

## Study Guide

# Session 1: Integrity in Real Life

**OPEN**

We all know what it is like to be stressed at work. That stress hurts our productivity, the quality of our work, and our relationships with our teammates. And often, it seems inevitable—like there is nothing we can do about it.

We cannot outrun conflict, but we can use conflict as an opportunity for growth. You might think it will take a miracle to fix your workplace stress, but once you learn the skills of better communication, you will be able to find a miracle moment.

## VIEW

Watch Session 1: *Integrity in Real Life* (8 minutes).

## REVIEW

Every office and work team is different, but our problems are surprisingly similar. The biggest source of our stress and frustration is not tedious busy-work or nagging customers: it's communication. **In what ways are your stresses at work related to poor communication?**

**Who do you believe is at fault for this poor communication? In what ways do you want this poor communication to change?**

While it is easy to blame poor communication on others, we must come to terms with the fact that we are as much to blame for poor communication as anyone else. Nicole showed us that, when faced with workplace frustration, we all have a choice. “We can perpetuate the same pattern we’ve been living in, letting the hurt win—or we can move toward a miracle moment.” **What is your knee-jerk reaction when you get frustrated at work?**

### How do you treat your coworkers when you are frustrated?

You are most likely very aware of the conflicts and sources of frustration in your office and with your team. **What specific relationships in your office need a breakthrough, or miracle moment?**

**What might keep you from reaching that miracle moment? Restrict your answer to things you can control.**

## EXPLORE THE PRINCIPLES FURTHER

Nicole talked about our need to find “integration”—alignment between our emotions, thoughts, and actions—if we want to have miracle moments in times of stress. Today, you only need to commit to laying the groundwork to create those miracle moments.

There are five prerequisites we must meet if we want to find a miracle moment:

### 1. *Nice Is Bad*

This step does not mean we should be rude. Rather, we need to stop defaulting to quiet politeness when we encounter poor communication. Simply being nice and polite can create a false sense of peace in our offices where we outwardly smile but inwardly stew with anger. Instead of being nice, we need to be honest and vulnerable.

**In what ways has “niceness” silenced you or contributed to workplace stress in the past?**

**What could it look like for you to be honest when you are frustrated at work?**

Vulnerability forces us to take down our guard and show the world who we truly are. **What worries you about being honest and vulnerable in the midst of conflict?**

### 2. *Chaos Before Order*

To fix our communication, we must be willing to throw out our old way of doing things. That means we will have to disrupt our status quo and the false peace we have cultivated. To find a miracle moment, we have to be comfortable with being uncomfortable. **In what ways does change make you anxious?**

**What don’t you want to disrupt?**

**In what ways does your status quo need to be disrupted?**

### 3. *Curious, Not Condemning*

Nothing shuts down growth faster than self-condemnation. We are all going to make mistakes and may even re-make past mistakes. Beating ourselves up over them isn’t helping. Instead, we should investigate

what went wrong. We can ask: What went wrong? What triggered my poor reactions? How can I improve the way I handled the situation? Condemnation keeps us stalled in negativity. Curiosity moves us toward solutions.

**What circumstances at work cause you annoyance or frustration or shut you down?**

**What causes these reactions in you?**

**Why do you think certain people can cause you to react negatively?**

#### **4. *Small Is Big***

Poor communication in your workplace won't be fixed overnight. True change comes through small, consistent, incremental steps. That means we each must commit to the integration practices we will learn in this study.

Think of what having better communication would change for your team. **What does that future look like?**

**What can you do to create a culture of honest accountability in your office as you commit to long-term changes?**

#### **5. *Hope Is Necessary***

Nicole said, "Hope is linked to a fundamental belief that change is possible." And it's true! The road to a better future is long, but you can reach your goals. While we change, we will all make mistakes, which might be frustrating but can be overcome.

Write down your hopes for your company, your team, and your own work experience, then share your hopes with your team. Find a way to remind yourself and them of your hope when times are difficult. **Which of the hopes you listed is your highest priority? What do you need to do to make that hope a reality?**

## **APPLY WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED**

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**Consider:** Review the five prerequisites of miracle moments. Which prerequisite do you need to work on most?

**Commit:** It is not enough to know about the prerequisites. We must commit to putting them into action. In what ways can you lay the foundation for a miracle moment today?

**Act:** Nicole closed this session with a quote from Albert Einstein, "There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle." Choose to see workplace frustrations as opportunities for miracles. Write down Einstein's quote and post it someplace where you can be encouraged by it throughout the day.

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