

BECOMING A MORE MINDFUL MANAGER

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Thank you all for joining us today for Becoming a More Mindful Manager. I'd like to now introduce our presenter, Sally Koesterer. Sally Koesterer is a licensed clinical social worker and certified employee assistance professional who is licensed in the states of Missouri and Colorado. She has over 28 years of clinical experience counseling individuals, couples, and families in a wide range of settings. She utilizes trauma informed therapy, motivational interviewing, mindfulness and cognitive behavioral therapy and is trained in EMDR. She works with substance abuse, relationships, trauma, anxiety and depression. She currently provides consultation and counseling to federal employees and their family members. And with that, I'll turn it over to Sally to begin the presentation.

Thanks, Jessica. Hi, everyone. As Jessica says, my name is Sally Koesterer. I want to thank you for joining today. We are going to start our time together with both a quote and a story. The quote is from Ma Jaya Sati, an American born teacher also known for her work serving the homeless, poor, people living with AIDS. She said quiet the mind and the soul will speak. This story might illustrate how that would play out in real life. In his book the right stuff, Tom described how in the 1950s, a few highly trained pilots were attempting to fly at altitudes higher than had ever been achieved. The first pilots to face this challenge responded by frantically trying to stabilize planes when they were out of control. They would apply standard correction after correction. And yet because they were way out of the earth atmosphere, the rules of thermodynamics no longer applied. The old solutions would not work. The planes came crashing down. This tragedy occurred several times until one pilot was struck unconscious. Unable to apply the old solution. His hands let go of the steering and the plane began to tumble. When he woke the plane had naturally tumbled into the denser atmosphere. The standard navigation strategies started working again. He studied the plane and he landed. In doing so, he discovered the only life-saving response that was possible in that desperate situation. Not to do anything. Take your hands off of the controls. That is actually what Wolf wrote. If it is the only solution you have, take your hands off of the controls. As managers, we sometimes get stuck in habitual ways of responding to problems or people and we might be surprised when our typical way of responding doesn't work. We get habituated because we are busy. We don't have time to pause and think about new solutions. In this training we hope to teach you mindfulness techniques that might allow for the pause. Which can then help open different pathways of approaching and allowing for fresh ideas. We are going to explore how mindfulness helps us let go of our overthinking brain and tap into deeper wisdom. Begin by talking about the history of mindfulness and its definition. We will explore the meaning, importance, and qualities of mindful leadership. And discover how to cultivate mindful leadership. Next, we will review how to mindfully listen and discover your own personal leadership principles and finish by doing a self compassion exercise together. It is a very interesting story of how mindfulness came to be. It is believed that the Buddha, born in sixth century B.C. in what is now modern Nepal. He was a prince and he had an extravagant lifestyle. Also ordered by his father to live a life of seclusion and not leave the palace grounds. His father was very protective of him and didn't want them to experience suffering. But the prince rebelled against his father's orders and he decided to leave. Stepping outside the palace walls revealed the reality of suffering to the Prince. He saw people for the first time who were poor, sick, elderly. The next day he decided he was going to leave the kingdom and lead a frugal life in a way to end suffering. It took him years of searching, studying, trial and error. Until one day as legend has it, the Buddha decided to sit under the tree, sacred fig tree. He vowed not to move until he knew how to diminish suffering. It was in the act of sitting still while allowing all feelings and thoughts good or bad to come and go with awareness without response or judgment that he found peace. This was the birth of mindful meditation. Sometimes mindfulness and meditation are lumped together. We are just going to look at the difference between the two. John Cabot Zinn is a professor of medicine and mindful based trust reduction. I will give you his definition. It is, quote, mindfulness is the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose in the present moment nonjudgmentally. To

