



Leading Under Pressure

Staying Grounded When the Numbers Matter Most

Reconnecting with what matters most
• Gratitude • Purpose • Connection



Pressure is a privilege.

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Learning objectives

1. How pressure impacts focus, judgment, and leadership presence.
2. Practical, neuroscience-backed strategies to stay clear, calm, and intentional in high-stakes moments.
3. How gratitude, purpose, and connection strengthen trust, communication, and credibility, especially during uncertainty and change.



What's Creating Pressure Right Now

- Growing talent and developing future leaders
- Financial sustainability: rising costs + declining reimbursement
- Regulatory compliance and payer requirements
- Workforce shortages in finance and revenue cycle roles
- Technology integration, optimization, and AI evolution
- Personal pressures: workload, uncertainty, ~~work~~balance



Grounded Leadership

- Calm under stress
- Clear in decisions
- Connected to people
- Anchored in purpose



Quick Warm-Up (60 Seconds)

- Think of ONE pressure you're carrying right now.
- What would grounded leadership look like in that situation?
- Write it down...you'll use it again before we finish.



**You protect access to care
by protecting financial stability.**

THE HUMAN IMPACT



What HFMA Leaders Have Already Proven

Rapid adaptation during the pandemic while maintaining revenue cycle performance

Innovation: streamlining billing and collections through technology

Collaboration: provider alignment to solve complex challenges

Past performance creates present confidence



**Gratitude grounds you.
Purpose directs you.
Connection sustains you.**

THE THREE ANCHORS UNDER PRESSURE





Pressure isn't occasional in
healthcare finance.
It's constant.



**The spreadsheet was closed.
The weight of the decision wasn't.**

Today, we're learning how to carry that
weight intentionally.



What Pressure Does to Leaders

- Narrows focus
- Shortens patience
- Reduces listening
- Causes reactions over responses



Stress Hijacks Clarity

- Survival mode replaces strategic thinking
- Urgency replaces intention
- Reactivity replaces leadership presence



**Pressure doesn't bring out
the worst in leaders.**

It makes them less present.



**Presence is not a soft skill.
It's a performance skill.**



Tool #1

Pause before the decision

CLARITY LIVES IN THE PAUSE



The Pause (10 Seconds)

- Breathe
- Name what's true
- Ask: "What matters most right now?"
- Then decide



Tool #2

Purpose over pressure

**WHEN PRESSURE IS LOUD, PURPOSE
MUST BE LOUDER**



Purpose Questions (Use in Real Time)

- What is the outcome we truly want?
- Who is impacted by the decision we make?
- What decision will we be proud of in 12 months?
- What decision is aligned with your mission and values?



Tool #3

Presence builds trust

PEOPLE FOLLOW PRESENCE, NOT JUST POSITIVITY



**Trust is built in moments...
not in metrics.**

CONNECTION



3 Behaviors to cultivate presence

- Listen without fixing
- Name uncertainty with calm (SCARF)
- Communicate the “why” behind the numbers



Leadership Happens in Moments

- Tough conversations
- Budget constraints
- Change announcements
- Uncertainty and urgency



**Gratitude grounds leaders.
It restores perspective.**

GRATITUDE

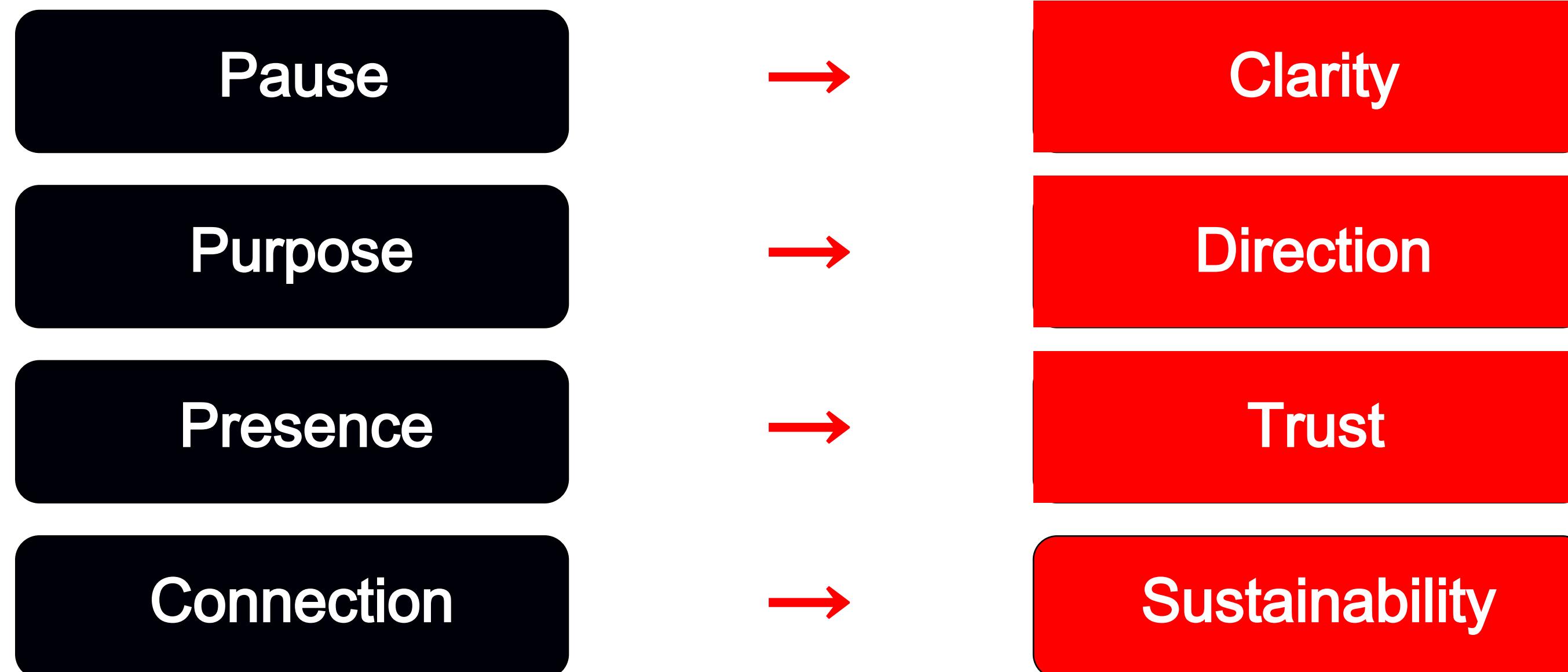


A Simple Practice...Before addressing what's wrong...

1. Remember **why** you're in your role
2. Remind yourself of the **impact** and significance of what you get to do
3. Then **lead** from that perspective



The Grounded Leadership Framework





So Here's the Shift

- Pause to regain clarity
- Lead from purpose, not urgency
- Stay present to build trust
- Stay connected to sustain performance



Ask yourself again...

Where is pressure showing up for me right now?

How is it affecting how I show up?

What would grounded leadership look like for you?



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Questions?





Thank You



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