



# MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> Tools



7 Meta-Competence Tools to Improve  
Your Way of Thinking for Better  
Decision-Making and a Satisfying Life



**MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup>**  
Destination ~ Awareness ~ Choice

**Companion eBook To Advance Your Mental Wellness**

**By Robert W. Lebovits, Ph.D. & Gérard S. Meyer, Ph.D.**

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# INTRODUCTION

Our printable e-Book was compiled with two purposes in mind:

1. It is the complete reproduction of the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> Self- Learning Online Skills course - with all the texts, images, videos, and exercises as in the computerized version - for certification and accreditation, including a certificate of completion. It can be printed for your personal use.
2. It also serves as the companion workbook for the benefit of coaching students of the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> Online Skills course. With it, you will be able to review the material you have learned and the exercises you have practiced at any time. The more you study MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup>, the more quickly you will acquire mastery.

This e-Book version was designed to allow adding personal commentaries and journaling, just like you can in your printed version.

“*All glory  
comes from  
daring to begin*

*~Eugene F. Ware*

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK?

- Reading information
- Journaling or recording your thoughts and experiences in the course
- Doing exercises and practicing the skills you are being taught



Look out for this symbol  
– it means you will be  
writing something in  
your journal.

## WHAT DO I NEED?

- A printed or pdf copy of this Workbook
- A comfortable seat in a quiet location
- A journal or other organized way to record your experiences
- A timer (for exercises that are timed)

*Every lesson and every workout will tell you exactly how long you should expect to work on it.*

Like any journey, this course will take you to places you may have never been before. Be open to new experiences, thoughts, and emotions! Use your journal to note thoughts and ideas you have – unexpected ones and ones that you have thought of before.

You may notice a change immediately, or it may take a few lessons until you see how you can use this to make significant change. Being open and curious will allow you to take full advantage of the experience.



## OUR META-COMPETENCE TOOLBOX INCLUDES:

### **TOOL 1: How to Notice**

We often do not notice what is really happening. Learning to notice gives us the information we need to make good choices and change our lives.

### **TOOL 2: Knowing Your Operating System**

When we understand the difference, we can learn how to control what is going on inside and out.



### **Tool 3: Determining Your Destination**

Articulating where we are going and the process of getting there gives us a map for living our lives.

### **Tool 4: Avoiding the Effects of Stress**

Avoiding stress maintains our mind and body at its maximum functioning for peak performance.

### **Tool 5: How to Think**

Humans are the only creatures with the ability to think. Knowing how to use this most powerful and valuable ability gives us the power to make changes beyond our imagination.

### **Tool 6: Binary Choice**

Using our capacity to make intentional choices allows us the greatest ability to make positive change.

### **Tool 7: Pulling it All Together**

Individual tools are useful, but the surge in advantage comes from using the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> system.

With these tools at hand, you will be able to recognize and sidestep the negative impact of impulsivity and inattention - the most common causes of mistakes in decision-making. You will become immune to biased distortions and thoughtless habits.

This workbook is made to accommodate anyone's pace of learning. The seven skill blocks include exercises and tasks to enhance your understanding and acquisition. Since the MFC method is a sequential program, each block must be successfully learned before moving on to the next one. Typically, each block is learned over the course of a week, but you can spend more time - or less - if you prefer.

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**TOOL 1A**

# HOW TO NOTICE

In order to make a change, we need to notice what is happening HERE AND NOW.

**Problem:**

We don't notice what is happening right now.  
Without a clear picture of the current situation, we cannot think or act differently.

**Solution:**

Whether the issue is procrastination, becoming angry, impulsivity, relationships, or any other problem, noticing what is happening in the moment is key to making decisions on the next best action.

**Results:**

Once you can clearly see what is happening right now, you will be in a position to make a good decision about what action to take.

When you are done with all the topics in this lesson listed below, you will take the quiz. When you pass the quiz with a 90%, you will be able to move on to the next tool.

## TOOL 1A LESSON CONTENT

► WHAT and not WHY?

► Bringing It Closer

## WHAT AND NOT WHY?

The first step in understanding any situation is to be aware of what is really going on, without judgment or bias. Often situations present themselves to us, and we become confused. We don't know which way to turn; what is right and what is wrong. We even question what we really want. How do we start to unravel the chaos?

This lesson will teach you to start noticing what's going on around you.

We often see what we WANT to see or what we think SHOULD be true. We often get facts mixed up with our feelings. We look at facts and judge them to be "good" or "bad". We ask "WHY?" when we need to simply see "WHAT". Once we see what is really happening, we can begin to unravel the situation. We need to focus on the WHAT, not the WHY.



### TRY THESE EXERCISES: [OR 2-MINUTE NOTICING PRACTICE]

#### **Exercise 1A: Noticing Practice (2 mins)**

Set your timer for two minutes. Write down what is happening around you and inside you right now. There are no right or wrong answers; just see how much you notice.

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*continue writing here:*

**Exercise 1B: Let’s Get Better at Noticing (4 mins)**

Set your timer for three minutes. Look at the picture below.  
Write down everything you notice in the picture.



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**After Exercise 1b List to compare:**

Did you notice:

- The number of people in the water?
- The number of people out of the water?
- The color and shape of the clouds?
- The color of the water?
- The tree branch to the top left?
- The number and size of the rocks in the water?
- The shape of the beach?
- The road that runs behind the trees to the right?
- The type, sizes, and number of the trees on the beach?
- Anything else?

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**Exercise 1C: More Noticing Practice (4 mins)**

Here is another image. Set your timer to 3 mins and see what you notice here. Record what you notice in your journal.



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**After Exercise 1c List to compare:**

Did you notice this time:

- Where is Joey?
- How many clowns did you see? How many girls?  
How many boys?
- Is it a boy or girl selling tickets?
- How many rides are there for the children? What  
are they?
- Anything else?

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## TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT ON YOUR REACTIONS TO THESE EXERCISES.

Understanding what is important about a situation is key to noticing the right details.

You may have been somewhat baffled by this exercise because you were not told what was IMPORTANT to notice.

Were you frustrated?

You may be excited by the possibilities.

You may have enjoyed some aspects of it.

What reactions did you have?

What did you find difficult to notice? What did you find easy?

What strategies can you think of to make noticing the important details easier?

*Perhaps you need to design a systematic way of looking at a situation.*

## WHAT IS NOISE?

Noise is comprised of the elements of a situation or scene that distract you from what is important. It interferes with the main message.

Determining what is important and what is noise is a skill. We will consider this idea as we move forward in acquiring additional tools.

### **Our Attentional System**

We have an attentional system that allows us to be aware of our environment.

When we notice things, our attentional system is open to all the details of our environment.

There are efficient and inefficient ways of using our attentional system. As we get further into this course, we will learn efficient ways to use it.

### **Try This**

What did you learn from these exercises?

- a. Different things catch our attention at first. When we take time to look, we might see things we didn't notice before.
- b. We choose to look at certain things at the expense of others.
- c. We have a pattern of where we tend to look. Having a systematic way of looking may be beneficial.
- d. We can look at something without judging it.
- e. We need to pay attention to all the important details.

## BRINGING IT CLOSER

The last topic helped us notice more about things in general. Now let's see if we can notice more in our personal environment.



### **Exercise 1D:** **Notice Your Environment (4 mins)**

Take a look at your immediate environment. Record your findings in your journal.

Take care to note WHAT is there. Don't judge the condition or features of what you see, like *"The walls really need a new coat of paint,"* or *"I wish we'd get rid of that chair,"* or *"I shouldn't have eaten so much of that cake."*

- The features of the room.
- Furniture and other objects
- Colors
- Shapes
- Direction and movement
- People

Can you tell the difference between NOTICING and JUDGING? We will look at this more closely in the next section.



[illegible]

*Now let's focus on other senses.*

**Exercise 1E: Noticing Through Sounds (5 mins)**

Listen to the audio clip below (almost 4 mins). Take time to really listen and hear all the different sounds.



You can also play the audio [here](#).

*Note: You will need to connect on the internet to listen to the audio.*

**Did you notice:**

- When the traffic was louder, quieter, and absent?
- When the voices of people talking began and ended?
- Footsteps?
- Clanging?
- Shuffling?

Write what you noticed in your journal.

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**Exercise 1F: Awareness Through Listening (4 mins)**  
**Now listen to what is happening around YOU.**

Set your timer for 3 minutes. Sit quietly and notice all the sounds around you. Can you hear the sounds from outside? From inside the room? Appliances or other background noise? What about the sounds of your breathing? Take care not to judge any of the sounds as “good” or “bad”. Just notice them. Take a minute to record what you heard in your journal.

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### **Exercise 1G: Awareness Through Smell (1 min)**

**Now do the same thing with the smells in the room.** What odors or fragrances are there? Any pets? Any cooking? Any cleaning products? Anything else? Again, take care not to judge them; just notice them. **Record the findings in your journal.**

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*Now let's focus on other senses.*

### **Exercise 1H: Body Awareness Practice (10 mins)**

**Now try to turn your attention to yourself. Try this Body Scan exercise:**

- Notice, without judgment, the way your body feels.
- Close your eyes and turn your focus to the top of your head. Feel the skin, your hair, and any other sensation.

- Now focus on your ears, your mouth, your cheeks. Notice any tension and any relaxed, soft sensations.
- Slowly, let your focus move down your body. Your neck, your shoulders, your arms, your torso, your abdomen, your legs, your feet.
- Take time to feel how your body feels the seat of the chair, your back feels against the back of the chair, and your feet feel on the floor.
- Are your hands in your lap or by your side or folded across your chest? Notice each part of your body and how it feels.



**Record your experience in your journal.**

What did you enjoy? What was difficult? Is there a discernible pattern to how you are aware and what you overlook?

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## NOTICING THOUGHTS AND SENSATIONS

So far, we have been talking about physical sights, sounds, and smells. We started looking at the environment outside ourselves. The last exercise asked us to focus inside on our physical sensations.

Aside from internal physical sensations, we also have thoughts and sensations. **Thoughts are generally made up of mental words; sensations are felt somewhere in the body and may be accompanied by thoughts.**

### **Exercise 1i: Noticing Yourself (4 mins)**

Set the timer for 2 minutes. Sit quietly and notice your thoughts. There is no need to judge them as “good” or “bad”; just notice them. Record them in your journal.

Now reset the timer for another 2 minutes. Sit quietly and notice your inner experience. **Are you excited? Tense? Edgy? Pleased? Sad? Bored?**

*What bodily experience tells you that you are having this sensation? Is your heart beating quickly? Is your breathing fast or slow? Do you feel pressure in your body somewhere? Notice the sensations in your body.*

Record them in your journal or here.

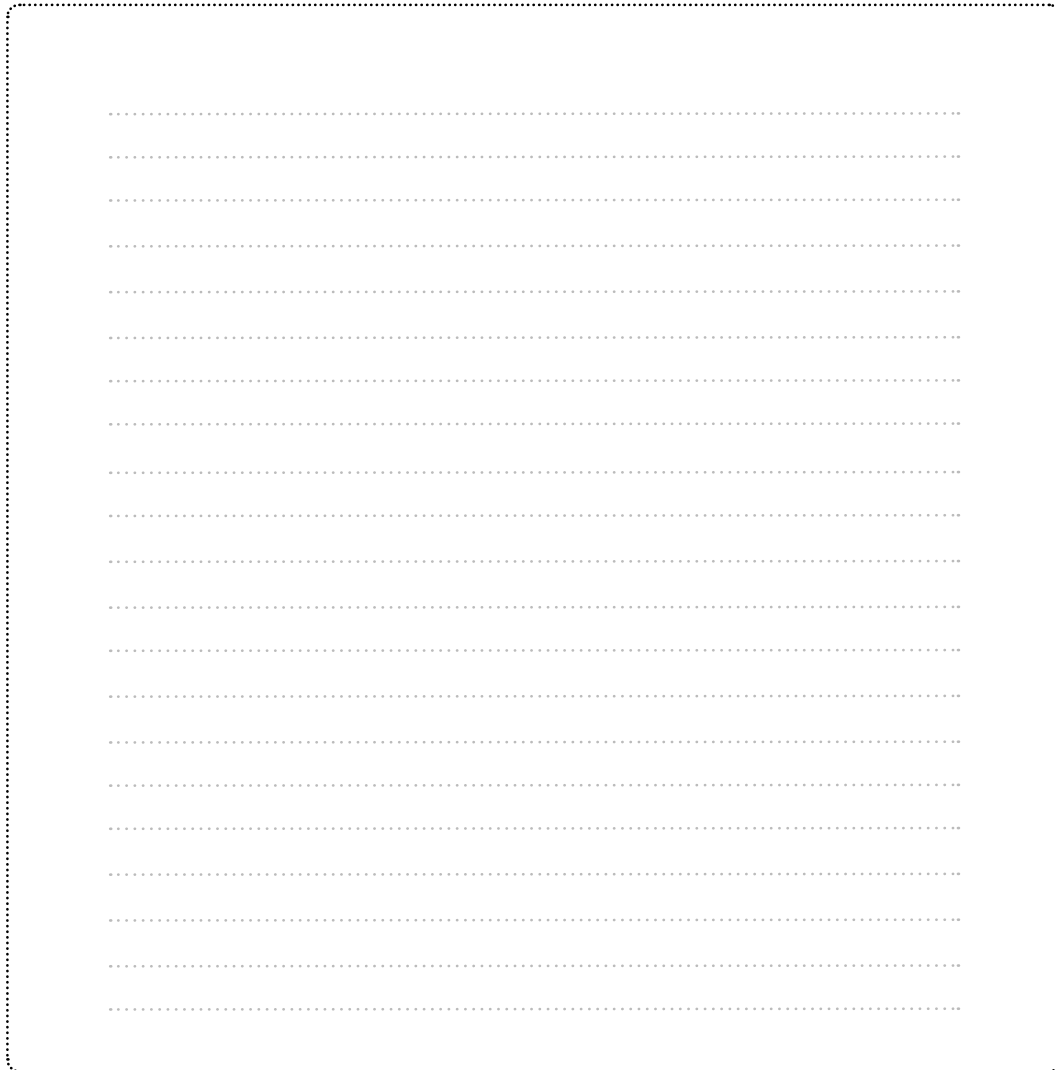
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This lesson has helped you hone your skills of noticing what is happening, both outside of yourself and inside. Take a moment to record your thoughts in your journal. Did you find this useful? Difficult? What did you enjoy about it? What did you learn?

*Ready to move on? In the next topic, we will take a quick look at distinguishing between fact and perception/judgement/bias.*

**TOOL 1B****BECOMING SELF-AWARE**

Approximately 10 mins

**TOOL 1B LESSON CONTENT**

- Am I being judgmental?
- Becoming Self-Aware
- How much do you know about NOTICING?

It is sometimes difficult to determine whether a thought is a fact, judgement, or one's perception of what is happening, rather than the actual fact of what is happening. Try this exercise to see if you can tell the difference.

**Exercise 1J: Fact vs. Perception Activity Part 1 (3 mins)**

Choose whether the statement is perception or judgement

	Perception	Judgement
I am stuck		
This is a new experience		
My heart is beating fast		
He made me angry		
He is a fool		
It's past my bedtime		



I feel danger
This is no good.
This always happens
This is terrible
This has happened before
I am angry

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

*Another word for Perception or  
Judgement is BIAS.*

**Exercise 1k: Fact vs Perception Activity Part 2 (2 mins)**

Answer the question to check for understanding.

**What is the definition of a factual statement?**

- a. A statement that is not open to other possibilities.
- b. A statement that is well-known
- c. A statement that is obvious

Now try this one.

**What is the definition of a *judgmental* statement?**

- d. A statement that can be taken to court
- e. A statement that is true
- f. A statement that is open to other possibilities

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

## IS THIS A FACT OR A PERCEPTION/ JUDGEMENT?

*“I feel sad.”*

This is indeed a FACT. Describing a feeling is describing a FACT – it exists, and it is not open to another possibility.



*“She is trying to hurt me.”*

This is a JUDGMENT- a statement about someone else’s motives for their actions is open to other possibilities. “She is trying to hurt me” is just one possible motive.



*“I am thinking that she loves me.”*

This is a FACT – You are thinking that she loves you. She may or may not love you, but the FACT is that you are thinking that.



*“I am so nervous; my heart is racing.”*

This is a FACT mixed with a JUDGMENT. You are identifying a physical sensation – your heart is racing. It might be likely that it is the result of feeling nervous, but it is possible that it is not. So the reason given – that you are nervous – is the JUDGMENT.

**Think about this:**

The skill of identifying your thoughts and feelings without judgment takes time to cultivate. Practice it often – when waiting on line at the grocery store, while sitting on the bus, while drinking your morning coffee. The more you practice the better you will be at this crucial skill.

*Let's move onto the next topic.*

## BECOMING SELF-AWARE

Approximately 40 mins

So far, you have been focusing on noticing, without judging, what is going on outside and inside of you. Now we will take the next step – bringing YOU into the picture while remaining **objective**.

### What makes a person “tick”?

Everyone assigns meaning to the events, people, and items in their lives. But each of us sees the world through different lenses, so we may assign different meanings. These lenses, or **filters**, include our experiences, predispositions, and our **physical state at the moment** in our lives. When we think about it, we can often easily see this in others.



#### **Exercise 1L: Character Awareness Part 1** (10 mins)

Think about a character in a movie or book. Write the name of the character in your journal. Now think about the 10 rules that make this person tick. It doesn't have to be exactly 10, but try to get an idea of what is important to this person. What is their typical reaction to normal, everyday life? What is their reaction to difficult circumstances? Write down the rules that govern this character.

How are you able to know what governs this character's behavior? A well-developed character will behave consistently. You know how the character has behaved in the movie or book; that information will tell you how the character will behave in other circumstances. Taking a look at the character's behavior teaches you about them.



*Now we’re going to do this with a real person.*



**Exercise 1M: Character Awareness Part 2**  
**(10 mins)**

Think of a family member or close friend. Choose someone who does not generally upset you. Write down the **10 rules that govern this person’s behavior**. Note that you know about the person’s typical reactions and what is important to them because you have seen how they behave. Their behavior teaches you about what is important to them and how they typically react. Be careful not to judge what you see as “good” or “bad”. Accept what you notice as facts.

**Notice how there is more emotion while you are doing this exercise, yet you can remain non-judgmental.**

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*Let's step things up!*



**Exercise 1N: Character Awareness Part 3**  
**(7 mins)**

Now take a look at someone close to you who “pushes your buttons.” This exercise may be more challenging, but take care to remain non-judgmental as you record the **10 rules** that govern this person’s behavior. The traits you find are not “good” or “bad”. Again, note how their past behavior will teach you about what is important to them and how they typically react.

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**Exercise 10: Self-Awareness (10 mins)**

Now turn the mirror on yourself.

What makes you tick? How do you typically react to different situations? What is important to you? **Use your skills of remaining non-judgmental as you take a look at yourself.** Accept what you see as facts, without judgment. This process is one that you will constantly refine as you observe your behavior and learn more about yourself as a result.

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**This lesson has taught us to use the tool of how to notice what is happening and recognizing how people in our lives operate without becoming judgmental or deciding that it is “Good” or “Bad”. It is important, as we move forward, to use this information to help us make the changes we really want.**

ARE YOU READY FOR THE QUIZ? Click on Quiz on the menu to see how much you know. After achieving a 90% on the quiz, you can move onto Tool 2.

### QUIZ TOOL 1

## HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT NOTICING?

Take this quiz. Because the next tools build on the practice and understanding of this one, you must achieve 90% on this quiz before moving forward. Feel free to review the module as many times as you need to.

**Choose the best way to finish this sentence:**

1. Asking WHY? rather than WHAT?...

is the first thing to do  
allows you to analyze the situation.  
is NOT a good idea because it prevents you from  
viewing the situation AS IT IS, and puts you in a poor  
position to move forward  
allows you to get data to see what is going on

2. Which is the correct statement?

Noticing is a skill that takes time and practice to develop.  
Noticing the details of a situation is not important.  
Noticing everything that is happening is critical, whether it is important or not.  
Noticing does not take time.

