

# One-Session Mindfulness

A Baker's Dozen of the  
Best Brief Mindfulness Tools

**Session 1 of 3**

Welcome!

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*Simply Mindful: A 7-Week Course and Personal Handbook for Mindful Living*

*The Mindfulness Toolbox*

*Reflect: Awaken to the Wisdom of the Here and Now*

Mindful Living Newsletter  
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**Mindfulness Training ● Consultation ● Speaking**

# Session 1 of 3 Today's Roadmap

## Intro to Fundamentals

- The Three Regulations: Body, Breath, Mind

## Tool #1: Breath for Calm and Emotional Regulation

- Tool #1: Diaphragmatic Breathing
  - Turning on the parasympathetic nervous system
  - Practice: The 5 Postures

## Tools #2 and #3: Grounding and Savoring

- Tool #2: Palm the Present Moment
  - Distance from Difficult Anxiety, Stress, Transitions
- Tool #3: Savoring and Anchoring
  - Contextual Awareness for Positive Affect

*APA Disclosure: Materials that are included in this course may include interventions and modalities that are beyond the authorized practice of mental health professionals. As a licensed professional, you are responsible for reviewing the scope of practice, including activities that are defined in law as beyond the boundaries of practice in accordance with and in compliance with your professions standards.*

# Intro to Mindfulness Fundamentals

- Core Mindfulness Practice
  - Noticing the Body, Breath, and Mind
- Website Resources

# Core Mindfulness Practice

## WHERE ARE YOU RIGHT **NOW**?

*3-Part Practice*

***BODY as it is***  
*(Rooted, Posture)*

***BREATH as it is***  
*(Physical Contact Point)*

***MIND as it is***  
*(Non-judging Labeling)*

# Affect Labeling and the Brain

Dispositional mindfulness is associated with greater widespread PFC activation and attenuated amygdala responses during affect labeling.

Affect labeling encourages participants to treat affective states as “objects” of attention, promoting a detachment from these negative states.

# Emotional Regulation Changes Amygdala

Study showed “evidence that cognitive regulation can create long-lasting changes in the ability of stimuli to elicit affective responses.

Amygdala response remained low during a follow-up after initial training.

# Mindfulness Helps Mild Cognitive Impairment

- 3-month intervention
- Treatment group showed improved neurocognitive function
- Significantly improved verbal recognition memory compared to control group

Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences: Mindfulness practice alters brain connectivity in community-living elders with mild cognitive impairment  
Fam, Beng, et. al. First published: 25 December 2019  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/pcn.1297>



# Questions and Hypotheticals...

# Useful (& Free) Web Resources

- Brain Resources
- Mindfulness Websites

# Mindfulness Resources/Research

- National Telecenter for Health and Technology

<https://telehealth.org/apps/behavioral/breathe2relax-mobile-app>

Virtual Hope Box: [https://www.research.va.gov/research\\_in\\_action/Virtual-Hope-Box-smartphone-app-to-prevent-suicide.cfm](https://www.research.va.gov/research_in_action/Virtual-Hope-Box-smartphone-app-to-prevent-suicide.cfm)

Greater Good; The Science of a Meaningful Life

[www.GreaterGood.berkeley.edu](http://www.GreaterGood.berkeley.edu)

- Center for Investigating Healthy Minds:

<http://www.investigatinghealthyminds.org>

- Mindfulness Research Monthly      goamra.org

- DANA.Org Brain Research [Dana Foundation](http://www.dana.org)

- TCME.Org [The Center for Mindful Eating](http://www.tcme.org)

# Tool #1: Diaphragmatic Breathing

- Train the Brain for Calm and Cognition
- Turn on the Parasympathetic Nervous System
- Navy SEALs method for arousal control
- Practice: Diaphragmatic Breath & the 3 Min. Question for Clients

# Mindful Breathing Awareness

## **20-minutes of diaphragmatic breathing produced:**

- A reduction of negative feelings
- An increase in neurotransmitter serotonin for improved mood
- A higher concentration of oxygen in the pre-frontal cortex  
(mindful attention and higher level processing)

*International Journal of Psychophysiology* 2011, May, Activation of the anterior prefrontal cortex and serotonergic system is associated with improvements in mood and EEG changes induced by Zen meditation practice in novices; Toho University School of Medicine

# Brief Mindfulness Reduces Stress & Blood Pressure

## Pilot Study with 13 Priests at University of Portland\*

- Priests a vulnerable population to stress and high blood pressure
- Program consisted of two 1-hour training sessions on “contemplative breathing” and 3-minute practice sessions three times a day.
- Results: Significant reduction in Blood pressure and Percived Stress Scale

\* Joy Mocieri, RN, BSN, CEN, TNCC, *The Unique Power of Mindfulness on Blood Pressure and Stress Reduction on a Priest Community*; University of Portland School of Nursing, June 24, 2018

# Turning on the Parasympathetic System

**Where are you breathing?**

- **Rewiring the Stress Response**
  - 20-30 sec. to turn down stress volume
  - 10x increase in oxygen
  - Lower B.P., respiration
  - Increase alpha waves
  - Increase serotonin

# 5 Regulating Breathing Practices



# Teaching Belly Breathing

- 1) Explain the physiology of breathing, and how it turns on the body's relaxation system
- 2) Check where they are breathing by having them put one palm on the chest, one on the belly.
- 3) Demonstrate how to get a fuller belly breath by placing the hands behind the back or behind the neck/head.
- 4) Problem solve how clients can use this each day.

# Pair Belly Breathing with Other Pleasant Activities

- 1) Music
- 2) Walking
- 3) Swimming
- 4) Biking
- 5) Reading
- 6) Eating

# The 3-Minute Question

You do lots of things to take care of your physical hygiene each day....

Are you worth 3 minutes a day to take care of your mental well-being with belly breathing?

# Questions and Hypotheticals...

# Tool #2: Palm the Present Moment

## Physical Grounding Practice

Drop into the body...  
and rest the weary mind.

Intervention for clearing out and  
managing the **RATS**:

**R**-umination

**A**-nxiety

**T**-ransitions

**S**-tress

# The New Science of Epi-genetics

## [Nova and Epigenetics](#)

- Meditation altered gene expression changes to more than 2200 genes, including those responsible for inflammation, handling of free radicals, and programmed cell death

\* Dusek JA, Otu HH, Wohlhueter AL, Bhasin M, Benson, H, et al. 2008 Genomic Counter-Stress Changes Induced by the Relaxation Response. PLoS ONE 3(7): e2576.

## Stress Scale Instruments

- **The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)**

10-question inventory developed by psychologist Sheldon Cohen ([mindgarden.com](http://mindgarden.com)).