the unfolding of experience moment by moment. That is a mouthful. In other words, mindfulness is paying close attention to what is going on both internally and externally in the present moment. When your mind wanders such as when you are distressed, into the future, what is going to happen next or into the past that some things have already happened. Your neighbor stole your paper. That is not mindfulness. The key is to remain nonjudgmental as you observe what is going on. That can be really hard for us as humans. We tend to want to categorize things as positive or negative. What is meditation and how is that different? Meditation is the formal practice of mindfulness. While you can be mindful anytime, while you are cleaning, eating, while urinating, meditation is a time you actually set aside to specifically practice being mindful. People usually choose a specified amount of time although there really isn't a right or wrong and out. Some people do five minutes, some people do three week long meditations. Also many different types of meditation. Well we are not going to go into detail about that, you might decide you want to explore the various methods just to see which discipline is best for you. Now that we understand what mindfulness is, what is mindful leadership? In essence, it is the ability to lead in the midst of chaos. Janice Marturano is the author, I will read her definition. A mindful manager embodies a tangible presence with clarity, creativity, compassion and service to other. Leadership presence is a tangible quality. Requires full and complete nonjudgmental attention in the present moment. Those around a mindful leader see and feel that presence. Again, that is quite a long definition. I am going to give you a real life example. These examples come from her book. These are executives she has worked with. In this particular instance, this is an executive of a Fortune 500 company. He was alerted about a potentially unsafe food product. There was no smoking gun, only one person had been affected as far as they knew. The company product was only one of many things the person had. The executive and two of his colleagues had 24 to 48 hours to decide to either do a recall that would cost the company millions and taint the reputation, weight more definitive evidence of contamination. Possibly receiving the help or lives of their customers. After a full day of reviewing all the data and facts around the clock, the three men presented their opinions. They did not come to a consensus. However, all three of them had been through mindful leadership training. Even with very little time left, instead of arguing points or debating they decided to each reflect quietly on their own about what had been presented. When they reconvened, they all agreed they had to do the recall. Stepping to be mindful give them to space to make a crucial decision based on intuition and experience rather than inconclusive data. In a critical moment they had the courage to stop, let the dust settle, react intentionally. When we can recognize when we are acting indiscriminately and pause, we are granted more space for mindful, focused, compassionate leadership. Every day managers have a lot on their plates. You might have a list of tasks that never end or find you are spending your days putting out fires. In short, you may find yourselves in high stress unpleasant situations. We are drawn in different directions and faced with things sometimes we can't control like a subordinates behavior. It is important in those moments to be able to be intentional. Intentional to calm ourselves, focus, question our typical ways of reacting, separate out what we have control over from what we don't. Let go of what we can't control. Now, when we start working on being mindful, we are really working against our hardwired negativity bias. Our brains are essentially wired for our survival. Therefore, they are geared to sense danger and problems. Our ancestors would not have survived dangerous predators if they had been in a state of calm and relaxation. Evolution give us the ability to sense fear. Our limbic system is activated when we perceived threat. Our hardwired reaction is to fight, flight, or freeze. The part of our brain that creates that reaction is the amygdala. It is far faster than the thinking part of our brain which is the prefrontal cortex. When we see a problem, cortisol and adrenaline are produced instantly to get us ready to react. Even though we are not being chased by dinosaurs at work, that part of the brain reacts the same way when we receive a dreaded email, challenging new assignment, criticism. We are not in a life-threatening situation but our amygdala reacts as if we are. We might notice tension in our body, tightness in the chest, racing heart, sweating. We may react impulsively which is our limbic system doing its job for survival. It cuts us off from thinking clearly. During the fight, flight, freeze response, body is redirecting energy for maintenance functions which include higher levels of thinking. Redirecting the energy to a life saving response. As a result, the logic center of the brain is shortchanged. We are less able to use our critical thinking skills because our amygdala has convinced our brain we need safety. When you feel that response, that is your signal to pause. Again, Janice Marturano has worked with hundreds of successful executives. Most of them report feeling inadequate. These are some of the most successful people in the world. They repeatedly state that what is missing for them to be their best is space. Not physical, but breathing room. Clear and focused. If we are running from one task to another in a constant reaction, we

