

Summary of assignments from Session 4

Lunchtime every day

Self-observation 4: Growth – page 73

Practice 1: Breathing – page 14

Practice 3: Magic sprouting bean – page 76 and 77

4pm every day

Self-observation 4: Growth – page 73

8pm every evening

Reflection and journaling – go back to page 20 to refresh the purpose.

Random times

Exercise 2: Balance – pages 32 to 46 – throughout the course

Exercise 11: Session 4 Buddy – contact on Friday

Exercise 12: Read the two blogs:

Growth and personal strategy

New Growth

Read the article:

5 reasons why your company should be distributed

(see members' section of www.strategy-leadership.com)

Exercise 13: Critical questions – page 79 to 82

Exercise 14: Five beans – pages 83 and 84

Session 4

Assignments

Self-observations

The following are no longer assigned, but you should continue to reflect on these when you do your journaling:

Self-observation 1: Energy

Self-observation 2: Shining up the people

Self-observation 3: Continuously improve my product, service and the way I operate.

Between Sessions 4 and 5 please observe the following:

New

Self-observation 4: Growth

Remember to use a bean as a reflective tool

Please refer to pages 12 and 13.

Instructions

The questions this week are:

- How am I using my third VIA character strength in helping me to grow?
- What is promoting my growth?
- What is holding me back from ‘growing’ as much as I should?
- What physical manifestations are there when I consider the above questions?

Frequency and duration

As per page 12.

Purpose

To create greater awareness of:

- How often you are using a VIA character strength especially as related to growth.
- Noticing those strengths in others.
- Your physical state in any of these situations.
- Identify ‘stumbling blocks’ and ‘stepping stones’.
- As previous but the aim is to notice patterns regarding personal growth.

Barriers and support.

Consider.

Reflection and journaling

Reflect on this self-observation and journal each evening.

Practices

Practice 1: Breathing

See page 14 – continue

Practice 2: Mandalas

Page 30 – optional

(Please see the next page.)

Practice 3: Magic sprouting bean

Instructions

1. Stand with your posture erect and chin tucked in.
2. Look straight ahead. We'll refer to that position as 'neutral'.
3. Imagine a dry bean. It can remain dormant for a long time.
4. However, once it is surrounded by damp soil (or cotton wool), life starts to stir, things happen inside, energy mounts. Feel the energy rushing around.
5. The bean swells and bursts open. Be aware.
6. Action! First the root goes down. Without moving your head or any part of your body, look as far down as you are able to. With your whole body, feel the energy rushing as the root penetrates the earth and then goes downward.
7. Hold that position for five seconds.
8. Return your eyes to 'neutral'.
9. Now the shoot appears and begins to grow upward towards heaven. Without moving your head, look as far upward as you are able to. Feel the upward pull through your whole body.
10. Hold that position for five seconds.
11. Return your eyes to neutral.
12. Now the shoot develops side branches. Without moving your head or limbs, look as far to your right as you are able to. Feel the pull.
13. Hold that position for five seconds.
14. Return your eyes to neutral.
15. Without moving your head or limbs, look as far to your left as you are able to. Feel the new tendril pulling to the left.
16. Hold the position for five seconds.
17. Return your eyes to neutral.
18. Now feel the pull both to the right and to the left. There is a slight shiver as new pods drop from the plant to the ground.
19. Feel the fullness of the new beans.
20. Return to centre and picture your bean becoming dormant again as it shrivels and dries.
21. Hold that thought for five seconds.
22. Begin the cycle again, repeating steps 3 to 21 twice.

Frequency and duration

Do this practice once a day immediately after your breathing practice, seven days a week, until our next session.

Reason

1. This practice links to and enhances our current self-observation, Self-observation 4, Growth (see page 73).
2. Thus, it also links to our theme for the week, Growth. And this follows on from our F, L and A assignments and themes.
3. This is a grounding practice and helps us to centre.
4. Practising eye movements helps to strengthen our eye muscles.
5. Keeping our bodies still and moving only our eyes, isolates areas and helps us to focus.
6. Enhanced eye-movement leads to an ability to physically balance better.
7. This practice helps to broaden our vision.
8. It makes us aware of how narrow our focus often is.
9. Doing a regular practice at the same time each day helps us to develop new habits.
10. This is a simple practice that requires no tools and can be done anywhere. So it is versatile.

