

Bite-sized lessons based on
The Chaos Antidote: A Fable About Mindfulness

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Introduction

In *The Chaos Antidote: A Fable About Mindfulness*, I have shared a parable that is filled with practical steps for developing mindfulness. I am indebted to Jon Kabat-Zinn, founder of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, whose course teaches students how to practice mindfulness. His teachings, and that of many others referenced in my book's appendices, have made a profound impact on my practice.

The framework I've introduced in my book teaches how to create mindful habits and maintain them—developed with the realities of a modern schedule in mind.

In this six-week guide, I've outlined the basic mindfulness principles and exercises as refreshers on the fundamentals, as well as homework assignments for the training. The homework builds upon itself and changes slightly each week to reflect that week's lesson.

I've estimated the amount of time that each practice will take. It may take you a bit more or less. I recommend following the homework as presented; however, if you find that time is too tight one week, you may decide to alternate between one activity one day and another the next. Five minutes a day adds up. However, two daily exercises that I strongly encourage you *never* to miss are 1) sitting and 2) GLOWY daily reflection practice.

Suggested supplies and props include:

- A chair or sitting cushion of your choice
- A blanket for padding and support
- A yoga mat

- A journal and pen
- Art supplies (crayons, paint and clay to canvases, art paper, scissors, tape, glue and chalks, jewelry creation supplies, stamps or blank sheets of music paper, depending on your needs)
- Tea (preferably loose-leaf tea with a diffuser, though tea bags will work)
- Instrumental music (and player, if needed)
- A bell or musical bowl (optional, a glass and eating utensil will work)

Chapter 1 Summary

Three exercises to begin preparing yourself for mindful practices:

- **Breathe deeply** for one minute and focus only on your breath, noticing how it feels going in and out of your body.
- **Consider** how mindfulness, being fully present, might serve you.
- Practice giving a **mindful hug**: Always hold on, never letting go until the other person is ready to release the hug. Silently reflect on your gratefulness for the person in your arms.

Chapter 2 Summary

What Is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is paying attention to what's going on inside and around you. Your breath is the bridge between the two. You notice where you are and what you're thinking or feeling without reacting to it. You can practice anytime and anywhere.

- You cultivate the capacity to be mindful through practicing meditation—or intentionally being with what is.

- Close your eyes. Take three deep breaths, focusing on your breath traveling in and out. Breathing in, notice the sensations your in-breath has. Breathing out, notice the sensations your out-breath has.
- What did you notice (physically, mentally, emotionally)?

In mindfulness, you notice what comes up and try to replace judgment with curiosity. So, when you feel yourself getting carried away by your thoughts, you can say, “Isn’t that interesting that in a moment of quiet I thought of that?”

Meditation is simply breathing, quieting your mind, practicing being present with your breath, so you can be present for other important parts of your life—your thoughts, feelings and physical sensations, as well as your relationships and work. It’s a powerful practice and has the ability to rewire the structure of your brain.

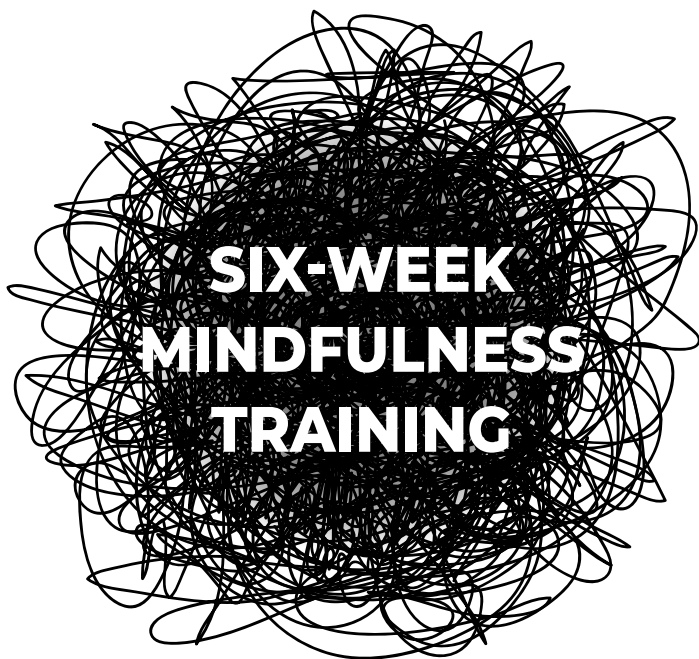
Mindfulness Is Like Learning to Play Basketball

You learn to bounce that air-filled, orange-brown sphere. Up and down, like an in-and-out breath. You build upon that dribbling skill to be able to pass the ball. Then shoot the ball. But you’d never be ready to play a game of basketball if you don’t learn the basic principle of up-and-down dribbling.

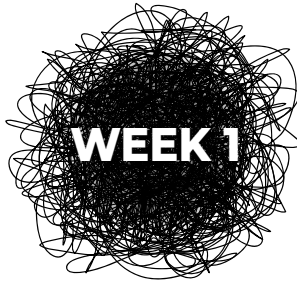
The same goes for meditation, or mindful breathing. If you can master the skill of breathing mindfully in and out, you will be equipped to develop mindful skills in other areas of life, like fully listening in a business meeting, staying present during a difficult conversation with a loved one or giving thoughtful space to your own joys and wounds. Even paying attention to your own physical discomfort.

