

# Advanced Mindfulness Toolbox for Rewiring the Brain

Rewiring Anxiety, Depression, Pain, PTSD, and Stress

Welcome!

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

*The Mindfulness Toolbox*

*101 Mindful Ways to Build Resilience*

Mindful Living Newsletter  
MindfulPractices.com

**Mindfulness Training • Consultation • Speaking**

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.

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## Today's Roadmap

### Intro to Mindfulness

- Core Mindfulness; Affect Labeling and Prefrontal Cortex

### Research & Useful (& Free) Web Resources

- Mindfulness Resources
- Brain Resources
- Mindfulness Apps & Compassionate Presence

### The Truth About Stress

- Stress Research; Stress and Epi-Genetics
- Assessing with Stress Instruments
- Anxiety and Stress Practice: Palm the Present Moment
- Visual Brain Model for Patients

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### Today's Roadmap

- Brain Basics
  - Neuroscience of the Brain
  - Reflect Module of Brain
- Breath for Calm and Cognition
  - Turning on the Parasympathetic Nervous System
  - Navy SEALs method for arousal control
  - Practice Diaphragmatic Breath & the 3 Min. Question for Clients
- Mindful Eating
- Connecting Clients to Mindfulness
  - Notice and Normalize Mind Wandering
  - Using Awareness Styles & Practice: Awareness Detective

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### Today's Roadmap

- 5 Steps of G-R-E-A-T Mindful Self-Care:
  - Sleep Hygiene and the Glymphatic System
  - Developing Healthy Sleep Rituals
  - Nutrition for the Brain
- Exercise and Pleasantness
  - Exercise, learning, and the brain
  - Strategies for inviting exercise
  - Importance of Factor P
- Gratitude and Attitude
  - Cultivating connections with gratitude
  - Developing and deepening acceptance

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### Today's Roadmap

- 5-Steps to Mindful Self-Care (cont.) Relationships
  - Identify changes in the social network
  - Address building the network
- Technology and Tune-Ups
  - Setting Technology Boundaries and Slowing Down
  - Face-to-Face Contact Wires Brain
  - Experience: Exploration of Time Spent

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### Today's Roadmap

#### Mind Wandering & the Mindfulness Vocabulary

- Telomeres and Mind Wandering
- Meeting the client where they are at
- Exercise: The power of metaphor to expand the vocabulary

#### Loving-Kindness Affirmation

- Method for Broadening Awareness and Feelings of Security
- Practice: Loving Kindness with Breath

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### Intro to Mindfulness & Research

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

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### Mindfulness Warm-Up

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## Reflect Warm-Up

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.

\*from Reflect: Awaken to the Wisdom of the Here and Now  
by Donald Altman

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## Brief Mindfulness Greeting

Using the CHAT function, share:

- 1) Your name, and write one sentence about the work you do.
- 2) In one sentence, tell what it was about this particular workshop that interested you.

Take a moment and appreciate the uniqueness of the people who are sharing this time with you.

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## 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)

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### Questions and Hypotheticals...

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### 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.

Neural Correlates of Dispositional Mindfulness During Affect Labeling  
J. David Creswell, et. al., Psychosomatic Medicine 69:560–565 (2007)

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### Emotional Regulation Produces Long-Lasting Effects on 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.

Long-Lasting Effects of Emotion Regulation on Amygdala Response. Brian T. Denney, et. al., Psychological Science, July 2015) doi: 10.1177/0956797615578863

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## Useful (& Free) Web Resources

- Brain Resources
- Mindfulness Websites

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## MBCT As Effective as Anti-depressants for Relapse of Depression

- Depression patients in remission who underwent mindfulness therapy did as well as those who took an anti-depressant.
- Up to 40% of people who come out of depression do not take their prescribed anti-depressants to prevent relapse \*

\* Archives of Gen. Psychiatry, Segal, Zindel, and Bieling, Peter, et. al.; Vol. 67 (No.12) Dec. 2010 <http://archpsyc.ama-assn.org/cgi/reprint/67/12/1256> (accessed January 18, 2012).

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## MBCT Effective for Reducing Headache Pain

- Altered Cognitive processing in patients with headaches
- Greater perceived distance from pain and reappraisal of pain intensity
- Greater pain acceptance

Journal Anesthesia and Pain Medicine; Use of Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy to Change Pain-related Cognitive Processing in Patients with Primary Headache: A Randomized Trial with Attention Placebo Control Group, Namjoo, Borjali, et. al., Published online 2019 Oct 20. doi: [10.5812/aapm.91927](https://doi.org/10.5812/aapm.91927)

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### Meta-analysis of Mindfulness Interventions

- Mindfulness meditation led to significant lessening of:
- Symptoms of depression and anxiety after therapy and for up to 3 months after the treatment \*

**The Effect of Mindfulness-Based Therapy on Anxiety and Depression: A Meta-Analytic Review;** *Hoffman, et. al, J Consult Clin Psychol., April 2010*

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### Mindfulness Slows Progression of Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) in Adults

- Subjects 55-90 yrs. with (MCI) meditated 15-30 min. daily for 8 weeks.
- MRI showed increase in functional brain connectivity in areas affected by MCI and Alzheimers Disease.
- Mindfulness Meditation reduced hippocampal atrophy and increased networks related to past memories and associations.

