**Course Name: Organizational Behaviour: Individual Dynamics in Organization**

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**Week – 10**

**Lecture – 05**

Lecture 50: Using Psychological capital and mindfulness at work

Hello students. Namaskar. Welcome back to the course on Organizational Behavior, Individual Dynamics in Organization. Today we move to the last lecture of module 10 where we look into using psychological capital and mindfulness at work. If you recollect in the previous lectures across this module 10, we had looked into creativity, psychological capital and today's focus specifically would be mindfulness.

I am Dr. Abraham Cyril Issac. I am a faculty at the School of Business, Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati. So straight away moving into today's topic, let's look into today's theme which I already emphasized is mindfulness.

"Mindfulness widens attentional breadth. This quality makes it valuable for experts in novel context but detrimental for novices in routine context."

I would like to repeat it, it is valuable for experts in novel context but detrimental for novices in routine context. So, we will have a detailed discussion on this but before that we will also look into the application because if you look into most of the last lectures of every single module, I try to bring in the application aspects generally. I look into the empirical research that has happened in the area. I try to connect it with industry.

So basically, in this lecture also the attempt would be likewise. So, when you are looking into the application of what we have discussed in the previous four lectures, the first part is selection of human resources because any OBHR domain people would understand and appreciate the importance of selection of human resources. Assessing the individual's present magnitude and strength of self-efficacy is critical. When you look into the previous lectures, we have detailed on the requirement or the need or the benefit of self-efficacy. So when you look into the situation or setting up self-efficacy in the organization, we need to measure it and for that setting up self-efficacy scales for each of the major task that is being given to the overall domain of each given job becomes essential, becomes relevant.

So that is where self-efficacy discussion is more becoming fruitful when we look into the entire capacity of the organization to actually measure who is having like let us say what is the amount of self-efficacy each person or each employee is having. When you have a certain understanding as a top management about your employees, then you are in a better position to actually assign the task and if you have also found out that there is lack of self-efficacy or for that matter any other quality, you can obviously bring in certain intervention mechanisms including training and other aspects of motivating systems which can actually bring up the employees which otherwise are lacking in their performance. When using self-efficacy assessments for training and development need analysis, it makes the organization more robust, it makes the organization more employee friendly.

Now let us look into another dimension of the application, one was in selection as well as recruitment, another is obviously in the T&D, the training and development. So, when you look into the training and development in other modules also I will stress on this about the guided mastery and the cognitive mastery.

Now let us look into guided mastery. Guided mastery is nothing but the instructive modeling to acquire a skill or competency, guided skill and perfection. So, when you are looking into situations or aspects of guided mastery, you are actually trying to teach or train an individual with respect to imparting a certain skill or a competency. Now transferring the training back to the job to ensure the self-directed success becomes vital in case of self-efficacy, completing the entire chain of events. So, when you are looking into guided mastery you have to also understand and appreciate what is cognitive mastery.

Cognitive mastery is nothing but its ways to enhance efficacy for decision making and problem solving. Now there is no specific instruction happening here, there is more of a cognitive transfer of information or transfer of knowledge. To learn the thinking skills and how to apply them by observing the decision rules and reasoning strategies successful models use as they arrive at solutions to problems and make effective decisions. So, when you are looking into the most important aspect any organization would want its employees to specifically undertake, it is nothing but to take or make important decisions. And if an organization worth its salt is able to compete in the market, have the required competitive edge over their competitors it is only because of the top-notch decisions that are being made by the organization or the higher management of the organization.

For this you cannot make good decisions by undermining the people in the bottom level. So please understand when you are actually trying to build your organization, this is for all the entrepreneurs out there, all the people who are trying to build their organization

you should ideally look into the people who are good or having significant amount of self-efficacy. Now if that is not happening you need to at least train and develop them to the requirement of the company or the organization and if that is also not happening it is not a good sign for the organization in general. When we look into other applications specifically with respect to our topic of self-efficacy, enhance self-efficacy to better cope with stress and facilitate productive teamwork and collective efficacy of self-managed teams. So here we are specifying about self-managed teams which also need self-efficacy to a greater extent.

