



Infinity Learning

COACHING • TRAINING • CONSULTANCY

— FOR LEADERS AT A TURNING POINT

Five questions every leader should sit with.

A short reflection guide for headteachers, senior leaders,
MAT directors and managers who are carrying more than they admit.



HOW TO USE THIS

Sit with one question per day for five days.

Write your first answer, then your second.

The second answer is usually the truer one.

On day six, look back over the five.

— INTRODUCTION

A short word before you start.

Most leaders I work with don't lack capability. They lack space — the kind of quiet, slow space where the right question can do its work.

These five questions are not new. None of them are clever. They are the questions I notice come up most often, in different forms, in coaching conversations with headteachers, business managers and NHS leaders.

Sit with them honestly and they will give you something useful. Skim them and they will give you nothing. The questions know.

If anything here lands, my discovery calls are free for the next thirty minutes of your life. No pitch, no pressure. Details on the back page.

— Hiral Kelly

01

What am I really being asked to do?

Most decisions arrive disguised. The agenda item says one thing; the room is actually asking another. The email is signed off politely but contains a buried question that no one has the time or grace to surface.

Before you answer, ask yourself: what is actually being asked here, under the surface? Is it a request for permission? For reassurance? For a witness? For someone to take responsibility?

You cannot answer well until you know what was actually asked. Most weeks I lose to answering the wrong question.

SIT WITH THIS

Pick one situation this week. Write the surface question, then the underneath one.

02

What would I be doing if no one was watching?

Leadership produces performance. Some performance is necessary; some is not. The trouble is that the necessary and the unnecessary look identical from the outside, and after enough years they start to look identical from the inside too.

If your calendar was invisible — no minutes, no observers, no inbox — what would you actually spend the day doing? That answer is your real job. The gap between your real job and your actual job is where the exhaustion sits.

SIT WITH THIS

Write the answer. Then highlight the one thing you can move toward this week.

03

Whose voice is this, really?

Most of the inner critic is borrowed. The phrases that loop in your head when you fail are rarely yours — they belong to a teacher, a parent, a former line manager, a deputy head from 2009 who told you something once that stuck.

When you next notice the loop running, pause and ask: whose voice is this, really? Once you can name it, you can choose whether it still gets to stay.

Some voices have earned their seat. Most haven't.

SIT WITH THIS

Write down the loop. Name the voice. Decide if it stays this year.

04

What am I avoiding by being so busy?

Busy is the most respectable form of hiding we have invented. It feels necessary, it looks productive, and it is socially rewarded — but it is sometimes a way of staying just barely out of contact with a decision, a conversation, or a fact about yourself you haven't yet agreed to know.

This is not a guilt question. Some of the busy is genuinely the job. But some of it is doing other work — and that other work, named honestly, is often what coaching is for.

SIT WITH THIS

What might be on the other side of being less busy this term?

05

What would I want a coach to ask me?

If you could put one question in the mouth of someone you trust completely, and have them ask it of you at the right moment with no agenda of their own — what would it be?

That is usually the question you most need to be asked. Most leaders can name it inside three minutes if they are honest. Most also realise that they have been waiting for someone else to ask it for years.

You can wait. Or you can write it down today and answer it yourself. Either way, it is your question to carry from here.

SIT WITH THIS

Write the question. Then write three honest sentences in answer.



— ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FIFTH QUESTION

If anything here landed, let's talk.

A free 30-minute discovery call. No pitch, no pressure — just a conversation about what you're carrying and whether coaching is the right next step.

BOOK ON CALENDLY

calendly.com/hiral-kelly-infinity-learning/consultation

OR REACH HIRAL DIRECTLY

ABOUT HIRAL

Hiral Kelly is the founder of Infinity Learning. ILM Level 7 Coaching & Mentoring, MA Education, NPQH. Twenty years in primary leadership including Specialist Leader of Education for English (Harrow) and English Hub Lead 2016-2024.