TRANSCRIPT DOWNLOAD

LEADING CHANGE WITH YOUR TEAM

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Hello, my friends. How are you doing? Are you keeping your spirits up? Are you keeping your mind in check? Are you aware of how your thinking is driving how you're feeling right now? Today's episode is going to be a quick and dirty one. I'm trying to get as many episodes out as I can this week to help you help yourselves, help your team, help your family, and help anyone who depends on you manage their mindset through the time when we're dealing with this circumstance of Coronavirus.

It's easy to think there are a lot of challenges associated with what's going on right now. Really, a lot of those 'challenges' are simply things that are circumstances that we can't control and we think of them as challenges. There's a lot of change being thrown at us. We can decide that that change is hard or we can decide that that change is an opportunity. We can decide that that change is going to be okay and we can decide how we want that change to affect us.

I know many of you in my audience are people who are leading teams, are part of teams, and work with other people. As long as you work with one other person, there's an opportunity there for you to be a leader. I really am encouraging everyone to take the time and think about how they are showing up. How are you showing up for yourself and the people around you? Because how you show up can set the tone.

I spend a lot of time on LinkedIn and I've been reading a lot of stuff in there. There are some very angry people, some very negative people, and some very inspirational people. My inbox, I don't know about yours, but my inbox is just getting filled up with companies who are giving breaks to people, who are trying to help people through this difficult financial time, who are offering advice on how to think and how to show up and how to keep yourself calm and keep your mental health strong through this time. And I really appreciate that.

It's tough to be isolated. It's tough to just hang out with my husband in the house all day long. You think that would be easy, but it's not always the easy thing to do. It's tough to have to cancel things that I had planned. It's tough for all of us. We all have things that we are finding, I shouldn't even say it's tough. It's a circumstance that I actually choose to think, okay, there's an opportunity here. I can get a lot of work done, I can do more podcasts, I can help more people, and I can offer free sessions if people need to get their minds sorted.

So my very first challenge for you guys is to really think through how you can help. How you can help yourself, clean up your mindset, and focus on showing up in a way that serves yourself and the people around you.

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Today, I want to talk about something that probably a lot of you are dealing with and that is managing your team through change. Because that's what this is. It's just a bunch of change being thrown at us all at the same time. And you already know how to deal with change, probably because you've probably dealt with a lot of different change circumstances in your job over the course of your career. This is no different. It feels bigger because there's the world involved in this change, not just your group or your department. But it's still people feeling uncertain about what's going to happen next. As leaders, we can help them through that.

Today, I'm going to go through a few things that you can do with your team. Standard change management stuff that I am customizing for the circumstances that we're dealing with right now. And the very first one I want to talk to you about is cleaning up your own mind first before you can be there for your team.

You have to be there for yourself. I urge you to do a thought download of all the stuff that's going on in your mind and all the thoughts that are going on in your mind about what's happening with COVID-19. Then what kind of feelings are those thoughts driving? Is that really how you want to feel? Are those things really things you want to think? Take a look at that list and decide if those thoughts are serving you. Are those thoughts helping you move through and move forward through everything that's going on around us?

I said earlier this week as well that life coaching is what everyone really needs right now. And really, life coaching is someone who holds up a mirror and helps you see how your thinking is driving how you're showing up. Life coaches are someone who helps you manage your mindset because your mindset is really the biggest part of getting results at work, showing up productively, and achieving everything that you want. I'm a life coach first, I know, I call myself a career coach.

First and foremost, I'm a life coach because I help people with the mindset piece. Then I also bring in the technical side of how to put together a really solid career management plan. When you're putting the mental and emotional aspects together with the technical aspect of managing your career, that's when you can be really successful. I want you to think about that as you're thinking about how to lead your team through this process. It's going to be a mix of mental and emotional management, as well as the technical part of helping them move through this process.

So many people want to just get to the technical part, take everything off their checklist, have a meeting with a team, and tell them what's going to happen next. How are you helping them with their mental and emotional management? How are you helping yourself with your mental and emotional management? I want you to think about that.

The very first thing when you are managing your team through change is cleaning up your own mind first. What are you thinking mentally and emotionally? How are those thoughts driving how you are feeling about this situation? Then deciding intentionally, are those the thoughts you really want to focus on? Are those the feelings that you really want to be feeling right now?

Once you have yourself in the right space, then you want to bring the team together. You want to create an environment where the team feels safe. You want to create that psychological safety for your team. So the very first thing that you can do for your team is inform them. You want to dispel any myths that are out there about

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their current employment situation. Share facts, and keep those facts clean. Try not to add too many descriptors or emotional context to those facts.

Every little bit of texture that you add to those facts when you start to share your opinion or your thoughts and feelings about those facts, you're setting the tone for everyone on your team. Keep your thoughts clean and keep the facts clean. Let people ask questions about those facts and make sure that you're answering them as honestly as you can. Don't speak like a politician. This is not the time for spin. This is the time for open and honest dialogue.

Let them know about the decisions that you're making right now. And let them know that the decisions could change based on new news that's coming out all the time, new circumstances that are arising all the time and that you and the management team or whoever the team is that are making the decisions are going to be continuously informing them what's going on and answering any questions that they have as openly and as honestly as possible. So again, the first thing is to clean up your own mind.

