



SELF-DEVELOPMENT FOR EMPOWERED LEADERS

An introductory guide

BY

SUZANNE WYLDE



WELCOME

Hi There!

I am Suzanne, a leadership coach, self-development author and creative. A multi-hyphenate in short!

I use my experience of working with clients through coaching and in a range of modalities to deliver impactful coaching to leaders.

I believe that the world needs your best leadership self and all the benefits that can bring and I am here to support you in that goal.

I hope you enjoy this short guide where I try to give you a taste of how self-development work can empower you as a leader, and some real tools to you can implement today,

Let me know what you think!

Suzanne Wylde

ABOUT ME

Self-development author, leadership coach, fiction author, entrepreneur, sometime volunteer.

I have a passion for self-development and for supporting people in becoming their best selves, while I try to do the same.



WHAT IS SELF-DEVELOPMENT?

This is an extremely general term - an online search could yield results on anything from getting rich and buying a yacht to becoming a hermit who meditates all day.

In this context I use "self-development" to mean intentionally working on yourself by increasing self-awareness, examining limiting beliefs, identifying your values, gaining clarity and other skills, which improve our ability to be great people and leaders.

WHAT WILL I GET OUT OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT WORK?

As a leader you already have so many responsibilities, so I know there has to be a very good reason to invest your time and attention in doing additional work.

However, when doing self-development you are not only improving your leadership capabilities - you are investing in yourself.



By actively growing to overcome a specific obstacle or achieve a goal, you will also likely gain benefits that pay off in the future as well as other areas of your life.

Let me give you an example.

Brian feels highly competent at his job, yet he is often uneasy in his leadership role, and this makes it hard to connect to his team and motivate them.

Through exploring his resistance in more depth he realizes his role models for leadership were all very alpha, “power-over” types that used to throw their weight around. He really disliked those people and the association is making him reject the title of leader.

By reframing the concept of leadership, he is able to step into the role more completely. His team look to him with more confidence and are able to relax, which has positive outcomes in their morale and efficiency.

Brian is also able to take what he learned about leadership and apply it to his other roles: husband, father, uncle, coach. His relationship with power and responsibility becomes more comfortable and this leads to more ease and closeness in his personal relationships.

So, you can see from this example that putting the effort into self-development work can have unexpected pay-offs.

(And we never know how it's going to pay off until we've done the work.)

SO, HOW DO I DO THIS WORK?

Self-development is a very broad topic (because we as people are multi-faceted), so there are also many ways to do the work.

It's not about finding the "right" way, but rather the way that works for you right now.

This is a non-exhaustive list of some of the things you can try:

1. You can **read books** on various self-development topics. This is a great way to start because you can go at your own pace and mull things over. Reading the biographies of leaders you admire can also yield very helpful lessons.

I recommend you try to implement what you are learning as you go, because real-life experience is where you actually make progress and start to test what works for you, as well as integrating it.

2. Another route is **getting coaching**, which I am very biased towards as a coach! I have seen powerful shifts in my clients, many of whom have gone on to create strong teams and cultures around them, and feel a robust satisfaction in their lives.



The benefit of coaching is that it is all about you and where you are at. Whereas a book can be 10% relevant to you and your situation, a coaching session will be 100% about you and what you are dealing with and therefore the results will be that much greater.

Coaching can be a sizeable investment, so do make sure you find someone that feels right for your personality and goals.

For others who want to do the work on their own terms, **self-reflection** is a very effective tool.

And, as leadership can be lonely, you may prefer a supportive **group of peers** where you can talk over your challenges and share guidance.

Alternatively, there are certain modalities you can try in order to improve your self-awareness, self-expression and happiness, and through that your ability to lead. (just so you know, I can't vouch for them as it comes down to the person/ method you use). For example:

Common self-help tools:

Meditation, mindfulness and journaling

Lifestyle changes:

reducing screen time, more time in nature, improving the quality of your relationships, having more fun

Alternative therapy/ movement:

breathwork, yoga, expressive dance, resistance stretching

Some of these approaches may seem too alternative for you, and I would never push someone past their comfort zone.

However, I have seen them have benefits for people and if you've tried the same thing over and over again without getting the results you want, then trying something completely different may be the right choice.