Lessons from Queen Alba and the Lynx

- Distractions are things that keep you from being present with your true nature.
- When you lose touch with yourself and others, tragic consequences can result.
- Facing your situation—both inside and out—with mindful breath and awareness is the key to returning to yourself.



**SIX-WEEK
MINDFULNESS
TRAINING**



Sitting with Awareness

The essence of meditation is noticing what's going on inside and around you, while maintaining a sense of curiosity. This means being aware of your thoughts, paying attention to your senses, noticing your feelings. Sitting is the basis of a mindful practice, rooted in deep breathing and staying cognizant of the thoughts and feelings moving across the stage of your mind.

First Check-In

Check in with yourself by closing your eyes and breathing in fully. Now breathe out fully. Continue breathing for one minute.

What did you notice?

Justify, Judge and Join

You can be quick to justify, judge and join your experiences.

- I am tired (thought) because it's early (justifying).
- I am sad (emotion) because I need to stay strong (judge).
- I smell a scent (sense), and I am connecting it to summer camp (join).

The brain's job is to think, always looking for past experiences to justify a response, judge what you should do or join a train of thought. But these reactions can remove you from your current experiences.

Meditation is about noticing what's inside and around you while remaining nonjudgmental, curious, loving and kind toward yourself. And your breath grounds you, helping you practice presence in a small, tangible way that's always available to you. Breathing is the basis of all your mindfulness practice.

Noticing Your Surroundings

Please spend two minutes and notice what's around you, without judgment and only curiosity.

- What do you see?
- What do you hear?
- What do you smell?
- What do you feel?

Tea Time

Make and enjoy a cup of tea in silence.

- Listen to the water as it fills the kettle.
- Hear the sound of the burner ticking.
- Smell the raw tea.
- Listen to the water boil.
- Smell the brewed tea.
- Feel the warm mug.
- Taste the tea.

Sitting

Choose a place to sit quietly and comfortably.

“As you sit, try to keep your knees below your hips. Place your hands on your thighs. Ensure you and your seat are stable. Keep your back upright but relaxed. Imagine sitting tall like a monarch. You have two options for your eyes: You can gaze downward a few feet in front of you, which I find keeps me grounded in the space. Or, you can close your eyes, which I find helps me focus more inwardly.”

Posture Pointers

Legs: Knees below hips, legs loosely crossed (if applicable)

Hands: Placed comfortably on thighs

Bottom: Stable and centered

Spine: Upright but relaxed

Chin: Tucked slightly

Eyes: Gaze downward gently, about five feet in front of you, which may help keep you in the moment. Or keep your eyes closed, which may help you focus inwardly.

- Practice a slow, deep breath in—feeling the air enter your body, all those sensations in your nose, throat, chest and stomach.
- Slowly release your breath through your mouth—noticing how the air feels passing over your lips and leaving your body. If you get distracted, just come back to your breath—noticing it as it naturally occurs.
- Imagine your thoughts are bubbles. Touch them with a feather as they pass, but try not to pursue or grab them. They will pop!

- Practice slowing down the thought bubbles, watching them pass and naming what they are. Just the act of naming them can make your thoughts less overwhelming and get you in touch with what's really occupying your mind.

If you get caught up in your thoughts:

- Say in your mind “thinking” without judgment and come back to your breath.
- Tap one of your fingers on your leg or knee, like a body bell.
- Say a mantra, like “Come home” or “Just breathe.”

Body Scan

- Lie down on your mat in Shavasana, or corpse pose, on your back with your arms comfortably at your sides. Notice the sensations of your body and let go of any stories your mind tells.
- Bring your attention to your left foot, feeling each toe one at a time.
- Notice your left ankle, calf, knee, thigh, hip.
- Work your awareness up both sides of your body, ending at the top of your head.

Week 1 Homework:

Sitting with Awareness (~10 min./day)

Daily

- **Awareness (3 min. to choose/practice):** Pick a routine habit and bring awareness to this activity (such as brushing teeth, lathering hair, washing dishes, smelling food or drink).
- **Sit (2 min.):** Practice sitting for two minutes daily.

- **Scan (2 min.):** Scan your body once per day (perhaps first thing in the morning or last thing before bed).
- **GLOWY Daily Reflection Practice (3 min.):** Write one page every morning (preferably outdoors), addressing each of the following:
 - o **GratITUDE:** Recognize things in your life that you're grateful for.
 - o **Lift Up:** Identify circumstances, people or struggles that are causing you/others to suffer; or needed wisdom/resources.
 - o **Observe:** Scan your body and notice sensations in your body, thoughts and feelings you're experiencing; observe your surroundings.
 - o **Wholesome Intention:** Set a clear, positive statement of the outcome you want to experience; how you intend to be, live and show up.
 - o **You Are:** Write positive affirmations about who you are.
- **Self-Care:** Drink plenty of water daily to hydrate yourself, eat healthy and whole foods and get sufficient sleep each night.

