

## Hiding in Plain Sight – curated resources to support, stretch, nurture, encourage and challenge you...so read, listen, reflect and enjoy.

*'To let ourselves be seen, deeply seen, vulnerably seen...even though there's no guarantee is really hard'* (Brene Brown)

### Read and reflect:

- Covering:

Covering here refers to how we minimise or hide parts of ourselves, in order to stand out less. Here's the quick read infographic:

<https://www2.deloitte.com/.../us-leadership-for-inclusion...>

The full report is a bit more of a trudge but if you want to know more, here it is:

<https://www2.deloitte.com/.../us-about-deloitte...>

- Be kinder to yourself by Alice Boyes, HBR, January 2021

<https://hbr.org/2021/01/be-kinder-to-yourself>

Promotes talking to yourself with compassion because often we're our own worst critic. When we feel anxious or frustrated, so many of us talk to ourselves more harshly than we'd ever talk to our friends or colleagues. *'I blew that presentation. Everyone on my team has such strong technical skills, and I can't follow the conversation. My children are going to be so mad at me for working late again.* When you beat yourself up like this, you're only limiting your potential. Practice compassionate self-talk instead. Here are four key elements to keep in mind:

- Use a tone of kindness in your inner monologue. When you're being mean to yourself, ask, "Would I speak to my best friend this way?"
- Recognize that pain and failure are universal human experiences. You're not alone in feeling this way.
- Take a balanced approach to your negative emotions that neither suppresses nor exaggerates them. Acknowledge them for what they are.
- Know that you're making the best decisions you can, even if they're not perfect.

Try:

- Gentle and supportive nudges: *'what do I need right now?'*
- Reducing anxiety by telling yourself: *'trust the process for a while'*
- Help yourself face the fear and get started: *'not starting because you're anxious is understandable, you want the task to be perfect and the best way is to chip away at it, just have a go, it doesn't have to be instantly right, just something to work on'*
- Don't feel you have to work solo: *'I don't have to get everything right all on my own. I can use other perspectives. That's how great work happens'*

Talking to yourself with compassion and kindness grows strength to help you manage the challenging situations that you'll inevitably face in your personal and professional lives.

- Does Jacinda Adern's approach provide any learning points?....And anyway, it's not often you get to see 'Vogue' on a reading list!

<https://www.vogue.co.uk/news/article/jacinda-ardern-leadership-style>

This article describes Jacinda Adern's values and approach as built on and driven by:

- Kindness – in the face of global challenges kindness, empathy and warmth are the qualities we need the most
- Authenticity – she's consistent, concise and direct about her strategy **and** open and honest about her concerns
- Purpose – acts decisively and swiftly **and** effectively communicates the thinking behind her actions
- Believing **and** behaving – promoting and achieving gender equality is important to her
- Systems leadership – recognises her country is small but understands the bigger picture responsibility to contribute, '*lead the charge*', to the global battle against the climate crisis
- Listens to and learns from children – their well-being is our now and our future

So, what about you? What matters? What's in your core, your DNA? Do you have the courage to uncover and be you?

In another article:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/coronavirus-new-zealand-jacinda-ardern-cases-deaths-leadership-a9460591.html>

The attributes highlighted about her are she's:

- Focused on the human as well as the economic consequences
- Conducted a masterclass in real time in crisis communications:
  - '*We go hard, we go early*'
  - '*We only have 102 cases – but so did Italy once*'
- Calm, authoritative and friendly:
  - '*Be strong, be kind, and unite against Covid 19*'
  - '*We'll do everything we can to protect you: I'm asking you to do all you can to protect all of us*'
- Ensured the tooth fairy and the Easter bunny were deemed keyworkers!

So what's your learning about just being you and telling it how it is?

- Letting go:

Safire Rose nails this concept in her short poem, 'Letting Go'

<https://safire-rose.com/books-and-media/poetry/she-let-go>

Read and ask is this a strategy for you to use:

*'She let go of all the anxiety that kept her from moving forward*

*She let go of the planning and all of the calculations about how to do it just right....*

*In the space of letting go, she let it all be'*

- And something to watch and read, Amanda Gorman talking with Michelle Obama:

<https://time.com/5933596/amanda-gorman-michelle-obama-interview/>

If you haven't heard 22 year old Amanda Gorman read her poem 'The Hill we Climb' at the recent Presidential Inauguration, then take a couple of minutes to do so – does the ending speak to you?

