

ENGAGEMENT

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Relationship-Based
Practices II



ENGAGEMENT

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“When people talk, listen completely. Most people never listen.”

Ernest Hemingway

Reflection

Really listening can be difficult, particularly if someone is talking about a painful topic. Hearing traumatic stories from people every day also makes listening hard, yet everyone needs to be heard—including you.

Action

Set aside ten minutes each day to listen to your own thoughts. This can be during your commute or at the end of the day. If it helps, write your thoughts in a journal. Guard this time religiously. These may be the most important minutes in your day.

ENGAGEMENT

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Mind

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“Pain is something that’s common to human life. When we ignore it, we aren’t engaging in the whole reality, and the pain begins to fester.”

Karen Armstrong

Reflection

Engaging in conversations about painful topics can be a delicate process. Still, attempting discussions about difficult issues before a relationship is established can close the door to meaningful conversations.

Action

List three pieces of evidence you use to gauge whether a relationship is solid. Compare notes with a partner. How many of your senses did you think of using to measure relationships?

ENVIRONMENT

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ENVIRONMENT

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“If you are what you eat, you are what you see and hear.”

E.A. Bucchianeri

Reflection

This suggests that everything around us influences who we are. Do you agree? Do you think it's possible to block out aspects of our surroundings? Do we pay a price for doing that? For not doing it?

Action

How would you describe the “emotional weather” of your last week? Were all the days sunny or cloudy? Are there severe weather warnings on the horizon? How has your mood been influenced by those around you? Has your mood affected your work, family, or friends?

ENVIRONMENT 4



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ENVIRONMENT

Mind

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Heart

Soul

“A very large percentage of illnesses are the expressions of inadequate responses to the environment.”

René Dubos

Reflection

Research continues to show the negative effects of stress, particularly high levels of chronic stress. What evidence do you see for this in your life and in the lives of those you work with?

Action

On a ten-point scale, rate the average stress level of your work. What was the level last week? Compare that rating with the “emotional weather” of the last week.

EMPATHY

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Relationship-Based
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EMPATHY

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care.”

Theodore Roosevelt

Reflection

Think of a time that someone offered you unsolicited advice. Did you feel as if that person understood you? Did it come from someone close, or someone you didn't know very well? Do you think that matters?

Action

Write a piece of advice you'd give to a friend, and one you'd give to a stranger. How would you feel if someone gave that advice to you?

EMPATHY

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Relationship-Based
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EMPATHY

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“We think we are being interesting to others when we are being interesting to ourselves.”

Jack Gardner

Reflection

Remember a time that you felt forced to listen to someone that you didn't find at all interesting. Was there something that could have made you feel more engaged? Have you ever been in the other seat? What did you notice that made you think the other person just wasn't interested in what you were saying?

Action

Imagine writing a note or having a conversation with that person about how you felt. Is that advice that you could also give yourself?

EGOCENTRISM

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Relationship-Based
Practices II



EGOCENTRISM

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“You are so busy being you that you have no idea how utterly unprecedented you are.”

John Green

Reflection

How often do you stop to think about who you are right now? Is your work building your self-confidence and supporting your self-esteem? If not, do you think that influences the quality of your work? If so, how does it make a difference in what you do?

Action

Make a list of how work lowers your self-confidence or self-esteem. Make another list of factors that build or support them. Talk with a partner about how to reduce the negative influences and increase the positive. Is this the basis for an action plan?

EGOCENTRISM

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EGOCENTRISM

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“I think the reward for conformity is that everyone likes you except yourself.”

Rita Mae Brown

Reflection

Does your work call on you to make people different—better behaved, or more self-aware, for example?

When we try to help people change, do we give the message that they aren't likable the way they are?

Action

Think of ways that you appreciate being recognized for being yourself. Do you do the same for those you care for? If not, list three ways you could build that into your daily interactions. Do you think this might strengthen your relationships?

ENTHUSIASM

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ENTHUSIASM

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Some days there won’t be a song in your heart. Sing anyway.”

