



An Evolved Leader's Guide



Introduction



When I reflect on the past year, I am overcome with equal amounts of uncertainty and optimism. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all of us differently. As we begin to move forward, we will reassemble our lives in new and unique ways, creating our own “new normal,” taking with us many lessons of the past year.

The pandemic has been the most disruptive catalyst of our lifetime, revealing aspects of our daily lives that demand change and innovation. We are seeing care shift to different settings, and growth in virtual care is off the charts, yet “simple” things like wifi access are still not universally accessible. As leaders, we have seen our teams step up in countless, untold ways as the pandemic impacts us not only professionally but personally. Leaders have also been impacted and have learned to innovate on the fly, changing how things are done.

Moral distress-related trauma is affecting millions of clinicians and healthcare workers in the wake of the pandemic. We must all pause and consider how we have been affected and memorialize the memories so that they are not discarded or discounted, knowing that the goal is to reflect and recenter. This guide will address creative approaches to leadership through connection, collaboration, kindness, listening, storytelling, and healing.

With gratitude,

Bonnie Clipper, DNP, MA, MBA, RN, CENP, FACHE
Chief Clinical Officer

About Wambi



Wambi's holistic real-time recognition and culture transformation solution improves the healthcare experience for patients and staff through the power of gratitude. Its gamified technology delivers real-time feedback from patients and other team members that recognizes, rewards, and motivates optimal care. With the proven ability to increase workforce engagement, reduce clinician burnout, and drive higher patient satisfaction, Wambi improves the human experience for all.

A New Way to Lead

As we begin to shift gears toward a post-pandemic world, how do we, as leaders, secure healthy solutions that strengthen healthcare workers' resiliency? We must embrace innovation, stay true to our values, and evolve to meet the needs of our patients, our teams, and ourselves. Share the activities and ideas in this guide in your shift huddles or staff meetings to infuse some creativity and fun.

Our Culture & Values

At Wambi, our values are the essence of who we are. We use them as a lens through which we approach every interaction. We call this the Wambi Way. We embody our values to drive human connection at every level, with our platform, within our team, with our clients, and with our communities.



Gratitude: Start each interaction with an attitude of gratitude.



Compassion: Cultivate compassion, seek to understand, and build emotional connections.



Fearlessness: Act with fearlessness to overcome discomfort and grow.



Imagination: Conquer challenges by using imagination to journey beyond the usual.



Joy: Find ways to bring joy to every situation.

The Importance of Leaders

Healthcare is a team “sport”, and we cannot accomplish the goal of improving health and wellbeing for everyone safely and cost-effectively unless we operate as a unified group. Teams have leaders to guide processes and keep them on the right path. Let’s start by defining leaders: Someone who creates a sense of belonging and inspires those they collaborate with to attain a specific predetermined goal. “A great leader is someone who can do this day after day, and year after year, in a wide variety of circumstances” (Harvard Business Review, 2004).

“Leadership is the art of motivating a group of people to act toward achieving a common goal.”
—S. Ward

Leaders are like explorers, carving paths forward for others to follow. Leaders are strategic, developing the plan and tactics for execution. Leaders create a sense of optimism, belonging, and inspiration. Being a leader is tough work, and over the past couple of years has become even more challenging. The COVID-19 pandemic has fast-tracked many into the leadership ranks and has challenged everyone in new and sometimes emotionally taxing ways. Yet, many leaders have emerged stronger than ever with a new sense of purpose and grace.

Because of their role, experience, and skills, leaders have unique opportunities to build and support teams. This has been particularly evident in the last year as it pertains to burnout and resilience. According to a 2021 survey of national nurse leaders, the top five behaviors that contributed to reducing team burnout and improving staff morale were:

- Listening
- Resiliency
- EAP/HR support
- Leader rounding
- Mental health/Psychological support services & recognition (also tied with virtual meetings)

(Joslin/AONL, 2021)

Why do we focus so much on leaders? Because leaders set the tone for the culture of our organizations. They shape the agenda, the direction of our organizations, and even how our team functions. Inspiring and effective leaders drive the success of each individual, the team as a whole, and the organization overall. They create a thriving workplace where everyone feels engaged and that their contributions matter and are valued.

Creating a thriving workplace

- Highlight your organization’s **mission** and **vision**. Help your team **see the impact of their hard work**.
- Focus on **human connection** and **meaningful interactions** among your team.
- Utilize **empathy** and provide **grace** for those on your team who struggle to **disconnect** and **practice self-care**.