- **The Epstein Stress-Management Inventory**

(ESMI-i) is a 28-question inventory for individuals ([mystressmanagementskills.com](http://mystressmanagementskills.com))

1. Manage Sources of Stress
2. Prevent or Avoid Stress
3. Practice Relaxation Techniques
4. Manage Thoughts

## Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)

(Circle): 0 = Never 1 = Almost Never 2 = Sometimes 3 = Fairly Often 4 = Very Often

1. In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly? ..... 0 1 2 3 4
2. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life? ..... 0 1 2 3 4
3. In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and "stressed"? .....0 1 2 3 4
4. In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems? ..... 0 1 2 3 4
5. In the last month, how often have you felt that things were going your way?..... 0 1 2 3 4
6. In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do? ..... 0 1 2 3 4
7. In the last month, how often have you been able to control irritations in your life? ..... 0 1 2 3 4
8. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things? 0 1 2 3 4
9. In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that were outside of your control? ..... 0 1 2 3 4
10. In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them? ..... 0 1 2 3 4



## Perceived Stress Scale Scoring

1. Add up the numbers for questions 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10. **Write the total here \_\_\_\_\_**
1. For items 4, 5, 7, and 8 reverse the numbers (0 = 4, 1 = 3, 2 = 2, 3 = 1 & 4 = 0) and add these up. **Write the total here \_\_\_\_\_**
3. Add the two totals from steps 1 and 2. **Write total here for Overall Score: \_\_\_\_\_**

### *Perceived Stress Level Rating:*

#### **WOMEN:**

0-7	<i>Low</i>
8-20	<i>Average</i>
21-26	<i>High</i>
27-40	<i>Very High</i>

#### **MEN:**

0-6	<i>Low</i>
7-17	<i>Average</i>
18-23	<i>High</i>
24-40	<i>Very High</i>

# Mindfulness Enhances Mind-Body Connection

- Meditation strengthens connections between the frontal cortex and the insula \*
- Mindfulness training for 7-8 yr. old anxious children showed clinical improvement, better attention, and included daily mindful walking. \*\*

\*Effects of Meditation Experience on Functional Connectivity of Distributed Brain Networks, *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, March 2012|Volume 6|Article 38| 1; Wendy Hasenkamp and Lawrence W. Barsalou

\*\* Treating anxiety with mindfulness: an open trial of mindfulness training for anxious children; *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy*, Vol. 19 No. 4, 2005. Semple, Reid, and Miller

# Tool #2: Palm the Present Moment

## **Practice:**

- Guided Script is in Handouts.  
Use script until you are comfortable and familiar with various steps.

# Teaching: Palm the Present Moment

- 1) Get centered in body
- 2) Rubs palms together then place palms a foot apart
- 2) Slowly bring palms closer until they touch
- 4) Raise elbows and press palms together; Hold for four count
- 4) Release, letting go stress
- 5) Lower arms and hands onto legs; breathe out remaining stress
- 7) Stretch arms over head and exhale as arms come down

# Tool #2: Palm the Present Moment

## **Guidelines for Teaching Clients:**

- Frame as a portable tool for stress and rumination.
- Always demonstrate and have client follow along.
- Give handout after teaching client.
- Schedule Practice Times.
- Follow-up and practice again next session to ensure effective use.

# Palm the Present Moment Reflection

What was your experience with Palm the Present?

How could you use this practice with groups or individuals?

# Questions and Hypotheticals...

## Tool #3: Savoring and Anchoring

- Mindfulness as a Selective Attention Tool for Distancing from Negativity and Triggers
  - 2 Kinds of Savoring Memories for Building Positive Affect and Enhancing Social Identity
    - Savoring a Past Success or Accomplishment
    - Savoring Times of Helping Others
  - Anchoring in the Environment



# Savoring a Past Success or Accomplishment

- Recalling past successes or good times can boost feelings of positivity.
- Extending a positive memory for a longer period of time, known as “savoring” can produce feelings of well-being.

Journal of Happiness Studies; *Savoring:  
A New Model for Positive Experience*, 2007

# Savoring for Older Adults

- Older adults associate tranquility and contentment with life-satisfaction.
- Use a Savoring Exercise with Tranquility as the focus.
- Have client make a list of ways they feel content in their life to help them experience a life well-lived.

## Practice: Savoring a Past Success

During the next five minutes, savor a favorite memory, a past success, or something you are proud of, that makes you feel joyful.

You can either write this down or just savor the memory in great detail.

(Use tranquility and contentment as a focus if you want.)

# Savoring Times of Being a Benefactor

Reflecting on voluntarily giving or being a benefactor produces:

- Increased positive affect and greater pro-social behavior than when reflecting on receiving.
- Stronger self-identity as a capable and caring contributor.

## Practice: Being a Benefactor

For the next five minutes, write about a recent experience at work or in your life in which you volunteered or made a contribution that enabled other people to feel grow, flourish, or feel grateful.

Write down your experience of being a benefactor in as great detail as you can.

# Savoring Reflection

## **Explore the Following:**

- What was it like to do both of these?
- Which appealed to you most? Why?
- How might this practice have a positive impact on your day, work, or relationships?
- How might you use or adapt either of these interventions with clients?

# Anchoring in the Environment

Ordinary Symbols and Objects are Anchoring, such as:

- Shapes, such as a circle, a ring, etc.
- Sounds or musical instruments
- A comforting color or object in nature
- A favorite object or family keepsake.

## Anchors from Daily Experience

- Name of a Favorite Sports Team
- Smell of Lavender
- Childhood toy or favorite object
- Non-verbal gestures, postures
- Geographic safe place, nature



# Anchors from Various Life Stages

Children relate to grounding symbols, such as:

- \* Favorite childhood books
- \* Chair in their room
- \* Pets and animals
- \* Favorite comics; game cards
- \* Dolls, Pokemon, model trains, etc.
- \* Cap and gown are symbols at graduation
- \* Plants are symbols for life, death, and rebirth
- \* Adult symbols are family keepsakes, cultural holidays, flags, Mother's and Father's Day, etc.

## Practice: Savoring an Anchor

For 10 minutes: Journal or Visualize favorite anchor symbols from childhood, young adulthood, and adulthood.

Chose one symbol from each life stage and journal your favorite memories of these in detail. How and when could these help you to cope and center? How do they differ?

# Practice: Savoring an Environmental Anchor

1. Find a safe anchor in your current environment, such as:

- A Soothing Word
- Body Movement
- Anchor Memory
- One Small Breath
- Soothing object, color, sounds, smell, etc.

2. What memories or associations come to you as you savor this environmental anchor?

Journal this if you want. Check in on how your body feels.

# Reinforce Safe Anchors

- Reinforce an anchor by noticing a positive feeling in the body that you get while focusing on the anchor.
- Use safe anchors frequently; Even a single breath can slow things down and be a safe anchor.

## Anchors: Reflection

- What was your experience of identifying and anchoring with a symbol like for you?
- How might you use anchoring with clients?

# Questions and Hypotheticals...

# One-Session Mindfulness

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Session 2 of 3

Welcome!

# Session 2 of 3 Today's Roadmap

## Tool #4: The 5 Steps of G-R-E-A-T Mindful Self-Care

- Gratitude; Relationships; Eating/Sleeping; Activities; Tune-Up

## Tools #5 and #6: Working with Stress and Cravings

- Tool #5: Be the Pebble Practice
- Tool #6: S-T-O-P Multi-Sensory Grounding

## Tools #7 and #8: One Pleasant Thing and Mindful Eating

- Tool #7: One Pleasant Thing
- Tool #8: The Four Mindful Bites Eating Practice



## Tool #4: The 5-Steps to G.R.E.A.T. Mindful Self-Care

- 5 Mindful Self-Care Strategies\* for Resilience and Optimal Functioning
  - **G**-ratitude & Attitude
  - **R**-elationships
  - **E**-ating & Sleeping
  - **A**-ctivity
  - **T**-une-Up with Mindfulness Practices

Note: Always Go with **Small, Realistic, Achievable**

# Mindful Self-Care Step 1: Gratitude and Attitude

- Brain wires up by what is in the field of focused attention
  - Focus on the good things
  - Savor the ordinary
  - Attitude of kindness

# Gratitude for Depression

## Depression Intervention:

*2003 study\* had participants write down five things they were grateful for during the week for a period of 10 weeks. These people were:*

- 25% happier than persons who wrote down their day's frustrations or simply listed the day's events.
- More optimistic about the future.
- Felt better about their lives.
- Participated in one and a half hours more exercise per week than those in the control groups.

