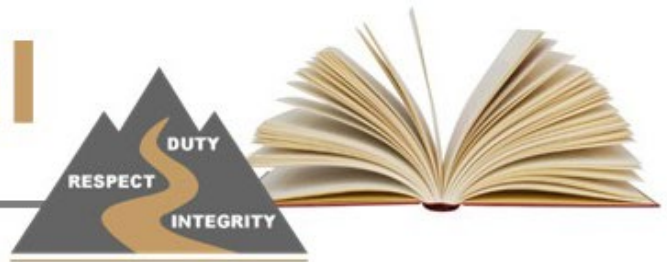


Professional Reading Program

Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program



Fully Present by Susan L. Smalley and Diana Winston

Best Wildland Fire Leadership Level to read this book:

- Any, but earlier is better since mindfulness is a tool that can be used at all levels

Why Read *Fully Present*?

“Seat belts save lives; buckling up is a simple thing to do to protect ourselves from physical harm. What is the comparable tool to protect ourselves from the mental hazards of life? What is the seat belt to protect against unhappiness, depression, anxiety, pain, and suffering? Mindfulness may be the mental ‘seat belt’ that protects us along the bumpy, twisting, turning road of life, whether we encounter unexpected drop-offs, terrible accidents, or smooth sailing.”

Fully Present is not a leadership book, but it can give you some tools that will help you be a better leader. All leaders and followers should have a “toolkit” of skills and knowledge that go beyond the technical aspects of the work and of leadership and can be applied in other parts of life. An understanding of the concept of mindfulness is a valuable addition to any leaders toolkit, and the practice itself can be hugely beneficial personally and professionally. Many respected fire leaders have advocated for firefighters to practice mindfulness, and it can be valuable at any level of leadership.

There are several videos related to the book and featuring the authors available online. Find two of them at the links below, or by using an internet search engine.

- **Fully Present: The Book- Mindfulness as a state of consciousness (3 minutes):**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F39hgAfE1QU>
- **Mindfulness for Health and Wellbeing | Diana Winston | UCLAMDChat (27 minutes):**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilzc3gslHos&t=6s>

For more leadership ideas and to dig deeper, check out the Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program (WFLDP) blog, Facebook page, Professional Reading Program, and more at the links below:

Blog: <http://wildlandfireleadership.blogspot.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WFLDP>

Professional Reading Program: <https://www.nwcg.gov/wfldp/toolbox/prp>

Main WFLDP page: <https://www.nwcg.gov/wfldp>

Fully Present Discussion Questions

Chapter One: What is Mindfulness?

What do you think of mindfulness as a learned skill? How can becoming more mindful improve the accuracy of your perception of the environment around you? Why could that be important in the wildland fire setting?

Chapter Two: Getting Started

What kind of “automatic pilot” habits do you have? Had you tried mindfulness meditation before this chapter? What did you think of the meditation exercises in this chapter?

Chapter Three: Breath and Awareness: Essential Components

How can stopping to “take a breath” in the context of mindfulness be valuable to a fire leader or follower? When can you practice mindful breathing in the wildland fire setting?

Chapter Four: Mindful Movement: The Body and Awareness

Why is it important to be aware of your body and what it’s telling you? What do you think of the idea in this chapter that mindfulness can enhance your sensory acuity? Can you think of any wildland fire-related situations where being aware of subtle changes in your senses might be valuable? The feel of air movement or of heat on your skin, for example?

Chapter Five: Working with Physical Pain

How can mindfulness be a tool to deal with pain or discomfort? How might you use these techniques as a firefighter, leader, or follower?

Chapter Six: Feeling Bad: Dealing with Negative Emotions

Why could using mindfulness to increase awareness of our emotions be important for a leader or follower? Can you think of a situation where it would be good to not be “controlled by your emotions?” How is recognizing and accepting your emotions different than acting out on them?

Chapter Seven: Feeling Good and Finding Happiness

How are mindfulness and self-compassion valuable tools for fire leaders and followers? How can the mindfulness tools discussed in this chapter improve your interactions with others?

Chapter Eight: Pay Attention, but How?

How can applying mindfulness concepts and practices to attention be valuable for leaders and followers? Why might it be important in the fire setting to be better at “paying attention to what you are paying attention to”?

Chapter Nine: Stressful Thinking

How can mindfulness techniques help you to navigate stressful thinking? Why could this be important to a leader or follower?

Chapter Ten: What Gets in the Way?

What obstacles get in your way while trying to be mindful? What can reacting to these obstacles in a mindful way teach us about how to react to obstacles we face in other parts of our lives and work environments?

Chapter Eleven: Mindfulness in Action

How could “mindful communication” be important as a leader or follower? How might mindfulness help with decision-making in the wildland fire environment?