

Unlocking leadership tensions

Dan Heasman
Head of Creative



Meet MindGym

Core beliefs



Five minutes with a genius beats a month with a fool



People change only when they believe it is in their own best interest



Science wins – In research we trust



We choose how we think



One size fits no one



Little but often – think gym not health farm

Global leader using behavioral science to improve performance

Over 4 million participants in 90 countries

Clients include 55% of S&P 500, 62% of FTSE 100

Floated on London Stock Exchange

Our partners



Leadership has
always been
challenging,
but never more
challenging than
now.



Great expectations

**Increasing
productivity and
driving results**

**Navigating
business changes
and executing
strategy**

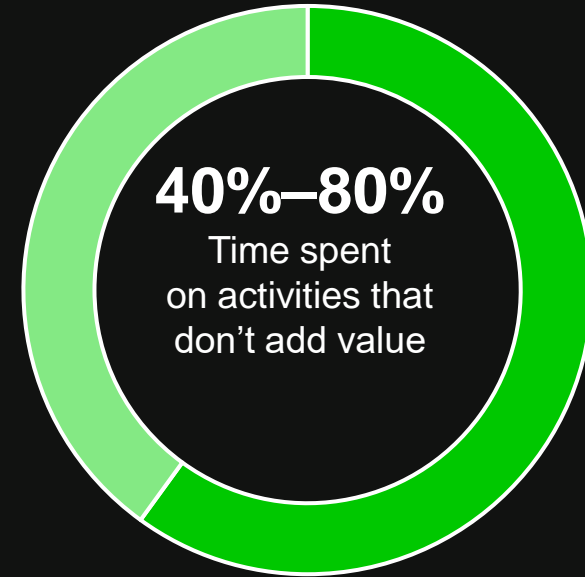
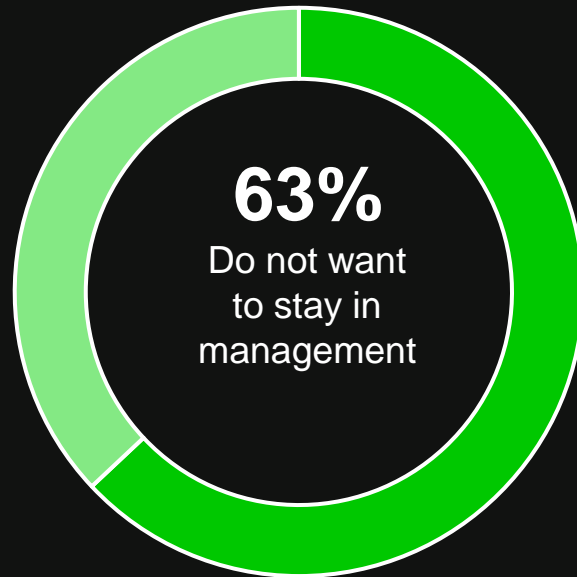
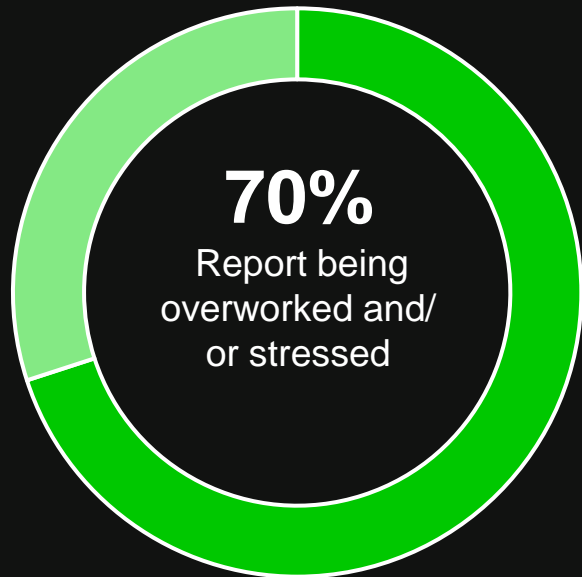
**Increasing
innovation**