Creating A Human Connection

Building meaningful human connections is an undervalued, essential component of being an effective leader. Whether planned or spontaneous, the way leaders communicate always has an impact — be sure that it is a positive interaction! Create a goal to intentionally “connect” at a meaningful level with one person each day. Human connections are built when leaders round on staff, send a text or email to check on how someone’s day is going, mail a handwritten note, or even pick up the phone to have a live conversation.



What is your connection plan for today?

Today, I will: _____ text _____ email _____ write _____ call _____ visit _____ other

Name: _____

Purpose/Goal: _____



*Set a goal that enables you to show empathy and create a meaningful interaction.
It's often the simple things that make someone's day, and make you feel better too!*



Collaboration

Leadership styles continually evolve to stay relevant and meet present challenges. Collaborative leadership is essential today because none of us can do it alone; it requires partnership and collaboration. The Collaborative Leadership style is a modern twist to build your leadership skills and strengthen your team.

Traditional Leaders	VS	Collaborative Leaders
Believe power comes from their position of authority	1	Believe power is greatest in a collective team
Maintain ownership of information	2	Openly share information and knowledge
Sometimes listen to suggestions and ideas from their team	3	Encourage suggestions and ideas from their team
Deliver the approved solution to their team	4	Facilitate brainstorming with their team
Allocate time and resources only when proven necessary	5	Enable their team with immediate time and resources
Adhere to specific roles and responsibilities	6	Allow roles and responsibilities to evolve and fluctuate
Fight fires and focus on symptoms	7	Seek to uncover root causes of issues
Review staff performance annually based on company policy	8	Offer immediate and ongoing feedback with personalized coaching
The workplace is changing. Leadership is changing. The future is collaborative.		

Focus On Kindness

Recall the lyrics from the song Spread a Little Sunshine from the musical Pippin: “when I help others, I’m really helping myself.” When we do something kind, we receive a sense of fulfillment ourselves. We often underestimate the role that kindness can play in our lives, but being kind generates a positive feeling for the “giver” that leaves us feeling good for a few hours and can transform our day. The amazing thing about kindness is that it has a two-fold effect, a true “win-win”, because the recipient of an “act of kindness” experiences the same positive effects as the giver.

Have you ever been on the receiving end of a random act of kindness? If you have, chances are that you were surprised, touched, or even overwhelmed. Even the smallest kindness instills faith in humankind and reminds us we are not alone. Kindness is rhizomatic, spreading its roots and sprouting more kindness in its path. When you have been the recipient of kindness, you are much more likely to pay it forward.

According to Kristin Baird, CEO of the Baird Group, this is fairly easy and can even be done for free. Studies link random acts of kindness to a release of the feel-good brain chemical dopamine, resulting in a feeling of euphoria and what’s called the “helper’s high.”

If we perform more “random acts of kindness” it could make the day better for us and those around us. Think about how you can positively influence your day and that of someone around you by planning simple “random acts of kindness”.



“Kindness is sharing the best parts of our hearts with those around us.”
— R.A. Ktivist

Kindness Activity:



Reflect on the last time you experienced an unexpected act of kindness. How did it make you feel?

What acts of kindness have you shown others in the past week?

Who could use an act of kindness now?

Listening To Build Trust

As told by Frankie Abralind of *The Good Listening Project*: I did not know her, but I could tell she was on the edge. She was in her mid-20s, flannel shirt, unwashed hair, sitting at a computer in a dorm room. There was a pen in her hand when she gestured in front of the camera, a textbook on the desk. I introduced myself as a listener poet and explained that I would be listening to whatever was on her mind and writing a poem about it.

She began talking about being a med student. It was her third year of medical school. She was more than tired after working twelve straight days on her current rotation; she felt burnt out. “And I have five more years like this,” she said. “My sister tells me, ‘Keep pushing, you can get through it,’ but I don’t know if I can....” She gave a small sigh. We were strangers. Why did this young woman trust me? Why did she feel comfortable opening up about her feelings, her fears, her weaknesses?

Sure, there was context. I work for a professional, established organization. And there was a referral effect: someone had recommended us to her and pointed her to our website. But anyone who has worked in healthcare knows that real, genuine sharing is not guaranteed, no matter how white your coat or how shiny your stethoscope. People tend to get deep and personal with our listener poets, despite sessions lasting only 10-15 minutes on average. This person believed I would honor what she shared because of the behaviors I was exhibiting as a good listener. The poem I wrote for her, “PPE,” appears below.