*J Am Geriatr Soc. 2013 Apr; (6) 14. 642-645. doi: 10.1111/jgs.12179. Meditation for Adults with Mild Cognitive Impairment: A Pilot Randomized Trial; Rebecca Wells, Catherine Kerr, et. al.*

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### Mindfulness Practice Alters Brain Connectivity in Elders with 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>

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## Alters Physical Brain Structure

- Meditation alters brain structures in 8 weeks, in brain regions associated with memory, sense of self, empathy and stress.\*

- 4-Day Meditation Training Improves Cognition and Reduces Anxiety and Stress\*\*

\*Massachusetts General Hospital, "Mindfulness Meditation Training Changes Brain Structure in 8 Weeks," <http://www.massgeneral.org/about/pressrelease.aspx?id=1329> (accessed January 30, 2011).

\*\*Mindfulness meditation improves cognition: evidence of brief mental training. *Journal Consciousness and Cognition*, June 2010; 19(2):597-605

## Mindful Breathing Awareness

- Ability to stay in contact with the breath decreases mind wandering
- Watching breath reduced rumination, repetitive negative thinking, and depression
- Less fearfulness related to bodily sensations

The Healthy Quality of Mindful Breathing: Associations With Rumination and Depression, Jan M. Burg and Johannes Michalak; *Cognitive Therapy and Research Journal*, 2011, April, Volume 35, Number 2, 179-185

## Pausing for 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

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### Mindfulness Resources/Research

- 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>
- MARC, The Mindful Awareness Research Center  
[www.marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=38&oTopID=38](http://www.marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=38&oTopID=38)
- Mindfulness Research Monthly for new mindfulness research that is being published.  
[goamra.org](http://goamra.org)
- DANA.Org Dana Foundation Brain Research [Dana.Foundation](http://Dana.Foundation)
- MindGains.Org [Global.Assoc.Interpersonal.Neurobiology](http://Global.Assoc.Interpersonal.Neurobiology)
- TCME.Org [The.Center.for.Mindful.Eating](http://The.Center.for.Mindful.Eating)

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### Questions and Hypotheticals...

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# Mindful Compassionate Presence

*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?

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## Questions and Hypotheticals...

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## The Truth About Stress

- Stress Research; Stress and Epi-Genetics
- Identifying Stress & Assessing with Stress Instruments
- Practice: Be a Smart Stress Avoider

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At the Movies...Angry Yoga & Honoring Stress

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### Why Worry About Stress?

Stress— a biological, psychological, social reaction to fear, anxiety, chaos, and demands of the environment.

- What music ripples through your brain
- and body during times of stress and transition?

How can you reduce and replace ripples of stress with a tune of peace, harmony, and joy?

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### Effects of Daily Stress

- **Handling stress poorly each day puts you at a greater risk for mental health issues 10 years from now**
- Significant increase in clinically diagnosed anxiety and depression in those who reacted negatively to stress.
- Research suggests the importance of view stress as a challenge, rather than as a threat.
- Your attitude can make all the difference in your mental health.

*The Wear and Tear of Daily Stressors on Mental Health*, Psychological Science. 2013 24: 733 Charles, Piazza, et. al

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### Stress Survey in America

- **80% said their stress either stayed the same or increased over the past 2 years.**
- **PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS:** 69% experienced upset stomach, headaches, muscle tension, insomnia, lack of appetite.
- **PSYCHOLOGICAL SYMPTOMS:** 67% experienced irritability, anger, sadness, and tearfulness
- **UNHEALTHY BEHAVIORS:** 36% reported eating unhealthy foods or eating excessively in response to job stress; Many reported treated family and others poorly.

APA (2013-2019). *Stress in America*. From: <http://www.APApractice.org>

### Stress-Related Illness

- 25 Million Americans suffer from a stress-related illness, including:
  - Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
  - Back Pain
  - Auto-Immune Disease
- 8 of 10 commonly used drugs treat symptoms of stress
- Cost is 30% of total US mental health services  
*Journal of Clinical Psychology, 1999*

### Stress Effects: Amygdala Activity Related to Cardiac Events

First study to link over active amygdala with arterial inflammation and heart disease— heart attacks and strokes— in a longitudinal study

“amygdalar activity independently and robustly predicted cardiovascular disease events” in 293 persons, median age 55

[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(16\)31714-7/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(16)31714-7/fulltext) published Jan 11, 2017

# 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

[www.genome.gov](http://www.genome.gov)

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

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## At the Movies... *Stress and Epigenetics*

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## Questions and Hypotheticals...