**Leading
inclusively
and responding
to employee
activism**

**Attracting,
retaining and
developing talent**

**Ensuring
wellbeing and
engagement**

United in struggle



Trapped in tensions

01	I need to deliver what we've promised for the present	↔	I need to drive innovation for the future
02	I need everyone to perform at a consistently high level	↔	I need to prevent burnout and protect wellbeing
03	I need to show that I value others as individuals	↔	I need to treat everyone fairly and strengthen the team
04	I need to get on with executing what I believe is right	↔	I need to make time for other people's views
05	I need this task done quickly and to a high quality	↔	I need to give people time to learn and empower development

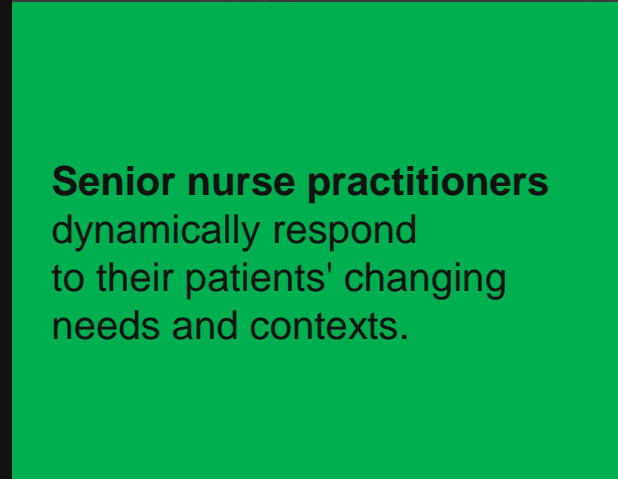
Reacting is human



Breaking free



Expert orchestra conductors are better able to flex their attention.



Senior nurse practitioners dynamically respond to their patients' changing needs and contexts.



Master chess players process information broadly and intuitively.

Sources: 1. Benner (2004),
2. Bergee (2005), 3. Amidzic (2001)

The way forward

Notice

The practice of opening up to take in more information

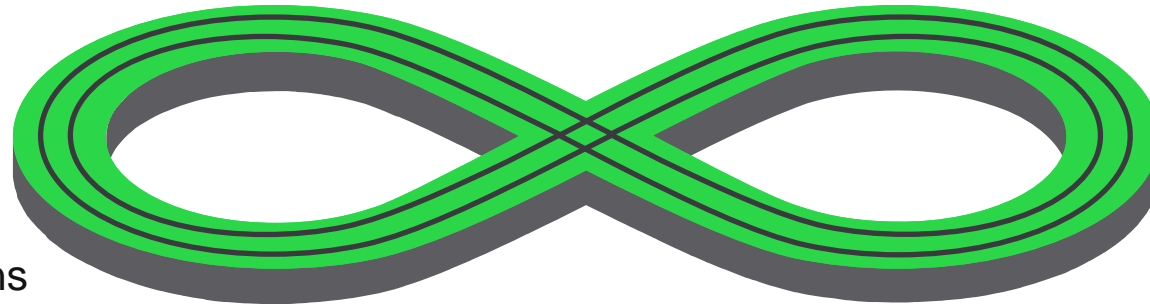
The 4 practices of **ATTUNEMENT**

Sense-make

The practice of interpreting information effectively

Act

The practice of managing decisions made by us and others



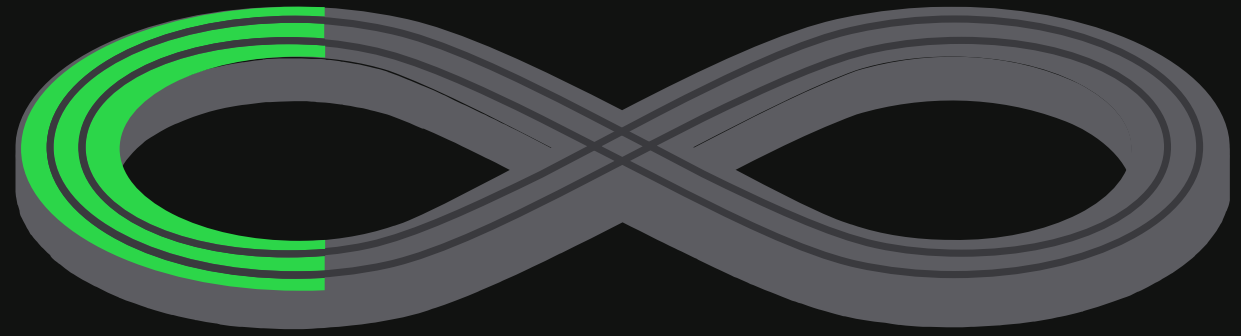
Choose

The practice of clear decision-making

Research shows that successful leaders get tensions working for them by tuning in to them.

