

Mindfulness

FROM AUTOPILOT TO AWARENESS

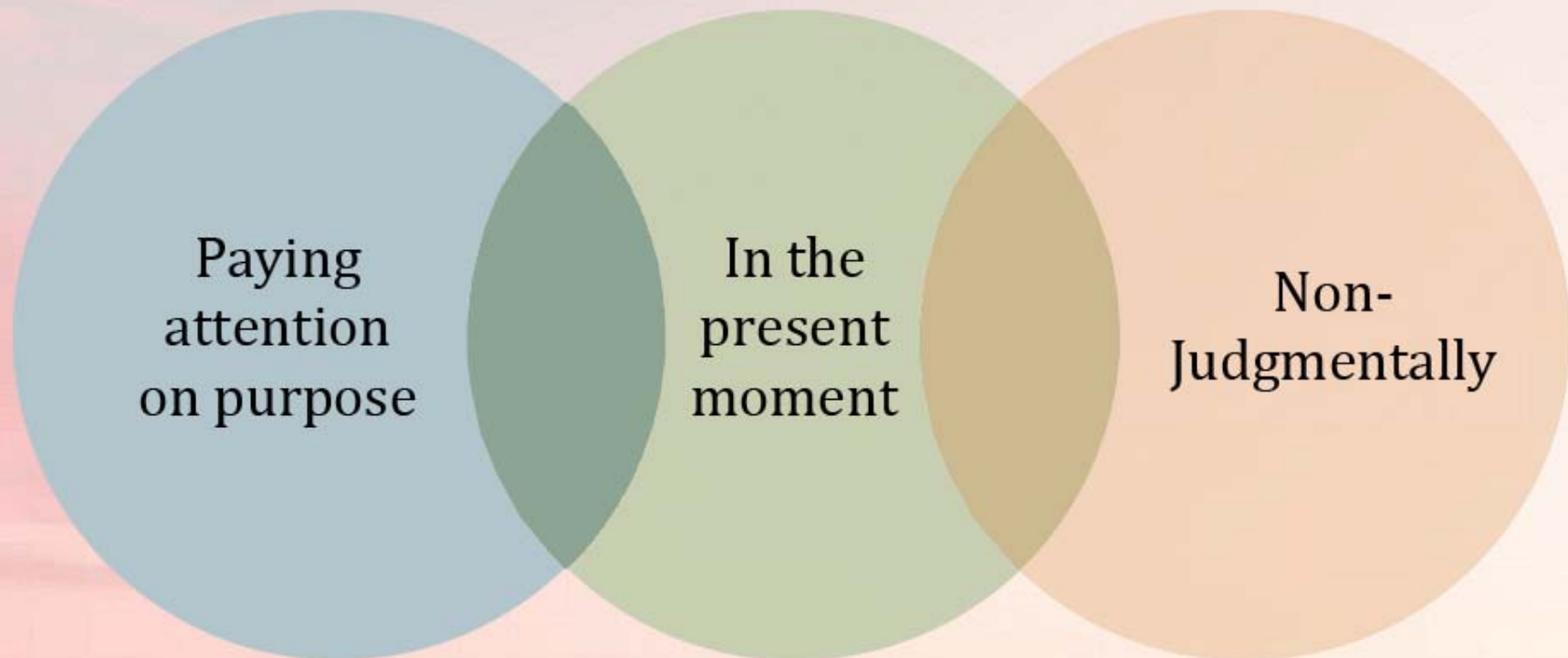
A practical path to greater
wellbeing, balance
and connection



What is Mindfulness?

The awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.

- Jon Kabat-Zinn



The Bigger Picture

Our thoughts are just the tip of the iceberg.

Conscious thoughts,
actions & awareness
10%

Thought
Analysis
Decisions
Responses

Subconscious -
reactions and actions
we realize when we think of it
40%-50%

Emotional Reactions
Belief Systems
Imagination
Personality
Memory
Identity
Habits

Unconscious -
deep recesses of our
past and memories
30%-40%

Stored Trauma



The Autonomic Nervous System

Our nervous system is like a personal surveillance system, always asking: “Am I safe?”