*\*Counting Blessings Versus Burdens: An Experimental Investigation of Gratitude and Subjective Well-Being in Daily Life—Robert Emmons and M. McCullough, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2003, Vol. 84, No. 2, 377–389*

# Saint Teresa's Prescription

My daughters, what are these drops of oil in our lamps?

They are the small things of daily life:

faithfulness,

punctuality,

small words of kindness,

a thought for others,

our way of being silent, of looking,

of speaking, and of acting.

These are the true drops of love.

Be faithful in small things because  
it is in them that your strength lies.

# Gratitude for the Ordinary Study

- Participants chronicled both an “Ordinary” daily event and “Extraordinary” Event
  - Photos and writing about the day
- Subjects predicted which they would most interesting to review in the future
- Majority predicted the Extraordinary Event
- 3 Months Later, Subjects Reviewed Both Events:
  - Individuals greatly underestimated the ordinary day and what they could gain from it.
  - Subjects found the Ordinary Event more meaningful and interesting than the Extraordinary one.

# Practice: Savoring the Ordinary

Using the categories below, choose 1-3 “small things,” as Mother Teresa referred to them—to savor for the next 5 minutes.

## 1) Identify One Small Thing from This Week

- Things cherished or appreciated, like reading the paper, sipping coffee, giving a hug or kiss to someone special, feeling of water in the shower, etc.

## 2) Observe One Ordinary Good Thing in Your Surroundings

- Take a mental snapshot of how you’re sitting in a nice chair, watching your kids play, interacting with a friendly person, or seeing the sunlight coming in through a window.

## 3) Remember One Kindness from Today

- Did you help someone today? Did someone help you? Bring to mind that ordinary (yet special) word of encouragement you shared with another or vice versa. Remember even the smallest act of kindness—a pat on the back, a smile, etc.

# Mindful Self-Care Step 2: Relationships

- ▶ Relationships enrich and give meaning
  - Relationships help us learn and grow
  - Sharing stories broadens understanding and coping skills
  - Resources increase resilience and give hope

# Relationships as a Risk Factor

- Research shows influence of a social network is as much a mortality risk factor as the following behaviors:
- Smoking ten cigarettes daily
- Alcoholism
- Obesity

\* Holt-Lunstad, Smith, and Layton, *Social Relationships and Mortality Risk: A Meta-analytic Review*; PLOS Medicine, July 27, 2010  
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000316>



# Building Relationships

- Identify different segments of one's social network:
  - Work, family, friends, caregivers, church/spiritual, hobbies
- Address how to build one's network
- Address how to identify and utilize one's network of resources and mentors, etc.
- Visualize or mentally rehearse social interactions

# Mindful Self-Care Step 3: Eating/Sleeping

- Required for optimal cognition and learning
  - Thinking brain needs protein
  - Brain's glymphatic system cleanses brain during sleep
  - Sleep enhances learning

# Healthy Eating & Nutrition

Identify eating patterns and strategies

- Identify meal skipping or mindless eating
- Protein to help with mood, attention and motivation
- Drugs and alcohol patterns
- Role of caffeine with depression/anxiety
- Identify: simple, realistic and achievable goals
  - “What is one small change you can make today?”

# Healthy Eating & Nutrition

- Foods for attention and motivation
  - Neurotransmitters **Norepinephrine** and **Dopamine**: synthesized from tyrosine; sources include almonds, lima beans avocados, bananas, dairy, pumpkin and sesame seeds
- Foods for calm, mood regulation, thought flexibility
  - Neurotransmitter **Serotonin**: synthesized from tryptophan; sources include brown rice, cottage cheese, meat, turkey peanuts, and sesame seeds
- Foods for thought and memory
  - **Acetylcholine** (not made from amino acids): Choline belongs to the B family of vitamins is found in lecithin. Foods include salmon, egg yolks, wheat germ, soybeans, organ meats, and whole wheat products.

# Sleep Hygiene

- Brain and Sleep: The Glymphatic System
- How much sleep do you need? How much sleep do you get? What is your daily sleep deficit?
- Chronic sleep problems commonly found in anxiety and depression can produce more negative thoughts and memories.\*
- Factors of life style affecting sleep
  - Technology, time, etc.
- Medical factors affecting sleep
- Developing a healthy sleep ritual

Browse: [sleepfoundation.org](https://sleepfoundation.org)

[healthengagement.kaiserpermanente.org/wellness-topics/sleep/](https://healthengagement.kaiserpermanente.org/wellness-topics/sleep/)

## Mindful Self-Care Step 4: **Activity**

- Physical Exercise and Pleasant Activities boost mood and reduce anxiety
  - Exercise produces brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) good for brain and learning
  - Movement stimulates the production of a host of neurotransmitters and hormones that safeguard against anxiety, depression, ADHD, dementia, aging, and obesity.\*

# Exercise and Movement

- Identify medically appropriate exercise: type and amount
- Set start date/start time
- Start small
- Utilize Factor “P” –William Morgan and Purposeful Physical Activity
  - Adding Factor P produced 100% adherence to an exercise program
  - Walking the dog; walking or biking to work; creating a garden or path

## Mindful Self-Care Step 5: Tune-Up and Tech Boundaries

- What mindfulness practice do you like?
  - Calming Breath
  - Physical Grounding
  - Gratitude Practice
  - Chanting
  - Reading
  - Yoga, Tai chi, prayer, or other  
focused  
attention practice



# Weapons of Mass Distraction

- Setting Technology Boundaries and Slowing Down
- Face-to-Face Contact Wires Brain
- Practice: Exploration of Time Spent with Technology

# Is Technology Rewiring Our Brains?

- Less Time in Nature
- Loss of Face-to-Face Communication
- Expectation of Speed and Instant Response Time
- Working Across Time-Zones
- Sleep Deficits

# Drop in Empathy in College Students

*Study by U. of Michigan Institute, Association for Psychological Science, Annual Mtg, 2010*

*14,000 students analyzed over 30 years*

*Biggest drop in empathy occurred after year 2000*

*Today's college students display **40% less empathy than students of 20 or 30 years ago.** (measured by standard tests of personality traits and combined results of 72 different studies)*

*Potential Causes: Increase in media exposure; violent media; social media; rewiring of empathic brain; quicker response time and less reflective time for pausing.*

# Technology Intake Questions

- On average, how much time each day do you...
  - ...use technology (at work and at home)?
  - ...engage in uninterrupted face-to-face time with significant others?
  - ...bring work home?
  - ...spend around nature or noticing nature?
  - ...exercise, walk or do a favorite activity?
- If problems sleeping, do you...
  - ...look at TV, phone, or a computer before sleep?
  - ...stay awake worrying about pressures and deadlines?



# Technology Reflection

- Sociologist William Ogburn coined the term “culture lag”—the length of time it takes us to adapt to new technology in our family, society, and culture.
- 
- ▶ What happens when we accept technology without question?
  - ▶ How can clients be made more aware of how technology might be affecting their family and social interactions?
  - ▶ What kinds of healthy boundaries can be a starting point when working with clients?

