thumbs-down gesture, while the hand on the right is giving a thumbs-up gesture.

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## Visualization



A photograph of a man in a red shirt, resting his chin on his hands and looking upwards. A thought bubble above him contains the text: "I'm speaking fluently, my presentation is flowing, the audience is nodding and smiling."

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## What do these things have in common?

- Memory
- Language
- Empathy
- Collaboration
- Reasoning

**HUMANS ARE SOCIAL BEINGS**

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# Cultivate a common purpose

The diagram illustrates four types of team structures: 'hierarchical' (a top-down pyramid), 'breakthrough' (a central target with people around it), 'synchronized' (people in a line), and 'open' (a network of people). The title 'Types of Teams' is at the bottom left, and a small copyright notice is at the bottom right.

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## Table Top Scenario

- You are the superintendent of schools. Today is a Friday in early March. Several cuts in elementary, middle school, and high school teaching positions will need to be made for the next school year due to declining enrollments and a predicted drastic reduction in state aid.
- You have decided to meet individually with each of the least senior teachers to inform them that their positions are very likely to be eliminated. The first of your meetings will be held in a few minutes with Janet Jones, the least senior elementary teacher.
- You receive a phone call from the elementary principal in the school in which Janet works. He tells you he just learned Janet's husband was informed about an hour ago that his position in a nearby manufacturing firm is being terminated and he will be let go in two weeks. As you hang up the phone, you see Janet approaching your office door.
- What will you say to her?

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## Develop Knowledge Construction

The images show four natural structures: a nautilus shell (top left), a sunflower head (top right), a pine cone (bottom left), and a snowflake (bottom right). These represent different ways of organizing and constructing knowledge.

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## Reflective Pattern-Making

Happiest Times	Analysis	Challenging Times	Analysis
Hindrances		Hindrances	
Current Hindrances/Patterns?			

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## Mindful Seeing Transition

- Find a partner
- Take notice of what they are wearing
- Turn around and change one item (remove a piece of jewelry, open a pocket, fold a pant leg, etc.)
- Turn back around and look for what is different.

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**E**motion drives attention



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Ease, Excite, Evaluate:  
Emotional Intelligence

Perception	Understanding
Reasoning	Regulating

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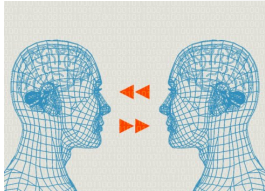
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Turn & Talk

Describe an experience where your emotions influenced the behavior of your staff.



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Focus on the BIG picture



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## Reticular Activating System aka "The Brain Regulator"



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## Your Leadership Legacy

Leader

Mindful Leadership

- a. The purpose of being a mindful leader
- b. The framework you use to cultivate knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of mindful leadership.
- c. Examples of how you apply what you know about the nature and nurture of intelligence to your everyday leadership practice
- d. Examples of how you apply what you know about the nature and nurture of intelligence as prescriptive practice in a particular system or situation
- e. How you collaborate with colleagues for the purpose of coaching each other toward greater expertise and effectiveness as mindful leaders.

Judge

Judge

Judge

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- o The purpose of being a mindful leader
- o The framework you use to cultivate knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of mindful leadership.
- o Examples of how you apply what you know about the nature and nurture of intelligence to your everyday leadership practice
- o Examples of how you apply what you know about the nature and nurture of intelligence as prescriptive practice in a particular system or situation
- o How you collaborate with colleagues for the purpose of coaching each other toward greater expertise and effect as mindful leaders.

**Cartooning the Concept**

**Describe your approach to mindful leadership through drawing yourself in a picture of your community.**

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**Please complete the session feedback survey!**

**ABCs of Mindful Leadership**

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