



Risk, 'Failure' and Innovation

From 6pm on Thursday 23rd May until 4.00pm on Friday 24th

The Wisdom of Failure and Innovation are two critical concepts in any organisation today. In this Conversation, we explore the role of learning from mistakes in driving innovation and the role of a growth mindset in today's business landscape.

Being in a safe environment where we can share stories of 'failure', the 'B' side of our story, without shame or anxiety is both cathartic and enabling. We can look back and see qualities and possibilities that came about as a result of failure and recovery. Growth is rarely a straight line. Here, we acknowledge and value the learning from setbacks along the way personally and reflect on the complex attitudes to 'failure' in our organisations.

We will share insights into how successful organisations and leaders have turned their failures into opportunities for growth and innovation, created a culture of experimentation that encourages risk-taking and promotes a growth mindset.

We will:

- Discuss the critical role of controlled non-harmful failure
- Explore the turning of failures into opportunities for growth and innovation
- Consider cultures promoting experimentation and controlled risk-taking
- Share experiences and insights on leveraging failure for innovation



AGENDA

The Conversation will follow our usual flow in three key stages:

- **"This is Me"** – taking stock of where we find ourselves currently in relation to this theme and the questions that are arising from our experience
- **"Tell Us More"** – enquiring more deeply into our learning and insights as we probe into this experience
- **"Yes I can, Yes I will"** – turning wisdom and insight into intention and practice

"THIS IS ME!"

Let's start by exploring our own relationship with failure, through story.

- How was failure treated in your upbringing?
- What have you failed at? In the past two years?
- What paths have opened up to you or possibilities emerged in response to failure?
- What is your learning and insight about the role of failure and your relationship to it?
- What is the imprint of failure in your organisation?

We will sleep on this overnight and further explore the implications of the beliefs, assumptions and emotions that are embedded within our stories.



“TELL US MORE”

As we delve deeper, and coach each other in our own situations, we will consider:

- prevailing myths and fears that inhibit experimentation and innovation
- effectively learning from mistakes before they become costly
- the distinguishing characteristics of excusable and inexcusable failure
- the leadership climate and organisational culture that reduces anxiety and has the potential to convert failures into opportunities for growth and innovation
- what it really takes to hold your nerve and lead in this context
- the role, intentions and consequences of risk 'management'

“YES I CAN!”

This stage is about nurturing intention and translating wisdom into action.

- How will you action these insights within your organization?
- What conversations will you initiate?
- What support do you need (inner and outer) to facilitate an environment that views failure as an opportunity for growth and promotes a culture of risk-taking and experimentation?
- How will you stay vigilant around your intentions?

The Conversation will close with a parting word from each of us.



Timings: Thursday 23rd May

- 1430** You are welcome to check in to your room in St George's House
-
- 1630** Tea in the House for those joining Evening Prayer in the Chapel
-
- 1705** Evening Prayer (*optional*)
-
- 1750** **Vicars' Hall.** Gathering together. Refreshments, then start of the Conversation at 6.00pm. Introduction to the Guiding Principles and then on to Stage One: ***This is me!*** We work in small groups sharing our stories and experience.
-
- 2000** Working dinner in the House Dining Room
-
- 2130** We go back to the Sitting Room for tea/coffee, and after dinner drinks
-
- 2145** Private floodlit tour of St George's Chapel, departing the Sitting Room (*optional*).
-

Friday 24th May

- 0745** Breakfast is served in St George's House. Please clear your personal belongings from your room and bring them down to the Vicars' Hall, so that the domestic staff can prepare the rooms for the next group
-
- 0845** We start again promptly in the Vicars' Hall and begin by noticing what is present to us as we start the new day, working in small groups and as a larger group. As we share our experiences and questions, we identify specific aspects and challenges in our different situations that require more focused attention and quality thinking time. At roughly 1030, we move on to Stage 2: ***"Tell us more"***, where we start to 'mine' these topics for the wisdom that can unlock them.
-
- 1100** Break for tea/coffee
-



Friday 24th May cont...

- 1130** **'Tell us more' cont...** Working in a variety of pair/trio or small group conversations we delve together into the particular issues that have most resonance and significance for us
-
- 1245** A hot buffet lunch is served in the Vicars' Hall and we work together in our groups, reflecting on how our insights from the morning are speaking to us and our intentions as leaders.
- At 1.40 we have a team photo on the West steps of the Chapel (weather permitting!)
-
- 1345** Back together as one group, we draw out our lunchtime reflections and engage in our final round of small group work as we clarify and solidify our intentions. Where is the invitation for each of us more fully to embody the wisdom we are accessing?
-
- 1500** We invite each of you to work in pairs or trios over tea or coffee to sharpen up your personal resolves and commitments in the light of your intentions
-
- 1545** Closing words and 'gathering up' of the wisdom that has flowed, however large or small.
-
- 1600** Conversation close
-

Video link-up:

At the end of the Conversation, we will confirm the arrangements for our follow-up zoom call to check in on the progress we have each made in progressing our resolves.

The key to us making the best possible use of our time in this is for Fellows to post a brief Whatsapp beforehand updating the rest of us on how you have been getting on, and especially which ones you found the most challenging. We then take it from there!

Suggested date and time: tbc