

NAWO Event: Leading Courageously 9 February 2021

– additional questions answered by Rebecca Hopkins

*Can you please rehash Brene's definition of leadership please?*

A Leader is anyone who takes responsibility for finding the potential in people and processes and has the courage to develop that potential.

Leadership is not about titles or the corner office. It's about the willingness to step up, put yourself out there, and lean into courage. The world is desperate for braver leaders. It's time for all of us to step up.

*What is your tips or processes when entering in the arena?*

The most important thing to take into the arena is clarity of your values and the skillset of self-compassion. See Kristin Neff's work on self-compassion <https://self-compassion.org> You will need those two things when you find yourself face down! That plus having someone in your support seats who can practice empathy.

*How brave leaders are different to leaders? Just went through a leadership course and the skillsets were very similar to those just described*

It's difficult to comment without knowing the content of the other programs but what I do know that in my 23 years of leadership and the countless trainings I experienced in my career, this is unlike anything else. This is deep, transformational work and when integrated will not only change how you lead, but how you parent, partner, live and love.

*Other than modelling in the 7 elements of trust in your behaviour are there any other tips? It can be hard to get a team to trust you esp if you are new in an org in a leadership position particularly if there has been turmoil before you have joined the business.*

Yes, agree it can be really hard. Listening and empathy are two of the most foundational expressions of trust we can practice. Listening with curiosity and not needing to have all the answers, especially when new to an organisation can really build trust. Here is a short video of Brené talking through the attributes of empathy <https://youtu.be/1Ewgu369Jw>

*How can you cope when your personal values are quite different from your company's or colleagues' values? apart from quitting your job*

A beautiful question to ask when you have a clash of values with another person is how can you both get what you need? Versus how can I get my values met at the expense of yours? And with the organisation a good question to reflect on is how can I live my values at work while still honouring the values of the company?

*Is leadership different in the virtual world*

I think the fundamentals are still the same, and it also requires a different level of attention to connection. There are less opportunities for the small non-work conversations in person that build trust, so we have to really focus on making time to build trust and safety when we aren't seeing each other in person.

*How about creating a story but assuming positive intent, and waiting until we can find out more? For example, creating the story that the person was late because they were stuck in traffic (rather than creating the story that they were late because they don't think this meeting is important)*

Yes, yes and yes!! The power of positive intent. It is still a story that needs clarifying but it isn't one that is going to lead you to treat someone in a way that is unfair or unjust. If we are going to make up stories, let's make ones based on the power of positive intent.

*How do you lead a team member who is negative and argumentative? especially when this person is not reporting to you.*

I think context matters here and the strength of the relationship you have with this person. If they are open to it, having a clear and kind conversation with them about the impact of their behaviour could be a good place to start. It's a tough conversation that requires preparation and permission! Don't spring it on them, make a time and private space to discuss the impact on yourself. Talk about specific observable behaviours, (what you are seeing, hearing or reading) not general vague statements. eg not saying things like "your negativity is impacting the team" but being more clear about the specific events and behaviours that you are observing and what you would love from them instead. This is tough!

*My daughter is 9. Tips for priming her on brave leadership?*

Love this question!! Here is a brilliant resource that I use with my kids, it's free and there is lots in there to choose from including emotional intelligence, managing anxiety and getting to know herself better. <https://shop.e2epublishing.info/collections/new/products/back-to-school-pack> Also two things that I think are amazing at this age are helping her to get clear on her core values and the skillset of self-compassion. See Kristin Neff's work on self-compassion <https://self-compassion.org>

*In regards to tough conversation what happens if you automatically struggle with high anxiety and find it hard to speak in general.*

Tough conversations take a lot of emotional labour, which is why most people avoid them. And if you add to this anxiety that is already present, this can be overwhelming. Before the conversation, preparation is key to lowering anxiety. And also giving yourself permission to make mistakes and permission to be honest about how hard the conversation is while you are in it. Role play with someone you trust beforehand so you can practice, this will build your confidence. During the conversation, focusing on safety above all else is crucial and breathing! You can also take notes in to help. Hope this helps!