In organizations where you are generally having a hierarchical structure and the job is more routine based mundane activities which you carry out on a day-to-day basis you might not essentially require or need the level of intricate self-efficacy or the level of effort from an individual perspective. But when you are actually looking into more of a horizontal structure, more of self-managed teams what we essentially are seeing is that we need to enhance a self-efficacy to better cope with the stress and to facilitate productive teamwork.

Now we also tend to use job designs that provide more responsibility, challenge and empower personal control or the work to enhance the job holders perception of self-efficacy. So, when we are actually looking into situations where you do not have a great control over what you are doing most of the times a task becomes complex because of this lack of control the organization is having or the individual who is assigned to undertake the task is having. So this is where the self-efficacy or the relevance of self-efficacy becomes more relevant.

Now when you look into goal setting there is yet another important aspect when you look into the progress of the goal and that this could be specifically individual goal and as we have discussed in our previous lectures with respect to the strategic intent where there is an alignment with the organization objective organizational objectives and the individual goal progress and attainment will in turn affect self-efficacy. If you are a person who is time and again successful in achieving your goal, if you are an individual who is with all the hindrances or barriers or difficult climate all around both in terms of physiological as well as psychological still you are able to achieve the targets then you have or you are making the essential goal progress no doubt about it. Now creative self-efficacy this is one important thing that most of the organizations that work around creativity, innovation or research and development actually look into. Employees believes that they can be creative in their work roles predicted that creative performance beyond the predictive effects of job self-efficacy. So creative self-efficacy is very much required when you actually look into those tasks or when you actually are engross in those tasks which are more novel which are not so common in the existing scheme of work profiles that are there in the existing work contracts.

We should also consider the leadership efficacy which has a strong positive impact on followers. Now many a time randomly we say that how the leaders are similarly the followers are also but when it comes to self-efficacy if you are having a leader who is not having the self-efficacy to stand up to a task, to stand up to the adversaries, to stand up to and deliver what is to be done and to protect his subordinates then you cannot expect the subordinates or the followers to have the self-efficacy which is required.

Now let us look into some related concepts. I will also try to look into optimism, hope, etc. We will just brush through this because I feel that when you discuss psychological capital, when you discuss mindfulness you need to be aware of certain aspects which we all know but seldom do we appreciate the existence of these features or these elements or these factors.

So optimism in workplace, optimism may be motivated to work harder no doubt about it because if you are an optimist you see a positive side of everything and even if the going is tough you tend to work harder, you are intrinsically motivated because of the fact that you are optimist, you see only the positive side of things and you tend to work harder and this is a natural consequence. Now when you are looking into optimist all around you in the organization they may be more including you, including you I am not undermining you as an individual they may be more satisfied and they have high morale there is no doubt about it and you look into individuals who are the most satisfied within the organization they might not have all the features that you have or all the benefits including the fringe benefits or all the perks that other organizations are giving yet again they are more satisfied for the simple reason that they are optimist.

Optimist have high levels of aspiration and set stretch goals, they are not satisfied with simple goals and this is an extension of the first point. In the first point I told categorically that optimist have an urge to work harder and that is because of the fact that they are more intrinsically driven they can do or they have or they see the positive side of things and so even if the going gets tough even if there are barriers stacked in front of you even if there are issues that are surmounting and you are not in a position to make a clear judgment but still your optimism is guiding you forward. That is making you more deterministic that is making you more to work hard in whatever environment you are and another extension of this is you are not satisfied with the present goal, you are always trying to go for another goal, you are always trying to stretch your ambitions, stretch your the objectives which are set for yourself.

When you look into other aspects of optimism they persevere in the phase of obstacles and difficulties. They are more hardworking, they tend to do more and more trial and error methods, they tend to be with the system, they do not ditch the whole system when

the going gets tough. So, they see the positive side, they feel that now it might be a time when things may improve. So that is optimism which is running them. They make attributions of personal failures and setbacks as temporary.

Optimists do not take it as a permanent thing that okay, I have a personal failure or I got a setback that is fine. They take it more as a learning step, they take failure as learning more of a step towards victory and it is that makes or differentiates them from the pessimist. Optimists also tend to feel good and invigorated both physically and mentally. You hardly see any optimist, you hardly see any optimist who is dull. You hardly see any optimist who is lethargic.

Optimists are always brimming with energy. They are always trying to attack the target or in a positive sense to get the things done, to do the work professionally. So, there is lot of professionalism, there is lot of zeal and enthusiasm that is associated with every single optimist. So optimism in workplace is a virtue. Many of us that do not have that.

