

Hello there. How are you doing today? I mean it, how are you? How would you answer that question? Right now? We have all been conditioned to say, "Oh, I'm good. I'm doing great. How are you doing? I'm fine". Or whatever your normal response is, no matter what's going on in your life. Right?

Now, I get it. 'How are you?' is a greeting. And many times, it's just what we say, to kind of get the conversation going. And we aren't there to necessarily dive into the details of what is going on with someone. If we are with a colleague or at work, or we're at a meeting, we just say, "hello, how are you doing?" as a courtesy. And then we get on with it? Right? I get it.

And today is all about really answering that question. How are you? as in YOU, and I'll tell you how I am right now is I am creating and I'm using that word on purpose, I am creating focus, optimism, and high energy. And I say creating on purpose, because when I checked in with myself this morning, what I noticed was confusion, overwhelm, and tiredness. Now, what I want for you to notice here is that I've used three words to describe myself each time. And those three words are specifically related to my mental, emotional, and physical states, or what I call my MEP, mental, emotional, physical. So right now, I am intentionally creating focus. That is what I'm doing mentally. And emotionally, I am creating optimism. And the physical energy that I am creating is going to be high. Because when I checked in this morning, when I went inside and asked myself, how are you? I felt mentally confused. And my mind was racing back and forth about what project I should start on today. And what was most important. I was second guessing what I had planned. And I was also noticing the energy of overwhelm. That emotion of overwhelming my body. And for me, that feels like a very fast heartbeat. And then I also feel a little bit of tension or tightness in my neck. And physically, I knew that I was tired, because I wanted to close my eyes. That's how I know when I'm tired. I know that if I close my eyes, and I start to feel relaxed, that I'm physically tired.

So, I want to know how you are doing. And I want you to know how you're doing. And if you don't know, you're not alone. So, I'm going to do is to give to you at the end of this podcast with a quick guided meditation that I created for my clients and for myself to help with this. To help know how we are doing.

Now as I'm recording this, we are gearing up for the holidays, and the holidays are the most wonderful time of the year, and also potentially are the most stressful, right. And that's true every year around this time. And we have more to do more events to go to. More things to get done before everyone goes on holiday break and longer lists.

Longer to do list without any more time. And really, it's not just this time of year. There are plenty of other times when we feel crunched for time, right? It is the nature of being a leader, you naturally have deadlines, you're highly scheduled and finding time to care for yourself, whether it is going to the gym, or going to the grocery store to make sure you have healthy food in the house or spending time engaging in a hobby that you truly enjoy or spending quality time with your family. It can be difficult to carve out that time. And unfortunately, one of the ways that leaders often, quote unquote create more time is by cutting out self-care routines.

Now when I help leaders come up with their customized self-care plan, we talk about how to care for their physical bodies, first and foremost. And I categorize the ways that we care for those bodies in three areas - fueling, resting, and moving. And that's all about the exchange of energy and figuring out what is right for you, given your schedule, given your results, and given what you feel like you're up to. And we always always, always set up a fuel plan, which is how you fuel your body and your brain no matter what your goal is whether it's to lose weight, or to just feel better, to perform better food, and the way that you fuel, is the primary way to take care of your physical body hands down. And then of course there's the rest and the movement side of things as well.

So, you absolutely need a plan that includes those three major elements so that you can have health and balance physically and knowing what to do is one thing right? And then actually following through on that plan is another thing and that is why mind management are the awareness of what you're thinking, and emoting and how you're physically feeling, and how you're focusing and consciously paying attention to yourself is so important.

Every single thing that you create in your life starts with your awareness. It starts with your thoughts. And when life seems to be spinning, what is really spinning is our thoughts about life. So, one of the primary tools that we use, and the Inner Circle and the client is a morning routine, that really starts with your relationship with yourself. Because, boy, is it easy, easy to jump out of bed and jump into your day and start focusing on what is essentially your relationship with everyone else, your kids, your colleagues, your company. And you get busy taking care of everyone and everything else, via emails and projects and meetings. And the one common denominator and all of those relationships is you. You are there interacting with those other people, other places, and other things.

So, when you take even just a few minutes at the beginning of the day, to basically say hello to yourself, and to notice what is going on with you mentally, emotionally, and physically, then you automatically stop that whirlwind and then you can create whatever you want, right there.

So, the question is, how do you do that? And there are many ways to get centered and many leaders have different morning routines. Some people get centered through their workouts, some people do it through prayer or through journaling. And I have a specific process that I share with leaders that is very quick and customizable. And I want to share part of that with you today. And that is this guided meditation that I created around the concept of self-leadership and understanding what is going on with you. And then setting a very specific intention for you to use throughout the day.