**3. Choose the correct statement.**

It is only necessary to notice visual aspects of what is happening.

You get most of the information about what is happening from your thoughts.

Noticing what is happening includes noticing what is happening outside you AND inside you (your thoughts and feelings).

Thoughts, feelings, what you hear, and what you can smell are not important.

**4. Choose the five (5) statements that might be judgmental.**

“This is ridiculous.”

“What an idiot!”

“I think she doesn’t like me”

“She doesn’t like me!”

“My heart is pounding.”

“This is making me nervous.”

“I am nervous.”

“I don’t like this.”

“This is going to work out.”

“I have a headache.”

**5. Our perceptions and biases come from the filters we all have that govern the way we see things.**

True

False

**6. It is easier to see what makes you personally tick without getting emotional than it is to look at others.**

True

False

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

## TOOL 2

# KNOWING YOUR OPERATING SYSTEM

We often talk about the words “emotion” and “feeling” as if they were interchangeable. They seem natural, and we wonder how much choice we have in how we feel. However, emotions and feelings are actually different. Distinguishing them accurately will help us recognize how we ought to make changes.

### **Problem:**

We believe we are at the mercy of our feelings and cannot change them. If we cannot change our feelings, we will be unable to make changes in our lives and we will stay stuck.

### **Results:**

After learning the skill of differentiating our emotions from our feelings, we recognize where our emotions and feelings stem from. We learn that we do not need to react to our emotions and we can change our feelings.

## TOOL 2 LESSON CONTENT

- Old Brain New Brain
- Emotions
- Feelings
- Conscious vs. Subconscious Processing
- Emotions and Feelings in Real Life
- Do you know how your Operating System works?

## OLD BRAIN VS. NEW BRAIN

approximately 20 mins

### What are the different parts of the brain?

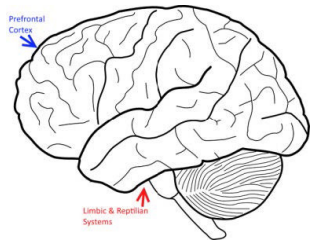
Your brain is made up of a number of different sections, each of them performing specific functions. Take a look at this quick (5 min) video to give you an idea of the parts of the brain and their functions.

*The two basic parts that concern us here are the “Old Brain” (reptilian and limbic sections) and the “New Brain” (neocortex).*



### “Old Brain”

The **old brain** includes the brain stem, medulla, pons, reticular formation, thalamus, and cerebellum. **The old brain is responsible for the automatic functions which ensure our survival.** These functions include **breathing, instincts, brain-based emotions, and reflexes.** Humans and animals both have this part of the brain. The limbic system (or midbrain) includes the hippocampus, amygdala, and hypothalamus.



**“New Brain”**

The new brain, the neocortex, is what differentiates humans from animals. It is responsible for logical thought, reasoning, decision-making, and prioritizing. It is here that we experience empathy, appreciate art, sociability, and consciousness. Only humans have this part of the brain. Only humans can educate themselves and change.

**Exercise 2A: Old Brain - New Brain (2 mins)**

Check the appropriate box that matches each functions.

	Old Brain	New Brain
Judgement		
Movement		
Hunger		
Memory		
Planning		
Breathing		
Emotions		
Sleeping		
Thinking		

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

The Cortex is divided into two lobes: the **right hemisphere** and the **left hemisphere**. Illustrated below shows the information about each lobe.

### LEFT HEMISPHERE

- Rational, sequential
- Looks at differences
- Responds to verbal instructions
- Is logical, sees cause and effect
- Is planned and structured
- Is a splitter – distinction important
- Prefers ranked authority
- Prefers established, certain information
- Prefers multiple choice tests
- Draws on previously accumulated information
- Prefers writing and talking



### RIGHT HEMISPHERE

- Draws on unbounded qualitative patterns that are not organized into sequences
- Free with feelings
- Looks at similarities
- Responds to demonstrated instructions
- Intuitive, simultaneous
- Is fluid spontaneous
- Prefers drawing and manipulating objects
- Problem solving with hunches, looking for patterns

**Exercise 2B: Right and Left Hemisphere (2 mins)**

Which characteristic belongs to which brain hemisphere?  
Write 'R' if the statement belongs to right hemisphere and  
write 'L' if the statement belongs to left hemisphere.

Prefers ranked authority	
Free with feelings	
Rational, sequential	
Draws on unbounded qualitative patterns that are not organized into sequences	
Looks at similarities	
Responds to verbal instructions	
Is logical, sees cause and effect	
Is fluid spontaneous	
Is a splitter – distinction important	
Solves problems with hunches, looking for patterns	
Is planned and structured	
Looks at differences	
Prefers drawing and manipulating object	
Prefers multiple choice tests	
Prefers established, certain information	
Draws on previously accumulated information	
Intuitive, simultaneous	
Prefers writing and talking	
Responds to demonstrated instructions	

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►





All humans use both sides of the brain, but most have a preference for using one hemisphere over the other.

**Which is YOUR preference?**

Knowing this will give you more information about what makes you tick!



**Exercise 2C: Which Is Your Brain Hemisphere Preference? (4 mins)**

Record your observations as to what your hemisphere preference may be. Bring specific indicators that support your conclusions.

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*We have taken a look at the functions of two parts of the brain. Let’s move on to discuss how this information is helpful to know in dealing with our emotions.*

## EMOTIONS

Approximately 20 mins

We mentioned that emotions come from the “old” brain. Emotions are hard-wired into us, based on our previous experiences, personality, and our physical state at the moment. Emotions are fundamentally linked to the hormones in our brain, especially serotonin, dopamine, oxytocin, and cortisol. More on that later.

## PLUTCHIK’S WHEEL OF EMOTIONS

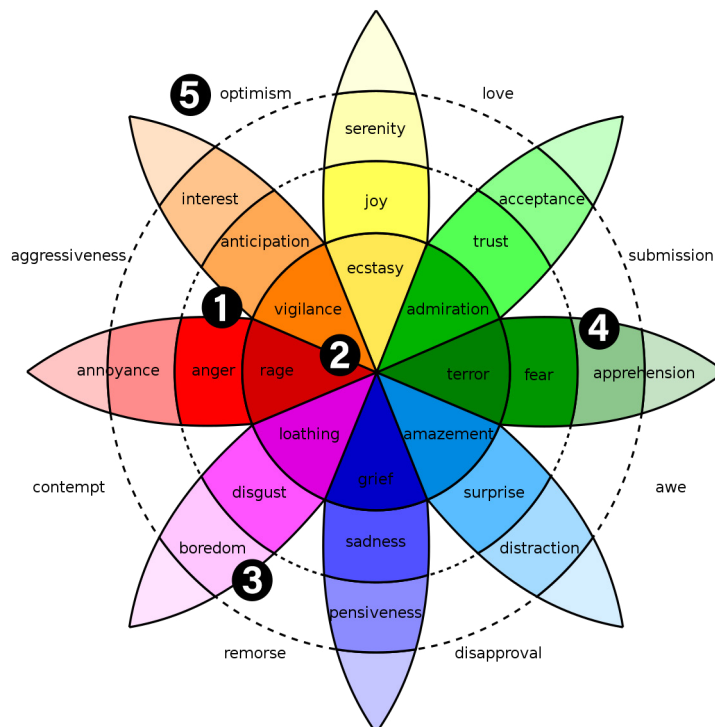
Dr. Robert Plutchik designed a “Wheel of Emotions” to help us identify and understand our emotions more clearly.

The model helps enhance emotional literacy. The purpose is not only knowing the words for emotions but also understanding how different emotions are related to one another and the possibility to develop over time.

### 1. Basic Emotions

- There are 8 Basic Emotions:

- Anger
- Anticipation
- Joy
- Trust
- Fear
- Surprise
- Sadness
- Disgust



2. **Extreme Intensity** - These emotions closer to the middle of the wheel are colored in a more intense color - they are the same emotions, just more intense.

3. **Mild Intensity** - These emotions are the same as the basic emotion but less intense.

4. **Opposite Emotions** - Emotions on the opposite side (180 degrees across) of the wheel are opposite emotions. **Trust** and **disgust** are opposite, as are **surprise** and **anticipation**.

5. **Emotions Combinations** - Emotions are sometimes felt in a combined way. For example, **anticipation** and **joy** are felt as **optimism**; **fear** and **surprise** are felt as awe.



### **Exercise 2D: Understanding The Wheel Of Emotion (5 mins)**

Use these questions to help you get a better understanding of emotions.

1. Which of the following are some of the basic emotions? (Check 5)

Grief  
Trust  
Anger  
Anticipation  
Ecstasy  
Love  
Joy  
Rage  
Sadness

2. Match the correct BASIC emotion from Column B to the MILD version in Column A. Write down the letter of your answer.

Place Your Answer Here	A - Mild Version	B - Basic Emotion
	Acceptance	<b>a.</b> surprise
	Annoyance	<b>b.</b> joy
	Apprehension	<b>c.</b> sadness
	Serenity	<b>d.</b> fear
	Interest	<b>e.</b> anger
	Distraction	<b>f.</b> disgust
	Pensiveness	<b>g.</b> trust
	Boredom	<b>h.</b> anticipation

3. Match the correct BASIC emotion from Column B to the INTENSE version in Column A. Write down the letter of your answer.

Place Your Answer Here	A - Intense Version	B - Basic Emotion
	Admiration	<b>a.</b> surprise
	Rage	<b>b.</b> anger
	Terror	<b>c.</b> trust
	Ecstasy	<b>d.</b> anticipation
	Vigilance	<b>e.</b> sadness
	Amazement	<b>f.</b> joy
	Grief	<b>g.</b> fear
	Loathing	<b>h.</b> disgust

4. The opposite of trust is:

Optimism  
Anger  
Joy  
Sadness  
Disgust

5. Love is a combination of these two basic emotions:

Amazement  
Joy  
Trust  
Interest  
Awe

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EMOTIONS:

1. Emotions are hard-wired into us. When we experience something happening, our “old” brain engages to produce emotions. They are not under our conscious control.
2. Emotions can be seen on the face – there is no way to hide the initial emotion. This is true across all cultures.
3. An emotional response happens in 180 milliseconds! That’s less than 1/5 of a second!
4. Emotions contribute to our “first thought.” More on this later.



**Exercise 2E: Understanding Your Own Emotions Part 1 (10 mins)**

Choose 4 of the basic emotions. For each, write down in your journal 2 specific times you felt them. Write down the following:

- What was happening?
- Where were you?
- Who was there?
- When was it?

Try to identify the **emotion** itself and whether it was the **mild, basic,** or **extreme version** of that emotion.

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Now, look at the combinations of emotions and identify times that you felt those. Again, write down:

- What was happening?
- Where were you?
- Who was there?
- When was it?

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If our emotions are hard-wired into us, and we have no conscious control over them, how are we to control our behavior?

*The answer to that comes with the understanding of how our FEELINGS differ from our emotions.*

*Let's move on.*

## FEELINGS

Approximately 15 mins

### So, how are Feelings different from Emotions?

Emotions are the physical, hard-wired reactions we experience when the “old” brain – specifically the limbic system – is activated by events in our lives. Since they are physical, they can be seen in facial expressions and in other measurable body reactions, such as heart rate.

Feelings are different. Once we experience an event, we activate the executive functions of the “new” brain (prefrontal cortex) to analyze and comprehend an experience. We think about what is happening and make judgments. These judgments, which are influenced by our past experiences, beliefs, and predispositions, generate the feelings we feel.

**Emotions** are very quick and immediate impulses – **feelings are mediated by the mind, and therefore can be changed.** One can learn to reflect on the circumstances in the moment and perceive choices - before simply reacting. With practice, you can make choosing positive responses second nature and you will have achieved a positive attitude!



Since what we THINK (with our “new” brain) causes our FEELINGS, they will change as our thoughts change. We can think of the mind as our operating system that determines our reality.

Emotions	Feelings
Physical, can be observed	Mental, may be hidden
Happens first	Results from thought



**Imagine this scenario:**



You're walking into a department store just as a big, angry-looking man is walking out. Without paying any attention to you, he barrels you over onto the ground. He gives you a nasty look and walks away. How do you feel? What are you thinking? How much do you ache?

Now imagine that a woman comes out of the store and helps you up. She apologizes for what just happened and explains that the man who knocked you down is her husband. He just found out he lost his job and they don't know what they will do. Now, how do you feel? What are you thinking? Are your aches the same?



*If we think well, we can feel well!*



### **Exercise 2F: Understanding Your Own Emotions Part 2 (4mins)**

Think of a time in your own experience that a similar thing happened. Your first reaction was negative, but when you were able to see an alternative perspective, your reaction changed to something positive. **Record the Who? When? and Where? in your journal.**

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## **FIRST THOUGHT VS. SECOND THOUGHT**

When reacting, our first thought is the automatic thought that comes without any mental work. Think of it as your default position. It is the product of our earliest experiences and our most basic emotions. We don't exercise choice when our first thought comes to mind.

*HOWEVER, we CAN choose our second thought!*

We can allow time for our “new” brain to kick in and DECIDE what makes SENSE in the situation. When we do this, we can CHANGE the thought we think, and thereby change the feeling we have.



It is helpful to practice taking a breath – inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the mouth- when feeling an intense emotion. This allows time to think of an alternative option. More on breathing techniques later.

Remember we said that the emotional response takes less than 1/5 of a second? If we pause just a tiny bit longer before reacting, our “new” brain gets a chance to activate and we can decide the best course of action. If we can delay our response and not react for 2/3 of a second(!), we can choose how to react.



### **Exercise 2G: Understanding Your Own Emotions Part 3 (5mins)**

**Try this:** Take a look at the list of emotions you recorded in your journal for Exercise 2e. Choose one incident and emotional reaction. Re-orient yourself to the situation (*Who? Where? When?*). See if you can find the thought that created the feeling. Was it your first thought (initial, hard-wired response)? Or was it your second thought (logical, “new” brain response)? Try this exercise with as many of your recorded emotions as possible.

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The difference between EMOTIONS and FEELINGS is that we cannot control our emotions, but we can control our FEELINGS by allowing the time for us to access the thoughtful part of our brain.

*Let's get a little better understanding by examining our conscious and subconscious.*

## CONSCIOUS VS. SUBCONSCIOUS PROCESSING

Approximately 7 mins

**This video explains how our subconscious and conscious thinking work:**



Note that subconscious processing includes “old” brain, habits that have become automatic, and memories. The processing of a thought or feeling that has become a habit also occurs in the subconscious. We call this type of habit an attitude.

Conscious processing includes thought that happens in the “new” brain.



### **Exercise 2H: Reflecting On Your Subconscious And Conscious Thinking Process (3mins)**

Make a list of 10 things that happen for you on a subconscious level. These include automatic physical responses as well as habits – actions you do without having to think about them.

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Now, make a list of 5 things that happen for you on a conscious level. These are the things that you need to think about.

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Which list was easier to fill? Is there overlap between the lists – things you can do subconsciously, but benefit from paying attention and doing them consciously?

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We can now better understand how the skills we have been learning are starting to fit together. **The first skill we learned was how to notice and remain objective.** That skill moved things from the subconscious to the conscious.

Much of the subjective thinking (our judgments and perceptions) happen at the subconscious level – they are the result of past experiences, our personalities, and our current physical state. It takes less energy to operate on the subconscious level. It is all fine and well, if that is working for us. However, if we want to make a change, we need to bring things to the conscious level.

**The second skill we have learned is differentiating between emotions, that occur at the subconscious level, and feelings, that can be changed if the thought is brought to the conscious level.**

## EMOTIONS AND FEELINGS IN REAL LIFE

Approximately 7 mins

Let's take a look at a common scenario: Road Rage



**How would the new tools we have learned play out in real life? Take a look at the following scenario:**

You're driving down the highway in the left lane and there is a fair amount of traffic. While cars are moving at a good clip, there are many stops and starts so you must be alert and vigilant.

The car in front of you begins to brake and at the same moment, a car in the right lane suddenly cuts in front of you in a very unsafe maneuver, forcing you to react by slamming the brakes!





*The Fight/Flight/Freeze response is triggered.*

**Emotion:** You immediately feel a rush of adrenalin and epinephrine as you are startled and experience the emotions of terror and rage. Your mind is processing the emotions and your body's physical sensations and you're identifying the cause of your physiological response due to the dangerous behavior of the other driver.

**Thought:** Your thinking is directed towards the driver of the other vehicle and how dangerous his actions were, needlessly putting you at risk for an accident simply because he wanted to shave a few seconds off his drive.

*What happens next?*

Click the button below to see...

This lesson has taught how our “operating system” works. The more you understand about it, the better you can use this tool to help you. When you achieve a 90% on the quiz, you will be ready to move onto the next tool.

## QUIZ TOOL 2

# DO YOU KNOW HOW YOUR OPERATING SYSTEM WORKS?

A very clear understanding of this tool is essential to moving on, so you will need to achieve 90% on this quiz. You may review the material as many times as necessary.

1. Choose the correct list of functions that is the responsibility of each section of the brain.

**“Old” brain:** - breathing - logical thought - reflexes

**“New” brain:** - brain-based emotion - decision-making - prioritizing

**“Old” brain:** - breathing - logical thought - reasoning

**“New” brain:** - brain-based emotion - decision-making - instincts

**“Old” brain:** - breathing - instincts - reflexes

**“New” brain:** - logical thought - decision-making - prioritizing

**“Old” brain:** - logical thought - decision-making - prioritizing

**“New” brain:** - breathing - instincts - reflexes

2. Emotions are biologically-based, hard-wired, and automatic; feelings can be changed by our judgments.

This is **true**.

This is **false**.

3. Which of these are BASIC emotions? (choose 5)

joy  
ecstasy  
fear  
disgust  
boredom  
interest  
distraction  
surprise  
love  
anticipation

4. Subconscious processing includes our habits, memories, and attitudes.

True.

False.

5. Subconscious thought takes more time and brain energy than conscious thought.

True.

False.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

### TOOL 3A

## DETERMINING YOUR DESTINATION

**Articulating where we are going and the process of getting there gives us a map for our lives.**

### TOOL 3A – DETERMINING DESTINATION

We have dreams of becoming great people, doing great things. But these are vague, undefined wishes, rather than planned goals. Once we determine what we are really aiming for, we can focus our decisions on the right path to get there.

**Problem:**

Since we don't pay attention to where we are headed, we end up making wrong turns and decisions that don't get us to our destination.

**Results:**

After defining our destination, we can keep that in mind whenever we make a decision. This will help us stay on track and reach our best selves.

### TOOL 3 LESSON CONTENT

- What is your DESTINATION?

## WHAT IS YOUR DESTINATION?

Approximately 1 hour 15 mins



### Where are you going?

If you are taking this course, you have decided that something is not going the way you would like. Something needs to change.

First, you need to figure out where it is that you DO want to go. That is the **destination. Your destination is YOUR interpretation of what a good and full life looks like.**

Once you know where you are going, that destination will be your aspiration. You decide which road to take based on where you are going. There may be many ways to get to the same destination. Determining which path to take is our task along the journey of life.

*So first, let's determine your destination.*



### **Exercise 3A: Creating Your Destination Plan** (at least 30 mins)

Determining your destination is a process that might take some time and thought. So prepare yourself a cup of your favorite drink, a comfortable chair, and a quiet room. Have your journal ready as you embark on a wonderful trip.

*Please note:*

*Discerning your destination for the first time can be a real challenge, but well worth the effort. However, some people, no matter how much they try, are unsuccessful in identifying how they want their lives to be – as they see themselves powerless to bring about change. The most critical concept for changing one's life is the unqualified recognition that everything you choose and everything you do makes a difference.*

*If determining your destination is eluding you, we strongly suggest discussing this task with a MFC Coach to gain clarity and focus. Should you still be unable to see your destination, it may be worthwhile to consult a mental health professional, to help you figure out what is blocking your path.*

#### **Let's take a trip to the place of your dreams.**

Imagine you have a magic wand that will take you anywhere you could possibly desire, and allow you to become the kind of person you want to be and attain the successes you want to achieve without any restrictions – the destination of your dreams. **Take a moment to describe this destination in your journal.** Use your awareness and noticing skills to see everything about it:

- **Describe yourself** – What are you doing? What sort of person have you become?
- **The physical environment** – describe it as completely as you can. Note who is with you. Who is NOT there? Are there specific objects or pets there?
- **Describe the life you lead in detail** – What have you achieved? Now that you have reached this destination, what are you looking forward to accomplishing?