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## Stress Scale Instruments

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

10-question inventory developed by psychologist Sheldon Cohen (mindgarden.com).

• **The Epstein Stress-Management Inventory**

(ESMI-i) is a 28-question inventory for individuals (mystressmanagementskills.com)

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

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**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

PSS created by Sheldon Cohen, et. al, Carnegie Mellon University

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**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 Low  
8-20 Average  
21-26 High  
27-40 Very High

**MEN:**

0-6 Low  
7-17 Average  
18-23 High  
24-40 Very High

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Palm the Present 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

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Palm the Present  
Metacognitive Reflection

What was your  
experience with Palm the  
Present?

How could you use this  
practice with groups or  
individuals?

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Brain Basics & Emotional Regulation

• Visual Brain Model for Patients

• Mindfulness Module of Brain

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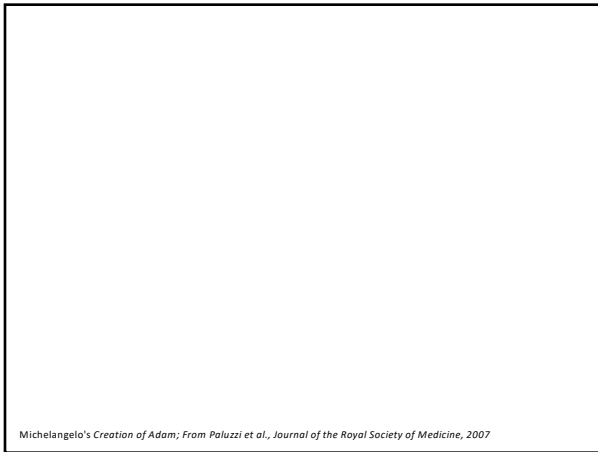
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### Your Brain on Stress

A message sent to the hypothalamus signals the pituitary, which then activates the adrenal glands to release cortisol and adrenaline into the bloodstream and prepare the body for flight or fight.

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### Your Brain on Stress

The stress response actually shunts blood flow away from the brain's "thinking" cortex. This more ancient brain system constantly scans the environment and can be "turned on" chronically through repeated stress or memory provoking events.

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## 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)

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At the Movies... Neuroscience of Mindfulness

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## Inner Reflective Pre-Frontal Brain= 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*

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Questions and Hypotheticals...

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## Mindful Eating

*Lead me not into temptation;  
I can find the way myself.*

—Rita Mae Brown

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## Mindfulness Intervention Reduces Cortisol and Abdominal Fat in Obese Women\*

- Psychological stress and elevated cortisol secretion promote abdominal fat.
- 4-month mindfulness program for stress eating at UCSF
- Reduced anxiety, improved mindfulness, and reduced stress eating
- Significant reduction in CAR (cortisol awakening response)
- Reduced CAR associated with reduction in abdominal fat

• Journal of Obesity, 2011, Daubenmier, Kristeller, et. al.

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## 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

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## 4-Mindfulness Bite Method

*I call on a dream that reminds us to focus on our fingertips, on the shape of our hand, on blood and bone and a thousand nerve endings as we raise an apple to our mouths.*  
 --Orish Mountain Dreamer

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## 4-Mindfulness Bite Method

- 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. If that seems like a long time, consider that you will eat this raisin as you have (possibly) never eaten a raisin before.

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

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#### 4-Mindfulness Bite Method

- **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.

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#### 4-Mindfulness Bite Method

- **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.

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#### 4-Mindfulness Bite Method

- **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.

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#### 4-Mindfulness Bite Method

- **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.

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#### Metacognitive 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.

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#### Questions and Hypotheticals...

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## Lunch (or daily meal) Practice

- **For Today's Lunch (Optional):**
- Rate hunger level (1-10) before, during and after the meal.  
What food that will satisfy this hunger?
- Give yourself permission to order (and eat) as much food as you think will satisfy the body's hunger (as opposed to ordering by your appetite)
- Intentionally leave some food on the plate.
- Take three diaphragmatic breaths before eating.
- Spend the first 5-minutes of your lunch in silence.

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## Lunch (or daily meal) Practice

• **Moment by Moment Awareness**

- Awareness of Body (posture, body movement, chewing, hunger, satiety, etc.)
- Awareness of sensations (tastes, textures, smells, sights, sounds, likes, dislikes, neutral)
- Awareness of mind (thoughts, desire, perceptions, judgments, opinions, memories, etc.)

