**Working with and Learning from Breakdowns**

Use this sheet to process breakdowns for yourself and plan for breakdown conversations.

**Declare the Breakdown** – What was the breakdown? What did you expect, and what was your experience? What was the impact of the breakdown? **To prepare**: Prepare to share this succinctly. (ex: *You said you’d have the figures to me by five and at six I still didn’t have them. I had to meet with the client without the information I needed. I was unable to give informed answers to their concerns*).

**Allow people the time and permission to express how they feel about the breakdown, and if necessary, vent their emotions. – To prepare**: how do you feel? Get in touch with your emotions about the breakdown. During the conversation: Actively listen and listen particularly for your role in the breakdown that might be hidden from you. *How do you feel?*

**Take Inventory – Separate Facts from Stories (Remember the Ladder of Inference!)**

**To prepare**: fill in the chart below. What facts do you have? What stories are you making up? During the conversation explore with curiosity while separating facts from stories.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What Happened** | **My/Others’ Story** |
|  |  |

**Learn from the Breakdown – How Did This Happen?** – Explore the facts with a Learner/Growth mindset. What was the root cause? Go a few layers deep. (ex: “There was no time” -> what was the root cause that there was no time?) Be prepared to determine where you were part of the source of the breakdown.

**Make a Renewed Commitment** – **To prepare**: What is your “ask,” going forward? What are you (and others involved) committing to doing to ensure this breakdown does not reoccur? This could be an agreement (request/promise).