Perhaps your destination involves only yourself and your achievements, but nothing physical. That's okay. Just describe that destination as you experience it.

Consider this a virtual reality experience – immerse yourself in that experience of being at your dream destination. Your image will probably include the things that are most important to you.

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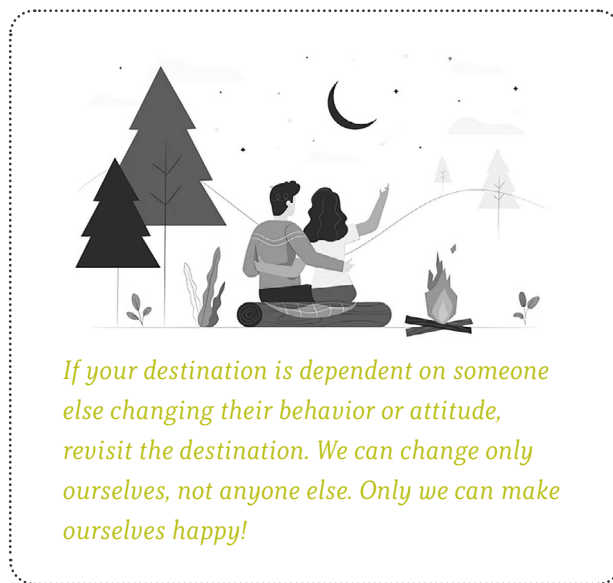


## IS THIS MY DESTINATION?

How do I know if I have determined my destination effectively?  
Ask yourself these questions when thinking about your destination...

### **Is my destination dependent on someone else's behavior?**

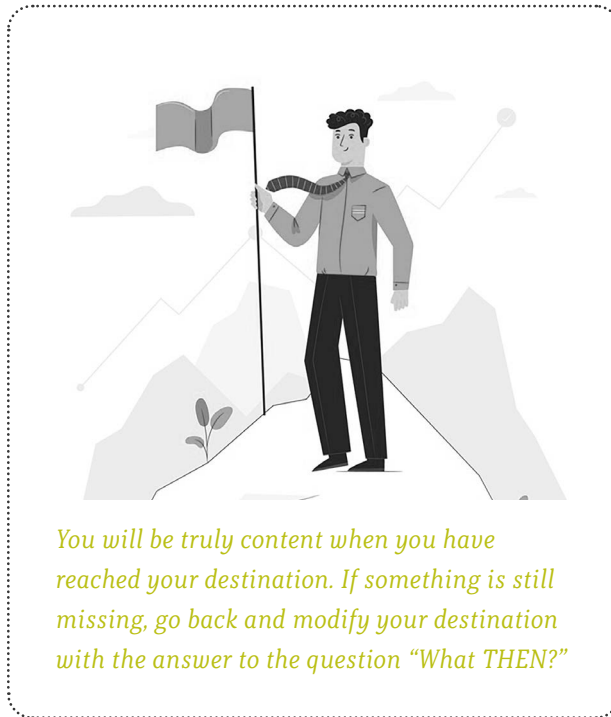
- a. Yes!** If only my wife/ brother/ boss/ friend would be more understanding/neater/more frugal then I would be happy!
- b. No!** My ideal destination is not dependent on the actions of anyone else.



Now ask yourself: **“What THEN?” What will happen when I have reached this destination?**

- a. I will have reached a place where I am truly content.
- b. There will be something still missing from my life

You will be truly content when you have reached your destination. If something is still missing, go back and modify your destination with the answer to the question “What THEN?”



*Sounds like you’ve got a clear picture of your destination! Let’s move forward to make it a reality.*

## **STAYING WITH THIS IMAGE OF YOUR DESTINATION, NOTE HOW IT FEELS.**

Do a body scan like we did before, and locate the positive feelings that are inside of you. How would you describe them? Cool? Warm? Soft? Hard? etc. Stay with those feelings. Remember, you can come back to this state of mind whenever you want.



**Record all this in your journal in any other way you'd like – draw a picture, write a poem, create a photo collage, write an essay.**

You will know that you have arrived at your destination when these feelings are present in your everyday life.

### **So if that's my destination, how do I get there?**

You've already begun by starting to learn these skills! As we move forward, you will learn how each tool can bring you a step closer to THAT destination.

You came here because you knew you were NOT moving in that direction! So how do you get on the right path?



### **Exercise 3B: Reflecting And Identifying If You Are On The Right Path (at least 15 mins)**

**Start by taking a look at the present.** Ask yourself:

Where is your life taking you right now? Remember to apply your skills of being **aware** (non-judgmental observation) to the different aspects of your life – yourself, the people in your life, your life space.

**Now identify your feelings about the present.**

- Do you like what you see?
- Are you satisfied with the person you are?
- Where is your life headed right now?

Take your time as you record the answers to these questions. Take care not to blame yourself or others – just look non-judgmentally at what exists right now.

You have probably identified some aspects of your life that are not bringing you closer to the destination you identified before. **Remember, everything you do makes a difference.**

Write your thoughts here...

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**Exercise 3C:**  
**Improving Your Destination Plan (15 mins)**

What would you need to change, what would you need to do now in order to reach that destination? Make a list of what is impeding your progress.

- What is **within you** that consistently keeps you from moving toward your dream destination?
- What is **within you** that would ensure your success when taking the path toward your dream destination?

Are you ready to try? Recognize any feelings of fear and address them – there is no downside to letting go of fear. Not trying will mean remaining stuck where you are now.

Write your thoughts here...

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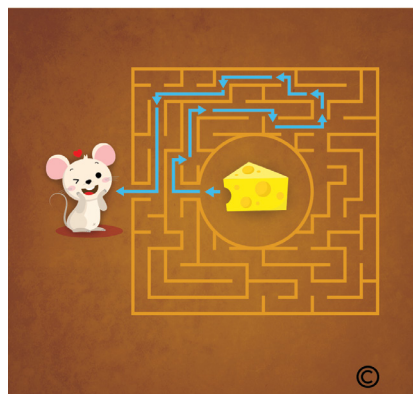
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*So how do I know which way to go?*

### Backward Design



#### **Backward Design**

There is a teaching method called **Backward Design**. This method takes a look at the goal, or the destination of the lesson and then determines a road map to get to that destination. We can use the same method to figure out the road map of our lives, moment by moment. We will discuss Backward Design more thoroughly later on.

**TOOL 3B**

## REACHING YOUR DESTINATION

### TOOL3B LESSON CONTENT

- JOURNEY: Using the tools you have
- Destination vs. Goals
- Levels of Mental Processing
- Primary vs. Secondary Tasks
- Can you Determine Destination?

### JOURNEY: USING THE TOOLS YOU HAVE

Approximately 25 mins

Now that you know where you are heading, you are better positioned to make the most of your journey. Every choice you make along your journey takes you closer or farther away from your destination.

You are now ready to acquire another tool. The first two tools you have learned, **noticing and knowing your operating system**, have prepared you to now take the next steps toward your destination.

Think back to a movie you saw that had a scene with a *premonition*. You KNEW something bad was going to happen next. How did you know that? Usually, the camera focuses on something (perhaps a character's facial expression, or a hand motion that might have by-passed your attention if you were looking at the scene with a wide-angle camera focus). Inevitably, there is also the ominous music that gives you a clue as to what to expect – something bad.





In real life, we can use our **awareness** and our **feelings** to do the same thing. We often KNOW when we are making a bad choice – we know the feeling, and we know what this scenario typically leads to. **We didn't pay attention to those clues before.** Now we can use our skills and, with our destination in mind, we can determine if this scene will lead us towards or pulls us away from our destination.



**Exercise 3D:**  
**Looking Back At Your Pleasant Experiences**  
(10 mins)

Think of a circumstance that went well for you. Orient yourself to that situation:

- time (day or night?)
- place (inside or outside?)
- people (who was there?)
- event (what was happening?)

Now think back to the moment JUST BEFORE that lead up to this situation. Did you have any indications that things were going to go well? Spend a few minutes as an observer. Notice things now that you may have missed before. Notice what you are feeling. Notice people's facial expressions.  
**What told you that things were going to go well?**

write your thoughts here...

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dotted lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.



**Exercise 3E:**  
**Looking Back At Your Unpleasant Experiences**  
**(10 mins)**

Now try the same thing with a circumstance that did not go well. Again, orient yourself to:

- that time (day or night?)
- place (inside or outside?)
- people (who was there?)
- event (what was happening?)

Now think back to the moment JUST BEFORE this situation. Did you have any indications that things were NOT going to go well? Spend a few minutes as an observer. Notice things now that you may have missed before. Notice what you are feeling. Notice people’s facial expressions. **What told you that things were going to go sour?**

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write your thoughts here...

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When we notice what is happening, we are in a better position to change course on our journey toward our destination.

*Having our destination in mind as we experience life with awareness of ourselves and our thoughts and feelings will help up discern how things ought to go. We can then make better choices that will bring us to our destination. More on the dynamics of good choice vs. bad choice later.*

## DESTINATION VS. GOALS

Approximately 20 mins

### **Funny thing happened on the way to my destination...**

When taking a long trip, many things can happen before we reach our destination. The journey can have many twists and turns. If we look at the compass in our car, it may say we are traveling north, even though the road we are on is identified as heading west. That's because, unless the terrain is completely flat, we may need to change direction temporarily, for example, to go around a mountain rather than over it. We may also find attractions along the way which may take us off on a bit of a detour. That's okay, as long as the destination remains our focus.



If this is a business trip, taking a 2-hour detour to explore some caves may not be the best idea. However, if this is a family trip for sharing experiences, it is not actually a detour; it is part of the journey to our destination.

Say we are going to run out of gas and there is no gas station on this road for the next 50 miles. We might need to take a detour to get gas and experience a short delay, but we haven't lost sight of the destination.

Even if we can't actually see the destination in front of us, we can still be on the right path. However, we need some signposts along

the way to make sure that we are heading in the right direction. **The short-term goals we set serve as our signposts and keep us from straying off the path.**

A goal is something you want to accomplish in some aspect of your life. Goals include: goods you want to acquire; education and other accomplishments you want to achieve; or relationships you want to create, improve, or exclude from your life. Health accomplishments are also goals.



**Exercise 3F: Identifying Your Current Goals**  
**(5 mins)**

Identify your current goals. Some may be more explicit than others; they may be more subtle like getting a promotion, getting more public recognition, or getting more fit.

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**Exercise 3G:**  
**Linking Your Goals To Your Destination**  
**(8 mins)**

The *formation* of goals typically happens at the mental processing levels 1 (strategic thinking that goes on over an extended time) and 2 (tactical thinking that we do over a few minutes to assess our current circumstance). The *actions* that can bring us to achieve our goals often happen at level 3 – established reactions that only take seconds. Now that you have identified your destination, you may want to articulate some new goals.

Write down 5 goals that will clearly move you toward your destination. Show the link between these goals and your destination.

Are there any goals that might not help you move closer to your destination? Write them down. These are the goals you want to avoid.

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### **Practice!**

The formation of goals typically happens at the mental processing levels 1 and 2. The actions that can bring us to achieve our goals often happen at level 3 – immediate, established reactions. The more practice responding to situations appropriately, the more established those responses become. By using the mind to formulate the appropriate response and not reacting spontaneously from our emotions, the more likely we are to reach the goals we set for ourselves.



Did you notice something? When we spoke about emotions and feelings, we mentioned how little time it takes for an emotional response to form. Yet, if we allow ourselves TIME, we also allow our thinking mind to provide input. This demonstrates the importance of TIME, even in tiny measures. Using TIME effectively is woven throughout the *MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup>* system.

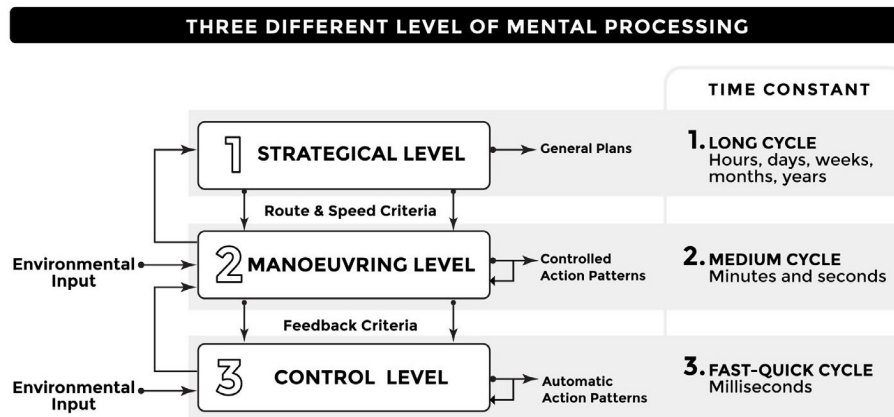
*Let's now examine staying focused on  
the Primary Task.*



## LEVELS OF MENTAL PROCESSING

Approximately 10 mins

Now is a good time to point out the three levels of processing that occur in the mind. The following presentation explains:

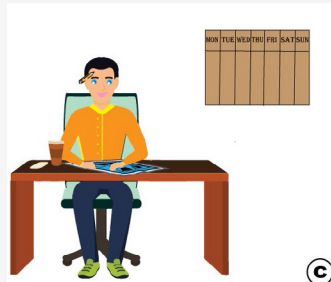


Model developed by John Michon

### Our Mind Processes at Three (3) Levels

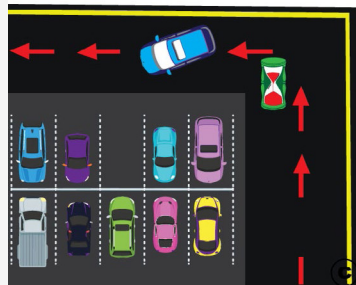
Most of us are not attuned to the way we think. It is like breathing – it just seems to happen. However, the more we know about what actually happens when we think, the better we are able to hone in on the type of thinking we are using and whether it is ideal for the outcome we want.

We plan and make decisions with three different levels of thought. Let's take a look at each one.

**Level 1: Long Term**

This is the level we use for long-term plans. This longest cycle of mental processing is measured in hours, days, months, and even years based on knowledge and experience acquired over the course of one's lifetime.

Level 1 processing results often depend on the breadth and depth of one's education and comprehension. We employ this level of processing for example, when preparing a road trip: selecting a route, checking the car, buying gas and food, or reserving hotels. **Planning our destination occurs at this level.**

**Level 2: Medium Term**

This is a shorter cycle of mental processing, measured in minutes. The Level 2 processing time-frame does not allow for deep thinking. Successful level 2 thinking depends on how well we have been trained to do things within a specific time limit.

Examples include: driving in traffic and parking a car. **This is the level we use when making moment-by-moment conscious decisions to reach our destination.**

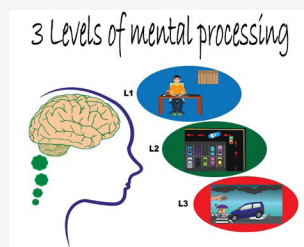
**Level 3: Short Term**

This is an extremely brief period of mental processing, lasting up to a maximum of a few seconds. Since this level consists of reactions, rather than conscious decisions, errors can cause sudden disasters. Therefore, the

better trained and prepared we are, the better the results. Being prepared for level 3 processing requires rehearsal and practice to help one to correctly anticipate and react. Even small physiological problems such as a toothache, headache, lack of sleep, drowsiness, or the influence of substances, can dramatically disturb mental functioning and disrupt appropriate responses.

Likewise, inattention, impulsivity, and any other psychological disorder are also compromising factors.

**This level includes our reactions to unexpected situations.** The more we train ourselves to think ahead of possible bumps in the road, the better we will react when the time comes.

**Summary**

Errors in levels 1 or 2 processing can generally be corrected without serious consequences. However, errors at Level 3 typically have serious results. *MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup>* contributes to the enhancement of all three levels of mental

processing. The benefits of MFC are most noticeable at Level 3, where speed and precision are needed for efficient functioning at peak performance.

### **Exercise 3H: Quick Quiz (5 mins)**

See what you now know by answering the following questions.

1. Determining our DESTINATION occurs at which level of mental processing?

Level 1 - **Long Term**

Level 2 - **Medium Term**

Level 3 - **Short Term**

2. Errors in the mental processing level at which we make decisions about long-term activities are most likely to lead to disasters.

True

False

3. Check the characteristics of Level 3 (short-term) processing:

Even small physical discomfort or lack of sleep can negatively affect the results  
Can be influenced by training  
Happens within a maximum of a few seconds  
Automatic response  
Errors here are likely to be disastrous  
Depends on understanding

4. Match the level of processing to the correct example

ANSWER HERE	LEVEL OF PROCESSING	EXAMPLE
	Short-Term	A. Trip planning
	Medium Term	B. Responding to a skid on an icy road
	Long-term	C. Driving and parking

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►



Determining our DESTINATION happens at the level of long-term processing. **Choosing to act** in ways that will lead us to our destination occurs at the level of medium- and short-term processing.

## PRIMARY VS. SECONDARY TASKS

Approximately 15 min

### What is the REAL task?

**Every choice we make results in multiple consequences. For example, if we begin to exercise more, we will have less time for other activities. We also may have less money to spend after paying for clothing, equipment, or gym memberships.**

Whenever you engage in an activity, you are choosing that activity over all others. The task you chose is primary, or more important than any other. All other options are automatically secondary.

Sometimes, we try to do more than one thing at a time. Even so, there is always one primary task – the one you deem most important. The primary task gets more attention and is done more quickly than the secondary task. This being true, genuine multitasking is not possible. We always prioritize one task over another, at least slightly; so we are always a bit more focused on one over all the others.

If you're like most people, you can probably take care of both tasks at the same time, even when your attention is not evenly split between them. **The difficulty begins when you are distracted or under stress.** Under those conditions, your secondary tasks can sometimes override your primary task, **especially if you aren't consciously aware of which task is which.**

Sometimes we think we are focused on the primary task, when there is a secondary task that is even more appealing. We may not be aware that our focus has been redirected until we take a look at our behavior.

**Example:** John wants to get to know Susan better and requests a favor from her: “Can you please read this report I wrote and see if there are any errors?” Which is the MOST IMPORTANT or PRIMARY goal? An error-free report or a better relationship with Susan?

**Another example:** William often argues with his wife, Linda, in the evenings. William asks his boss if there are any extra projects he can take on to earn some more money. Which is the MOST IMPORTANT or PRIMARY goal in this case? Avoiding home or earning extra cash?



When we decide on a goal, we need to recognize the PRIMARY goal of the decision, as well as the SECONDARY goals. What do we REALLY want from this? It is important to recognize this because sometimes we derail ourselves by switching goals in the middle of the interaction.

### **Exercise 3i: Recognizing The Primary Goal (4 mins)**

**See if you can identify the PRIMARY goal in the following scenario:**

Imagine that your spouse is one who always pushes things off. You want to remain on good terms, so you generally go along with the delaying tactics, although you get annoyed by them. Your mother is coming in after a long flight, and you ask your spouse to pick her up. Your spouse agrees to do it but wants to shower first. Reluctant to start an argument, you agree. Spouse ends up leaving late, hitting traffic, and mother was left waiting at the airport for over an hour. You feel frustrated.

**1. Can you identify the goals in this interaction (check all that apply)**

- To get along with your spouse
- To get stuck in traffic
- To make sure your mother would not have to wait at the airport
- To teach your spouse a lesson
- To teach your mother a lesson

**2. Which is the PRIMARY GOAL of the interaction?**

- To get along with your spouse
- To make sure your mother does not have to wait

**3. Which goal did the action you choose (agreeing to let your spouse shower) actually achieve?**

- To make sure that your mother did not have to wait
- To get along with your spouse

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

*Stick to the PRIMARY GOAL.*



Note that being aware of your **PRIMARY GOAL** in an interaction will help you make decisions that will help you towards your destination.

