

A TOOLKIT FOR PROFESSIONALS
MINDFULNESS AT WORK

Mindfulness of Difficult Emotions



Humans experience a wide range of emotions. Sometimes our emotions are pleasant and fortifying while other times they are unpleasant and difficult to navigate. Mindfulness of difficult emotions in the workplace can help us be present with any challenges we face in more effective ways. For example, it can improve our ability to communicate our needs clearly.

MINDFULNESS OF EMOTIONS IS...

An invitation to witness the raw experience of what we are feeling.

MINDFULNESS OF EMOTIONS IS NOT...

A means of denying, avoiding or bypassing our experience. Nor is it about attaching to it.

“Feelings come and go like clouds in a windy sky.

Conscious breathing is my anchor.”

- Thich Nhat Hanh

A MINDFUL PAUSE FOR DIFFICULT EMOTIONS:

If you find yourself caught up in a difficult emotion at work, try the following grounding practice before heading into a meeting or sharing your experience with a colleague. May this help you gain increased clarity about how you would like to move forward.

- Sit comfortably in a quiet place. Close your eyes when you are ready.
- Take a few grounding breaths. Invite your mind to connect with your body as you observe the steady flow of your breath.
- Next, scan your body slowly and tenderly from head to toe, looking for the place in your body where this emotion presents itself most predominantly. Hone in on sensation in this area with compassion, gentleness, and curiosity.
- Let your attention rest with this physical sensation until it shifts, dissipates, or until you feel finished with the practice for the time being.
- When you are ready, connect again to the support of the surface beneath you and slowly open your eyes.

After meditating on the physical presentation of this difficult emotion, practice compassionate inquiry by asking yourself the following:

- Is there an unmet need underlying this emotion? If so, what is it?
- What might be the best way to move forward from here?
- Is there a way I can communicate my experience of this emotion that both honors it and supports either resolution or processing?