

## Promoting Civility through Mindful Communication



Mindfulness is the practice of being aware. It's the ability to observe the world around you and acknowledge the moment. You are *mindful* of your thoughts and feelings and can respond to the situation thoughtfully, not reactively.

**Mindfulness** is a skill that can be developed and is especially helpful in times of heightened stress. To communicate mindfully—and effectively—consider the following tips:

1. **Seek to understand other people's differences and their context.** When speaking to others, consider how their unique backgrounds and experiences may influence how they interpret your messages.
2. **Be aware of your words and body language.** Use words that will be clear and familiar to everyone, and be mindful of what your body language is communicating.
3. **Listen and ask clarifying questions.** Give your full attention without distraction when communicating, and practice active listening. Pay attention to what is said and seek to understand. By asking clarifying questions, you can help provide context for others.

4. **Focus on managing your reactions.** You can only control yourself—not others and not what happens in the world at large. If you find yourself struggling to manage your reactions, take time to breathe or remove yourself from the situation until you can manage your emotions and reactions more effectively.

Learning to understand ourselves and others, and strengthening relationships is a lifelong practice. Mindfulness is a helpful technique in staying present and choosing how to respond to a variety of situations.

If stress or emotions are feeling overwhelming, your Assistance Program can help you develop coping strategies and resilience. To reach out for personalized assistance, call **855-775-4357** or [visit online](#).