## G.R.E.A.T. Self-Care Wrap-up: Client Exploration and Journal

- What area is already working for you?
- What area(s) are challenging and why?
- What one small change could you make in any one of these areas?
- How might this improve your work or personal life?
  - **G**-ratitude & Attitude
  - **R**-elationships
  - **E**-ating & Sleeping
  - **A**-ctivity
  - **T**-ech Boundaries and Tune-Up with Mindfulness Practices

## Tool #5: Be The Pebble

- Intervention for Distancing from Stress and Negativity and Increasing Concentration
- Useful for ADHD



# How Do We Focus?

## Time Spent in front of Screens and Time Away from Screens

- \* Today, 8-18 year-olds devote an average of 7 hours and 38 minutes to using entertainment media across a typical day (more than 53 hours a week).
- \*\* Preteens were tested for their ability to recognize non-verbal emotion and facial cues
- Subjects spent five days at a camp with only face-to-face interactions and without screens.
- Recognition of nonverbal emotion cues improved significantly more than that of the control group for both facial expressions and videotaped scenes.

\* *Generation M2: Media in the Lives of 8- to 18-Year-Olds*; Kaiser Foundation, <http://kff.org/other/event/generation-m2-media-in-the-lives-of/>

\*\* Five days at outdoor education camp without screens improves preteen skills with nonverbal emotion cues; *Computers in Human Behavior*, 39, 2014

# Be the Pebble Centering Practice

- Meditation and ADHD
  - ADHD symptoms in middle school children with 2x daily practice
  - After three months, researchers found over 50 percent reduction in stress and anxiety and improvements in ADHD symptoms
  - Brain does not actually multi-task

## Choose a Calming Word or Image

- Find a quiet surrounding
- Sit up, place 15% of attention on the breath, eyes closed
- Gently pay attention to the calming word—don't force it
- When sensations or thoughts come, that is normal. Simply favor your word or image over other thoughts or feelings.
- If any emotion or feeling gets so strong that you can't focus on the word, just sit and breathe. Your mind will be drawn to the feeling, and you can wait until it lessens or leaves. Then return to the word/image. If any feeling is too hard to tolerate, open your eyes and rest.

## Guidelines

- If you need to change position, do so with mindful awareness
- Time yourself for 5, 10, or 15 min. 1x a day, or 2x daily if desired.
- When finished, stop repeating the word and sit silently for a minute or two before opening your eyes.

## Tool #6: S-T-O-P Multi-Sensory Grounding

### Mindfulness for Triggers and Cravings

- Impulse Control and Emotional Regulation Technique
- Useful for any kind of stress or to overcome impulsivity

# Mindful Acceptance of Cravings

- Attention that brings mindful acceptance to cravings breaks the maladaptive cycle of desire by helping people mentally disengage from ongoing cravings.
- Acceptance lets people observe ongoing cravings as transient events that will eventually fade, rather than by trying to suppress them.
- Mindful attention acts as a brake between urge and reaction.

# Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP)

- More effective than AA and Psychoeducational follow-up
- Urges and cravings are precipitated by psychological or environmental stimuli.
- Ongoing cravings may erode the client's commitment to maintain abstinence as desire for immediate gratification increases
- Build mindful awareness of relapse episodes, dreams, or fantasies to identify situations that make coping difficult.
- Urge Surfing Techniques helps to manage urges and cravings. It replaces the desire for the urge to go away with a sense of curiosity and interest in the experience.

Browse: [urge-surfing](#)

# Interrupt Cravings with S-T-O-P Multi-Sensory Grounding\*

Uses 3 Effective Kinds of Grounding--

*PHYSICAL (Focus on Body)*

*MENTAL (Observe Emotions or Note things  
in Environment)*

*SOOTHING (Use Senses to Focus on  
Favorite Color, Sound, Texture, etc.)*

# S-T-O-P Multi-Sensory Grounding Practice

**S- STAND and SLOW DOWN**

Take two or three calming breaths.

**PHYSICAL GROUNDING**



# S-T-O-P Multi-Sensory Grounding Practice

## **S- STAND and SLOW DOWN**

Take two or three calming breaths.

## **T- TUNE IN to the body.**

*Scan from toes to head. Breathe into into tension, Name Emotion and let it go. Let thoughts go. Breathe it out.*

**PHYSICAL & MENTAL  
GROUNDING**

# S-T-O-P Multi-Sensory Grounding Practice

## **S- STAND** and **SLOW DOWN**

Take two or three calming breaths.

## **T- TUNE IN** to the body.

*Scan from toes to head. Breathe into  
into tension, Name Emotion and let it  
go. Let thoughts go. Breathe it out.*

## **O- OBSERVE** *surroundings.*

*Find novel or pleasant things  
(colors, shapes, sounds, etc.)*

**SOOTHING GROUNDING**

## S-T-O-P Multi-Sensory Grounding Practice

### **S- STAND** and **SLOW DOWN**

Take two or three calming breaths.

### **T- TUNE IN** to the body.

*Scan from toes to head. Breathe into  
into tension, Name Emotion and let it  
go. Let thoughts go. Breathe it out.*

### **O- OBSERVE** surroundings.

*Find novel or pleasant things  
(colors, shapes, sounds, etc.)*

### **P- PREPARATION, POSSIBILITY & POTENTIAL**

*Look at how to go forward right now—  
not reactively, but with choicefulness.*

## S-T-O-P Multi-Sensory Grounding Practice

- 1) Journal Your Experience of the S-T-O-P Stress Pause Practice.

What did you notice?

How could this be useful for you or others?

How could you use this with clients?

- 2) How could you introduce this practice? How can they practice so it becomes second nature?

# Questions and Hypotheticals...

# Tool #7: One Pleasant Thing

- Help Clients Get Out of Rumination and into the Present
- Discover How Clients Get Present through Learning Their Pleasant Hobbies and Favorite Activities
  - **7 Kinds of Smart** by Thomas Armstrong
    - Includes Quick Assessment of Learning Styles

Awareness style online assessments:

- **The Rogers Indicator of Multiple Intelligence**

<http://www.personal.psu.edu/bxb11/MI/rimi2.htm>

- **Literacynet.org**

<https://www.literacynet.org/mi/assessment/index.html>

# Mindfulness Based Exposure Therapy for PTSD

- Combat veterans with PTSD used body scan, breathing, and self-compassion practices.
- MRI showed increased connections between brain areas related to less negative mind wandering and more present focused attention
- Over time, subjects showed increased capacity to volitionally shift attention from anxious states to present state attention.

King, A. P., Block, S. R., et. al. (2016), ALTERED DEFAULT MODE NETWORK (DMN) RESTING STATE FUNCTIONAL CONNECTIVITY FOLLOWING A MINDFULNESS-BASED EXPOSURE THERAPY FOR POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD) IN COMBAT VETERANS OF AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ. *Depress. Anxiety*, 33: 289–299.  
doi: 10.1002/da.22481

“The trouble with ordinary reality  
is that a lot of it is dull,  
so we long ago decided to  
leave for somewhere better.”

-- Charles Tart, *Living the Mindful Life*



“Boredom is simply lack of attention.”

