

Planning a Co-Working Day

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For many of us, it is not easy to maintain our mindfulness during the workday. This is particularly true when:

- ... We work alone.
- ... We do not find reminders or support for the practice in our surroundings.
- ... A large part of our work takes place behind a screen or on the internet.
- ... We work on several projects at the same time.
- ... Our tasks consist of a large number of smaller activities.
- ... We are regularly interrupted by phone calls, emails, or personal contact when we work.

If our mindfulness and concentration lessen, light, superficially interesting, or current matters often prevail over more uncomfortable, difficult, yet important affairs. As a result, we do not progress. Instead, we are pulled in by the internet. We get caught up in mundane tasks and lose sight of what is essential. We are carried away by all kinds of distractions. We also lose our ability to critically observe our impulses before responding, and we become reactive. We fall back into old habits.

During retreats and Days of Mindfulness, we can lay a good foundation. Yet when we return to our everyday work life, we are easily confused. Mindfulness does not come easily, and it requires a lot of practice. It is easier to practice together than alone. We need to practice work meditation in the middle of our everyday lives to solidify our mindfulness.

To support mindfulness training at the workplace, the *Network for Mindful Business* started organizing mindful co-working days in 2012. These are days of training in mindful work under real conditions. Our work meditations are concerned with our current professional projects and—like in typical Plum Village retreats—with activities such as cleaning, cooking, or gardening. We are working on our current topics and projects, and we are writing emails and proposals. We leave the co-working area only to make phone calls, in order not to disturb others. In the meantime, over a hundred mindful co-working days have taken place in Berlin, Vienna, Munich, and Cologne, and more and more regional groups have adopted this form of practice.