

Reflective practice

Know You More coaches Dr Jeremy Hinks and Mandy Murphy offer their thoughts on reflective practice as a means of helping yourself and others to navigate complex change

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I am always interested in finding simple frameworks for challenging our ways of thinking and feeling. Frameworks that can be applied widely and in support of meeting personal, group and organisational level challenges. While there are many models developed within the coaching community that achieve this there is much to be gained by looking elsewhere to see what might be adapted to a coaching purpose. Take the Beckhard Harris change equation (BHCE) for example (see below graphic).

The Beckhard Harris change equation

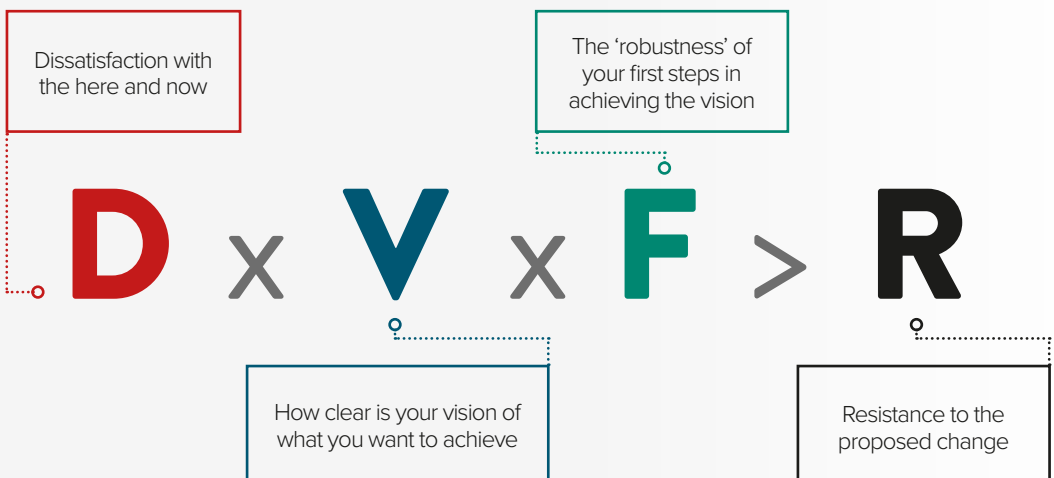
The challenge of complex change is distilled beautifully into simple

algebra. It is a tool that can be used to think about organisational change as well as our personal and interpersonal responses to it. In terms of organisational change, BHCE encourages curiosity along the following lines:

- Do you understand your stakeholders' - i.e. colleagues, learners, parents - thinking and feeling that is fueling their level of dissatisfaction with the status quo? What about your stakeholder's stakeholders?
- Have you expressed a clear vision that captures the purpose of the change and what the future will look and feel like on the other side? How do you know that this vision is understood by teachers, learners, parents?

- Have you identified those first small steps in terms of what they are, how you are going to do them, and how will you know you have succeeded in them? Do your stakeholders know about these steps too? Are your stakeholders co-creators in these first steps? How will they know when they are achieved?
- How effectively do you reframe resistance into difference which you can use to add value to your vision and first steps' thinking? How do you welcome that difference, use it effectively, while keeping a forward momentum?

Using these enquiries, and drilling further into the detail that surfaces, is a great way of thinking about →





→ change. Yet the temptation is to get lost in the detail and forget the simple truth that BHCE makes clear: if you do not do the necessary work in the areas of ‘D’, ‘V’ and ‘F’ then change will not occur. The left-hand side of the equation will be less than the right as there will always be resistance to change as it is a fundamental part of human nature to connect most strongly with what is already familiar to us.

All of the BHCE enquiries can be reframed to support a reflective dialogue in pursuit of greater self-awareness. Through ‘V’ and ‘F’ you can think about your personal goals and the necessary steps to achieve them. Digging deeper into ‘D’ offers an opportunity to explore your true motivations for change. Being attuned to your thinking and feeling around ‘R’ can encourage creativity in exploring the reasons behind your resistance, and the means to overcome it.

In peer-to-peer situations, BHCE can be used as a framework for a coaching dialogue about change. In addition to raising awareness in the

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areas described above, this offers the opportunity to create a common understanding of the challenges being faced within a relationship between people and within teams.