can't be fully present to feed. Let's talk about why being mindfully aware and present matters. Have you ever noticed how you felt when you were with a leader that you admired? Think of your favorite boss or favorite teacher. Most people report they felt listened to, understood, valued, seen. When the leader spoke to them, they felt as if that leader was completely present with them and no one else and nothing else was on that leader's mind. The ability to be present is not only critical for us as individuals, it has a ripple effect on those around us. In order for us to be present, we have to train our minds. We need to first recognize when we are in continuous partial attention or constantly distracted. Like when you are multitasking. I would bet most of the people on this webinar today have been in conferences where they were also checking emails, checking their phone, eating lunch. Did you really here everything that happened in the meeting? Did you fully comprehend the emails you were answering? Did you taste what you had for lunch? Continuous partial attention is exhausting but also inefficient. You might end up with more questions after the meeting or make mistakes, not truly answer the questions that came to you in the email. In turn, that would leave your colleague or subordinate feeling unheard. That is what we don't want to happen if we want to be leaders. What do we do about it? We train our minds to be aware, present, observant. That lends to greater focus, clarity, attention, creativity, compassion. We are going to do a quick experiment to get you familiar with quieting your mind and being present. I want you just to sit comfortably. Close your eyes. Just notice your breathing. Feel the breath coming into your nose and out through your mouth or however you breathe. This is the only task on your to do list for this moment. Just breathe in and out. Simply notice the breath and feel the sensation of it. If your mind wanders, bring it back to the breath. One more time. Breathe in. And out. We are going to let you fill out a poll. Just pick anything that resonates for you. If it doesn't resonate, don't need to pick it, no problem.

We have about 15 seconds left. Lots of answers coming in so far. When you are done, I will reveal the results. About five more seconds here. All right. There you go, Sally. You should be able to see the results now.

Okay. A lot of people started feeling more relaxed. That makes sense. When we are breathing, we are actually invoking the parasympathetic nervous system and it does help us to calm. With practice, noticing your breath can be an anchor to bring you to a present moment. In your pause, even chaos. The breath is experienced in the here and now. The more you practice, the more you're going to notice constant distractions cloud your mind and being present helps clear the brain pathways. Let's do another activity. We are going to take this just a step further. Again, just get comfortable. Clear your mind. Notice your breath. When you are ready, bring in mind a person you believe embodies leadership excellence. It can be someone you know or not. It could be a teacher, a coach, philanthropist, spiritual leader. Just take a moment to observe that person as a leader. Ask yourself two questions. Why did this person come to mind? What is it about this person that makes them an excellent leader? Hold the questions with curiosity and jot down the first few things that come to mind. I am going to give you a few moments to focus. Okay. We will give you another poll. Again, just pick what resonates. If it doesn't resonate, don't worry about it.

A little bit more time on this one since there are so many options. Just think about why this person is an excellent leader. Why did you think about that person? During the exercise. Lots of, apologies, lots of responses coming in. About 20 more seconds. Choose all that apply. Just about five more seconds. All right. And now I will pull up the results.

Okay. Yes. Lots of people put down compassionate, respectful, made you feel valued. When we look at the responses, what you might notice is they don't include typical measures like consistently meet quarterly numbers. You might have noticed things like the things of this poll. It isn't that metrics aren't important because they absolutely are, the qualities we just names are what set people apart as memorable great leaders. Think Martin Luther King Jr., Angela Merkel, Malala Yousafzai. As leaders, we could become hyper focused on measurable metrics and ignore qualities that are harder to measure but equally if not more important. We need to remember meeting goals with balanced and true attention to employees and people we serve is what makes a good leader become great. And it is what makes the people around you want to help you succeed and meet your goals. The employees who admire us want to help us fulfill our vision. Okay. No matter what qualities you attached to being an excellent leader, each of them is most likely rooted in one of these four fundamentals. Focus, clarity, creativity, compassion. According to William Dugan, author of creative strategy, these fundamentals are what allow great leaders to connect and skillfully guide change. Also key components to mindfulness. Let's take a little bit of a closer look at each. We mentioned this before. When we are distracted, productivity decreases. You set aside an hour to work on a project but your