Sympathetic Nervous System

Mobilizes us for action

- Fight, flight, fawn
- Floods system with adrenaline
- Increases heart rate, energy and alertness

Parasympathetic Nervous System

Helps us rest, digest and connect

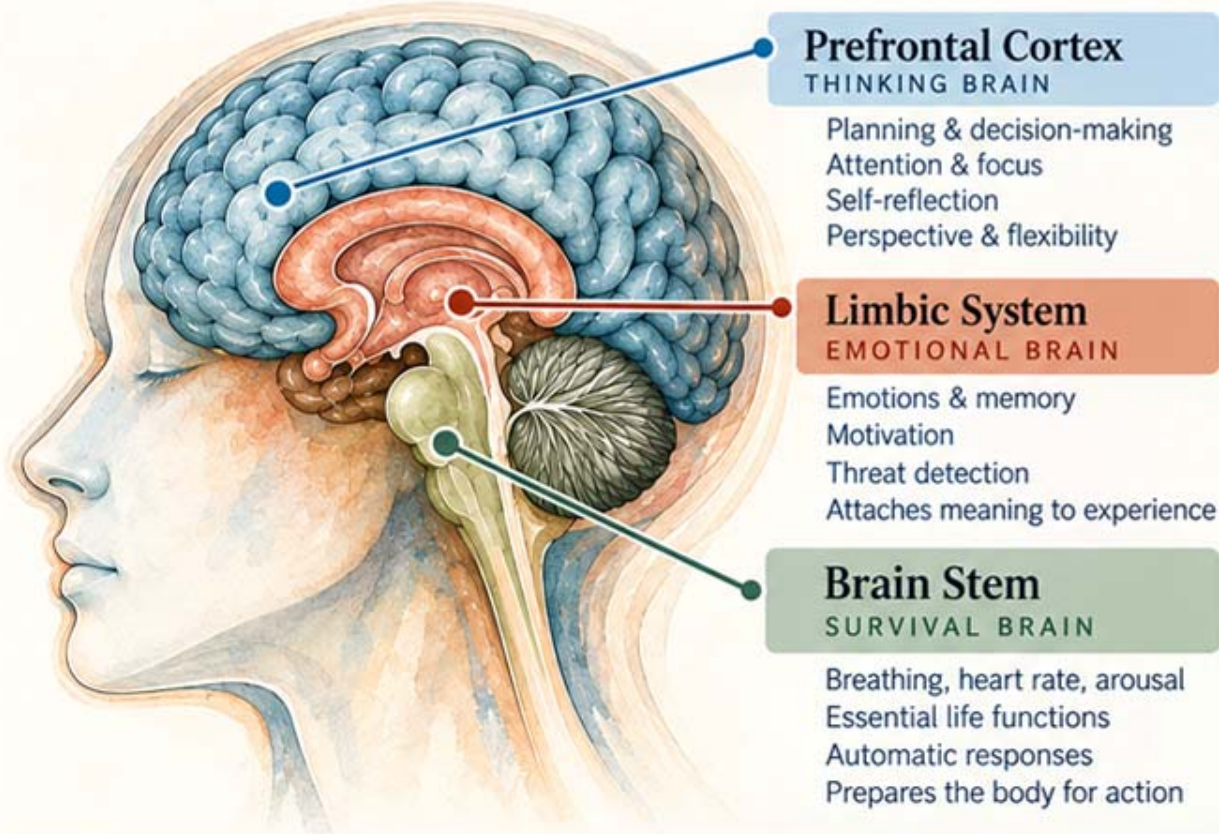
- Slows heart rate
- Supports healing and recovery
- Calms the body and mind
- Engages the social nervous system

Nervous System States

Each state shows up in the body, mind and behavior. All states are normal and have a healthy activation when the system is flexible to move from state to state in response to our environment.

