You’re Crushing it? Oh, Please, Let’s Consider How You Are Really Doing.

Bart Lorang starts every meeting he leads at FullContact the same way. He asks everyone in the room to pause for a moment and do a personal check-in. The check-in is simple. He wants everyone to ask themselves: “How am I doing? Really? Today, at this moment, how am I actually doing?”

Why the personal check-in at a team meeting?

Because Bart Lorang, Managing Director at V1 VC and successful founder of multiple companies, calls BS on the idea that entrepreneurs aren’t allowed to get real about the roller coaster of ups and down they face multiple times a day.

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Bart’s got an easy framework to answer this question. You’re either red, yellow or green. Green means “I’m present, I’m engaged, I’m calm.” Red means “I’m reactive, I’m agitated or angry, and maybe I’m physically unwell.” Yellow is somewhere in between.

Other entrepreneurs are always surprised when they learn that Lorang talks about fears, insecurities and anxieties at work. They ask if that makes him a “weak” leader. He wholeheartedly disagrees.

“Leaders think they have to have all of the answers, but what if instead you said ‘Team, I don’t know in this situation and I really need your help. I’m scared too.’ Now that’s courage. That’s leadership,” Lorang said.

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for Sure.

Lorang's on a mission to get real about the struggles of entrepreneurship, because he believes founding a company or launching a product is exhilarating, exciting, but also — really hard.

He sums up the emotional ride of an entrepreneur's brain like this:

"You feel anxious. You feel afraid. You feel high. You feel low. You're thinking: they'll buy my product, no, they'll never buy my product. You think, what's going to happen if we fail? You can feel depressive, suicidal, alone. And then, in the good moments, you feel energized, charged, and like, 'we're going to take over the world!"

Open, honest discussions about these kinds of thoughts and feelings are critical to success and fulfillment as an entrepreneur, leader, and person, according to Lorang. Talking about anxieties lessens the anxiety. Naming problems at a meeting helps crowdsource solutions, rather than sticking the brunt of an issue entirely on a single team member. And owning up to the daily struggle of launching a business or sustaining momentum creates a fast and true connection between people who work together.

"The strongest leadership is vulnerable leadership," Lorang says. "Because if you actually open up at work or in your life, people will follow you anywhere."

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Watch highlights of Bart's talk at the at the **2017 Propelify Innovation Festival**

Like this video? Want to hear the rest of Bart's ways to cultivate vulnerability in your own life and company? Sign up for a complimentary Insider membership at Propelify.com

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