



IT IN THIS TOGETHER

Communication Wisdom for the World of Work

Week 1 – Relating to Others with Presence and Intention

Class Summary

This session begins with an exploration of presence and intention. These qualities are foundational to our capacity to relate with others. Being present to our own and others' experience will support us in all our interactions. In this spirit, the session began with a grounding practice allowed everyone to become aware of what was present for them in the moment.

As both a Zen meditation teacher and a mediator, Diane spoke of the words 'mediate' and 'meditate' and how they share a similar process—to bring that which is fragmented into unity. In meditation, the practice is to bring the chaotic energy of the mind into a sense of stillness and coherence. In mediation, the practice is to align the conflict or duality in communication into a sense of oneness. And again, our intention guides our attention of whatever is happening in the moment.

The value in communication is to be able to inquire deeply into the heart of very difficult or complex subjects, such as sex, death, race, power, or gender. This involves being able to facilitate the inclusion of multiple perspectives. But inclusion also means bringing in points of view that are difficult or challenging. So intention is important in helping us to orient us when things get tough, confusing or chaotic. For example, being 'for' each other is an important intention that can help guide us in emotionally-charged or complex situations. Our intention helps to create a 'view' which serves as a reminder that continues to orient us.

If we are to create enough spaciousness to be able to hold multiple perspectives including our own, the ego is not the place to do this. This is where the meditative dimension becomes important. This will help us to relax the boundaries of identity enough to be able to hold the tensions inherent in multiple perspectives with more grace and ease.

We can develop our skill to be able to communicate with a sense of clarity and immediacy in a way that connects with others. One key for us to look for is in ourselves, when we are awakened and excited by what we are sharing. When we can communicate from that place, we also activate and inspire others.

Some Reflections and Questions from Participants:

- It can be challenging to bring as much capacity for penetrative awareness as for receptivity. Sometimes the capacity for receptivity can get in the way of those times when clear expression is important. An important question for us to explore is: how to find the clarity and flow in expression, and to strengthen an expressive moment through simplicity?
- How much would you bring meditative practices into a group if they're not quite 'into' it?
- How does a deep meditative presence intersect with facilitating fast-paced campaign strategy sessions?
- How do I stay connected to my initial intentions for communicating amidst the busy-ness of daily life when everything is in a dynamic flux?
- What is the ideal amount of time I should give to my daily meditation practice?