

EXPERT INSIGHT: Three questions to get you off the busy treadmill | [Transcript](#)

Intro:

Right now one of the biggest concerns for leaders in the social sector is the wellbeing of their staff.

From Pro Bono News and Top Five Movement, this is the Leading Generous Teams podcast and I'm Clare Desira.

As the founder of the Top Five Movement, I've worked with thousands of leaders across 40 countries and I've seen how challenging it is to lead teams at the best of times, let alone right now.

COVID-19 has had a seismic impact on the social sector, and this is taking its toll on the people working in it.

So this show is dedicated to you, generous leaders who recognise that the resilience, mindset and mental health of your teams has never been more important.

Hit subscribe now to never miss an episode.

And if you can't wait to start building your team's resilience with our free tools, head to www.topfive-movement.com/tools to get started.

And of course, for all of your social sector news head on over to www.probonoaustralia.com.au.

Clare Desira: Hello, and welcome to another bonus episode of Leading Generous Teams. These episodes are designed to bring you some expert insights and expand on the conversations that we're having with our other generous leaders around mindset, resilience, and wellbeing. We aim to leave you with some extra tips that you can try yourself, and of course, with your teams as well.

Today I want to talk about when we're stuck, sometimes when we don't even realise. One of my earliest pandemic memories, what a weird way to start a sentence, but it's true. One of my earliest pandemic memories was one night, mid-March when I was up late watching the news. And a psychologist was going to be coming up and talking about our initial response to all of this uncertainty and change.

Now mindset around change is one of our specialties and obsessions at Top Five, so naturally I was glued to the TV with my notepad and pen ready. I remember it very clearly. I was sitting there waiting for the other news updates to roll on through when the reporter made a massive mistake. Here at a time when people needed the latest news more than ever, he started to share old updates. I felt so sorry for him. Here he was, caught out in his own form of corona-chaos, and in a very public way. I was thinking, is this going to be a career ending move? Of course it shouldn't be, but with social media as rife as it is these days, and the other news stations would have loved the chance to jump on

someone else's mistake.

The breaking news was that Tom Hanks has coronavirus. Now I'd heard it five days before. Here I was thinking that this reporter would probably become a meme for making this mistake, and then I realised, I should be the meme. A meme of someone crazily pushing refresh on their phone screen as they were desperately seeking an update, because it was actually fresh news from that day. But I'd fallen into the news treadmill so badly it had felt like I'd actually read a week of news since I'd heard that update.

That news treadmill for me looked a little bit like this, scrolling and feasting on the news, then feeling in control and a little bit strangely satisfied, so I would stop consuming the news for a while. Then that sense of control and satisfaction would start to phase, and I'd be back with my phone in hand, and hello, Google, my old friend. That was the cycle. Feasting on news, feeling in control, stop consuming, that control fades, and then back into it again. Because if I didn't know what was going on in the world, how could I possibly feel prepared, ready, or even safe?

For me it's a little bit like a sugar rush, and I don't know if anybody can relate to this. We'll eat lots of chocolate, momentary feeling of joy, that small feeling of satisfaction. Then that sugar rush dies down, and you get on the hunt for more chocolate, usually with a bit of anger in that hunt as well. Maybe that's just me. When we learn ways to think differently, though, and identify these patterns, we can actually interrupt and disrupt these unhelpful cycles, and really more clearly understand what it is that we need.

Because let's be honest, amongst the unfolding corona news updates, I didn't actually need more news, I needed to take a breath and buy some time and ask myself a few questions. Questions like, what is the feeling I'm looking for here? What is it that I really need? And how can I get it in other ways? Because when I really did this, I took that breath and I stepped back and I thought about it, the feeling I was looking for was strength. I most wanted to feel strong. Strong like I could handle what happened next, and could support others around me that were trying their hardest, but maybe still either in that sugar rush, or still stuck in their own ways.

And feeling stronger within myself was never going to be fuelled by celebrity news or more Tim Tams. It was always going to be fuelled by taking action around things that are within my control. For me this includes my habits, like writing a top five list every day of the small wins that happen. The small wins, the kindness you see, the generosity you experience, the relief around things that didn't happen.

It was going to be taking actions like looking after myself, my self care, moving my body, breathing, really activating and leveraging my nervous system as well as I possibly could. I was going to feel stronger by actually thinking, taking a breath and thinking about my loved ones beyond me, and checking in on them. And of course not thinking positive thoughts, because we don't believe in those, but thinking the most helpful, encouraging, and productive thoughts that I possibly could. When you're in a spin, or you're trying to navigate change, welcome to adult life.

It's so easy to diss the basics, and as humans, we love shiny new things. We love new things, or the idea or the promise of a new thing. Get this, and then we'll be happier. And every time we do this, we dismiss the basics, even when they're proven and tested, and we know they good for us. They can

just feel so boring sometimes.

At Top Five, we're not called the most refreshing take on mindset and resilience for no reason. We love to take boring, old ideas, and the tried and tested science, and really bring it to life. We support teams who identify these unhelpful patterns and thought loops and outdated stories that could be driving fear, uncertainty, and doubt. We love sharing practical ideas to build more proactive and encouraging cultures, and show people how easy it can be to actually retrain and rewire your brain to be able to thrive during change and uncertain times.

Next time you're in a spin or you catch yourself on that treadmill, it could be you or your team, and it might be a loop around maybe feeling resistant or cynical about change, or getting yourself in a spin around a tricky stakeholder that you always have a big mental run-up before contacting them. It could be around performance, or even about not being able to switch off at night. Then I want you to try this. First take five deep breaths. Now I know you might be thinking, I don't have time for these, or what can five deep breaths really do? It can actually help reset the state of your autonomic nervous system so that you go from a red zone to a green zone, or an alert state into a rest and recharge state.

So take five deep breaths, more if you can, and ask yourself these three questions. What is the feeling I'm looking for? What is the feeling I'm looking for? Is it relief, confidence, freedom, happiness, peace, joy, focus. What is it that you're looking for when it comes to a feeling? The second question is, what do you need right now? What is it that you need? And the third is, how can I get it in the most helpful ways? How can you access that feeling as many ways as you possibly can?

If your team is stuck struggling, or needing some extra support for a mindset reboot, I'd be so happy to have a chat with you about the potential thought loops they might be stuck in, and tools or strategies to help disrupt those. And actually in the show notes, I'll include a link where you can book some time directly in my diary if you want to have a chat. Don't hold back, let's actually get your team unstuck and get them moving. And if you're listening to this for you, then take care, take some deep breaths, watch out for those thoughts cycles, and slow down long enough to ask yourself what you need. It could be the most important question you ask this year. I'm pretty sure you know what it is that you need, and I'm absolutely sure that it's not another Tom Hanks update.

That's all from us this week at Leading Generous Teams. We'll be back next week, look out for our next CEO interview next Tuesday. It's a very special one with an incredible woman, an accidental activist, and I know you're going to love it. So keep an eye out for it, we cannot wait to share it with you.

Clare Desira: As we wrap, I want to say a big thank you to all of the generous leaders and their teams out there, making a difference in our world, especially right now.

I'd like to say thank you to the people of the Kulin nation, from the Country where this podcast is produced, and of course I want to say thank you to you, our listeners.

Be sure to subscribe to the podcast and never miss an episode and if you're looking for some tools to get started with straight away, we've got some for you. Head over to topfivemovement.com/tools. For the latest social sector news, head over to probonoaustralia.com.au.

LEADING GENEROUS TEAMS

HOSTED BY CLARE DESIRA

And for now, we're wishing you the strongest mental health mindset and resilience as you head into the rest of your day. Have a good one.