-- Fritz Perls

# Here and Now Intervention

## **Finding Pleasantness**

*Ask the question:*

**What one thing can I find that is pleasant  
in my environment right now?**

*Colors*

*Objects*

*Sounds*

*Shapes*

*Sensations*

*Smells*

*Textures*

## The Next Step: One Pleasant Activity

- Identify simple, realistic and achievable pleasant activity to implement.
- Don't reinvent the wheel; use hobbies and activities that have worked in the past
- Select date and time to do activity.
- Have backup time to set the pleasant activity if it does not get completed.

# Questions and Hypotheticals...

# One Pleasant Thing Reflection

What was your experience  
One Pleasant Thing?

How could you adapt and  
frame this for clients as a  
coping skill?

# Tool #8: Four Mindful Bites Meditation

*Lead me not into temptation;  
I can find the way myself. —Rita Mae Brown*

# Mindfulness-based Eating Study

- 3-Key Elements of Establishing a Mindful Eating Practice
  - **General mindfulness meditation (breath awareness)**
    - Patients meditated 16 hours over the 7-week study
  - **Eating meditation**
  - **Mini-meditations**
- Results of a 10-week Mindful Eating study (with Duke University)
  - Overall index combining general mindfulness meditation, eating meditation, and mini-meditations were the “best predictor of improvement in relation to binge eating and to weight loss.”--Kristeller
- Increases level of personal control and comfort with food
  
- A study at UCSF showed mindful eating reduced cortisol and abdominal fat in obese women. -- Journal of Obesity, 2011, Daubenmier, Kristeller

# Four Mindful Bites Meditation

- This method is known as the S-T-O-P method. Think of it as STOPPING for mindfulness. A good start is to use the first four bites of any meal to devote your attention to food. Yes, it *is* possible to be mindful of every bite of every meal, but it takes practice.
- For the next few minutes you will eat a raisin or any small morsel of food. If that seems like a long time, consider that you will eat this small portion as you have (possibly) never eaten it before.

•

\* This handout is copyrighted by DayOne Publishing in *Discover Mindful Eating* and was modified with authors' permission.



# Four Mindful Bites Meditation

- **S** is the first bite and S stands for SELECT. Be purposeful in gathering this bite. You might imagine this is a food you have never tasted before. Select this bite, notice all of the colors, texture, and shapes. Choose a bite that is able to fit in your mouth easily. It is not too small or too big to chew, but just the size to savor the bite.

# Four Mindful Bites Meditation

- **T** is the second bite and T stands for TASTE. Your mind is fully on the sensation of eating. With this bite, you notice all the tastes that develop during the bite. Your mind is fully on the sensation of eating. You chew slowly, deliberately, and fully, swallowing with intention only when the food is completely chewed up.

## Four Mindful Bites Meditation

- o is the third bite and O stands for OBSERVE. With this bite, allow your mind to travel with this food around your mouth, down your throat and into your stomach. Notice your hunger without anxiety or fear. It is simply hunger. Observe yourself placing the fork down. Become aware of the movement of your hand, arm, and mouth. You are eating with purpose, full of poise and grace.

# Four Mindful Bites Meditation

- **P** is the fourth bite and P stands for PAUSE. With this bite, add an extra pause just before you put the food in your mouth. Then, during the bite, you pause in the middle of your chewing, just for a short moment. And when you're done with the bite, you add yet one more pause before taking the next morsel of food.

# Four Mindful Bites Reflection

- **Questions to consider:**

- How was this experience different from eating raisins in the past? How was the flavor different? How many raisins would you typically eat during this length of time? What has this experience taught you?
- How could you use the S-T-O-P method with clients? What are ways that you could “frame” this...such as “mindfully slowing down,” “paying attention to food,” “being curious,” etc.

# Questions and Hypotheticals...

# One-Session Mindfulness

Donald Altman, M.A., LPC

Session 3 of 3

Welcome!

# Session 3 of 3 Today's Roadmap

## Tool #9: Gratitude and G.L.A.D. - Tool #10: Finding Strengths

- Gratitude for depression and the G.L.A.D. Technique
- Finding Strengths Intervention

## Tool #11: Reflection – Tool #12: Loving-Kindness Affirmation

- Reflection for Insight and Overcoming Distraction
- Loving Kindness Affirmation for Safety and Relationships

## Tool #13: The Body Scan

- Managing Pain



# Tool #9: Gratitude

Four Psychological Reasons

Why Gratitude Is Good

Practice: Take G.L.A.D.

Snapshots Through the Day

Things We Sometimes Forget to Have  
Gratitude For...

# Opposable Thumbs

# Cordless Phones

Free  
Refills!!

# Consistent Gratitude Practice

## PHYSICAL

- \* Stronger immune system
- \* Lower blood pressure
- \* Less bothered by pain
- \* Lower blood pressure
- \* Exercise more and take better care of health
- \* Sleep longer and feel more refreshed upon waking

## PSYCHOLOGICAL

- \* Increased positive emotions
- \* More alert, alive, and awake
- \* More joy and pleasure
- \* More optimism & happiness

## SOCIAL

- \* More helpful, generous, and compassionate
- \* More forgiving and more outgoing
- \* Feel less lonely and isolated

# Four Kinds of Gratitude...

1) Basic Gratitude, Necessities

2) Personal Gratitude

3) Relational Gratitude

4) Paradoxical Gratitude

...AKA Silver Lining Gratitude

# Three Gratitude Practices

**INTERPERSONAL PRACTICE 1:** Write down one thing you were grateful for in the past week and then tell the story behind that gratitude to another.

**INTERPERSONAL PRACTICE 2:** Write a Gratitude Letter about something positive that another person did for you, and present that individual with the letter.

**PERSONAL PRACTICE 3:** Make a Gratitude Bowl (or teacup) for the day or week, and put a penny in for each time you feel grateful for something. Track how many pennies you accumulate.



# G.L.A.D. Daily Snapshot\*

*G.L.A.D. is an acronym for finding joy and balance using cognitive, behavioral and mindfulness skills*

**G** - find one **Gratitude** you're thankful for today

**L** - find one new thing you **Learned** today

**A** - find one **Accomplishment** you did today

**D** - find one thing of **Delight** that touched you today

*Journal or write on an index card*

# Questions and Hypotheticals...

# Tool #10: Finding Strengths

Strengths Intervention for Depression and Relationships/Resources

24 Core Strengths

Practice: Sharing a Story of Strengths

# Online Intervention

- Subjects who used the 3 exercises below for a week, showed significantly reduced depressive symptoms and increased happiness vs. the placebo
  - “Use Your Strengths” exercise
  - Gratitude Visit
  - The Three Blessings Exercise
- Effects lasted for 6 months with the Strengths exercise

# Use Your Strengths Intervention

- Subjects take the VIA-IS strengths questionnaire to assess their top 5 strengths, and think of ways to use those strengths more in their daily life.
- <http://www.viacharacter.org>
- Free strengths survey takes 15 minutes.
- Research:
  - [viacharacter.org/www/Research/Research-Findings#nav](http://viacharacter.org/www/Research/Research-Findings#nav)

# Story Attunes and Attaches

- Stories can redefine problems and organize us toward feeling states.
- Stories can stimulate ideas and motivation.
- Story sharing make sense of our experiences and shapes our memory.

*\*Healing the Mind through the Power of Story: The Promise of Narrative Psychiatry* by Lewis Mehl-Madrona, Bear and Co., 2010

*The Strengths Book: Be Confident, Be Successful, and Enjoy Better Relationships* by Linley, Willars, and Biswas-Diener, CAPP Press.,2010

# Strengths Reflection

- Explore the following questions:
- What stories (books, films, etc/) depict strengths in difficult situations?
- What stories support safety and calm?
- What stories support hope or resilience that might resonate with clients?
- How can clients become more aware of how they are using their stories?