	SAFE & CONNECTED (Ventral Vagal)	Mobilized (Sympathetic)	Shut Down (Dorsal Vagal)
How it Shows up	Calm, present, open	Alert, activated, on guard	Numb, disconnected
Body sensations	Steady breath and heart rate relaxed muscles warmth, ease	Increased heart rate, shallow, fast breathing, muscle tension, high energy	Low energy. feeling heavy, slowed down, weak muscles, foggy
Mind & emotions	Clear, curious, grounded, able to feel and think	Anxious, overwhelmed, focused on threat, harder to think clearly	Numb, empty, hopeless, hard to feel or engage
Behavior	Engaged, connected flexible, resilient	Fight, flight, fawn, reacting, doing, avoiding	Withdrawn, shut down, disengaged, dissociated
Healthy activation	Regulation and resilience, connection with self and others, capacity to work, rest and play	Energy and motivation, alert, focused attention, ability to take action, mobilized for appropriate challenge	Rest, recovery, conservation of energy, natural pause and healing, ability to re-engage when safe

How Stress Affects Us



When Stress Increases

Brain shifts into survival mode

Resources move toward what feels urgent.

Attention narrows

We become more sensitive to potential threats.

Thinking becomes less effective

Harder to think clearly and access perspective.

Body responds automatically

Even when we know we're safe, the body can still activate as if there is danger.

Physical Effects of Stress

Increased heart rate & blood pressure

Faster or shallower breathing

Muscle tension

Changes in digestion

Disrupted sleep

Affects immune function, pain & fatigue

How Stress Can Distort Our Thinking

High Activation (Sympathetic)

More sensitive to potential threats

Assume the worst

Repetitive worry

Rigid or black and white thinking

Harder to access curiosity and perspective

Shutdown (Dorsal Vagal)

Hopelessness or helplessness

Feeling like nothing matters

Difficulty thinking or concentrating

More withdrawn

Harder to see other possibilities

This Impacts Our Relationships

More reactive or defensive

Less able to communicate effectively

Misinterpret others' intentions

Harder to recognize available support

State creates story.

Our thoughts are important, but they aren't always an accurate reflection of what's happening in the present moment.



Why Mindfulness Matters

A regular mindfulness practice can help us:

Reduce stress	Less reactivity, more capacity to respond
Increase emotional balance	More steadiness through daily ups and downs
Improve focus	Greater attention and better decision making
Strengthen relationships	More presence, empathy and connection
Build resilience	More flexibility and capacity to navigate life challenges
Feel more present and alive	A deeper experience of joy, meaning and purpose

S.A.F.E.

A Simple Practice For Any Nervous System State

These practices can help us meet whatever is here with more awareness and choice.

S

Stop & Sense

Stop and sense what is happening in your body right now.

A

Allow

Let what is here be here without judgement.

F

Flow

Move with what your body is asking of you. Allow movement, breath or rest.

E

Expand

Choose to practice S.A.F.E. so you can build the capacity to move beyond familiar patterns of survival and into a life of greater connection, meaning, and possibility.



A Mindfulness Practice

Let's experience a few practices together to center, connect and build awareness.

1

Orient & Center

Arrive and allow the body to settle into safety.

2

Connection Breath

Invite connection through breath and touch.

3

Body Awareness

Notice what is here without judgment.

4

Mindful Movement

Awaken the body and experience movement with awareness.

Bringing Mindfulness Into Everyday Life

Mindfulness isn't something we just do on a cushion - it's a way of being.

Everyday Moments

Bring full attention to activities without multi-tasking.

Use Your Senses

Notice what you see, feel, smell, hear and taste.

Be Kind to Yourself

Notice and release self-judgment.

Create Touchpoints

Pair mindfulness with daily routines.

Cultivate Connection

Be more present with yourself and others.