answering your phone, answering emails and texts, after you do all of that you have to take time to get re-centered again on what you are working on. Another loss of productivity occurs when your focus wanes during a conversation or a meeting. You lose focus, getting disconnected to the person or persons you're talking with. This can be the difference between someone you manage feeling hurt or feeling dismissed. Mindfulness helps you strengthen your focus and teaches you to notice when your mind is wandering and how to bring it back. Over time, you will notice more quickly, the more you practice, the less your mind will wander. Becoming more focused and more productive. We are going to practice during a meditation a little bit later. Clarity. When you are moving quickly from one thing to another, you may not clearly see what is in front of you. You might fall back into autopilot. Intend to see what you expect to see, hope to see, want to see. We skip over our innate ability to challenge assumptions when we are rushed. We get rigid. Learning to stop and notice when you are stuck in a pattern of responding is part of becoming mindful. It helps you broaden your insight on issues and opportunities. This may lead to challenging your old mode of operation and stepping outside your comfort zone to see yourself more clearly. Again, this is a real life example from Janice Marturano. A manager who had begun practicing mindfulness noticed how often he was critical of himself when he felt he was falling short. He also noticed when he began criticizing himself, became more critical of his employees. Rarely yielded the results he wanted. He had the courage to step back and question his way of operating and look at the facts. When he saw the pattern wasn't yielding the results you wanted, he allowed himself the choice to change. Cut back on the self criticism and criticism of his employees. Creativity. William Dugan, who we just mentioned, author of strategic intuition and creative strategy. He says flashes of insight are a core element to innovation. Neuroscience research indicates our brain needs time and space to make connections. These new connections are responsible for innovation and creativity. Research also shows silence increases neural connections in the hippocampus. How many times has an idea come to you while you were driving or in the shower? Why does it happen? Your mind is more open in these moments. New solutions can randomly come to you. Versus when your mind is busy. Brain clutter gets in the way of finding people wisdom. Compassion. It arises from our understanding of suffering and our desire to alleviate. Cultivating compassion begins with self compassion. We make room to see our own suffering and offer ourselves kindness. Compassion helps us to understand ourselves but also others. The best leaders work for the service of others while also caring for their own well-being. What is interesting about these qualities is that they are all part of mindfulness. We now know from neuroscience we can develop and cultivate all four of these qualities. Through practicing mindful meditation. According to Janice Marturano, the initial recommendation is to meditate twice daily for 10 minutes to begin cultivating these qualities. We are going to do a meditation exercise in just a moment. Before we do, I want to point out a few tips for practicing meditation. As always, you want to get comfortable. If you find sitting still for 10 minutes is really difficult, try exercising before hand. It will help you burn off some energy and get you ready to be still. If you sit in a chair, keep your feet flat on the ground, neck back head straight, hands placed comfortably in your lap. You want to be awake and aware. If you sit on a meditation cushion, cross your legs in front of you, sit on the front half of the cushion. Tipping your pelvis forward so your knees released to the ground. Never do a posture that causes pain. A huge difference between slight discomfort and pain. We are going to include a specific resource about postures that you will get at the end of today. If you miss a day, miss a bunch of days, don't judge yourself. To start over. If you get to the point where you're focusing on your breath, it is down. You got it, you want to do something else, you could try doing a body scan. All that means is you put your attention to the top of your head and scan each body part all the way to your toes. Focusing on all the sensations. We want you to be proactive, look at your calendars, schedule an appointment, 10 he will practice. Most of us just don't tend to do things we don't schedule. Be very patient with yourself. It takes time to instill any habit. With consistent effort you will get into a practice and it will require that much effort down the road. It would be part of your regular routine. Okay. I am going to walk you through a basic meditation practice. This involves focusing on your breathing. For the sake of time, we are doing a shortened version. This is an example of how you might begin a mental meditation practice of your own. Again, find that comfortable seated position, sit upright with your neutral posture but remain alert. Just imagine a string that runs from the base of your spine all the way up to the crown of your head. Bring your attention to your breath. As you focus your attention, just be curious and notice. No need to change how you are breathing, let your breath be natural. You can ask, is my breath fast? Is it slow? Is it deep, is it shallow? What does it sound like? Do you feel the breath on your top lip, one nostril, in both? In your chest, your abdomen. If your intention gets pulled away, just acknowledge. Gently bring it back. No judgment. All you need to do is notice