PPE

*COVID nineteen
may not be here to stay
but my med student life
feels less live every day.*

*Trips, parties, and brunches
with friends, now and then;
hangouts, and dinners,
and dates, sprinkled in-*

*these balancing things
have been absent since March.
I lack PPE
for protecting my heart.*

*So, I’m tired. I’m not
giving up, but somehow
I have to get through
the discomfort of now.*

“I have learned a great deal
from listening carefully”.

— Ernest Hemingway

3 best practices to build trust quickly.

- 1 **Embrace silence.** When a speaker has the floor, they will explore their own thoughts more completely. Show them that even when they pause, no one will snatch the spotlight from them.
- 2 **Use simple, non-directive questions.** “Why is that important?”, “How do you feel about that?”, and “Tell me more” are most common. Let them go in whichever direction they like to keep the focus on them, instead of shifting it to your own stories.
- 3 **Reflect.** When a person comes to a stopping point, try to say, “Lemme see if I can reflect back what you just told me.” This intensifies their feeling of being heard and gives them a chance to correct anything you may have misunderstood.

Good listening builds trust quickly. If you are a good listener, people will share their stories with you. In healthcare, that can help save lives.

(Courtesy of goodlistening.org)

Valuing Others Through Storytelling

As humans, we love to tell stories. It is how we share our history, our experiences, and our love and care of others. Patients want, and need, to tell their stories, especially about the impact that an individual made during their care.

"We are all storytellers. We all live in a network of stories. There isn't a stronger connection between people than storytelling".

—Jimmy Neil Smith

According to Bonnie Barnes, Co-founder, CEO, of The DAISY Foundation this is one of the reasons that the DAISY nomination is so impactful both for the nurse nominee and for the patient who took the time to write it. For the patient who told their story of care that made a difference, writing the nomination creates a synergy with their nurse, allowing the patient to do something positive in return for all the nurse had done for them.

While it may help in the healing process to write the nomination, the patient really has no way to know the impact that the nomination will have on the nurse. DAISY nominations are inherently stories, allowing patients to recap their own experiences. They describe nurse behaviors that others value, even when the nurse doesn't realize it. It is the personalization and the descriptive specifics in the story that help make the recognition meaningful and personal to the nurse. In the best DAISY nominations, patients demonstrate exactly what a nurse did that made a difference. Told from a patient/family perspective, two simple elements of nominations tell a story that helps the nurse feel valued:

1 What exactly did the nurse do that made a difference?

2 How did this nurse's behavior make you feel?

These stories take nurses back to their purpose or the connection to their "why", and demonstrate that their work is valued by others.

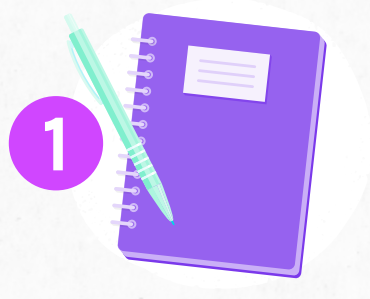
In addition to patients sharing stories about direct care nurses, nurses can also submit DAISY nominations for their leaders. Nurse leaders are usually the first to be sure others are recognized and feel valued, and the last to be recognized by others. DAISY Nurse Leader nominations, written by staff members, provide validation and re-charge nurse leaders. Often this inspires them as they work to ensure that the environment where care is delivered is one in which compassionate care thrives. If you haven't submitted a DAISY nurse leader nomination, think about a story you could share about a nurse leader in your life.

(Courtesy: Bonnie Barnes, CEO, Daisy Foundation)

Healing Through Gratitude

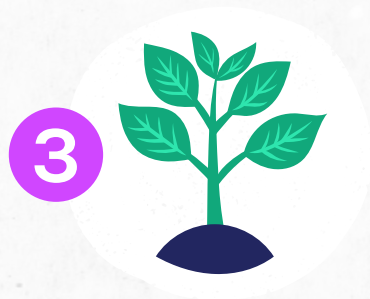
Healing is a large part of recovery and a key component of developing resiliency. Healing takes time, and should not be rushed; however, you can leverage the power of gratitude to work through difficult times. It is not our natural reflex to see the positive in what feels like a very negative situation, but by finding ways to be grateful, even the smallest glimmer of hope or opportunity to be optimistic can help you to build your “resilience muscle.” Here are some ways to simplify the practice of gratitude and build it into your daily routine.