SOME SELF-DEVELOPMENT TOOLS YOU CAN START USING TODAY.

Three simple, but powerful exercises to empower your leadership

1. FREEWRITING

Freewriting helps you to gain more insight into a person or situation and how you feel about them. It also allows you to access the deeper parts of yourself that don't always get to speak up, yet which are affecting your thoughts and feelings.

Sit down with a pen and paper (writing physically is more impactful) and write on a topic or situation that is bothering you for 10 minutes without editing yourself.

You can use a starter phrase to help you get going. For example, if you had a tough interaction with a person called Jenny, you might write "When I was talking with Jenny..." as your starter phrase.

Write the phrase over and over until other words naturally come up, then go with whatever comes to mind. Write the starter phrase repeatedly again if you get stuck.

Read back what you have written. Does anything surprise you?

2. SELF-REFLECTION

This is a general term that means reflecting on yourself: thoughts, actions, feelings etc. In this exercise, however, I'm going to give you guidance so you can do more focused self-reflection.



- 01** Sit somewhere you will be undisturbed. Take a deep breath and let it out. Call to mind a challenging situation, write it out if you like.

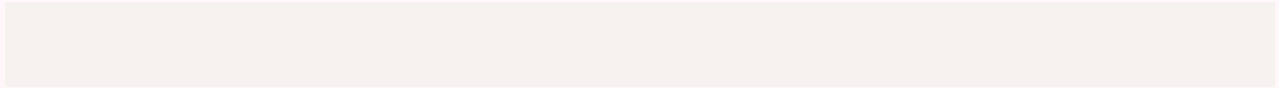
- 02** What are your thoughts about what happened and why it happened the way it did? Don't edit yourself, include all thoughts even if they sound illogical, so you can also catch limiting beliefs

- 03** Now say them all out loud one at a time, take your time.
How was that for you?

Further reflection

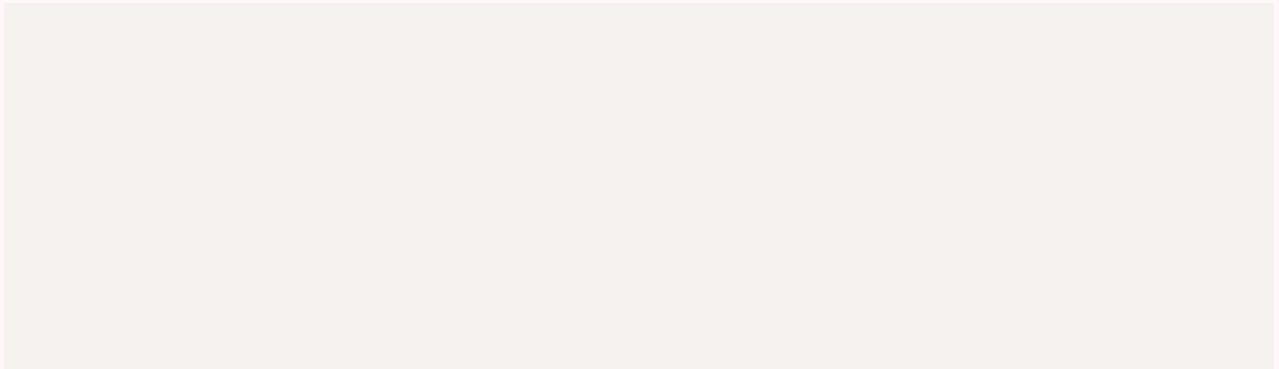
OK, now let's think about the situation again and now I want you to answer these questions, taking plenty of time for self-reflection for each so you give the fullest, most honest answer.

