

ALL-IN-ONE MEETING GUIDE

# CENTERED LEADERSHIP PART 5: ENERGIZING

# Overview

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The Centered Leadership model will help you lead with impact, resilience, and fulfillment at work and in your life. There are five parts to Centered Leadership: Meaning, Framing, Connecting, Engaging, and Energizing.

Energizing, the focus of this meeting, will help you manage work-life demands. This meeting will help you identify what energizes and drains you and show you how to develop strategies for finding time every day to focus on energy renewal and recovery.

## Meeting Goals

- Identify your sources of energy and the activities that drain you
- Set a sustaining practice to renew your energy

## Pre-Meeting Prep

- Watch “Energizing” individually or as a group [leanin.org/energizing](http://leanin.org/energizing)
- Remind everyone to bring a copy of this PDF
- Remind everyone to bring her One Action update (if you’re doing this)



### Brought to you in partnership with...

Joanna Barsh, director emeritus McKinsey & Company and author of *Centered Leadership* and *How Remarkable Women Lead*, along with McKinsey & Company.

# Meeting Agenda

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🕒 Approx. 90 minutes for total meeting (based on a group size of ten members)

(Please note: This is one of our longer meetings, and we love the way the activities build on one another. However, you can always skip an activity or spread the agenda over two meetings—whatever works for you!)

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**1 Check-In** 🕒 Approx. 20 minutes  
Warm up, catch up, and get going **p.4**

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**2 Education Activities** 🕒 Approx. 40 minutes for all activities  
Learn from experts and one another **p.5**

- **Activity 1: Key Takeaways** 🕒 Approx. 5 minutes  
Take a few minutes to review the core concepts of the “Energizing” video **p.5**
- **Activity 2: Feeling Your Energy** 🕒 Approx. 10 minutes  
Get in touch with how your energy changes in different emotional and physical states **p.7**
- **Activity 3: Shifting Your Energy** 🕒 Approx. 10 minutes  
Shift your energy by tapping into your passion **p.8**
- **Activity 4: Practice Sharing Gratitude** 🕒 Approx. 5 minutes  
Gain energy through gratitude **p.10**
- **Activity 5: Practice Mindfulness** 🕒 Approx. 10 minutes  
Explore mindfulness as a way to shift your energy **p.12**

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**3 One Action** 🕒 Approx. 20 minutes  
The little push you need to go for it **p.13**

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**4 Wrap-Up** 🕒 Approx. 10 minutes  
What’s next and a few final words **p.16**

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## Optional Member Materials

One Action Update, Your Energy Boosters, Your Energy Drainers **p.18**

# Meeting Guide

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## Check-In

Warm up, catch up, and get going

🕒 Approx. 20 minutes

### Step 1: Icebreaker

👥 Group activity

🕒 1 minute or less per member

An icebreaker is a powerful tool to help us become present with ourselves and one another. One by one, fill in the sentences below and share them with your Circle. Listen carefully as each member takes a turn and say thank you when she's finished. Avoid the urge to slip into conversation.

- Today I am feeling ...
- Most days at work, my energy level is ...
- What I most want to learn today is ...

### Step 2: Member Updates

👥 Group activity

🕒 2 minutes or less per member

Once you're warmed up, go around your Circle and share personal updates. As a general rule, personal updates should be brief and focus on big changes and important decisions in your life. (It's OK not to have one every month!)

If you have a One Action update, share that with your Circle at the same time. (A One Action is one concrete action you committed to take at your last meeting; the goal of a One Action is to step outside your comfort zone or practice a new skill.)

**For example, a member update might go like this:** *“Since our last meeting, I asked my boss for a big assignment and got it. I'm thrilled but a little nervous [personal update]. For my One Action, I asked that coworker I've been struggling with out for lunch. She immediately said yes, and I was surprised by how easily we got along. I can see it helping in the office, and we're going out for lunch again next week—her invite! [One Action update].”*

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## Education Activities

Learn from experts and one another

🕒 Approx. 40 minutes for all activities

### Activity 1: Key Takeaways

👤 Individual activity

🕒 5 minutes

Before you jump into today's meeting, review the key takeaways of our "Energizing" video individually or as a group:

#### **There is no solution to work-life balance other than managing energy**

Extensive research confirms that work-life balance is an elusive ideal that few, if any, of us attain. In fact, the very notion of work-life balance is flawed: work is not all draining and home life is not all energizing. Instead, if you shift from managing your time (spent at home versus work) to managing your energy—where it comes from and how you use it—balance will become achievable. And you may find that you spend more time doing the things that matter to you. This is a more practical and useful solution!

#### **Monitor your emotions and physical state**

Energy can be measured as high or low, positive or negative. Over the course of the day, try taking your "energy pulse": check your emotions (how you are feeling) and your physical state (what your body is doing) to determine which zone you are in: performance, survival, burnout, or recovery.

