

On Demand Team Development Case Study: Virtual Global Team Development

THE BACKGROUND

- Global Pharmaceutical Organization, R&D Function
- On Demand Coaching – COVID-19 – For HR Leadership Team

THE CHALLENGE

- Under the intense pressure to perform in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic for their internal clients (globally distributed team members of a pharmaceutical company), these 14 HR team members self-reported that they were suffering from extreme burnout, stress, insomnia, and/or general overwhelm. Their clients needed immediate responses and support on new policies related to remote working, juggling unexpected childcare and schooling responsibilities within the workday, and lack of access to daycare, elder care facilities, and summer camps.
- The 14 HR team members, themselves, reported working 12-hour days minimum, with back-to-back WebEx meetings now a new norm. They reported having to neglect their physical and mental health in order to keep up with the workload, while also struggling with the same issues their clients faced, i.e. lack of access to child and elder care.

THE OBJECTIVE

- To provide a rapid set of tools and practices to assist the HR team members to manage stress and burnout.

THE SOLUTION

- Two virtual WebEx sessions were facilitated by the coach, Karen Doyle Grossman. Each session was attended, at least partially, by the entire team.
- The first session provided space for each team member to respond to three questions: 1) *How have your expectations of yourself as a working person changed since the Covid-19 lockdown?* and 2) *How have your day-to-day circumstances changed since the Covid-19 lockdown?* These questions were designed to give each person the space to share and reflect on any dissonance between their expectations of themselves and their new, often radically-shifted reality. The third question: *What self-care or wellness practices have you tried in the last year, and which are you still doing through the Covid lockdown period?* This question was designed for the coach to get a snapshot of the extent to which the team members were using self-care practices at all.
- For the time between the virtual sessions, the coach assigned one contemplative practice for all participants, and recommended and provided a score of others, as individual interest and circumstances permitted.
- The second virtual session was divided into two parts: 1) A thirty-minute instructional experience practicing each of the seven steps of superconscious meditation; 2) Participant sharing of the results of their contemplative practices and providing an update on their well-being.

THE OUTCOME

- Each participant reported a positive and calming effect from the contemplative practice. Most reported that it helped them to disconnect from the workday and immerse themselves in 10-15 minutes focusing on joy and love.

- Additionally, more than two-thirds of the team members reported engaging in physical exercise more since the last session, including: walking, running, gardening, weeding, touch football with kids, peloton, hiking, soccer, dog walking, and fabricating and using a home gym.
- Several participants reported replacing the decompression time they used to enjoy from their commutes to work with new activities: arts and crafts, puzzles, meditating, sitting outside at the ocean, and cooking.
- Two participants requested the 30-minute meditation as a recorded practice that they could use at home. All of the participants received shorter meditations they can use throughout their days.