if you start thinking about something else and let that thought go. You can even name it. If you have a thought, you could say thought, thought, thought, let it go. It will be second for about 20 seconds to you meditate. Okay. Bring yourself back. Move your toes and your fingers. Open your eyes. We are going to have another poll. What did you notice while you were doing this meditation?

You have got about 25 seconds left to get your answers in. Choose all that apply. Great. Seeing lots of responses coming in. Thank you. Just about five more seconds. All right. And now I will pull up the results.

Okay. I love it. My mind sure likes to think it wondered a lot. A lot of people on that one. A lot of people were able to stay focused. Both perfectly natural and normal. If you notice your mind wandered, nothing is wrong with that. Minds think just like her to speak. You had an opportunity to notice the nature of the brain. Some people call this the mind. A swings from branch to branch. All the practicing mindful meditation sounds simple, it is not easy. It requires motivation and discipline to consistently bring your awareness back to the present moment. It also requires an equal amount of self compassion to redirect yourself gently and without judgment. Jack, and author of many books, suggests thinking of your mind like a puppy in training. Gently bringing your attention back to the present just like you would bring a puppy's attention back to a lesson. Starting simply is the first step for building a comprehensive practice. That will lead to becoming a more mindful leader. It does require making it a habit. Something you do regularly. Just as frequent exercise helps your body build strength, frequent meditation practice, builds mindfulness. 12 formed that practice, you can begin exercising mindfulness and other areas that contribute to excelling as a leader. Because communication is possibly the most important element that a leader must do effectively, let's explore techniques for doing it Mike Foley. This is a mindful communication method from Gregory Kramer. He is the author of inside dialogue. A four step process that can occur within a matter of seconds. Once you have it down. The first step is the pause. We have talked about this. In the pause, check in with yourself and use the sensations of your body to grant you in the moment so that as you enter communication with another person, doing so with your whole being. Before speaking, before emailing, pause just for a moment. Especially if you feel agitated. Secondly, be open to what is here. Not what you hope for, not what you imagined, I know that is easy, this could be the hardest part because we become attached to our expectations. It could interfere with hearing with what someone is releasing us. Going to give another real-life example. A manager convened with a subordinate and this was a subordinate that was not meeting expectations. She had given some assignments. When the manager asked about them, the subordinates said they weren't completed. The manager could have reacted right then was asking how are we going to fix this? Instead, manager paused. She felt that tension in her body but just took notice of it. Instead of criticizing the employee about her poor performance. The manager stayed quiet and noticed the employee didn't look happy. She was just noticing the person in front of her without judgment or expectation. She asked the employee, are you okay? The employee began sobbing and she revealed her spouse had been diagnosed a few months earlier with a degenerative disease and the employee had been struggling with concentrating. If the manager hadn't paused and observed the person in front of her, used nonjudgmental approach, the employee would not have opened up about what was truly going on. What have been a missed connection. This situation allowed for the true issue behind the lack of performance to be addressed. Step three is listen deeply. Redirect your attention. We touched on this a little bit. This also includes listening to yourself and noticing your own internal reactions and racing thoughts. Full attention to take in what others are communicating through words, body languages, facial expressions, emotions. Step four. Speak the truth with the intention to do no harm. As a leader, you can help shape the culture that makes it safe for employees to speak their truth. Speaking truth doesn't grant a license to be brash or denigrating. Rather, sugar perspective to benefit colleagues, organization, the community. Alan Maloley was named CEO of Ford in 2006. At the time the company was losing billions. He came up with a traffic light system and asked his team members to use Green for all is well, yellow to signal concerns, red for significant problems. At first, the team only indicated green which was extremely frustrating because he knew the company was feeling. Finally, when manager held up the red card. Alan ceased the moment to reward his honesty. In that moment, he listened, offer help, supported the manager, and soon, other managers admitted to struggling. By rewarding honesty, he found out where the real problems were and in four years, the company was making profit again. Leaders must let employees know the truth is expected by example. Sometimes employees, there is a culture where no one wants to hear bad news less they be considered non-team players. While this type of culture may seem on the surface, it is usually stifled. Being truthful allows for new innovation. We are going to go a little deeper into mindful communication and explore a few more tools. As noted, the first step in fostering