Remember that idea of “noise” that we mentioned in Tool 1? Keeping your destination in mind will help you determine which aspects of a situation are **primary** and which are **secondary** or even mere noise.

*Congratulations! You have finished learning another tool.*

**You have learned:**

1. What your destination means and how to determine it
2. How your journey through life can take you to your destination
3. How to determine goals that will take you towards your destination
4. Keeping the primary goal in mind

**Now take the quiz and see how much you know about determining your destination.** As soon as you achieve a 70%, you may continue onto the next tool.

### QUIZ TOOL 3

## CAN YOU DETERMINE DESTINATION?

Take this quiz! Since the tools that follow require the practice and understanding of this one, you must achieve 90% on this quiz before moving forward. Feel free to review the module as many times as you need to.

#### 1. Our destination is:

where we are planning to go on vacation.  
where we want to end up in life.  
how we travel through life.  
our chosen profession.

#### 2. Our journey is:

where we end up in life.  
the road we take to get to our vacation.  
the life path we choose that takes us closer to or further away from our desired destination.  
usually taken by car, but may be train, bus or plane.

#### 3. Errors at this level of mental processing can be catastrophic

Level 1  
Level 2  
Level 3  
none – nothing catastrophic ever happens as the result of errors.

**4. A goal is**

a shorter-term target that will help you reach your destination.

the same as your destination.

the same as your journey.

totally unnecessary – you will reach your destination without having any goals.

**5. The following are goals: (choose 3)**

The type of person you want to become.

Buying a house.

Earning a college degree.

Having a good marriage.

Losing 5 lbs.

**6. The following might be aspects of your destination:  
(choose 3)**

the type of person you want to become.

what you ate for dinner yesterday.

your achievements.

relationships you have developed.

the decision you made to speak softly.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

## TOOL 4

# AVOIDING THE EFFECTS OF STRESS

We are all affected by stress in our lives; stress itself is unavoidable. But we can avoid the *negative* effects of stress.

### Problem:

We don't recognize the symptoms of stress in our daily lives and we make poor choices under stress.

### Result:

When we understand the mechanisms of stress and their negative effects, we can develop strategies for keeping adverse consequences to a minimum. This will help us reach reasoned, calm choices - making it easier to arrive at our destination.

## TOOL4 LESSON CONTENT

- What is Stress?  
.....
- The Effects of Stress  
.....
- What is Tunnel Vision Effect (TVE)?  
.....
- Avoiding the Effects of Stress  
.....
- Do you know how to Avoid the Effects of Stress?  
.....

## WHAT IS STRESS?

Approximately 7 mins

Stress is a stimulus to the body that requires some sort of change. The body reacts to this stimulus with physical, mental, and emotional responses.

Stress itself is unavoidable. It happens all the time. For example, if I am reading a book and the phone rings, it intrudes on my concentration and causes me to lose my place. That is an experience of stress.

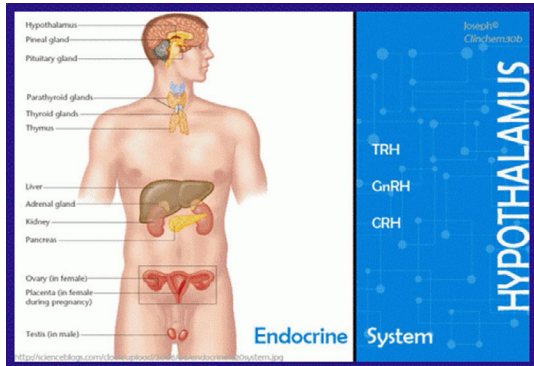
Stress may be internal, as well as external. The desire to improve a skill is an internal stress that demands a change. Stress can be positive or negative. Positive stress is one that improves my life in some way. Negative stress impedes on my functioning.

Our response to stress can also cause stress. This is the stress that we are going to learn to avoid as we move through this module.

### **The Body's Response to Stress**

Stress is a biochemical response to stimuli and is measured in heart beat, blood flow, oxygen consumption, and hormone levels. In order to understand the body's response to stress, we must understand a bit about the Endocrine System.

## WHAT IS THE ENDOCRINE SYSTEM?



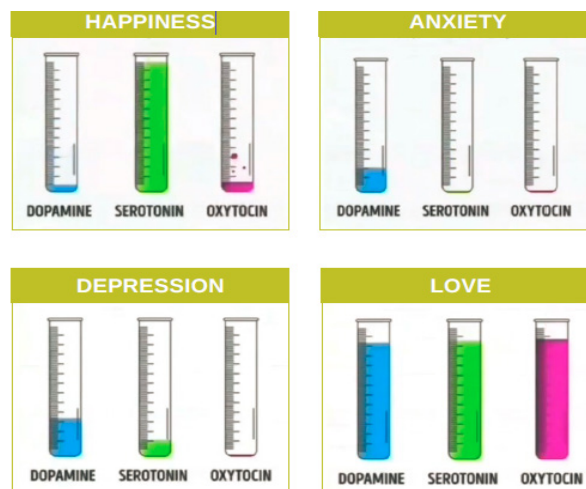
**The endocrine system is a collection of glands, such as the hypothalamus, pituitary, thyroid and adrenal glands, that produce and secrete hormones.**

Hormones are chemicals that signal the body to act in a certain way. They help

control involuntary body functions such as digestive processes, growth processes, heart rate and sweating. They also affect our mood. A single hormone can exert a variety of effects. Functions of hormones may overlap one another. Some well-known hormones are:

- Epinephrine (adrenaline)
- Serotonin
- Dopamine
- Oxytocin (“warm, fuzzy” hormone)
- Cortisol

## THIS IS HOW HORMONES INFLUENCE OUR EMOTIONS





The hormones act on the autonomic nervous system. This system has two parts: the sympathetic and the parasympathetic nervous systems. The sympathetic nervous system uses hormones to rev up the action; the parasympathetic system uses hormones to slow down or stop the action.

A stimulus will automatically release hormones into the body to help the person deal most effectively with that stimulus.

For example, when the “old brain” perceives a threat, it signals the hypothalamus, the brain’s control center. The **hypothalamus** signals glands in the sympathetic **nervous system** to produce hormones that help create the *Fight/Flight/Freeze response*. These hormones cause the heart to beat faster, blood pressure to rise, blood flow to move to the large muscles, and pupils to dilate. Once the threat has passed, the **hypothalamus** triggers the **parasympathetic system** to calm the body down.



*Troublesome stress occurs when the brain perceives a continuous threat that does not really exist. Hormone levels are excessively high and wreak havoc on the body and mind.*

**Exercise 4A: Quick Quiz (2 mins)**

1. A hormone is a chemical that is produced in a gland. Hormones produce physiological changes in the body, such as changes in heart rate and breathing.

Yes, that is correct

No, that is not correct

2. Match the correct BASIC emotion from Column B to the INTENSE version in Column A. Write down the letter of your answer.

Place Your Answer Here	Column A	Column B
	Hypothalamus	<b>a.</b> works to slow down the body
	Sympathetic System	<b>b.</b> organ that produces hormones
	Parasympathetic System	<b>c.</b> works to activate the body
	Hormones	<b>d.</b> command center
	Gland	<b>e.</b> chemicals that produce a specific action in the body

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

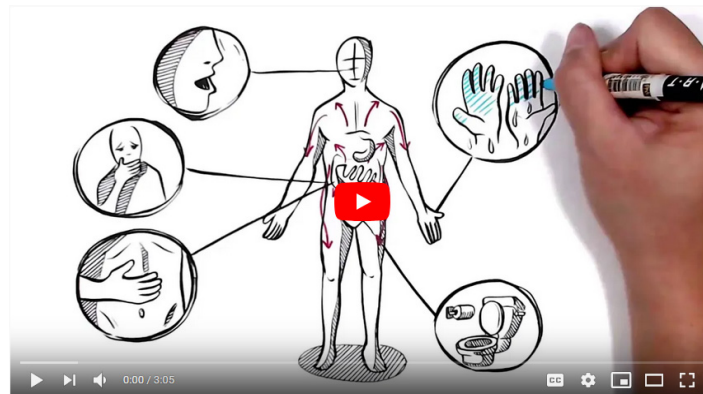
*Now that we understand what stress is, let's discuss the effects that stress has on the mind and body.*



## THE EFFECTS OF STRESS

Approximately 15 mins

Take a few minutes to watch this video that explains the Fight-Flight-Freeze response.



### Short-Term Stress

This is also referred to as **acute stress**. It can be triggered by activities, or events in the past, present, or the anticipated near future. It can be positive in small doses, such as manageable pressure, going to the gym, or even falling in love.

(Source: Rothstein, L., Miller, L.H., & Smith, A.D. (1994). *The Stress Solution*. New York, New York. Pocket Books.)

### Symptoms of short-term stress include:

- Bodily changes such as increased heart rate and blood pressure, dizziness, migraines, cold hands and feet, shortness of breath, and chest pain
- Muscular tension
- Digestive distress
- Disrupted sleep
- Emotional discomfort



### **Exercise 4B: Stress Awareness (5 mins)**

Think of a time when you were feeling acute stress. Place yourself back in the moment; ask yourself these four orienting questions:

- What was happening?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- Who was there?

Scan your body and find the physical sensations of stress (fast heart beat, butterflies in your stomach, sweating, fast breathing, etc.)

**Record what you find in your journal.**

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When the sympathetic nervous system is activated, the heart rate can increase from **70 beats per minute to 200 beats per minute!** And it will stay at this rate until the threat is no longer perceived.

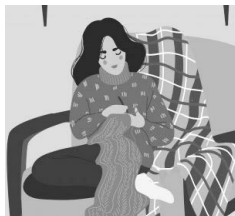
**Why is this a problem?** Because above 175 BPM, your frontal lobe (where logical thought takes place) is no longer working!

### Heart Rate

Heart rate is controlled by the old brain, and changes in response to our level of stress. Heart rate has effects on other functions as well.



**60-80 beats per minute**  
Normal resting heart rate



**115 beats per minute**  
Fine motor coordination  
deteriorates



**115- 145 beats per minute**  
Optimal survival and combat  
performance level for:  
• complex motor skills  
• visual reaction time  
• cognitive reaction time



**155 beats per minute**  
complex motor skills deteriorate



**175 beats per minute**  
cognitive processing deteriorates

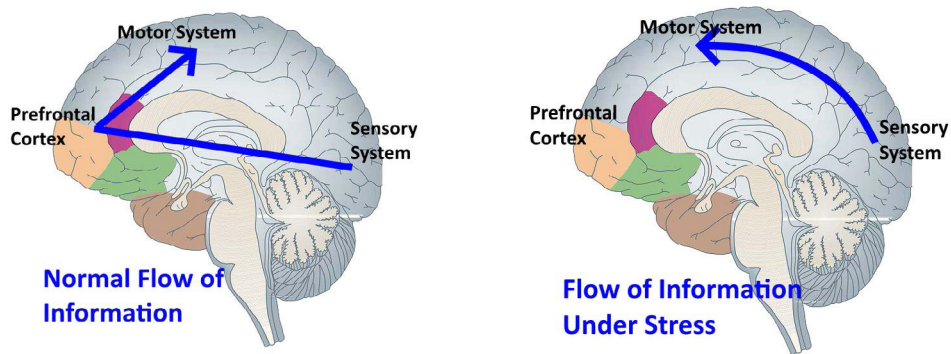
- loss of peripheral vision (tunnel vision)
- loss of depth perception
- loss of near vision
- auditory exclusion (tunnel hearing)



**More than 175 beats per minute**  
irrational fighting or fleeing

- freezing
- submissive behavior
- vasoconstriction (reduced bleeding from wounds)
- voiding of bladder and bowels
- gross motor skills at highest performance level (jumping or running)

Under normal conditions, oxygenated blood flows from the area that senses to the frontal cortex (the information processing center that is responsible for decision-making and forethought). The increased oxygen enhances the function of the frontal cortex, improving the capacity to analyze the situation, decide what to do, and send a message to the motor system to engage.



Under stress, the oxygenated blood goes directly from the sensory system to the motor system and limits the oxygen to the frontal cortex. This is survival mode: if a car is swerving toward you, you do not have time to analyze a situation, you only have time to move out of the way. The brain is directing its resources to the most vital functions for survival.

### **Long-Term Stress**

There are many negative health issues resulting from experiencing stress for a long time. Chronic stress results in physiological changes that incorporate stress as a “new normal.” This can be due to unrelenting pressure that is experienced as unavoidable. It can also result from traumatic experiences. Chronic stress can cause Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Years of untreated stress can cause several other health issues:

- anxiety and depression
- “burn-out” in which a person is emotionally and physically drained

A constant release of adrenaline and cortisol can cause:

- High blood pressure
- Hypertension
- Weakened immune system
- Low self-esteem
- Sleep disturbances

(Source: Rothstein, L., Miller, L.H., & Smith, A.D. (1994). *The Stress Solution*. New York, New York. Pocket Books.)

### Exercise 4C: BPM Matching (3 mins)

Match characteristics to heart rate:

Characteristic	Place Your Answer Here	Heart Rate
Cognitive processing deteriorates, loss of peripheral/near/depth vision and tunnel hearing		175BPM
Normal resting heart rate		155BPM
Complex motor skills deteriorate		115-145BPM
Optimal gross motor skills performance, fight/flight/freeze, loss of bladder control		115BPM
Fine motor coordination deteriorates		60-80BPM
Best performance for complex motor skills, visual or cognitive reaction time		175+BPM

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

Remember that short video on stress at the beginning of this topic? You may want to go back to review it. One of the effects of stress mentioned was *Tunnel Vision*. This is perhaps the most damaging aspect of reacting when stressed. Let's move on to examine the **Tunnel Vision Effect**.

## WHAT IS TUNNEL VISION EFFECT (TVE)?

Approximately 7 mins

Tunnel Vision Effect is the loss of **peripheral vision** with retention of **central vision**. This results in a constricted circular tunnel-like field of vision.

Tunnel vision affects both our **sensory vision** and our “**mental**” **vision**. It is, in fact, protective. It acts like a fuse by limiting the input we receive, to keep the mind from being overwhelmed when under extreme stress or when we try to process too much information at once. However, TVE also creates undesirable complications.



### What causes TVE?

- Mental multitasking
- Fatigue
- Stress
- Noise (mental, visual or audio)
- Fear or anxiety
- Impulsivity
- Inattention

### How is TVE triggered?

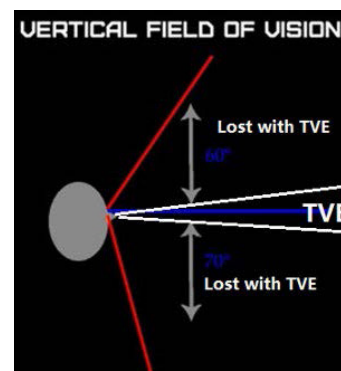
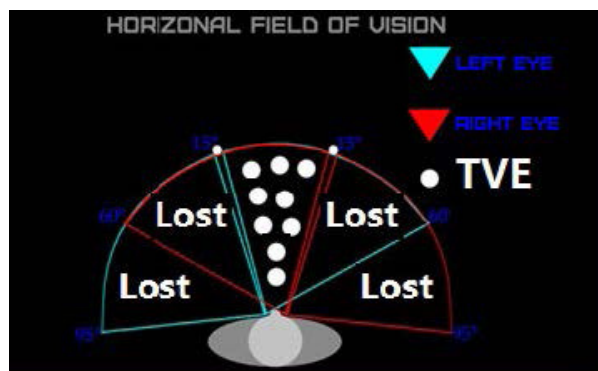
When the old brain perceives a threat to survival, stress hormones are released via the Sympathetic Nervous System. These hormones put the body into “Fight/Flight/Freeze mode”, leading to Tunnel Vision Effect.

Your heart rate and blood pressure (BP) goes up. In fact, your pulse can rise from the average 70 BPM to more than 200 BPM in less than a second! The heart rate will stay at this level until no threat is present. The Parasympathetic Nervous System is then activated, calming the body.

### What happens to your vision when TVE occurs?

- The adrenaline released by the SNS causes the muscles surrounding the lens of the eye to contract instead of relaxing for optimal focus.
- As the muscles contract, the lens thickens for distant focus, *almost eliminating all near focus*.
- This reduces the field of vision and increases pupillary dilation to let more light in.
- The cortisol released by the SNS disrupts visual input from being processed. Thus what is being viewed peripherally is not recognized as important and is not given the same attention as what is in front of you. Under the influence of TVE, 20-30% of peripheral vision is lost.

## SPACE HOLDER FOR HORIZONTAL FIELD OF VISION INTERACTIVE





## TUNNEL VISION EFFECT



You only have a narrow field of view and can no longer see the whole picture. You can only see the problem and not the possible solutions!



NOTE: TVE is the consequence of a mental and emotional overload triggering hormonal discharges. Thus, TVE is a physiological condition with psychological consequences. The experience of TVE is outside one's conscious awareness despite the elevation of respiration, heart rate, and blood pressure. In other words, you will not notice that you are not seeing the whole picture!

When experiencing TVE, you cannot see the solution – it is out of your range of vision. Tunnel vision focuses on the problem. And, as we will see later, we always go wherever we focus.

## OTHER EXAMPLES OF TUNNEL VISION EFFECT

### **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a condition where a person has experienced, witnessed, or was confronted by a traumatic event to which the response was intense fear, helplessness, or horror. He or she may have recurring thoughts or dreams about the event, triggering extreme distress. Likewise, they may be triggered by any stimulus that reminds them of the trauma.



PTSD can be acute, chronic, or have a delayed onset. A number of factors impact the experience of PTSD, including whether the person was directly exposed to the event, how many senses were affected by it, or if the person was physically injured.

PTSD does not occur immediately after the event. Before experiencing PTSD, a person will experience TVE. Repeatedly experiencing TVE can cause PTSD.

### **How do I know if I am experiencing TVE?**

Here are some clues:

- You have an intense focus on a visual stimulus that results in screening out of peripheral sights and sounds.
- You become irritated when anything interrupts your focus.
- You become unwilling to accept suggestions to change plans.
- You refuse offers for assistance.
- You are reluctant to take breaks from work.
- You experience confusion about what is going on around you.
- You can't make sense of what people are saying to you.

#### **Exercise 4D: What do you remember about TVE?** (3 mins)

1. Tunnel Vision Effect is a protective measure to help the mind from “blowing” when it is overloaded.

True  
False

2. What might you experience when in TVE  
(choose 5)

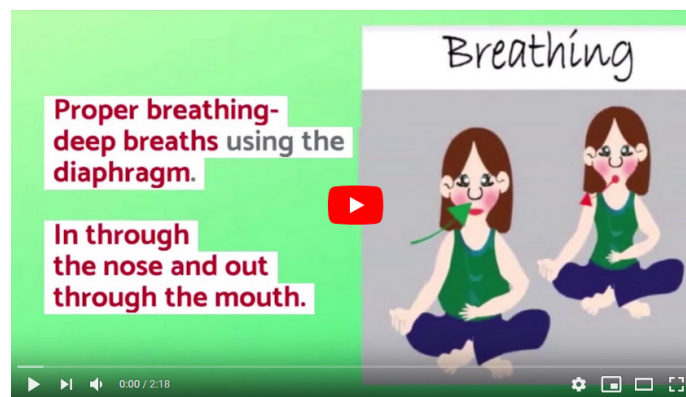
slow heart  
refusing offered assistance  
confusion about what is going on around  
unwilling to listen to suggestions  
reluctance to take breaks  
irritability when disturbed  
loss of vision

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

## AVOIDING THE EFFECTS OF STRESS

Approximately 1 hour

As we discussed, Tunnel Vision Effect is the result of stress. While experiencing Tunnel Vision Effect, one does not recognize it. However, one can sense the constricted mental state. The way to diffuse TVE is to short-circuit the stress response. We do this by stimulating the Vagus Nerve.



