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BUSINESS

7 STEPS TO MINDFULNESS AND COMPASSION @WORK

MANUAL
Step 7: Co-creation

7 Steps to Mindfulness and Compassion @Work

Step 7: Co-Creation

Today we will explore step 7 from our 7-step program: Co-Creation. After working on our true purpose and learning to speak in an authentic and compassionate way it is now time to bring yourself into this world. Through co-creation, you can work with others in a way that makes them part of the solution and that includes everyone's talents.

Before we dive deeper into the content we invite to a short arriving practice....

Mindfulness practice

Arriving, connection with the present moment and the body: add any observation of what came up for you during the exercise. What is important for you today?

Co-creation

At first, we want to mention that co-creation is way more than a method, tool, or process. Real co-creation is a culture, it is an attitude of how you encounter other people. It is the way of taking full responsibility for yourself, being brave to share your truth and being brave to share with others in a creative and open way.

The best way to do so is to be constantly in a curious mindset, allow life to surprise you in each moment, and be willing to adjust and learn rapidly so you can even grow beyond yourself.

Using that kind of attitude in your working environment, co-creation is a great way to enhance creativity in the team because you work in a way that includes all the knowledge, experience and expertise of everyone and in the end, there is not one person (boss) who decides how your vision or strategies should look like.

You create a space, where everyone is involved in the same way. This way everyone feels included and empowered to use their unique skills and abilities and so everyone feels empowered to take their responsibility for the outcome of all.

For our digital and accelerating time we are living in we need solutions that we will only find with the full potential of everyone. We are confronted with challenges we have no idea how to solve – we would be stupid not to use the whole wisdom of a collective and continue repeating the patterns of “great leaders”.

To be honest, this co-creation is a scary thing. We need to be willing to allow a certain chaos. To be able to work in a co-creative way, we need spaces and structures where we can try new things, it is a way where there is no space for old power-over control systems. It is a working culture of trust and self-responsibility – but please, don't misunderstand us on that point.

And here it becomes really sensitive because this does not mean that we do not need a structure to achieve our goals. But we need a flexible and supportive structure that gives a purpose that everybody can relate to and burns to achieve and give the best for the common – a structure that serves each one to grow into his/her highest potential.

As mentioned, there are many co-creative tools out there like open space, world cafe, Theory U, design thinking, dragon dreaming, and many more. One very powerful and simple tool we use to develop a co-creative setting is the talking circle.

Talking Circle

In a talking circle everyone has the same speaking time and only one person speaks at a time. It is not about discussing or being right or wrong, it is about sharing and listening deeply.

Everyone sits in a circle and you set the speaking time with a timer. When one person is finished, the person next to him/her gets to speak. No one else is allowed to speak during the whole time – only the person whose turn it is.

The goal is sharing, rather than discussing. Ideally, one person is the timekeeper and also sets a topic for the circle: e.g. what is your biggest challenge this week, what would you like to do differently in our team, and so on.

And now we want to show you one simple method that we use a lot, what we call the vision quest method.

Vision Quest Method

- **Step 1:** define a question that you want to solve in this vision quest: for example: how should our marketing strategy look like this year
- **Step 2:** to create a joint vision, it is important in this phase that everyone's idea gets heard and is included in the vision. Ideally, you use the talking circle explained above to make sure only one person talks without getting interrupted and have one person to write all points down on a flipchart.
- **Step 3:** once the vision is done, you ask yourself what are the goals that need to be achieved in the next 3 to 6 months so that this vision can be realized.
 - Everyone writes these points down by himself/herself on post-its or a notebook and when everybody is done you share them with the whole team and together you prioritize them. This question will help you to prioritize: Which goal would support achieving all the other goals?
 - And now continue with the 3 top goals with the highest priority.
- **Step 4:** now create an action plan:
 - everyone writes down for himself/herself all the steps that need to be done to achieve the main goal
 - then use the collective wisdom of the group again to get an overview of everything that needs to be done now.
 - after collecting them you give each team member the choice to choose the task that he feels he/she can grow the most

This is a very basic co-creative project design approach that uses the wisdom of the group and empowers each one to become an active member and find his/her place in the team and the whole process.

Mindfulness Practice

Meditation from I to we, starting with focus on self, expanding to others around us, include the others in your bubble and feel comfortable with them in your bubble.

Homework Exercise

- *Create a circle: in your next team meeting suggest that everyone sits in a circle and instead of everyone speaking when he wants to, or the boss or a few people doing all the talking, give everyone 2 minutes time to say his/her opinion about a certain project or just how he/she is doing right now. You can use a timer to set the time. Write down your observations*
- *At the beginning we started with the question: what are your biggest challenges and what would you like to have changed? After going through the 7 steps, are there any action steps that come into your mind of what could support you to realize the change? Write them down.*