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## Train the Brain for Calm and Cognition

- Turning on the Parasympathetic Nervous System
- Navy SEALs method for arousal control
- Practice: Diaphragmatic Breath & the 3 Min. Question for Clients

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## Breathing Awareness

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The Mindfulness Movie...*Stress and Mindfulness*

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## 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

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## Mindful Breathing

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

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## Brief Mindfulness Practice Reduces Stress and 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 Mocerri, 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

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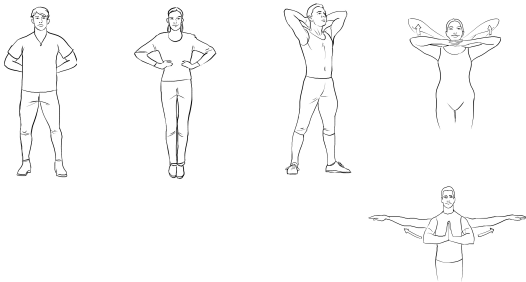
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## 5 Regulating Breathing Postures



\*from *Simply Mindful* by Donald Altman

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### 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.

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### Pair Belly Breathing with Other Pleasant Activities

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

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### Breathing with Deep Peace

- Deep peace of a running wave to you
- Deep peace of the flowing air to you
- Deep peace of the quiet earth to you
- Deep peace of the shining stars to you
- Deep peace of the gentle night to you
- Moon and stars pour their healing light on you
- Deep peace to you.

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Questions and Hypotheticals...

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Access Mindfulness through Awareness Styles

- Help Clients Use Mindful Coping Skills through 9 Unique Awareness Styles
- Discover Awareness Styles through Hobbies and Favorite Activities
  - **7 Kinds of Smart** by Thomas Armstrong
    - Includes Quick Assessment of Learning Styles
  - **Multiple Intelligences** by Howard Gardner

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At the Movies... Where in the Hell is Matt? *Visual/Spatial, Body/Kinesthetic, Hearing*

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### Tap **Mindful** Awareness Styles

- **Language/Verbal and Thinking Oriented**

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### Tap **Mindful** Awareness Styles

- **Language/Verbal and Thinking Oriented** – likes analyzing, reflecting, meditating, reading, writing, keeping a journal, crosswords, word games, puns, word jokes, speaking, listening or telling stories.
- **Mindfulness Practices:** Be the Pebble Practice, Prayer, Affirmations, Mindful Study Group, Gratitude Practice, Noticing Strengths, G.L.A.D. Practice, S-T-O-P Stress Grounding Practice.

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### Tap **Mindful** Awareness Styles

- **Visual/Spatial Oriented**

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### Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- **Visual/Spatial Oriented** – likes museums, art fairs, looking at sunsets, photography, painting, doodling, quilting, knitting, astronomy, motorcycling, bird watching, watching sports, fashion, looking at nature.
- Learns by visualizing, drawing pictures, coding with color, and avoiding multitasking.
- **Mindfulness Practices:** Meditate on Image or Object; Sky Gazing, Calming with Nature, Mindful Eating, Mindful Walking, Palm the Present; Notice Pleasantness; G.L.A.D. Practice, S-T-O-P Stress practice.

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### Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- **Hearing/Music/Sound Oriented**

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### Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- **Hearing/Music/Sound Oriented**— likes music, concerts, sensitive to sounds, dancing, singing, chanting, playing an instrument, sounds of the ocean waves and nature.
- Learns by listening or reading aloud.
- **Mindfulness Practices:** Chant; Loving-Kindness Meditation, Affirmations, Singing; Hymns, Playing and sharing meaningful music, nature sounds, S-T-O-P Stress practice.

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## Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- **Bodily/Kinesthetic/Tactile Oriented**

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## Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- **Bodily/Kinesthetic/Tactile Oriented** – likes dancing, swimming, walking, yoga, stretching, hot baths, jogging, hiking, biking, knitting, weight lifting painting, sculpting, jewelry making, scrap-booking, competitive and non-competitive sports
- Learns through movement and touch, hands on, acting out stories, and doing (not just hearing or seeing).
  - **Mindfulness Practice:** Palm the Present Moment (Sense Grounding) Mindful Walking, Mindful Eating, Tai Chi, Dancing, Yoga, Breathing practice, Running, Jogging, S-T-O-P Stress practice.

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## Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- **Mathematical/Science/Logical Oriented**

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### Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- **Mathematical/Science/Logical Oriented** – likes sudoku, good with numbers, reading, computer programming, analyzing, going to museums, understanding how things work, science, learning, chess, games of strategy.