mindful communication is being able to listen to yourself. Focus on the skill of listening to yourself. We going to do an exercise that will help you pay attention to how your mind and body respond to stimuli. And what insight you might find from internally listening to yourself. Listening to yourself does require becoming aware of your reactions at an internal level. I am going to read five different words and their definitions. I want you to listen and pay attention to the sensations in your body or any thoughts or emotions that arise. Just be curious. Here is the first word. And definition. Openness. Perceiving things as they are, allowing yourself to notice any attitudes or opinions that may block perception. Feel free to jot down on a piece of paper, the reactions that you have. The second, letting go. Allowing change to occur and not holding on an intentional act. Third word. Generosity. Giving in the present moment with care and compassion and no need for gained recognition or repayment. Fourth. Empathy. Feeling and understanding another person's situation, perspective, emotions. And five. Non-striving. Remaining an attached or detached to a concern, outcome, or achievement. Hearing those words, did certain words evoke or bring a bad reaction? A tightening in your chest. Once in your heart, judgment. What are the old messages you have about these words? For example, does non-striving scare you? Have you been told non-striving would lead to failure? Does openness feel too much? No need for gained recognition or repayment, I had a bit of a reaction. By exploring this, you began to understand the workings of your mind. Begin listening to yourself. Seeing how you react to certain things and allowing yourself to clearly understand why you feel the way you do and question it. After you have practiced listening to yourself you can begin really listening to others. It is helpful to practice and find a listening partner. Maybe a pure that also wants to hone leadership skill. I will give you an exercise to do with a listening partner. Here's how it works. Someone reads a list of words. Persons who just listens. Afterwards, person two has a full five minutes to talk about what their experience was with each word. They speak honestly and can take all of the time or only part of. Person one just listens. No interrupting, no offering feedback. Person one simply pays attention to what is happening for them internally as they listen to person two. Reflecting on their own thoughts and feelings. While this can be uncomfortable at first, people usually report when they listen without having to make a response or not there had, they hear more. The person talking does it feel any less hurt without those gestures. Person talking here feels they have the floor without interruption and can date deep into what they want to communicate without rushing. Before we move to the next section, I just want to say again, the four steps for mindful communication, pause, be open to what is before you, listen deeply, speak the truth. As we touched on a bit earlier, being compassionate is a hallmark of what sets apart a good leader from a great one. Let's take a look at how to use mindfulness to develop more compassion for yourself and your employees. Compassion is one of the fundamentals. Knowing and noticing your own suffering is a starting place. Cultivating compassion. We have to look at how managers typically are in the workplace. Not all. Most managers are not great at acknowledging difficulties. Really good at ignoring painful parts in their lives. People who are high achievers are reluctant to admit troubles and tend to power through tough situations. They can become intent on fixing things, they loose sleep, eat poorly, deny and ignore emotions. Essentially, some supervisors tend to put work first, feelings last. That is where having self compassion comes into play which does it negate the ability to be effective. In fact, being willing to get in touch with how you are doing emotionally allows you to be away and aware to those around you and doesn't interfere with effectiveness. We are going to do one more exercise together that you can keep in your pocket into account help you cultivate self compassion. I know I am a broken record here. Get comfortable in your chair. Put your feet on the floor. Imagine that string running a straight line from the base of your spine all the way to the top of your head. Relax the muscles in your face. Your job, your neck, your shoulders. Your arms and your hands. Your legs and your feet. Allow a slow deep breath and notice your breath coming in and out. Imagine each breath is filled with relaxation and each exhale breeds out tension. You can close your eyes or fix them on an object in front of you. Take note of how you are feeling in your body, your heart and your mind. Notice what is there without judgment. Notice with compassion. Say to yourself with sincerity, may I be well? May I be happy. May I be peaceful. May I be loved. It may be difficult to say these words and you can acknowledge that. Let it flow through you. Repeat. May I be well. May I be happy. May I be peaceful. May I be loved. As you do this, allow the feeling of peace to flow through your body and spirit. And now, bring to mind someone you care about. A good friend, a family member, someone you have positive regard for. Visualize their faith. Direct lovingkindness to this person. May you be well. May you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be loved. Imagine them receiving the kindness and joy. Feel the joy in your heart. Visualize it radiating to all of the cells in your body. Visualize it out of your body and to this person and repeat. May you

