

The Empty Tank

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The signs were there but they just chose to ignore them and drive on. The red warning low fuel light had come on but they believed there were a few miles left in the tank and that a place to stop and refuel was just around the corner.

And then it happened. The engine stuttered and the car rolled to the side of the road with no garage in sight. It's the moment we all dread, "I could have avoided this if only I had paid attention to the warning signs". They are always there but it's whether we choose to take notice and now we are stranded. "What do I do now and who can I call for help - I hope they will understand".

The nature of coaching is supporting, encouraging and developing others. A physical and emotional commitment and investment which requires a constant supply of energy. I wondered how often and how do coaches replenish their fuel tank? What do they do when those reserves run low or in the worst case scenario run out?

The purpose of this reflective piece was really to encourage coaches to take notice - "your body and mind are trying to tell you something, listen to their whispers before they turn into shouting".

Coaching is uplifting, energising and hugely rewarding but it can also be mentally and physically exhausting so when you leave the house think about some of the following;

- I have plenty of fuel (food and water) - eat well, hydrate and always carry something with you just in case
- Is the coaching / work / life / family balance how we want it to be? Just like the car analogy - we have the wheels balanced so we don't go off track! Don't be tempted to over-commit.
- Think "If I take care of me I can take care of and support others better"
- I know who to call, to check-in with, someone who supports me and offers perspective when it can be lost. They know me well and will understand
- Keep within the speed limits - do not exceed them, this engine - your engine needs to last for thousands of miles so be mindful of your well-being in the long term.

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