- **Mindfulness Practice:** Be a Smart Stress Avoider, Gratitude, G.L.A.D. Practice, S-T-O-P practice, Noticing Favorite Things Grounding Practice, Bear Meditation.

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### Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- **Social/Interpersonal/Relationship Oriented**

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### Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- **Social/Interpersonal/Relationship Oriented** – likes friends, committed relationships, volunteering, book clubs, social gatherings, church activities, planning or going to parties, empathizing, teaching, public spaces, team sports.

- **Mindfulness Practice:** Religious or spiritual groups, Dialogue with others, Prayer, Singing, Support Groups, Sharing Gratitude and G.L.A.D., Volunteering.

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## Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- Reflective/Intrapersonal/Spirituality Oriented

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## Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- **Reflective/Intrapersonal/Spirituality Oriented** – likes learning about one self, praying, meditating, reading and reflecting, thinking about purpose and gratitude, going to lectures, spiritual/religious rituals, solitude, seeking out silence, nature, and wisdom.
- **Mindfulness Practice:** Meditation, Journaling and writing, mindfulness with self and others, Reading, Prayer, Affirmations, Gratitude, Solitude with Nature, Silence, G.L.A.D. practice; B.L.I.S.S. practice.

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## Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- Natural World Oriented

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### Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- **Natural World Oriented** – likes hiking, hunting, fishing, boating, the beach, camping, sailing, archaeology, natural shapes and objects, sitting in the park, farmers markets, and good at finding way around new locations.

- **Mindfulness Practice:** Sky Gazing Practice, Noticing Nature, Mindful Walking or Hiking, Gratitude, G.L.A.D. Practices, Gardening, S-T-O-P practice.

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### Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- **Existential-Meaning Oriented**

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### Tap Mindful Awareness Styles

- **Existential-Meaning Oriented** – likes learning, introspection, expressing ideas rather than rote learning, philosophy, dialogue, reading, prayer, meditation, rituals and ceremonies, transcendent thinking and deeper meaning.

- **Mindfulness Practice:** Sky Gazing, Noticing Nature, Mindful Walking or Hiking, Gratitude, G.L.A.D. Practices, Loving-Kindness Affirmation, S-T-O-P practice, meditation.

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## Tap Mindful Awareness 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>

Armstrong, Thomas, *7 Kinds of Smart: Identifying and Developing Your Multiple Intelligences*, Plume, 1999

Gardner, Howard, *Multiple Intelligences*, Basic Books, 2006

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## Metacognitive Reflection

### BE AN AWARENESS STYLE DETECTIVE

- Each person dialogue with a partner identify your partner's awareness style.
- What style or blend of styles are present?
- Share a case study: How have you used awareness styles with a client in the past, or how you might in the future?

Armstrong, Thomas, *7 Kinds of Smart*, Plume, 1999

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## Questions and Hypotheticals...

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## 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)

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### 5-Steps to G.R.E.A.T. Mindful Self-Care \*

#### • 5 Mindful Self-Care Strategies

- **G**-ratitude & Attitude
- **R**-elationships
- **E**-ating & Sleeping
- **A**-ctivity
- **T**-une-Up with Mindfulness Practices

\* from: *Simply Mindful: A 7-Week Course and Personal Handbook for Mindful Living* by Donald Altman

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#### G.R.E.A.T. Self-Care Strategy #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

\* from: *Simply Mindful: A 7-Week Course and Personal Handbook for Mindful Living* by Donald Altman

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## 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.  
Results showed 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*

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## Saint Teresa's Mindfulness 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.

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## Savoring 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.

*A "Present for the Future: The unexpected value of rediscovery; Psychological Science, published online, August 29, 2014; Zhang, et. al.*

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## 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.

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## G.R.E.A.T. Self-Care Strategy #2:

### Relationships \*

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

\* from: *Simply Mindful: A 7-Week Course and Personal Handbook for Mindful Living* by Donald Altman

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## Relationships

- Research shows influence of a social network is as much a mortality risk factor as the following behaviors:
- Smoking
- 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>

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## 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

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## G.R.E.A.T. Self-Care Strategy #3: Eating/Sleeping \*

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

\* from: *Simply Mindful: A 7-Week Course and Personal Handbook for Mindful Living* by Donald Altman

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## 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?"

<http://www.caffeineinformer.com>

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## 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.

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## 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?
- Factors of life style affecting sleep
  - Technology, time, etc.
- Medical factors affecting sleep
- Problem solving sleep issues, even bad mattresses
- Developing a healthy sleep ritual
- \* 2011 Study shows that chronic sleep problems commonly found in anxiety and depression can produce more negative thoughts and memories.
- \* *Sleep and Emotional Memory Processing*, Matthew Walker; Els van der Helm, Sleep Medicine Clinics, Vol. 6, No.1, pages 31-43; March 2011

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At the Movies...23 ½ Hours: What is the Single Best Thing?

