



Lessons 1 of 10



Mindful Relaxation -- Layers of Sound

- Listen for the sounds that are far away from you and imagine stretching your hearing way out beyond the room you are sitting in, all the way to the outdoors. Listen carefully and find the farthest away sounds that you can hear.
- Bring your hearing even closer, to find the sounds in this room. Reach your hearing into each corner of the room and see what sounds you can find.
- Finally, bring your hearing to the closest place of all - your own body. Turn your focus to the sounds that you can find your own body making. Listen carefully.

Mindful Movement -- Video 1



Mindful Thinking -- Thinking Error: "I Can't"

What? When faced with a problem or challenge, often our mind automatically goes to "I can't" before we even know it.

So What? Sometimes we don't even realize that our brain is thinking "I can't" so it's important to learn how to recognize it. Breaking this thinking habit is also important because thinking "I can't" causes the brain to freeze and not take any action at all. It often leaves us feeling helpless, stuck, stressed, or disappointed, which only makes the problem feel worse.

Now What? The key to breaking the "I can't" thinking habit is to pause and consider what can be done. This is called cognitive restructuring when we can learn to catch ourselves when we think "I can't". Cognition=thinking, and cognitive restructuring literally means the restructuring or changing of how we think.

Ask Yourself:

- What is the evidence that I can't do it?
- What small step can I take right now to start tackling this problem?
- What steps have I taken in the past to learn new skills or handle other problems?
- Is it possible to ask someone for help?

Application

Take a moment to think: When and where can you practice this re-framing in your own life?



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Lessons 2 of 10



Mindful Relaxation -- I Can Do This

- Connect each of your fingers to your thumb on both hands at once.
- Press your thumb and first finger together saying "I".
- The thumb and the middle finger together saying "Can".
- The thumb and the ring finger together saying "Do".
- And the thumb and pinky together saying "This".
- Put enough pressure on your fingers to really feel the connection they are making.
- Begin slowly with both hands at the same time, and as you feel more comfortable, go a bit faster.
- Finally repeat it silently to yourself.

Mindful Movement -- Video 2



Mindful Thinking -- Thinking Error: Worst Case Scenario

What? Sometimes our brain jumps to the worst-case scenario, or catastrophe, thinking "what if they're mad at me?" when a friend doesn't text back instead of things like they're busy or the phone died.

So What? Breaking this thinking habit is important because anticipating disaster causes the brain to be stuck in a state of alarm. When we constantly "scan" and look for things to go wrong, we may develop anxiety and feel more stressed.

Now What? The key to breaking the "what if" thinking habit is catch yourself predicting a terrible event. The goal is to become a "what's most likely true?" thinker instead. Practice recognizing that thoughts of worst-cases are just thoughts, not reality.

Ask Yourself:

- Is this a worst-case scenario thought?
- Is there any evidence that this could actually happen?
- What are five other things that are more likely to happen?
- What would I tell a friend who had the same thought?

Application

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Mindful Relaxation -- Tense and Release

- To begin, make your legs as straight as long as can be for three seconds, then let your legs fall and be heavy.
- Moving to the stomach, pull your belly inward for three seconds, and release.
- Next move to your fingers, clench your fists. After three seconds, relax.
- Then, make your face muscles strong. Squint your eyes, and wrinkle your nose for three seconds, then relax.
- Now, tense all the muscles you can at the same time. Feel the strength that you hold in your body and hold for 3 and relax one final time.

Mindful Movement -- Video 3



Mindful Thinking -- Thinking Error: All or Nothing

What? At times we may develop ideas that things are black-or-white extremes, this or that, all or nothing---and we think that there can be nothing in between. When something isn't perfect, we see it as a failure; when something goes wrong, we may feel the whole day is ruined.

So What? Breaking this thinking habit is important because expecting perfection from ourselves and others isn't realistic. Rigid ways of thinking lead people to feel angry and resentful a lot of the time.

Now What? The key to breaking this habit is to catch ourselves in the act, and pause to think about many possible ways that events can unfold. The goal is to become a "let's look at all the points on the possibilities between the two extremes" thinker.

Ask Yourself:

- Is my thought at one extreme?
- Is there any evidence to support my thought?
- Is there evidence against it?

Application

Take a moment to think: When and where can you practice this reframing in your own life?



Mindful Relaxation -- Butterfly Hug

- Gently cross your arms and bring each hand to rest upon your chest.
- If you'd like, you are now ready to connect your thumbs together to create the form of a "butterfly's body" while the remaining fingers can extend outward to form the "butterfly wings."
- Imagine the butterfly resting above your chest
- Allow one of your hands (a butterfly wing) to flap gently, then the other wing, alternating hands slowly and gently to create the movement of a butterfly flapping its wings.
- Tune into the natural rhythm your own body is creating.
- Count down from "5". By the time you get to "0," your butterfly will have landed softly on your chest.

Mindful Movement -- Video 4



Mindful Thinking -- Thinking Error: Zooming in on Negative

What? Sometimes, our attention can zoom in and focus on a negative event or experience that happens during the day. Our brain gets stuck thinking about the bad stuff and blows the negative moments way out of proportion, making it feel much bigger than it really is.

