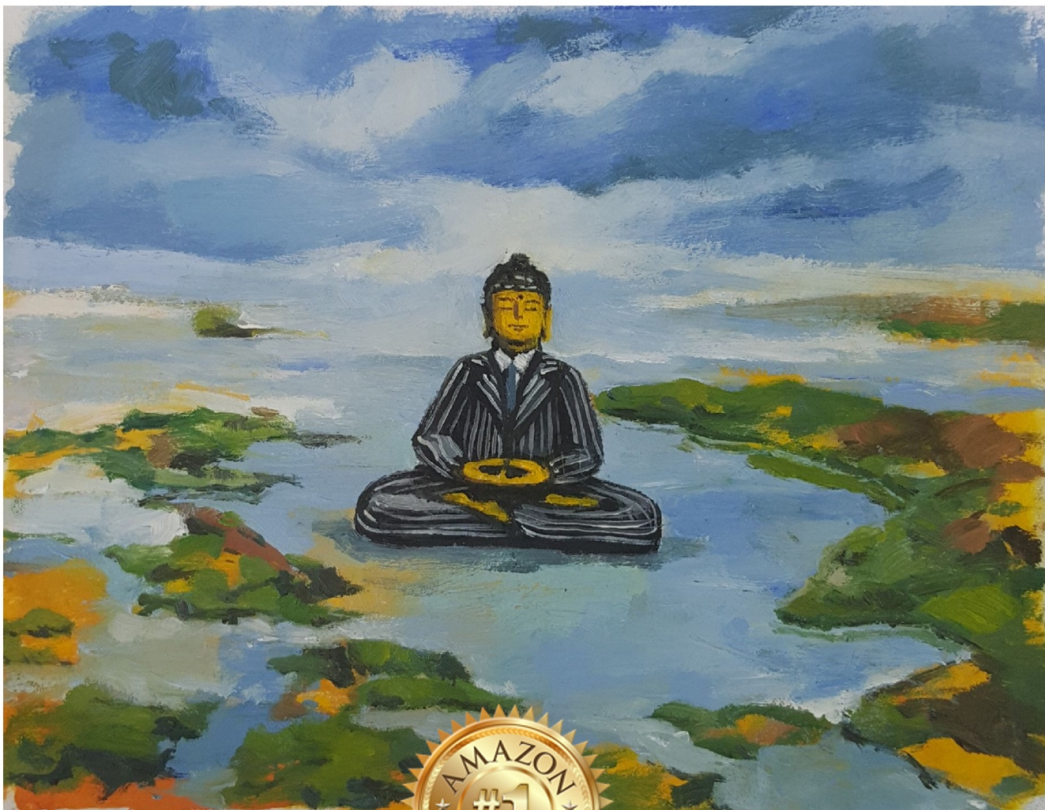# BUDDHA IN PINSTRIPES

A MODEL FOR LEADERSHIP IN UNCERTAINTY

How to integrate personal performance, business profit
and societal progress while preparing for disruption

ELIZABETH KING PHD

BUDDHA IN PINSTRIPES: A MODEL FOR LEADERSHIP IN UNCERTAINTY

How to integrate personal performance, business profit and societal progress while preparing for disruption.

DR ELIZABETH KING

GRATITUDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE – BUDDHA'S INSIGHT

> *"If there is any religion that could respond to the needs of modern science, it would be Buddhism."*
>
> *Albert Einstein*

Einstein concluded this, because he viewed the Buddhist philosophy as one which prepared people for disruption. In the context of accelerating change, in all aspects of socio-economic relationships and natural environmental conditions, perhaps the traditional Buddhist concept of ' mindfulness ' provides a path to help cope with the uncertainty associated with the current disruptive situation.

If your industry leaders are wrestling with questions about adapting to rapidly evolving business models, or how to meet customer demands for greater responsiveness, or how to remain calm and kind – then ' Buddha in Pinstripes ' is for you ! Based on many years of study and extensive experience at senior levels of international business, as well as consulting in varied workplaces, this book **is designed** for people who are leading in the volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world of business with a desire to generate profit whilst contributing to social purpose. It provides a guide to the origin and nature of VUCA along with effective ways to transform these circumstances into opportunity.

This transformation can result from a new approach of integrating personal performance with business profit and societal progress using ancient principles of Buddhist-based mindfulness. This book aims to bring the ideas to you in a practical package that can quickly integrate new information from the emerging data in this area. It presents a framework for understanding and action, along with enough information to guide implementation of a substantial tailored intervention. In addition, over the next two years, a number of field guides are planned that will supplement this book with assessment tools, practical exercises, and video instructions as well as a tool box of checklists to support the journey.

Sydney 2018   Elizabeth King

QUESTIONS AND UNCERTAINTY AT WORK

Introduction

Business people are being challenged in many ways – and questions include the following.

Is your industry being disrupted?

Is your C-suite struggling to translating your vision in chaos?

Are your leaders wrestling with rapidly evolving business models?

Are your customers demanding ever greater responsiveness?

Are investors demanding greater transparency as trust declines?

Are your employees present but too distracted to be fully engaged?

Are your systems adapting adequately to sustain safety requirements?

Does your organization have a strong sustainable social purpose?

Are your leaders calm and kind?

If these are important questions for you, then this book is exactly what you need to start creating a mindful, profitable, sustainable company.

The growing interest in mindfulness as a path to improving profit, sustainability and contribution to society, delivers a compelling proposition in times of uncertainty. Mindfulness and the principles it represents directs us to understand that uncertainty is to be expected, that it need not be feared, and that it may offer opportunity for the innovation that is required for success. Where the environment is fraught with systemic uncertainty, our most important role may be to embody this understanding and help others to do the same.

Much confusion about what mindfulness actually means and an exploding interest in the topic can make mindfulness seem too complex to apply to a contemporary business. This diminishes the opportunities that can accrue. The following pages set out a practical, commercially-relevant framework to translate Buddhist leadership principles and mindfulness-based practices into business - from design to implementation and evaluation.

In the pages ahead, you will learn more about the problem of uncertainty and the hypothesis of mindfulness as a solution. By discovering an approach to building mindful organizations, hopefully you will be able to avoid mistakes and design a solution tailored to your specific needs. These solutions are explained in five steps that show you how to use mindfulness principles to ensure that in your organization:

- People are present,
- Leaders are kind,
- Systems are safe,
- Governance is ethical, and
- Strategy is integrated and innovative.

In this way, mindfulness is a tool that can transform an organizational culture to one that is caring and courageous, aware and agile, stable and evolving.

This book provides both the theory and the practical steps that you and your organization's leaders need to take. They are steps which will prepare your organization for disruption, generate sustainable profit and social purpose and allow your people to be peaceful.

Volatile Uncertain Complex Ambiguous (VUCA) environments – and their costs

An Australian story, a global problem, a compelling motivation

> *"If Australia is to maintain national competitiveness and generate growth and jobs, organizations need to navigate through a phase of increased uncertainty and ambiguity, disruption and change"*[1].

This comment from a study of Australian leaders highlights the need to respond to slowing global and local growth in the face of accelerating technological change and 'big bang disruption'[2].The global rate of change and disruption is the highest it has ever been, and it is expected to increase. Internet penetration has risen three-fold in the last decade to over 50 % globally - in developed coutries it is over 80% , the use of smart phones has risen 12 % and the average individual spends over 5 hours a day on a mobile device – that's 35 hours a week, close to a full-time job! There is exponential growth in computing with greater accessibility due to lower costs. The rate of change is creating structural change in our society and companies must embrace both change and technology.

The structural changes resulting from disruptive technologies will create winners and losers alongside massive change for both organizations and individuals. Examples include the increase in connected devices due to the cloud and the "internet of things" where devices talk to each other making some "things" redundant while others become essential. The introduction of electric and autonomous vehicles will remove costs from some businesses and remove other businesses altogether. The block chain mechanism for controlling data will allow records to be centralized so our bank transfers are instant. Financial industries and systems will be pervasively impacted.

Along with the global work-related changes, Australian leaders are dealing with change in their families, society and local work-related changes. From 1950, changes in Australian society have increased uncertainty for many. The 1950's family of four children with one breadwinner morphed into the 2000's family of two children with

two working parents or variations on sole parent households[3]. For many Australians the reduced family support system has increased their sense of uncertainty, which is further magnified when work is also changing.

The work changes include an increase in average work hours of over three a week during this decade, mostly due to the very long hours worked by people in the professions. Twenty percent of these professionals work more than 48 hours each week and some of them work over 60 hours a week[4]. But it's not just the hours. Professionals also report an increased intensity of work[5], resulting from challenging leadership responsibilities[6] related to the ever-increasing complexity of organizational life [7].

Changes in organizational structure and role responsibility are described as the top sources of pressure for all Australian leaders [8], and it impacts on women more than men. All leaders are working longer and more intensely, with less social support than past generations, whilst facing unprecedented levels of change in the "age of uncertainty" [9]. Fluid organizational structures and new working practices, such as flex work and project management drive the complexity, change and uncertainty. Moreover, the sense of resultant pressure has increased for women whilst remaining stable for men. Australian women's dissatisfaction with work-life balance has almost doubled this decade. It rose from 15.9% to 27.5% in the five years from 2007 to 2012. Now nearly 70% of working women in Australia are experiencing chronic time pressure[10] described as a "**work-life bomb**"[11].

There is a significant and unique social context in Australia which makes it a compelling case study for the role of integration between personal, business and societal progress. Compared to other OECD countries, Australia holds cultural norms that encourage female participation in the workplace but insists that they maintain primary responsibility for the care of the family[12].

The dissatisfaction or stress of Australian working women highlights the pervasive impact of interrelatedness and uncertainty on society. Australia, unlike many OECD countries, did not experience the deep economic downturn of the global financial crisis during which it experienced growth rates averaging 2.1 % compared to 0.3 % in other OECD countries. However, despite this economic prosperity, Australian workers express widespread dissatisfaction with work-life balance. As such, the Australian situation has cross-national relevance, showcasing the impact of uncertainty and stress experienced by leaders, contributed to by pressures arising from gender inequality as well as economic policy and circumstances.

> *"Compared to other OECD countries, Australia holds cultural norms that encourage female participation in the workplace but insists that they maintain primary responsibility for the care of the family"*

Costs of uncertainty

The financial impact of these changes is high due to the real costs of stress and poor performance.

The cost of stress to society is difficult to determine, but global estimates range from $US221 million to $US1.87 billion. There are definitional variances.

When the costs to business of stress, absenteeism, presenteeism and lack of engagement are estimated, the numbers become so big that it's challenging to grasp their meaning. They are:

- US absenteeism – $US 225.8 billion annually (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention)
- US presenteeism - 57.5 days a year per employee of nonproductive work (Virgin Pulse)
- Australian presenteeism – $34 billion a year (Centre for International Economics).

Workplace stress costs the Australian economy $14.81 billion per annum[13]. This figure is made up of $9.69 billion in stress-related 'presenteeism' and $5.12 billion in 'absenteeism'. In Australia, it is argued that 40% of workplaces are underperforming and don't meet their profitability or ROI targets [14] contributing to the remainder of the estimate above of the $34 billion for presenteeism.

These figures don't account for the hidden costs associated with attention deficit (resulting from the emotional strain) in organizations. Attention deficit is deemed to be so significant that managing the attention economy is now being touted as "the single most important determinant of business success"[15].Whatever the total number may be, the financial costs of uncertainty are very substantial[16].

Across the globe, as political and economic issues become more important to the success of business *"The business of business is no longer just business"*[17].

At a personal level these changes are also significant. Whilst some leaders do thrive in complexity, others feel overwhelmed[18]. The impact of complexity and uncertainty is predominantly emotional and negative. Leaders can be affected physically and mentally, resulting in stress, bad moods, tiredness, sadness, fear and insecurity. So performance at work suffers and the cost of poor wellbeing are devastating.
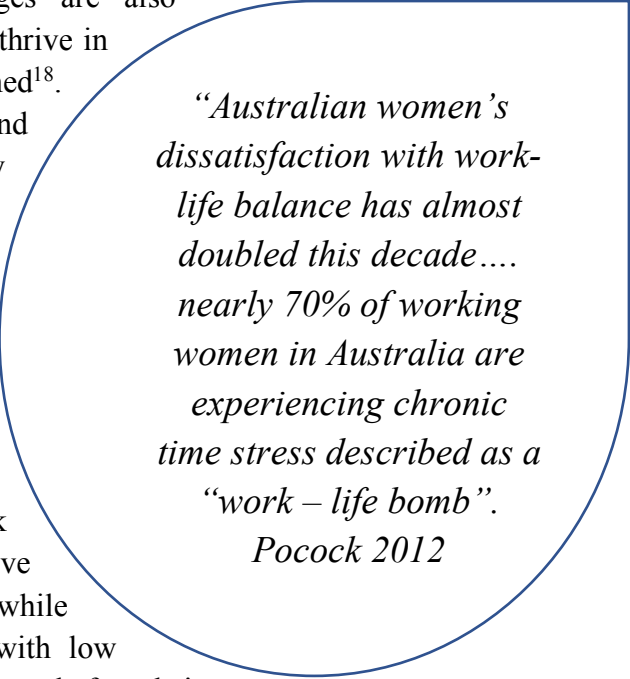
It is a reinforcing loop - poor work performance comes from the negative emotion that results from stress[19] while negative emotions are associated with low performance for both individuals and for their organizations[20]. The costs of failing to deal with the impact of uncertainty on our societies, organizations and leaders are high, creating a compelling motivation to find solutions.

"Australian women's dissatisfaction with work-life balance has almost doubled this decade…. nearly 70% of working women in Australia are experiencing chronic time stress described as a "work – life bomb".
Pocock 2012

Leadership to address uncertainty

The relationship between leadership, uncertainty and performance is complex, confusing and potentially alarming. For example, when the environment is seen to be uncertain leaders tend to be chosen for charisma[21]. Paradoxically, leadership attributes that enable performance within uncertainty (e.g. systems thinking, collaboration, proactivity and risk management)[22], or performance generally (ethics, self-regulation, flexibility, learning mindsets and nurturing communication)[23] are not generally associated with a charismatic leader. It seems in uncertain times we may make poor leadership choices.