*'For there is always light,*

*if only we're brave enough to see it.*

*If only we're brave enough to be it'*

In the article Amanda and Michelle talk about art, identity and optimism, scroll through towards the end and home in on their discussion about not feeling good enough to be themselves...and how both deal with it: *'I'm learning 'no' is a complete sentence. And I'm reminding myself that this isn't a competition...'*

### **Short videos and podcasts to listen and think about what speaks to you**

- Dare to Disagree - Margaret Heffernan (2012):

[https://www.ted.com/talks/margaret\\_heffernan\\_dare\\_to\\_disagree?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/margaret_heffernan_dare_to_disagree?language=en)

Use 12.56 minutes and listen to Margaret Heffernan's Ted talk. Phrases that might resonate and encourage: *'best partners aren't echo chambers'*. Her other works include 'Beyond Measure: the big impact of small changes' where she makes the powerful point that *'supplying answers shuts a conversation down... but asking questions, as a way of solving the problem, implies confidence.'*

- It's ok to feel and be vulnerable ...and not everything (or everyone) is neat, tidy and perfect:

Listen to Brene Brown on The Power of Vulnerability (TEDx Houston)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/brene\\_brown\\_the\\_power\\_of\\_vulnerability?utm\\_source=tedcomshare&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=tedsread](https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_the_power_of_vulnerability?utm_source=tedcomshare&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=tedsread)

Think about how her insights might apply to you, *'And so these folk had, very simply, the courage to be imperfect. They had the compassion to be kind to themselves first and then to others, because, as it turns out, we can't practice compassion with other people if we can't treat ourselves kindly....they were willing to let go of who they thought they should be in order to be who they were, which you absolutely have to do...To let ourselves be seen, deeply seen, vulnerably seen...even though there's no guarantee is really hard. And the last, which I think is really important, is to believe that we're enough.'*

- A different perspective and approach to being you:

Why you should not bring your authentic self to work – Jodi-Ann Burey, TEDxSeattle December 2020

[https://www.ted.com/talks/jodi\\_ann\\_burey\\_why\\_you\\_should\\_not\\_bring\\_your\\_authentic\\_self\\_to\\_work](https://www.ted.com/talks/jodi_ann_burey_why_you_should_not_bring_your_authentic_self_to_work)

Bringing your whole self to work and just 'be yourself' is a myth, a trap, the bigger challenge is to tackle systemic racism because *'it's much easier to be who you are, when who you are is all around you'* and *'we cannot compete in a costume contest without a costume and expect to win'*.

Does this fire you up and speak to who and how you want to be?

- I feel like I don't deserve my success

Is that you? Listen to this recent video by Medhavi Arora, Shaad Midhat and Saraskanth TK, who speak powerfully about what's it like to live with the feeling that despite your achievements you're not enough? How do you cope with the voice in your head that keeps holding you back?

A social media influencer and a corporate professional share their stories of overcoming impostor syndrome in India, a country where it is often seen as "taboo" to seek help:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-55770991>

What works for them is having the courage to both reach out and give help. Is that something you can do?

- What about when you can't see either the wood or the trees and even the sky and sea seem the same:

Try a swift dip into 'From the Swamp to the High Ground':

<https://thestaffcollege.uk/multimedia/from-the-swamp-to-the-high-ground/>

It's a quick video (under 5 minutes) on leading when you don't know what to do or where to go.....and everyone is looking to you for direction.

- What resonated with you?
  - What might you take away and do differently?
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- 'If we can't see a problem, we can't fix a problem'

Want to know more about this? Try listening to Kimberle Crenshaw in her 2016 TED talk, 'The Urgency of Intersectionality':

[https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle\\_crenshaw\\_the\\_urgency\\_of\\_intersectionality?utm\\_source=tedcomshare&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=tedsread](https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality?utm_source=tedcomshare&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=tedsread)

She's insightful and thoughtful about needing to find new inclusive frames to think about people and issues when available frames don't work or fit.

Does that speak to you?

### **Blogs that may resonate and prompt action**

- Creating space for compassion, empathy and learning - Sam Allen, Kings Fund August 2020

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/creating-space-compassion-empathy-learning>

Teases out the learning from leading in a crisis which can demand and value confidence, grip, strength and so on and argues we also need a different leadership approach which promotes a safe and compassionate culture and a workplace where employees can be their authentic selves. A leadership which is empathetic, values humility, creates a genuine desire to learn from experience and feedback, and practices a willingness to accept other viewpoints.

Can you be that person with those skills to model what this means to and for others right now?

- And 3 simple promises to make to yourself?

This tip is adapted from "[This Two-Minute Morning Practice Will Make Your Day Better](#)," by Neil Pasricha, HBR February 2021

Nearly two years into the pandemic, it can be hard to muster the positive outlook that fuels motivation and creativity. When we lose that positivity, burnout and fatigue can quickly follow. How can you inject some hope and optimism into your day? This might help. Every day, finish the following three sentences (could be out loud or in your head) before you start your tasks whatever they are:

- *Today, I will focus on \_\_\_\_\_*
- *Today, I am grateful for \_\_\_\_\_*
- *Today, I will let go of \_\_\_\_\_*

Be specific with your answers, but since we're only awake for an average of 1,000 minutes each day, if we can invest just two of them to focus on hope and positive possibilities, then you'll be helping ensure the quality of your other 998 minutes.

Rose 2021