



# Optimist or Realist

From 10.30am until 4.30pm on Wednesday May 5th

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The conversation will follow the same flow as our face to face conversations, beginning with an honest and frank enquiry into our own experience of this tension.

## This is me

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In this phase of the conversation we will encourage you to share your own stories and learning journey on this theme. What have you learned from your experience so far? Where have you been able to sustain hope at an appropriate level, what is telling you that you are getting it right? What has been your own personal experience of managing these ups and downs?

As we share our stories we will find some key themes emerging amongst us – some simple practicalities to notice and share but also the beginnings of the deeper knowing we are accessing here. As we look back over our own journey of belief and doubt, of hope and despair what is it that we start to see – what is the 'golden thread' that enables us to stay the course and what is it that has helped us stay true to this, even when it may have felt the opposite?

## Tell Us More

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This takes us into the second phase of the discussion which will inform our thinking over a break for lunch and a reflective walk. What is the **discerning wisdom** we need to access here that helps us know what to do and say and when – when is it right to be painfully real, when do we need to draw deep into our hearts and find the inspiration to energise and renew? And how do we each do this in our own different ways and circumstances?

## Yes I can

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Following our presencing in these questions and sharing the deeper knowing of the heart and gut as well as the head, we will move into the closing phase of the conversation; crystallising the insights from this into our own intentions, and further enquiry, as leaders. What is becoming clear to us in terms of practical changes we need to make:

- In terms of how we personally are sustaining our own balance of hope and realism
- In terms of how we encourage our key colleagues and teams to take responsibility for theirs?
- In terms of specific interventions or conversations we know we need to initiate on our return.

In the final session of the Conversation we will make arrangements for a video link up to share progress on for those who want to maintain accountability on their intentions.

## Timings:

1000	Log on and meet each other online before we begin
1015	Introduction to the Guiding Principles and then on to Stage One: This is me. We break into small groups and share some aspect of your personal story.
1045	We develop the conversation and begin to pull out some of the patterns and connections in our sharing. What are the deeper roots of hope within us? How do we access these? What happens when we start to lose our optimism? What is our experience of how we get it back again?
1130	Screen and Coffee Break
1150	We move into the second phase of the conversation: tell us more. We identify the rich seams in what has been shared and mine these. This involves us accessing the deeper knowing that lies beneath our experience -the knowing that we don't know we know until we find ourselves surfacing it in a space like this one.
1300	Break for lunch and personal reflection, usually a walk, alone or in pairs (on the phone). What is really speaking to us in this?
1400	Back together as one group, we draw out the key outcomes of our lunchtime discussions and the deeper significance of these for our stance as leaders.
1445	Moving into the third phase, 'Yes I can', we prepare for our final round of small groups, after which we invite each of you to sharpen up your personal resolves to enable you to become better able to stand in the truth of the challenging and uncertain whilst still sustaining belief and hope in a stronger future.
1500	Screen and Coffee Break
1520	We work on helping each other sharpen our commitments and intentions and develop a personal practice to help manage this duality on an ongoing basis.
1615	Closing words and insights, finishing the Conversation promptly at 4.30 pm.