Practices for Mindful Communication and Emotional Intelligence

NOW Conference 2019
Practices for Mindful Communication and Emotional Intelligence

Aaron Culich
aculich@berkeley.edu

Aaron Culich is a Research Data & Computing Architect with the Data-Intensive Social Sciences Laboratory (D-Lab) at UC Berkeley. He is also a Teacher-in-Training with the Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute (SIYLI).
Search Inside Yourself
Mindfulness-Based Emotional Intelligence for Leaders
In Pairs

What do you love about your work?

What are some of your biggest challenges?
+ Emotional Intelligence
+ Neuroscience
+ Mindfulness

= Search Inside Yourself
- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Motivation
- Empathy
- Social Skills
Volatile
Uncertain
Complex
Ambiguous
47% Average time spent Mind-wandering

70% Leaders report regularly unable to be attentive in meetings

02% Regularly make time to enhance personal productivity

Killingsworth, 2010; Mindful Leadership Institute, 2010
Result = “Autopilot”
Autopilot Traits

- Attention is in the past or future
- Distracted
- Reactive or judgmental
- Act based on habit patterns and assumptions
“Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”

Viktor Frankl’s teachings, summarized by Steven Covey.
How to get off Autopilot?
Mindfulness
Mindfulness

“being present”
Autopilot

Aware
Self-Awareness
Awareness of...

• Mind
• Body
• Surroundings
Awareness of...

- Mind
- Body
- Surroundings

Attitude of...

- Kindness
- Curiosity
Micropractice

Three Breaths

1. Attention to breath
2. Relax body
3. Ask: What’s important now?
1. Three Breaths
Mindfulness Research Publications
(PubMed)
Neuroplasticity: Changes in Attention and Mind-Wandering

Default Mode Network (DMN)

- Related to mind-wandering and self-referential thinking.
- Less active during meditation.
- Meditation practice → greater connectivity with attention management regions, even at rest.
In the moment “Integrated”

At the gym “Dedicated”
Focused
Attention
Process

Follow
Breath

Distraction

Notice
Distraction

Reorientation
of Attention
Summary

- We need skills for a VUCA world

- Mindfulness is the movement from Autopilot ➤ Aware
Empathy
What Google Learned From Its Quest to Build The Perfect Team.

1. Psychological Safety
   Team members feel safe to take risks and be vulnerable in front of each other.

2. Dependability
   Team members get things done on time and meet Google’s high bar for excellence.

3. Structure & Clarity
   Team members have clear roles, plans, and goals.

4. Meaning
   Work is personally important to team members.

5. Impact
   Team members think their work matters and creates change.
Autopilot Traits

• Attention is in the past or future

• Distracted

• Reactive or judgmental

• Act based on habit patterns and assumptions
Movement from Autopilot ➤ Aware

Mindfulness:

Empathy:

Awareness of others
Listening
• What’s surprising to me lately in my life is...

• The kind of person I want to be is...

• OR ... anything else
UN-Mindful Listening
Micropractice

Shift to Connection

1. Settle the mind
2. See a similarity
3. Offer kindness
Mindful Listening
• **A** talks and **B** listens *(bell)*

• Switch roles

• Free-flow conversation

• What’s surprising to me lately in my life is…

• The kind of person I want to be is…

• OR … anything else
Comments
Remember how it feels to connect with others
Autopilot

Aware

Connected
Practices

1. Three Breaths Practice
2. Mindful Breathing
3. Mindful Listening
4. Shift to Connection
Summary

• We need skills for a VUCA world

• Mindfulness is the movement from Autopilot ➤ Aware

• Awareness of others creates connection & empathy

• Find ways to practice, both dedicated and integrated
Next Steps
Thank you!

Practices for Mindful Communication and Emotional Intelligence

- Check your phone for a push notification shortly
- Scan the QR Code at right, or
- Visit https://bit.ly/2PYnANd