So What? Breaking this thinking habit is important because focusing on the negative all the time can lead to feeling badly about ourselves, others, and life in general, which can make us sad or depressed.

Now What? The key to breaking this habit is to notice and pay attention to times when we are zoomed in on the negative. The goal is to become a "let's look at the big picture" thinker, to step back and see things overall instead of focusing on the one detail.

Ask Yourself:

Am I focusing too much on one detail of a situation?

What good things happened that I'm forgetting? Try to list five things in your head.

When I think back on today, what will be the most accurate way to remember the bigger picture?

Application

Take a moment to think: When and where can you practice this reframing in your own life?





Lessons 5 of 10



Mindful Relaxation -- Lazy 8 Breath

- Tune in by taking a few deep breaths notice the temperature of the air as it passes through your throat: Is it cool? Warm? Both? Maybe, all you have noticed so far is that you are noticing - and that's fine. Just notice!
- Use an index finger to begin tracing the number "8"
- Count silently to four as you trace the upper loop (1..2..3..4..) then the bottom loop (5..6..7..8..)
- To match our breathing to Mindful Movement, we breathe in as we move 'up' and we breathe out as we lower 'down.'
- You can also synchronize your breath with the movement of your hand as you trace "8."
- Inhale, trace 'up' and around the top loop (1..2..3..4..).
- Exhale, trace 'down' and around the bottom loop (5..6..7..8..).

Mindful Movement -- Video 5



Mindful Thinking -- Thinking Error: I Should, You Should

What? Sometimes, the brain can set unrealistic expectations about our own behavior and the behaviors of others. It often uses the word "should" to express a feeling.

So What? It's not healthy for us to constantly look for what we, and others, need to be doing differently. These inflexible ways of thinking often lead to feelings of disappointment, regret, betrayal, and anger. When we apply such intense rules to our own actions and then don't measure up, we are likely to feel like we messed up and let others down. The same happens when we apply intense rules to others as well.

Now What? The key to breaking this thinking habit is to look hard at the times when your brain thinks "I should" or "they should." The goal is to become an "it would be nice if..." thinker instead.

Ask Yourself:

- Were my expectations reasonable?
- What do I want? What's my preference?
- What if I change it to think "it would be nice if..." or "I'd like to..." instead?

Application

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Mindful Relaxation -- Volcano Breath

- Start with your fingers bent, and knuckles pressed together in front of your belly.
- Imagine you are an old volcano. On the outside, you are very still and silent. But on the inside, the lava is warm and full of movement.
- Keep your knuckles pressed together and send a breath of fresh cold air into your volcano.
- Exhale, letting the warm volcano air come out through your mouth.
- Inhale, lifting your arms straight up.
- Separate your hands and breathe out, moving your arms down to your side.
- Inhale, lifting your arms above your head. Exhale, circling your hands down. Inhale again, feeling the fresh air cool your volcano.
- Exhale, noticing your warm breath is as it leaves your body.

Mindful Movement -- Video 6



Mindful Thinking -- Thinking Error: Fortune Telling

What? Fortune telling is when the brain assumes it can predict the future. Instead of waiting to see what happens, it jumps to a conclusion and thinks it knows what is going to happen.

So What? When the brain makes predictions without knowing what will happen, it leaps right over what is actually true. Believing we're doomed from the start makes our brain freeze and then, guess what? Sometimes the negative prediction ends up coming true.

Now What? The key to breaking this thinking habit is to pause and question your automatic predictions about the future. The goal is to become a "look before you leap" thinker to catch yourself when your brain jumps to make a prediction about the future.

Ask Yourself:

- Is my prediction reasonable? Does it make sense?
- What evidence do I have to base my fortune-telling on?
- How often have I been right in the past when I jumped to a conclusion that something bad will happen?

Application

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Mindful Relaxation -- Ocean Breath

- Begin by taking a deep breath in through your nose until you are completely full of air. Slowly and evenly let the air out of your mouth, whispering a long, slow “ha” sound.
- Next, imagine you are fogging up a mirror: Hold up one hand in front of you and begin with a deep inhale.
- Slowly release the warm air to fog up your mirror.
- Seal your lips and begin to inhale slowly and evenly through the nose.
- Keep your lips sealed and exhale, noticing your warm breath is as it leaves your body.
- Make the same whisper again, with the lips sealed.
- Notice how the rhythm of your inhale and exhale sound similar to the ocean waves moving back and forth.

Mindful Movement -- Video 7



Mindful Thinking -- Thinking Error: Mind Reading

What? The thinking error called “mind-reading” is when the brain thinks it knows what someone else is thinking and assumes that whatever the person is thinking is mean or critical. Instead of using evidence, it automatically assumes to know what’s going on in the mind of someone else. It’s almost always wrong.

So What? When we assume we know what others think, it can make us feel really down about ourselves. It can also make us feel really insecure and awkward around others, because we worry that others are judging us.