Support

Find some-one who will support you in doing this exercise. It could be fun to include family members or colleagues.

Barriers

What could stop you from doing this practice? How will you overcome those barriers? Discuss with your buddy.

Reflection and journaling

Remember to reflect on this practice before your journal in the evenings. Be curious about how your body felt during the practice. How easy was it to do the practice today compared to yesterday? What else are you noticing?

(Please see the next page.)

Exercises

Exercise 1: Observing my life in context

Optional.

Exercise 2: Networking Savvy

Continue working towards taking your networking to higher levels. Recognise and optimise opportunities.

Exercises 3, 7 and 9: Buddies from previous weeks

Continue networking with them.

Exercise 4: VIA Strength Test

Complete

Exercise 5: Balance

Complete

Exercises 6 and 8: and any other reading

Continue to reflect on these when you journal each evening.

Exercise 10: Resource questionnaire

Complete.

Exercise 11: Session 4 Buddy

Please contact your new buddy tomorrow.

Exercise 12: Reading

- Please see the blog on ‘Growth and Personal Strategy’ - www.strategy-leadership.com and go to the blog tag
- Please also see the blog on ‘New Growth’ - <http://strategy-leadership.com/new-growth/>
- Articles: ‘5 reasons why your company should be distributed’
‘Pareto Principle’
‘Tethered camels’
- Other resources: ‘FLOW: how to turn your stumbling blocks into stepping stones’- Chapter 3, ‘The door to this home’
- Poem: ‘New Growth’
‘The door of this home’

(Please see the next page.)

Exercise 13: Critical questions

Instructions

Please answer the questions that follow on page 78 onwards.
Record your answers for your own reference.

Frequency and duration

You’ll answer these only once and please complete this before the next session.

Reason

1. The purpose of this course is to provide a ‘kickstart’ to the year ahead and this personal strategy will help you to do this.
2. These questions cover areas that are critical to your personal success.
3. There is balance over a range of areas which affect your legitimate strategising.
4. These are aimed at your ‘way of being’ as well as at the actions you need to take to achieve success.
5. Thus the ‘golden thread’ runs through this exercise and through your training and coaching during the ‘EYES’ programme.
6. Your reflection on these questions and your answers will impact on the strategy you set.

Barriers and support

If there are barriers enlist the support of your buddy.

Reflection and journaling

Please reflect on your answers and include in your journaling each evening.

(Please see the next page.)

Critical questions

1. F: Energising - Maximising energy (and having Fun!)

- a. Energy is renewable. How am I managing my energy?
- b. In what ways am I building energy through conscious attention to quality sleep and rest, fresh air, foods, liquids, cardiovascular and strength exercises?
- c. What am I doing to be more conscious of my signature character strengths and use them where possible?
- d. How am I going about realising a state of FLOW where challenges and skills meet?
- e. In which ways am I honouring my body?
- f. How am I tapping into ‘the wisdom of my body’?

2. L: Leading upward - and focusing on the desired future

- a. How clear are my vision, goals and tactics?
- b. What am I doing to ensure that my behaviour is ‘forward focused’ on goal-directed behaviour?
- c. How clearly and timeously am I communicating my vision, goals and tactics to my teams (work and home)?
- d. How am I recognising and motivating those in my work and home teams?
- e. What am I doing to empower others so that they can reach potential?
- f. What am I doing to reward or ‘shine up’ myself?

3. A: Continuously improving - ‘an attitude of positive discontent’

- a. How am I honouring my ‘authentic self’ in promoting my ‘personal brand’?
- b. How am I continuously improving the way I operate in all domains of my life?
- c. How am I ensuring that I continuously use my tactics to move towards my goals and vision?
- d. What routines have I instituted to regularly check that every aspect of my life is ‘the best it can be’? (In other words, how am I practising ‘an attitude of positive discontent’?)

4. G: Growing (knowledge, skills, competencies)

- a. What am I doing to continuously enhance my knowledge, skills and competence?
- b. What am I doing to ‘create space’ so that I can grow?
- c. What am I doing to establish new ‘pathways’, learn new things (neuroplasticity)?
- d. How am I going to add value to my current qualifications?

