LEADERSHIP insights
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# Finding Leadership in COVID-19

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|---|---|
| C | Choose |
| O | Opportunity |
| V | Verify |
| I | Inform |
| D | Disrupt |
| 19 | minutes |

**CHOOSE.** And choose often. It is empowering to make choices. In a time when there is a lot we cannot control, we always have a choice about at least one thing: how we choose to show up. We forget that we can proactively choose this and that our response does not have to be a victim of the circumstance. Remind yourself at various times throughout the day to make these choices that matter:

- How much meaning we attach to something
- What we pay attention to
- Who we listen to
- To let go of something
- To take actions that match our intentions

**OPPORTUNITY** exists every day. Every situation presents one. Perceiving a difficulty as an opportunity is a lens. It doesn't magically turn something awful into something wonderful. What it does do, though, is allow us a path to find meaning. Author and speaker Rachel Hollis suggests an alternative to the old saying, "Everything happens for a reason." That belief can often feel unhelpful and not very accessible because there is not a sensible *reason* for bad things to happen. But she suggests that instead we search for the *meaning* that we can find in difficult times.

- What opportunities are there for you to grow, appreciate, learn, bend, feel, teach, or contribute?

**VERIFY** first. For yourself, don't believe everything that comes into your head, your news feed or the rumor mill. As a leader, ***be*** the trusted, credible resource for people who look up to you. One truth that has arisen during the current crisis is that trust in leadership is critical. People need leaders who have verified the facts, and share what is known and transparently admit to what is unknown.

**INFORM** people. Your employees want to hear from leadership. After you have verified (see above), keep people informed even if it is bad news and even if it is, "I still don't know." Tell people how you will stay in touch, how often, in what different formats, and then DO. Don't underestimate how much comfort it brings to your employees just to reach out with communication.

- A silent void will be filled and it won't be with facts.

**DISRUPT.** The virus started it, but you as a leader have a chance to initiate a ripple of intentional disruptions during this window to shape a new future. The dust won't settle in the same way. "Normal" will be different. **Make this disruption make a difference and make it better than it was**. Be a visionary and be bold. Answer the questions:

- If we are not going back to the old normal, what do we want the new normal to be?
- What are we realizing was not essential after all?
- How does leadership need to shift to meet the changed environment, and how do we prepare to make ourselves more nimble and adaptable?

**19 MINUTES.** Toward the end of my 20-minute meditation is when my monkey brain surrenders a little bit and takes a back seat. Thinking never stops exactly but anxieties and ruminations recede to the background and the repeated, calming deep breaths make their impact. It feels a little bit like a "hum" throughout the body and leaves me more ready to face whatever comes next. What comes next won't change because of meditation, but I can change the way I meet it. Access the resources available to you. We at RWHC are here to support you. This link takes you to the Institute for Zen Leadership resources to explore meditation and more: https://zenleader.global/heal-resources/.

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