

24 September 2020

Thoughts from Staff College.....the tenth in our series of Faculty blogs

Medice, cura te ipsum*

Dr Yogi Amin

(*Physician, heal thyself, Luke 4:23)

If all things stay the same, it looks like there'll be a second surge, as predicted. When that happens, people may well find themselves at different stages of the Kubler-Ross grief cycle at different times. They may experience Denial, Anger (frustration, irritation, anxiety), Bargaining (struggling to find meaning, reaching out to others), Depression (overwhelmed, helplessness, hostility, flight) and Acceptance (exploring options, new plan in place). This is a perfectly normal and predictable reaction but it's important to try to identify where you are in the cycle. It's also crucial to try to judge where the people around you are, so that you can better understand their own internal context. Being aware of your own and other people's perspectives will enable you to bring your people to an acceptance of what are the priorities of the individual, team and organisation.

In areas that I led during the first surge, my priority was safety. Obviously, it is a little more complex than just physical safety, as in my mind, mental and societal safety also needed to be considered. This is a challenge, as this simple statement of safety can push and pull in different directions depending on which individual stance you take of physical, mental or societal safety. This has been more obvious of late, again for me it helped when I knew when I needed to lead, and when I needed to follow - even when I didn't fully agree with the path being taken.

One of my observations from the first surge, was the importance of the relationship between leadership and followership. More specifically, the ability of agile leaders to move from being a leader to being a follower and vice versa, in the blink of an eye. This enabled them to ensure that people stayed focused on the ultimate aim of the group or team (if they had already agreed what the aim or priority was!)

My blog this week is short and asks more questions than answers, but I would like you all to look at yourselves and ask:

- Where are you in the grief cycle, and where are those around you?
- What needs to be done to move you to a different place?
- What is the aim of your team? Is it agreed?
- And finally, when do you need to lead and when do you need to follow to be most effective?

“He who cannot be a good follower cannot be a leader” Aristotle.