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## G.R.E.A.T. Self-Care Strategy #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.\*

\* Spark: *The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*— James Ratey and Eric Hagerman New York: Little, Brown and Co., 2008

\* from: *Simply Mindful: A 7-Week Course and Personal Handbook for Mindful Living* by Donald Altman

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## 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
- Exercise produces a substance known as “brain-derived neurotrophic factor,” or BDNF, which encourages neurons to grow and make connections and is associated with learning and emotional control.\*
- Exercise stimulates the production of a host of neurotransmitters and hormones that safeguard against anxiety, depression, ADHD, dementia, aging, and obesity.\*

\* Spark: *The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*— James Ratey and Eric Hagerman New York: Little, Brown and Co., 2008

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## Pleasant Activities

- Identify simple, realistic and achievable pleasant activity to implement.
- Don’t reinvent the wheel; use 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.
- Noticing Pleasantness is also a pleasant activity
  - a favorite color, a favorite sound, a favorite object, etc.

*Control Your Depression* by Peter Lewinsohn

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G.R.E.A.T. Self-Care Strategy #5:  
**Technology Boundaries and  
 Tune-Up with Mindfulness Practices\***

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

\* from: *Simply Mindful: A 7-Week Course and Personal Handbook for Mindful Living* by Donald Altman

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### Weapons of Mass Distraction

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

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### 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

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### 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.*

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### Effects of Hyper-Networking in Teens

***Hyper-networking in Teens** defined as: more than 3 hours a day on social networking sites (11.5% of students)*

*This group has higher chance of stress, depression, suicide, poor sleep, poor academics, TV watching and parental permissiveness.*

*62% more likely to have tried cigarettes*

*79% more likely to have tried alcohol*

*69% more likely to binge drink*

*84% more likely to use illicit drugs*

*94% more likely to have been in a physical fight*

*69% more likely to have had sex and 60% were more likely to have had 4 or more sexual partners.*

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

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### Technology Intake Questions

...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?

...have few nighttime boundaries with technology

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## Reflect Practice

Listen for the music of stillness,  
and you will be with peace.

What weapons of mass distraction  
block you from the deep peace  
of meditation, reflection and repose?

Distraction of noise, busy-ness and technology  
steal your peace like thieves in the night.

Serenity is much closer than you think.  
Simply seek the music of silence  
and find simplicity within.

Reflect on this.

*\*from Reflect: Awaken to the Wisdom of the Here and Now  
by Donald Altman*

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**Mindful Exploration of Time Spent** Copyright © 2014 by Donald Altman

Time Spent Daily (average)	Self-Care: Pleasant activity, hobby, or relaxation	Face-to-Face without interruption: partner and friends & family	Technology Not at work: TV, CD, Cel, DVDs, Internet, e-mail, games, etc.	Exercise and other physical activity	Appetite Food and meals	Craving and Desire Browsing and shopping	Travel and Scheduling Planning, organizing and transitions	Reflection Contemplation: Exploration thought, personal growth	Sleep	Work
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+ hrs.										
7 + hrs										
8+ hrs.										
9+ hrs.										
10 +hrs.										

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## Metacognitive 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.

- ▶ Reflect on the following questions:
  - ▶ 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?

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### Tune-Up with Mindfulness Practices

- What calming practices do you like?

- Calming Breath
- Physical Grounding
- Gratitude Practice
- Yoga, Tai chi, prayer, or other focused attention practice

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### The 3 Minute Question

ARE YOU WORTH  
3 MINUTES A DAY  
TO DO A MENTAL FLOSSING?

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### G.R.E.A.T. Self-Care Strategies: Exploration with a Partner or Journal

- What one small change could you make in one of these areas?
- How might this improve your work or personal life?

- G-ratitude & Attitude
- R-relationships
- E-ating & Sleeping
- A-ctivity
- T-ech Boundaries and Tune-Up with Mindfulness Practices

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Questions and Hypotheticals...

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Expanding the Mindfulness Vocabulary

- Mind Wandering
- Practice: Expanding the Mindfulness Vocabulary

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*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

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## William James

"...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*

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## Mindfulness and Students

2-Weeks Mindfulness Training Course was found to:

- 1) Improve GRE Reading comprehension scores
- 2) Improve working memory capacity
- 3) Reduce distracting thoughts during completion of the GRE test.

Researchers found mindfulness was "an effective and efficient technique for improving cognitive function."

*Mindfulness Training Improves Working Memory Capacity and GRE Performance While Reducing Mind Wandering*, Psychological Science 2013 24:5 pp. 776-781 Michael Mrazek, Michael Franklin, et. al.