These findings are confusing and inconsistent, but can be explained if we acknowledge that in uncertain times "nasty" or "dark" leadership is compelling to many followers[24]. Recent political decisions highlight this dynamic. It is also demonstrated in popular culture such as J.K. Rowling's character Voldemort in the Harry Potter fiction series. Such 'dark' leaders can be very charismatic and attractive to followers looking for solutions.

Given that the quality and character of leadership impacts the wellbeing of society, a framework for understanding what constitutes good leadership in these circumstances is crucial.

What is leadership performance in uncertainty?

Not sure!

It is hard to define and measure leadership performance, because performance means different things to different organizations and individuals. It's even harder because common assessment practices use subjective measures which link the concept of success to expectations, which are in themselves subjective[25]. For example, common measures of organizational performance include achievement of sales targets, turnover, profit, customer satisfaction and employee engagement. Success with these criteria is subjective and entangled with the environment so, when environments are complex and in constant flux, the task of measuring performance is complicated by the changing nature of the externally-related benchmarks against which it is correlated.

Measuring leadership performance in uncertainty?

Not robust!

Because of this complexity, we find that current practices of defining and measuring performance within uncertain contexts tend to fall short. There is also a lack of models to guide the way.

As psychology allows us to determine performance at the individual level using self-reported experience or the outcomes of relationships, the psychological approach is helpful. However, it is limited in its capacity to extrapolate data to objective criteria.

A pragmatic approach, that adopts a broader measurement base for performance assessment, can be developed if we consider the issue by drawing on individual experience as well as achievement of self-selected outcomes of individuals, teams or organizations.

Leadership development in uncertainty

One urgent action in this endemic uncertainty is the imperative to provide leaders with the support to develop the capabilities they need to navigate it. Such development is crucial to leaders' capacity for the resilience needed to sustain performance. The resources committed to development programs shows that companies are trying.

Global investment in leadership development is estimated to be over $50 billion USD a year yet there is a perception that results are disappointing. A recent management consulting survey outlines this perception. It estimated that only 7 percent of CEOs believe they are preparing leaders well and only 10 percent believe that leadership development interventions impact their business results. Only 11 percent of executives feel that development interventions do what they are intended to do. [26]

Leadership development programs are often introduced during times of organizational change[27] to protect against the high failure rates of change initiatives[28]. However ironically, these programs can create a collision between environmental demands for change and the pressures on leaders to learn new skills, potentially weakening the effectiveness of the very interventions offered to combat the change[29]. The complex

relationship between challenge and learning[30] and the largely inadequate evaluation practices used by most organizations[31] make it difficult to determine the value of these interventions.

A more complete understanding of the effectiveness of leadership development programs, conducted in uncertain environments, can be provided if a qualitative, delayed, reflective and dynamic process is used. This however is rarely done, possibly due to a reluctance to acknowledge the unsatisfactory nature of this situation. I

It can even be argued that there are functional and financial benefits for suppliers of leadership development programs that flow from flawed practices in evaluation. This almost suggests a 'collusion with denial'[32] phenomenon which can occur between the suppliers and purchasers of leadership development programs. It poses a question of causation and provides a possible answer to what seems to be widespread dissatisfaction about results despite the significant resources being committed to these strategies.

What is clear is that if we want to evaluate these programs we need to align our evaluation process with the development intervention. This is crucial when considering the mindfulness solution to leadership in uncertainty that is discussed later. Effective evaluation of leadership development interventions requires the courage to be honest, the integrity to be outcome focused, and the capacity to persist in ambiguity.

"Success in not final, falilure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts" Winston Churchill

> *"We now have advocates for and practitioners of mindful eating, mindful sex, mindful parenting, mindfulness at work, mindful sports, mindful divorce lawyers, mindfulness-based stress reduction, mindfulness-based addiction recovery, and on and on... Today mindfulness is touted as a cutting-edge technique said to provide everything from financial success to mind blowing female orgasms"* Wilson [33].

The popularity and enthusiasm for what has been termed the 'mindfulness revolution' (Time Magazine and 60 Minutes) is broadly based on recognition of the *mindlessness* that results from increasing mental demands.

In an era of rapid and unpredictable change, multiple distractions and increasing diversity and demands, individuals and organizations routinely bemoan the 'busyness of business', and their consequent inability to maintain focus and attention, create space for genuine exploration and creativity, and handle the stresses and anxieties of apparently increasing fluidity and overload.

In this context, the promotion of individual and collective mindfulness as an important capability and set of practices appears to many as a reasonable approach to addressing, or at least reducing such problems.

Magic or Myth?

Promoters of the 'mindfulness revolution' see it as a solution to the problems and anxieties that surround rapid and disruptive change, digital distraction, stress and burnout. They offer understandable, controllable and practical solutions in the form of

packaged meditation and non-meditation-based mindfulness programs to enhance individual and organizational performance and well-being.

Such programs and methods are legitimized by the 'hard' science of neuro-plasticity and evidence of the clinical effects of meditation and mindfulness programs. Promoters of 'mindful work'[34] and 'mindful organizing' describe its success in helping people and organizations to adapt to life in challenging and 'high velocity' environments.

Supporters of 'mindful leadership' celebrate it as 'as both a perspective and systematic method that helps leaders better understand and transform their own minds'[35].However, despite this general agreement, and an increasing number of academic discussions and popular debates exploring its character and value, there remains confusion, disagreement and prejudice about the nature, costs and benefits of mindfulness and associated programs. In reality, we don't really know how to clearly define mindfulness, measure it, isolate it or really understand what it does.

Despite all this, supporters remain firmly convinced that there is a 'Mindfulness Revolution' that is powerfully effective in improving well-being. On the other hand, critics remain equally convinced that it is a superficial and detrimental form of 'McMindfulness'[36].

Legends of the mindfulness revolution

Mindfulness, as a 'revolution', has been dominated by the work of mindfulness researchers[37] (predominantly American) who have dedicated their lives to adapting traditional Buddhist meditation techniques to western culture and become legends in the field. They have done so by medicalizing, secularizing, psychologizing and marketing mindfulness[38].

The evolution of this perceived revolution marks the beginning of the modern mindfulness movement which emerged strongly in the mid-1970s through exposure of Americans to Buddhism because of Asian immigration and the Vietnam war [39].

Political decisions led to Asian immigration while visitors brought their religious beliefs into the culture[40]. Among the visitors were monks from modern Buddhist movements who aimed to bring meditation and mindfulness to the west. These included the influential Thich Nhat Hahn who published significant books including "The Miracle of Mindfulness"[41]. Importantly these monks described the "techniques" involved in the ancient Buddhist practices, but made dharma (Buddhist teachings) optional [42], [43].

A small key group of American peace corps volunteers in Vietnam also contributed to the phenomenon. These volunteers became the scholars who seeded the most influential academic mindfulness interventions, emphasizing the techniques or most basic aspect of mindfulness, as articulated in the modern Theravada tradition[44].

One volunteer, Jon Kabat-Zinn, a doctor and scientist, became the pivotal force for medicalization of mindfulness through the MBSR (Mindfulness Based Stress

Reduction) program run at the Massachusetts University Medical School [45, 46]. A meta review of the MBSR studies describes their instrumental approach as "nonreligious and non-esoteric, based upon a systematic procedure to develop enhanced awareness of moment-to-moment experience of perceptible mental processes"[47].

At the same time Jack Kornfield, Joseph Goldstein and Sharon Salzberg returned from spiritual training in Asia to set up their own instrumental mindfulness programs and create the influential Insight Meditation Society (IMS) promoting the development of insight through meditation[48, 49].

The work conducted in the MBSR and IMS programs was grounded in the Theravada tradition of Buddhism. This tradition originated from India and its modern version emphasized levels of mindfulness training and practice, the most basic level of which was elegantly adapted to make mindfulness more accessible to the west by Goldstein and colleagues[50].

Buddhist traditions that originated from the Northern Hemisphere, such as the Kadampa, placed more emphasis on the bare awareness of noticing the objects of mindfulness[51]. However, both traditions recognize the different levels of depth in mindfulness training. These levels are significant in understanding the trajectory of mindfulness in the west since the 1970s. At the most basic level, mindfulness is seen as a value-neutral technique, while at its more advanced levels it is seen as a path to ethical and moral development [52].

From the scientific focus of the early scholar/practitioners, other key players began investigating the value of mindfulness techniques to address the discontent of the mind, seeking to shed light on the psychological and/or neurological effects of mindfulness. These players included therapists developing a mindfulness-based approach to cognitive therapy (MBCT) led by Zindel Segal[53] who eventually created specific clinical applications of mindfulness for various mental disorders[54]. Segal is a therapist but is not to be confused with Daniel *Siegel,* a psychiatrist and neurologist, who wrote elegantly of the mindful brain, mindful therapist, mindful parenting and other applications of mindfulness to mental health[55]. Siegel represents a significant group of scientists advancing the application of mindfulness - neurologists and cognitive scientists seeking to understand the impact of mindfulness and meditation on the brain.

Neurological investigation of mindfulness was inspired by the Dalai Lama's vision to create greater understanding and acceptance of Buddhist practices and philosophy by using western science to study the nature of the mind. As a result, a team of neuroscientists led by Davidson[56] and Wallace[57], conducted precise cognitive science experiments using experienced meditators to study the effect of mindfulness and other meditation techniques on the brain. These were an extension of early studies conducted within the medical community looking at phenomena such as changes in body temperature during meditations which were conducted almost naked in the snow and which led to later attempts to explain the physiology of meditation[58].

Once neuroscientists became involved with the Dalai Lama and sophisticated laboratories were built using MRI scans and computers to create monitoring labs in participants' homes. Decades later these same scientists and their colleagues are discovering the role that meditation plays in creating sustained attention[59], compassion[60], and (among other impacts) the physical changes on the neurological chemistry and/or structure that correlates with changes in behaviour or emotion[61], [62], [63].

Understanding the evolution of the "revolution" provides context for the emerging nature of the literature and application of mindfulness and leadership which is predominantly written from this initial instrumental perspective. Through it we can begin to see that the apparent confusion and lack of clarity in fact simply reflects the different stages of investigation in the various disciplines.

The Mindful Leadership Hypothesis

> *"The world is desperate for great leadership - more specifically for mindful leadership. Suffering abounds in our personal and professional lives. The greatest opportunity for leaders is not to accomplish monumental tasks but rather to alleviate suffering. Given that we spend a significant part of our lives at work, organizational leaders in particular can make a profound difference – and at a much deeper level than we typically think."Michael Bunting [64]*

The growing interest in mindfulness, as a potential solution to the perceived leadership challenge of change and ensuing uncertainty, is seen in the explosion of literature on the topic. This explosion is mostly occurring outside the accepted business journals. Publishing within business journals reveals a dominant focus on instrumental approaches. There is an emphasis on theoretical discussion rather than actual studies, with very little research conducted in the field with leaders. It is clear that the commercial focus on mindfulness techniques and applications has not yet been matched by the scholarly focus, which is still seeking to justify the attention and struggling to understand the construct and how to measure it. The focus of the business literature is the hypothesized effects on performance and effects of mindfulness on leader wellness.

"The mismatch of hype and evidence emphasizes that we do not yet know if mindfulness can support leaders to perform in uncertain environments...."

Despite the lack of field research there is an expanding list of theorized benefits of mindfulness for organizations[65], [66] which despite minimal evidence to support claims[67] fuel the motivation for attention to mindfulness and leadership. Along with greater wellbeing[68], and task performance[69], these effects include the outcomes of managing oneself and others more effectively, particularly in circumstances of personal or interpersonal conflict[70], change[71], uncertainty[72], and demanding complex ethical decisions[73], [74] or required innovation[75].

The mismatch of hype and evidence emphasizes that we do not yet know if mindfulness can support leaders to perform in uncertain environments. To increase our knowledge of mindfulness and performance we need more robust understanding of what it is, scientific studies of hypothesized relationships and ways to conduct these studies that overcome the difficulties inherent in observing mindfulness and its impact.

In the eyes of those promoting mindfulness, its compelling promise includes the realization that we urgently need a different approach to navigating the workplace issues of our time and the inherent paradoxical challenges.

Individual leaders need ways to pilot their way through the impact of escalating complexity on their health, personal lives and performance.

Organizations, on the other hand, need to manage rapid change and increasing disruption, while the broader society needs to address important and urgent issues of governance and environment, all of which involve complex conflicting agendas.

Mindfulness in Organizations
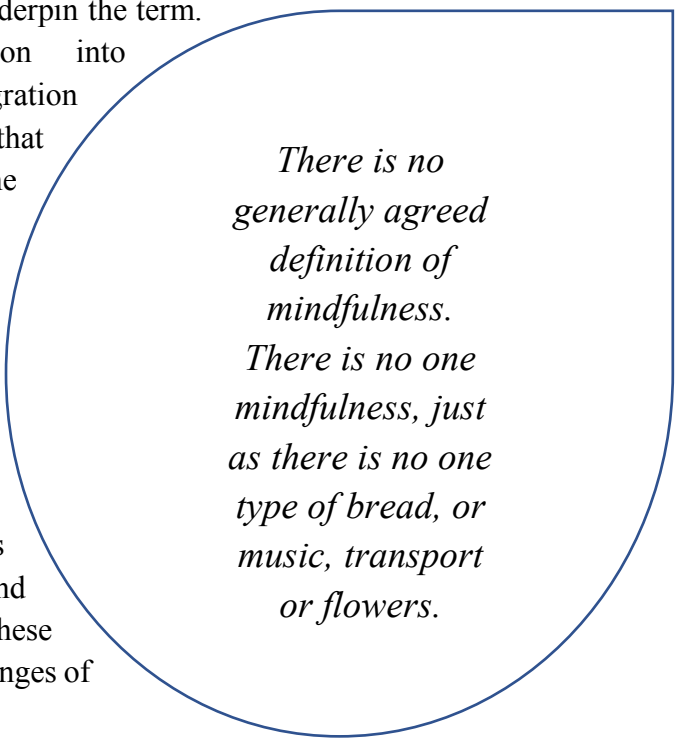
The current practice of mindfulness in organizations is dominated by the individual perspective which is also the easiest path to designing workplace mindfulness interventions, due to the available psychological measurement models and tools that fit with the instrumental aspect of this perspective.