This is achieved through four key practices.

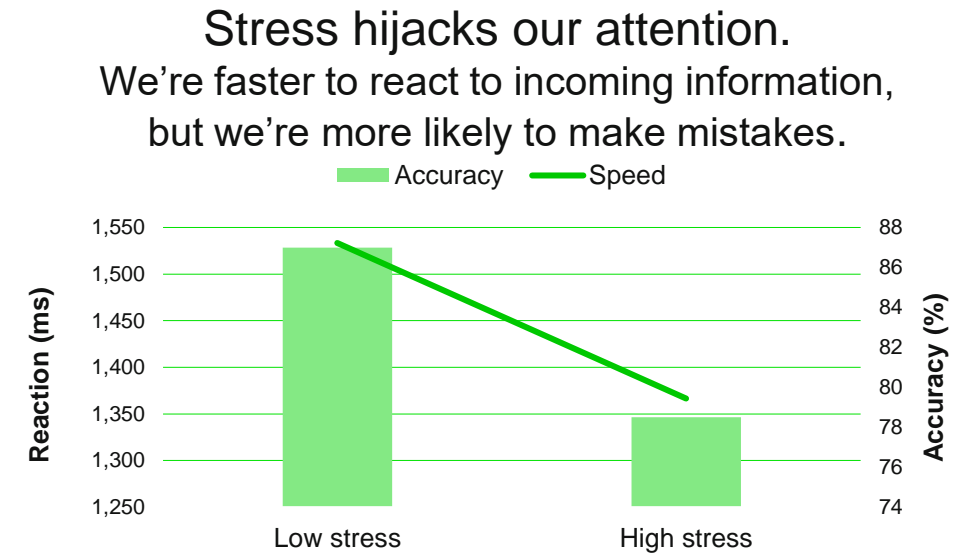
The practice of Noticing



Don't just do something, stand there

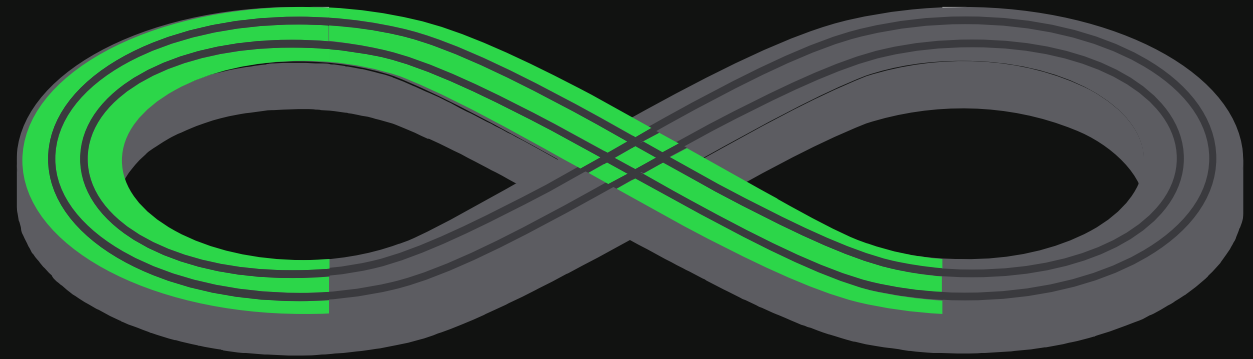
The impulse to act is strong, but leaders will notice more ways forward if they take a moment to notice than if they rush ahead.

- Recognize cues that signal when attention could become narrow and rigid.
- Override instinctual reactions to make space for intentional responses.
- Disconnect observation from evaluation to free up capacity for more open, flexible attention.



Practice noticing by slowing down, pausing for a moment, and opening yourself up to more information.