# Digging Deeper: The Story Brain

History & Story Brain

Relationship &  
Resources Brain

Environmental Brain  
(Inner Outer Stress)

Body Brain



## Practice: Finding Strengths through One's Daily Story

Journal your story of all that was necessary for you to take this video workshop today.

Include your 1) *history* (**story brain**), 2) *relationships and centering rituals* (**relationship & resources brain**), 3) *stressors, moods and thoughts* (**environmental brain**), and 4) *the body and habits* (**body brain**).

## Practice: Finding Strengths through One's Daily Story

After Journaling, read your own story as if you have never heard this story before.

Identify and write down all the strengths necessary for you to complete your task of taking this workshop.

## Finding Strengths using a Client's Daily Story

Have the client share a simple story and reflect back the strengths you hear in that story.

Have clients journal daily strengths and accomplishments—even simple ones related to self-care.

# Questions and Hypotheticals...

## Tool #11: Reflection and the Power of Pause

*The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, worry about the future, or anticipate troubles but to live in the present moment wisely and earnestly.*

—The Buddha

William James wrote...

“...The power of voluntarily bringing back a wandering attention, over and over again, is the very root of judgment, character, and will...But it is easier to define this idea than to give practical directions for bringing it about.”

—*The Principles of Psychology, 1890*

# Pausing or Mindful Metacognition

- Taking a pause to reflect improves learning.\*
- 2-Week Mindfulness Meditation Training increased the accuracy of perception and memory.\*\*

## **Benefits of Metacognition:**

- Helps us develop more accurate judgment about our abilities and insight about ourselves
- Is a skill that can be developed by pausing to reflect.
- Pausing in session helps clients to integrate what they have learned from therapy.

\* Improving learning through enhanced metacognition: a classroom study; J. R. Baird, European Journal of Science Education 1986

\*\* Domain-specific enhancement of metacognitive ability following meditation training; Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 2014 May 12.

# The Mindful Therapist

- How Does a Clinician's Mindfulness Affect Therapy?
- Positive correlation between clinician's mindfulness and the therapeutic alliance
- Non-judgmental acceptance and openness to experiences were predictors of a strong therapeutic relationship

*Mindfulness in Clinician Therapeutic Relationships,*  
Mindfulness, August 2013, Russell Razzaque, Emmanuel  
Okoro, Lisa Wood

# A Wandering Mind Is an Unhappy Mind

- People's minds wander an average of 47% of the time
- Mind wandering (state of not being present) is ubiquitous across all activities. Mind wandering is a predictor of feelings of unhappiness.
- It's not the activity, but how present one is that increases happiness



# Mind Wandering and Telomeres

## Mind Wandering and Aging Cells

- Telomere length is a measure of biological aging and a correlate of severe stress.
- Individuals reporting high mind wandering had shorter telomeres.
- A present attention state may produce cell longevity.

*\*Clinical Psychological Science*  
Jan 2013 vol. 1 no. 1 (75-83)

# Reflect Practice

It's impossible to hold onto a river,  
But you can flow with it

Feelings and thoughts are droplets  
in an endless river  
flowing out to the ocean.

None are final,  
so why hold onto dissolving droplets?  
Instead, watch them flow past and through.

This is nature's way,  
and the way to find peace  
with feelings and thoughts.  
Reflect on this.

# Reflect Practice

Do not be afraid of  
letting go of your worry.

Why live all clenched up,  
Holding onto fears and worries?

Let go of one worry  
with this next out-breath.

Exhale naturally,  
*AHHhhh.*

Now one more.

How lovely!

Reflect as you *AHHhhh.\**

# The Brain's Reflect Module

Sense the Body and Emotions

Control the Emotional Thermostat (work of Benson)

Relate to Get Mutual Needs Met

Veto Cravings and Impulses (work of Libet)

Mental Flexibility (work of Ellen Langer)

Awareness of Mental Processes & Inner Self

Experience Empathy (mirror neurons)

Dissolve "I" and Recognize "We"

Ability for Present Moment Attention

# Nature Reflection Practice

Sit in nature with this or another reading for 5-10 minutes.

Nature plays a song that  
only the silent can hear.

Don't let your busy-ness get in the way.  
If you really want to tune into nature's song,  
you must first grow quiet.

Don't just *look* at a tree.

Peer deeply into its leafy green intelligence.  
Feel its brown barky pulse.  
Sense the Earth's entire wisdom  
being drawn inward through sinewy roots.

Reflect on this.

# Questions and Hypotheticals...

# Tool #12: Loving-Kindness

## *Three Questions*

—by Leo Tolstoy

What is the best time to do each thing?

Who are the most important people to work with?

What is the most important thing to do at all times?

# Loving Kindness to Heal Trauma

- Fredrickson's *Broaden and Build* Theory for Positive Emotions

- Asserts that positive emotions broaden attention and thinking in response to diverse experiences, not narrowly focused threats.
- Positive emotions increase connection, trust, and openness.
- Positive emotions build relationships and resources.
- Loving-kindness Meditation (LKM) increased daily positive experiences and broadened personal resources and life satisfaction, and altered response to negative, depression-inducing emotions.

*Open Hearts Build Lives: Positive Emotions, Induced Through Loving-Kindness Meditation, Build Consequential Personal Resources*, J Pers Soc Psychol . 2008 November ; 95(5): 1045–1062. doi:10.1037/a0013262, Fredrickson, Cohn, et. al.



# Loving Kindness to Build Positive Emotions

*Loving-Kindness Meditation to Enhance Recovery from Negative Symptoms of Schizophrenia*, Johnson, Kring, Brantley, et. al., *Journal of Clinical Psychology* Vol 65(5) 499-509(2009)

# Loving Kindness Affirmation

- *May I be safe*
- *May I be happy*
- *May I be healthy*
- *May I be at peace*
- Optional to add: “May I be...Secure, Loved, Forgiven, Accepted, etc.”

# Loving Kindness Affirmation

After practicing sending these warm feelings to yourself, you can extend these to others:

Teachers, mentors, guides

Family and friends

Neutral persons

Unfriendly persons

To all persons without discrimination

# Questions and Hypotheticals...

# Tool #13: Body Scan

Introduction to the Body Scan

Changes Perception of Pain

Practice: Surf the Body

# Body Scan for Pain Reduction

- Four 20-min. sessions of mindfulness meditation reduced pain unpleasantness by 57% and pain intensity by 40% \*
- Engages multiple brain mechanisms that alter the subjectively available pain experience.

\* "Brain Mechanisms Supporting the Modulation of Pain by Mindfulness Meditation,"  
The Journal of Neuroscience, 6 April 2011, 31(14): 5540-5548

# Practice: Body Scan

- Non-judging awareness and acceptance with the Body Scan
  - Used in Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and
  - Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression (MBCT)

# Body Scan Reflection

How can the Body Scan be part of a daily practice?

What obstacles could get in the way?

What would be the best time and place to incorporate the Body Scan into your day?

How could you adapt this practice?

How will you know if the Body Scan is being effective?



