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STRIKING A BALANCE:

The emotional and logical
battle within human rights
organisations.

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INTRODUCTION

In the heart of every human rights organisation lies a passionate team of individuals who have dedicated their lives to fighting injustice and championing the cause of the marginalised.

These noble souls, driven by their unwavering commitment to the betterment of humanity, often find themselves grappling with a profound internal struggle - the battle between emotion and logic. As they navigate the complex world of human rights advocacy, their dedication is tested in ways few can truly understand.

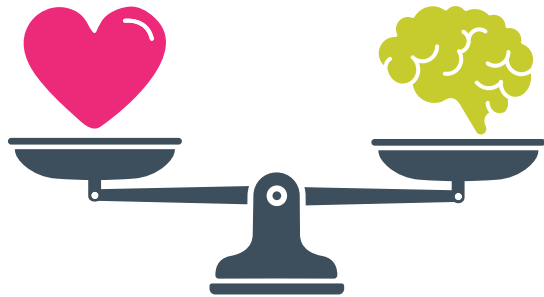
In this customer story, we delve into the compelling story of a team working tirelessly for a human rights organisation, their ongoing struggle to balance their emotions and logic, and the profound impact it has on their work.



The Crucible of Emotion

Human rights work is inherently emotional. It involves confronting the most harrowing stories of suffering, injustice, and cruelty that the world has to offer. Team members are exposed to heartbreaking tales of oppression, violence, and discrimination, often facing a relentless barrage of despair and injustice.

The emotional toll of bearing witness to these atrocities is immense, and it's not uncommon for team members to find themselves overwhelmed with grief, anger, or sadness. Compound that with never truly switching off: responding to emergency calls at any time of the day or night because if you take a moment to yourself, that could be one less life saved.



The emotional conflict versus the power of logic

While emotions are the driving force behind their commitment to human rights, they can also become a double-edged sword. The overwhelming empathy and passion that motivate these individuals can cloud their judgment, making it challenging to develop effective strategies and solutions.

This particular team were unable to have open discussions, share different perspectives and have healthy and constructive disagreements. Every conversation went awry with emotional charge, making strategy personal rather than practical. Logic provides the structure and methodology needed to translate the team's emotional drive into tangible outcomes.

Finding common ground

So, how do these valiant individuals reconcile the emotional and logical aspects of their work? The key lies in finding a harmonious synergy between the two. That's where TCM and consultant partner Philippa Brown came in. Our task was to work closely with the team during a two-day facilitation to ascertain how, collectively, they could bind being effective and efficient with their duty of care.



Day 1

The sessions began with a conversation that set the principles for the rest of the time together, whereby Pip created a confidential and safe space for colleagues and discussed the art of disagreeing well. The team took the opportunity to let their frustrations out and to share what was working well and not so well. Pip used the GROW model to frame conversations, helping team members to talk about their individual and collective goals.



That gave them the space to see where there areas of commonality – and also where their visions differed.

With that clearer perspective and having flushed out some underlying assumptions, the group was able to start to discuss and agree what they wanted their shared goal to look like.

Other activities included creating a vision board for the future and gaining an understanding of people's needs, behaviours and desires. At the end of the first day, Pip sensed a great shift in perspective and attitude:

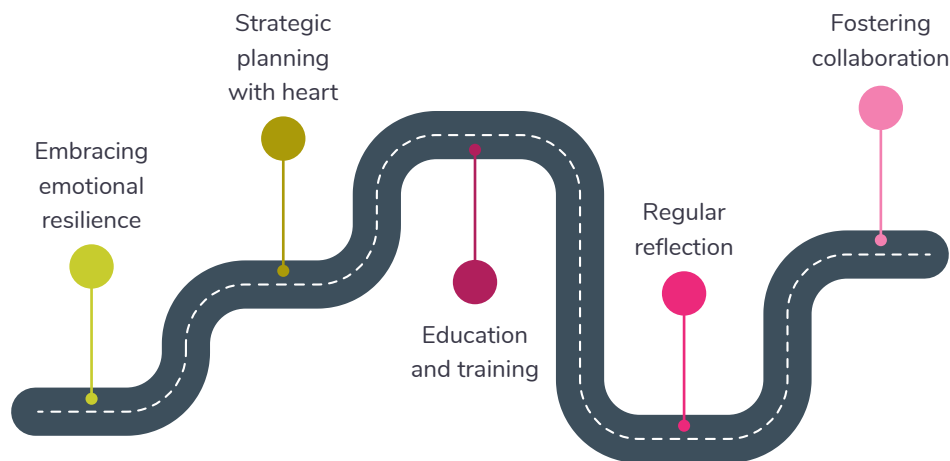
“The team went from having a sense of tension and suspicion to one of relief. There was a lot of gratitude in the room as colleagues took the time to speak about what they appreciated and valued in one another, going forward into the next day with a newfound commitment.”

PHILIPPA BROWN, TCM CONSULTANT.

Day 2

The second day centred largely on agreeing actions for the future and designing a roadmap to move forward. This fed into a structured process of how to work better as a team with that ever-delicate balance of emotion and logic.

The second day gave the team the space and support to think through the practicalities needed to take their shared goal from vision to reality.



Since the team facilitation, management have provided positive feedback:

“We’ve seen a really significant transformation in the ability of team members to have difficult and courageous conversations. When the team gets together, there’s safety in the room because individuals now feel comfortable to talk and share their thoughts and feelings without feeling threatened, scared or overwhelmed. That’s allowed them to take that forward into their working days.”

MANAGEMENT FEEDBACK SINCE TEAM FACILITATION.

TCM's top tips

- **Embracing emotional resilience:** Human rights advocates must acknowledge the emotional toll of their work and cultivate emotional resilience. This includes creating a supportive work environment, providing access to counselling, and encouraging self-care.
- **Strategic planning with heart:** While logic is essential, it should never be devoid of empathy. Team members can harness their emotions to inform their strategic decisions, ensuring that their work remains rooted in the human experiences they aim to protect.
- **Education and training:** Providing team members with the tools and training necessary to navigate complex legal and political systems can empower them to make informed, logical decisions without compromising their values.
- **Regular reflection:** Periodic self-reflection and evaluation of their work can help human rights teams assess whether they are striking the right balance between emotion and logic.

Conclusion

The battle between emotion and logic within human rights organisations is an ongoing struggle that mirrors the larger journey toward justice and equality. The dedication and passion of these teams are undeniable, but so are the challenges they face. By acknowledging the importance of both emotional commitment and logical reasoning, human rights advocates can forge a path toward lasting change while preserving the humanity at the core of their mission.

In the end, it is the ability to balance these two forces that defines the resilience and effectiveness of those who dare to fight for a better world. The TCM Group is always willing to give a helping hand towards that fight.

If you would like more information on how your organisation can benefit from Engage Leadership, please contact us today to speak to a member of the team.



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