



the toolkit...

the
**MINDFUL
LEADERSHIP**
FOUNDATION

Welcome

the Mindful Leadership Foundation has developed a range of tools over the last 10 years. Many hundreds of clients have found them useful in the process of understanding who they are, where they have come from, what has informed their patterns of behaviour, thinking, feeling, doing and leading.

The tools aim to help you to find out more about yourself in order that you can healthily and mindfully chose the best, most sustainable, way of being as a leader in a complex world.

As part of our tenth anniversary we are publishing some of these tools so that you can try them for yourself.



half full...

Last thing at night simply list what have been the best 10 things about the day.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____
- 10 _____

Then just ask yourself some questions:

- 1 How easy were they to find? Were my criteria too high to name 10 good things?
- 2 What are the categories and themes? (Loved ones, natural world, something done well, values met, gratitude, sensory etc.).
- 3 Reflect on whether there is enough of these things in your life.
- 4 Decide how you can increase their presence.
- 5 Think about how you can turn your attention to what is good in your life tomorrow.
- 6 Think about how you can change your attitude to what is challenging and difficult in order to find the good in it.

commentary

The field of Positive Psychology, pioneered by Seligman (Authentic Happiness, 2003, 2004, 2011) had solid evidence for the impact of this tool. Initially it was thought that completing the exercise daily leading to you having 70 things at the end of the week was the best way to complete it. There has been evidence more recently (Lyobimirsky, 2007, 2010, 29013) that it is better once a week.

For me it comes from the inspirational work of Victor Frankl, (Man's Search for Meaning, 1946/2004) the Austrian psychiatrist, who was imprisoned in Auschwitz. He observed that the one thing that helped those in extremis was their attitude to the oppressor. To oversimplify, he said that your agency was vital, when stripped of any control of what was happening, all you had was the thoughts you had and whether you conceded your power to the other.

The latest neuroscience also shows (Bloom, The Endorphin Effect 2011) that serotonin the x neurotransmitter that brings softening of tissues can be increased by gently turning our attention to what is pleasant and good (see William's tool Strawberries).

As Barbara Ehrenreich points out beautifully (Smile or Die 2010) there is a danger that this can lead to an inauthentic positivity. This is not the aim of this tool. We are keen to encourage you simply to turn your attention to what is good so that you notice it and not simply to dwell in what is going wrong. Be mindful in the moment. Accept what you can change. There is of course merit too in looking at some thing that hasn't gone well in your life and trying to identify what good has come out of it.

So in summary. Notice. Turn Up. Be Present. Don't let the good stuff pass you by.