

Healthy Conflict 4.5: Mindful(ish)

Summary

- Recognising our emotional state is vital to communicating honestly and clearly. If we come to a conflict full of tension or anger, for example, people will likely feel more threatened.
- Deep breathing can work to calm us. One particular exercise that works for a lot of people is:
 - Place one hand on your stomach, one on your chest.
 - Inhale deeply through your nose.
 - Hold the breath for 2 seconds.
 - Breathe out through your mouth for at least 4 seconds, or until your breath runs out.
 - Pause, then repeat as many times as you like.
- But we can't always be calm! Observing and naming our emotion can help, providing a little bit of space to choose how we want to respond rather than reacting to our emotions without realising it.
- Naming our emotions also gives people a chance to understand us, and not feel either unsure or responsible for how we feel.

Exercises

- 1) Think about the last conflict you had. What does it feel like to you? What happens in different parts of your body? What different labels would you give our emotions? Consider:
 - Emotions: nervousness, fear, anger, disappointment, insecurity, sadness
 - Physicality: shoulders, neck, stomach, jaw, upper back, lower back
- 2) In the heat of the moment, would you be able to take a deep breath, or take thirty seconds out to do the breathing exercise? If not, is there anything else you could do to calm yourself?

Resources and links:

- <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/human-neuroscience/articles/10.3389/fnhum.2018.00353/full> Systematic review of the physiological benefits of slow breathing in conflict

- <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2007.01916.x>
Research paper on the impact of naming emotions on the brain, including diminishing amygdala responses and increasing activity in the prefrontal cortex
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FpKpW0EhYo&pp=ygUZcGFyYXN5bXBhdGhldGljIGlyZWFOaGluZw%3D%3D> Parasympathetic breathing exercise (or just put 'parasympathetic breathing' into Youtube for loads of options)
- https://www.une.edu/sites/default/files/herbertbrandsma_mindfulness.pdf
Chapter from an academic book on the definitions, processes, evidence, and tools used in mindfulness work.

Evaluation:

We would really appreciate your feedback through these short questionnaires on the videos and their usefulness. Your feedback will help us improve future content.

Prior to watching the videos



After watching the videos