# Questions and Hypotheticals...

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**MindfulPractices.com** **facebook.com/mndfulness**

Dana Foundation, brain and immunology: **www.dana.org**

Greater Good: **www.GreaterGood.berkeley.edu**

Hope Foundation, Professional Development for Educators: **www.hopefoundation.org**

The Mindful Awareness Research Center: **www.marc.ucla.edu**

Mindfulness Research Monthly: **www.mindfulexperience.org**

Center for Investigating Healthy Minds; Richard Davidson, **www.investigatinghealthyminds.com**

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Global Assoc. for Interpersonal Neurobiology Studies: **www.mindgains.org**

The Center for Mindful Eating: **www.TCME.org**

## 5 Breathing Postures

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Mindful Exploration of Time Spent

Time Spent Daily (average)	<b>Self-Care:</b> Pleasant activity, hobby, or relaxation	<b>Face-to-Face without interruption:</b> partner and friends & family	<b>Technology Not at work</b> TV, CD, Cel, DVDs, Internet, e-mail, games, etc.	<b>Exercise</b> and other physical activity	<b>Appetite</b> Food and meals;	<b>Craving &amp; Desire</b> Browsing & Shopping	<b>Travel and Scheduling</b> Planning, organizing and transitions	<b>Reflection</b> Creativity, thought, personal growth, reading	<b>Sleep</b>	<b>Work</b>
15 min. or less										
15 min. to ½ hr.										
½ hour to 1 hour										
1-2 hours										
2-3 hours										
3-4 hours										
4-5 hours										
6 or more hrs.										
7 or more hrs.										
8 or more hrs.										
9 or more hrs.										
10 or more hrs.										

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Thoughts/Reflections to write on back of sheet: For example: How do you feel about the distribution of time spent? What would you like to do differently? How could you begin to redistribute time spent?

Excerpted from:

*The Mindfulness Toolbox* by Donald Altman, M.A., LPC

Tool #48 – Loving-Kindness Affirmation

**LEARNING STYLES:**

The following learning styles are compatible with this practice:

Verbal-Linguistic

Visual-Spatial

Reflective-Intrapersonal

Existential-Meaning

***Thoughts for Therapists***

Suffering is one thing that all humans have in common. (Hopefully, so is joy) Still, as a human being it is not possible to avoid loss of some kind. Possessing a human body means being subject to illness, frailty, aging, and ultimately, death. Of course, trying to deny, resist, or pretend that this doesn't exist is yet another form of suffering. There seems to be no way out of this mess, and yet, there is a way to bring meaning to loss and pain. It is called compassion—whose original meaning translates as “to be with suffering.”

To know suffering means that we can try to relieve suffering. Unlike empathy, through which we can step into the emotional shoes of another person, compassion impels us toward being available to reduce the suffering of others through selfless action. Indeed, over twenty-five percent, or one-quarter of all Americans, volunteer or give service to those in need. While some researchers believe compassion is an instinct that leads to survival, others believe that it can be taught. Either way, more compassion—and self-compassion—is greatly needed.

Researcher Richard Davidson—director of The Center for Investigating Healthy Minds and author of *The Emotional Life of Your Brain* (co-authored

with Sharon Begley)—has put the Dalai Lama’s monks into magnetic resonance imaging machines to see if brain function was altered in those who have practiced ten- thousand hours or longer of compassion meditation. His work shows that intensive training in compassion produces significant changes in brain function. Davidson has also found that compassion can be learned, and that it results in altruistic behavior in subjects who undertake compassion training.

What do we do with this knowledge? We can put it to use by using the ancient loving-kindness meditation or affirmation practice. This practice generates compassion toward oneself and others, as well as forgiveness—both attributes that can firmly assist those struggling with pain and the loss of physical well-being.

### ***Tips for Working with Clients***

- ✓ *The Loving-Kindness Affirmation* is closely related to Tool #50, *At Peace with Pain*, which is another meditation that can be used to engender warm feelings of love and understanding. Share both of these with clients as a nice boxed set.
- ✓ Before working with loving-kindness, it is important to understand the religious or spiritual background of your client.
  - While loving-kindness was originally an ancient Buddhist practice, the words are considered by attachment researchers to be “security priming words”—that is, words that prime the limbic emotional core of the brain for feelings of safety, trust, and openness.
  - When exposed to certain words, such as *love*, *closeness*, *safety*, etc., people have experienced more openness and trust toward others. To be described in a more secular way, this meditation can be described as a security priming.
  - This meditation is about the deep wish for one’s well-being, and that can be imagined as coming from any source—as a blessing, as an affirmation, as coming from any higher power or from God, etc.
- ✓ Work with clients in adapting the words in this meditation in appropriate ways. For example:

- The words “May I be...” could be transformed into an active choice by stating, “I choose to be...”
  - The meditation could be stated as an affirmation by stating, “I will be...” or “I am...”
  - Other words can be added to the actual meditation, such as “May I be *loved, accepted, understood, forgiven, pain-free,*” etc.
- 
- ✓ What follows in the handout can be used as a script for guiding the client through this practice for the first time.
  
  - ✓ Practicing this meditation can be a powerful and emotional experience. Always allow time for processing after using this in a session.
    - Always have the client state loving-kindness for themselves first, *then* afterwards send it out to others.

## HANDOUT: Loving-Kindness Affirmation

In his book *Works of Love*, Danish philosopher and theologian Søren Kierkegaard shared some wisdom on the essence of love. He wrote:

*To cheat oneself out of love is the most terrible deception; it is an eternal loss for which there is no reparation, either in time or in eternity.*

As someone grappling with pain—either physical or emotional (maybe both)—it may be hard to think about the idea of love. But the affirmation practiced in these pages is not like the love you may be thinking of. It is not the flavor of love that is romantic, sentimental, or nostalgic—dependent on one person or a specific memory. Rather, this is the deeply profound and compassionate wish for the well-being of all persons.

It is predicated on the basis that all beings deserve this non-discriminating love, that we all *need* it because all of us have struggled or suffered in some way. Even that person who seems happy and appears to have it all together will deal with loss and pain in life. And so, this practice is a form of compassion—which really means *to be with the suffering of another*.

We begin by developing compassion for ourselves. This is a process, since you may not feel you are deserving of this deep wish for your well-being. If this is the case, you can begin by picturing the young baby, toddler, or child you once were, and who was deserving of this loving meditation. State the words for that part of you.

Offering love and charity toward our neighbors is a central tenant to all wisdom traditions. Key examples of loving-kindness are found in stories of how Jesus, Buddha, and Mohammed all fed the hungry and starving, without discrimination. Whatever your background may be, this is an inclusive practice that anyone can benefit from. In addition, you can see the words here in any way that fits with your religious or spiritual background—as a blessing, a prayer, an affirmation, and so on.

***Instructions:*** Follow along with the words below, stating them to yourself over and over... *like you really mean it.*

1) BEGIN WITH FORGIVENESS.

We've all been hurt, which is why this practice begins with forgiveness. You may be that parent, for example, who knows you have unintentionally wronged your children and yet hope for the grace of forgiveness. Or, you may have inadvertently hurt someone because you didn't know any better. Whatever the case may be, reflect on the words below. Allow forgiveness to act as a salve for your wounded spirit so that you may let go and move on. By sending forgiveness, you also open the gateway to a more awakened and sensitive behavior—alert to even the subtle consequences of your actions and thoughts. Jesus spoke to this in the Bible (Luke 6:37) when he said, “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”

**Repeat the following words once before moving on.**

*May I forgive myself for hurting others.  
May others forgive me for hurting them.  
May I forgive myself for hurting myself.*

## 2) SAY LOVING-KINDNESS FOR YOURSELF.

**Repeat the following words over and over.** Say them until you can feel the words resonating within. This could be for five minutes, for 10, for 30 minutes.