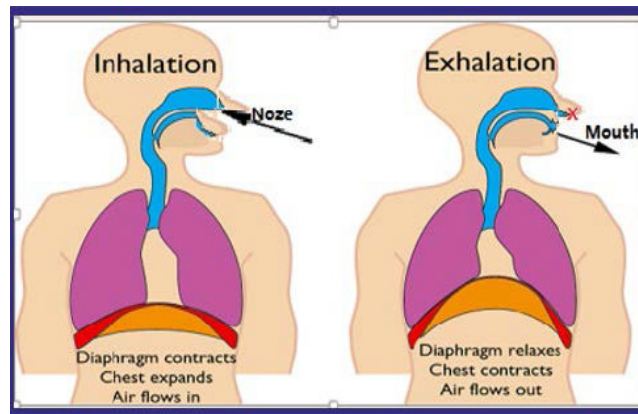
MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> teaches us how we can train our brain, and breathe to diffuse TVE in non-emergency situations, or emergency situations that require critical thinking and forethought.

### **What is the Vagus Nerve?**

#### **The Vagus Nerve Response**

The Vagus nerve is an element of the parasympathetic nervous system; it runs from the back of the neck to the intestines. When stimulated, it releases an array of anti-stress hormones such as vasopressin and oxytocin, creating calm. It is associated with benefits such as improved memory, immune function, sleep, and higher levels of growth hormone. It can be stimulated in a variety of ways, such as deep breathing.

## How to Breathe



**Watch this short video to learn proper breathing technique:**



### **What else can I do to Avoid TVE? (3 cards)**

**Instructions:** Click each button below to reveal each step instructions



### Exercise 4E: Breathing Practice (5 mins)

Practice breathing correctly for a few minutes. Record this experience in your journal.

There are many ways to avoid the effects of stress. Sometimes, the best course of action is to remove the stressor. But what happens if that is not practical or possible?

Here are some things you can do to make sure stress does not affect you long-term.

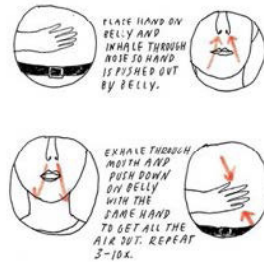
### Things that you can do to avoid the long-term effects of stress

**Note:** if the words overlap the images, please simply refresh your screen to see it clearly.

#### Breathe

Breathing efficiently is one way to activate the vagus nerve.

#### BELLY BREATHING 4-7-8 BREATHING



REPEAT THE BELLY BREATHING EXERCISE BUT WITH A SLIGHT MODIFICATION. INHALE FOR 4 COUNTS, WAIT 7 COUNTS AND EXHALE FOR 8 COUNTS. REPEAT FOR SEVERAL MINUTES.



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#### Relax

Relaxation is the opposite of stress

- Cardiac and respiratory responses are reduced
- Lower muscular tones
- Warmer extremities due to deeper skin dilation
- Lower artery pressure
- No adrenaline is circulating
- Reduced activity in the limbic system
- Improves better quality of sleep



In a state of relaxation, the person is awake but can voluntarily interrupt the state of relaxation at any point. Relaxation is voluntary and can be learned as a reaction to stress. Meditation can help with relaxation.

### **Exercise**

Regular exercise is a great way to avoid stress.

- It creates more endorphins, the “feel good” neurotransmitters, which act as natural painkillers.
- It is meditation in motion, as you focus on how your body is moving.
- Exercise improves sleep.
- Exercise improves alertness and concentration.
- Exercise improves self-esteem.



### **Eating Healthy**

When your body is fueled by healthy foods, it experiences less stress in everyday, daily actions.



### **Efficiency**

- Work efficiently.  
Remove timewasting activities and schedule your day to optimize your energy.  
When you are operating efficiently, you will experience less stress.
- Stay focused on one thing at a time. Trying to multi-task is much less efficient and can produce TVE.



# PLANNING TO AVOID STRESS

The next two exercises will help you plan to avoid stress.



## **Exercise 4F: Enhance Dealing with Stress** **Part 1 (15 mins)**

Sit quietly and mentally review your typical day. When during your regular schedule do you:

- Breathe correctly?
- Relax?
- Exercise?
- Eat healthy?
- Work efficiently?

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**Exercise 4G: Enhance Dealing with Stress**  
**Part 2 (15 mins)**

Now review your schedule and see when you might be able to add:

- Breathing correctly?
- Relaxing?
- Exercise?
- Eating healthfully?
- Working efficiently?

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### **Making Good Choices Reduces Stress**

Notice that all the ways to reduce stress are choices we can make. None of the factors are in-born or depend on outside circumstances. We can choose to breathe correctly, relax when we need to, and exercise. We can choose our thoughts and think positively.

*MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup>* teaches us that there are always two ways we can go, two choices of actions to take. Each time we choose well – the “Green Door” – we get closer to our destination. Each time we choose poorly – the “Red Door” – we move away from our destination. We will discuss the concept of choice more fully later.

### **Multitasking always creates stress.**

In reality, there is no such thing as true multitasking. What we really do is flip our attention between one activity and another. Our divided attention produces overload and stress. This overload can cause TVE when the brain perceives that it is more than it can handle.



**Exercise 4H:**  
**Analyze Your Multi-Tasking Habit (10 mins)**

Think about times when you attempt to multitask. What tasks do you try to do together? How can you focus on only one of them at a time? Plan to make one change in your “multitasking” habits. Record the plan in your journal.

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Stress is an inevitable part of life. We can use our minds and bodies to manage stress, which in turn helps our minds and bodies work better. MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> is a wholistic system, using both mind and body optimally for an optimal life!

*Now take the quiz to see how much you remember.  
Once you achieve 90%, you can move onto the next tool.*

#### QUIZ TOOL 4

## DO YOU KNOW HOW TO AVOID THE EFFECTS OF STRESS?

Because the next tools build on the practice and understanding of this one, you must achieve 90% on this quiz before moving forward. Feel free to review the module as many times as you need to.

### 1. What is the function of hormones in the body?

- To make you excited.
- To regulate body functions.
- To make you happy.
- To tell the glands what to do.

### 2. Tunnel Vision Effect (TVE)

- is only applicable in cars going through tunnels.
- affects only vision.
- is a physiological condition with psychological consequences that can be due to stress, fear, panic, fatigue, anxiety, and impulsivity.
- is easy to spot when experiencing it.

### 3. What is the difference between the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS) and the Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS)?

- The SNS regulates breathing and heart rate and the PNS regulates the thought process.
- The SNS is bigger than the PNS.
- The SNS contains many nerves, while the PNS contains only the Vagus Nerve.
- The SNS activates the body and the PNS calms the body.

**4. Chronic stress is**

a situation where stress is occurring for a short time.  
is a condition where stress becomes “normal”.  
is always caused by TVE.  
is exactly the same as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

**5. The following are benefits of proper breathing (choose 3):**

More oxygen to the brain, so it is easier to think clearly  
Lightheadedness  
Greater flexibility in muscles  
Maintaining calm  
Increased alertness

**6. Which of the following helps stimulate the Vagus nerve? (choose 3)**

Eating a lot of carbohydrates  
Exercise  
Correct breathing  
Loud music  
Relaxation

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

**TOOL 5A**

## HOW TO THINK

Most of us incorrectly assume that thinking is a rather simple and straightforward activity. In fact, the process of thinking is considerably complex.

**Problem:**

When we don't understand the process of thinking and how to use it, we are likely to make errors in our choices.

**Result:**

Learning how to think effectively will help us use our human potential to make appropriate choices that will help us reach our destination.

### TOOL 5A LESSON CONTENT

- Levels of Mental Processing: A review

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- The Six Thinking Hats - Parallel Thinking

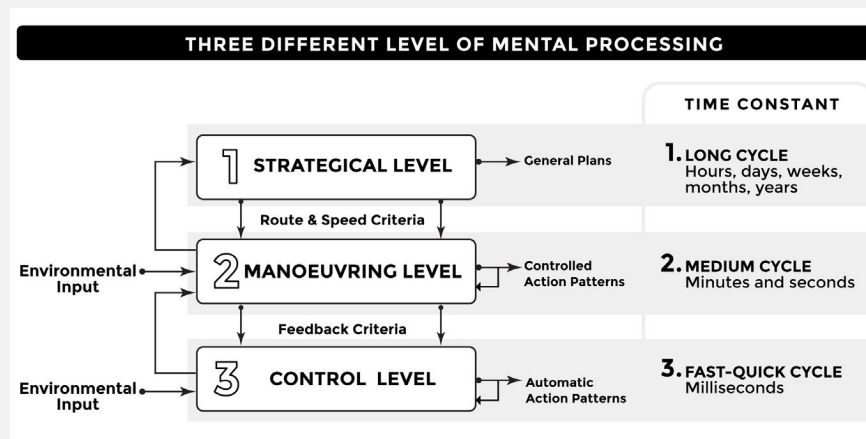


## LEVELS OF MENTAL PROCESSING: A REVIEW

Approximately 5 mins

Now is a good time to point out the three levels of processing that occurs in our mind. The following presentation explains:

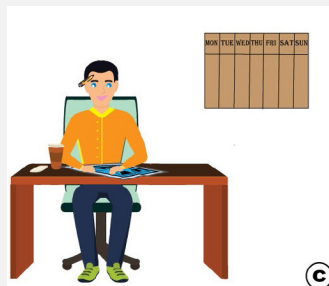
### Our Mind Processes at Three (3) Levels



Model developed by John Michon

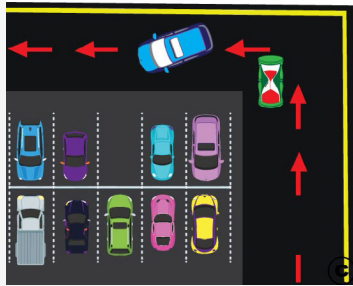
Most of us are not attuned to the way we think. It is like breathing – it just seems to happen. However, the more we know about what actually happens when we think, the better we are able to hone in on the type of thinking we are using and whether it is ideal for the outcome we want.

### Level 1: Long Term



This is the level we use for long-term plans. This longest cycle of mental processing is measured in hours, days, months, and even years. It is based on knowledge and experience acquired over the course of one's lifetime.

Level 1 processing results often depend on the breadth and depth of one's education and comprehension. We employ this level of processing for example, when preparing a road trip: selecting a route, checking the car, buying gas and food, or reserving hotels. **Planning our destination occurs at this level.**



### Level 2: Medium Term

This shorter cycle of mental processing is measured in minutes. The Level 2 processing time-frame does not allow for deep thinking. Successful level 2 thinking depends on how well

we have been trained to do things within a specific time limit. Examples include: driving in traffic and parking a car. **This is the level we use when making moment-by-moment conscious decisions to reach our destination.**

### Level 3: Short Term



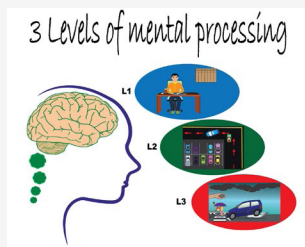
This is an extremely brief period of mental processing, lasting up to a maximum of a few seconds. Since this level consists of reactions, rather than conscious decisions, errors can result in sudden disasters. Therefore, the

better trained and prepared we are, the better the results. Being prepared for level 3 processing requires rehearsal and practice to help one to correctly anticipate and react. Even small physiological problems such as a toothache, headache, lack of sleep, drowsiness, or the influence of

substances, can dramatically disturb mental functioning and disrupt appropriate responses.

Likewise, inattention, impulsivity, and any other psychological disorder are also compromising factors. **This level includes our reactions to unexpected situations.** The more we train ourselves to think ahead of possible bumps in the road, the better we will react when the time comes.

### Summary



Errors in levels 1 or 2 processing can generally be corrected without serious consequences. However, errors at Level 3 typically have serious results. *MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup>* contributes to the enhancement of all three levels of mental processing.

The benefits of MFC are most noticeable at Level 3, where speed and precision are needed for efficient functioning at peak performance.



Determining our DESTINATION happens at the level of long-term processing. **Choosing to act** in ways that will lead us to our destination occurs at the level of medium- and short-term processing. Let's take a look at our medium-term planning – our goals.

## THE SIX THINKING HATS – PARALLEL THINKING

Approximately 40 mins.

The key to making the correct decision when engaged in Level 3 processing is training. As you work through the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> decision-making process and practice it again and again, you will see an improvement in short-term reactions. You may also see an improvement in Level 2, medium-term processing.

When it comes to Level 1 and Level 2 processing, we have the luxury of time. We do not have to make an instant decision because we are not responding to immediate events. Therefore, we can take the time we need to make the best decision.



As we have seen from previous tools, perceiving the whole picture is critical to making optimal decisions. If you are not aware of all the elements of a situation, and if you don't see how they come together, you are likely to miss an important factor that may impact the outcome of your decision.

Dr. Edward de Bono developed a system to identify and be attuned to the various forms of thinking we use. De Bono called his method “Six Thinking Hats.”

**Watch this video to get an overview of de Bono's Six Thinking Hats method.**



### **Six Thinking Hats - Recommended Order**

Many companies and individuals use the Six Thinking Hats method to think through a problem thoroughly. MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> recommends that you use the following order when thinking through a problem:

#### **Hat 1-Blue Hat**

The BLUE HAT is the perspective that manages the problem-solving process. It looks for the big picture. It asks questions like:



- What is the problem?
- What do we want to achieve?
- What is the plan of action?
- What has happened so far?
- What might I do next?



#### **Hat 2- White Hat**

The WHITE HAT asks for data about the issue. What are the numbers? What are the facts? When wearing the white hat, think like a computer.



### **Hat 3- Red Hat**

Wearing the RED HAT asks us to think about how we feel about this problem and the possible solutions. It asks for our intuition and emotions.



### **Hat 4- Green Hat**

The GREEN HAT asks us to be creative, expansive and generate new ideas. What is possible? How can we make this better? What alternatives are there?



### **Hat 5- Black Hat**

The BLACK HAT represents the critical analysis: What are the impediments to success?



### **Hat 6- Yellow Hat**

The YELLOW HAT is optimistic and comes up with all the positive aspects of this idea. It is clear and constructive.



### **Hat 1 – Blue Hat**

Finally, we return to the Blue Hat and synthesize all the information and insights we have gleaned into a coherent solution and plan of action.

### **Summary**

The Six Thinking Hats method of processing thought is a good way to assure that your thoughts are organized and efficient. Remember, efficiency reduces stress.



**Exercise 5A:**  
**Six Thinking Hat Practice (30 mins)**

Consider a situation that you recently encountered.  
Choose something that was not very emotionally charged.

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Use the Six Thinking Hats process to revisit the situation. It may be beneficial to actually wear a hat of the appropriate color as you are doing this exercise. Make yourself some paper hats if you need to. Remember not to move onto a different color hat until you have completely exhausted all the thinking of each hat. Use the flashcards to guide you. Write down your answer here or record this in your journal.



## Blue thinking hat Synthesis



Managing the thinking process:

- What are we trying to achieve?
- What comes next?
- What steps should we take?

## White thinking hat



### Gathering Data:

- What do I know about this issue?
- What do I need to know about this issue?

## Red thinking hat Emotion



Emotions and intuition:

- How do I feel about this?
- What do I like?
- What do I dislike?
- What's my gut telling me?

## Green thinking hat Creative



Creativity:

- What are the possibilities?
- What alternatives exist?
- What new ideas do we have?



Troubleshooting:

- What can go wrong?
- What dangers exist?
- What difficulties will come up?

Handwriting practice lines for the Black thinking hat section.



Optimism, positive thinking:

- What is the value here?
- What are the benefits?
- What are the positives?

Handwriting practice lines for the Yellow thinking hat section.

**Blue thinking hat  
Synthesis**



Managing the thinking process:

- What are we trying to achieve?
- What comes next?
- What steps should we take?

Once you have thought it through using the Six Thinking Hats, consider:

- How was this process different for you using the Six Thinking Hats?
- What benefits did you find?
- What difficulties did you find?

Practicing the Six Thinking Hats process will help you think things through completely. This is a significant step in making good decisions.

*Next, we will discuss the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup>  
4-step Process: Sequential Thinking.*

**TOOL 5B**

# MINDFULCHOICE<sup>SM</sup>

## TOOL 5B LESSON CONTENT

- The MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> 4-step process - Sequential
- Thinking
- Important vs. Urgent

## THE MINDFULCHOICE<sup>SM</sup> 4-STEP PROCESS – SEQUENTIAL THINKING

Approximately 35 mins.

### What is the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> 4-Step Process?

The MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> process is a sequential 4-step process that will help you manage any situation so that YOU can take control of where YOU want it to go. Here is a quick overview; the rest of this topic will go into each step in more depth.



### Step 1: RECOGNITION

In this step, you **RECOGNIZE** what is present at the moment. You want to look at the facts as they are, without any judgement about them. This

is a nonjudgemental snapshot of the occurrence as it presents itself.

**Example:** Ralph is upset because his wife, Lisa, just asked him to take out the garbage, and he is very busy with an important deadline for work. Ralph feels like yelling at her. Ralph **recognizes** that:

- his wife has made a request of him,
- this has happened before,
- he feels an inner tension,
- he is blaming his wife.

### **Step 2: AWARENESS**

The next step is to be AWARE of one's subjective experience including:



- thoughts, feelings, pressures, demands, conflicts, and physical reactions
- the many ways the situation may go
- the potential responses and their consequences

**Example:** Ralph takes a moment to become aware of: for what and how he is blaming his wife, that he had not communicated his tension to her, that the last time this same situation happened, it ended in an unproductive argument.



### **Step 3: CHOICE**

Now you use your reasoning to decide what course of action to follow, and implement your decision.

**Example:** Ralph knows that his destination includes a peaceful home life and a happy

marriage. He sees that if he **chooses** to **YELL**, he will be moving away from his destination, and if he **chooses** to **NOT YELL**, he will be moving closer to his destination. **So Ralph chooses to NOT YELL.**

**Step 4: SELF-ASSESSMENT**

Lastly, you **ask yourself** “How well did I execute these steps?” You are not evaluating the actual outcome of the decision, but whether you followed the process.

Non-judgmentally, look at the process and see what you have learned and what might be done better next time.

**Example:** Ralph now thinks to himself that he, indeed, followed the process. He:



- 1. Recognized what was present**
- 2. Became aware of his resources**
- 3. Made a choice with his destination in mind.**

Ralph learns that he is able to make a better choice in harmony with his destination compared to the choices he made in the past.

**Summary**

The 4-step MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> method helps you recognize how the choices you make bring you closer to or further away from your destination. With practice, you will be able to take greater control over your journey towards your destination.



### **What should we recognize?**

Two things must be recognized:

1. What is happening? Is it something that must be addressed, and could it have different consequences depending on how you react to it? Note all aspects, including thoughts.
2. How does this situation compare to past situations? Do you find any patterns, and are you assuming you know the way the situation is going to go?

**Recognition** requires you to be alert, attentive, and not susceptible to noise. Noise can include external distractions and internal processes. Either way, you have to keep a clear focus on the situation at hand.

**Recognition** also involves looking at all the **facts** of the situation. A fact is something that exists and is stated without judgement or **preconception/bias**. Facts include what you are feeling internally, but do not include a judgement of whether that is “good” or “bad”. You will examine your preconceptions in the next step.

#### **Exercise 5B: Fact Vs. Preconception** (5 mins)

Let's do this one more time. **See if you can sort out “fact” from “preconceptions”**. Review the exercise and material from pages [36](#) to [39](#).

Remember: To be effective in the Recognition step, you need to avoid impulsivity (acting on your emotions) and be fully attentive (taking in the full picture – noticing what is happening both inside and outside of yourself).

## AWARENESS

The next step is Awareness. You think mindfully about the situation, the choices you can make, and the consequences those choices could have. “What will happen if I do this? What will happen if I don’t?