Who wouldn't want to be in the performance zone all the time (high positive energy)? But without knowing it, most of us slip into the high negative energy zone (survival) and continue working. Eventually, we find ourselves in the low negative energy zone (Burnout). But it doesn't have to be that way.

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## Activity 1: Key Takeaways (cont.)

### **We cannot be in high performance all the time—no matter what**

Most of us want to stay in the high performance zone at work, the equivalent of finishing a marathon daily, weekly, and yearly. The research of Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz underscores that we cannot be in high performance without building in regular recovery periods. In fact, they report that you cannot go into the Performance zone from Survival or Burnout without stopping in Recovery first. So building in periods of low positive energy is crucial.

If that is true, why do so many of us postpone recovery to the weekends or, worse, to irregular vacations?

### **Mind-sets stop us from building in recovery**

If you find yourself routinely not taking time for recovery, explore the beliefs or mind-sets that drive this behavior. People who ignore the signals from their physical and emotional states often have entrenched and limiting mind-sets. Here are a few we hear most often: “hard work requires suffering”; “only slackers take time”; “committed people put in long hours and are always available”; and “I just don’t have the time.” Once you identify your limiting mind-sets, consider shifting. The most important shift you can make is from managing your time to managing the quality of your energy.

### **We all have four sources of energy that fuel us**

Most of us know plenty about how to build physical energy (get enough sleep, eat healthy, drink lots of water, work out three times a week). That said, many don’t realize that there are three more sources of energy that you can tap: mental, emotional, and spiritual. You can recover in as little as ten minutes at a time, and there are dozens of energizing activities you can do at work in those ten minutes; for example, practice mindfulness (mental); call a friend (emotional); read a favorite poem (spiritual). Many of these activities touch on more than one energy source.


### **Build in a sustaining recovery practice**

The key is to identify the practice you want to do and then embed it into your work day. A sustaining recovery practice is a concrete and specific activity that you commit to carrying out with specific timing and duration, and with results that can be tracked. Think of it as a ritual that you choose to do.

To embed a ritual, you first have to do it consciously until your practice becomes second nature. To begin, plan the ritual you commit to in great detail. Keeping a journal helps to reinforce your success. After a while, your ritual will become hardwired—as easy as brushing your teeth day and night.

## Activity 2: Feeling Your Energy

 Group activity

 10 minutes

Research shows that the clues to our energy level may be emotional or physical. Here is a fast way to get in touch with them. Stand up. Imagine an activity in the Performance Zone (top right quadrant). As a group, move your bodies to act out the physical and emotional sensation. Repeat this in each of the remaining quadrants and you'll literally feel the difference!