be well. May you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be loved. Now, bring to mind someone you have some difficulty with. A family member, a friend, coworker. Someone you have conflict with. See their name to yourself. Imagine that person sitting in front of you. Direct lovingkindness towards this person. May you be well. May you be happy. May you be peaceful, may you be loved. Sending this person lovingkindness may be difficult. To forgive, understand, you might struggle. Just let these feelings wash over you. Continue to wish this person loving kindness. Don't be harsh with yourself if this is hard to do. Just continue to say may you be well. May you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be loved. As you say this, feel love, visualize the love flowing through your body and out to that person. Visualize kindness, love, well-being, peace. Send this to yourself, to the person you know and love, the person you have difficulty with. And now, return to this current space in time and bring with you the feelings of love, happiness, well-being, peace. When you are ready, open your eyes and stretch out. In the meantime, we will bring up a new poll for you. This is just what you noticed during that exercise.

We got lots of responses coming in. About 15 more seconds. Just about five more. Thank you for responding. All right. There you go.

These are pretty even. It looks like the difficult one for most people was hard to send love to the difficult person. Absolutely. Here is the deal. If it was difficult to do these exercises, that is even more reason to do them. Getting to a place for feelings of love and compassion for yourself and others can easily will ultimately bring you more peace and happiness. Remember, these exercises are truncated for the sake of time. If you want to find a full-length loving kindness meditation, you could simply search them on YouTube and you will find a few resources in our handout as well which will be emailed to you. I do hope that each of you will allow yourselves the space to be with your intuition and connect with your wisdom. All right. We have been over a lot of information. Being patient and kind to yourself as you try to incorporate these skills. It is going to take time. No investors this overnight. If you get frustrated, it is okay. Overtime, with practice, the more mindfulness and compassion you exhibits, the more importance you are going to place on what you value in life and what guides you as a leader. In essence, you are going to start to discover your own unique personal leadership skills and principles. It is a good idea to write these down and revisit them. Many organizations identify guidelines for successful practice but there is an intrinsic difference when the principals come from within yourself. The principles will align with what you most value in your career as well as how you want to live your life. They will ultimately define who you are and act as a compass when you are faced with challenges and difficult decisions. Furthermore, the more we understand our principles, the closer we stay aligned to them. We are less likely in the heat of the moment in a stressful situation to forget who we are and what we believe in. In summary, mindfulness is paying close attention to what is going on internally and externally in the moment without judging. Leading rightfully means you can meet in the midst of chaos, being intentional to calm yourself, stay focused. Know what is within your control for what isn't, let go of what isn't. By practicing mindfulness, you will develop focus, clarity, creativity, compassion. You will get in touch with your personal principles. I am going to get to the resource screen. Before I turn it back over to Jessica, I just want to point out a couple of my favorites. Tarabrach.com is fantastic. You can also find hundreds of videos of Tara speaking in many subjects like anxiety, depression, relationships, grief, on YouTube. The Ram Dass podcast, I have it on Spotify. It is absolutely free. There are over 200 episodes. That, too, is just a wonderful resource. All of the resources that you are going to get our quality. Just pick the ones that resonate for you. With that, I will turn it over to Jessica.

