

When we practice mindfulness meditation one of the many benefits is that it grows the parts of the brain responsible for observing and response regulation to stimuli. Mindfulness practice s-l-o-w-s us down. Mindfulness is about presence. The more presence we have the more awareness we cultivate. The more awareness we have, the more choices we have.

BE INTENTIONAL AND FULLY PRESENT

- Set an intention to listen open-heartedly for meaning. Allow space for silence and resist the urge to interrupt or interject. Avoid fixing, judging, one-upping. Recognize your conflict styles.
- Set an intention to speak your truth in a clear, concise and authentic way.
 - Use the THINK practice to evaluate the wisdom of what you have to say = True, Helpful, Inspiring, Necessary, Kind.
- Use your mindfulness practice to develop awareness when your mind wanders. Gently return your attention to the present.

BE AWARE OF THE COMMUNICATION OF THE BODY

- Always keep the lens of awareness set on the communication the body is sending you, whether you are the speaker or the listener. Use your body to actively listen. Lean in. Make eye contact. Gesture. Aim for 25% awareness on self.

HONOR THE COMPLEXITY OF COMMUNICATION

- Admit your unskillfulness at times and humbly ask for a do-over. Be gentle with yourself and stay with it.
- Be thoughtful about what medium you choose to communicate. Is the conversation appropriate for text or chat? Voice? Or better suited to in-person (or at least video conference these days)?

USEFUL COMMUNICATION PHRASES IN CONFLICT

- Let me see if I'm understanding...
- Here's what I'm hearing...
- Tell me more
- I'd like a moment to gather my thoughts
- I want to keep listening but I'm a bit confused. May I ask a question?
- I appreciate you bringing that up...
- That didn't come out right. Can I try again?

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