This perspective does not, however, address all the concerns of individuals and organizations for which it is hoped mindfulness may be a solution. Nor does it enable understanding of what mindfulness is, or how it might integrate with similar ideas utilized in other disciplines.

Creating clarity around what mindfulness is requires a broader perspective and a deeper understanding of the ideas that underpin the term. With that clarity, integration into organizations is possible. Integration requires an inclusive definition that captures the core components of the construct so that we can apply it in a nuanced way rather than as a blunt instrument.

The next chapter outlines a framework that can be used to make the mindfulness hypothesis a solution through a practical application of core ideas. It allows us to cut through the confusion and understand how to apply these powerful perspectives to the challenges of leading in uncertainty.

There is no generally agreed definition of mindfulness. There is no one mindfulness, just as there is no one type of bread, or music, transport or flowers.

THE CONCEPT AND MINDFULNESS SOLUTION AT WORK

A framework to integrate performance, profit and societal progress

"It is only when we've awakened that we realize how much of our lives we've actually slept through". Ellen langer[76]

What is mindfulness?
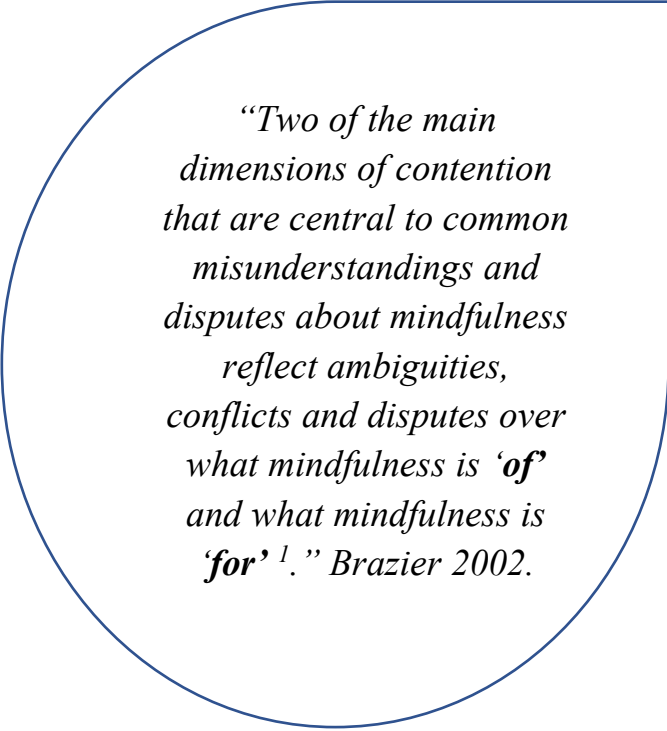
There is no generally agreed definition of mindfulness. There is no one mindfulness, just as there is no one type of bread, or music, transport or flowers.

Rather than viewing mindfulness as having an essential nature with singular meaning and unilateral significance, it could be viewed as an ambiguous and contested experience. But there is a way to understand its complexity, by considering two questions.

Mindful *of* what? Mindful *for* what?

Two of the main dimensions of contention that are central to common misunderstandings and disputes about mindfulness reflect ambiguities, conflicts and disputes over what mindfulness is *'of'* and what mindfulness is *'for'* [77]. In particular, the issues around *'of'* and *'for'* concern whether mindfulness is viewed as an individual or collective experience and whether it is for instrumental or substantive purposes, with substantive purposes being both meaningful and considerable.

Mindfulness perspectives are more individual in character when they are directed towards immediate personal experience, emphasizing awareness and attention to the present moment, stress reduction, emotion regulation, overcoming habitual thought and behaviour etc.

"Two of the main dimensions of contention that are central to common misunderstandings and disputes about mindfulness reflect ambiguities, conflicts and disputes over what mindfulness is 'of' and what mindfulness is 'for' [1]." Brazier 2002.

They have a more collective focus when addressing the minor importance of the individual self and the reality of interdependence, group mind, relational mindfulness and organizational support for cooperative and heedful thought and action.

Mindfulness perspectives are characterized in instrumental terms to the degree that they are focused on how individual performance and well-being might be improved through mindful thought and behaviour, and how organizational sustainability and success might be enhanced.

Mindfulness has a more strongly substantive focus when the viewpoint is mindful (re)consideration of purpose, the value of transcending self-centered concerns of individuals and organizations and attending to the meaning of individual action and collective endeavours.

As outlined in the Figure 3.1, these two dimensions give us forms of mindfulness, which are not distinct, but have different core centres of gravity.
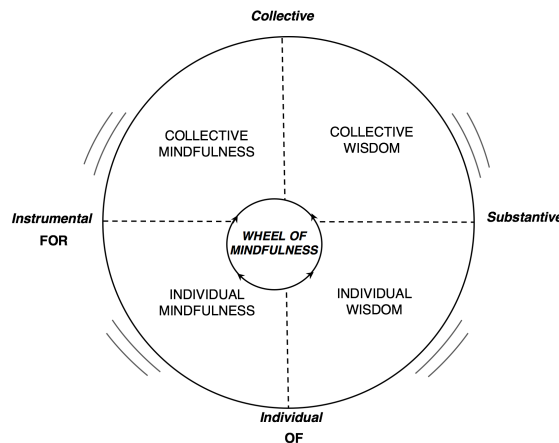
Figure 3.1. Mapping Mindfulness

The assumption behind the framework presented here is that there is more to mindfulness than narrow, conceptual discussions and empirical assessments of the nature and impacts of therapeutic, meditation-based organization programs. The latter are typified by the classic Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) activity of **'sucking a raisin'** and similar activities.

In particular, attention is directed towards the broader characteristics **of**, and **reasons for**, mindfulness. This then addresses the significance of the **collective** as well as **individual** meanings and purposes embedded within mindfulness and for which it is (and can be) deployed.

Clarity on the mapping of mindfulness is gained by considered the level of emphasis on instrumental or substantial goals–**the raisin or the reason?**

Mindfulness defined

Clarity about what mindfulness actually is requires a broader perspective and a deeper understanding of the ideas beneath the differing discussions about mindfulness. It requires a way to represent the core components while allowing nuanced application. The definition of mindfulness offered here was crafted with the intent of seeing its relevance to the western leadership context without losing the traditional Buddhist meaning.

The definition of mindfulness offered here was crafted with the intent of seeing its relevance to the western leadership context without losing the traditional Buddhist meaning.

Mindfulness is paying full and proper attention to presence, context and purpose[78].
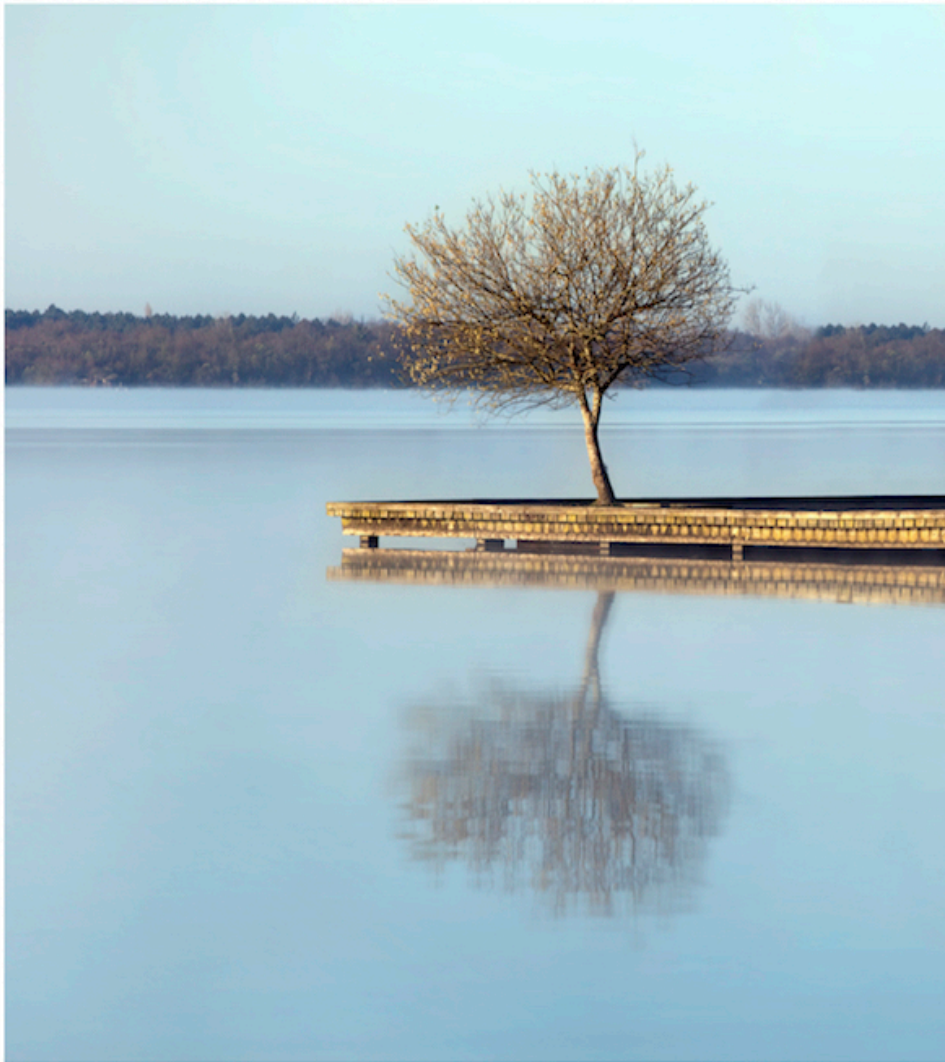
The Wheel of Mindfulness – A Framework of the Features of Mindfulness[79]

Core features of mindfulness are described in the diagram and explanation below - the shared elements of inner and outer experience, the positive aspects of the different quadrants or emphasis of mindfulness, and the potential negative side of each position if strongly held .

Inner Mindfulness Experience – The 3 A's

The inner experience of mindfulness is made up of the common assumptions about what it is to pay full and proper attention to experience.

The description of the core internal components of mindfulness as the three A's (awareness, attention, and acceptance) strives to be an inclusive, pragmatic approach to understanding the internal experience of mindfulness. It relates to clarity and breadth of *awareness*; metacognition and regulation of *attention*; and an attitude of *acceptance* that ranges from open and curious to compassionate and grateful.

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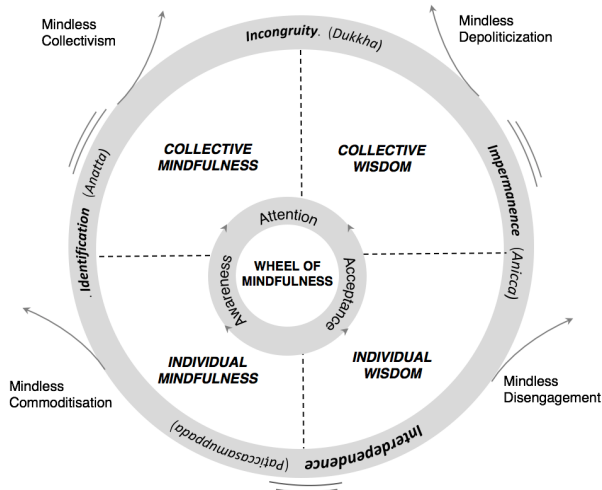
Figure 3.2. The Wheel of Mindfulness

Outer Mindfulness Experience – The 3 I's

The outer experience of mindfulness concerns the **meaning** of paying full and proper attention to experience. There are frequently shared, background assumptions about the nature of existence, assumptions that underlie the significance of attending to presence, context and purpose. In traditional Buddhist terminology, these are equated with dependent origination and three marks of existence. To enhance accessibility while avoiding too restrictive a view of the philosophical origins of these assumptions, these could be characterized as 3-Is of *incongruity, impermanence* and *identification*.

These assumptions refer to:

- the inherently disjointed and unsatisfactory nature of our experiential existence (incongruity – represented by the Buddhist off-centre axle and the assumption of suffering or dukkha);
- the impermanence of ourselves and everything around us (all things shall pass);
- and a tendency to see the world in terms of our personal development and gratification, together with the importance of understanding the dynamics and limitations of this process (*identification* - clinging to and craving for self).

The issue of identification is particularly relevant for leadership development as it refers to our tendency to identify with a solid unchanging sense of self, undermining our capacity to develop mindfulness of the causal and interrelated nature of our work and personal actions. We see the translation of this important idea in business discussion around an emerging acknowledgment that wise leadership requires reduced ego.

The four forms of mindfulness in the workplace

"*The goal of the mindful perspective is to increase cognitive flexibility and to thereby increase behavioral flexibility and the ability to adapt to one's current environment in a meaningful manner. Empirical evidence spanning four decades attests to the*

beneficial effects of a mindful vs. mindless perspective" [80]

Our understanding of the potential for mindfulness in the workplace is helped with the clarity provided by:

- The inclusive definition

- The understanding of shared internal and external features described above

- Clarity around the different forms it can take depending on the emphasis within the axis of individual /collective of instrumental/substantive described below.

The forms of individual and collective mindfulness are centrally concerned with self-development and organizational development - the performance and health of individuals and organizations.

The forms of individual and collective wisdom extend the concern with mindfulness to consideration of the meaning and purpose of enterprises. They focus attention onto a deeper exploration of the source of catastrophic living[81] to which individual and collective mindfulness seeks to adapt us while, at the same time, questioning the value of focusing on a successful self or high performing and sustainable organization in an inherently interdependent and impermanent world.

