

# TOGETHER IN WELLNESS: A GUIDE FOR LEADERS AND WELLNESS CHAMPIONS

## TURNING REACTION INTO ACTION

Sometimes, we encounter a situation and respond quickly, without much thought because we're juggling many tasks and aren't completely focused on what's in front of us. Our response is more like a soundbite: short, to the point, and with no extra fluff, so we can move on and put out the next fire. Other times, we may be led by emotion, especially when responding to something we're passionate about.

In both instances, we may not respond in a well-rounded or thought-out way. To others, the response may feel cold or reactive instead of thought out and reasonable. It's during these times that we walk away thinking, "I should have said..." or "I should have done..." or even "that really irked me!"

We've all had moments when we sit back and think: "I don't like how I left that conversation but there's nothing I can do about it now." But that's not actually the case. The good news is that, although that point in time has passed, you can still provide a logical and rational response.

Once you're no longer in the heat of the moment and don't have any other pressing issues at hand, you have time to hit pause, peel back the layers, think objectively and respond the way you wish you would have in the first place.

Sometimes there may be an unpleasant experience that affects the entire team or a handful of people in the group—either directly or indirectly.

These events are not common but when they occur it is important to take the time to address them and debrief after an uncomfortable or difficult situation. Debriefing can help uncover people's perceptions of what happened, correct any misconceptions and uncover ways to respond to future situations in a way that considers the needs of the team and helps achieve a more desired outcome.

### TEAM ACTIVITY

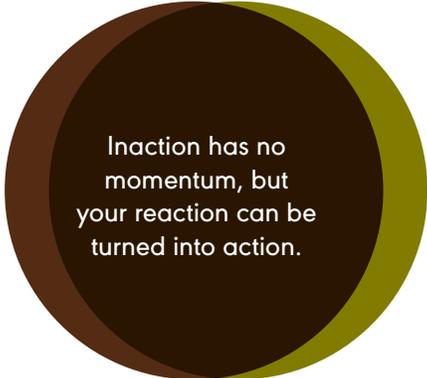
#### How to prepare:

**Review** [Turning Reaction into Action](#) in our Together in Wellness Planner. Pay special attention to the tips in 'Moving into Action':

**The facts:** Be objective and examine the facts and details that you observed. What was said? What did you see, hear, feel, touch, or even taste? This will help you methodically re-examine the experience.

**My reaction:** Reflect on your reaction. How did you feel? What was your emotional and physical reaction? What did you like or dislike? How did you respond?

**The meaning:** Using critical thinking skills, examine the facts and your reaction. What is the significance of the event? Why is this interaction important to you? What was actually said and what was the intention behind it all? Most importantly, what can you learn?

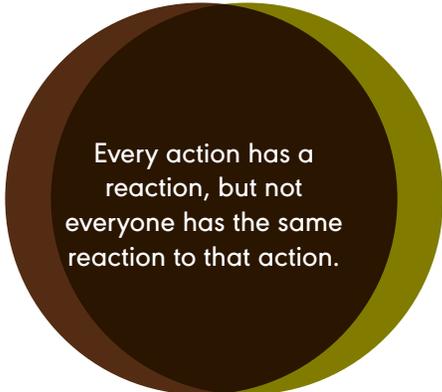


Inaction has no momentum, but your reaction can be turned into action.

**My new action:** Learn, adjust, and move forward. What can I do? What should I do? What will I do? Now that you've had some time to process everything, this is your opportunity to go back to the person and share what you wish you would have said in the first place. We may not have a delete key but it's never too late to go back and make a few edits.

#### How to include your team:

1. Share copies of [Turning Reaction into Action](#). This can be done prior to or during the meeting.
2. Identify a situation or event to debrief as a group.
3. As a group, review the four stages of 'Moving into Action.' The purpose of this activity is to gain a better understanding of other people's interpretation of the situation and explore how to do better next time. Gently encourage everyone to share. To make it a safe space, allow people to opt out (or share later) if they aren't comfortable sharing with the group at this time.
4. Gather **the facts**, which is the first step from Moving into Action. Remind the group that there are no wrong answers and everyone's perceptions and responses are true for them.
5. Next, dig a little deeper and have everyone share **their reaction** to the situation. Remind the group that everyone's reaction is personal and therefore true for them.



Every action has a reaction, but not everyone has the same reaction to that action.

#### How to debrief:

Now that the details have been uncovered, it's time to activate those critical thinking skills to uncover **the meaning** behind the event. The following questions are examples of how you can steer the conversation:

- What is the significance of the event?
- Why is this interaction important to you?
- What was actually said and what was the intention behind it all?
- Most importantly, what can you learn?

#### How to continue:

By this point, you should have a good understanding of the event. Now it's time to learn, adjust and move forward. Ask the group: what can we do, what should we do and what will we do?

Things may not have gone as planned the first time around but that doesn't mean you can't learn, grow and have a better reaction next time.



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