One Time

- **Veda Hug:** Give someone you love a mindful hug. Don't let go until they do. Think about how grateful you are for them while they're in your arms.



Awakening the Senses

This week is about awakening your five—actually six—senses. Your senses ground you in the present in powerful ways. From eating a tart orange to smelling a lavender bush, your senses remind you you're alive and in the now.

Coming to Your Senses

- You have six senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, tasting and thinking (mind).
- The sense of your mind helps you connect with your feelings and thoughts.
- Exercise: Create a meal in silence, breathing deeply and tuning in to each of your senses. (Consider using the Super Vegetable Soup Recipe included in Appendix B of *The Chaos Antidote: A Fable About Mindfulness*.)
 - o Sight: Look at the ingredient. What do you see?
 - o Touch: Pick it up and notice how it feels.
 - o Hear: How does the ingredient sound?
 - o Smell: Now smell it. How would you describe the scent?
 - o Taste: Taste it. How would you describe the flavor?
 - o Mind: Lastly, what are you thinking as you experience this ingredient?

Sitting in Silence

- Sit comfortably on a stable cushion or chair.
- The mind's job is to think. You don't need to judge it for doing its job. When you notice your mind wandering, gently bring your attention back to your breath.
- Visitors come in a variety of costumes. A visitor can be an actual person, or a thought, emotion or physical sensation.
- Practice just being with visitors of all types, not labeling visitors as good or bad, for 10 minutes.

Writing Exercise

- Sit outdoors and open your eyes to see all that's around you.
- Choose one thing you'd like to see more closely, then walk to it and inspect it with all your senses.
- Write your observations for the next five minutes.

Week 2 Homework:

Awakening the Senses (~12 min./day)

Daily

- **Awareness (3 min. to choose/practice):** Pick a routine habit and bring awareness to this activity (such as brushing teeth, lathering hair, washing dishes, smelling food or drink).
- **Sit (4 min.):** Practice sitting for four minutes daily.
- **Scan (2 min.):** Scan your body once per day (perhaps first thing in the morning or last thing before bed).

- **GLOWY Daily Reflection Practice (3 min.):** Write one page every morning (preferably outdoors), addressing each of the following:
 - o **GratITUDE:** Recognize things in your life that you're grateful for.
 - o **Lift Up:** Identify circumstances, people or struggles that are causing you/others to suffer; or needed wisdom/resources.
 - o **Observe:** Scan your body and notice sensations in your body, thoughts and feelings you're experiencing; observe your surroundings.
 - o **Wholesome Intention:** Set a clear, positive statement of the outcome you want to experience; how you intend to be, live and show up.
 - o **You Are:** Write positive affirmations about who you are.
- **Self-Care:** Drink plenty of water daily to hydrate yourself, eat healthy and whole foods and get sufficient sleep each night.

One Time

- **Listen (5 min.):** Mindfully listen to an instrument-only song this week.
- **Look (5 min.):** Look at your face in a mirror. Notice one beautiful thing and write about it in your journal.



Mindful Movement

Mindful movement connects you with your physical body, slowing down your form to experience the nuances of movements and the sensations of your tissues. When your body is calm in movement, your mind is encouraged to follow. In this week's lesson, you explore standing movement, floor movement and walking meditation.

Always talk to your health care provider about the exercises you'd like to do. With any of the suggested movements, stop if you feel pain. If you feel discomfort, you may choose to be with that discomfort or address it. A blanket under your hips, head or other body part may help.

Listen to your body and only do what makes sense for you. If a movement or position feels uncomfortable, try breathing into the area that's experiencing discomfort. If it's still too much, back out of the position partially or completely. You can always practice breathing while sitting or in corpse pose.

Standing Movement

- Stretch your arms to the sky.
- Tilt your head to the right, then to the left.
- Stretch your right arm across my body and press it with your left hand. Repeat the move with your left arm.

- Ragdoll: Bend over at the waist, exhaling and let your arms fall toward the ground. Stand up, reach your arms to the sky and repeat.
- Clasp your hands behind your back and focus on opening your chest to the ceiling.

Floor Movement

- Shavasana or Corpse Pose: Lie on your back on your mat. Let your arms lie at your sides, palms up. Notice where your body is touching the floor. Perhaps the sensations on the back of your head, upper back, hands, buttocks, calves and heels.
- Set an intention to move mindfully.
- Scan your body from head to toe, noting places where you may be holding tension. See if you can soften any of those places.
- Notice your breath. Feel your belly expanding and falling.
- Rock-a-Bye: Bend your left knee to the sky, then your right knee to the sky. Hold your knees with your hands. Inhale and relax your knees away from your body. Exhale and pull your knees closer to your chest. Notice where you feel the sensations, perhaps in your back and buttocks, or through the backs of your shoulders as you stretch your arms around your knees. Release your hands and slowly lower your feet to the floor. Keep your legs bent and your feet near your buttocks.
- Bridge: With your knees bent, using your hips, tilt to touch the small of your back to your mat three times. You may notice your stomach muscles engaging to complete this movement. Release and come back to neutral. Repeat. Now as you keep your upper torso grounded, push your weight into your heels and lift your hips off the ground for a bridge. Do this three times.