 I repeat, optimism is a virtue in workplace. So many a time it should be the core ingredient for entrepreneurship. Many a time it should be the core ingredient for the people who generally think to or aspire to progress in the career ladder. So, this is where optimism in workplace becomes critical. Now that said, it is not that the picture is all rosy.

 The downside of optimism do exist when you are actually looking into optimistic person. Anything which is in the extreme levels is always dangerous or always risky. So following that trivia, we are looking into optimistically driven behaviour may be aimed at pointless pursuits. Now, just now we have concluded telling that they may have stretch goals. They might find it difficult to settle somewhere. They might find to extend their objectives, work more, work harder, more professionally and all those things. But at some point if you are not scoping down, if you are an optimist and you are not scoping down your area of work or your objective or your target, there could be a situation that is arising where you are actually after a pointless pursuit. There might be some objectives in certain which are not attainable, not achievable. So, you might be actually drifting or trying to get those objectives which are actually unattainable from that perspective. So that is one of the downside of optimism.

You tend to set unrealistic goal. So, what we actually require, what we actually need is a realistic optimism. Within the organisational context, now think for a minute, within the organisational context, are you aiming to get to a realistic progression in your next term? For example, let us say you are actually a person who has just joined the organisation, you have the potentialities, the higher management has seen that, you have good

knowledge, you are from well reputed universities, you have your educational qualification speaks for you, you have great amount of experience also, but you see that there is a hierarchy in the organisation. So, the next possible step is, let us say you are a senior manager and the next possible step would be a DGM or GM. Suddenly if let us say you are optimistic unrealistically and you are trying to set a goal that from senior manager you want to directly become a VP, assistant or additional VP, then it might be an unrealistic goal.

So think from the organisational context, look into your context, your situation. Again it comes back to the initial discussion of the relevance of the context not only the individual per se. Now when we look into the other aspects, other research and application of aspects of psychological capital, self-efficacy, etc. in workplace, we have to look into some of the empirical research and certain jobs in which at least mild pessimism would be beneficial when you actually look into optimism as a counterpoint. Technical jobs such as safety engineering, you cannot be highly optimistic, you have to take necessary precautions like let us say there are some safety protocols which you need to follow, you cannot just be optimist and think that okay nothing bad is going to happen, it is I am going to see only the positive side. So that would be foolish from your part. So when you are into jobs like safety engineering, you have to be a little bit pessimistic and that is the ideal way to go about it.

When you are looking into other jobs like in financial control and accounting, you cannot be optimistic and be liberal in keeping the books. You have to be critical, you have to be very much stringent, you have to be very much focused when it comes to financial control and accounting. So when you look into optimism, there is diametrically opposite side of pessimism which is also required when we are looking into organizational behavior and organizational behavior management in particular, there are some situations where some jobs which actually require or warrant a certain level of pessimism attached to it.

Now when you are looking into optimism and leadership, a field study found that the measured optimism of military cadets had a significant relationship with the military science professor's rating of leadership potential. So, when you are looking into people who are brimmed with optimism, who are high in optimism, you might look into or you might be seeing people who are having very high leadership potential. So, there is a certain correlation that is existing and another study of business leaders found that on average they were more optimistic than a sample of non-leaders that those most effective in initiating change were less pessimistic and that the more optimistic the leader, the more optimistic the followers. We come back to the basic understanding we have when you are working under a leader who is more optimistic. When you are working under situations which are developed by leaders who are more optimistic, you tend to see the optimism in

work. You tend to understand that optimism is there in the environment. So this makes the followers also optimist.

Now I would also like to quickly discuss on hope. Hope is something which we all know, which we all have possibly and which we all otherwise aspire to have. So, what are the implications of hope as a quality in workplace? Now let us look into couple of definitions here.

Daniel Goldman from the perspective of emotional intelligence defines hope as having hope means that one will not give into overwhelming anxiety, a defeatist attitude or depression in the face of difficult challenges or setbacks. So essentially, we are extending the previous discussion of optimism. A person who is more hopeful is a person who is more optimistic. Martin Seligman from positive psychology perspective states on hope that whether or not we have hope depends on two dimensions of our explanatory style, pervasiveness and performance. So, these are the two critical aspects which define hope.