Emory Austin

Reflection

When people depend on us—children, students, or clients—do you think we should act as if things are okay even if they aren’t? What price do we—or they—pay for our “singing a happy song,” even when we don’t feel like it? Is there anything we or they gain?

Action

Divide a paper into columns. In the first list times in the last month that you’ve had “a song in your heart.” In the next, list times that it was hard to “sing.” In the third, list any times when singing was just not possible.

ENTHUSIASM 10



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ENTHUSIASM

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Help someone—you earn a friend. Help someone too much—you make an enemy.”

Erol Ozan

Reflection

Do you agree that people tend to like those who help them? How does it feel if someone you don't like offers help? Does it feel uncomfortable to be grateful?

Action

Talk with a colleague about a time—imagined or real—when you were asked for more help than you wanted to give or helped more than you thought you should. What contributed to that? If situations like that come up in your work, how can you change them?

EVIDENCE

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EVIDENCE

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Observations open the windows of knowledge around us.”

Sukant Ratnakar

Reflection

Do you prefer to collect evidence about best practices by reading, talking with coworkers, observing, or in some other way? What are advantages and drawbacks of each?

Action

Think of a challenge you are currently facing and the kind of information you need to address it. What's your best source for that information? Can your observations help you meet the challenge, even if you also want to go to other sources?

EVIDENCE

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EVIDENCE

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“The thing is, it’s very dangerous to have a fixed idea. A person with a fixed idea will always find some way of convincing himself in the end that he is right.”

Atle Selberg

Reflection

Why is it hard to give up ideas in the face of evidence that our beliefs are incorrect? Have you tried to change someone’s mind who wouldn’t think of different views? Do you have ideas you can’t imagine changing?

Action

Imagine that you are giving a lecture on a topic that you believe in passionately. Make a list of the points that people in the audience might raise to prove your ideas wrong. Do you have good answers for them?

ENDURANCE 13



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ENDURANCE

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Sometimes there’s a better way. Sometimes there’s only the hard way.”

Mary E. Pearson

Reflection

Shortcuts can be seductive, especially at the end of a long day or if it seems there is more work than you can possibly finish. When did a shortcut made your life simpler? What about a time that trying to find an easier way made things more difficult in the end?

Action

Locate an area on a map you would like to visit that is close to work. Trace the most direct route. Find another route that would take about twice as long. Look at what you’ll see on the longer route.

ENDURANCE 14



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Practices II



ENDURANCE

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Scars are not signs of weakness. They are signs of survival and endurance.”

Rodney A. Winters

Reflection

If an emotional experience scars you, does it feel as if you lost the fight? Do you have any scars you see as a sign of strength? Are there ideas that you would fight for, knowing that you might end up hurt or scarred?

Action

Imagine that you have been asked to participate in a rally or protest march that might draw hecklers. List the points you would consider in deciding whether or not to join. If you had the idea that the event might turn violent, would that change the list?

EXTENDING

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es II



EXTENDING

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“I may not always be with you/But when we’re far apart/Remember you will be with me/Right inside my heart.”

Marc Wambolt

Reflection

Do interactions with others help fill our emotional reservoirs and deepen our relationships? How do we keep those we care about in our hearts when we aren’t with them? Do you think that absence makes the heart grow fonder?

Action

Think of someone you remember fondly from a long time ago. Jot down a few things you remember about that person. Are those the things that have kept that person in your heart during the absence?

EXTENDING

16



tic s d
es II



EXTENDING

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“We all take different paths in life, but no matter where we go, we take a little of each other everywhere.”

Tim McGraw

Reflection

If you carry good relationships with you, do you also carry some that you'd like to leave behind? What do you think makes it hard to let go of painful memories?

Action

Think of someone whose memory you would like to leave behind. Write a list of words about that person. Cut that list into small pieces and toss them into the wind, bury them, or throw them in the trash. Talk with someone about how you feel afterwards.