

A TOOLKIT FOR PROFESSIONALS MINDFULNESS AT WORK

Cultivating Gratitude

When we find ourselves consumed by frustration, stress, or tension while at work, it is often helpful to tap into the power of gratitude. Gratitude, which is a sense of appreciation, is not about denying the full range of our emotions; rather, it is an invitation to explore what goodness there is in this present moment.

A MINDFUL EXERCISE FOR CULTIVATING GRATITUDE

This gratitude practice is part meditation, part journaling exercise. It can be practiced alone or with a group of colleagues.

- ▶ Sit comfortably in a quiet place, close your eyes, and feel the support of the surface beneath you.
- ▶ Turn your attention to the natural rhythm of your breath. Spend 2-3 minutes here.
- ▶ Next, begin your inner exploration of what you are appreciative for at this very moment. For instance, you might feel gratitude for your body, for your breath, the roof above you, or the chair you are seated on.
- ▶ Then, expand your awareness to consider things you are appreciative of on this day as a whole. For example, a particular co-worker, the kindness of a stranger, or a nourishing lunch.
- ▶ After a few more minutes have passed, ground back into the surface beneath you. Open your eyes and write down all you feel thankful for. If practicing in a group, allow everyone the opportunity to share what they discovered.

“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity.” -Melody Beattie



THE POWER OF GRATITUDE:

- **Increases positive emotions**
- **Reduces stress, anxiety and depression**
- **Reduces sick days**
- **Increases job satisfaction**
- **Improves sleep quality**
- **Increases self-esteem**
- **Increases kindness and generosity**
- **Strengthens relationships**
- **Improves resilience**

BONUS EXERCISE:

Call to mind someone you feel grateful for at your workplace. Reflect on what it is that you appreciate about this person. Write them a 'thank you' note. If appropriate, you might choose to verbally express your gratitude the next time you see with this person.