1. Did you show up with your whole self to that situation?



2. If not, what held you back from showing up fully?

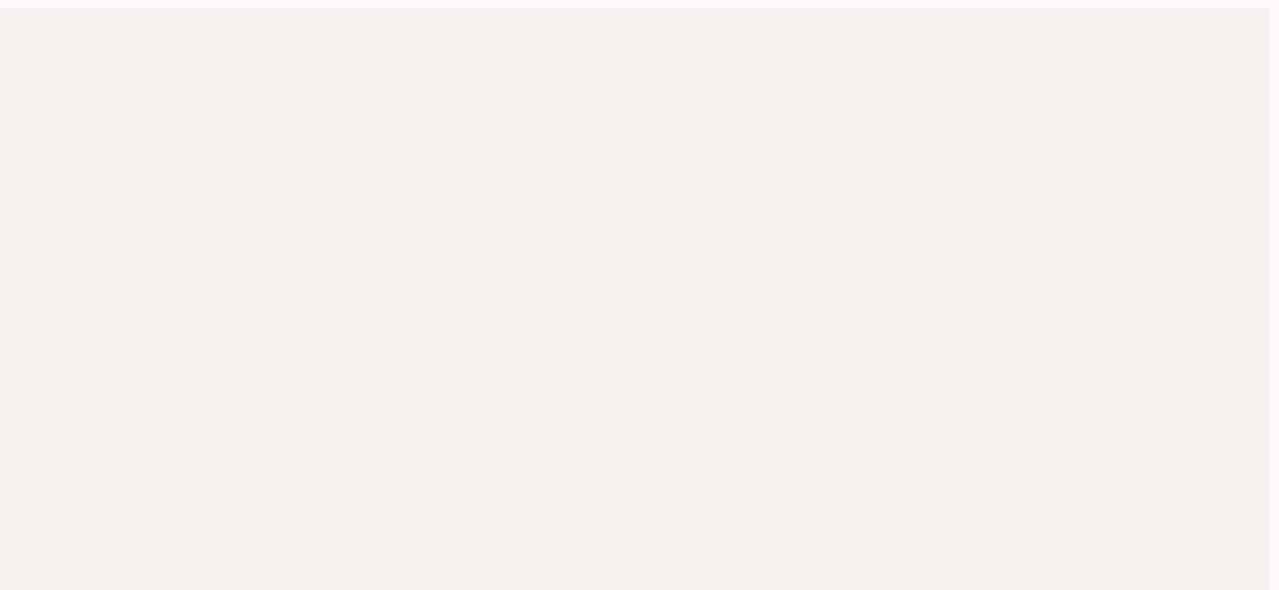
(Again, include all thoughts even if they seem illogical or out of proportion, because there will often be an emotional component and we really want to hear all of it. Also, emotions are never wrong – but they can be about a different place or time that the current situation is reminding you of.)



Take a moment to acknowledge everything that came up without the need to change it right now.

Then ask yourself:

3. If I had shown up as my whole self, what would the situation have looked like? Give as full and descriptive an answer as possible

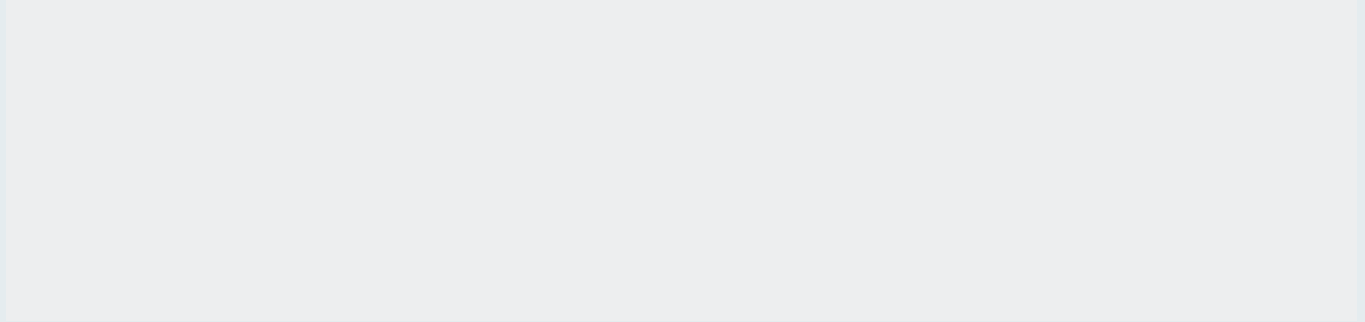


3. ROLE MODELS

A really simple exercise with deep meaning, I will explain more after you've done it.

