

A TOOLKIT FOR PROFESSIONALS MINDFULNESS AT WORK

Asking For What You Need

Asking for what we need isn't easy, but is a skill worth cultivating. To get better at expressing our needs in the workplace, it can be helpful to start by gaining clarity on what our needs actually are.

Once we have identified our needs, we can explore different ways of effectively expressing these needs.



IDENTIFYING YOUR NEEDS

When frustrated, stressed, or resentful at work, identify what needs you feel are not being addressed.

- 1 Sit comfortably in a quiet place, close your eyes, and settle into the natural rhythm of your breath.
- 2 Once you feel grounded, notice what judgments, recurring thoughts, or emotions are present, and then inquire:
 - What deeper needs do I feel are not being met here?

Examples of needs may include: autonomy, trust, rest, security, support, compassion, cooperation, challenge, or self-expression.

- 3 Rest in contemplation until you have gained clarity around your underlying needs. When you feel ready, open your eyes and write down the needs you've identified.

COMMUNICATING YOUR NEEDS TO OTHERS

Once you've identified your needs, the next step is communicating them effectively. There is no right or wrong way to do this, but the closer you can stay to the heart of the issue, the more effective your communication will be. Consider the differences you hear between the following examples...

"Michelle, you are so close-minded. You quickly shut down any idea you haven't already thought of. I feel suffocated when I have to work with you."

"Michelle, I feel like there isn't much space here for me to express my own thoughts. I have a lot of ideas we haven't taken a closer look at and I need to feel like they are at least being heard and considered."

"If we're not aware of what it is we're needing, we are bound to habitually and compulsively keep repeating the same behaviors without even knowing why we're doing them." - Oren Jay Sofer