- **Hip Stretch:** Place your right ankle on top of your left thigh. Pull your left thigh toward your chest with both hands. If it feels right for your body, use your right elbow to press your bent right leg back a bit. Release your left leg to the ground and switch legs, left ankle on top of right thigh. Pull your right thigh toward your chest.
- **Tabletop:** Slowly turn over onto your stomach. Then get on your hands and knees, with your knees under your hips and your hands on the mat below your shoulders. You can place a blanket under your knees for padding, if needed.
- **Cat-Cow:** Starting in tabletop, exhale as you move your head towards the floor and your middle back toward the sky, making the letter C with your body. Then inhale as you arch your back, letting your spine curve toward the floor and your head move toward the sky.
- **Child's Pose:** While on all fours, move your hips on top of your ankles and let your upper body move toward the floor. Lengthen your arms out straight above your head, away from your body. If possible, bring your forehead to the floor. Notice the sensations and remember to listen to your body. If ever any position is too much, please back out of it.
- Return to tabletop, knees under hips and hands under shoulders.
- Gradually move into a sitting position, legs crossed. Place your left hand on the ground and reach your right arm over your head and lean to your left. As you stretch, clench your right hand tightly, then release it. Repeat this three times. Roll your right wrist in one direction. Now the other direction. Release your right hand to the ground. Now reach your left arm over your head and lean to the right. Clench your left hand tightly, then release. Repeat

this three times. Roll your left wrist in one direction. Now in the other direction.

- Place the bottoms of your feet together. Let your knees fall open. This is cobbler's pose. Sit up tall. You might use your thumbs to massage the bottoms your feet. You can try opening your feet like a book for an added stretch.
- Softly place your palms on your thighs—right hand on your right thigh, left hand on your left thigh. Sit up tall, with your eyes closed if that serves you, and breathe deeply for three breath cycles. Notice how you have met your intention of mindful movement.

Moving Mindfully

Begin in mountain pose, standing with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent, pelvis slightly tilted under.

- Feel your feet, all four corners of your feet. Slowly shift your weight around the edges of your feet in a circular fashion. Ground yourself through your planted feet and deepening breath.
- Lean your head to the left, then gradually roll it back, then to the right, then to the front. Now reverse, to the right, back, left and front.
- Come back to center. Pause for a breath in mountain pose.
- With your palms facing in, raise your arms straight in front of your body, parallel to the ground, breathing in. Release your arms slowly to your sides while you breathe out. Repeat this a few times, letting your in-breath guide your hands up, and your out-breath guide your hands back to your sides.

- Two Worlds: Raise your arms out to your sides to form a T. Turn your palms up to face the sky. Breathe out as you curl your arms in and touch your shoulders. Breathing in, extend to a T. Breathing out, touch your shoulders.
- Return to mountain pose.
- Chair: You will move like you are lowering yourself into a seat. Bend at the knees, and gradually, with your palms facing inward, raise your hands up to the sky as you move your buttocks back into the imaginary chair. Slowly return to mountain pose. Repeat chair pose, noticing where you are feeling the stretch. Return to mountain pose.
- From mountain pose, shift your weight to your left leg, and raise your right thigh parallel to the ground, knee bent. Now extend your bent leg straight out in front of you and point your toes. Breathing out, bend your leg while keeping it raised. Breathing in, extend your leg straight up and out, pointing your foot. Breathing out, return your extended leg to the ground. Now shift your weight to your right leg, and bend your left leg so that your left thigh is parallel to the ground. Extend your left leg straight and up while pointing your toes. Breathing out, bend your left leg back in while keeping it lifted. Breathing in, extend your left leg again. Breathing out, bend it back in. Now return to mountain pose.
- Placing your hands on your hips, you will draw a large circle around your body with your head by leaning your torso forward at the waist then around. Imagine a marker on the top of your head drawing a circle in the air as you breathe in and slowly lean to your left, then lean back, keeping that circle smooth, then to

your right, and back to the front. Now you will return in the opposite direction, breathing out.

- With your arms at your side, reach your hands toward the floor as you stand up tall, spreading your fingers out wide. Slowly bring your arms up to a T, and then above your head, reaching toward the sky. Hold it here for a couple breaths. Touch your palms together in prayer hands and bring your hands down in front of your heart.
- Namaste.

Walking Meditation

In walking meditation, you are focusing on your body as you walk, all the sensations, movements, shifting of weight, even aches and pains that you may overlook in your daily life. The purpose is to be fully present with your walking, knowing that you are walking, just for the sake of walking, without hurrying. Walking in peace, you are kissing the earth with your feet.

Start in mountain pose, legs shoulder-width apart.

- Feel all four corners of your feet by gently shifting your weight around, shift your weight around the edges of your feet in a circular fashion. Feel the ground below your feet supporting you.
- Slowly take a step with your right foot. Experience the sensation of the planted foot rolling forward as you shift your weight forward. Feel the various elements of your step.
- Notice how your hips shift to support your intention to walk.
- Notice how your arms swing and perhaps touch your sides.
- Notice how your foot feels when it touches the ground.

