



## Tool 6

### Attunements: Starting by Stopping

An attunement invites the mentee and the mentor-coach to be in the moment, aware of their own current internal state. It is an intentional way to create the space for arriving fully and able to engage in the conversation with an open and focused mindset. Below, we offer a variety of attunement exercises to use.

*“As we also become aware of our awareness, we can sharpen our focus on the present, enabling us to feel our feet as we travel the path of our lives. We engage with ourselves and others, making a more authentic connection, with more reflection and consideration.”*

—Siegel, *The Mindful Brain: Reflection and Attunement in the Cultivation of Well-Being*, 2007, p. 15

*Breathing is “an anchor line to tether you to the present moment and to guide you back when the mind wanders.”*

—Kabat-Zinn, *Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life*, 1994, p. 18

#### Breathing

Bringing our attention to our breathing is a simple and impactful practice to support presence and mindfulness. An effective way to begin a mentor-coaching session is to invite both the mentee and mentor-coach to close their eyes and take several deep breaths in silence, focusing on the sensations of inhaling and exhaling (see exercise below).

#### Exercise: Introductory Mindfulness Meditation

Find a quiet and comfortable place to sit. Close your eyes, or keep them open in a soft gaze, and focus your attention on feeling your breath in your body, inhaling and exhaling. Over several minutes, keep your focus on your breath and the sensations you experience in your body as you continue to breathe. When you notice that you are no longer paying attention to your breathing, call yourself back. It is important not to judge yourself when you find your mind has wandered off and you have forgotten the breathing focus. Continually noticing and inviting yourself back expands your capacity to be in the moment, experiencing being present with yourself. (WMMC, p. 104)



## Mind, Body, and Momentum Calibration

Using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is low and 10 is high, pose the following questions to invite the mentee to “check in”:

- How **present** are you?
- What is your **energy level**?
- What is your **level of connection** to your learning?

## Current Internal State: Creating or Choosing an Image or Object

This attunement can help the mentee notice their current internal state, making it explicit and concrete, as they begin a session. It can also establish or restore mental energy and focus.

Invite the mentee to illustrate how they are arriving to the session by selecting or creating an image or object:

*Have a look around (e.g., out a window, inside an office or room). Considering where you are now, let your eyes land on an object that pulls you in. Explore, describe, and/or draw it in detail, using all of your senses. Notice any metaphorical layers that are present for you.*

- What resonates for you about the object?
- What links do you see between the object and your present state?
- What, if anything, do you see that relates to what you are bringing to the conversation today?