Individual Mindfulness

Individual-instrumental views of mindfulness focus on individual incongruity, impermanence and identification.

In this quadrant the incongruity is experienced as suffering from both our experiences of failure, pain and loss and our thoughts about the experiences.

Our awareness of impermanence comes through observation of the ephemeral and shifting nature of the thoughts, sensations and feelings through presence in the moment.

In terms of identification, the focus becomes one of knowledge and questioning of our identification processes through a meta-cognitive awareness of our self-narrated stories about events, the unproductive and anxiety-creating ruminations that follow from them, and the value of a non-judgmental and compassionate response towards our experiences and our entrapments within these stories.

Individual Wisdom

Individual-substantive approaches to mindfulness also focus on individual incongruities, impermanence and issues of identification.

However, they focus on the incongruities that exist in the form of the deficiencies we experience through gaps between our purposes and our achievements, as well as the problematic consequences of personal and interpersonal immoral conduct.

There is also a focus on the impermanence of changing cultural discourses that entrap us within their problematizations of the world, accompanied by our experience of complexity, emergence and lack of control in an ever-changing world.

And, finally, there is questioning of our identifications with restricted perspectives from which we seek to exercise control over the world, as well as obsessions with individualistic and commercialized self-improvement solutions.

Collective Mindfulness

Collective-instrumental mindfulness approaches are centrally concerned with incongruities brought about by different and shifting views of group tasks and institutional goals rather than those of us as an individual.

The focus on impermanence in this case is due to the unpredictably emergent nature of complex systems, as well as changing orientations and situations that render yesterday's solutions out of date.

For the collective instrumental dimension, identification is seen through clinging to and following earlier and established rules, understandings, identities and views about the situation at hand.

Collective Wisdom

Collective-substantive forms of mindfulness are again concerned with incongruities, impermanence and identification.

In this case however, the central concern is with incongruities brought about through organized irresponsibility and conflicts between social, ecological and economic goals.

Notions of impermanence relate to organizational entities and systems in which integrative solutions are not sought, and in which there are ongoing challenges involved in letting go of the past while letting the future come.

Questions around identification involve the restriction of individuals and organizations identifying with the narrow interests and concerns of their own institutional arrangements and survival at the expense of a more expansive view of social and ecological sustainability and survival.

Benefits and risks of each position

The benefits of developing mindfulness will depend on the focus of effort as it relates to each position. All these positions complement each other and can be synergistic.

An emphasis on *individual mindfulness* provides identifiable therapeutic benefits and commercial outcomes relevant for sustainable success in an attention economy.

An emphasis on *collective mindfulness* creates contribution through inter-personal and social intelligence and relational leadership in complex and changing environments.

An emphasis on *individual wisdom* leads to serious reflection on the basis and value of our presumed identities and meaningful endeavours, including consideration of the dysfunctionalities created by uncritical acceptance of one-dimensional perspectives and externally imposed subjectivities.

An emphasis on *collective wisdom* extends such reflection into systematic and collective purposes, avoiding the dangers of organized irresponsibility.

"The benefits of developing mindfulness will depend on the focus of effort as it relates to each position…."

The risks

If unsuccessful, however, the perspectives within the different arenas may be mindlessly pursued as the real or desirable approach to mindfulness without recognition of the partiality of their views or of the way in which doing so limits their potential.

The different arenas may be mindlessly pursued as the real or desirable approach to mindfulness without recognition of the partiality of their views

Should this occur, individual mindfulness programs may embody an uncritical form of therapeutic individualism and institutional commercialism.

Collective mindfulness concepts and programs may be pursued as a form of mindless collectivism, excluding any consideration of the purposes for which it is being deployed.

Individual wisdom initiatives may become entrapped in marginal movements or disempowering negative critiques of a commercialization.

Collective wisdom movements may relapse into a simple counter or critique, which may display as a populistic, hypocritical, bland and blanket ideological rejection of corporate capitalism.

DEVELOPING LEADERS TO PERFORM IN UNCERTAINTY

A practical framework for Mindful Leadership Development

Currently the majority of 'mindful leadership' programs support individual leaders to become more mindful and are based on an emphasis on mindfulness as an individual phenomenon, despite the current understandings of leadership as a relational process[82].

These programs tend to focus on instrumental issues of performance and well-being. While substantive ethical, political and social issues are sometimes incorporated, the focus of the mindfulness programs has tended to be more instrumental in character and are now referred to as first generation programs.[83]

The tendency for individual mindfulness programs (first generation) to take the form of self-development, marketed as an elixir for enhancing performance, improving sleep, creating the body beautiful, etc., is regarded by some as a counter-productive form of spiritual narcissism. In *The Happiness Industry*, Davies[84] documents how a scientific-medical-bureaucratic-commodified complex 'ends up blaming - and medicating - individuals for their own misery and ignores the context that has contributed to it'.

Davies writes that in an era in which institutions require greater engagement from managers and employees, yet undermine many of the social and economic foundations for such engagement, the happiness industry provides an 'objective, measurable, administered' solution. It manages the 'problem' by creating a new 'science of subjective feeling', an administrative system of 'measurement, surveillance and government' of feelings, brains and behaviour, and the implementation of a growing battery of 'happiness monitoring' techniques. In so doing, it marginalizes consideration of the 'external' social and political origins of the impermanence, stress and distraction being experienced, and the 'wisdom' of pursuing the socio-economic changes required to address them.

In addressing such challenges, the alternative approach of Buddhist education (which emphasizes ethical dimensions) informs a variety of emerging workplace mindfulness initiatives and represents a key feature of developing second generation mindfulness programs[85] which are termed interventions.

Second generation mindfulness interventions in leadership go beyond mindfulness as a means to reduce the stress of continual change and aim at instrumental support for organizational performance in an 'economy of attention'.

As discussed earlier, mindfulness is best understood as an inherently multi-dimensional term. The diagram below sets out the key shared elements and four forms of mindfulness relevant to the workplace. These forms include objectives that are relevant to both first and second-generation programs.
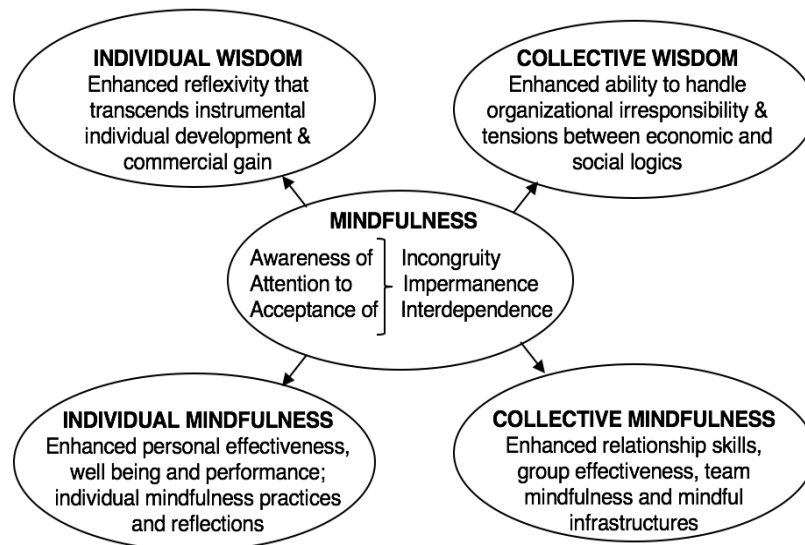
Figure 4.1. Second generation mindfulness programs

Developing Mindful Leadership

Given the four forms that mindfulness may take in an organization there are four types of development programs which, collectively, can transform an organization's leadership by delivering the benefits listed above to ultimately generate profit and purpose.

1. A program to develop individual mindfulness will ensure people are present.
2. A program to develop individual wisdom will ensure that leaders are kind.
3. A program to develop collective mindfulness will ensure low-risk, reliable systems.
4. A program to develop collective wisdom will ensure conscious governance.

This leads us to consider what programs promoting such a framework might look like, and what kind of impact they might be expected to have.

What, then, are the kinds of skills, competencies, capabilities or qualities that different types of mindfulness programs could be expected or required to deliver? And what identifiable behaviours, accomplishments and outcomes are intended to be achieved?

As with any other attempt to define skills, competencies or capabilities as outcomes required from management or leadership programs, this task is

"Given the four forms that mindfulness may take in an organization there are four types of development programs which, collectively, can transform an organization's leadership"

fraught with ambiguity, tension and controversy. It is particularly pronounced when it involves, as it does in this case, a shift from programs that create understanding, to versions that incorporate regulation and/or application of what is known.

The next four chapters will explain what these programs might look like. Together they allow us to cut through the confusion surrounding mindfulness and work and provide a framework to guide the generation of performance and profit with the purpose of leading to societal progress.

Cultivating Present People

> *"Your work is to discover your work and then with all your heart to give yourself to it." –Buddha*
>
> *"Throw yourself into some work you believe in with all you heart, live for it, die for it, and you will find happiness that you had thought could never be yours."*
> *Dale Carnegie*

It seems like everyone is dealing with the stress of change, and while some of us are also experiencing the joy of uncertainty and engagement at work there are many who don't.

In a context of change and chaos in the corporate world, the benefits of mindfulness for the individual include a myriad of health and relationship outcomes associated with lowering the negative impact of stress and gaining control over the way we think and engage at work.

In this chapter we review the *promises, pragmatics and programs* that relate to individual mindfulness in the workplace. We then describe the types of knowledge, capabilities and behaviours that would allow people to gain these benefits.

These core elements are summarized in a table which can be used as the basis for developing tailored individual mindfulness development interventions - interventions that can bring health, happiness and engagement.

Individual mindfulness: Promises pragmatics and programs

Promises

Individual mindfulness in the workplace is promoted as a means for improving individual performance[86], well-being and the relationships required for bringing these about. It is described in psychology as 'a receptive attention to, and awareness of, present events and experiences'[87], and commonly represented in leadership programs as a 'mode of consciousness characterized by a commitment to purposeful, present moment awareness'[88].

Currently the most commonly conducted mindfulness programs are built on a basis of science that describes Mindfulness Based Stress Relief – MBSR[89], Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy – MBCT[90]; and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy – ACT[91].

Individual mindfulness is seen as directing 'minds' towards the nature and importance of awareness, attention and acceptance in how we experience ourselves, others and the world around us. The separate dimensions are significant, overlapping and interdependent, with awareness affected by attention, attention influenced by attitudes, and attention and attitudes influenced by what we are aware of. Understanding the

distinctions is very helpful in demystifying mindfulness and using it as a pragmatic tool for modern work.

Overall, the benefits of mindfulness are attributed to these combined attributes, defined as *'re-perceiving'* such that rather than 'being immersed in the drama of our personal narrative or life story, we are able to stand back and simply witness it.

The psychological benefits of developing this trait or attaining this state are the elimination or reduction of aggravated emotional responses and stressful and unproductive ruminations, and an increase in helpful self-reflection.

Pragmatics

Awareness of experience refers to our conscious registration of stimuli, including the five physical senses, kinesthetic senses, and the activities of the mind. It is our direct, most immediate contact with reality. This dimension of mindfulness involves noticing what is being experienced and allows us to see more. When we broaden our focus, we can notice our 'inner' world (bodily, feeling and mental states), the world of the 'other' (such states in others); and the 'outer' (complex systems that define and constrain our world). In this way, mindfulness unites a broad awareness of body and feelings, in oneself and others, with noticing situational complexities and 'weak signals' of events not working out as expected.

In Buddhist teaching the numerous points of focus for mindfulness practice are described variously as the four pastures, four fields, or four foundations as depicted below. Dhamma refers to the teachings of Buddha but also means the ideas we have of the way life works - this includes things like our preconceived ideas and the way we understand life.
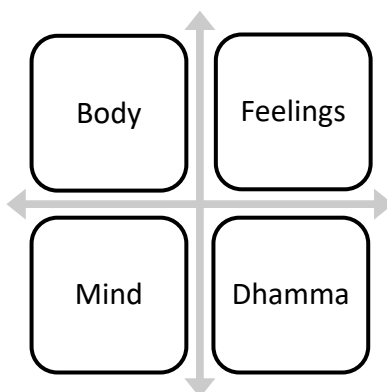
Figure 5.1: The four foundations of mindfulness

Attention involves a focusing of awareness to highlight aspects of experience. Mindfulness as a disciplined approach to attention involves attention regulation and control together with reflective awareness of attention processes. This involves the capacity to deliberately select objects of attention, sustain the attention and switch effectively between objects of attention. Mindfulness, in this sense, involves disciplined attention to immediate experience with less unproductive ruminating about what is experienced. It involves understanding, avoiding and paying attention to the wandering and habitual thoughts and thought processes which restrict how we live.

As a quality of attention, mindfulness is crucially linked to *meta-cognition* of what we are aware of and attend to. Meta-cognition is commonly voiced in terms of thought about thought, awareness of awareness, or attention to attention. It encourages a degree of detachment in which our subject becomes object. This includes distinguishing between *primary* thoughts, experiences and consequences and the nature and effect of *secondary* elaborations about them. This can be understood as a perceptual shift from the content of the thought … toward the thought as an event occurring in the mind. This enables us to notice our habits of attention and by being less automatically hooked by them, develops our facility for controlling attention and allowing a wider landscape of experience and choice.

Mindfulness is also identified with a particular attitude towards what is experienced - one of **acceptance**. For many, this equates to a state of openness and non-judgement but is frequently extended to include care and compassion. For Buddhists it is associated with approaching an ideal state of poise, which is about combining an even-minded and calm mental state, with a non-prejudicial attitude towards all things.

Programs

Initiatives intended to develop such traits and states of mindfulness - Mindfulness Based Initiatives (MBIs) are multi-dimensional and variable in character. The 8-week meditation-based Mindfulness Based Stress Relief (MBSR) programs have influenced MBIs, but the diversity of MBIs extends through modifications to MBSR style programs, variations in the types of meditation employed and the development of non-meditation-based programs.