- Observe how your weight shifts to your right foot as you bend your left knee and slowly swing your left foot forward.
- Pay attention to your breathing. Stay aware of your feet and your rising and falling belly.
- When thoughts or feelings arise, name them “thought” or “feeling,” and continue walking.

Week 3 Homework:

Mindful Movement (~21 min./day)

Daily

- **Awareness (part of routine):** Pick a routine habit and bring awareness to this activity (such as brushing teeth, lathering hair, washing dishes, smelling foods or drinks).
- **Sit (6 min.):** Practice sitting for 6 minutes daily.
- **Scan (2 min.):** Scan your body once per day.
- **Walk (5 min.):** Practice walking mindfully for 5 minutes per day.
- **Move (5 min.):** Practice mindful movements (see week 3 mindful movement summary).
- **GLOWY Daily Reflection Practice (3 min.):** Write one page every morning (preferably outdoors), addressing each of the following:
 - o **GratITUDE:** Recognize things in your life that you're grateful for.
 - o **Lift Up:** Identify circumstances, people or struggles that are causing you/others to suffer; or needed wisdom/resources.

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- o **Observe:** Scan your body and notice sensations in your body, thoughts and feelings you're experiencing; observe your surroundings.
- o **Wholesome Intention:** Set a clear, positive statement of the outcome you want to experience; how you intend to be, live and show up.
- o **You Are:** Write positive affirmations about who you are.
- **Self-Care:** Drink plenty of water daily to hydrate yourself, eat healthy and whole foods and get sufficient sleep each night.

One Time

- **Look (5 min.):** Look at a friend or colleague this week; notice one thing about them and write it in your journal.
- **Veda Hug:** Give someone you love a mindful hug. Don't let go until they do. Think about how grateful you are for them while they're in your arms.



Mindful Creations

Creating mindfully means mindful exploring, connecting and practicing your artistic languages, and perhaps trying out new artistic languages. Stay present with yourself and your art. Use your senses. Smell the pencil lead, touch the chalk and see its dust on your hands, hear the sound of your scissors cutting paper. Keep in touch with your body movements, as well as thoughts and emotions that may arise.

Unending Line

Select an instrumental song. Choose a writing instrument: pens, pencils, colored pencils, markers, etc. Start the song. In your journal, touch the writing instrument to a blank piece of paper and don't stop moving it until the song stops.

Stand up. Visualize your unending line and let your movements replicate the shape of it. For instance, if you drew a swirl, start your movement out small and end much bigger.

Artful Creations

Collect art supplies from your home or a department store: from crayons, paint and clay to canvases, art paper, scissors, tape, glue and chalks, jewelry creation supplies, stamps or blank sheets of music paper, depending on your needs.

Find a place to create that suits your inspirational needs, preferably outdoors or near an outdoor view. Create freely. If you so choose, you may want to share your creation with a friend.

Week 4 Homework: Mindful Creations (~23 min./day)

Daily

- **Awareness:** Stay aware of your chosen habit (brushing teeth, washing dishes, etc.).
- **Sit (8 min.):** Practice sitting for 8 minutes daily.
- **Scan (2 min.):** Scan your body once per day.
- **Walk (5 min.):** Practice walking mindfully for 5 minutes per day.
- **Move (5 min.):** Practice mindful movements (see week 3 mindful movement summary).
- **GLOWY Daily Reflection Practice (3 min.):** Write one page every morning (preferably outdoors), addressing each of the following:
 - o **GratITUDE:** Recognize things in your life that you're grateful for.
 - o **Lift Up:** Identify circumstances, people or struggles that are causing you/others to suffer; or needed wisdom/resources.
 - o **Observe:** Scan your body and notice sensations in your body, thoughts and feelings you're experiencing; observe your surroundings.
 - o **Wholesome Intention:** Set a clear, positive statement of the outcome you want to experience; how you intend to be, live and show up.

- o **You Are:** Write positive affirmations about who you are.
- **Self-Care:** Drink plenty of water daily to hydrate yourself, eat healthy and whole foods and get sufficient sleep each night.

One Time

- **Create (10–15 min.):** Sit—preferably outside or with a view of the outdoors—with paper and your choice of colored pencils, markers or paints. Observe what you see, then respond to it with a creation.



Tools to Process Difficult Emotions

Difficult emotions, even unpleasant events, have the power to upend your days, weeks, years or lifetime—if you allow them. One of the greatest gifts you can give yourself is learning to see what happens in life as always changing. You can choose not to thrash against it or claim it as yourself, but simply recognize what's going on and allow it to pass, as all things do.

Equanimity is being able to recognize the various elements of your experiences with a whole heart, calm body and open mind. It's holding space for peace and calmness in the midst of the chaos of life. You look life in the face, accepting what's there and ceasing to struggle.

The Tools

- You identify the emotion you're feeling, such as anger, fear or sadness.
- You listen to thoughts you may be having and physical sensations you may be feeling.
- Then you let it be as it is. You infuse the situation with compassion. You investigate the roots of your feelings and detach from the thoughts, emotions and sensations.
- You recognize that your thoughts, emotions and body sensations are just that—thoughts, emotions and body sensations. You don't

identify with them as being you, just realize you are experiencing them, like a passing cloud.

