

A TOOLKIT FOR PROFESSIONALS

MINDFULNESS AT WORK

Managing Overwhelm

Overwhelm is an uncomfortable feeling. It is the sense that there is far too much for us to handle; a time when we struggle to keep our heads above water, so to speak. Managing overwhelm begins by recognizing what is happening and doing what we can to settle and ground ourselves.

A MINDFUL PRACTICE FOR WHEN YOU FEEL OVERWHELMED

When feeling overwhelmed at work, read through and practice the following mindfulness exercise to help settle your system.

- Recognize that noticing you are feeling overwhelmed is a great first step. You now have the opportunity to address it.
- Put everything aside for the time being and set a timer for 5 minutes.
- Sit or lie down comfortably and close your eyes. Place one hand on your belly and one on your chest.
- Breathe as much as is comfortable into the hand that is resting on your belly. Let the hand on your chest be a symbol of self-care and compassion.
- Belly breathing can help ease the 'fight or flight' response, bringing us back to a state of relative tranquility. Continue to breathe deeply into the hand on your belly until the alarm rings.



MINDFUL TECHNIQUES FOR MANAGING OVERWHELM

- Step outside and rest with nature. Sit on the earth, rest against a tree, or look up at the sky to reconnect with the present moment.
- Use mindful movement to help calm and quiet the mind. Practice yoga, dance, run, or stretch.
- Are you multitasking? Try single-tasking instead. Identify your top priority for the moment and stay with it exclusively until the task is complete.

DID YOU KNOW?

... there are many different types of overwhelm? Your struggle might be primarily with emotional overwhelm, mental overwhelm, or physical overwhelm. Often it is some combination. By getting clear about the types of overwhelm you are experiencing, you become better able to address the situation and nourish yourself accordingly.

TIP: During times of overwhelm, we can ask ourselves the following two questions to better assess our needs.

What am I receiving too much of? What am I getting too little of?