3 Simple Tips for Practicing Gratitude



Keep a gratitude journal! Your journal should be special and unique to you. Focus on things for which you are grateful. Keep it simple: a sunny day, a good cup of coffee or a special person may be worthy of a note in your journal. Jot down the experience or interaction and what you are thankful for.

Pick one day a week where you don't complain about anything! This sounds easier than it is. Whose turn to take the trash out, feed the dogs, or pick up the groceries? Once you focus on this it is easy to see that while none of us consider ourselves “complainers” we do this more than we think. While you are mindful of complaining you will also focus more on positive moments.



Seek out challenges to grow! Changed your job, your shift, or your department? Look for the positive and see this as an opportunity to pursue something that you have always wanted to try. Maybe it is time to go back to school, or turn a colleague into a friend. How can you turn this change into a chance to grow into your best self?

(Robert Emmons, everydaypower.com, 2021, para. 26, 27, 28)



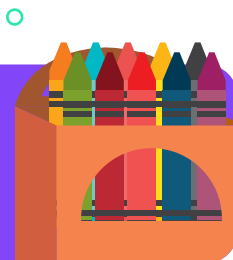
Gratitude in the present is the platform upon which **optimism for the future is built**; if you aren't grateful for the blessings of today, what makes you think anything will change to make you more grateful tomorrow? Gratitude is optimism expressed in advance, and thus is the fuel for self-fulfilling prophecies.

— Joe Tye, Founder and Head Coach, Values Coach Inc.





Coloring reduces stress and promotes mindfulness!
Take a few minutes to de-stress with some coloring,
followed by a crossword puzzle.



♥ LOVE YOURSELF ♥



Speed Crossword

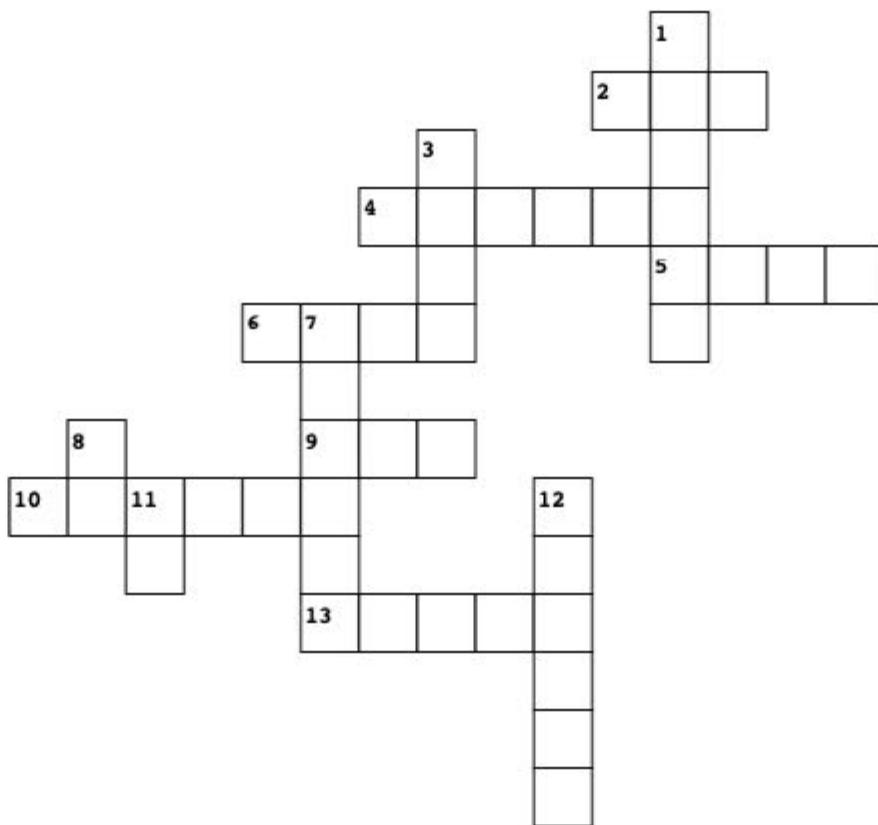
Can you fill this out in less than 90 seconds?

Across

- 2. Snap, crackle,
- 4. Hook, line and
- 5. Up, up and
- 6. Red, white and
- 9. Larry, curly and
- 10. Bacon, lettuce,
- 13. Rock, paper,

Down

- 1. Hip, hip,
- 3. Earth, Wind and
- 7. When life gives you ___
- 8. On your mark, get set, ___!
- 11. Do, re,
- 12. Past, present and



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Joe Tye, CEO and Head Coach of Values Coach

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Moments move us.

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