*May I be safe.  
May I be happy.  
May I be healthy.  
May I be peaceful.*

Optionally, add these words—  
*May I be free from pain, hunger, and suffering.*

## 3) SAY LOVING-KINDNESS FOR OTHERS.

Next, you will repeat the loving-kindness meditation/affirmation for others. Picture these individuals looking radiant and healthy and happy as you send them this deep wish for their well-being.

Look at the list of six groups below. The top two are self-explanatory, but the “neutral persons” group refers to persons who you may see or interact with from time to time but who you don’t really know—such as that person at the checkout stand at the grocery store, that person who lives down the street who you wave to, etc.

The “unfriendly group” represents those persons who are difficult persons in your life. They may have even created pain and abuse. This is a group that presents the greatest challenge for sending out the loving-kindness words. If you find that you can’t send to this group, you can stop and start sending love to yourself. Then, where you feel resonance with the words, again start sending loving-kindness to others, starting from the top of the list.

Remember, that even that abuser or difficult person in your life has suffered in some way. Even this person would benefit from such a blessing. In addition, you can know that difficult person does not have to know you are sending these words out to them. In fact, they may not even be alive. Because loving-kindness breaks down the walls of separation between ourselves and others, saying it for others—even those who may have hurt or harmed us—is also beneficial to us! Here are the categories and the way you can repeat the loving-kindness wish of well-being for these groups of persons.

- 1) Teachers/mentors/guides
- 2) Family members
- 3) Friends
- 4) Neutral persons
- 5) Unfriendly persons
- 6) All Persons/living beings/living things without discrimination

**Repeat the following loving-kindness words for each of the above groups.**

*May (name here) be safe.*  
*May (name here) be happy.*  
*May (name here) be healthy.*  
*May (name here) be peaceful.*

Optionally, add these words—

*May (name here) be free from pain, hunger, and suffering.*

4) CONCLUDE WITH A FINAL BLESSING OR WISH FOR OTHERS.

After you have extended loving-kindness to all the six groups, end with following words.

**Say the following words once.**

*May suffering ones by suffering-free,  
May the fear-struck fearless be,  
May grieving ones shed all grief,  
May all beings find relief.*

**Reflections:** What was it like for you to say the loving-kindness meditation or affirmation? Was there any part of this that you found difficult?

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The loving-kindness practice takes time and patience. How do you think this could help you move toward forgiveness—either toward yourself or others?

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How could you develop an ongoing loving-kindness meditation or affirmation practice? Where would be an ideal place to practice this—where you might be in the solitude of Nature or at a place you design and dedicate to this gentle practice of cultivating peace, kindness, and compassion?

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## **Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Body Scan**

Sample Script: The purpose of this activity is not to relax these body parts, but to increase your awareness of them and notice any sensations that may be present from moment to moment. Later on, after practice, you may choose to include thoughts of gratitude and thanks to each part of the body—but that is not necessary when learning this technique.

To begin, we will just be sensing each part of the body. If at any time any sensation feels overwhelming, you can open your eyes or move to another body part where there is no pain or negative feelings. This is a good activity to use in the morning. You can also use this at night before going to bed or anytime you want to get centered. Again, remember that this practice may or may not produce relaxation. It will be different each time you practice it be you are encouraged to let go of expectations as part of this practice. Know that while you are sensing your body, you are actually scanning the motor and sensory cortex of your brain.

*Right now, center your mind on your body's presence. Take three deep breaths and feel your diaphragm move. Feel how marvelous it is that each breath fills your lungs, sends oxygen to your muscles and organs, and sustains you. You may want to wiggle your toes and feel how effortlessly they follow your command. Take a few moments to feel grateful for this body, this extraordinary gift that you possess.*

*Now, starting at your feet and working your way up to your head, you will place your attention on each part of your body. If you feel discomfort with any part, you can remind yourself that this is simply a sensation. The sensation does not define who you are. You are simply observing signals. When you are ready, you can always decide to move on to another location in the body where there is less discomfort. Know, however, that by resting with the discomfort, you are allowing yourself to bear witness to the feeling and sensation that exists, and experiencing the fullness of what is occurring. If you have pain in a certain area of the body—such as your neck or shoulders—you may find that focusing on that area increases the sensation. You can always move focus to another part of the body and return to the painful area later.*

*Also, as you do this exercise, you may notice that the awareness of sensation or pain is not the sensation or pain itself, but just awareness. This may lead to greater understanding about discomfort or pain. Viewed like this, you may begin to witness the feeling for what it is. It is simply a sensation that is separate from the story you have about the pain—like how it is making your life miserable, keeping you from doing the things you want, and other strong*

*attachments to ideas and beliefs you may have. But at this point, just notice the sensation, and notice the awareness that notices the sensation. See if you can recognize the difference.*

*Let's begin now, by focusing on your toes. As you do this, acknowledge how your toes have been masterfully constructed to help you walk and carry your weight. Picture your toes from the inside, filled with muscles, tendons, and bones, all working in concert. Feel a sense of gratitude and thankfulness to them. As you breathe, you may even visualize them filling up with the breath. Do this now for a few moments.*

*Optionally, if you want, you may send gratitude and appreciation to each part of the body as you go through this exercise.*

*Move now to the soles of your feet, to the ball of the feet and the heel. Feel any sensations in the soles. Sense the tendons and tissue that are below the skin. Notice any feelings or signals from inside this part of the body. Take time now breathe into this part of your feet. Again, you can optionally give thanks to the soles of your feet for supporting your body, and for allowing you to feel sensations as you walk and move and stay active. Or, you can just continue to sense each part of the body.*

*Now, move your mind's attention to the ankles, taking time to experience any sensations that are present. You can imagine the inside of this part of your body, how it is both flexible and strong enough to help you pivot and change directions. Allow yourself to let go of any sensation so as to contact the next sensation as it appears. In this way you can contact new sensations as they appear, in this moment, and the next, and the next.*

*You can continue this sequence as you move upward, scanning various body parts, including parts like the heart, intestines, stomach, genitals, kidneys, liver, spine, and brain, as well as other sense organs that assist in your well being.*

*Feel your connection to each of these parts that help to make a joyful and fulfilling life possible. Again, as an option, you may give special recognition to any part of your body is injured or needs healing—and you may send to it your desire for healing and well-being. You can also breathe in a white, healing light with your in-breath. Imagine that this light fills up your body or any injured part. Then, as you exhale, imagine the breath taking any impurities with it and leaving through your feet, where the impurities return to the earth for recycling.*

*When you have completed this practice by addressing all your body, let yourself rest for a moment in the presence of it. Give thanks and ask for your body to guide you in doing what is*

*best for it. Let your body know that you will pay attention to the signals it sends you, and that you will follow up any warning signals by getting check-ups and taking care of your body through learning about health and preventative measures. By now, you may really be smiling and ready to face the day (or night, as the case may be). This is a wonderful ancient practice that will help you find the strength to do what is right for your body—and the rest of you.*

*During the day, let yourself be more aware of your body. It really will let you know when it is happy and when it is not. I know several people, for example, who have told me that they feel less energetic when they drink too much caffeine. It is easy to make corrections if you take the time to become good friends with your body.*

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