Now, I'm going to add the meditation at the end of this. So, you can go right into it or download it and so that you can use it. And what I want you to know about this meditation is that it's about 11 minutes long, there's an introduction at the beginning. So, the actual meditation is about 10 minutes. And what I have done here, is to take you through the three main areas that influence your experience of life and your ability to perform in it, and to feel fulfilled in it. And those are your mental, emotional, and physical states. And as you go through it, the first part is about noticing what is. Noticing your mental, emotional, and physical states. This is the art of noticing. And when you shine a light on yourself and see yourself, this is extremely powerful. I cannot underscore the power of this practice enough. As a leader, it is so easy to put yourself last and hear so many leaders saying things like, "I'm having really serious trouble with this cough, or I'm not feeling well, or I'm stressed about the stock market". And then they follow up with ",but you know, that's not that big a deal. This is a first world problem, I'm okay, I can handle this, I shouldn't be complaining or be worried about this". And we basically tell ourselves to buck up and get over it.

And here's the interesting thing about that. The ability to buck up and get over it and push through the pain, if you will, is a valuable skill, right? It's the skill that has helped you to get where you are right now. You know how to push through and how to get things done. And for sure, there are times when we need to do that. But what we do is we judge ourselves and we judge other people for having negative emotions. And we think that we have to be positive all the time.

Several years ago, at this amazing wellness leadership conference that I went to, I heard Susan David speak who is from South Africa, and she is an expert in emotional agility. And she talked about the African greeting, sawubona. And sawubona is the most common greeting in the Zulu tribe. And throughout really South Africa, and it's translated as "I see you. And by seeing you, I bring you into being". And that is what this daily check in or guided meditation is all about. It's like truly seeing yourself and asking yourself, how are you? and waiting for your response. Waiting to see what you come up with.

It's taking the time to check in with you. Not just in passing or just kind of casually noticing but intentionally checking in. And in this meditation, you're going to check in mentally, emotionally, and physically and notice what is going on with you. Taking just a few moments to notice and this is so powerful. Because you aren't trying to change anything you are just noticing. And this is a metaskill. The metaskill of noticing and being aware of what is going on with you internally and also being aware of what is going on externally is a skill that you can bring into your day. It's the practice of creating space in your internal environment and your external environment. In the military, we call this situational awareness, which really is the key to mastering leadership and whatever is going on and mastering your behavior change and getting to the results that you are trying to create.

And then the second part here is to simultaneously decide, "alright, this is what is what am I going to create, again, mentally, emotionally and physically? What am I going to create within myself first?" And the really, really cool thing about doing this is that when you pay attention to yourself, and those three distinct ways, when you go searching for what is going on in your physical body, and noticing the tension or the energy, and then you distinctly go to your mind, and you notice your thought and what's going on in your brain. And then you purposely go to your emotions and see what's going on there. You are practicing understanding the difference between those states, and then also seeing the connections. And when you go through the practice of changing your behaviors and leveling up and doing what it is that you want to do to create the best life that you can create, whether it's getting rid of debt, or creating more work life balance, or learning how to say no thank you to food and alcohol that doesn't serve you. When you are going through that practice. You are getting in touch with what you are thinking, emoting, and doing. I'll say that again, what you are thinking mentally, what you are feeling emotionally, and what you are doing physically. Right? That's mental, emotional, physical, that is the thought emotion action cycle, and it is fundamental, to practice changing your behaviors and that is completely baked into this meditation. It is a sawubona, how are you awareness.

And so, the last thing that I'll share with you here is that when you are done with a meditation, one of the things that I do and I ask clients to do is to write out the words that you come up with. :literally write down "I am" and then fill in your words, right? Fill in your mental, emotional, and physical state, and you can write it on your calendar, or you can write it on a piece of paper, but just write out who you are going to be today what you are going to create. So that could be I am focused, compassionate and energized. Notice those map states mental, emotional, physical. Focused, mentally compassionate, emotionally and energized physically, or I am quick. I'm hopeful, and I am strong.

So, write out your MEP, state your mental, emotional, and physical state and keep that with you as your day unfolds. Set that as your intention. And then when someone asks you, how are you, you can say I am great. And you can mean it, because baked into that word great, when I say that I am great, I am thinking that I am generating results with my emotions, actions, and thoughts. And if you've done your meditation, you know exactly what that state is of your mind your emotions and your body. And then you get to reinforce your intention. And when you ask someone else how they are, look for those states, look at them, look them in the eyes, see them. Think sawubona and really, truly be aware of their mental, emotional, and physical states.

So, you have the opportunity to set your intention. To notice what is and then to create what it is that you want and then to also pay attention for other people. So that is you leading yourself and that is you leading others. So, thank you for your focus and for your attention and for your presence and go forth and create your most amazing day.