- The sky represents your experiences. You see the sky change colors, clouds come and go and the sun moves up into the sky, just like you can see your experiences come and go, morph and move. Explore it without attaching to an outcome. You practice being a non-judgmental explorer.

GLOWY Daily Reflection Practice

- G stands for “grateful.” You remember things that are a blessing.
- L is for “lift up,” for the things that need prayer.
- O is for “observe” to remind you to pay attention to what you notice in your mind, body and soul.
- W stands for “wholesome intention,” what you intend for your day.
- Y is for “you are,” the beginning of a positive affirmation about yourself.

Unpleasant, Pleasant and Neutral Events

In your journal, write one example of an unpleasant event, one example of a pleasant event and one neutral happening from this past week.

When you encounter a situation, good, bad or neutral, you have a choice about how you respond. One way you can invite wisdom into your responses is by giving some space between the situation and your response, to give yourself time to be aware of the external situation and your internal situation.

R.A.I.N. and B.R.A.I.N.

R.A.I.N. is an acronym that helps you guide yourself through your life encounters. This is an acronym coined long ago by Michele McDonald, a meditation teacher. In the story, Meghan recommends adding a “B” to the acronym for “breathe.”

- **B** stands for “breathe.” To connect with yourself, begin by grounding via your breath.
- **R** stands for “recognize what’s going on.” What are your thoughts and feelings? How is your body responding—is your jaw clenched, are your eyebrows furrowed, do you feel your stomach flipping?
- **A** stands for “allowing,” letting the situation be what it is without trying to change it.
- **I** is for “investigating.” You are exploring the roots of your pain, happiness or other emotion. Perhaps you’re reacting based on a habitual pattern.
- **N** is for “not identifying with your thoughts, feelings and body sensations.” Let thoughts be thoughts, feelings be feelings and body sensations be body sensations. None of these are you.

Drawing on a Body Outline

- Free write for five minutes.
- In your journal draw an outline of a body.
- On this body outline, draw your thoughts, feelings, sensations. Use markers, pens or paints.

Week 5 Homework:

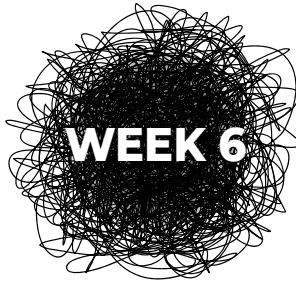
Tools to Process Difficult Emotions (~25 min./day)

Daily

- **Awareness:** Stay aware of your chosen habit (brushing teeth, washing dishes, etc.).
- **Sit (10 min.):** Practice sitting for 10 minutes daily.
- **Scan (2 min.):** Scan your body once per day.
- **Walk (5 min.):** Practice walking mindfully for 5 minutes per day.
- **Move (5 min.):** Practice mindful movements (see week 3 mindful movement summary).
- **GLOWY Daily Reflection Practice (3 min.):** Write one page every morning (preferably outdoors), addressing each of the following:
 - o **GratITUDE:** Recognize things in your life that you're grateful for.
 - o **Lift Up:** Identify circumstances, people or struggles that are causing you/others to suffer; or needed wisdom/resources.
 - o **Observe:** Scan your body and notice sensations in your body, thoughts and feelings you're experiencing; observe your surroundings.
 - o **Wholesome Intention:** Set a clear, positive statement of the outcome you want to experience; how you intend to be, live and show up.
 - o **You Are:** Write positive affirmations about who you are.
- **Self-Care:** Drink plenty of water daily to hydrate yourself, eat healthy and whole foods and get sufficient sleep each night.

One Time

- **Sunrise (5 min.):** Watch the sun rise in all its glory. Notice how it changes.
- **Sunset (5 min.)** Are you a night owl? Watch the sun set instead and observe its transformation.
- **Unpleasant, Pleasant, Neutral:** Write one unpleasant, one pleasant and one neutral event from your week.



Day of Silence

A day of silence is one not only of verbal silence, but of silence of the eyes, meaning you keep your eyes to yourself. You focus inwardly during your practice. The recommended time allotment totals approximately four hours, plus transitions. You may consider a five-hour day with leisurely transitions, time for breathing and inspirational quotes.

Planning Tips

- Schedule your day of silence (or half-day of silence ... or day and night of silence) in advance.
- Find a quiet place that provides access to nature. Reserve it in advance.
- Location ideas:
 - o Cabin in the woods
 - o Room at a state park lodge
 - o Place of worship
 - o Country club
 - o Home: you may choose to instead stay home and arrange for individuals who reside there to be elsewhere for the day.
- You may consider asking a friend (or a few) to join you.

- Plan the details of the day (suggestions below), and send the information to those who will join you. Remind participants that phones will need to be on silent and ideally left in vehicles, so make arrangements to be unavailable for a period of time.
- Collect a set of inspirational quotes (either from this book or on your own).

