

# Video transcript

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## Perspective in uncertain times

My name is Ben Crowe, and I'm a professional mentor and leadership coach. Mainly with CEOs, coaches and athletes and teams - more recently governments and teenagers, working mainly in mindset in a professional sense and their perspective in a personal sense. Both my brothers are doctors, and I think I must have been a 'wanna-be' who just wanted to help people. My life purpose is to help people do things better and be better for it. How that manifests is different depending on the client and depending on the situation. My dad died when I was pretty young, and I think I've always been in that search of meaning and purpose ever since, in terms of perspective. In coming to terms with our new environment, perspective will get us through this chapter and in terms of perspective, the two most powerful pillars are acceptance and gratitude, but there are other principles as well to acknowledge here first and foremost; This too shall pass, the world will get through this. Secondly, our greatest growth comes from our darkest times. Our greatest learnings come from our most difficult times, and this chapter will define many leaders out there. The reason why our greatest failures can lead to our greatest successes, is because it unlocks humility and humanity, and learning - three of the greatest attributes of leaders. We're already seeing the most beautiful sense of humanity around the world at the moment.

In terms of how powerful acceptance is, in these times, acceptance is the gateway of perspective and it's one of the greatest pillars that human beings have access to. Today, we actually don't understand as humans how powerful acceptance is. There's a book called 'The road less travelled' by Scott Beck, which is considered the top three most important books ever written. You don't need to read the book - I'll give you the punch line. It's in the first page, it's actually in the first two lines of the first page. The first line of 'The road less travelled'; "Life is difficult." But the second sentence is the clincher, "Once you accept that life is difficult, life is no longer difficult." The power is in acceptance. We're just not accepting today, and therefore we're distracted. Everyone is putting judgements on whether something is good or something is bad, and we've got opinions and judgments. Nothing is ever that good or that bad, it just is what it is, and as soon as we go from that frame of reference, life is a lot easier to deal with.

In terms of reframing expectations with appreciation or reframing entitlement with gratitude, you can wake up in the morning and appreciate that you've got to have a hot shower, or you've got to have a breakfast, or you've got to sleep in your bed. We decide whether to focus on expectation and entitlement, or have a sense of appreciation and gratitude. And just saying right now things that you're grateful for shifts your perspective in such a beautiful way.

Certainty and routine right now have been replaced with uncertainty, risk and emotional exposure, and effectively the definitions of vulnerability. So those who embrace vulnerability as a strength right now, have got a greater chance of getting through this chapter. There's effectively two types of people on the planet today: Those who view vulnerability as a strength and those who view it as a weakness. And if you view vulnerability as a weakness, typically we're quite closed, close-minded, defensive, on the back foot, in denial of what's going on around us. We're not very compassionate first, for ourselves because we think we have to be this perfect leader with all the answers, and then it's very hard to be compassionate for someone else if you're not

compassionate for yourself first. And compassion is so important right now, and then you won't create that connection first for yourself, then for others.

But if you view vulnerability as a strength and you lean into that risk and uncertainty and emotional exposure, the opposite three things happen; you're more open, you're more open-minded, curious, you're more adaptive, you're incredibly compassionate because you're not going to be this 'perfect leader' anymore. You can lean into the humanity of what's going on around you, and then you can be compassionate to others and then you will create that connection that, as leaders, we're looking for – even though you're physically disconnected in terms of your environment, working from home, you can still create the most beautiful connection if you, as a leader, you embrace vulnerability as a strength, and then you'll be able to adapt to the conditions around you, which are changing by the hour, at the moment.

A lot of the work I do with my clients centers around performance mindset, which is in the moment of performance; How I can focus my attention on the things I can control, and the best version of me, and not get distracted by the things which typically sabotage our performances, which is the fear of failure or focusing on the results. Right now, it's fair to say that life is a performance. There are so many distractions that are sabotaging our performances right now. What's imputed on us is to identify when we're getting distracted and let them go. 90% of performances are sabotaged by the fear of failure or focusing on the results causing unnecessary expectations that we can't control. Accepting the things we can't control and focusing back on the things we can control are the best version of us, enables us to think with clarity and with a calmness and composure to enable us to strategise to communicate and stay connected. Now, this is the most important principle that every human on the planet needs to understand, acknowledge and implement – that is, it's our decisions, not the conditions, that determines our mindset, our self-worth and our attitude.

At the moment, the opposite is happening. We're letting the conditions of our reality determine our mindset, but we are in total control of our emotions because we're in total control of the words that we send from our conscious mind to our unconscious mind, that determines our emotions. So, if you're feeling calm, it's medically and physically impossible to feel anxious, but the opposite is also true if you feel anxious. It's impossible to feel calm, and you decide. Recapture the performance memory when you're at your best and reclaim the words that best describes how you were feeling in that performance, and I guarantee you'll find derivatives of calm or composed or relaxed or confidence or happy or free. In your own words, in your own way, when you recreate and reclaim those emotions, that becomes the story you tell yourself. Viktor Frankl, who's one of my heroes, who's arguable the world's greatest psychiatrist, who survived the Auschwitz concentration camp, who got out of there and he wrote a book called 'Man's search for meaning' and write it in seven days. The most famous line in that book is that "Everything can be taken from a person except for one thing, the last of the human freedoms to choose; One's attitude." In any given set of circumstances to choose one's own way, our greatest growth comes from our darkest times, and in this chapter, we define so many leaders. Once we realise that we decide – it's our decisions, not conditions that determine our mindset, that determine our attitude, that determine our self-worth, it's not up for grabs. We're already unconditionally worthy.