Currently outside of work the most commonly conducted mindfulness programs are Mindfulness Based Stress Relief – MBSR[92], Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy – MBCT[93]; and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy – ACT[94].

Programs conducted in organizations tend to add tailored work context, examples and objectives to these approaches. For example, they may add leadership strength training to the basic approach to mindfulness.

MBIs vary in length, combining different levels and types of meditation and informal and non-meditative practices. Meditation methods vary and are commonly compared to different ways to cook or different forms of medicine.

Considerable variety also exists in the form and level of non-meditative activities added to meditation, such as mindfulness-without-meditation programs and the supplementation of MBSR style relief programs by positive psychology strength programs.

The most prominent alternative to meditation-based mindfulness is the type of cognitive mindfulness programs promoted by Ellen Langer[95], and extended into the sports arena[96]. These can be represented as an alternative Western approach to the Eastern contemplative programs or as complementary methods for achieving mindfulness rather than different views of the nature of mindfulness itself.

Knowledge

Individual mindfulness focuses on individual incongruity, impermanence and identification.

In this form of mindfulness, the incongruity is experienced as suffering from both our experiences of failure, pain and loss and our thoughts about the experiences.

Our awareness of impermanence comes through observation of the shifting nature of the thoughts, sensations and feelings through presence in the moment. In terms of identification, the focus becomes one of knowledge and questioning of our identification processes through an awareness of our self-narrated stories about events, the anxiety-creating ruminations that follow from them, and the value of a non-judgmental and compassionate response towards our experiences and entrapments in our stories.

Capabilities

Within the individual mindfulness arena, the capabilities to be developed involve:

- awareness of the direct experiences of suffering within, and the unsatisfactory nature of experience when unmediated by our thoughts about and responses to it;
- the partial and shifting nature of our thoughts, physical experiences and feelings; and the degree to which we view the world through our own self-centered beliefs about, and judgements of, these phenomena;
- paying sustained attention to these phenomena, taking them into account in regulating our attentiveness towards them and our responses; and
- through acceptance, being able to constructively direct this regulation without being entrapped in distracting and painful judgment-based ruminations, and to do so in a manner that is informed by curiosity and compassion, towards ourselves, others and events.

A peaceful state of mind, often referred to as a state of equanimity, is required to achieve this level of control over our mental activity.

Behaviours

In general, what would be observable in people who have mastered individual mindfulness at work would be:

- an awareness of and focus on self, others and complex environments;
- a regulation of attention with an engagement in reflective meta-cognition of self-narratives and perspectives;
- levels of equanimity in accepting with curiosity and compassion the results of this
- awareness and attention; and evidence of avoidance of mindless behaviour through reduced anxiety and stress, enhanced resilience, less reactive behaviour and improved relationships.

Table 5.1 below summarizes the results of developing greater individual mindfulness.

Table 5.1. Individual Mindfulness

	KNOWLEDGE	CAPABILITIES	BEHAVIOURAL OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE ACCOMPLISHMENTS
INDIVIDUAL MINDFULNESS	**Incongruity** Twin arrows & surplus suffering	**Awareness** Of the twin arrows, present-momentness & the self-narrated nature of experience	Demonstrated awareness of self, others & complex environments	e.g. low levels of stress
				e.g. select, sustain & switch attention
	Impermanence Present momentness & the transience of thoughts, feelings, sensations	**Attention** Attention regulation & disciplined meta-cognition of above individual experiences	Demonstrated regulation of attention & double loop reflective metacognition	e.g. cooperative social relationships
	Identification Metacognition & reflexivity on self-narratives	**Acceptance** Open, curious & compassionate attendance to the above experiences	Demonstrated calm & equanimity in reacting to stress & attending to relationships	

Performance outcomes of individual mindfulness at work

People practicing this form of mindfulness would be expected to be rewarded with lower levels of stress than the circumstances might otherwise dictate. This alone will lead to greater performance at work, less absenteeism and presenteeism and more engagement. In addition, the capacity to manage their own attention would be expected to lead to individuals with greater task mastery, better decision making and the personal effectiveness that flows from reduced distraction. Co-operative relationships that stem from the improved communication that results from being able to listen intently understand others and care appropriately would be measurable through key performance indicators.

Key Points

Organizations and their people desperately need solutions to the stress inherent in change. Developing individual mindfulness is a way to enhance personal performance, wellbeing and relationships.

The key components of the internal experience of mindfulness are attention, awareness and acceptance. From this perspective these mental activities are focused on the four foundations of mindfulness mentioned above – the body, mind, feelings and our

perceptions.

Most mindfulness-at-work programs are predominately focused on this form of mindfulness with various additions. They are built from variations of the mindfulness-based stress reduction model. One important exception is the non-meditative model of noticing.

When learning individual mindfulness, people become more aware of the distinction between what they find difficult in life and the way that their responses to those issues make their situations more or less difficult. Iindividual mindfulness teaches us to accept the changing nature of our thoughts and emotions and helps us escape the stories in our heads. Our capacity to control our own attention and attitudes is enhanced with this skill.

When we become skilled, people will observe us caring for others and the context in which we find our self. We will be seen to reduce stress in others rather than exacerbate it and will experience more satisfying relationships. Individual mindfulness will make us more present and productive at work and home.

LEADERSHIP STEPS – INDIVIDUAL WISDOM

Cultivating Kind Leaders

> *"Great Leaders are not merely effective, they are ethical. Moral principles guide their purposes and practices. People follow them because they believe in them. Great leaders engender trust in their integrity, their competence and their intentions".* **Nelson Mandela**
>
> *"Be kind whenever possible. It's always possible".* **Dalai Lama**

Most of us have experienced leadership that was damaging and would have concerns about the behaviour of some of the most influential people in our world today. Some scholars believe that the majority of leadership positions are occupied with dark triad personalities (narcissists, Machiavellians, and psychopaths)[97] because of their commitment to gain power and social dominance and the charisma that makes it possible.

However, in reality kindness is more effective. Studies from the Harvard Business School have shown that kindness inspires trust. So when leaders display warmth employees are motivated[98] to the extent that kind leaders perform better than others[99]. Moral excellence in leaders has been shown to result in employees who feel more loyal and committed and more likely to go out of their way to be helpful. This moral excellence is demonstrated by behaviour that is self-sacrificing[100] . So apparently, the evidence supports our experience - that kindness is inspiring.

How can we understand this frustrating situation? Maybe it's just difficult to be kind in chaos if you don't have the right strategies. When everything is moving, and stress descends, many leaders revert to power tactics. Approaches to mindfulness which are individual but embedded in moral frameworks can help.

We term this *individual wisdom.*

In an environment of uncertainty, the benefits of mindfulness embedded in a moral framework include the personal peace and professional performance resulting from a strong moral compass and sense of purpose. The complexity that uncertainty causes can create a mental burden when making decisions. A clear moral framework eases that burden, engenders trust in others, and clears the way to productivity and contribution.

In this chapter I review the promises, pragmatics and programs relating to mindfulness from an individual perspective with a concern for the things that matter, then show you how to develop more of these qualities.

I then describe the types of knowledge, capabilities and behaviours that would allow people to gain the benefits of individual wisdom. They are summarized in table form and can be used as the basis for developing tailored, mindfulness development interventions.

Promises

For promoters of mindfulness as *Individual Wisdom*, a valuable component is the direction of attention to *purpose*. The pursuit of individual mindfulness does not exclude attending to purpose, the processes of metacognition and consideration of aims and goals. Exponents of individual wisdom highlight this dimension.

However, the defining feature of 'purpose' incorporates the concerns of many Buddhist scholars and advocates for systems leadership about the limitations of individualistic self-centredness, and the inherent value of deeper reflection on what could be called unnecessary or surplus suffering.

From the perspective of individual wisdom, Buddhist philosophy provides an alternative to the unsustainable, individualistic cravings generated by capitalism's religion of consumerism.

Table 6.1 The Noble Eight Fold Path

	The Noble Eigth Fold Path
1	**Right view**: translates as right understanding or perspective and meaning the capacity to observe phenomena and not become attached to a view or perspective
2	**Right Intention**: translates to right thought and involves the practitioner's intention to rid themselves of immoral conduct.
3	**Right speech**: is about making the best use of our words including abstaining from lying, verbal abuse and idle gossip.
4	**Right action**: is translated as right conduct and is concerned with acting in ways that do not produce harm to self or others.
5	**Right livelihood**: infers that practitioners do not involve themselves in occupations that cause harm to self or others.
6	**Right effort**: is translated as right diligence and concerned with the persistent effort to concern oneself with avoiding harmful actions, words or thoughts.
7	**Right mindfulness**: is translated as right attention or right awareness and is concerned that practitioners remain alert to the phenomena of life and do not act or speak from inattention.
8	**Right concentration**: is the practice of concentration focused on an object such as the breath, a sound (mantra) or object until meditative state of absorption is achieved.

Pragmatics

When individual mindfulness is restricted to stress-relief it reinforces the self-centred individualism seen as a basic problem in Western society.

In contrast, remembrance of the spiritual or moral purposes of mindfulness practices is proposed here. This involves a recognition of the interdependent character and intertwining 'Buddhist ideas of right view, right effort and right mindfulness, all of which are aspects of the eight-fold path described above).

In this way, mindfulness is viewed as an inherently ethical doctrine and practice incorporating a philosophy of kindness, gratitude and compassion. Therefore, it is traditionally practiced alongside other meditation practices which deliberately enhance these philosophies and are seen as the social foundation of mindfulness.
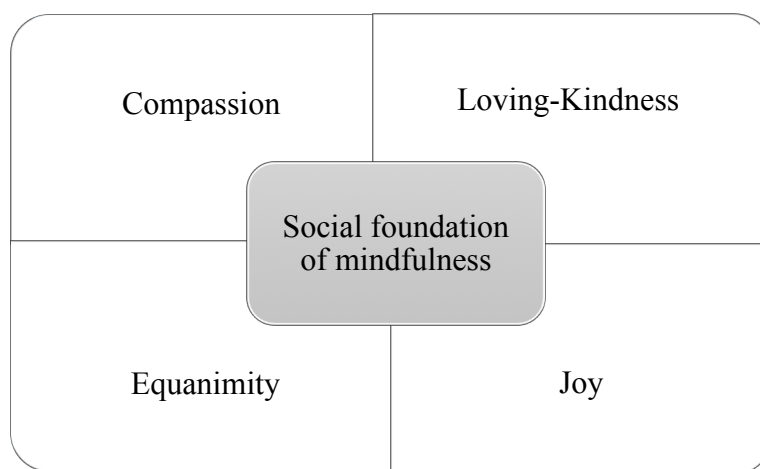
Figure 6.1 – The Social Foundation of Mindfulness

Programs

This approach to individual mindfulness promotes the development of a form of wisdom based on a deeper awareness of, attention to and acceptance of moral issues and the essential nature of existence, grounded in an understanding of the importance of reducing our own sense of self-importance. In doing so, mindfulness has the potential to support a world view that recognizes multiple perspectives, interdependence, and systemic complexity and emergence and therefore to prepare leaders and their organizations to face disruption and the elements of a VUCA environment. One example of how programs that might develop these type of qualities is the combination of MBSR and Bohm Dialogue training [101] in a course on complexity, consciousness and management. Educating leaders on the ethical dimensions of mindfulness is a key feature of second generation mindfulness programs[102].

Most training in ethical mindfulness occurs outside the world of work in centre-based programs where participants attend weekly, monthly or daily sessions of education and meditation supplemented with retreats. Typical centre and retreat programs can be found at the Insight Meditation Society (www.dharma.org) and Spirit Rock (www.spiritrock.org).

The foundation program to develop mindfulness through meditation is Vipassana, which means 'to see things as they really are'[103], referring to the capacity to both observe the mind and reduce self-focused distractions. Vipassana is typically taught in a 10-day retreat where participants sustain long-days of seated meditation practices to create non-judgmental observation of thought and feelings while maintaining silence and ethical precepts. A similar retreat program occurs in France's Plum Village where mindfulness is woven into daily life. Meditators are immersed for 1-4 weeks from 5.00 am to 11.00 pm with activities involving sitting and walking meditations along with hiking, cooking, eating and talking mindfully. This is done alongside reflection on daily dharma talks that introduce the ethical frameworks of Buddhism, as well as community activity that highlights the importance of sangha or spiritual community.

Knowledge

Individual Wisdom approaches to mindfulness focus on individual incongruities, impermanence and issues of identification. However, they also focus on the inconsistencies that exist in the form of the deficiencies we experience through gaps between our purposes and our achievements, as well as the problematic consequences of personal and interpersonal immoral conduct.

There is also a focus on the impermanence of changing social conversations that entrap us with concerns of the world, accompanied by our experience of complexity, emergence and lack of control in that ever-changing world.

And, finally, there is a questioning of our identifications with restricted perspectives from which we seek to exercise control over the world, as well as obsessions with individualistic and commercialized self-improvement solutions.

Capabilities

Within individual wisdom, capabilities to be developed involve awareness of the inevitable incongruity or frustration in our ability to realize our purposes; and the impermanent and changing nature of how these purposes are constructed, along with the problems associated with commercial and self-centered solutions.

Programs then go further to pay attention to these phenomena in systematic, disciplined and sustained reflection; and, in addition, foster acceptance of the inevitability of our limitations and the advantage of a sympathetic approach to our struggles in this area.

Behaviours

For individual wisdom, the behaviours that will be observable in people who have mastered this skill involve displaying awareness of incongruities, impermanence and self-centered/commercialized entrapments. This will be seen in how they define the purpose of their endeavours; how far and in what ways they are able to regulate and reflect on such matters; the degree to which they are accepting, curious and compassionate (towards themselves as well as others) in such enterprises; and in what ways and to what degree they possess and achieve behavioural outcomes and accomplishments that avoid mindless restrictions and unreflective self-concern in their

endeavours.

