

A TOOLKIT FOR PROFESSIONALS
MINDFULNESS AT WORK

Letting Go of Control

REASONS TO LET GO OF CONTROL:

- Trying to control other people can create conflict. Releasing this control can improve our relationships.
- If we try to control things we have no control over, we unnecessarily increase stress. Releasing control helps us get the rest we need.
- If we are too controlling, we might feel a sense of distrust in life or in others. Letting go helps us embrace the unknown and tap into greater trust in the universe.
- If we are holding onto control, it might be because we think we know best. By surrendering some control, we open ourselves up to other ways of doing things.

REASONS TO LET GO OF CONTROL:

- Other people's actions
- Other people's opinions
- Other people's beliefs
- Other people
- The past
- The world

THINGS WE CAN CONTROL:

- My words
- My responses
- My efforts
- My choices
- My actions
- My attention
- My attitude

Surrendering to the truth we cannot control outcomes, or others, can be difficult. We often feel we need to take control for things to go as planned. However, holding too tightly to control can leave us feeling stressed and tired – plus, it can have a negative impact on our workplace relationships. Releasing control helps us find greater balance.

A MINDFUL PRACTICE FOR LETTING GO

Use the following mindfulness practice when you find yourself struggling to release control at work.

- Pause and notice. On a scale from 1 to 10, how strongly are you grasping to control? Jot down your answer.
- Next, on a scale of 1-10, write down how relaxed your body feels. Write down how relaxed your mind feels.
- Set a timer for 2-3 minutes, sit comfortably and close your eyes.
- Shift your attention to your breath. With each inhalation, silently repeat, “expanding...” and with each exhalation, “releasing...” Continue until the timer rings.
- Slowly open your eyes. Now, repeat the first 2 steps. Notice what has changed.
- If this type of practice is new to you, there may be some resistance. If a few minutes of breathing does not result in greater relaxation, let go of this too, and try again another day. Remain open to new experiences and realizations.

“Some of us think holding on makes us strong, but sometimes it is letting go.” – Hermann Hesse