



**MINDFULNESS
FOR BUSY
PEOPLE**

YOUR MINDFUL YEAR



MINDFULNESS IS
HOW WE RELATE TO
OUR THOUGHTS, NOT
THE ABSENCE OF
THEM.

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UNDERSTANDING THE THOUGHT - BODY - EMOTION LOOP

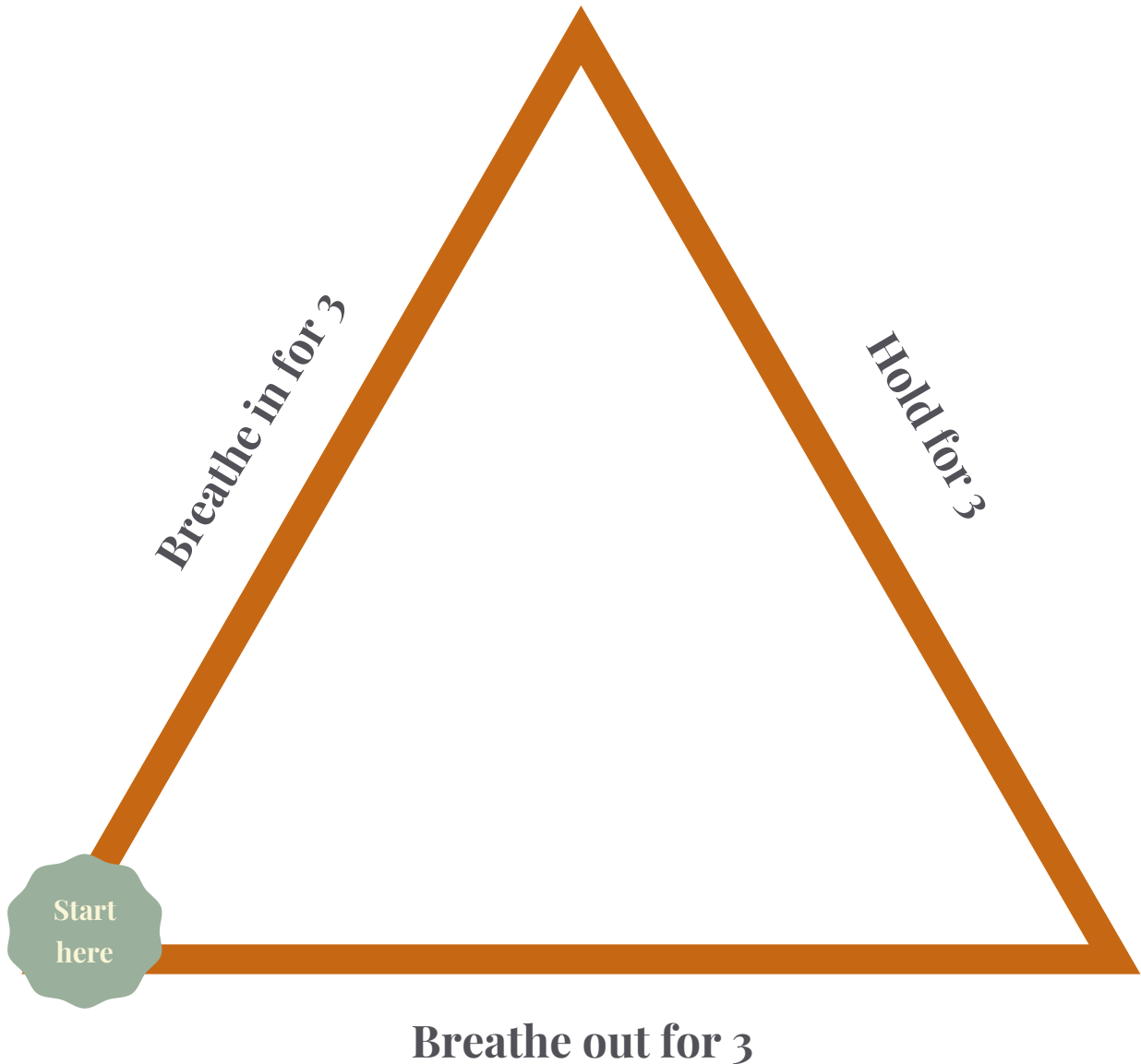


1. **Trigger** (internal thought, external event, memory, sensation)
2. **Rapid brain processing** (amygdala and other regions assess the trigger in milliseconds)
3. **Physiological response** (body releases appropriate chemicals and changes based on the assessment):
 - **Threat detected:** stress hormones (cortisol, adrenaline), increased heart rate, muscle tension
 - **Reward/pleasure detected:** dopamine, serotonin, relaxed muscles, slower breathing
 - **Safety/calm detected:** parasympathetic activation, steady heart rate, relaxed breathing
 - **Novelty/curiosity detected:** moderate arousal, focused attention
4. **Physical sensations** (we feel the body's changes - butterflies, warmth, tension, lightness, etc.)
5. **Conscious interpretation** ("What am I feeling? What does this mean?")
6. **Story creation** ("I'm excited because..." "I'm nervous about..." "This is wonderful...")
7. **Feedback loop** (our interpretation influences our physiology, which creates more sensations, which influences more thoughts)

Key insight: The same physical arousal (increased heart rate, butterflies) can be interpreted as excitement or anxiety, depending on our thoughts. This is why noticing without immediately labelling gives us choice in how we interpret and respond to our body's signals.