Measures of such behaviours are notoriously difficult to operationalize. Work done in this area, such as identifying meta-abilities or meta-qualities[104] refers to a broad list of capabilities and attributes including creativity, mental agility, and self-confidence. Identification of whether managers' balanced learning habits and skills, as well as self-knowledge have succeeded in developing such meta-qualities, however, relies on broad categories, qualitative observation and -feedback from peers, subordinates and supervisors , rather than simple or quantifiable measures or observations from singular viewpoints.

After decades of effort and insights from the proliferation of programs, studies and measures of mindfulness, there is an important task and challenge to be found in increasing attention to how this can be achieved through a focus on wisdom as evidenced in studies of second generation interventions[105].

Outcomes

With consistent demonstration of the behaviours described above, positive outcomes could be expected in terms of: increased motivation and engagement with self-selected goals; a capacity for rapid responses and redirection in situations of crisis due to a clear moral framework; and a high level of experimental initiative and achievements resulting from the meta skills of creativity and curiosity. These meta skills emerge naturally from an acceptance of impermanence and interrelatedness and detachment from the ego or the idea of a solid "self".

Table 6. 2 Individual Wisdom

	KNOWLEDGE	CAPABILITIES	BEHAVIOURAL OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE ACCOMPLISHMENTS
INDIVIDUAL WISDOM	**Incongruity** Subordination to self-imposed quests	**Awareness** Of subordination to transient, self-imposed & commercialized self-centredness & control	Demonstrated meta-skills of self-awareness in establishing purpose & controls	e.g. level of engagement with goals and direction of action e.g. rapid & effective redirection in response to unpredicted crises e.g. level of experimental initiatives & achievements
	Impermanence Fluid cognitive constructions of purpose	**Attention** Attention regulation & disciplined meta-cognition of such forms of subordination	Demonstrated meta-abilities in self- regulating behaviour based on such awareness	
	Identification Commercial self-centered entrapments	**Acceptance** Openness, curiosity & compassion towards such entrapments & their transcendence	Demonstrated meta-qualities in open, curious & compassionate responses to challenges	

A focus on substantial purposes, provides a sustainable alternative to the self-centred cravings of consumerism.

Our capacity to focus on purpose is supported by a moral framework. One example is the eight-fold path.

Second generation mindfulness programs add a moral or ethical framework to the instrumental forms, such as MBSR.

This form of mindfulness leads to a clear understanding of the nature of life such as impermanence, interrelatedness, the value of reducing our attachment to a strong sense of self and acceptance that life is not always a comfortable experience.

People with these skills are able to choose their focus of attention and maintain an awareness of their purpose.

A consistent display of calm compassionate behaviour would be a result of learning this form of mindfulness.

High levels of engagement and innovation can be expected because this form of mindfulness develops leaders to be kind.

LEADERSHIP STEPS - COLLECTIVE MINDFULNESS

Cultivating Careful Systems and Effective Teams

"The things we fear most in organizations -- fluctuations, disturbances, imbalances - are the primary sources of creativity." Margaret Wheatley

"The only certainty in this world is uncertainty." Buddha

Organizational accidents can be catastrophic. Events that occur within complex corporations from industries such as aviation, nuclear power plants, banks, oil companies and others can create devastating levels of damage on uninvolved populations, assets and the environment. They are difficult to understand, control predict or foresee. Examples of such events are listed below:

- The 1989 Alaskan oil spill from the 'Exxon Valdez'.

- The loss of the Russian submarine 'Kursk' during exercises in 2000, in which 118 crew died.

- The nuclear accident in Fukushima in 2001, following an earthquake and tsunami.

- The Beaconsfield mine collapse in Tasmania in 2006.
- The 2010 Deepwater Horizon rig explosion in the Gulf of Mexico, killing 11 and causing millions of barrels of crude oil to spill into the ocean.
- The 2011 naval explosion in Cyprus when containers of gunpowder exploded, killing 13, injuring 62 and putting the power station out of action for days.
- The horrific Sava building collapse in Bangladesh in 2013 which killed 1129 people.
- The Turkish mine disaster in 2014 where an underground explosion trapped hundreds of miners of whom 301 died.

- The Florida bridge collapse in March 2018.(casualties, disruption?)

Mindfulness is about noticing. Noticing events around you is a path to reducing disastrous incidents by minimizing human error or predicting potential problems so they can be moderated or limited. This is *organizational mindfulness*.

Understanding leadership, as a relationship that is embedded in the daily events of organizations, supports this type of noticing and results in effective group outcomes. Being present allows connection and nuanced understanding of what is going on for people, within companies and their context. This is *relational mindfulness*.

Organizational and relational mindfulness are aspects of *collective mindfulness.*

Promises

With a concern for *collective mindfulness*, the focus moves from individual to organizational development and the attention on the collective is predominantly instrumental. It tends to concentrate attention on developing and supporting forms of thought and action that, while enhancing collective performance and well-being (health, sustainability etc.), pays little attention to substantive goals.

A focus on collective mindfulness views mindfulness as a state of collective (rather than individual) mind, and relational (rather than individual) leadership. When such collective mindfulness is absent people still may act with care but not with respect for others. In terms of generating a careful collective mind this is a two-way street, as people can't be careful unless they take account of others and unless others do the same. Being careful is a social rather than an individual act, and collective mindfulness occurs at the organizational, interpersonal and group levels.

The most publicized research and programs with this focus are those surrounding high reliability organizations (HROs)[106]. Here *organizational mindfulness* is presented as a structure and culture that supports a productive, safety-enhancing vigilant wariness. It incorporates three principles of *anticipation* and two principles of *containment* making up five principles of organizational mindfulness which are:

- preoccupation with failures rather than successes;
- reluctance to simplify interpretations;
- sensitivity to operations;
- commitment to resilience; and
- deference to expertise through encouragement of a fluid decision-making system which produces a collective state of mindfulness[107].

The significance of collective mindfulness extends beyond its application to HROs managing large, complex and potentially catastrophic technological systems. It is embedded in the general value of how vigilant we are about how we make sense of the world including our response to corporate fads, crisis-ridden changing circumstances, and hyper-competitive environments as well as our contributions to the sustainability of reliability-seeking organizations.

Along with organizational mindfulness, collective mindfulness is about *relational mindfulness*[108]. Relational mindfulness is about focusing on interpersonal relationships and is an extension of ideas drawn from mindfulness literature in therapy[109], adaptive and relational leadership[110,111] and an active process termed mindful organizing[112].

Relational mindfulness includes such activities as: *sensitively* responding to others; making sense (*sensemaking*) and building sense (*sensegiving* or *sensebuilding*) of, with, and for, others[113]. It also incorporates recognizing established and changing mindsets and handling the emotions and interpersonal dynamics that surround adaptive change. It is an important aspect of appreciating and enhancing social dialogue through crucial

conversations using techniques such as surfacing undiscussables etc.[114]. It is important to emphasize that collective minding extends the analysis of inter-personal relations to encompass understanding and improving interpersonal relations.

At the group level, collective mindfulness is seen as both a component and support for *collective mind* and group processes - *collective minding[115]*. Traditional theories of group development define maturity in terms of shared purpose, established behaviours, shared mental models, commitment to each other and the value of the group etc.

The collective mind however involves shared mindfulness[116] as a wariness about divergences within the group and their changing nature. This makes a group more capable of intelligent action.

Pragmatics

Approaches to collective mindfulness involve consideration of the collective nature and influences upon organizational attention[117], situational appropriateness of mindless routines[118], implications of ongoing impermanence and interdependence for continuous reorganization[119], and processes of 'mindful organizing'[120].

As such these approaches incorporate and embed implications of classic Buddhist teaching of the nature of existence being interrelated and impermanent and recognizing that we do not have a solid impermanent "self". These teachings of the nature of existence arise from the foundation teachings of the four noble truths as described below.

The Second Noble Truth

The four noble truths represent the central teachings of the Buddha as elucidated when he awakened to the true reality of existence, this nature referring to the relativity of all that we do and all that exists. The teaching describes both the causal nature of human suffering and the path to liberation from suffering. It is formulated as a medical diagnosis, providing a problem, a cause to the problem, a solution and a practical approach[121].
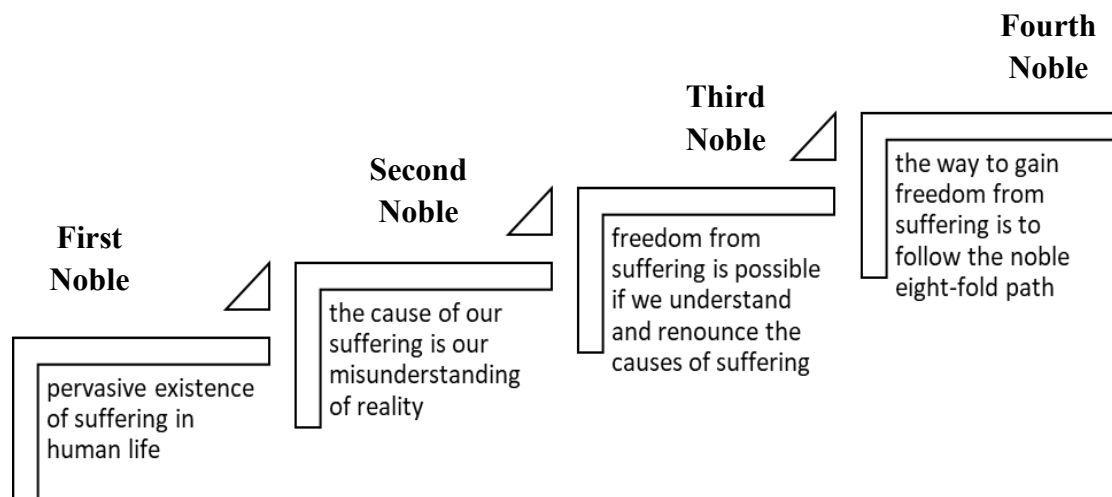

Figure 7.1 The Four Noble Truths

The second noble truth emphasises how our misunderstanding of the way life works can create trouble for us, a misunderstanding that includes a solid sense of self rather than seeing ourselves in an interrelated system. It is this understanding, along with clarity about relativity, that allows us to see the normality of ever changing environment.

Programs

Programs addressing collective mindfulness are less prevalent or standardized than those focused on individual mindfulness.

Organizational mindfulness and collective mind tend to be dealt with in programs for crisis management, safety and quality (mainly addressing 'high reliability' or 'managing the unexpected'), or as a component of training of crews for hazardous situations where distributed intelligence and cooperative behaviour are critical.

Relationship mindfulness, while explicitly addressed through interpersonal mindfulness and insight dialogue programs[122], is more frequently an individually-oriented component of consultancy-based mindful leadership courses.

Knowledge

Collective mindfulness approaches are centrally concerned with incongruities brought about by different and shifting views of group tasks and institutional goals rather than those affecting us as individuals.

The focus on impermanence here is the unpredictably emergent nature of complex systems, as well as changing orientations and situations that render yesterday's solutions out of date.

Identification, on the other hand, is seen through clinging to, and following, earlier and established rules, understandings, identities and views about the situation at hand.

Capabilities

Within the collective mindfulness capabilities to be developed, we include:

- awareness of different knowledge about and views of collective endeavours from those involved;
- the emergent and contextual nature of required action;
- organizational routines, beliefs and practices that support sustained attention to such matters;
- a value-based and politically-supported commitment to accepting such challenges; and
- the need for open and honest attending to difference and failure; and the contribution of ongoing wariness.

Behaviours

For collective mindfulness, the identification of observable behaviour accomplishments requires:

- specifically identifying the collective levels of awareness of diversity, uncertainty and emergence around group tasks and how they are, and should be, achieved;
- elaboration on levels of development of supportive mindful infrastructures based on established principles and further customization of high reliability principles of organization; and
- identifying and measuring mindful organizing behaviours and practices that support and develop these forms of awareness and attention practices.

Outcomes

The results of building skills in collective mindfulness should be a lower level of accidents in organizations and a high level of group goal achievements.

The capacity to discern changes in the environment early would also be expected to highlight emerging risks of disruptive change and spark creative solutions and innovation. The awareness of systems required here leads to reinforcement of the interconnectedness of people, business and society discussed in the next chapter.

Summary Tips

Collective mindfulness includes both organizational mindfulness and relational leadership.

The development of collective mindfulness skills holds the promise of reduced organizational accidents, enhanced leadership effectiveness, and quality of group achievements.

There are five principles of organizational mindfulness involving a preoccupation with failure, a reluctance to simplify, sensitivity to operations, commitment to resilience and deference to expertise.

Approaches to development of organizational mindfulness involve reducing mindless routines and becoming wary of, and accepting the normality of, constant change.

Collective Mindfulness allows groups to become knowledgeable about the constant change inherent in complex systems and to use the emergent nature of their situations to seed innovative solutions.

Relational mindfulness focuses on interpersonal relationships and involves skills such as *sensitivity, sensemaking* and *sensegiving* or *sensebuilding*.

Collective mindfulness leads to intelligent, effective groups.

Cultivating Ethical Governance

> *"To prosper over time, every company must not only deliver financial performance, but also show how it makes a positive contribution to society', Larry Fink.*
>
> *"The interconnected leader sees himself or herself as the generator of impulses into an interconnected system to realize the purpose of the organization." Dalai lama.*

Communities, societies and shareholders are losing faith in their organizations due to the unethical behaviour that is regularly reported.

The societal response is seen in the development of what are termed 'benefit organizations' or 'B Corps', which aim to address social and environmental issues parallel to creating shareholder wealth. These corporations are aligned to calls for new models of corporate governance that address the purported damage of time poverty and short-term focus. One strong example is the position taken by BlackRock, the world's largest asset management company. BlackRock's CEO, Larry Fink, in his 2017 letter to shareholders, espoused "a sense of purpose" driven by the understanding that "to prosper over time, every company must not only deliver financial performance but also show how it makes a positive contribution to society". The sentiments of BlackRock are echoed by consultants, directors and board experts seeking to create enduring organizations[123] that are effective in addressing the future challenges of our modern world.