**What happens next?”**

### **What happens when we become aware?**

The goal of this step is to determine, before making the final choice, what paths you could go down when you choose between different options. You calmly (or mindfully) analyze all of the data you’ve gathered about the situation, so you know as much about it as you can. Now you can look at the situation in a way that helps you judge whether something is “good” (will positively take you in the right direction) or “bad” (will negatively lead you away from your destination).

### **Awareness Prompts**

**Instructions:** Each box consists of awareness question prompts. You can print and cut this out into cards. These question prompts will guide you in having an aware and mindful choice.

#### **How serious is this?**

Will my choice here make a big difference to the situation or my life’s journey?

#### **Is what I am feeling reasonable?**

Perhaps the other party is acting without the necessary information. Maybe I am not seeing the whole picture.

<b>If this has happened before, how did it turn out last time?</b>  If it did not happen before, is it similar in some way to other situations I have encountered?	<b>How do I want this to turn out?</b>  What do I really want out of this situation?
<b>What can I change about the situation?</b>  What can I not change?	<b>How soon is the situation going to affect me?</b>  How close is it? Think in terms of time and place.
<b>Will it need to be proactive?</b>  If so, what options are open to me?	<b>Am I physically and/or emotionally prepared to act?</b>  Am I tired? Hungry? Enthusiastic? Afraid?

## CHOICE

Once you have completed the Awareness step, you are now in a position to determine what your choices may be. You can act – or not. If you cannot see your choices clearly, you probably have some unfinished business. Return to the awareness step so you can gather the additional information you need to make the optimal choice.

### **So many choices!**

We sometimes think we have only one option available to us. At other times we think we have so many options that it is difficult to decide which is the best one.

*MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup>* directs you to look at every choice as binary. Binary means 2 – there are always only 2 options at any given moment. We can

choose to act in a certain way or we can choose NOT to act in that way. We can choose to think a certain thought or we can choose NOT to think that thought. Once we have made a choice, we are immediately presented with another binary choice. Seeing the binary choice is key to the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> method. We will discuss this at length in the next tool.

### **Exercise 5C: MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> Exercise (5 mins)**

Try these short practice scenarios. Choose the action that will bring you closer to the stated destination.

#### **Scenario 1:**

Your child has not done their assigned chores despite multiple reminders. This scenario plays out every evening. You raise your voice and demand they be completed, but it doesn't happen.

#### **Choose your destination:**

Maintaining a close relationship with your child.  
Developing compliance and follow-through habits.

With your chosen destination in mind, which would be the best course of action? Select the button that matches your best answer.

**Scenario 2**

You are late and hurrying to work. As you are walking, you notice an unfamiliar, older couple who seem confused. You see someone else, an equal distance away, walking towards them.

**Destination:**

To connect positively with others and be kind

**Select the button that matches your best answer.**

## SELF ASSESSMENT: DID I DO A GOOD JOB?

Self-Assessment isn't about judging yourself or evaluating how good or bad the results of your choice were. It is about reviewing how you can make the decision process better next time. What should you pay more attention to? How can you refine the process?

When you make any specific choice, many elements come into play. You predict the outcome of a choice based on the circumstances you are aware of. But in the real world, unexpected things can happen over which we have no control. For example, you take a convenient shortcut only to find out that there's just been an accident on that road and it's caused a traffic jam. Was the decision you made a bad decision? Maybe, if you judge only by the outcome - but not if you judge by the process you used to make the choice.



When you use the *MindfulChoice*<sup>SM</sup> method to arrive at a decision, you increase the likelihood of making the best choice available. Imagine two financial advisers: One has twenty years of experience, good training, and an excellent track record, but this year, his performance has been below average. The other financial adviser has been very successful this year—but his way of choosing investments is by flipping a coin. Which financial adviser would you prefer? Certainly,

you'd want the one who has the more reliable process, because it will pay off in the long run.

This is why Self-Assessment focuses on process rather than outcome. By addressing how well you execute the process, you increase your chances of making good choices in the future. Always ask yourself:

- Did I follow the process?
- Did I do it in a way that makes sense?
- Am I heading toward my destination?

As you become more practiced at using the *MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup>* process, you will develop your own set of questions to help you self-assess your use of the process. Based on this module, you might add questions such as:

**Did I...**

- Consider similar past experiences?
- Pay full attention to the situation?
- Evaluate my mental and physical abilities at that moment?
- Consider the other (binary) alternative?
- Picture the likely consequences of my choice?



**Exercise 5D:**  
**MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> (15 mins)**

Think back over something that happened over the last 24 hours. See if you can fit what happened into the MFC 4-step process. What parts of the process happened naturally? What parts of the process can you improve for next time?

**Record your thoughts in your journal.**

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This 4-step MFC process is the overall structure to help you think through your process in a sequential manner.

Next, we will look at important vs. urgent: a method of examining all aspects of a situation thoroughly.



## IMPORTANT VS. URGENT

Approximately 25 mins

We all want to be productive. Yet, we often feel like we could get much more accomplished. We dream of accomplishing big things, but we don't want or need the stress.

If we take a look at how we spend our time, we see that the list of what we do falls into four categories. Take a look at the examples below for each category of activities:



### Not Urgent - Important

The items in this category are of high value but do not have immediate time pressure. With proper planning, many of these tasks and responsibilities can be fulfilled without time stress. An example is having medical checkups before problems present themselves.

### Urgent - Important

This category of items comprises the most valuable tasks and responsibilities that demand your time and attention. They deserve your highest priority. For example, it is 5:30 pm, and it is time to make dinner. No other task takes precedence at this moment in time. Sometimes an item can be in this category due to poor planning. It is not necessary to wait until something is urgent before it gets done.

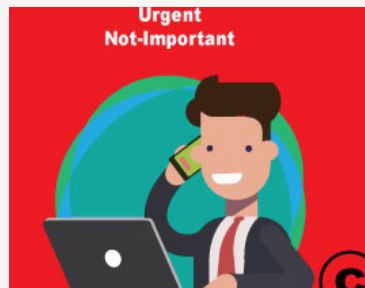


**Not Urgent - Not Important**

These are time wasters, such as web surfing and trivial busywork. These do not deserve our attention. They may be things we enjoy, but they should be placed at the bottom of our to-do list. Stopping these time-wasting activities will yield a jump in productivity.

**Urgent - Not Important**

This category holds items for which there is no objective importance, but we identify something that must be done in the here-and-now. For example, answering every phone call and email immediately. While some of them may be important, it is really our need to respond, which creates a sense of urgency. Minimizing these interruptions will reduce stress and keep us focused and productive.



**Exercise 5F:**  
**Important Vs. Urgent Practice (20 mins)**

Think over the most recent typical day. Make a list of everything that you did that day. See which category each item fits into.

Now look over the list and determine how many of the “Urgent/Important” items are genuine and how many could have been excluded with proper planning.

“Important/not urgent”: How can you increase the number of items for this category? Identify how you will remove “Not Urgent/Not Important” items from your list. See which “Urgent/Not Important” items you can delegate to someone else.

**TOOL 5C**

## THINK THINGS THROUGH

### TOOL 5C LESSON CONTENT

- Think Things Through
- Thinking about Thinking - Metacognition
- Do you know how to Think?

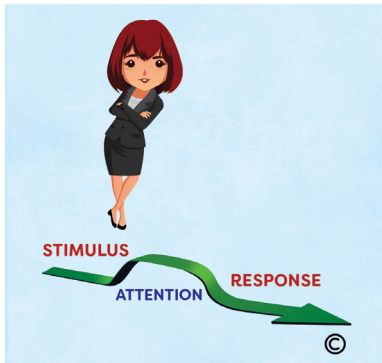
## THINK THINGS THROUGH

Approximately 30 mins

With all the tools you have learned about noticing, your operating system, identifying your destination, stress and TVE, and the *MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup>* 4-Step Process for decision-making, your path to change and fulfillment will now be a straight shot, right? Sorry, it's more complicated than that.

Our research has led us to the conclusion that the overwhelming majority of errors when making our choices – more than 95% – that keep us stuck, frustrated, and disappointed have just two causes: **Impulsivity** and **Inattention**. For some of us, the former is more common, for some the latter – and sometimes both are present, though one of them is usually dominant.

We are constantly bombarded by stimuli, both internal and external, and we would be literally paralyzed by stimulus overload were it not possible to *selectively attend* to some things and ignore everything

**Inattention by-pass**

else. Thankfully, we are equipped with an amazing and complex *Attentional System* that does the work necessary to keep us attuned to what is important at any moment in time. Through a series of executive functions involving focalization, data analysis, filtration, and storage, we keep our eyes on the ball and maintain the focus we need to accomplish whatever we set ourselves to do.

Yet there are times when we are moved to act by urges, desires, and/or emotions. An impulse can take hold and shift our attention to something we experience as pressing, creating the **Impulsivity Bypass**. Or the activity involved in holding our attention is overwhelmed by a new stimulus that is more engaging, creating the **Inattention Bypass**. In either case, the Attention System becomes shortcircuited and we lose our way.

Now the good news! All the MFC tools you have learned precisely make up the skill set necessary for avoiding errors of Impulsivity and Inattention when practiced and incorporated into your daily life. Destination. Awareness. Choice. They come together to give you the ability to **THINK THINGS THROUGH!**

**Impulsivity by-pass**



**Exercise 5G:**  
**Decision-Making Awareness Part 1 (10 mins)**

Think about some specific errors in decision-making you made over the last week. Were the errors due to impulsivity or inattention? Do you find that you are more likely to make one type of error over the other? Since correcting impulsivity requires a different set of actions than correcting inattention, it is very useful to know which is your “preferred” type of error.

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## Predicting errors in decision-making

Ever been to a movie and notice how you KNOW how the characters are going to react to something that happens (even if you didn't read the book!)? Based on your experience with other movies, the characters you have met in the movie and their previous reactions, you unconsciously put it all together and can predict the reactions. The same is true in "real life." We can often predict how we ourselves and others, especially those we know well, will react.

### Think things through



As we come across situations that demand our attention and response, we have come to recognize how emotion, thought, and feelings can affect us. We have learned that taking time to notice what is happening in the present is important; it gives us information to base our decision on appropriate next move. When we keep in mind our ultimate destination, we can see this situation in greater context.

*MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup>* encourages us to **Think Things Through**. It is not only important to know what is happening NOW, but also to examine the potential consequences of our actions, based on both the present and the past. Taking time to think and breathe makes it easier to anticipate what is likely to occur. Perhaps the most important question we can ever ask ourselves when faced with a choice is: **What happens next?**



### Exercise 5H: Decision-Making Awareness Part 2 (10 mins)

Think about a situation that happened in which you had to make a choice. While it was happening, what did you think about before you made your choice? Did you only think about what was going on in the moment, or did you consider where each of your choices would lead you? What was the most important factor in arriving at your choice? Write down in your journal how you might have spent more time thinking about the future rather than just this moment in time.





**Exercise 5i: (10 mins)**

Recall a situation that you experienced today in which you found yourself confused or disoriented. Identify the sequence of your thoughts. What would have been the optimal type of thinking for that situation? Would it have been best to remain unemotional or would it have been best to remain in a compassionate thought process? Did you engage in a type of thinking that ended up being self-limiting and made it more difficult to resolve the situation? Did you have trouble maintaining one line of thinking? Were positive thoughts intruded upon by negative thoughts? If so, what might have triggered them?

Thinking thoroughly in a structured manner helps us to make sure that we are not missing any parts of the issue. It helps us separate our logic from our emotions, yielding better choices.

**Take the quiz and see how much you know about thinking. The next tool examines the idea of Choice.**

### QUIZ TOOL 5

## DO YOU KNOW HOW TO THINK?

A very clear understanding of this tool is essential to moving on, so you will need to achieve 90% on this quiz. You may review the material as many times as necessary.

### 1. Which is the MFC recommended order for the Six Hats?

Blue White Red Green Black Yellow Blue  
White Black Red Green Blue Yellow White  
Blue Brown Green Red White Yellow Black  
Blue Black White Green Red Yellow Blue

### 2. Which of the 3 levels of mental processing is concerned with immediate decisions

Level I – Strategic, long-term level  
Level II – Maneuvering, medium-term level  
Level III – Control, short-term level  
None of these levels address immediate decision-making

### 3. Which is the FIRST of the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> 4-step process?

Awareness  
Recognition  
Choice  
Self-assessment

**4. What does the phrase “Think Things Through” encourage?**

Maintaining tunnel vision – see things through a small hole.  
Focus on only one aspect of things at a time.  
Nothing – it’s just a catchy phrase where each word starts with a “T”.  
Look not only at the immediate effects of your choice, but also at what happens next.

**5. What is metacognition?**

Thinking about thinking  
Seeing only the big picture  
Doing nothing but thinking  
Thinking without emotion

**6. What type of thinking is “Blue Hat”?**

Constructive  
Creative  
Synthesis  
Critical analysis

**7. What type of thinking is “Red Hat”?**

Emotional  
Creative  
Objective  
Constructive

**8. What type of thinking is “White Hat”?**

Emotional  
Constructive  
Critical analysis  
Objective

**9. What type of thinking is “Black hat”?**

Creative  
Critical Analysis  
Objective  
Synthesis

**10. During which stage of the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> process do we analyze how well we made our choice?**

Recognition  
Awareness  
Choice  
Self-assessment

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

**TOOL 6**

# BINARY CHOICE

Every step we take is a choice. We are constantly choosing how to act and think.

**Problem:**

We often don't see that we DO have a choice or we see too many choices in front of us.

**Result:**

After understanding how choice works, we can use its power to help us make choices that will bring us closer to our destination.

## TOOL 6 LESSON CONTENT

- What is Choice?  
.....
- Binary Choice  
.....
- Destination and Choice  
.....
- Do you know about Choice?

## WHAT IS CHOICE?

Approximately 10 mins

*“For all practical purposes, we choose everything we do, including the misery we feel.”*

– WILLIAM GLASSER, MD

Choice is the basis of how we live. EVERYTHING we do is because we chose to do it. We make approximately 30,000 choices each day.

**Because everything is choice, there is ALWAYS another option. I am never stuck!**

Choice is the power we have to shape our own lives. Every choice you make changes you. We are the sum total of our choices.

**Watch this short video:**





**Exercise 6A:**  
**Reflecting On Your Choices Part 1 (5 mins)**

Think about an action you did within the last 24 hours. It could be something small or something big.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Did you recognize that you had a choice in doing that action?
- What were the choices in front of you?
- What were you thinking when you made that choice?
- Do your thoughts or your feelings drive your choice?
- Did you look at the possible result of your choice before you chose?

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*Let's move on to learn about binary choice.*



## BINARY CHOICE

Approximately 10 mins

It may seem that we have many choices in front of us, but in reality, we always only have two: to take a course of action or NOT. The word “binary” means 2; choice is always binary. We may be making multiple binary choices in rapid succession, but each choice is binary.

For example: If I have 3 flavors of ice cream to choose from, I may think that I am choosing between three items. In fact, however, I am choosing whether to eat vanilla ice cream OR NOT. Then I am choosing whether to eat chocolate ice cream OR NOT. Then I am choosing whether to eat strawberry ice cream OR NOT. Each choice is only available after the previous choice has been made. As I make one choice after another, I am building a decision tree.

### Binary Choice and Tunnel Vision Effect

While **multitasking** is possible physically (we all breathe as we are doing other things; we can walk and push a wagon at the same time), mental multitasking is not possible. We SEEM to be multitasking, but what we are really doing is switching back and forth very rapidly between different mental processes. If that SOUNDS stressful, it IS! Trying to mentally multitask induces stress and can lead to TVE. When we don't recognize our choices as binary, we are at risk for attempting to mentally multitask.



When one is stressed and in the grips of TVE, one only sees ONE option. One feels stuck – there is no other option.



**Exercise 6B:**  
**Reflecting On Your Choices Part 2 (5 mins)**

Think back to a decision you made over the last day. Can you identify the binary decision(s) involved? Can you identify the decisions that followed one another that built your decision tree. **Record your findings in your journal.**

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**Let’s see now how our destination and using Backward Design play a fundamental role in making good decisions.**

## DESTINATION AND CHOICE

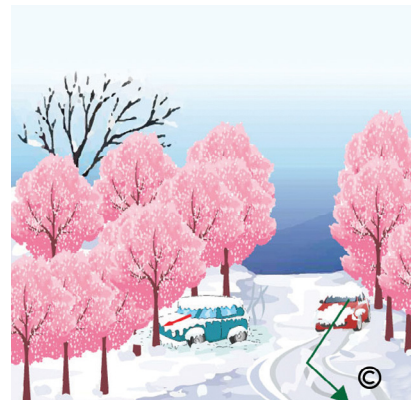
Approximately 12 mins



Every choice we make directs us to the next choice. We make one choice at a time. When we keep our focus on our destination, we will make choices that direct us toward what we are trying to reach. Choices that take us closer to our destination are “good” choices – we call this choosing the “Green door.” Choices that take us away from our destination are “bad” or “Red door.”

Every step of the way is a choice. Each choice leads to another one. At every step of the way, we can choose the Green door, even if we have chosen the Red door in the past.

We always end up where we are focused. Using the concept of Backward Design, we can anticipate which choices will help us move toward our destination. We can follow the decision tree backwards from our destination to help us see which choice is the Green door.



### **Exercise 6C:** **Reflecting On Your Choices Part 3 (10 mins)**

Think about an action you did within the last 24 hours. It could be something small or something big. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Did you recognize that you had a choice in doing that action?
- What were the choices in front of you?
- How did this choice take you closer or further away from achieving your destination?



A *MindFulChoice*™ is not just choice; it is a superior mindful process of choosing. When making a *MindFulChoice*™ decision one should always assess binary alternatives and never be limited to merely one option due to inaccurate perceptions, impulsivity, negative mood, or inattention.

The ultimate test of a good choice is the degree to which it advances one towards the destination. The *MindFulChoice*™ discipline develops an attitude that prioritizes reason over emotion. By possessing **the attitude** to make optimal choices, one ensures positive results and self-satisfaction.

## TOOL 6 QUIZ

# DO YOU KNOW ABOUT CHOICE?

Take this quiz. Because the next tools build on the practice and understanding of this one, you must achieve 90% on this quiz before moving forward. Feel free to review the module as many times as you need to.

### 1. Is this statement true?

*"We choose everything including the misery we feel."*

Yes, it is true.

No, it is not true.

### 2. Because every step we take involves a choice:

We have many choices at any given moment.

There is ALWAYS another option.

We never make it to our destination.

We can only make two choices.

### 3. Binary choice means that:

Choices are the same as ones and zeros.

Each choice has a number.

We make two choices each day.

Every time we choose, we are choosing between two options.

**4. Why is it important to have your destination in mind when making a choice?**

Because the destination is where we are aiming to go; each choice takes us closer or further away from our destination.

It is not really important.

We change our choices as our destination changes.

We change our destination each time we make a choice.

**5. What advantage do we gain by viewing each choice as binary?**

We do not gain any advantage.

We enter a state of tunnel vision, where we see only one option. This helps us choose.

We reduce mental stress, thereby avoiding tunnel vision effect.

We become better choosers by only making two choices a day.

**6. Multitasking is stressful because**

It is difficult to breath and think at the same time.

Multitasking is really an illusion. The brain is really jumping from one task to another very quickly.

It is not really stressful. We just haven't practiced enough.

It is stressful because we think about it too much.

**7. A decision tree is**

a great place to find a decision.  
the branching path of our decisions as we make one  
binary choice after another.  
the best way to choose between many options.  
a chart that one must fill out when making choices.

**8. Each binary choice we make leads to**

our destination.  
our journey.  
backward design.  
another binary choice.

**9. Backward design is useful in the decision-making process because**

it helps us trace our decision toward our destination.  
it helps us trace our decision from our destination to  
the current choice.  
It is not helpful since it has nothing to do with choices.  
It helps us see things when they are turned on their  
backs upside down.