Thank you so much, Sally. Before we get to your questions, I just want to remind you that if you would like more information about this or other health and wellness topics, please give us a call or visit us online at foh4you.com. EAP is confidential and available 24 seven. I also want to remind you the recording and transcript, a copy of the slides which include a certificate of attendance, a resource handout will be emailed to you within 24 hours following today's session. All of today's content will also be available on foh4you.com in about two weeks. I want to mention also that when you exit, you will see a satisfaction survey. Please let us know how we did today. We do read all of your comments after each webinar and port to make adjustments based on feedback. We truly do appreciate you filling out the survey. We do have a few minutes for some questions, Sally. The first one is what if I don't have time to meditate every day? If I can only do it once or twice a week, is it even worth it?

Yes. It is absolutely worth it. Just like if someone says I only have time to work out once or twice a week. Their body is still going to benefit. Your mind will benefit and become stronger with focus and clarity even if you only meditate once or twice a week.

Great. Another person asked, I have tried meditation but I fell asleep. Is that normal?

Absolutely. Especially if you are a very busy person which I am sure most of you are. When you sit down and you have that quiet, naturally you are going to probably feel fatigued. If you are having trouble with falling asleep, there are a couple things you can try. One is you can stand while meditating. I know that may sound unusual. It is a lot harder to fall asleep when you are standing. The other thing you can do is use the meditation cushions or meditation neher. Being up on the kneeler and cushion does make it a little harder to fall asleep rather than when you are sitting in a chair. I would say if you are too comfy, that is when you are going to have problems with falling asleep.

Great. Another question came in and says to I have to follow Buddhism to meditate?

No. You absolutely don't. Just like you could be any religion and pray, you can meditate and not be Buddhist. At its core, meditation is a cognitive exercise. Focusing the mind and stillness. It doesn't require you align with any particular belief or religion.

Great. Another question that came in. When is the best time to plan to meditate?

That is going to depend on your schedule. Here is what I would suggest. I would be looking at a time where there is not going to be a bunch of people around or if they are around, you let them know I am going in this room, shutting the store. I don't want to be disturbed for 10, 15 minutes. If you have pets, make sure pets aren't in the room with you. That is going to be a destruction. Pick a time of day where you are not inclined to be sleepy. I wouldn't recommend right before bed unless you have trouble sleeping. Then it will get you more calm.

Great, thank you. Looks like we have one more question. This person is saying I have a person I work with who struggles and not performing well. Not meeting expectations. I want to be mindful of their circumstance but I also need to get to complete their assigned tasks. What would you recommend?

I would recommend you meet with them and really just take a listening asking stance as to what they perceived it to be the things that are getting in the way. That may not find you and answer on how to proceed. It might give you some clues. I would recommend you call in to the EAP line into a consultation with one of our clinicians to get some suggestions about how to proceed in a mindful manner with that person.

Great. Very quickly, one more question and we will end this. This person is asking how can a leader lead without striking? Do we need to have goals and missions to strive to achieve?

Absolutely. I think the key here is balanced. Yes. We have goals we want to strive toward them. We want to balance that with making sure we are staying in line with our guiding principles. Just like in the example where the gentleman had to make a decision about whether to do a recall or not. He could have decided I don't want the company to lose billions. Not in line with my goals. In that particular instance, you have to accept that in the greater scheme of things, danger to other people was more important. I think we have goals. We balance it with our principles. As long as we are not stepping over people and harming people on the way to those goals, it is just fine.

Great. Thank you so much, Sally. Since there are no other questions, and it is top of the hour, we will conclude the webinar for today. A reminder that if we didn't get to your question or you have additional concerns, please call the EAP to speak with one of our consultants who can help with your specific situation. I would like to thank Sally once again for presenting and thank you for taking the time to be here with us. Please join us again next week for our final webinar of the year, 7 Thought-Provoking Questions That Help You Find Your Life Purpose, taking place on Wednesday, December 14th. Register at FOH4You.com by clicking on the 2022 webinar calendar, located on the live and on-demand webinar page. Have a wonderful rest of your day. [Event concluded]