MINDFUL WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP
Empowering women leaders through mindfulness practice to make confident, ethical decisions in our mission-driven organizations
Trish Andrews
NPA 622: Nonprofit Data Analysis
Summer 2021
Instructor:
Naomi Osaka: 'It's O.K. Not to Be O.K.'

Osaka withdrew from the French Open to tend to her mental health. Williams & Hirakawa—August

https://time.com/6077128/naomi-osaka-essay-tokyo-olympics/

Simone Biles is withdrawing from the Olympic all-around gymnastics competition.

Simone Biles pulled out of the women’s gymnastics team final on Tuesday night. Doug Mills/The New York Times

What empowers women to step into their leadership potential?
How can we cultivate the stamina necessary for working toward social change?
What makes a confident, ethical decision-maker?

Who?
All who identify as women some or all of the time, current women leaders, future women leaders, leaders and mentors who want to be allies...

What?
Self-empowerment and confident, ethical decision-making

Hypothesis
Women leaders - who are agents of change in our organizations and communities - are empowered through mindfulness practice to make confident, ethical decisions.
OBJECTIVES AND VALUES

1. Promoting resilience among existing women leaders, because we know the value of experienced leadership.

2. Empowering the next wave of women of color to step into their leadership potential, because we know that value of inclusive and diverse leadership.

3. Contributing to women’s leadership research.
METHODS AND APPROACHES

1. Literature Review: Mindfulness and Leadership through a gender lens

2. Semi-structured expert interviews with women leaders from mission-driven organizations

3. Proposed Mindful Leadership Model to assist with self reflection connected to a situational leadership approach
All of the women commented on their unique experience as a daughter - bridging generations - resolving conflict - making difficult care-taking decisions

Find out how it will affect the group - each stakeholders outcome - reach out to trusted mentors - check in with myself - personal checklist of values

Informal practice - breathing, journaling, reading, nature walks - reactionary mindfulness - different phases of mindfulness throughout life cycle - helps quiet the mind to see the big picture
Mindfulness
- Meditation
- Buddhism
- Moral precepts
- Buddhist ethics
- Historical development
  1970’s Western clinical psychology and psychiatry
- Formal mindfulness techniques
- Informal daily practice
- Breathing techniques
- Journaling

Self empowerment
Self awareness
Vulnerability as a strength
Discernment skills
Checklist of personal values
Women as change agents in organizations
Mindfulness for social innovation

Leadership
- Ethical leadership
- Inclusivity
- Situational leadership model
- Cross generational mentorships
- History of white women leaders
  upholding standards of patriarchal systems
  Professional sabotage
- Women’s leadership theory
  Glass Cliff
  Added pressure on women leaders of color to achieve and model exceptional behavior
CONSCIOUS SOCIAL CHANGE (STEIDLE, 2017)

1. Cultivating presence: *What is happening?*
2. Becoming whole: *What is true?*
3. Ensuring well-being: *What is needed?*
4. Engaging mindfully: *What is helpful?*
5. Leading from within: *What is possible?*
Proposed Mindful Leadership Model

Stage 1
Look inward, self-awareness, self-reflection

Stage 2
Look outward, assess the situation for an appropriate response according to contributor readiness & leader input

### Inner Benefits
- Increased positive emotions
- Decreased ruminations
- Notice the body and mind
- Non-judgemental
- Non-reactive
- Present

### Relational Benefits
- Increased social connectedness
- Increased response flexibility
- Increased emotion regulation
- Ability to disengage automatic pathways

### Mindfulness
- Acting with awareness
- Increased empathy and compassion
- Greater insight and wisdom
- Decreased emotional reactivity

### Proposed Mindful Leadership Model

#### Level of Support
- High Support
- Low Support

#### Level of Direction
- High Directive
- Low Directive

### Styles
- **Style 1 - Directing**
  - Low support
  - High directive
  - Enthusiastic Beginner
    - Low competence
    - High commitment

- **Style 4 - Empowering**
  - Low support
  - Low directive
  - Self-reliant achiever
    - High competence
    - High commitment

- **Style 2 - Coaching**
  - High support
  - High directive
  - Disillusioned learner
    - Some competence
    - Low commitment

- **Style 3 - Supporting**
  - High support
  - Low directive
  - Capable but cautious performer
    - High competence
    - Variable commitment

*Level of Support: the extent to which the leader engages in open dialog with the contributor.