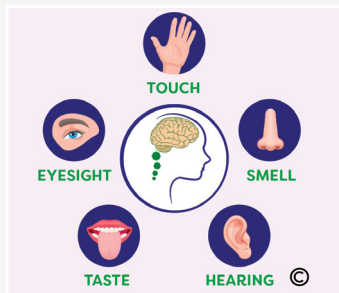
**10. Choice is a fundamental tool because**

we can choose whether or not we like it.  
choices always take us to our destination.  
our destination is the only place our choices can take us.  
we are constantly making choices. Everything we do and  
think is a choice.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

**TOOL 7****PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER**

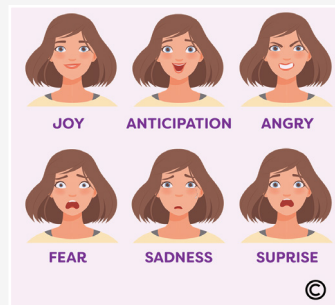
Now that we have a good understanding of the tools that are used in the *MindfulChoice*™ process, let's take a close look at the origin of these tools – the *MindfulChoice*™ Model from Perception to Behavior.

**1 Perception**

Everything that we encounter in our daily lives is input processed through our five senses. We can hear music but we can't see it. We can see color but we can't smell it. Our world is defined and limited in this way.

**2 Emotions**

Sensory input is filtered through the part of the “old” brain that is hardwired and responsible for emotions, linked to our hormonal system. Our most basic responses of Fight/Flight/ Freeze happen here, as well as our body's response to events.







### 3 Thought

At the same time that our “old” brain is processing the raw data of sensory input, our “new” brain employs executive functions to evaluate this input, so that we can understand and grasp the meaning of our experiences and make sense of our world.

### 4 Attitude

A set of thoughts that share a common motif, direction, perspective, and/or interpretation is an attitude: A distinctive “lens” that we use as our framework to define ourselves and interact with the world. Are you optimistic or pessimistic? Are you trusting or suspicious? Do you see the world as full of wonder or is it a dangerous place? Attitudes can be changed and developed to help us reach our destination.



### 5 Feelings

Our attitudes – positive or negative – influence our judgements of events. These judgements determine the direction of our feelings: A positive attitude leads to positive feelings while a negative attitude leads to negative feelings.

### **6 Behavior**

The way we act is the final step in the process of experiencing. It is the result of choice, based on all the preceding steps in the sequence.

Thus, if you change the way you think, you will change your attitude – and the way you live your life.



## **TOOL 7 LESSON CONTENT**

- Scenario 1: To Do or Not To Do
- .....
- Suggested answers for Scenario 1
- .....
- Scenario 2: The Anniversary that Wasn't
- .....
- Suggested answers for Scenario 2
- .....
- Summary

## SCENARIO 1: TO DO OR NOT TO DO

It was another frustrating Saturday morning and Alicia was lying in bed watching another video. Like the last five weekends in a row, she had promised herself that she would get up at a proper time and finish organizing the garage and attic. But here it was, eleven o'clock and she was still doing nothing productive.

“If I were a better person I wouldn’t let myself go like this, just because I had a really hard week. I’d already have gotten up and been halfway through the job”, Alicia berated herself. Yet at the same time she could feel the stubborn resistance rise within her. “I really don’t want to do it! I hate having to get filthy in the garage and in the basement. It’s just so gross!” Alicia could admit to herself that she was a bit of a germophobe, but she still believed that she ought to overcome her uneasiness and do the right thing.

### HOW ALICIA REACTS WITHOUT MFC

#### **Without MFC**

Seeing as how there was not enough time to get the job done, Alicia made (another) promise to herself that next Saturday she would make the garage and attic spotless and perfectly organized, no matter what it would take. But deep down she really despaired of ever succeeding.

## HOW ALICIA USES THE 4-STEP MFC PROCESS

### 1. RECOGNITION

Alicia could feel the tension in her body. She knew she was having inner conflict between her desire to complete the job of organizing the house and her resistance to actually doing the work she found so unpleasant. She could see that her avoidant behavior was her way of coping.

### 2. AWARENESS

Alicia began to tune into the stress she was experiencing and the slew of physical reactions it set off including rapid heart rate, muscle contractions, stomach-churning, and fatigue. Even her vision narrowed as she felt hopeless. Alicia became aware that her thoughts just kept looping over and over, how stuck she felt, and that she was not the better person she wanted to be. Her feelings of despair were oppressive.

Alicia had been through similar experiences in the past when under stress. Consequently, she knew she was caught in Tunnel Vision Effect (TVE) and needed to first open her mind. She closed her eyes and began deep breathing to oxygenate her brain, reduce the presence of stress hormones, calm her hyperactivated nervous system, and step out of despair. Within a very short time, Alicia relaxed and felt calm and clear-headed. She could now look at her dilemma with objective reason and clarity.

Alicia began to consider her options. She really wanted to organize the attic and the garage, but she didn't want to come in contact with the dust and dirt. She considered how she might be able to clean up by wearing special gear or limiting the amount of time she would spend cleaning on any given day, but none of these ideas appealed to her. Alicia thought for a moment about the possibility of delegating the job to a cleaning service or someone she knew who might be interested in making some money, but she quickly dismissed the idea. She wanted to rise to the challenge and prove she could overcome adversity.

But Alicia was stymied. No option seemed workable. At that moment she began to wonder what made it so important that she be the person doing the work. What else was going on in her thoughts? The more she considered this question the more she came to realize she had made proving herself to be a “better person” more important than organizing her home. In other words, *she had made a secondary goal her primary goal and relegated her primary goal to a secondary status!* That's why she was so stuck: She was working at cross purposes.

### **3. CHOICE**

Once Alicia understood the pattern of her thinking and the fact that she had switched her goal status, she could formulate her choices and the

consequences of those choices. Her first choice was to return cleaning the house back to her primary goal. Improving herself was certainly a worthwhile objective but Alicia determined there were many other ways to achieve that end. Getting organized was just about...getting organized!

Now Alicia could look at which option was most likely to achieve that result in the quickest and surest way. She decided that hiring a cleaning person was the answer. Satisfied with her decision, Alicia picked up the phone and called her friend about doing the work. Her friend readily agreed to come by later in the week. Problem solved. Stress gone.

#### **4. SELF-ASSESSMENT**

After the dust settled Alicia reviewed how she had worked through her dilemma. She was pleased with the way she had followed the process and pulled herself out of her TVE. In considering what she had learned from the experience, Alicia was struck by how much her desire to be a good person could enter into her thinking even about mundane activities. She decided to give more time and energy to this matter since it was clearly something of much importance.



**Exercise 7A:**  
**Let's Test Your MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup>**  
**Knowledge Part 1 (5 mins)**

After examining the scenario, look at the icons below, and see which concepts and tools you can identify in this scenario.

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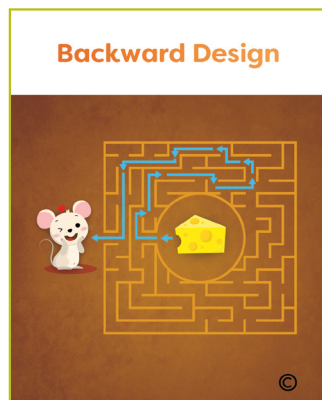
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*Starting from the desired results and working backwards helps us see the best option.*

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*Becoming aware of our initial, instinctive reaction helps us recognize that we do not need to act as a result of those emotions.*

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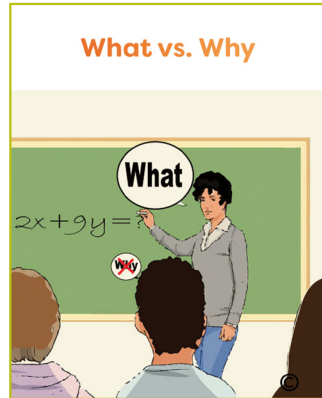
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*Asking “What” rather than “Why” helps us focus on our choices at this moment.*



*All thought and action takes time; allowing time to process what is happening will allow us to become aware of the best options.*

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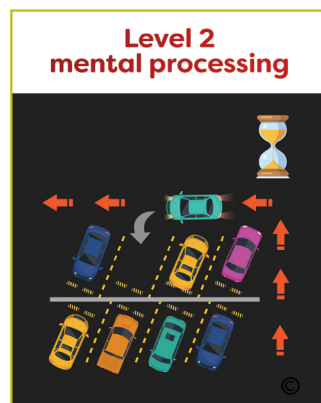
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*Decisions that do not require immediate response, yet are not in the realm of long-term planning are those that move us toward our destination.*

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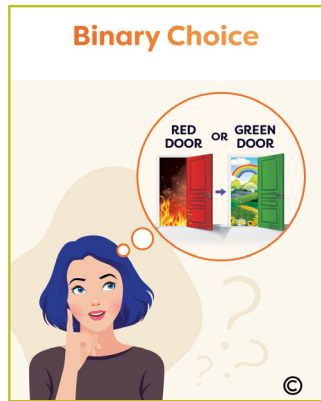
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*We always have 2 options.*

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*Think of 3 other MFC concepts present  
in this scenario. Check your answers against  
the icons in the next topic.*

# SUGGESTED ANSWERS FOR SCENARIO 1

Did you think of these concepts?

Tunnel vision effect

The illustration shows a car's perspective through a windshield. A cow is in the road ahead. A red circle labeled 'TVE' highlights the narrow field of vision directly in front of the car, while the rest of the road and the cow are in shadow.

Group 9 • Mind EVOKE<sup>SM</sup> 66

You end up where you look

The illustration shows a snowy landscape with pink cherry blossom trees. A car is driving on a path that leads towards a distant mountain range, illustrating the concept of looking far ahead.

Group 5 • Mind EVOKE<sup>SM</sup> 31

Wholistic Mind & Body

The illustration shows a circular diagram divided into six segments, each representing a different aspect of life: working at a desk, family time, exercise, sleeping, learning at a chalkboard, and playing music. This represents a holistic view of the mind and body.

Group 10 • Mind EVOKE<sup>SM</sup> 71

Vagus nerve

The illustration shows a human silhouette with the vagus nerve highlighted in green, running from the brain down through the chest and abdomen to the pelvic region.

Group 10 • Mind EVOKE<sup>SM</sup> 73

Keep calm

The illustration shows a person sitting in a comfortable armchair, reading a book. A lamp, a plant, and a framed picture are in the background, creating a calm and relaxing environment.

Group 2 • Mind EVOKE<sup>SM</sup> 10

## **SCENARIO 2: THE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION THAT WASN'T**

### **The Background**

Charles and Lisa have been together for four years and wanted to do something special for their anniversary. One of Lisa's favorite singers was coming to town and she really wanted to attend his concert. Charles decided to surprise her with tickets for the show. He got them great seats, despite the high cost. As the evening of the concert approached they were looking forward to having a great time.

### **The Setup**

The evening of the concert Charles took Lisa out to dinner at their favorite restaurant. They were having a wonderful meal when Lisa looked at the time and told Charles perhaps they should be leaving since the show would be starting soon. Charles reassured her they had plenty of time; there would almost certainly be an opening act that would take at least another half hour before the headliner came on. They finished the meal at their leisure and drove to the concert venue.

### **The Scene**

Well, as luck would have it, there was no opening act. When the couple took to their seats they made two unpleasant discoveries:

1) They had missed practically the entire first set; and 2) Having great seats didn't mean very much since most people were standing for much of the show.

### **THE REACTION:**

Let's see what happens next...  
Will Charles use his MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> Tools?

#### **Without MFC Charles...**

Charles was seething. This was not how he had envisioned the evening and it was not in the least bit fun. He found himself greatly annoyed by every minor discomfort. He wanted to yell at the people standing in front of him to "Sit down!", and his legs were giving him a lot of pain from standing so long. When the second set began all he focused on was his disappointment over missing the first set, rather than enjoying the music like everyone else.

### **Without MFC The Relationship...**

Charles was not hiding his frustration and irritation from Lisa. Try as she might to keep her own regret from intruding on her pleasure with the music, his vibe was overwhelming. Lisa finally confronted Charles and told him he was ruining her evening and he had to stop his negativity. When they left at the end of the concert Charles and Lisa were not speaking. In the car, the silence morphed into a loud argument that lasted the rest of the night. This anniversary was not one they would soon forget.

### **With MFC: The Realization**

Charles could feel his body react to feelings of guilt and disappointment. His heart rate increased, his muscles became tight, and he had a queasy feeling in the pit of his stomach. For a moment all he could think about was what he had lost. He was angry with himself for miscalculating so badly and sad that Lisa missed hearing some of her favorite songs. As his physical reactions intensified Charles became aware of how his experiences of his surroundings were becoming more and more limited. He recognized this familiar state from past occurrences: He was in the midst of Tunnel Vision Effect and it was starting to take over.

Charles knew he had to reduce his physical arousal

before he could get out of TVE. He took a few deep cleansing breaths and focused on relaxing his muscles. His heart rate began to slow while the tension in his chest eased. As Charles was practiced in this sequence, the entire process took less than a minute. Now Charles could look at the situation with a clearer frame of mind.

### **With MFC: The Resolution**

Charles still felt sad and sheepish over his mistake to presume he could play the odds with his timing – & he was paying for his decision. Nevertheless, his choice here and now was obvious. He could allow his feelings to dominate his consciousness and forfeit all pleasure & satisfaction, or he could accept his loss and focus on the possibility of enjoying what was still there to experience. Charles also appreciated that the concert was a step on the path to his true Destination – giving Lisa delight and sharing in her joy. That was still within his reach if he did not allow himself to indulge in self-blame and pity.

### **The End of the Story**

When the second set began Charles and Lisa put the first set behind them and relished the remainder of the concert together. It turned out to be a great night after all. And besides, the people sitting next to them said the second set was much better than the first!



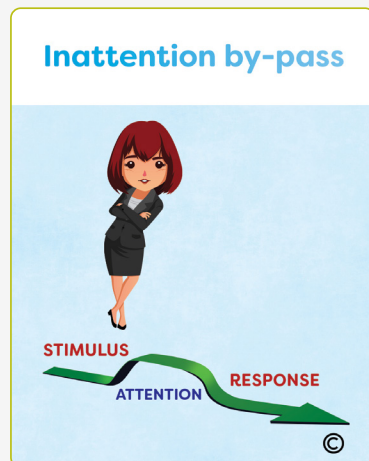


### Exercise 7B: Let's Test Your MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> Knowledge Part 2 (10 mins)

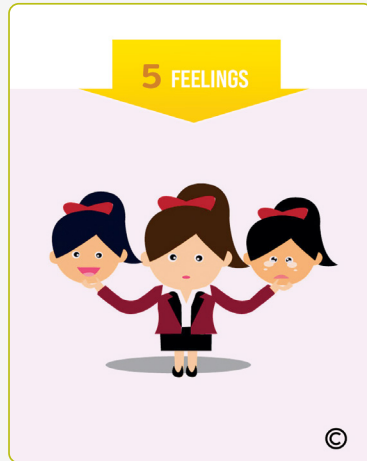
After reviewing this scenario, which MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> principles and tools do you see expressed?



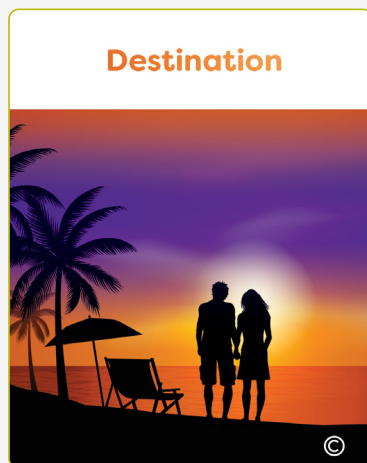
**Awareness** of all the components of a situation, both internal and external, is essential to making an appropriate choice.



When our **attention** is not intentionally focused, we are likely to respond ineffectively.



What we **feel** about a situation is the result of what we think about it.



### Destination

Keeping our **destination** in mind is key to making appropriate choices.

**Tunnel vision effect**



Avoiding **Tunnel Vision Effect** is critical to viewing the entire situation.

Which other tools and principles do you see in this scenario?

## SUGGESTED ANSWERS FOR SCENARIO 2

Did you think of these?


**Your past does not determine your future**



PAST FUTURE

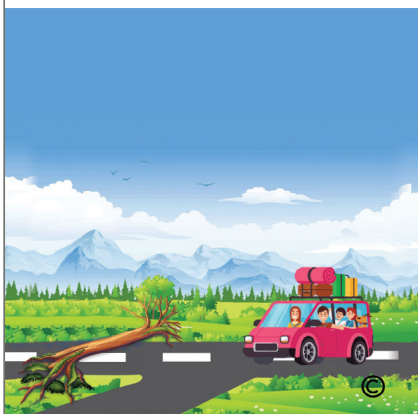
Group 4 • Mind EVOKE<sup>SM</sup> **28**

**Think things through**



Group 5 • Mind EVOKE<sup>SM</sup> **34**

**Focusing on the solution not the problem**



Group 5 • Mind EVOKE<sup>SM</sup> **30**

## FINAL ASSESSMENT

### 1. Choose the correct statement.

It is only necessary to notice visual aspects of what is happening.

You get most of the information about what is happening from your thoughts.

Noticing what is happening includes noticing what is happening outside you AND inside you (your thoughts and feelings).

Thoughts, feelings, what you hear, and what you can smell are not important.

### 2. Choose the best way to finish this sentence: Asking WHY? rather than WHAT?...

Is the first thing to do.

Allows you to analyze the situation.

Is NOT a good idea because it prevents you from viewing the situation AS IT IS, and puts you in a poor position to move forward.

Allows you to get data to see what is going on.

### 3. Which is the correct statement?

Noticing is a skill that takes time and practice to develop.

Noticing the details of a situation is not important.

Noticing everything that is happening is critical, whether it is important or not.

Noticing does not take time.

**4. Our perceptions and biases come from the filters we all have that govern the way we see things.**

True  
False

**5. It is easier to see what makes you personally tick without getting emotional than it is to look at others.**

True  
False

**6. Choose the five (5) statements that might be judgmental.**

“This is ridiculous.”  
“What an idiot!”  
“I am thinking that she doesn’t like me.”  
“She doesn’t like me!”  
“My heart is pounding.”  
“This is making me nervous.”  
“I am nervous.”  
“I don’t like this.”  
“This is going to work out.”  
“I have a headache.”

**7. Which of these are BASIC emotions? (choose 5)**

joy  
ecstasy  
fear  
disgust  
boredom  
interest  
distraction  
surprise  
love  
anticipation

**8. The emotional combination of sadness and surprise is**

disapproval  
remorse  
disgust  
disinterest

**9. Subconscious processing includes our habits, memories, and attitudes.**

True  
False

**10. Subconscious thought takes more time and brain energy than conscious thought.**

True  
False

**11. Emotions are biologically-based, hard-wired, and automatic; feelings can be changed by our judgments.**

This is true.  
This is false.

**12. Choose the correct list of functions that is the responsibility of each section of the brain.**

“Old” brain:

- breathing
- logical thought
- reflexes

“New” brain:

- brain-based emotion
- decision-making
- prioritizing

“Old” brain:

- breathing
- logical thought
- reasoning

“New” brain:

- brain-based emotion
- decision-making
- instincts

“Old” brain:

- breathing
- instincts
- reflexes

“New” brain:

- logical thought
- decision-making
- prioritizing

“Old” brain:

- logical thought
- decision-making
- prioritizing

“New” brain:

- breathing
- instincts
- reflexes



**13. Our destination is:**

Where we are planning to go on vacation.  
Where we want to end up in life.  
How we travel through life.  
Our chosen profession.

**14. Our journey is:**

Where we end up in life.  
The road we take to get to our vacation.  
The life path we choose that takes us closer to or further away from our desired destination.  
Usually taken by car, but may be train, bus, or plane.

**15. Errors at this level of mental processing can be catastrophic**

Level 1  
Level 2  
Level 3  
None – nothing catastrophic ever happens as the result of errors.

**16. A goal is:**

A shorter-term target that will help you reach your destination.

The same as your destination.

The same as your journey.

Totally unnecessary – you will reach your destination without having any goals.

**17. The following are goals: (choose 3)**

The type of person you want to become.

