



Head to Heart Coaching

relief from struggle

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LEADING MEETINGS THAT REDUCE STRESS AND RELAX EGO

1. Start the meeting on time, whether everyone is present or not.
2. Say, “Close your eyes. Put both feet on the floor and let your hands rest lightly on your knees. Let your mind settle like sand to the bottom of a glass of water. Now take 2-3 deep breaths to bring a fresh supply of oxygen into the brain. Breathe from your navel.”
3. Have drinking water available in the room, not caffeine.
4. Ask each person to “check in” with what they are grateful for or what they appreciate. *According to www.HeartMath.com, “When you intentionally shift to a positive emotion such as appreciation, care or compassion, your heart rhythms immediately change, blood pressure drops, stress hormones plummet, the immune system pumps up, anti-aging hormones increase, and you gain clarity, calmness, and control. The effects are both immediate and long-lasting.”*
5. Ask each person to write on an index card how he or she wants to be thought about and treated during this meeting. Allow silence for writing. Then say, “Make a commitment that this is how you will think of and treat others during this meeting. Refer to it if you feel your tension rise.”
6. Give people time in silence to read the agenda and make notes. Clearly state no more than 3 questions you want answered during this meeting. Give people time to **write** their answers before speaking them.
7. For maximum learning, use the tool of *dialogue*, not discussion. Disallow banging words around. Instead, ask each person to read his/her answers to the three questions, in turn, reading only one answer at a time.
8. Insist that people pause between speakers. This avoids the “jump into the fray” mentality, allows the brain time to process information, and gives people opportunity to understand.
9. Say, “Do not speak if someone else has already expressed your idea, question, or thought in different words.”
10. Say, “Speak only if you truly believe that your words will increase understanding.” Discourage “chatter.” Honor silence as time to reflect.
11. For those questions that require closure, after people have said all they truly need to say, ask, “What is the most complete answer or solution?”
12. Stop the meeting on time.

Whether you’re leading the meeting or simply participating, you may follow many of these suggestions for greater personal effectiveness.

Brains work best in a state of relaxed alertness.