Hey there if you are ready to take your Wellbeingness© to the next level, come visit thewellness.coach where I've got lots of free resources and make sure that you type in thewellness.coach, not .com and I will see you there.

And now prepare for your daily guided leadership meditation. When you are clear about what is important to you, you literally create a presence and consciousness to approach your day intentionally. This meditation is a ritual to be practiced daily in the morning. And you can do this with me or practice on your own. It allows you to ground yourself in what is most important to you and to continue to focus on your values throughout the day so that you can make choices and have interactions with yourself and others that are in alignment with your values. Owning your intention invites you to be authentic and present and stand in a place of power versus force when the day's activities begin. You are positioned to be who you want to be no matter what the day brings. And this practice grounds you and centers how you interpret and experience the world and how you respond. It allows you to see what is happening, to be okay with it, so that you can look deeper and understand and find meaning in your experience.

I now invite you to make yourself comfortable to let go of the busyness of the mind to let go of the To Do lists of today's events. And I invite you to drop into relaxation and presence. Let us begin by taking three deep breaths to settle the mind and body and emotions to signal the start of your practice.

Right now, you have the choice to set the tone for the rest of your day. What qualities do you want to experience today? What will you experience in your physical body? What are the qualities of your mind and what are the qualities of your emotions? So, we will do this by checking in and what is occurring presently. And then purposely creating your experience for the day to come.

Check in to see what it is that you are currently experiencing. And be careful to let go of any expectations of what you think you should find. Let go of any judgments of what you do find. This practice is about curiously looking inward to connect with what is true in your current experience and to consciously create.

The key to change his consciousness. Now is the time to set your intentions for the rest of the day without judgment or expectations. To do this, let's first allow your awareness to settle on your present physical experience. What do you notice right now? Are you tense or relaxed? Do you feel rested? Simply check in and notice your experience now.

As you notice what is occurring for you now and your physical body, think about the qualities that you would like to bring forth into your day. How will your body feel today? What is the energy level that you need and will create today? Give words to the way that you want your body to be. Perhaps it is strong or flexible, comfortable, pain free, energized.

And now bring your awareness to the state of your mind in this present moment. What is there for you now? Is it quiet or busy? Are you feeling clear headed or a little foggy? Can you sense what needs your attention right now in your mind?

As you notice what is occurring for you in your mind right now think about the qualities that you will bring forth into your day. What is the state of your mind that will best serve your values today? Give words to the way that your mind will be today. Perhaps it is focused attention, easily problem solving, clear headed, strong memory, the ability to process information quickly and with ease.

Now bring your awareness to the state of your emotions in this present moment. What is there for you now? Is it a state of peace or agitation? Are you feeling calm? Or maybe a little anxious? Remember that we are just curiously noticing to connect with what is true currently and setting an intention for what is to come.

As you notice what is occurring for you emotionally think about the qualities that you will bring forth into your day. What is the state of your emotions that will best serve your values today? Give words to your ideal emotions. Perhaps it is calm, courageous, energized, joyful, delighted, optimistic, or grateful.

Think of the words you have given to your physical state, your mental state, and your emotional state. These words are your intention for the day. Consciously choose and decide right now in this moment to be those qualities. Feel them taking root as you breathe in deeply. You have the ability to literally create this state of being to create the qualities of who you will be in this day. Visualize the activities that you have planned for the day and see yourself being in those physical, mental, and emotional qualities that serve you.

Breathe in the essence of those qualities and breathe out whatever does not belong. Breathe in and welcome a strong and relaxed body. Exhale out all the physical tension and whatever does not belong. Breathe in and welcome a spacious and clear mind and exhale out all mental tension and whatever does not belong. Breathe in and welcome joy and love to your heart. And exhale out all emotional tension, and whatever does not belong. Breathe in all of the qualities that will serve your highest self today. Feel all of the tension melt away with each breath. Your mind and body and emotions are clear and equipped for the day's events to come.

Sit with this powerful and tranquil experience of a relaxed body. Spacious mind and open heart. Connect with this powerful state. Know that this is you and within you and can be maintained throughout the day when you start your morning here. Build a sense of being centered and grounded in these intentions. You are your intentions. You approach every situation with these qualities. In your mind, repeat your intentions once more. In your body feel these qualities that you intend to live by. Breathe in deeply once more grounding into your intentions to take them with you as you go on your day.

Take another deep breath and knowing that you are centered and prepared to create the day that you want. A day that will serve your highest intentions. And when you are ready, open your eyes to start this beautiful new day intentionally and with clarity and purpose.

Thank you for practicing with me today. May you go forth with clarity of mind, compassion in your heart and courage in your step.