Now What? The key to breaking this thinking habit is to stop assuming people are thinking badly of ourselves by recognizing what we’re doing each time we try to read minds. The goal is to become a “what else could they mean?” thinker to stop from guessing what others are thinking.

Ask Yourself:

- Is it actually about me?
- Could I ask the person directly?
- What does their body language, facial expressions, and words tell me?
- What else could they mean?
- What would I tell a friend who was trying to be a mind-reader?

Application

Take a moment to think: When and where can you practice this re-framing in your own life?



Mindful Relaxation -- Flower Breath

- Cup your hands in front of you and imagine that you are carrying a delicate flower.
- Take a moment to examine your flower, noticing the color, pattern size and texture of its petals.
- Bring the flower up to your nose as you breathe slowly and deeply through your nose, imagining that you are smelling the flower.
- Exhale, lower the flower down slowly for 3 seconds.
- Inhale deeply through your nose, imagine the smell of the flower.
- Exhale entirely through the mouth, slowly saying “ahhhhh.”
- Continue to breathe deeply this way, each time imaging something new about the flower you are smelling.

Mindful Movement -- Video 8



Mindful Thinking -- Thinking Error: Blaming

What? Sometimes our brains focus on blaming someone or something for everything. The automatic habit of blaming ourselves or other people when something bad happens doesn't do any good, because blaming can't fix anything, and usually causes resentment and hurt.

So What? When we focus on blaming someone or ourselves for what has happened, we feel guilty or angry. This can lead to feeling like we're always in trouble, or we're always the one getting hurt by others.

Now What? When we immediately jump to place blame, we're not seeing clearly what actually happened. The goal is to become a “that's a bummer, how can I respond?” thinker instead because things are going to happen but it's more helpful to focus on the response instead of who to blame.

Ask Yourself:

- Am I being fair to myself by taking all the blame? Or Am I being fair to others by blaming them?
- What else contributed to this situation?
- What can I do now to make the best of the situation? And to do differently for next time?

Application

Take a moment to think: When and where can you practice this re-framing in your own life?





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Mindful Relaxation -- Balloon Breath

- Begin by placing one hand on your chest, and the other in your belly. Notice the feeling beneath your hands: the temperature, softness, and movement.
- Focus on your lower belly, imagining a small balloon in that space.
- Breathe in slowly and deeply through the nose, imagining your belly is inflating like a balloon.
- Slowly exhale through the mouth, now picturing your balloon deflating slowly and steadily.
- Feel the movement beneath your lower hand, gently expanding and contracting with each breath.
- Repeat at least 10 times.
- Lower your hands down and allow your breath to return to its natural rhythm and pace and notice any changes in your body.

Mindful Movement -- Video 9



Mindful Thinking -- Thinking Error: It's Not Fair

What? Sometimes our brains automatically think "it's not fair!" when something happens to us in one of the most common thinking errors.

So What? Obviously, there are times when justice is important and worth standing up for, like when a student is being treated unfairly or something unjust happens in the community. But in other situations, demanding that others meet our standards to "play fair" leaves us feelings constantly helpless, a victim, disappointed or angry.

Now What? When we automatically think "it's not fair" we miss the chance to learn how to bounce back from disappointments, or moments when things don't feel fair. The goal is to become an "it is what it is" thinker and learn to let go of the idea that we are owed equal treatment.

Ask Yourself:

- Can life always be fair and equal?
- What did the situation look like from the other person's point of view?
- What action steps can I take to move forward from this?

Application

Take a moment to think: When and where can you practice this re-framing in your own life?





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Mindful Relaxation -- Balancing Breath

- Reach your right hand out in front of you, and bring your thumb and index finger together, creating a pincher, just like a crab.
- Bring your pincher up to sit on your nose. Seal your lips and use your thumb to plug your right nostril. Inhale through your left nostril. Stop pressing with your thumb, and switch to press your index finger down.
- Exhale out the opposite/right side. Inhale through the same/right nostril.
- Now switch fingers, pressing your thumb down to plug the opposite nostril.
- Exhale out of the left nostril.
- Inhale in through the left nostril. .
- Repeat the steps, alternating between nostrils, always switching sides after the inhale.

Mindful Movement -- Video 10



Mindful Thinking -- Thinking Error: Feelings as Facts

What? Sometimes, when we feel a strong emotion, our brain takes that feeling and tries to turn it into a fact. Feeling frustrated about a test can lead the brain to convince you that you're not smart.

So What? When we let our feelings turn into "fact" and use those facts to make decisions about ourselves and others, it can often lead us to feel insecure and not good enough, which can lead to extra stress and anxiety in our lives.

Now What? The key to breaking this habit is to remind ourselves that feelings are feelings, and emotions don't control who we are as people. The goal is to become a person who can think "I'm feeling ____ but it's just a feeling."

Ask Yourself:

- What are the real facts, outside of the feeling, that supports this idea?
- How can I manage the feeling so that it doesn't turn into a fact in my mind?
- When I feel ____, what can I do to help me cope?

Application

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