In line with these calls for profit with purpose, organizations, conferences, programs and literature on *mindful leadership* and *conscious capitalism* presume and promote mindful organizational forms, exemplified in organizations such as Southwest Airlines and Starbucks, which focus on recognition of long term consequences of actions, simultaneous awareness of inner self, external reality and work impacts, and commitment to authenticity, truth and responsibility. The recommended new forms of organization reflect a broader interest in corporate governance and stakeholder models of the firm, involving the pursuit of a triple bottom line within more long term, sustainable and socially responsible forms of capitalism.

Moving from the question of what we would like from governance, to how boards will achieve it, aligns the call for greater purpose with mindfulness in the boardroom.

Supporters argue that success in meeting board responsibilities such as managing corporate strategy, performance risk, governance and the crucial choice of senior positions, is enhanced by the capacity to purposefully direct individual and group thought. While such a process can be developed to either an instrumental or substantive purpose it is, when substantial, an example of collective wisdom .

Promises

Advocates of *collective wisdom* extend the giving of full and proper attention to purpose to considerations of *collective purpose.*

In contrast to collective mindfulness, proponents of collective wisdom are concerned to link mindful leadership to the establishment of a higher sense of organizational purpose to overcome misalignments between economic interests and social values, and the sustainability of individual organizations to those of the broader economy, society and environment[124].

Proponents of mindful leadership who take this perspective discuss firms of endearment[125], 'conscious capitalism'[126], system leadership[127] and the attainment of a new level of consciousness[128] within 'second tier'[129], 'teal'[130] and 'deliberately developmental' organizations[131]. Laloux[132], for example, elaborates 'teal organization' principles in organizations such as Patagonia and Sun Hydraulics, based on self-management, wholeness and evolutionary purpose, while Kegan and Lahey[133] focus on 'deliberately developmental organizations' such as Next Jump and Bridgewater.

What all these discussions have in common is the suggestion that a new type of organization is required, one that unites economic interests with social values.

Pragmatics

Four key organizational elements of the recommended new forms of organizations are:

- a sense of *higher purpose* (meaningful contribution, supportive mission and vision);
- *stakeholder integration* (customers, employees, investors, suppliers and dealers, communities, environment);
- *conscious leadership* (social intelligence, values-driven 'servant leadership', integrity, compassion); and
- a *conscious culture* (meaningful purpose, care for multiple stakeholders).

These key elements have much in common with leadership models that have been built from Buddhist education frameworks. Such models draw on principles presented in the key Buddhist text "The guide to the bodhisattvas of life"[134]. This text is from the Mahayana (Great Vehicle) of the bodhisattva tradition and articulates a widely used model of leadership in Asian countries where the interconnectedness of business, society and the environment is accepted. The model of leadership that translates from the idea of the bodhisattva is one where the leader serves others and aims to foster happiness[135].

The six perfections of the bodhisattva/leader are qualities that allow the leader to create happiness and wellbeing in the community[136]. As principles of leadership, they have been translated as the ten 'talents' (qualities) of the mindful leader[137], and integrated into leadership behaviours with 7 practices for transforming leadership by Bunting[138], all of which integrate the six perfections into the practice of mindfulness (see below).

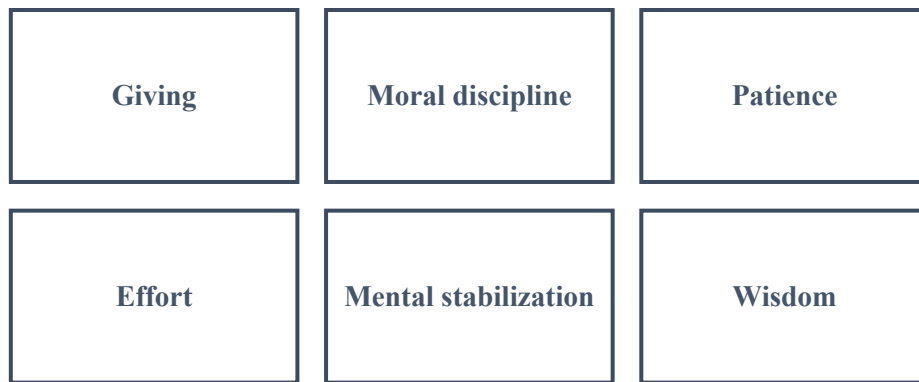| Giving	Moral discipline	Patience
Effort	Mental stabilization	Wisdom

Figure 8.1 Six perfections on the path to enlightenment

A societal extension of the Buddhist frameworks, developed from the concept of the bodhisattvas[139] is evident through the Gross National Happiness Index (GNH) used to govern Bhutan[140]. The GNH Index defines nine domains of interrelated factors which are understood to contribute to societal happiness[141]. These domains were originally articulated as four different aspects of interrelatedness in society that were to provide good governance and achieve sustainable socioeconomic development and the preservation of culture and environment[142].

These "four pillars" of the GNH *index* were developed into nine domains of the Gross National Happiness *philosophy* and are seen to provide the circumstances to create happiness and enable measurements and indices of the impact of activities designed to produce it. The nine domains are: good governance, living standards, community vitality, education, time use, psychological wellbeing, cultural resilience, health, and environment[143]. Further details can be found at www.gnhcentrebhutan.org.

DOMAINS

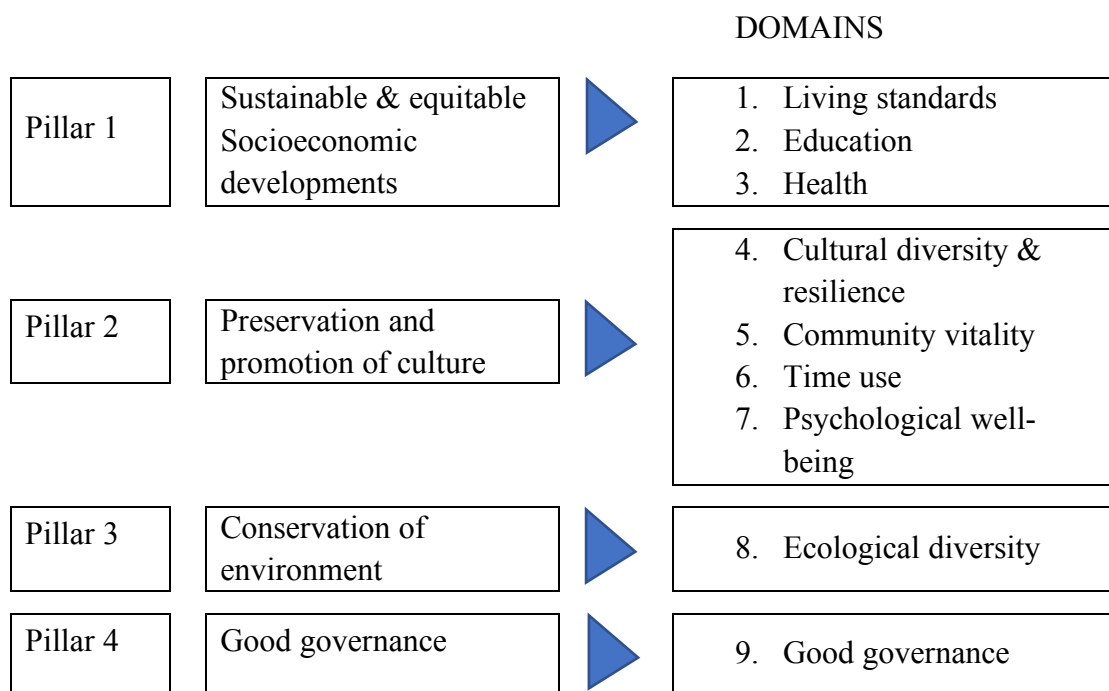| Pillar 1	Sustainable & equitable Socioeconomic developments	▶	1. Living standards 2. Education 3. Health
Pillar 2	Preservation and promotion of culture	▶	4. Cultural diversity & resilience 5. Community vitality 6. Time use 7. Psychological well-being
Pillar 3	Conservation of environment	▶	8. Ecological diversity
Pillar 4	Good governance	▶	9. Good governance

Figure 8.2 The 4 pillars and the 9 domains of Gross National Happiness

Each domain has 2 to 4 indicators under them totaling up to 33 and, further, these indicators have sub-indicators totaling up to 124 (GNH survey 2010).

The various frameworks of B Corporations, elements of organizations pursuing conscious capitalism and Buddhist governance models all provide similar guidance for organizations wanting to pursue profit for purpose. The compelling question becomes how to develop organizations to do so, how do we change our collective habits?

Programs

Within the business community there are few leadership development programs available with objectives consistent with substantive motivations towards mindfulness. As exemplified in critical articles on 'McMindfulness' and beyond by Purser and his colleagues[144]; there is often little faith in establishing corporate programs as effective vehicles for collective wisdom, with attention more likely paid to the significance of social, political and environmental initiatives outside the corporate arena[145].

Within the debate, the claims of system leadership and conscious capitalism theories of the birth of a 'new capitalism' are challenged by others, on the grounds that the aspirations are not achievable in the context of existing economic and institutional conditions[146]; and embedded conflicts between multiple stakeholders as well as the inherent tensions that exist between such restrictive and more radical discourses of reform.

System leadership is associated with changing our collective habits of thought and action, understanding complex systems, initiating reflection and generative conversations, and moving from reactive problem-solving to co-creating the future. To support this type of behaviour Scharmer and Kaeufer[147] encourage development interventions that initiate deep learning cycles while, for advocates of systems leadership, a crucial intervention supports the role played by activities to enhance 'sensing', 'presencing' and 'realizing'[148]. In terms of Scharmer's[149] 'Theory U', this involves broadening contemplative awareness by releasing participants from established habits and categories of thought ('letting go') and facilitating embodied and creative emerging ways to respond to such experiences ('letting come').

However, facilitating mindfulness and these associated reflective skills within the standard approach to managerial development - generally short-term training aimed at motivating long term behavioural change, is problematic. The Mind and Life Institute conducts a program based on contemplation and ethical precepts for leaders, typically delivered in a week-long retreat program focused on the use of contemplation to develop ethics, empathy and leadership skills and to promote the same outcomes at both an individual and collective level. The Nan Tien temple takes a similar approach and some business school teach wisdom[150] with an experiential emphasis, however all these approaches are confronted with the conflict of available verses required time.

A sustained apprenticeship model where development is ongoing and embedded within work, has been suggested as an alternative approach to workplace training[151]. This approach aligns more closely to the extensive effort serious mindfulness practitioners

apply to improving themselves and the lives of others. The apprenticeship model offers a mentor and continuous education to support the achievement of outcomes promised by the ethically directed mindfulness - enduring peace and happiness. If programs are to be developed they would be designed along the lines of the knowledge, capabilities and behaviours described below.

Knowledge

Within collective wisdom forms of mindfulness, the central intellectual concerns are with:

- incongruities brought about through organized irresponsibility and conflicts between social, ecological and economic goals;
- notions of impermanence that relate to organizational entities and systems in which integrative solutions are not sought, and in which there are ongoing challenges involved in letting go of the past while letting the future come;
- questions around identification involve the restriction of individuals and organizations identifying with the narrow interests and concerns of their own institutional arrangements and survival at the expense of a more expansive view of social and ecological sustainability and survival.

Capabilities

Within collective wisdom, capabilities to be developed involve:

- awareness of incongruities within impermanence of and entrapments through restricted identifications with economic, social and ecological purposes;
- attention to systems of stakeholder management and cultures that are both multi-national and creative in encouraging and supporting substantial matters; and
- an acceptance of the inevitable tensions and paradoxes that includes a curious, creative and proactive commitment to coping with the anxieties and conflicts this creates, and encouraging a search for possible solutions.

Behaviours

Regarding collective wisdom, the challenge of identifying core competencies at the level of the organization is accompanied by the requirement to include within this identification, considerations of shared purpose, beliefs and culture regarding *why* work is done rather than simply *how* work is done.

What this necessitates is:

- the capture and operationalization of behavioural outcomes in relation to collective awareness of the incongruities, impermanence and limitations of institutional self-definition of purpose, specifically in regard to how it blends economic, social and ecological concerns;
- the routines, practices and structures established by institutions to ensure that they attend to such concerns; and
- the cultural values and institutional politics established to ensure that the tensions

this involves are acknowledged and accepted and that the requirement to live with these tensions and explore partial/possible solutions is carried out with curiosity and compassion.

There are significant challenges involved in determining the collective behavioural accomplishments needed to establish this type of sustainable learning organization.

Despite the inevitable incompleteness, addressing the challenge of describing observable behaviours may foster helpful development by enabling closer integration of these programs into existing human resource protocols such as competency and capability matrices.

Outcomes

When an organization has developed the skills of collective wisdom it would be expected to have achieved a level of significant resources for corporate social responsibility (CSR) and to have principles and procedures that support CSR in a sustainable fashion. This will be most observable when the organization responds rapidly and appropriately to inevitable crisis.

Table 8.1 Collective Wisdom

	KNOWLEDGE	CAPABILITIES	BEHAVIOURAL OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE ACCOMPLISHMENTS
COLLECTIVE WISDOM	**Incongruity** Contradictions between economic & social/ecological objectives	**Awareness** Of organized irresponsibility & contradictions between economic & social/ sustainability concerns	Demonstrated institutional reflection on organized irresponsibility & socioeconomic contradictions	e.g. level of resourcing & scope of corporate social responsibility
	Impermanence Instability, uncertainty & lack of sustainability in global systems	**Attention** Collective attention regulation & disciplined meta-cognition of narrow & contradictory group purposes	Established routines, practices & structures attending to such concerns	e.g. operational outcomes achieved by following principles & procedures

e.g. application of values when reacting to critical tests |
| | **Identification** Organized irresponsibility | **Acceptance** Openness, curiosity & compassion towards transcending tensions in complex purposive systems | Institutionalised cultural values & power structures that acknowledge & experiment with such tensions | |

Collective wisdom reminds us to focus on the higher purpose of an organization, its contribution to society and the environment as well as to stakeholders.