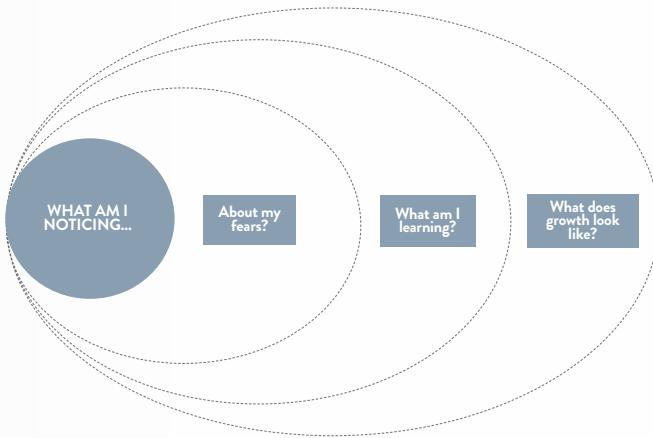
MANDY MURPHY

No-one knows you better than yourself. But we often don’t use this knowledge to help ourselves through

change or disruption, especially if we need to make good decisions and lead others through that change. We look outwards, not inwards to resolve the challenge. We don’t take time and pause to self-reflect ‘am I being true to myself?’ ‘are we achieving the goals we set out to achieve?’

Self-reflection is a skill and is hard to do. For a start it’s not easy to hop off that treadmill and use the finite resource of time for self-reflection. It feels self-indulgent. It’s uncomfortable as it makes us feel vulnerable. And sometimes we just don’t know how to do it, where to start, what are the good questions to use.

Self-reflection is simply about purposefully spending time to ask ourselves important questions in different situations. Reserving time for self-reflection during a period of change can be hugely rewarding, leading to greater self-awareness, which helps us to improve the way we do things, particularly if leading others to achieve better results and ultimately greater self-esteem,



The KYM Self-care in Leadership Model

vitality and success.

We have developed the resource above to support individuals to reflect during challenging times and identify learning and growth needs to move forward.

Examples of questions in the resource include:

- What am I feeling right now?
- What can I control?
- What personal strengths am I using?
- What are the opportunities in this situation?

In strengthening and developing your own self-reflection plan, here are a few suggestions to help you succeed:

- When you take a pause, notice how you are feeling emotionally and physically. There will be personal signs that indicate what is going on for you.
- Start small. Self-reflection doesn't have to begin with an outpouring of all your emotions or going back to your childhood. Start by asking

yourself, 'how was your day?'

- Talk to yourself like you are someone you respect, recognising that you are human and humans are not perfect. This is a learning process in every walk of life.
- Look at self-reflection as an essential skill in your toolbox to help you succeed at your goals. Establish a method that works for you, such as walking, sitting in a quiet space, or journaling.

Self-reflection is the cornerstone of good leadership. Purposefully take time to get off the treadmill, take stock of where you are, understand what's working or not working, what you want to change and what you want to keep.

Use self-coaching questions to tap into your inner wisdom to build your self-awareness and self-reflection skills. If you determine your motivation for change is low, you have obstacles or feel too stuck to take a first step, a formal coaching session may help you move forward.

Free coaching sessions

GTC Scotland and Education Scotland are offering coaching sessions for teachers as part of the Scottish Government-funded programme to cope with additional pressures during the pandemic. Headteachers can register now for digital coaching sessions with Know You More at kym.re/cerg

Coaching for pastoral teachers, teachers with a child protection remit and teachers new in post will open in January.

Keep an eye on the Coaching and Mentoring Matters website at bit.ly/Introtoacoaching for further dates.



About Mandy

Mandy Murphy is a professional coach (www.coachmandy.co.uk) and

a founding member of KYM. Her coaching work supports individuals with career transitions, enabling them to make good decisions to excel in their futures.



About Jeremy

Dr Jeremy Hinks is Coach Community Director at KYM.

Through KYM

and Alpamayo Coaching Ltd (www.alpamayocoaching.com) he delivers leadership and development coaching across all levels in organisations across the public, private and social sector.