

## Mindfulness for Managers – Follow-Up

Connecting personal and professional goals with the growing body of scientific evidence that shows how mindfulness practice changes the structure and function of the brain (as well as blood markers of cell longevity and inflammation and even gene expression) is a subject that would require several additional hours of time to do it justice.

At the beginning of our session we discussed three questions:

1. “What would you most like to change about your workplace culture?” elicited responses including:
  - Greater employee accountability and investment in their jobs
  - More support and appreciation from Yale administration
  - A more positive atmosphere
  - A more “spacious,” less harried / frantic atmosphere
2. Managers were most proud of supporting the professional, emotional and social development of their employees
3. Areas where managers wanted personal change included:
  - A greater capacity to delegate work
  - Becoming more skilled at providing feedback
  - Clarifying boundaries and expectations
  - Delivering difficult news in a way that is “joining”
  - Being more punctual
  - Being warmer, more spontaneous, and/or less formal

### **How can mindfulness practice help?**

Mindfulness practice is essentially a way to cultivate greater awareness, insight, focus and emotional stability over time. The development of these capacities will influence the way we relate to others – helping us to cultivate both “soft” qualities like empathy, compassion and presence and “strong” qualities like resilience, emotional strength and balance, and focus.

With more emotional strength and balance as well as more empathy, it becomes easier to give feedback in a way that is direct and clear, holding in mind the good of all parties concerned. With a greater capacity to focus, we may notice the habits of mind or behavior that cause us to be chronically late and be able to make different choices. A reduction in reactivity may make it easier to relate to other with greater ease and warmth.

There are countless ways in which mindfulness practice can show up in our work as managers and support us as we grow in our capacity to engage with ourselves and others with both wisdom and compassion.