In this space western models of 'benefit organizations' align with the models of business and governance drawn from Buddhist educational frameworks.

To date there are few programs that can develop these skills and those that do generally draw on experiences from outside of organizations, and recognize the long-term focus required to develop these skills, supporting an apprenticeship model.

Developing these skills embodies our understanding of the pervasive role of impermanence and interdependence in our lives, and our ability to navigate complexity with this awareness and to behave in ways that support multiple stakeholders.

BUDDHA IN PINSTRIPES

A practical approach to preparing for disruption and leading through uncertainty

> *"It's sad, really, how a negative workplace can impact our lives and the way we feel about ourselves. The situation is reaching pandemic heights – most people go to work at jobs they dislike, supervised by people who don't care about them, and directed by senior leaders who are often clueless about where to take the company."* - Branham and Hirschfeld [152]

> *"I am convinced that human nature is basically affectionate and good. If our behavior follows our kind and loving nature, immense benefits will result, not only for ourselves, but also for the society to which we belong"* - Dalai Lama

The first quote above goes some way to describe the suffering in workplaces that the promoters of Mindful and Buddhist leadership models seek to address. The second quote brings our attention to the proposal that an important task for leaders is to remove the barriers to their natural instincts for kindness enabling extraordinary benefits for individuals , business and scoeity. His holiness the fourteenth Dalai Lama proposes that global politics should be based on fostering a kind heart and a calm, clear mind that leads to taking responsibility for happiness of all people.[153]

These sentiments are echoed by consultants who guide organizations to address the uncertainty and complexity of commercial reality along with concerns about human, environmental and social sustainability and wellbeing.

Fear seems to be the key theme in discussions around how to address uncertainty. For example, Deloitte quotes change as the "top business challenge for organizations" based on interviews with senior HR executives and 'dismal' success at developing leaders to deal with it[154].The MIT Sloan management organization states that "a change in perspective" is needed for leaders to deal with the "unfamiliar territory" of "uncertainty and instability"[155]. McKinsey ramps up the fear-inspiring language by taking it to the top; they note that in response to the 'digital age' directors are outmatched by the "ferocity of changing technology" and the belief that "software is eating the world"[156]. While consultants make money from uncertainty, politicians seek votes by reminding us to fear the inherent uncertainty of the environment, violence and big data, and the happiness industry proposes that if something doesn't feel good there is something wrong with us.

Change and uncertainty is big business, made all the bigger by the fear being created around it. When we are seeking to support leaders in addressing challenges of meaning as well as uncertainty at work, then second generation, individual-substantive, approaches to mindfulness can help as they directly address the problematic consequences of personal and interpersonal immoral conduct and identify the normality of impermanence and the experience of complexity.

Whilst Buddhism does not occupy this space alone, the education processes that have been refined over centuries in Buddhist monasteries offer much helpful guidance. In particular, the analytical reasoning that can lead to a softening of our natural identification with a solid sense of self and desire for stability in external circumstances is beneficial; this softening is also consistent with development objectives that include consideration of our impact on others and our world.

The central concern of this book is an exploration of the argument that managing attention, awareness and acceptance, the core components of mindfulness, are key to leadership performance in uncertain circumstances. The increasing change, instability and lack of predictability in our economy creates complexity and systemic uncertainty. Leadership capacity to embrace such complex and transitory experience is seen as resulting in increased performance, resilience and innovation.

As the book has aimed to explain, the criteria used to define mindfulness and its benefits are complex issues subject to contestation and debate. Our understanding of mindfulness is emerging and will continue to be refined. Previous pages have outlined the role that mindfulness and the Buddhist ethical framework it is derived from, might play in developing leaders and their organizations to succeed in VUCA conditions and to prepare. The development options available are summarized below.

Mindfulness development interventions

Mindfulness education programs are constantly evolving in response to tailored applications. The most common approaches follow a similar structure whether the intention is to reduce stress, decrease depression or increase mindfulness at work. This structure was developed to support mindfulness-based stress reduction and cognitive therapy which are generally offered as eight-week, group-based therapies which teach mindfulness skills through a range of formal and informal mindfulness practices. Such programs involve group education sessions with 2-hour weekly workshops, one longer session and intake and exit assessments. The content of many of these programs focus on applying mindfulness to a variety of objects derived from the four foundations of mindfulness discussed earlier. An alternative approach implemented in the Langer experiments and programs aims to "increase novel distinction-drawing"[157].

Mindfulness as taught in these popular mindfulness-based, stress reduction programs is one of many ways to induce the healing physiological response termed the relaxation response[158]. The relaxation response is the key to the underlying cause of the positive impact these programs have on wellness and the reduction of stress-related symptoms [159] and, as such, it acts as an antidote to the pervasive stress inherent in modern western lifestyles. Arguably this form of mindfulness training could be more appropriately coupled with the science of the relaxation response rather than with Buddhism or leadership. However, the reduction in stress is accompanied by a variety of information processing methods that increase the creativity and problem-solving abilities so desperately needed by leaders navigating the chaos and uncertainty of modern business life in an individualized western culture[160]. The techniques used for reducing *mindlessness* also enhance cognitive capabilities, increasing attentiveness to weak signals, refining categories, developing new categories and creating greater awareness

of multiple perspectives[161].

"Mindfulness at Work" programs emphasize these additional cognitive effects and cover greater breadth of content in the objects of mindfulness which are expanded to include tasks of management and leadership. In general, they are designed by adding work-related skills to what is the theoretically value-neutral vehicle of mindfulness[162].

However, one such leadership task is the application of ethics to behaviour and decision making. This, in turn, invites investigation of the incorporation into Mindfulness at Work programs of the ethical aspects of mindfulness training, which is emphasized in practice by Buddhism and discussed in the literature of collective mindfulness[163], constructive developmental psychology[164], and system leadership[165]. Such an investigation highlights the need to consider carefully how development programs might impact ethical behaviour, or not, and the value of aiming for particular outcomes.

It is likely that definitions of success for mindful leadership training from this perspective will include the capacity for ethical behaviour and for observing complex situations in the leaders' mind; while at the same time, fostering an ability to create empathetic follower responses and to navigate organizations towards socially positive outcomes. Consequently, careful alignment of measurement tools for ethical mindfulness and leadership effectiveness is essential if we are to create meaningful information to guide the sustained development activities required to deliver substantive objectives.

Given that definitions and measurement of both mindfulness and leadership effectiveness remain problematic, it is difficult to determine how development programs to produce these outcomes will be deemed effective within the constraints of the accepted model of corporate training evaluation, typified by the Kirkpatrick Model [166] which aims to measure emotional reaction, learning and productivity outcomes.

Sophisticated leadership competency models which measure leaders' general skills along with their capacity to function in interrelated and uncertain environments, such as the new model of work role performance[167], are more likely to capture the impact of an 'other-centred' leader. But there is, to date, no evident link made between training programs that aim to produce this type of leadership and either development or performance impact.

As ideas of mindfulness begin to be applied to leadership, the notions of self and non-self, often seen as the interface between Buddhist and western psychology, guide the limited research in this area[168]. A cautionary note is offered as the Buddhist expansive view of non-self can be seen as useful in a western context in the service of ego[169], so the application of Buddhist psychology to the western ideology of leadership could, paradoxically, be described as the ethics of enlightened self-interest[170].

Thus, even an ethical approach to mindful leadership could be either primarily ego-centric due to a desire to seek liberation from suffering, or primarily other-centric, with the desire to attain full enlightenment in the service of others.

The Buddhist education system has been heavily committed to facilitating individual

and collective moral development for centuries, thus the literature on the subject has much to offer any attempt to design mindful leadership development interventions and provides an argument for the expansion of mindful leadership interventions outside the instrumental perspective from which they have primarily emerged.
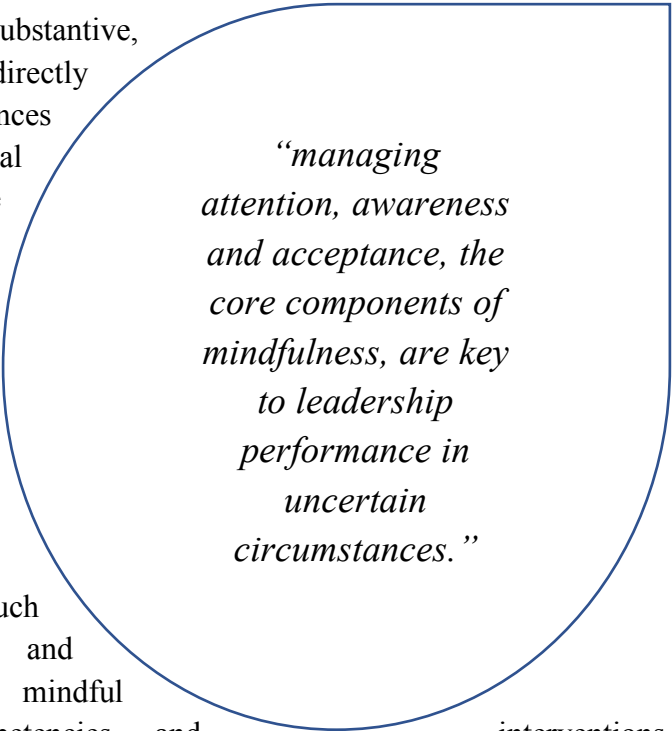
The importance of this enquiry lies in the potential for second-generation programs to address the challenges facing leaders more effectively than those based on a first-generation perspective. It reflects the knowledge relating to mindfulness from an individual perspective but with a substantial goal, a goal that extends beyond the improvement of the self as the mindful self, towards the transcendence of the self - a self-less mind.

This book suggests the importance of aligning mindfulness development objectives and interventions with broader collective and substantive concerns.

The framework is intended to be impartial and flexible though the author holds a personal bias for research and action towards the collective wisdom quadrant. If we are seeking to support leaders in addressing challenges of meaning as well as uncertainty, the second - generation style programs, as an example of individual substantive approaches to mindfulness, more explicitly address these issues – more than programs evolving from secular corporate approaches that have objectives related more to mindfulness of self.

Second generation, individual-substantive, approaches to mindfulness directly address the problematic consequences of personal and interpersonal immoral conduct and identify the normality of impermanence and the experience of complexity. As mentioned above, whilst Buddhism does not occupy this space alone, the education processes that have been refined over centuries offer much helpful guidance.

"managing attention, awareness and acceptance, the core components of mindfulness, are key to leadership performance in uncertain circumstances."

The approach here incorporates such concerns within a broad and comprehensive approach to mindful leadership capabilities, competencies and interventions, including consideration of addressing the complexity of multiple organizational stakeholders and conflicting purposes of an economic, social and environmental character. This provides a path to identifying, describing and developing such a mindful leadership.

Guidance for organizations

Practical implications for organizations seeking to introduce mindfulness interventions include[171] :

1. Resourcing broad mindfulness initiatives by:

   Providing resources, cultural preconditions and practical spaces for encouraging reflection that is both individual and collective, instrumental and substantive and to combine within such initiatives, commitments to individual performance and well-being, collective dialogic and relational development, and considerations of self, society and the environment that transcend short and long term organizational requirements.

2. Rigorously evaluating mindfulness initiatives by:

   Extending the rigorous evaluation of leadership development outcomes, both in terms of immediate consequences for individual resilience, adaptability, creativity and well-being etc., and for collective capabilities in responding to rapidly changing, uncertain and contested organizational environments.

3. Engaging in public debate on viability of mindfulness by:

   Engaging in discussions with academics and practitioners of the nature and feasibility of 'mindfulness' as a viable and desirable set of short and long-term concepts and programs. Given the breadth and depth of what mindfulness incorporates, and the contested nature of the term itself, the value of focusing on 'mindfulness' as a point of concern in leadership development is, at least, an important question requiring further exploration.

4. Cultivating innovation and creativity by:

   Building collaborative realtionships between scholars and practioners. Collaborations between scholars and leaders allows the use of relationships to navigate complexity, benefit from the creativity that emerges, and shape the methodology of the research process to accommodate the chaos and uncertainty of the environment

   If scholars can work with leaders themselves using mindfulness to enhance their mutual understanding there is an unprecedented opportunity to build innovative solutions to current problems which can transform our society and organizations. Mindful leadership research enables greater clarity on workplace reality and provides the opportunity to address the gap between knowledge and practice in leadership.

Finally,

Rather than fearing a VUCA world and disruptive innovation, mindfulness embedded in an ethical framework offers a path to:

- address and overcome Volatility by developing and communicating a compelling Vision
- deal with Uncertainty by practices that heighten Understanding of what the organization, its employees, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders are facing,
- overcome Complexity by the Courage to confront it and break it down, and

- diminish the impact of Ambiguity by fostering approaches that heighten Agility

In conclusion, I hope it is clear that Buddhist derived leadership models can show us how to integrate personal performance, business profit and societal progress.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Elizabeth King

I have brought to these pages years of rigorous study and a career that includes senior roles in global healthcare companies, building a business and consulting. After a science degree, an MBA and over a decade working in leadership positions in international pharmaceutical companies I learnt a great deal about the impact of leadership on people and profit. I later travelled to Harvard to study the use of behaviour as medicine and learned about the emerging science of mindfulness. When consulting to apply these skills to enhance leadership performance I was abruptly reminded that changing our behaviour when everything around us is changing is difficult. A Masters of Coaching helped me help my clients. Alongside my work I had been studying and practicing Buddhist meditation for 20 years and found the Buddhist psychology enhanced my own practice of mindfulness. This was painfully clear when I hit some difficult personal times. When everything in my life was confusing, the combination of Buddhist principles and mindfulness practice provided a clear path and a way to remain effective. My PhD studies on relationships between mindfulness and leadership performance have shown me how these ancient precepts can offer a solution to today's chaotic, uncertain world of business. My wish is that they do.

Elizabeth King

MetaMindfulness

www.metamindfulness.com

www.linkedin.com/in/dr-elizabeth-king

If you found this book helpful, please leave a review on Kindle below.

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