

TJ AWARDS 2019 - COUNTDOWN TO THE GALA DINNER

TJ

Training Journal

NOVEMBER 2019

Special

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for OEB19



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THE POWER OF
PERSONALISATION
IN LEARNING

THE
STRATEGIC
AGILITY
CHALLENGE

7
DEADLY
MYTHS OF
CHANGE

ELICITING TECHNIQUES

BUILDING TRUST

• GUY •
BLOOM

LIVING BRAVE LEADERSHIP

SPOTLIGHT ON

When talking to Guy Bloom, author of Living Brave Leadership, you get a sense of a jigsaw – the different parts are all relevant but it’s their culmination that brings a rare perspective on the development of leaders.

Guy has spent the last 30 years working within organisations in various roles such as head of leadership and learning at RBS Insurance, group talent manager for Homeserve Plc, and director of leadership for leading UK consultancy Blue Sky.

He has judged the TJ Awards category Best Leadership Programme, and won multiple awards for his work, including Best Leadership Development Programme at the TJ Awards 2014, and Excellence in Performance Improvement at the Association of Business Psychology Awards 2015.

Another aspect to the jigsaw puzzle is Guy’s experience in martial arts. He is recognised as an instructor in three systems, a four-time entrant into the Martial Arts Hall of Fame, and an author of more than 30 articles.

“Martial arts have played a huge part in my life. It’s where I learned about integrity, hard work, failure and constant calibration. You have to understand that the best martial artists fail every day by testing themselves.”

His passion is in offering development that isn’t couched in the safety net of academia or in the personality of a lead character. His passion is in offering an accessible programme that, when experienced, acts as an enabler for leaders and those around them that can be demonstrated in tangible actions and outputs.

Why training and how did you start?

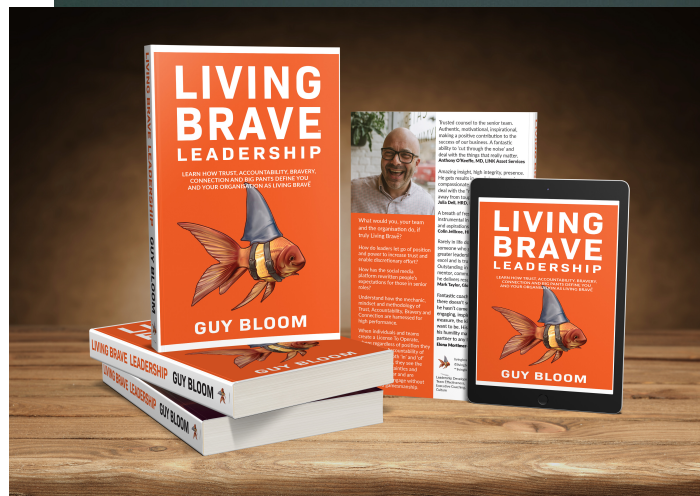
When in the workplace I often recognised people who, when given support and development opportunities, were able to take up positions that would have been beyond their reach before my intervention.

This insight came from combining →

This month we meet the man on a mission to enable people, teams and organisations to answer the question: what would you do if you were living brave?

GUY BLOOM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHOTO HEADS





*I let go of pride
and focus on
what works*



my knowledge of martial arts and workplace experience, and giving people awareness of their existing capability.

By building competence you reduce fear – this applies in both martial arts and in work. As this methodology kept working with individuals and teams, my focus moved to people development as a career.

Who or what inspires you?

My first inspiration was Bruce Lee. He revolutionised the martial arts by creating an approach that challenged the status quo. He was doing ‘Lean’ before the term was even thought of – “absorb what is useful, reject what is not, add what is essentially your own”. I mean, really think about that.

I admire people who will not be

made less by their circumstances; people like Shaquem Griffin, the NFL’s first one-handed player. He had his left hand amputated when he was four and he is a pro player.

As I have recently reflected while writing my first book, I am increasingly inspired by the everyday things that people do, from navigating divorce, shyness, bullying, illness, bereavement, fear and so on. I now realise that inspiration sits in every room I enter. So, while I still go “wow” at the outliers, I have started to go “wow” at the everyday.

What has been your lowest moment, and what your noblest hour?