5. Deepening self - Spirituality and enriching ourselves emotionally

- a. How connected do I feel to the universe?
- b. What meditation processes and other reflective practices do I engage in?
- c. How am I maximising the incorporation of my ‘touchstones’ into my daily life?
- d. How am I caring for my emotional needs?
- e. What have I done to ensure that ‘reach out’ is a default and that I ‘shine up’ others?
- f. How is ‘being kind to myself’ incorporated in my self-leadership?

6. Serving - addressing the needs of those whom we serve

- a. Who are the people I serve? How clearly have I identified them?
- b. What business, community and private roles do I play?
- c. Who are those people or entities who have power over me?
- d. What am I doing to minimise the impact of those who are toxic to me?
- e. How am I consciously assessing and meeting the needs of those whom I serve (where appropriate)?
- f. What am I doing to meet the changing needs of those whom I serve?

7. Being agile and yet ‘grounded’ - mentally and physically

- a. How agile am I? How effectively can I recognise and optimise opportunities?
- b. What am I doing to improve my agility?
- c. What can I do to improve the speed at which I move towards positive opportunities and away from negative influences?
- d. What grounding practices do I regularly engage in?
- e. What am I doing to become more intuitive?

8. Enriching positive relationships and connections

- a. How consistently am I genuinely adopting an attitude of ‘what can I do for you’?
- b. How do I go about building and sustaining positive relationships in all aspects of my life?
- c. How am I ‘harnessing the power of collective networking’?
- d. What is my strategy for taking my networking to a higher level?
- e. What am I doing to build and sustain positive relationships?

9. Finding my effective ‘voice’

- a. What am I doing to constantly ensure that I communicate effectively and at the right time?
- b. How am I making sure that my messages have been understood in the way in which I intended them?
- c. How constructively do I deal with feedback (given or received)?
- d. How am I using my voice?
- e. How am I structuring my messages so that people do listen?

10. Integrating

- a. How am I integrating all aspects of my life?
- b. What should I be doing to find greater balance over all areas of my life?
- c. How am I integrating my top 5 (signature) character strengths into my ‘way of being’?

(Please see the next page.)

Exercise 14: Five beans

Instructions

1. Consider your five dried beans.
2. Reflect on the thoughts that come to mind.
3. How can you use these five beans to be symbolic of aspects of your life, your motivation or your aspirations?
4. Be creative. Write a poem, create a collage, plant the beans – whatever you wish. But your ‘project’ must portray ‘purpose’ and have meaning behind it. (For example, you might stick your five beans on a piece of cardboard and paint each a different colour. Each of the five may stand for one of your values? You could describe why you have chosen the colour for each bean.) The ‘project’ can be any size that is convenient for you to bring to the next session.
5. At the next session you will be asked to bring your ‘Five beans’ and share your ‘story’ with a group. So make sure your project is portable (pointless planting the beans in your garden – if your project involves planting them, plant in a container small enough to bring to the next session.)
6. Have fun!
7. In the evenings when you do your reflections, be curious about your ‘five bean’ creation and the process of choosing to develop it the way you did.

Frequency and duration

This is an ‘exercise’ and in coaching terms that means it is a ‘one off’. There is no set amount that you need to do each day. Just make sure it is complete so that you bring it to the next session and are ready to share the story.

Reason

The golden thread running through our programme links various themes. This week our theme is ‘Growth’ and we are incorporating in an integral manner.

Your self-observation involves your personal growth and factors which promote or may be holding you back. So this links.

Your practices are the continuation of your ‘breathing’ (to gain mastery) and this week we have added ‘magic sprouting bean’. So this exercise consolidates those factors.

Much of our work-lives may have a left-brain focus. Here we are again exercising creativity. There is no right – and there is no wrong. This has some elements of our ‘cover story’.

This exercise encourages reflection.

Barriers and support

If you need support, remember that your Session 4 Buddy is your immediate support.

Reflection and journaling

Reflect on this exercise and include your insights in your journaling.

Reflection and journaling

Please continue to reflect on all self-observations, practices and exercises. Record your thought each evening in your journaling. What patterns are you noticing?