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## 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

*A Wandering Mind Is an Unhappy Mind*, Matthew A. Killingsworth and Daniel T. Gilbert; Science 12 November 2010: 330 (6006), 932.

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## 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)*

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*At the Movies... Stress, Mind Wandering, and Telomeres*

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Questions and Hypotheticals...

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Expanding the Mindfulness Vocabulary –  
Traditional Terms

- **Sati**- bare awareness of the sense doors, thoughts, and emotions
- **Sampajanna**- clear knowing-- knowing the consequences one's actions and understanding of nature of impermanence and change
- **Hesychasm**- quieting and stilling the mind
- **Nalu**- in the flow; not too fast, not too slow

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Charles Tart

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

—*Living the Mindful Life*

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Fritz Perls

"Boredom is simply lack of attention."

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### Reflect Practice

Be present with the next small thing,  
and then the next.

Make the in-between time count.  
Notice all the little moments  
of doing the dishes,  
walking to the shower,  
and hugging your partner.

The next simple moment  
is where you gain real-life traction.

Don't get lost in the future.  
You'll get there anyway, without even trying.

Reflect on this.

\*from *Reflect: Awaken to the Wisdom of the Here and Now*  
by Donald Altman

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P.A.I.R. U.P. for a Mindful Fit with What Is In  
Your Life

- **P**-Present Moment Participation
- **A**-Attuned Acceptance
- **I**-Intentionality; Conscious choices
- **R**-Reflection, insight; ethics and values
- **U**-Understanding of Suffering; compassion
- **P**-Purposeful Partnership (from 'Me' to 'We')

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Exercise: Expanding the Mindfulness Vocabulary

Brainstorm other words or phrases that can be used  
to describe mindfulness.

How will this broader vocabulary help you to meet  
clients where they are?

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### Questions and Hypotheticals...

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### 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.

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### 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 and compassion meditation: potential for psychological interventions, Hoffman, Grossman, and Hinton, et. al., Clinical Psychological Review, 2011 Nov;31(7):1126-32. Epub 2011 Jul 26.

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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

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1-Minute Loving-Kindness + Breath Practice

- **1-minute: Breath in loving kindness for yourself; exhale it for all other beings**
- **OPTIONAL:** Use a single word, such as “safe” “connected” “secure” “peaceful” “energized” “compassion” with each in and out breath.

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*At the Movies...Mr. Rogers & Cultivating Mindful Curiosity*

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## Contemplative Breathing

By Donald Altman, author *The Mindfulness Code* and *Clearing Emotional Clutter*

### **Introduction**

Proper breathing techniques are essential for learning how to relax the body and mind. Meditative methods of breathing for attaining relaxation and states of heightened awareness have been practiced for thousands of years. Archeologists have recovered 4,000 year-old statues from India that depict yogic breathing positions. The contemplative Christian practice known as hesychasm used breathing methods along with mantras such as the Jesus prayer to find stillness in order to connect with God.

In the 1960s, Harvard cardiologist Herbert Benson discovered how ancient breathing techniques created what he called “the relaxation response.” His research showed that focused breathing results in a family of beneficial psychological and physiological effects.

These include:

- lowering of blood pressure
- decreasing of the heart rate, metabolism, and breathing rate
- increasing alpha brain waves
- oxygenating the prefrontal cortex—activating the regulating & reflective part of the brain

### **The Basic 3-Step Contemplative Breath Method: (Intention, Action, Attention)**

STEP 1) SET AN INTENTION:

a) With each in-breath, set an intention to breathe in by mentally stating the words:

*Creating a breath.*

b) With each out-breath, set an intention to breathe out by mentally stating:

*Ending a breath.*

STEP 2) FOLLOW-UP WITH AN ACTION (MOVEMENT)

Follow up with the action of breathing in and breathing out after each intention.

STEP 3) USE YOUR ATTENTION TO SUSTAIN OBSERVATION ON THE BREATH

Observe the diaphragm rising and falling.

Notice even the pause between the in-breath and out-breath.

If the mind wanders, gently notice this and return focus to the breath. Should you have problems staying focused on the breath, try counting each breath from 1 to 10, and then down from 10 to 1.

NOTE: If you lose count, that’s okay. Simply start over again from number 1 until you build up the concentration to count the entire way.

Additionally, you can focus attention on a word or phrase (as in a centering prayer practice). For example, if you are anxious, you could mentally state a word or words, such as “calm and relaxed” with each out breath; for sleep, repeat “restful sleep” with each out-breath.