The practice of Sense-making



Find more signal in the noise

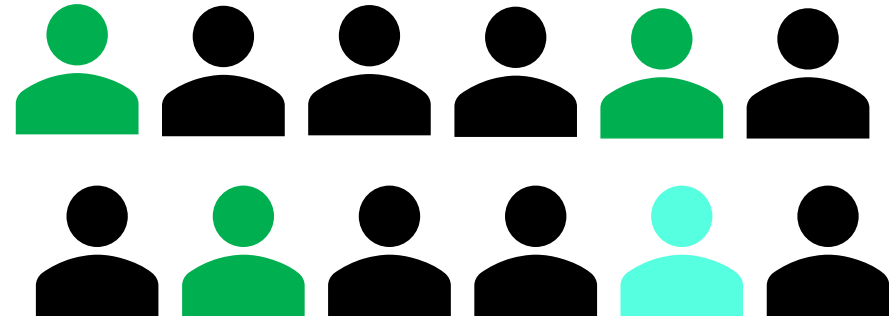
Tensions can distort our thinking, especially if one side seems urgent. With a more balanced view of the situation, leaders are more likely to discover novel opportunities and creative solutions that address both sides of the tension at once.

- Avoid zero-sum thinking and adopt a true win–win mentality.
- Look at the situation through different lenses and across different levels to get a more complete view.
- Recognize patterns over time, and understand what is working for you, and what is not.

Sources: 1: Zwane (2012) 2: Andrews Fearon, Götz, Serapio-García, & Good (2021)

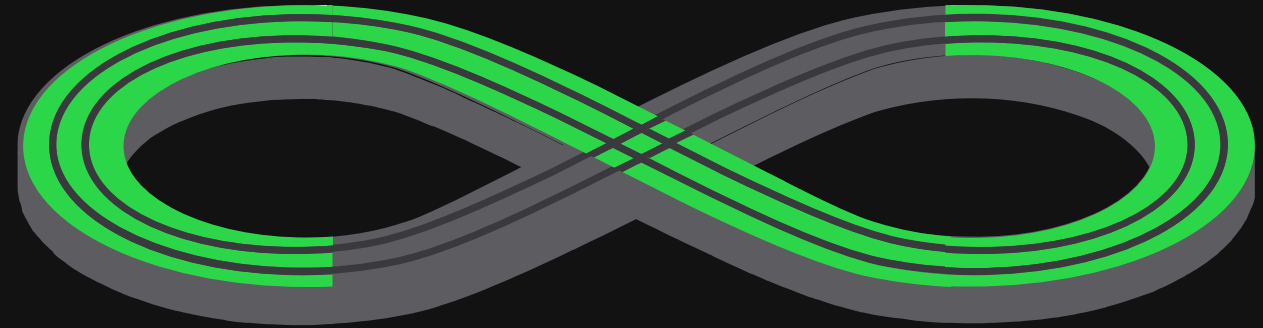
Follow the patterns

Look at the bigger picture to take note of what's really happening.



Practice sense-making by looking at the patterns over time. For example, if you notice increased attrition over time, what factors in the system could be contributing to this?

The practice of Choosing



Decide what to do

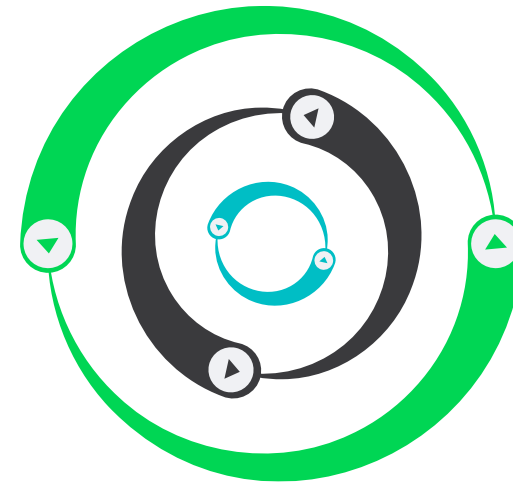
Tensions can never be resolved, and this can feel paralyzing. The key is to take a small, brave step in the right direction, and then keep doing this again and again over time. We call it dynamic decision-making.

- Understand where you need to differentiate and where potential synergies lie.
- Decide what to do now and what to do later, based on both current and future priorities.
- Create checks and balances that will signal when and how to adjust course.

