

What many of us find is that there are certain advisers – often the loudest, most aggressive or most negative ones – who we seem to listen to more than any others, and we end up following their advice and doing things their way almost all the time. But being a good President means taking in a broad range of input and advice, and being open to all opinions. Unfortunately, most of us have certain advisers that we barely ever call on. It may be that we don't trust them, or maybe we don't even know that they're there. It pays to really get to know your trusted team of advisers – all of them: the loud ones and the quiet ones, the ones you like being around and the ones you don't like being around. The more familiar you are with them, the better and broader the advice you will receive, and the clearer and more accurate the picture you build of reality will be.

EXERCISE: Getting To Know Your Advisers

If each of us has all these different parts of ourselves – this team of advisers, each of whom offers us a unique perspective on the world – then it pays to get to know them. Now you have an opportunity to do just that . . .

Get comfortable in your seat and take a few deep breaths. You can close your eyes or keep them open, but when you feel ready, allow your mind to start to explore the question 'who am I?' knowing that there cannot be just one simple answer. Think about all the different qualities that you possess as a person. Think of all the roles that you inhabit every day, the parts you play in the lives of others. Think about parts of

you that are there and maybe don't get expressed that often, but that you would like to see more of.

Start to give names to these parts of yourself – like 'the comedian', 'the appreciator', 'the runner', 'the worrier', 'the son', 'the mother' – whatever means something to you. Come up with as many as you can and make a note of them in the space below.

Just for now, choose six from the above that you would like to get to know a bit more about. Imagine these as your team of advisers, each one absolutely exemplifying the qualities of that part of yourself. In the space below, describe those qualities (we've given you a couple of examples to start with):

Adviser	
The Runner	<p>Helpful: Determined, relentless, loves a challenge, keeps on going even when tired, does what it takes to reach the finish line.</p> <p>Unhelpful: Can be relentlessly demanding, doesn't know when to quit or take time to relax.</p>

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The Worrier	<p>Helpful: Future-oriented, always trying to keep me safe from harm or embarrassment.</p> <p>Unhelpful: Focuses almost exclusively on the negative, keeps me anxious all the time.</p>

Now, think of a situation that is currently worrying you, upsetting you or causing you stress. Let your mind settle completely there for a minute or two and allow whatever thoughts and feelings arise to stay there.

Now, select three of your new team of advisers and one by one consciously take on their perspectives.

Start with the first one: what are the qualities of this adviser? What is their energy? How do they see the world? As best you can, allow yourself to settle into this perspective just for a moment and answer the questions in the Consulting Your Team of Advisers Worksheet below as if you were this adviser, making whatever notes you want to in the first column.

Now call on your second adviser: what are their qualities? What is their energy? How do they see the world? As best you can, allow yourself to settle into this perspective just for a moment and answer the questions in the Consulting Your Team of Advisers Worksheet below as if you were this adviser, making whatever notes you want to in the second column.

Now call on your third adviser: what are their qualities? What is their energy? How do they see the world? As best you can, allow yourself to settle into this perspective just for a moment and answer the questions in the Consulting Your Team of Advisers Worksheet below as if you were this adviser, making whatever notes you want to in the third column.

CONSULTING YOUR TEAM OF ADVISERS WORKSHEET

	Adviser:	Adviser:	Adviser:
What do you have to say about the situation that is worrying (your name)?			
What would you suggest to (your name) to help them cope with the situation?			
What would you suggest that (your name) could do to take one small step towards a life that feels more fulfilling and meaningful?			

Remember, in this exercise we are not interrogating our advisers in the hope of finding the 'right answer'. We are just trying some different perspectives to see what wisdom might be available in each. Just as each one will have something of value to share, the biggest mistake many of us make is becoming too attached to one particular perspective. Dave

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started to associate himself powerfully with the 'has-been' perspective and it had a big impact on his life. An important lesson when he gets a new job will be to ensure that he doesn't start to associate too strongly with the new perspective that is likely to emerge of 'Manager' or 'Bread-Winner' or however he might think of it. He did that before, and when he lost his job it felt as if his whole identity had been stripped away. There is more to us than any one of our perspectives can represent. Why not try to hold all those parts of you with an equal sense of lightness? Then as life twists and turns we can move with it, flexibly and effectively.