What to Pack

- Chair or sitting cushion of your choice
- Blanket for padding and support
- Yoga mat
- Journal and pen
- Art supplies (crayons, paint and clay to canvases, art paper, scissors, tape, glue and chalks, jewelry creation supplies, stamps or blank sheets of music paper, depending on your needs)
- Tea (preferably loose-leaf tea with a diffuser, though tea bags will work)
- Tea cups, diffuser and kettle
- Instrumental music (and player, if needed)
- Bell or musical bowl (optional, a glass and eating utensil will work)
- Food for the day
- Piece of fruit for all participants
- Inspirational quotes

Day of Silence Guide

Remember it's your practice, so please take care of your needs quietly throughout the day. Below is a recommended outline for a day of silence.

It's highly recommended to set your intention for the day. Also set clear expectations on the beginning and ending time.

Introduction (5 min.)

Acquaint participants with the building/property. Remind them that it's their practice and they are free to tend to their needs. A day of silence includes silence of the eyes, meaning everyone keeps their eyes to themselves. The leader will share quotes and instructions to guide the practice. Please turn off all phones, watches and other devices. It's strongly recommended that all devices are left in the car. The leader will ring a bell at the beginning of each exercise and ring it three times at the end of each practice.

Intention Setting

Take a few moments to breathe and set your intention for the day.

Sitting (20 min.)

Roll out your yoga mat and set up your sitting space. Focus on your breathing. Notice the thoughts in your mind and sensations in your body.

Six Senses (10 min.)

Practice being present with your six senses. Have your journal and the piece of fruit handy. Feel free to note your observations in your notebook throughout the exercise or at the end.

Sight: Really look at the fruit in your hands. What do you see?

Touch: Pick it up and notice how it feels.

Hear: What do you hear when you touch the fruit?

Smell: Notice the scent of the fruit. How would you describe the scent?

Taste: Take a bite of the fruit. What do you taste?

Mind: What thoughts come up for you about the fruit?

Take a few moments to finish writing your sensations.

Mindful Walking: Short (10 min.)

Find a place indoors or outdoors for mindful walking. Walk in a straight line back and forth for 10 minutes. Feel free to keep your eyes opened or closed.

Reflection (10 min.)

Silence can be challenging to find. Soak it in and write or draw about silence in your journals. You may notice your senses around silence. You might note how you feel silence and how you feel about it. Remember to breathe deeply.

Mindful Movement (20 min.)

Remember that if a position doesn't honor your body, you can always practice breathing while sitting or in corpse pose, or simply visualize the movements.

- Lift your arms to the sky.
- Two worlds: Arms in a T, now curling in to your shoulders and back out
- Cat-cow: Exhale as you move your head towards the floor and your middle back toward the sky, making the letter C with your body. Then inhale as you arch your back, letting your spine curve toward the floor and your head move toward the sky.
- Downward dog: Begin on hands and knees, hands are flat and forward at shoulder width, feet hip distance apart, toes pointing to the front of your mat, bend your knees, support your hands

and wrists, push bottom up toward ceiling, arms are straight, legs are straight, or knees bent to accommodate tight hamstrings, heels stretching towards the floor.

- Mountain pose: Feet shoulder-width apart
- Child's pose: Move your hips on top of your ankles and let your upper body move toward the floor. Lengthen your arms out straight above your head, away from your body. If possible, bring your forehead to the floor. Notice the sensations and remember to listen to your body. If ever any position is too much, please back out of it.
- Table top: On all fours, knees under hips and hands under shoulders
- Seated stretch: Legs crossed, place left hand on ground, reach right arm over your head and lean to left. As you stretch, clench your right hand tightly, then release it. Repeat this three times. Now, roll your right wrist in one direction. Now the other direction. Release and repeat with opposite side.
- Transition to a 10-minute sitting meditation.
- End in Shavasana, or corpse pose: Lie on your back with your arms comfortably at your sides.

Silent Lunch (45 min.)

Eat anywhere on the property. It's a 45-minute lunch break. Remember to take your time and use your senses to eat mindfully.

Mindful Walking: Long (20 min.)

Go outdoors and find one natural item (perhaps on a trail) to bring back. While you walk outdoors, keep your eyes open as you feel your feet and movements, touch leaves and branches.

Creative Reflection (20 min.)

Write or draw about the natural item you brought back. You may also use your creative supplies to express your observations.

Mat Walking (10 min.)

Walk back and forth on your mat. Practice breathing in as you lift your foot and breathing out as you gently place your foot on the ground. As you feel the end of the mat, turn slowly and breathe in and out three times. Then begin walking across the mat again.

Mindful Movement (20 min.)

Always pay attention to your body. If a position or movement doesn't serve you, practice sitting mindfully or lying down for a body scan, or simply visualize the movements.

- Begin in mountain pose: Feet shoulder-width apart.
- Chair pose: Move like you are lowering yourself into a seat. Bend at the knees, and gradually, with your palms facing inward, raise your hands up to the sky as you move your buttocks back into the imaginary chair. Slowly return to mountain pose and repeat chair pose, noticing where you are feeling the stretch.
- Ragdoll: Bend over at the waist, letting upper body hang over your legs, breathe into your hamstrings.
- Two worlds: Arms in a T, now curl in to your shoulders and back out.
- Arm stretch: Right arm across your body, press it to yourself with your left hand; then do this for your left arm.
- Cat-cow: Exhale as you move your head towards the floor and your middle back toward the sky, making the letter C with your

body. Then inhale as you arch your back, letting your spine curve toward the floor and your head move toward the sky.