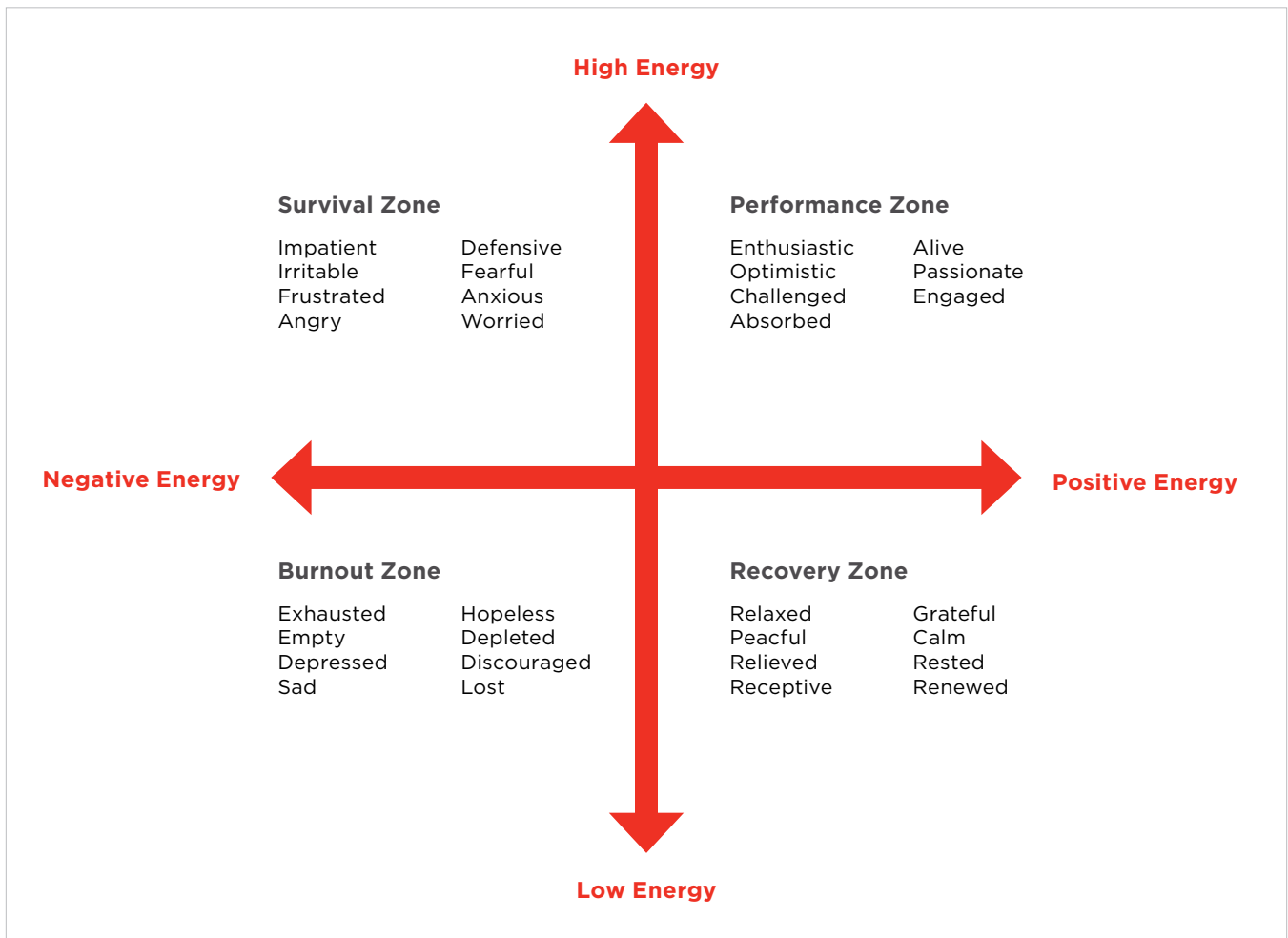


Image from Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz, *The Power of Full Engagement*

## Activity 3: Shifting Your Energy

🕒 Approx. 10 minutes

### Step 1: Score your energy

👤 Individual activity

🕒 1 minute

On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the most energized), score yourself on each energy dimension in the “now” column below.


	Now	After
<b>Reliability</b> How much energy do I have available? How active, fit, nutritionally satisfied, rested do I feel?		
<b>Mental</b> What is the quality of my focus in the present? To what extent am I intellectually engaged with my full attention?		
<b>Emotional</b> What am I feeling? To what extent am I experiencing positive emotions? How connected to others do I feel?		
<b>Spiritual</b> Is what I am doing meaningful to me? Am I spending my time and energy on what really matters to me?		



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## Activity 3: Shifting Your Energy (cont.)


### Step 2: Share an interest or passion


 Pair activity

 2 minutes per partner, 4 minutes total

Now, find someone to pair up with. Still standing, share your greatest interest or passion and thank each other after.

### Step 3: Score your energy again

 Individual activity

 1 minute

Sit down and score yourself again in the “after” column.

### Step 4: Share how you feel with your Circle

 Group activity

 4 minutes


Raise hands to see how many Circle members observed an increase in their scores in at least two dimensions. If anyone’s scores decreased, take a minute together to explore.

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## Activity 4: Practice Sharing Gratitude

⌚ Approx. 5 minutes

### Step 1: Reflect on what you're grateful for

 Individual activity

 3 minutes

Write down as many things as you can that you are grateful for—you feel happy and joyful about these things. Try to be specific about the value you get and what exactly you feel grateful for. For example, instead of writing “my family,” try to list each person in turn with a quick reason (“Jetta for her optimism”; “Gaby for her rapping”).


When everyone is done, count up the number of items you recorded on your sheet.

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## Activity 4: Practice Sharing Gratitude (cont.)

### Step 2: Share how you feel with your Circle


 Group activity


 2 minutes or less

One by one, share how you feel after this exercise. Gratitude is one of the few universal energizers.

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## Activity 5: Practice Mindfulness

 Individual activity

 10 minutes

Mindfulness practice uses the body's natural ability to become centered. We suggest this as a Recovery practice or a daily ritual to get in the present. You'll find yourself feeling more physical and mental energy (and maybe spiritual energy) right away!

If someone in your group has taken meditation or yoga, or even mindfulness classes, ask her to facilitate. If no one in your Circle has experience with such exercises, ask a member of the Circle to volunteer to guide you through these steps:

- Sit up straight and comfortably in a chair, feet uncrossed and hands gently resting on your lap. Balance your head on your spine and feel the chair holding you. Place your feet on the floor and feel the ground holding them.
- Close your eyes to reduce external stimuli.
- Scan your body and become aware of all sensations. Relax your body starting with all the small facial muscles, your neck, shoulders, and on down all the way to your feet.
- Now exhale deeply, pushing all the air out on exhalation and letting the breath flow back in by itself. Do this two or three times.
- Let your breath assume its regular rhythm and gently draw your attention to it, feeling the rise of your chest, perhaps the airflow from your nose or mouth.
- Your mind will wander to thoughts, noises, or body sensations. This is entirely normal and natural. When you notice it has wandered, just let these thoughts or noises or body sensations go and gently bring your attention back to breathing.
- It may help you to place one or both hands in the center of your chest (at your heart) and imagine a loved one or favorite place there. As your thoughts wander, effortlessly and easily bring your attention back to your breath.
- After ten minutes, gently bring your attention back to your surroundings. If you rub your hands together and then place them over your eyes, you may find it very refreshing.
- Stretch gently.