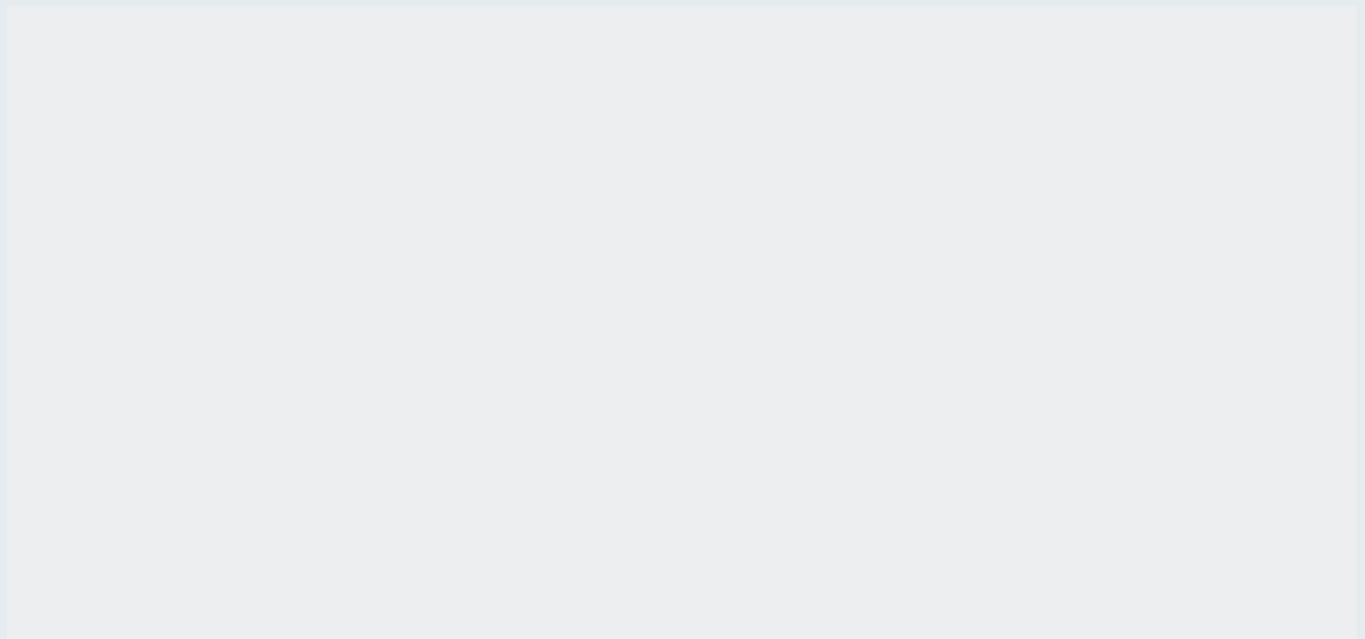
1. Think about amazing leaders you've known, seen on TV, or read about and jot down their names.

(There's no restriction: they could be pop singers, cartoon characters, invisible friends etc. and they don't have to be recognised as a leader by others - just by you)



2. Now I want you to write out all the qualities that make them a great leader. And again - this is to you personally, we're not considering why anyone else might think they are great.

This list is not restrictive. So, if wearing bright pink, or having a big sword, or dancing skills genuinely feel like qualities that helped them to be a great leader, include them.



OK, when you feel you have listed absolutely all the things that made these people/ characters great leaders, have a read through all of them.

Now, know that you identified these qualities because you have them.

You have them.

Just sit with that for a moment.



This exercise can help you to define what you think a great leader is.

And not only that, but the kind of great leader **you are**, whether you are expressing it right now or not.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT FOR EMPOWERED LEADERS

I hope you enjoyed this very brief, very non-exhaustive look at what self-development for leadership can look like. In reality there are far more tools, and it can go a lot deeper (or broader, depending on the day.)

But it comes down to this.

Outside of circumstance and education, the only thing limiting your ability to lead is **your level of self-development.**

And from what I've seen in my work with clients, it is the most impactful factor, and so often the least developed in many people - whether they are new to leadership or seasoned leaders.

We all need to work on ourselves sometimes, but it doesn't all need to be hard work. You can find community, enjoyment and fun in the journey.

And whether I get to support you or not, I wish you all the success you deserve, and that you will have the impact you want to on the world.



WHAT NEXT?



Explore how coaching with me can help you
by booking your free intro call today.

SCHEDULE YOUR CALL