Finding temporary and specific causes for misfortune is the art of hope. So, you tend to have a thought process which is that you will be existing not only now but in future also and that is going to take you to places or that is that is going to lead you or guide you throughout your work within the organization. So, hope is closely related to many aspects like work related goal expectancies, perceived controls, self-esteem, positive emotions, coping and even achievement. So, you can understand what is the relevance of hope with some of these factors. If you are more a person with more of an achievement orientation or a need for achievement, you are a person who is more into perceived control, who is more into coping, who is more into work related goal expectancies. Every single factor has a certain bit of ramification when it comes to hope in general.

Now let us also look into resiliency at workplace. Resiliency sometimes acts as an asset. So, enhancing that particular asset that a person possesses is vital when it comes to resiliency. How effectively you can bounce back, how effectively you can bounce back to adverse situations or barriers that are stacked against you within the organization.

It might be because of the higher management, it might be because of the task in itself, it might be because of your co-workers or your subordinates or your boss in particular, whatever be the reasons may. You might have a resilient environment or resilient behavior which will ensure that you bounce back every now and then even when you have difficult situations. So it could be developed or nurtured as an asset through education, training and nurturing social relationship and by improving the quality of resources available for the person to draw upon. This is critical. I would just take 30 seconds to have a small discussion on this.

When you are actually trying to be in an organization and let us say you are being promoted to a leadership position, the first and the foremost thing you would try to check is the resources, not only the quantity but the quality of resources. In other words, you will try to scale up or you try to have a clear understanding of who all are the people you have to deal with and what is the level of delivery those people are having. Let us say you have made an assessment that there is a person X who is just a loud mouth. He talks a lot but he is not delivering but there is a person Y who does not talk that much but always delivers on time. So, you might have a realistic understanding of whom to put where.

So that clear understanding will ensure that you are having a clear measure over the quality of the resources. In this particular context, it is with respect to the human resource. It could be with respect to let us say the information channels or even as simple as a software in your hand or let us say a knowledge sharing portal within the organization or maybe a leave portal mechanism, whatever be the situation you are in, the quality of resources have to be ensured in the first place and that will obviously go long way in making your house or your organization a resilient one.

There are also risks associated with that. The appropriate physical and psychological health care is what can actually make you resilient. When you look into your situation or your work generally in workplace, you cannot be resilient if you are not physically and psychologically well and I cannot make them mutually exclusive because if you are physically and psychologically healthy, you are fit then only you can be resilient. Whatever be your mindset, whatever be your attitude, whatever be your personality, if there is let us say a physiological illness that is associated with you, you might not be the same resilient person you are otherwise. That is a risk which can come up when we discuss resiliency at workplace. There are adaptational processes also associated with resilience through developing other positive psychological capacities, let us say such as self-efficacy, hope and optimism. I think now you will appreciate why I discuss self-efficacy, hope and optimism before discussing resilience for the simple reason that you need to have psychological capacities when you want to adapt to certain situations which are beyond your control, which are beyond your ability to deliver the things. So that will make you more resilient. So through teaching people how to use effective coping, stress management, problem solving and goal setting strategies and practical techniques are also emerging as additional practical techniques to make you more adapted towards resilience.

Now comes the discussion on mindfulness and this is where I would end my lecture and end this module. So, mindfulness is a critical aspect, there is no doubt about it. Increasing body of literature in terms of research has actually categorically showed us or is showing us that mindfulness is quite relevant. Now let us understand mindfulness both in terms of the depth and breadth.

Present-centered attention and awareness is mindfulness. I repeat present centered attention and awareness. There might be situations, now just think of some situations where you are physically present there but you do not know what is exactly happening. There might be situations where you are actually doing some job, again you might not be physically present, you might be physically present there but when you are looking into the psychological awareness of the things going around you might not be actually present. There might be mental absence of you. So this is where mindfulness becomes relevant. Present centered attention and awareness. You are aware every single situation, all your antennas are open, you are receiving all the stimuli. It might be a very small stimuli and it might be a very powerful stimuli also. Whatever be the extreme, you are such an open individual, you are living in the present, you are attentive to all the stimuli that is coming your way and you are aware of the surrounding that you are in.