TRIANGLE BREATHING BRAIN BREAK



Starting at the left bottom of the triangle. Trace your finger up the side while you take a deep breath in. Hold your breath for three seconds as you slide down the other side. Breathe out along the bottom of the triangle. Repeat as desired. Do this a few times during your day to calm your mind.

Mindfulness through the senses

Feeling grounded is easily achieved when we get out of our heads and pay close attention to what is happening around us and the sensations we experience.

A few times a day, engage your senses and really feel the world around you. What can you notice?

Five things I can see

Four things I can feel

Three things I can hear

Two things I can smell

One thing I can taste



UNBURDEN EXERCISE:

Write down the things that you are currently stressing over.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Now circle the ones you have no control over. Now, cross out any “stories” you have created in your head and are not likely to happen.

For the circle items, consider: Is there anything I can do to minimise their impact on my life?

For the uncircled items: What is one small step that I can take today to solve/make progress on this issue?

You are carrying stress about things you can't control. Radical acceptance frees up energy for what you can change.



GRATEFULNESS EXERCISE

Choose three things in each category and on the right hand side write why are you grateful for them



Family & friends

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Health & wellbeing

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Circumstances & environment

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Safety & security

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Technology & everyday comforts

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MINDFULNESS GIVES
YOU TIME.
TIME GIVES YOU
CHOICE.
CHOICES, SKILLFULLY
MADE, LEAD TO
FREEDOM.



BHANTE HENEPOLA GUNARATANA

What are your top five values?

When our decisions are guided by our true values, we can stand by them—regardless of the outcome. Regret often comes not from failure, but from choices made out of fear, pressure, or misalignment with what truly matters to us.

When we take the time to understand our values and live by them, we cultivate a sense of inner clarity and confidence. Even when things don't go as planned, we know we acted with integrity. And that, more than any external success, is what brings lasting contentment and fulfillment.

- T
- Authenticity
 - Achievement
 - Adventure
 - Authority
 - Autonomy
 - Balance
 - Beauty
 - Boldness
 - Compassion
 - Challenge
 - Citizenship
 - Community
 - Competency
 - Contribution
 - Creativity
 - Curiosity
 - Determination
 - Fairness
 - Faith
 - Fame
 - Friendships
 - Fun
 - Growth
 - Happiness
 - Honesty
 - Humor
 - Influence
 - Inner Harmony
 - Justice
 - Kindness
 - Knowledge
 - Leadership
 - Learning
 - Love
 - Loyalty
 - Meaningful Work
 - Openness
 - Optimism
 - Peace
 - Pleasure
 - Poise
 - Popularity
 - Recognition
 - Religion
 - Reputation
 - Respect
 - Responsibility
 - Security
 - Self-Respect
 - Service
 - Spirituality
 - Stability
 - Success
 - Status
 - Trustworthiness
 - Wealth
 - Wisdom

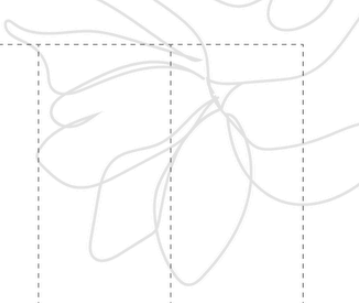
VALUE TRACKER

- Before starting this exercise, take a moment to identify your top five values.
- Then, pick one to focus on for the next five weeks.
- Next, list five simple, actionable ways to live out your chosen value. For example: If your value is connection, you could plan to call a friend once a week or schedule coffee with a colleague you'd like to know better.
- Throughout the week, keep these five mini-goals in mind. At the end of the week, reflect on how you did and note areas where you can improve as you move forward.

FOCUS FOR THIS PERIOD

MY TOP FIVE

FIVE WAYS TO EMBODY THIS VALUE	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5
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QUICK CIRCUIT BREAKERS

1. When you feel a strong emotion coming on stay with it for 90 seconds. Name the emotion. Observe where you feel it in your body. Say it out loud: “I feel angry”
2. Before making a decision or sending that email ask yourself: am I hungry, angry, lonely or tired? And if you answer yes to any of them, is this influencing how you see things right now?
3. When something goes wrong, play the unfortunately-fortunately game. Example: Unfortunately, I didn’t win that customer. Fortunately, I know why and can create a better pitch next time.
4. If you are feeling stressed or anxious and are able to lie down on the floor for 7 minutes, this gives your nervous system the “I am safe” message and helps downregulate your stress response.
5. Hum for a couple of minutes. This relaxes your vagus nerve and calms your brain.
6. Write down the main reason you are stressing right now. Then list 5-10 thoughts that come into your mind around this subject. Give each thought a value: R for real, H for hypothetical.