**Follow-Up Practice:** Do this 3x a day, 3 minutes each time, or 2x a day, 5 minutes at a time.

## *The Mindfulness Toolbox* by Donald Altman

### Tool #12 –Palm the Present Moment

#### **LEARNING STYLES:**

The following learning styles are compatible with this practice:

*Bodily-Kinesthetic-Tactile*

*Visual-Spatial*

*Reflective-Intrapersonal*

#### ***Thoughts for Therapists***

Anxious clients are often caught up in a myriad of thoughts spinning in their head. For some, this rapid spinning of thoughts can even result in an overpowering sensation of nausea—almost like being on a boat that is bouncing up and down in choppy water. That makes sense when you consider that it has been estimated that the mind can generate up to 125 thoughts per second. Getting solidly rooted or grounded back in the body is one method for calming down, quieting the anxious or ruminating mind, and getting back onto more firm and peaceful ground.

In addition to anxiety, this practice is a good way of creating space from any negative emotional feeling, ruminating thoughts, or feelings of being overwhelmed from stress or chaos. I also recommend this as a tool for when clients come into the counseling office and are not settled down due to the demands of time pressures, traffic congestion, getting a parking space, etc. Spending a minute or two getting grounded and centered at the start of a session can help the client enter a more receptive space.

One of the advantages of the *Palm the Present Moment* practice is that is portable and easy to use. It offers a multi-purpose means of centering to counter anxiety—especially when transitioning from one physical location or situation to another. (This is also a useful one-minute mindfulness technique for therapists to use between sessions for the same reasons.)

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

- ✓ *Palm the Present Moment* practice is a readable script that you can use in session to guide clients through the practice. Do this prior to giving them the handout.
- ✓ Follow along with the movements so patients can visually see you model this practice for them.
- ✓ Other sense grounding practices for anxious clients that can be bundled with this one include:
  - Tool #13, *Ground Surfing*
  - Tool #16, *BE-THIS Sense Grounding*
  - Tool #33, *Squeeze Out Stress*
  - Tool #35, *Take a Stress Pause*

## HANDOUT: Palm the Present Moment GUID

**Instructions:** Use this portable grounding meditation script whenever you find yourself getting anxious, worried, feeling overwhelmed, lost in negative thoughts, or feeling uncertain about the future while transitioning from one place to another. Spend as much time as necessary to do this the first time.

Once you're familiar with how to *Palm the Present Moment*, you can shorten the process and do this in just one-minute, if desired.

*Sit in a comfortable chair and take a couple of nice, long, calming breaths.*

*Now, just raise your hands up to the height of the heart center, with the palms facing one another—about a foot or so apart. Notice how much tension there is in just holding the arms and hands up in the air.*

*Next, ever so slowly, bring the hands closer until you feel even the slightest or subtle sensation of energy, pressure, heat, or warmth. Stop when you feel this, and just notice this for a few moments. Observe closely this sensation. Is the heat, warmth, energy, or pressure constant? Or, does it vary slightly moment to moment?*

*Now, gently move the palms closer until just the fingertips come together with the most feathery, lightest touch. Imagine that the molecules from the fingertips of your right hand are dancing with the molecules of the fingertips of your left hand. You might even think about what dance they are doing... the foxtrot, the samba, the tango, the waltz, or the jitterbug.*

*Now, you continue to bring your palms together until they lightly touch. As you do this, notice how the fingers straighten out and how more heat builds up between the palms. With your palms together, this is a good time to pause for a few moments and have appreciation for the body, which is a precious gift that we possess. We can also reflect on the words of former priest and author John*



*O'Donohue who wisely wrote in Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom, "Your body is the only home in the universe."*

*(Rest in silent appreciation for 5-10 seconds)*

*Now, let's spend a few moments to see what it's like to tense, and then relax the body. Keeping your palms touching, raise your elbows up to the side. Press with only ten percent of the total pressure you could exert. Now, press your hands together even harder—up to twenty percent of total pressure.*

*Stop pressing if you feel any pain. Press only as hard as you experience no pain or discomfort.*

*Again, observe how far up your arm the tension goes. Does it extend to the wrists, the elbows, the shoulders, the shoulder blades, the back, the chest? Maybe you feel more heat building in the palms of your hands? Which muscles are tense? After about five seconds of this, let your shoulders and elbows relax and fall. Release all this tension. Notice how nice it is to let go of tightness and tension in the body.*

*Finally, very slowly open your palms, like flower blossoms opening to the morning sun. Sense the coolness in your palms as the heat dissipates. Finally, let the weight of gravity tug on your hands and arms, letting these gently fall like leaves from a tree, until they come to rest on your lap or legs. Take a nice, long inhale, and as you exhale, imagine all the remaining stress draining out with the exhale down your legs and out of the bottom of your feet—where it will flow into the Earth for recycling. If you want, just sit for a few more moments in appreciation for the body that follows your commands and carries your consciousness so you can achieve your life goals. How marvelous!*

### 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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