- Downward dog: Begin on hands and knees, hands are flat and forward at shoulder-width, feet hip-distance apart, toes pointing to the front of your mat, bend your knees, support your hands and wrists, push your bottom up toward ceiling, arms are straight, legs are straight, or knees bent to accommodate tight hamstrings, heels stretching towards the floor.
- Child's pose: Move your hips on top of your ankles and let your upper body move toward the floor. Lengthen your arms out straight above your head, away from your body. If possible, bring your forehead to the floor. Notice the sensations and remember to listen to your body. If ever any position is too much, please back out of it.
- Bridge: On your back, with your knees bent, use your hips to tilt the small of your back to the mat.
- Rock-a-bye: On your back, hold your knees with your hands. Inhale, relax your knees away from your body; exhale to pull your knees closer to your chest.
- Low back roll: With your knees still pulled close to your chest, gently roll side to side to massage your back.
- Cobbler's pose: With the bottoms of your feet together, your knees falling open, sit up tall. You may massage the bottoms of your feet, and try opening your feet like a book.
- Return to mountain pose.
- Transition to a 10-minute sitting meditation.
- End in Shavasana, or corpse pose: Lie on your back with your arms comfortably at your sides.

Tea Time (20 min.)

Prepare tea. Experience every part of the process with all six senses. Drink the tea.

Sitting (15 min.)

The day will conclude with a mindful sitting. If in a group, the members will circle up afterward for a discussion. During the sitting practices, you may sit anywhere in the property or choose to stay together for the final sit.

Work to focus on your breath, slowly breathing in and out.

Ending Discussion or Journaling If Solo (20 min.)

Questions for discussion/journaling:

- What came up for you today?
- What surprised you?
- What was most challenging for you?
- Have your feelings about silence changed at all? If so, how?
- What will you take away from this day?
- Complete this sentence: Silence is _____.
- What did you learn today?
- How do you intend to continue mindful practices in your daily life?
- Is there anyone else in your life who might benefit from learning about mindfulness? How might you help teach or connect them to mindful resources?

Week 6 Homework:

Day of Silence (~25 min./day)

Daily

- **Awareness:** Stay aware of your chosen habit (brushing teeth, washing dishes, etc.).
- **Sit (10 min.):** Practice sitting for 10 minutes daily.
- **Scan (2 min.):** Scan your body once per day.
- **Walk (5 min.):** Practice walking mindfully for 5 minutes per day.
- **Move (5 min.):** Practice mindful movements (see week 3 mindful movement summary).
- **GLOWY Daily Reflection Practice (3 min.):** Write one page every morning (preferably outdoors), addressing each of the following:
 - o **GratITUDE:** Recognize things in your life that you're grateful for.
 - o **Lift Up:** Identify circumstances, people or struggles that are causing you/others to suffer; or needed wisdom/resources.
 - o **Observe:** Scan your body and notice sensations in your body, thoughts and feelings you're experiencing; observe your surroundings.
 - o **Wholesome Intention:** Set a clear, positive statement of the outcome you want to experience; how you intend to be, live and show up.
 - o **You Are:** Write positive affirmations about who you are.
- **Self-Care:** Drink plenty of water daily to hydrate yourself, eat healthy and whole foods and get sufficient sleep each night.

One Time

- **Research:** Identify local resources (classes, clubs, meditation groups) to support your mindful practice.
- **Review Your Journal:** Read through your journal from your time of practice. Consider:
 - o What did you learn?
 - o What mindful practices were the most beneficial to you?
 - o Are there any exercises that were especially hard? Why?
 - o Which practices will you continue to incorporate into your daily life?
 - o How will these mindful practices serve you?
 - o The three Ws: *When*, *where* and with *whom* will you practice?
 - o Do you have a friend, loved one or acquaintance who might benefit from mindfulness? How might you help teach or connect them to mindful resources?

GLOWY Daily Reflection Practice (2–3 min.)

GLOWY is an acronym you can use in your daily practice.

G stands for “grateful.” You can identify things that are a blessing.

L is for “lift up,” for the things that need attention/prayer.

O is for “observe,” to remind you to pay attention to what you notice in your mind, body and soul.

W stands for “wholesome intention,” what you intend for yourself and your day.

Y is for “you are,” the beginning of positive statements about yourself.

The GLOWY Daily Reflection Practice

Take three deep breaths in and out. Then connect with yourself by reflecting on the following:

I am **G**rateful for _____.

I **L**ift up _____.

I **O**bserve _____.

My **W**holesome intention is _____.

You are _____.

Take three deep breaths in and out.

The Journey Continues

Hungry for more? Be sure to visit aimeemorgan.com, where you'll find further resources, recipes from the book and opportunities to connect. Hope to see you there!

ARE YOU TIRED OF THE CHAOS?

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