

## Glossary Term: Mindful Organisational Culture©

### Definition

#### What is Mindful Organisational Culture©?

The **Mindful Organisational Culture©**<sup>1</sup> approach to **staff care** was developed by trauma therapist Maria Zemp.

#### Background

It is a feminist approach that consciously acknowledges the necessity to work on care within organisations. It starts from the basic assumption that experiencing stress and trauma dynamics in the context of working in the field of violence and trauma can have an impact on both helpers, support systems, and organisations.

#### Objective

##### Implementation:

The approach is centered on promoting health and quality of life at the workplace, i.e., experiencing the workplace and work as empowering and meaningful. The interaction between colleagues, and organisational structures and processes, should be designed in a way that protects employees from the possible stressful effects of working on issues concerning violence, such as compassion fatigue or secondary traumatisation.

The term **mindfulness** is often taught in a Buddhist context, where it is described as a technique of introspection. In this context, mindfulness is understood as something detached from religion and philosophy. Instead, it refers to **personal attitudes of attentiveness towards leadership and staff**. Exercises to train one's own perception and ability to reflect are established as everyday practices to regulate oneself and the interactions within both the team and the organisation which can, for example, contribute towards reducing tension.

### Importance for *medica mondiale e. V.*

*medica mondiale* piloted Mindful Organisational Culture© from 2013 to 2016, in cooperation with the consultant Maria Zemp, as a far-reaching concept of organisational care and development (staff care). During this time it was partially adapted and implemented by our partner organisations.

The following five pillars or **components of a Mindful Organisational Culture©** are, in conjunction with appropriate measures, intended to contribute to the long-term promotion of the resilience of both the staff and the organisation at *medica mondiale*:

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- Pillar 1 – **Stress- and trauma-sensitive attitudes and communications** promote sensitivity and competency in dealing with the personal and organisational consequences of stress and trauma dynamics.
- Pillar 2 – **Holistic health care** strengthens mental and physical health and social interaction.
- Pillar 3 – **Structural tools** provide safety and orientation within the organisation.
- Pillar 4 – **Observing and reflecting on effectiveness** makes it possible to experience one's own effectiveness.
- Pillar 5 – **Creating culture** promotes a positive identification with the organisation.

These components include various **measures** based on the organisation's needs and possibilities to promote and anchor Mindful Organisational Culture®, such as multi-module workshops on stress- and trauma-sensitivity in one's own work context, in which all managers and staff are required to participate, as well as other offers such as "STA strengthening groups", team and case supervision, fitness training, health days, massage, and open offers to staff such as guided meditations. The training on Mindful Organisational Culture® will be revised and offered again.

### **Significance for the STA – Stress- and Trauma-sensitive Approach**

Self-care and staff care is one of the four basic principles of the STA – Stress- and Trauma-sensitive Approach. Mindful Organisational Culture® is a specific approach to staff care in which the promotion of a stress- and trauma-sensitive attitude and communication is one of five components. Therefore, establishing a Mindful Organisational Culture® also includes training on stress and trauma sensitivity.