*Level of Direction: the extent to which the leader tells the contributor what to do, how to do it, where it needs to be done, and when it needs to be completed.*
RECOMMENDATIONS
for existing women leaders, future women leaders, and anyone who wants to be an ally

01 Practice Mindfulness
- Try and try again
- Find what’s meaningful for you
- Shed armor
- Approach each moment with an open, present mind

02 Ethical Decision-Making Considerations
- Increased empathy
- Sharpened discernment
- Decreased judgement in self and others
- Decreased rumination and negative thought cycles

03 Mentorships
- Intergenerational
- Sharing values and unspoken agreements
- Organizational culture
- Moving from sabotage to support
# RECOMMENDATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meditation</td>
<td>Thich Nhat Hanh, &quot;Zen Master&quot; and founder of <strong>Plum Village</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visualization</td>
<td><strong>Changing perspective</strong> 1:16 in length, this video may help change your perspective on mindfulness, and perhaps inspire you to have a little compassion for yourself while you attempt the difficult practice of finding peace and presence and avoiding our need for perfection.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Youtube</td>
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<td>If you have time for one episode, try: <strong>The Mind, Explained S01E04</strong>, for some useful mindfulness science. If you have time for a full series try: <strong>Headspace Guide to Meditation</strong>. Andy, the creator of the Mindspace App combines his personal journey studying mindfulness with powerful visualization tools and meditation practice.</td>
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**SUMMARY**

Looking for ways to empower existing and future women leaders lead to an exploration of mindfulness as a practice to improve self-awareness and increase empathy allowing leaders to arrive at each situation with a balanced, present mind. This project proposes a Mindful Leadership Model which begins by looking inward, then shifts outward to the situation with an adapted situational leadership model that helps assess the appropriate response for different situations depending on the leaders response and the contributors readiness.

**PURPOSE**

- Promoting resilience among existing women leaders, because we know the value of experience leadership
- Empowering the next wave of women of color to step into their leadership potential, because we know the value of inclusive and diverse leadership
- Contributing to the women’s leadership research

**HYPOTHESIS**

Women leaders - who are agents of change in our organizations and communities - are empowered through mindfulness practice to make confident, ethical decisions in varying situations.

**RESEARCH METHODS**

- Literature review: Mindfulness and Leadership through a gender lens
- Semi-structure expert interviews with women leaders in mission-driven organizations
- Proposed Mindful Leadership Model to assist with self reflection connected to a situational leadership model

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**DATA AND ANALYSIS**

**Mindfulness**

- Meditation
- Buddhist
- Mental concepts
- Buddhist ethics
- Historical development 1970’s Women clinical psychology and psychiatry
- Formal mindfulness techniques
- Informal daily practice
- Breathing techniques
- Journaling

**Leadership**

- Ethical leadership
- Inclusivity
- Situational leadership model
- Cross generational mentorships
- History of white women leaders upholding standards of patriarchal systems
- Professional sabotage
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**IMPLICATIONS**

- Cultivating presence: What is happening?
- Becoming whole: What is true?
- Ensuring well-being: What is needed?
- Engaging mindfully: What is helpful?
- Leading from within: What is possible?

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **01 Practice Mindfulness**
  - Try and try again
  - Find what’s meaningful for you
  - Try new things
  - Approach each moment with an open, present mind

- **02 Ethical Decision-Making Considerations**
  - Increased empathy
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  - Intergenerational
  - Sharing values and unspoken agreements
  - Organizational culture
  - Moving from sabotage to support

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**TOOLS AND RESOURCES**

- **Meditation**
  - Thich Nhat Hanh, "Zen Master" and founder of Plum Village

- **Visualization**
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**REFERENCES**