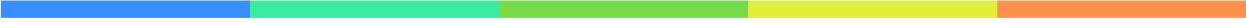


A Healthy Leadership Rhythm

Increasing support, improving communication and reducing anxiety -
The 5 Questions



When things are changing fast, when events are unpredictable and uncertain then anxiety, stress and confusion abound. Staff may be exposed to anxiety over days, weeks and months and the accumulation of such stress is unhealthy. We need to support our people with a healthy leadership rhythm.

No one has a monopoly of good leadership, it can come from anyone at any time, but some of us do have roles and responsibilities that require our thought and consideration. Each and every day everyone in the organisation, at whatever level, has a supervisor, team leader, manager or senior – we are also surrounded by hard working colleagues. All of us can establish a healthy leadership rhythm that reduces anxiety and achieves many things.

- **Visible leadership** – making personal contact with your team, being seen, having their back.
- **Valuing their opinion** – truly hearing what they say, their ideas and experiences matter.
- **Action their issues** – own a task they share and keep your promises – feedback to them.
- **Reward them** – thank, praise and offer specific feedback – and care for them such as taking breaks, etc.
- **Create a climate in which they are empowered** – don't be a 'rescuer' all the time – to be a rescuer you need a 'victim' – don't create victims, allow them to own and act.
- **Trust them** – allow them to get on with getting on – people clear on what is expected are less anxious.
- **Show you care** – in busy moments nothing shows you care more than your time – be present.

So, each and every day, preferably face to face (but use any means you can) check in with your people and colleagues and ask five questions. Spend a few minutes (even if on the phone), the questions encourage more than a cursory greeting. They do not need to take long but they will mean a huge amount. The essential part for leadership is to actively listen and respond with compassion.

Taking the time to ask these 5 questions every day means; you are present with your team, tangible actions will emerge for you and for them, they will be heard and you can share, myths can be addressed, new facts shared, they know that you are accessible, they know they are not alone, they know you have their back. Touch base with your people every day, make the time to do this and get into a healthy leadership rhythm – let them know that every day and shift that you care and value them.

Watch the video on how to use the 5 questions at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQ12f_hb05A

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YK4pcfsOlvk>

For copies and for more help contact: steve.andrews5@nhs.net

A Compassionate Healthy Leadership Rhythm

Regular, swift, supportive and kind

How are you doing?

We ask this all the time, it is almost our standard greeting, it is an alternative to 'hello'. Most people respond with 'fine thanks, how are you?' This exchange is a chance for you to share something with them, to be honest, and demonstrate who you are, what you are engaged in and that you care.

How are your team doing?

By asking this you offer colleagues an opportunity to share their experiences of others, to offer a perspective on the great things the team is doing, the barriers they are bumping into and in this second question may emerge the answer to the first. In this moment suggestions, concerns, praise, information and actions will appear.

How are your colleagues?

The nurse might offer insight into how the doctors are coping, Ward A might share a story about Ward B. At this time useful exchanges are taking place and all parties are showing an interest in wider groups. As your confidence grows you might find the confidence to ask the invisible sixth question 'How do you think I am doing?'

What can you do to help them?

When events are urgent and fast it is helpful if people feel they can act, they are responsible for events, they have some things they can control, they have responsibilities and are supported in taking action. This question creates the opportunity to establish a climate where people feel more in control. Empowered to support others but also to take on and own actions.

What can I/we do to help you?

You care for your people and your colleagues. This questions tangibly demonstrates that. Be honest in this moment because, just like them, some things you have control of and some things you don't. If you leave the exchange with an action – keep your promises and communicate back. If you do they will know - you care, are dependable, reliable, trustworthy, they aren't alone, you have their back.