This is specifically mindfulness. Now let us look into the impact mindfulness is having in different aspects namely performance, relationship and well-being. Let us look into performance, performance levels and this is where the theme of the lecture comes in. Now let us look into a situation where you are getting lot of stimuli. You are into a job, you are getting lot of inputs, let us convert for ease of understanding the stimuli to information. You are into a particular new position and you are getting a lot of information.

Many of those information, trust me is noise. So what you tend to understand that you have to actually take the best signal out of the entire available signals and throw away the noise. So, this is where you actually see that a lot of inputs are coming and if you are an expert in the domain, being mindful that is being a person who is able to attract moreover understand and aware of all the stimuli that is coming your way, if you are the person who is expert for that in the particular domain, it will be useful.

Let us understand a reverse scenario. When you are actually not so an expert, you are a novice in the area, you do not know much about it, you are being bombarded with information A, B, C, D, E, etc. Now hardly you are getting time to process this information, then being mindfulness might be detrimental for you.

So please understand when it comes to performance, mindfulness has a certain impact on the performance. If you are an expert in the field and you are mindful, then your performance is going to increase manifold, no doubt about it. But if you are novice, if you are not that an expert and you are being bombarded, you are trying to be mindful, you are mindful then it might be detrimental to you in the present scheme of things.

Now you should also look into other aspects like performance variability. Somebody who is mindful and somebody who is not, there is a lot of performance variability that has been observed by different researchers in terms of their study when they conducted with the human population.

Now performance buffering is that already we have seen that there are lot of stimuli coming into it. So there is a certain level of preparation that can always happen. You have received certain stimuli and certain information and you are made ready or you are made aware because of your mindfulness you have captured everything like a sponge. You have got everything. So that would ensure that when the time comes, when the requirement actually comes, you can actually deliver.

So this is what specifically performance buffering refers to. And the final aspect would be goals and motivation. When you are actually looking into work related outcomes of mindfulness, the most important aspect would be goals and motivation. Somebody who is mindful, somebody who is open, somebody who is aware about the surroundings and attentive to all the signals that is coming across him, for her goals and motivation are a natural outcome. He or she might be more intrinsically motivated towards the goal that is being set and they might be more capable in achieving the respective goals that they have set. When it comes to relationship, a lot of factors including communication quality because you are mindful, you have seen that a lot of stuff has happened and you have made a record of it and you have consumed that information that has came your way in a very fruitful manner so that you can reciprocate or you can replicate it at a later point in time. It certainly enhances the quality of the communication. You are now more informed, you are now more reasonable with respect to the information you are having. So this is what makes the relationship more sturdier, more mighty.

And we also look into other aspects like empathy because the moment you are mindful, you are attentive to others. People tend to discuss with you because you are open to them, you are listening to them. That creates a level of empathy, that creates compassion and when it comes to leadership, self-orientation versus other orientation, being mindful is always a virtue a better leader will have.

And when it comes to teamwork, climate, safety, voice and trust is always with those persons or with those individuals who are mindful, who are having attention to detail, who are living in the present, who have present centered attention and awareness.

And finally when it comes to well-being, I have discussed about resilience. When it comes to well-being, being mindful makes you more resilient because you do not get hurt by small aspects of other co-workers. They might be ridiculing you, they might be humiliating you, but you are resilient enough because you know that the core information

is actually in favor of you or what you are trying to say is actually the right fact. So that gives you the confidence to actually get you to or make you the right person in the room.

So that effectively, consequently brings in a lot of well-being aspects into you. Your well-being is ensured because you do not have to justify to them that you are right because you are were mindful and you have consumed the knowledge in such a way that whatever you observe or whatever you feel, whatever you have written down or remembered is correct. So this is where mindfulness becomes critical. So that completes our module. I would just like to conclude with one aspect of mindfulness which is also the theme of today's lecture.

When we actually look into all the situations within the organization, be open, be mindful, in other words be attentive and be aware about your situations, aware of your environment. There might be lot of important inputs coming in. In fact there might be lot of inputs that is coming in something which is not important, something which is important. So, you tend to act as a filter, but before the filter, you please understand that quantity begets quality. If you are able to receive everything, being mindful, then you get a proper set of information and from those information you are able to filter it out and get the fine reason, get the fine sediment or get the fine output which will make your decision making more superior than others in the organization.

Thank you for listening to me patiently. We will see you in the next module in the next class. Till then take care. Bye bye.