Sources: Smith (2014), Smith et al (2012), Smith & Tushman (2005)

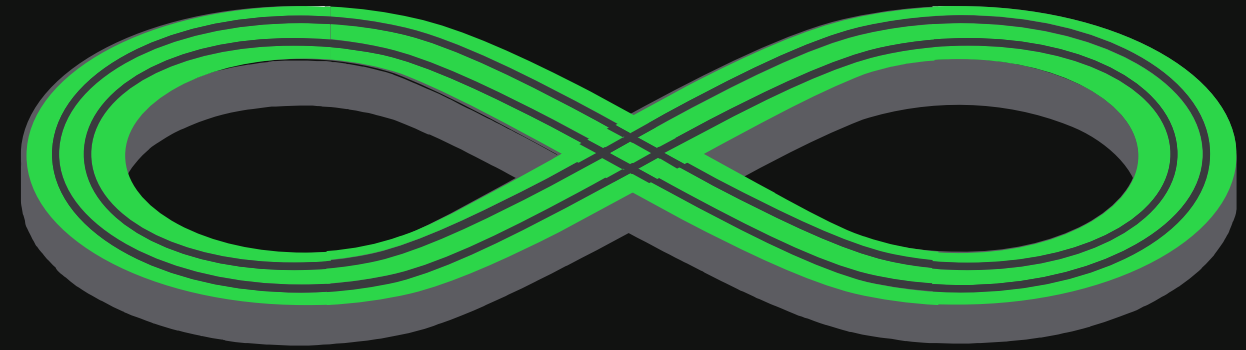
Keep it dynamic

Choose a course and correct where needed.



Practice choosing by keeping the feedback loop short. Instead of getting caught up in analysis paralysis, continually reassess decisions to ensure that they're still working and adjust course if needed.

The practice of Acting



Do it with panache

When uncertainty and friction are high, how leaders act matters as much as what they do. Acting with empathy, equanimity, and confidence will make leaders a source of stability in an unstable world.

- Acknowledge discomfort, build empathy and demonstrate care.
- Experiment boldly and reflect humbly.
- Flex between behaviors that balance empowerment and accountability.
- Role-model how to engage with the tensions.

Models matter

The ability to role-model well has a significant positive impact on a wide variety of outcomes.



Practice acting by considering your impact on others and how you can be a force for good.

Making it real

Notice

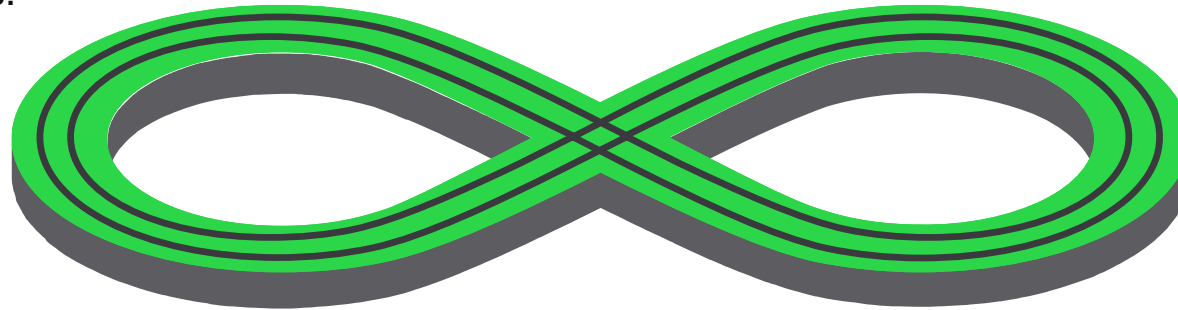
Stop and consider

Override instinctual reactions to make space for intentional responses.

Sense-make

Recognize patterns

Recognize patterns over time, and understand what works or doesn't work for you.



Adjust as needed

Flex between behaviors that balance empowerment and accountability.

Embrace dynamic decision-making

Decide what to do now and what to do later, based on both current and future priorities.

Act

Choose

Thank you

Get in touch

London

e: uk@themindgym.com

t: +44 (0)207 376 0626

New York


e: us@themindgym.com


t: +1 646 649 4333

Singapore

e: sg@themindgym.com

t: +65 6962 8980

 [/company/mind-gym](https://www.linkedin.com/company/mind-gym)

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