I have to pause here as it’s easy to give a glib response. However, I have

PLAYING TO WIN

Here I am going to offer the Living Brave credo in the form of 15 top tips that I reflect on and strive towards:

- 1 Don’t hide – you are intrinsically valuable.
- 2 There is no permission required for you to have an opinion. Curiosity is not challenge; it’s OK to ask a genuine question. Offering your observations and counsel is not being opinionated.
- 3 Ask yourself, who am I doing this for? The answer will guide you.
- 4 Holding a position is not aggression.
- 5 Learning is knowledge and experience – the route to your future self.
- 6 It’s OK to be scared, we all are about something.
- 7 Help others, don’t create a dependency for you or them.
- 8 Say ‘yes’, ‘no’ or ‘maybe’ if you want to.
- 9 Being an elegant version of yourself is the goal.
- 10 Hurting others because you are being you is bullying; don’t be that person.
- 11 Not everything is a battle, but recognise when you are in one.
- 12 The more you put yourself out there, the more successes and the more failures. It’s not a paradox, it’s supposed to be that way.
- 13 You have more impact than you think.
- 14 There is no ‘being neutral’.
- 15 When all is said and done, stand for something, make some ripples, leave a positive imprint in people’s lives.

let people down by not being the person I should be. I talk about trust, accountability, bravery and connection in my new book and at one point I said to myself: you aren’t doing this.

It was upsetting. I had to look inwards and make changes, actually by doing what I’d written about – I was hoisted by my own petard.

So, my noblest hour was embarking on personal change so I can be the person I say I am, and that when my boys look at me, they see that integrity.

THE 360 DEGREE

"He is authentic and has the ability to energise the room. Motivational, inspirational and continues to make a positive value-add contribution to the success of our business. He has a fantastic ability to cut through the noise and deal with the things that really matter."

Anthony O'Keefe, CEO, Link Asset Services

"He strips a team bare then rebuilds its collective strengths while being crystal clear on the challenges your company faces. Whichever company I lead, I always turn to Guy for help."

Dawn Airey, CEO, Getty Images

"A breath of fresh air to our business and instrumental in converting our hopes and aspirations into a reality."

Colin Jellicoe, HRD, Morrison Utilities (Previously VINCI Construction)

"Amazing insight, high integrity and has presence and impact on the group. He strives for results and gets them, and does so in a collaborative and compassionate way. He has a fearless ability to deal with the real issue and won't shy away from tough but necessary conversations."

Julia Dell, HRD, RFU

"Very rarely in life do you come across someone who genuinely inspires you and your colleagues to greater leadership, gives you the tools to excel and is truly brilliant at what they do."

Mark Taylor, Global CEO, InXpress

What and when was your career turning point?

I became director of leadership at Blue Sky Performance Improvement in 2008 where Marc Jantzen was MD; here I had the opportunity to really learn my craft.

Marc was an inspiring leader who balanced achieving great commercial success for his organisation with supporting his people. His emotional



Guy's sons, Milo and Hugo

intelligence gave him the ability to support his people and their wellbeing, while allowing them the space they needed to grow and develop.

He walked the tightrope faced by many business leaders – balancing successful outcomes with vision and regard for those he employed.

Much of what I learned at Blue Sky gave me the confidence to become self-employed and face the reality of offering my ideas to the world.

Describe your best learning and development experience

I am going to offer two. The first has been a continual process – martial arts demand that you challenge your limits and, in doing so you, have to fail; that's how you get better. So that thinking has dominated all my adult life in the sense of 'poke it to see if it fails'.

Quite recently I was teaching a group of instructors and we couldn't get something to work. It was something I'd been teaching a long time. In the end it was rejected from the system. This ongoing approach means I let go of pride and focus on what works.

The second highlight was winning the Best Leadership Programme at the TJ Awards 2014. We put 500 people through a programme that saw a deep harmony between my team and the internal HR team. It's a programme that created a huge impact in the moment and has lived with people to this day.

What's next in your career?

I have just published my first book, *Living Brave Leadership*. I am truly humbled by people's reaction to it. I was fortunate to have Major General Paul Nanson CBE write the foreword, as I thought if anyone is going to have an opinion on it, it will be the commandant of Sandhurst.

I definitely want to speak on the topic to a wide audience and drive the thinking forward. I want

IT'S ALL ABOUT ME

Age
50

Family
Tara, Milo and Hugo

Location
UK

Hobbies
Writing and family life

Favourite place
Appledore, Devon

Favourite book
The Leadership Challenge
(Kouzes & Posner)

Favourite music
Coldplay

Favourite film
Leon

Favourite Technology
Supernote Notepad

to bring development that sticks, enables and gets carried forward.

I always talk about leadership as a craft not a qualification, and this is important to me. There are a lot of pretenders and pseudo experts who profess expertise but are without the foundational understanding, personal insight or the delivery capability to impact at a senior level. I don't want to be that person.

The focus for me is on developing my methodology and testing it with current and future leaders through executive coaching, team effectiveness and leadership development. So just like in martial arts, it keeps getting better.

I want to push the frame of reference, the tools and techniques, and offer something that attracts those that want to get better in their role by the challenge that is: what would I do if I was living brave? It's become a genuine life focus for me. **TJ**

Living Brave Leadership is available from Amazon. Find out more at www.livingbrave.com and follow Guy on Twitter @contactbloom