One by one, share how you experienced the activity and how you feel now.

**Tip:** If you are interested in learning more, we recommend Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn's book *Mindfulness for Beginners*. Some participants use smartphone apps. If someone in your Circle has experience with a different mindfulness practice, consider all trying it together.

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# One Action

The little push you need to go for it

🕒 Approx. 20 minutes

We recommend you close every meeting by committing to a “One Action”—one concrete thing you’re going to do before your next Circle meeting to step outside your comfort zone or practice a new skill.

## Step 1: Commit to a sustaining practice

 Individual activity

🕒 10 minutes

Given the importance of recovery, what sustaining practice will you commit to for yourself? (Hint: Find the smallest activities that will make the biggest difference to renewing your energy.) Please develop one or two practices. Refine them with a discussion partner and choose one you will commit to.

	Energy Practice One	Energy Practice Two
<b>What will I do? (be specific)</b>		
<b>When and where will I do this?</b>		

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## One Action (cont.)


	Energy Practice One	Energy Practice Two
<b>What will get in the way?</b>		
<b>What tools or structure can I put in place to help?</b>		
<b>What new mind-set will underlie this practice?</b>		
<b>What are the benefits for me—my performance and fulfillment—if I do this?</b>		

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## One Action (cont.)

### Step 2: Share your One Action with your Circle

 Group activity

 1 minute or less per member

One by one, go around your Circle and share the sustaining practice you are committing to.

Move quickly from member to member and consider cheering on one another as you go.

**Housekeeping Note:** We recommend you give an update on your One Action during your next meeting. On page 17 of this PDF, you'll find an optional worksheet to help you prepare your update. Individually or as a group, you can decide to bring the worksheet to your next Circle meeting.

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## Wrap-Up

What's next and a few final words

🕒 Approx. 10 minutes

### Step 1: Finalize logistics of your next meeting

👥 Group activity

🕒 10 minutes

Before you break, make sure you have the basics covered for your next meeting: day and time, location, food and drink. Decide what you're going to do when you get together or who's going to send out ideas. You may also want to talk through what worked—and what didn't—in today's meeting and brainstorm improvements going forward.

### Step 2: Close on an energetic and inspirational note

👥 Group activity

🕒 2 minutes or less

To punctuate the end of this meeting, go around your Circle one by one and complete the sentence: "As we finish today's session, I am feeling ..."



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# Congratulations on a great meeting.

See the following pages for optional member activities.

# One Action Update

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Use the following prompts to give your One Action update during your next meeting. You can even prepare your answers ahead to maximize your time with your Circle.

- The sustaining renewal practice I am following is:

- When I practice it, I notice:

- What has worked well:

- What I'm still working on:

# Your Energy Boosters

Reflect on two activities that leave you feeling energized. Put yourself back in the moment and describe your environment. *What part of you feels most energized? What is it about the activity that creates energy for you? What is the impact on you and the people around you? Use the grid below to understand how these activities fill you up.*

	Energizer 1	Energizer 2
<p><b>Physical</b></p> <p>What physical sensations are present? How much more energy do you have available?</p>		
<p><b>Mental</b></p> <p>What is the quality of your focus? To what extent are you fully engaged?</p>		
<p><b>Emotional</b></p> <p>What are you feeling (quality and intensity of your emotional experience)? How connected to others do you feel?</p>		
<p><b>Spiritual</b></p> <p>How important is what you are doing to you? What value or belief is at play?</p>		

# Your Energy Drainers

Reflect on two activities that leave you feeling drained. Put yourself back in the moment and describe your environment. *What part of you feels most drained? What is it about that activity that drains you? What is the impact on you and the people around you?* Use the grid below to help you understand where your energy goes and why.

	Drainer 1	Drainer 2
<p><b>Physical</b></p> <p>What physical sensations are present? How much energy do you have available?</p>		
<p><b>Mental</b></p> <p>What is the quality of your focus? To what extent are you fully engaged?</p>		
<p><b>Emotional</b></p> <p>What are you feeling (quality and intensity of your emotional experience)? How connected to others do you feel?</p>		
<p><b>Spiritual</b></p> <p>How important is what you are doing to you? What value or belief is at play?</p>		