Second thing. Share the facts. Dispel any myths that are out there and answer their questions. Third thing. Help your team clean up their own minds. Help them understand that. How they think about what's going on right now is going to determine how they feel. It's okay to be uncertain. Normalize it for them. It's natural to be uncertain about what's going on. But you don't have to let that uncertainty create feelings of anxiety and stress. You can say it's normal to be uncertain right now.

I'm going to make the best decisions for me and my family based on what I know right now and urge them to not make decisions based on their future selves. We don't know what's going to happen tomorrow. All we know is what we know today. Make a decision and be confident. If things change tomorrow, you can make a different decision. A lot of the time, your team is going to get wrapped up in a sense of uncertainty and be nervous and stressed about it because they don't have all the answers.

The fact is, they're not going to have all the answers. And that's okay. They can make decisions and set the direction for themselves based on what they know right now. Remind them that there's no point in judging themselves after the fact. It's easy once you have new information to go back and say, *Oh, that was such a crappy, stupid move.* But that's not fair to you because you didn't have the information that you have now. So encourage them that there's no value in judging themselves after the fact.

There's certainly no value in judging others. Everyone is doing the best that they can. The other thing you might want to remind them about is that everyone is responsible for how they show up. Blaming others for your feelings is unproductive. It's actually not really what's going on.

I was talking yesterday about being angry at the people who are partying down the road for St. Patty's Day. Blaming them and thinking about, oh, what a bunch of idiots they are. But then thinking, okay, wait a second. They are people doing their own thing. I'm getting angry about it but I'm driving my own anger. I'm responsible for how I shop, I'm responsible for what I do in my life, I'm responsible for my thoughts, I'm responsible for my feelings.

Today, my husband's sister has invited us for dinner. They've been going to the gym and working out so I'm not going to go. I've told my husband he can do what he wants, but he has to consider the consequences of what

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he's doing. I won't be able to hang out with him, let's just say that. You get to make the decisions for yourself. My husband gets to make the decision whether or not he's going to go to his sister's house for dinner. And I get to decide how I'm going to think and feel about that. I'm not going to blame my husband if he decides to go. That makes me angry because of a thought I'm having.

So it's really important to not blame others for how you're showing up and what's going on in your life. The circumstances are the circumstances and we get to decide what that means for us always. That is our superpower.

Once you've reminded folks that it's up to them how they show up and how people share their thoughts, they're not going to fully absorb the idea that they're in control of their thoughts right off the bat. That's okay. Have them share their thoughts, have them get it off their chest, and help them through it. It's totally okay for them to think and feel whatever they're thinking and feeling right now. There's nothing wrong with any of it.

The question that you can ask your team, though, is, how are those thoughts and feelings serving them? What actions are they taking from those kinds of thoughts and feelings? And are those actions actually helping them move forward? What are some other actions that they could take that could help them be more productive, or help them feel better? Sometimes, just sharing thoughts is cathartic. And it's a great way to bring the team together to support each other.

That's also part of the tone that you can set, is to say, let's help each other. Let's come from a place of compassion. Let's come from a place of generosity. Then at the very end, just ask the group how you can support them. What do they need from you? Let them know that you're there for them. Listen to how they respond, listen to what they ask for, and be there for them. The more that you can create a sense of community and support in this time of isolation, the safer everyone is going to feel. That is the way that you can really support your team and be a leader.

The one last thing I'll say to you is if there is anyone in your group who is really silent, or having a really hard time with this, you don't have to deal with it and single them out in the group if you don't want to, but don't leave them hanging. Don't leave them out there because those outliers can go one of two ways. They can really just spiral themselves down into a very unproductive place, or they can create noise within the team.

So it's really important to circle back with those people and ask them what's going on. *I noticed that you didn't say anything in the meeting. I noticed that. Tell me how you're feeling.* Just really have a conversation with them and don't let them off the hook. Remind them that they, too, are leaders in the team. Even if they don't lead people, what they do and say is so important. Everyone has a responsibility in how they're setting the tone. So make sure that those people understand their role, and that you're there for them. You're there to help them judgment-free. That's it for this episode, my friends. Like I said, down and dirty, I'll be back later this week.

In the meantime, do your best to have compassion for everyone. Not everyone is going to do things the way that you would do them. That's okay. Help yourself, clean up your own mind, and help as many people as you can feel safe. You certainly can't control how they think or feel. But you can help them by giving them ideas on the choices that they have in front of them, just like I'm doing for you right now.

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Now, one last thing I want to share with anyone. I sent this out to my mailing list. I've sent this out to my members, and I'm sending it out to my podcast listeners as well. If you need help, if you want to have a chat, if you just want to clean up your own mind and talk about it a bit, you can set up some time with me at melsavage.com/chat.

Normally those strategy sessions are about sussing out the best way to work together with people. No strings attached, no hard sell, just to have a chat. I'm happy to do that. You can book that at melsavage.com/chat. Just go there, sign up, and let's talk about what's going on with you.

That's it, my friends. Have a great week. Stay safe. Bye for now.

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