Buying a house.

Earning a college degree.

Having a good marriage.

Losing 5 lbs.

**18. The following might be aspects of your destination: (choose 3)**

The type of person you want to become.

What you ate for dinner yesterday.

Your achievements.

Relationships you have developed.

The decision you made to speak softly.

**19. What is the function of hormones in the body?**

To make you excited.

To regulate body functions.

To make you happy.

To tell the glands what to do.

**20. What is the difference between the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS) and the Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS)?**

The SNS regulates breathing and heart rate and the PNS regulates the thought process.

The SNS is bigger than the PNS.

The SNS contains many nerves, while the PNS contains only the Vagus Nerve.

The SNS activates the body and the PNS calms the body.

**21. Tunnel Vision Effect (TVE)**

Is only applicable in cars going through tunnels.

Affects only vision.

Is a physiological condition with psychological consequences that can be due to stress, fear, panic, fatigue, anxiety, and impulsivity.

Is easy to spot when experiencing it.

**22. Chronic stress is**

A situation where stress is occurring for a short time.

Is a condition where stress becomes “normal”.

Is always caused by TVE.

Is exactly the same as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

**23. The following are benefits of proper breathing (choose 3):**

More oxygen to the brain, so it is easier to think clearly  
Lightheadedness  
Greater flexibility in muscles  
Maintaining calm  
Increased alertness

**24. Which of the following help stimulate the Vagus nerve? (choose 3)**

Eating a lot of carbohydrates  
Exercise  
Correct breathing  
Loud music  
Relaxation

**25. Which is the MFC recommended order for the Six Hats?**

Blue White Red Green Black Yellow Blue  
White Black Red Green Blue Yellow White  
Blue Brown Green Red White Yellow Black  
Blue Black White Green Red Yellow Blue

**26. Which of the 3 levels of mental processing is concerned with immediate decisions**

Level I – Strategic, long-term level  
Level II – Maneuvering, medium-term level  
Level III – Control, short-term level  
None of these levels address immediate decision-making

**27. Which is the FIRST of the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> 4-step process?**

Awareness  
Recognition  
Choice  
Self-assessment

**28. What does the phrase “Think Things Through” encourage?**

Maintaining tunnel vision – see things through a small hole.  
Focus on only one aspect of things at a time.  
Nothing – it’s just a catchy phrase where each word starts with a “T”.  
Look not only at the immediate effects of your choice, but also at what will happen next.

**29. What is metacognition?**

Thinking about thinking  
Seeing only the big picture  
Doing nothing but thinking  
Thinking without emotion

**30. What type of thinking is “Blue Hat”?**

Constructive  
Creative  
Synthesis  
Critical analysis

**31. What type of thinking is “Red Hat”?**

Emotional  
Creative  
Objective  
Constructive

**32. What type of thinking is “White Hat”?**

Emotional  
Constructive  
Critical analysis  
Objective

**33. What type of thinking is “Black hat”?**

Creative  
Critical Analysis  
Objective  
Synthesis

**34. During which stage of the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> process do we analyze how well we made our choice?**

Recognition  
Awareness  
Choice  
Self-assessment

**35. Is this statement true?**

**“We choose everything including the misery we feel.”**

Yes, it is true.

No, it is not true.

**36. Because every step we take involves a choice:**

We have many choices at any given moment.

There is ALWAYS another option.

We never make it to our destination.

We can only make two choices.

**37. Binary choice means that:**

Choices are the same as ones and zeros.

Each choice has a number.

We make two choices each day.

Every time we choose, we are choosing  
between two options.

**38. Why is it important to have your destination in mind when making a choice?**

Because the destination is where we are aiming to go;  
each choice takes us closer or further away from  
our destination.

It is not really important.

We change our choices as our destination changes.

We change our destination each time we make a choice.

**39. What advantage do we gain by viewing each choice as binary?**

We do not gain any advantage.  
We enter a state of tunnel vision, where we see only one option. This helps us choose.  
We reduce mental stress, thereby avoiding tunnel vision effect.  
We become better choosers by only making two choices a day.

**40. Multitasking is stressful because**

It is difficult to breath and think at the same time.  
Multitasking is really an illusion. The brain is really jumping from one task to another very quickly.  
It is not really stressful. We just haven't practiced enough.  
It is stressful because we think about it too much.

**41. A decision tree is**

A great place to find a decision.  
The branching path of our decisions as we make one binary choice after another.  
The best way to choose between many options.  
A chart that one must fill out when making choices.

**42. Each binary choice we make leads to**

Our destination.  
Our journey.  
Backward design.  
Another binary choice.



**43. Backward design is useful in the decision-making process because**

It helps us trace our decision toward our destination.  
It helps us trace our decision from our destination to the current choice.  
It is not helpful since it has nothing to do with choices.  
It helps us see things when they are turned on their backs.

**44. Choice is a fundamental tool because**

We can choose whether or not we like it.  
Choices always take us to our destination.  
Our destination is the only place our choices can take us.  
We are constantly making choice.  
Everything we do, and think is a choice.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE ►

# EXERCISES AND QUIZ ANSWERS

## TOOL 1: HOW TO NOTICE

### Exercise 1J: Fact Vs Perception Activity Part 1

I am stuck - Perception/Judgement

This is a new experience - Fact

My heart is beating fast - Fact

He made me angry - Perception/Judgement

He is a fool - Perception/ Judgement

It's past my bedtime - Fact

I feel danger - Fact

This is no good - Perception/ Judgement

This always happens - Perception/ Judgement

This is terrible - Perception/ Judgement

This has happened before - Fact

I am angry - Fact

[BACK TO EXERCISE ►](#)

### Exercise 1K: Fact Vs Perception Activity Part 2

What is the definition of a factual statement?

**Answer a.** A statement that is not open to other possibilities.

What is the definition of a judgmental statement?

**Answer b.** A statement that is open to other possibilities

[BACK TO EXERCISE ►](#)

### TOOL 1 SUMMARY QUIZ:

#### HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT NOTICING?

1. Asking WHY? rather than WHAT?

- Is NOT a good idea because it prevents you from viewing the situation AS IT IS, and puts you in a poor position to move forward.

2. Which is the correct statement?

- Noticing is a skill that takes time and practice to develop.

3. Choose the correct statement.

- Noticing what is happening includes noticing what is happening outside you AND inside you (your thoughts and feelings).

4. Choose the five (5) statements that might be judgmental.

- "This is ridiculous."
- "What an idiot!"
- "She doesn't like me!"
- "This is making me nervous."
- "This is going to work out."

5. Our perceptions and biases come from the filters we all have that govern the way we see things

- True

6. It is easier to see what makes you personally tick without getting emotional than it is to look at others.

- False

BACK TO EXERCISE ►

## TOOL 2: KNOWING YOUR OPERATING SYSTEM

### Exercise 2A: Old Brain - New Brain

Judgement - New Brain

Movement - Old Brain

Hunger - Old Brain

Memory - New Brain

Planning - New Brain

Breathing - Old Brain

Emotions - Old Brain

Sleeping - Old Brain

Thinking - New Brain

[BACK TO EXERCISE](#) ►

### Exercise 2B: Right And Left Hemisphere

Prefers ranked authority - L

Free with feelings - R

Rational, sequential - L

Draws on unbounded qualitative patterns that  
are not organized into sequences - R

Looks at similarities - R

Responds to verbal instructions - L

Is logical, sees cause and effect - L

Is fluid spontaneous - R

Is a splitter – distinction important - L

Problem solves with hunches, looking for patterns - R

Is planned and structured - L

Looks at differences - **L**  
 Prefers drawing and manipulating objects - **R**  
 Prefers multiple-choice tests - **L**  
 Prefers established, certain information - **L**  
 Draws on previously accumulated information - **L**  
 Intuitive, simultaneous - **R**  
 Prefers writing and talking - **L**  
 Responds to demonstrated instructions - **R**

[BACK TO EXERCISE](#) ►

### **Exercise 2D: Understanding The Wheel Of Emotion**

1. Which of the following are some of the basic emotions?  
 Check 5.

**Answer:** **Sadness, Joy, Anger, Anticipation, Trust**

2. Match the correct BASIC emotion from Column B to the MILD version in Column A. Write down the letter of your answer.

**Answer:**

Place Your Answer Here	A - Mild Version	B - Basic Emotion
<b>g</b>	Acceptance	<b>a.</b> surprise
<b>e</b>	Annoyance	<b>b.</b> joy
<b>d</b>	Apprehension	<b>c.</b> sadness
<b>b</b>	Serenity	<b>d.</b> fear
<b>h</b>	Interest	<b>e.</b> anger
<b>a</b>	Distraction	<b>f.</b> disgust
<b>c</b>	Pensiveness	<b>g.</b> trust
<b>f</b>	Boredom	<b>h.</b> anticipation

3. Match the correct BASIC emotion from Column B to the INTENSE version in Column A. Write down the letter of your answer.

**Answer:**

Place Your Answer Here	A - Intense Version	B - Basic Emotion
<b>c</b>	Admiration	<b>a. surprise</b>
<b>b</b>	Rage	<b>b. anger</b>
<b>g</b>	Terror	<b>c. trust</b>
<b>f</b>	Ecstasy	<b>d. anticipation</b>
<b>d</b>	Vigilance	<b>e. sadness</b>
<b>a</b>	Amazement	<b>f. joy</b>
<b>e</b>	Grief	<b>g. fear</b>
<b>h</b>	Loathing	<b>h. disgust</b>

4. The opposite of trust is:

**Answer:** Disgust

5. Love is a combination of these two basic emotions:

**Answer:** Joy, Trust

[BACK TO EXERCISE](#) ►

### **TOOL 2 SUMMARY QUIZ:**

#### **DO YOU KNOW HOW YOUR OPERATING SYSTEM WORKS?**

1. Choose the correct list of functions that is the responsibility of each section of the brain.

**Answer:**

“Old” brain: - breathing - instincts - reflexes

“New” brain: - logical thought - decision-making - prioritizing

2. Emotions are biologically-based, hard-wired, and automatic; feelings can be changed by our judgments.

**Answer:** This is true.

3. Which of these are BASIC emotions? (choose 5)

**Answer:** Joy, Fear, Disgust, Surprise, Anticipation

4. Subconscious processing includes our habits, memories, and attitudes.

**Answer:** True.

5. Subconscious thought takes more time and brain energy than conscious thought.

**Answer:** False

[BACK TO EXERCISE](#) ►

## TOOL 3: DETERMINING YOUR DESTINATION

### Exercise 3H: Quick Quiz

1. Determining our DESTINATION occurs at which level of mental processing?

**Answer:** Level 1: Long Term

2. Errors in the mental processing level at which we make decisions about long-term activities are most likely to lead to disasters.

**Answer:** True

3. Check the characteristics of Level 3 (short-term) processing:

**Answer:**

- Even small physical discomfort or lack of sleep can negatively affect the results
- Can be influenced by training
- Happens within a maximum of a few seconds
- Automatic response
- Errors here are likely to be disastrous

4. Match the level of processing to the correct example

ANSWER HERE	LEVEL OF PROCESSING	EXAMPLE
<b>b</b>	Short-Term	A. Trip planning
<b>c</b>	Medium Term	B. Responding to a skid on an icy road
<b>a</b>	Long-term	C. Driving and parking

BACK TO EXERCISE ►



### **Exercise 3i: Recognizing The Primary Goal**

1. Can you identify the goals in this interaction (check all that apply)

**Answer:**

- To get along with your spouse
- To make sure your mother would not have to wait at the airport

2. Which is the PRIMARY GOAL of the interaction?

**Answer:**

- To make sure your mother does not have to wait

3. Which goal did the action you choose (agreeing to let your spouse shower) actually achieve?

**Answer:**

- To get along with your spouse

BACK TO EXERCISE ►

### TOOL 3 SUMMARY QUIZ:

#### CAN YOU DETERMINE DESTINATION?

1. Our destination is:

**Answer:** where we want to end up in life.

2. Our journey is:

**Answer:** the life path we choose that takes us closer to or further away from our desired destination.

3. Errors at this level of mental processing can be catastrophic

**Answer:** Level 3

4. A goal is

**Answer:** a shorter-term target that will help you reach your destination.

5. The following are goals: (choose 3)

**Answer:**

- Buying a house.
- Earning a college degree.
- Losing 5 lbs.

6. The following might be aspects of your destination: (choose 3)

**Answer:**

- the type of person you want to become.
- your achievements.
- relationships you have developed.

BACK TO EXERCISE ►

TOOL 4 : AVOIDING THE EFFECTS OF STRESS

Exercise 4A: Quick Quiz

1. A hormone is a chemical that is produced in a gland. Hormones produce physiological changes in the body, such as changes in heart rate and breathing.

Answer: Yes, that is correct

2. Match the correct BASIC emotion from Column B to the INTENSE version in Column A. Write down the letter of your answer.

Answer:

Place Your Answer Here	Column A	Column B
d	Hypothalamus	a. works to slow down the body
c	Sympathetic System	b. organ that produces hormones
a	Parasympathetic System	c. works to activate the body
e	Hormones	d. command center
b	Gland	e. chemicals that produce a specific action in the body

**Exercise 4C: BPM Matching**

Characteristic	Place Your Answer Here	Heart Rate
Cognitive processing deteriorates of peripheral, near, depth vision, tunnel hearing	175BPM	175BPM
Normal resting heart rate	60-80BPM	155BPM
Complex motor skills deteriorate	155BPM	115-145BPM
Optimal gross motor skills performance, fight/flight/freeze, loss of bladder control	175+BPM	115BPM
Fine motor coordination deteriorates	115BPM	60-80BPM
Best performance for complex motor skills, visual/cognitive reaction time	115-145BPM	175+BPM

[BACK TO EXERCISE ►](#)
**Exercise 4D: What Do You Remember About TVE?**

1. Tunnel Vision Effect is a protective measure to help the mind from “blowing” when it is overloaded.

**Answer:** True

2. What might you experience when in TVE (choose 5)

**Answer:**

- refusing offered assistance
- confusion about what is going on around
- unwilling to listen to suggestions
- reluctance to take breaks
- irritability when disturbed

[BACK TO EXERCISE ►](#)

### TOOL 4 SUMMARY QUIZ:

#### DO YOU KNOW HOW TO AVOID THE EFFECTS OF STRESS?

1. What is the function of hormones in the body?

**Answer:** To regulate body functions.

2. Tunnel Vision Effect (TVE)

**Answer:** The SNS activates the body and the PNS calms the body.

3. What is the difference between the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS) and the Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS)?

**Answer:** is a physiological condition with psychological consequences that can be due to stress, fear, panic, fatigue, anxiety, and impulsivity.

4. Chronic stress is

**Answer:** is a condition where stress becomes “normal”

5. The following are benefits of proper breathing (choose 3):

**Answer:**

- More oxygen to the brain, so it is easier to think clearly
- Maintaining calm
- Increased alertness

6. Which of the following helps stimulate the Vagus nerve? (choose 3)

**Answer:**

- Exercise
- Correct breathing
- Relaxation

BACK TO EXERCISE ►

### **TOOL 5 SUMMARY QUIZ:**

#### **DO YOU KNOW HOW TO THINK?**

1. Which is the MFC recommended order for the Six Hats?

**Answer:** Blue White Red Green Black Yellow Blue

2. Which of the 3 levels of mental processing is concerned with immediate decisions

**Answer:** Level III - Control, short-term level

3. Which is the FIRST of the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> 4-step process?

**Answer:** Recognition

4. What does the phrase “Think Things Through” encourage?

**Answer:** Look not only at the immediate effects of your choice, but also at what will happen next.

5. What is metacognition?

**Answer:** Thinking about thinking

6. What type of thinking is “Blue Hat“?

**Answer:** Synthesis

7. What type of thinking is “Red Hat“?

**Answer:** Emotional

8. What type of thinking is “White Hat“?

**Answer:** Objective

9. What type of thinking is “Black hat“?

**Answer:** Critical Analysis

10. During which stage of the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> process do we analyze how well we made our choice?

**Answer:** Self-assessment

[BACK TO EXERCISE](#) ►

**TOOL 6 SUMMARY QUIZ:**  
DO YOU KNOW ABOUT CHOICE?

1. Is this statement true? “We choose everything including the misery we feel.”

**Answer:** Yes, it is true.

2. Because every step we take involves a choice:

**Answer:** There is ALWAYS another option.

3. Binary choice means that:

**Answer:** Every time we choose, we are choosing between two options.

4. Why is it important to have your destination in mind when making a choice?

**Answer:** Because the destination is where we are aiming to go; each choice takes us closer or further away from our destination.

5. What advantage do we gain by viewing each choice as binary?

**Answer:** We reduce mental stress, thereby avoiding tunnel vision effect.

6. Multitasking is stressful because

**Answer:** Multitasking is really an illusion. The brain is really jumping from one task to another very quickly.

7. A decision tree is

**Answer:** the branching path of our decisions as we make one binary choice after another.

8. Each binary choice we make leads to

**Answer:** another binary choice.

9. Backward design is useful in the decision-making process because

**Answer:** it helps us trace our decision from our destination to the current choice.

10. Choice is a fundamental tool because

**Answer:** we are constantly making choices. Everything we do, and think is a choice.

[BACK TO EXERCISE](#) ►

### MINDFULCHOICE<sup>SM</sup> TOOLS FINAL ASSESSMENT TEST

1. Choose the correct statement.

**Answer:** Noticing what is happening includes noticing what is happening outside you AND inside you (your thoughts and feelings).

2. Asking WHY? rather than WHAT?...

**Answer:** Is NOT a good idea because it prevents you from viewing the situation AS IT IS, and puts you in a poor position to move forward.

3. Which is the correct statement?

**Answer:** Noticing is a skill that takes time and practice to develop.

4. Our perceptions and biases come from the filters we all have that govern the way we see things.

**Answer:** True

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**5.** It is easier to see what makes you personally tick without getting emotional than it is to look at others.

**Answer:** False

**6.** Choose the five (5) statements that might be judgmental.

**Answers:** “This is ridiculous.”, “What an idiot!”, “She doesn’t like me!”

**7.** Which of these are BASIC emotions? (choose 5)

**Answers:** fear, disgust, joy, surprise, anticipation

**8.** The emotional combination of sadness and surprise is

**Answer:** Disapproval

**9.** Subconscious processing includes our habits, memories, and attitudes.

**Answer:** True

**10.** Subconscious thought takes more time and brain energy than conscious thought.

**Answer:** False

**11.** Emotions are biologically-based, hard-wired, and automatic; feelings can be changed by our judgments.

**Answer:** This is true.

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**12.** Choose the correct list of functions that is the responsibility of each section of the brain.

**Answer:**

“Old” brain:

- breathing
- instincts
- reflexes

“New” brain:

- logical thought
- decision-making
- prioritizing

**13.** Our destination is:

**Answer:** where we want to end up in life.

**14.** Our journey is:

**Answer:** the life path we choose that takes us closer to or further away from our desired destination.

15. Errors at this level of mental processing can be catastrophic

**Answer:** Level 3

**16.** A goal is:

**Answer:** a shorter-term target that will help you reach your destination.

**17.** The following are goals: (choose 3)

**Answers:** Buying a house., Earning a college degree., Losing 5 lbs.

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**18.** The following might be aspects of your destination:  
(choose 3)

**Answers:** the type of person you want to become, your achievements, relationships you have developed.

**19.** What is the function of hormones in the body?

**Answer:** To regulate body functions.

**20.** What is the difference between the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS) and the Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS)?

**Answer:** The SNS activates the body and the PNS calms the body.

**21.** Tunnel Vision Effect (TVE)

**Answer:** is a physiological condition with psychological consequences that can be due to stress, fear, panic, fatigue, anxiety, and impulsivity.

**22.** Chronic stress is

**Answer:** is a condition where stress becomes “normal”.

**23.** The following are benefits of proper breathing  
(choose 3):

**Answer:** More oxygen to the brain, so it is easier to think clearly, Maintaining calm, Increased alertness

**24.** Which of the following help stimulate the Vagus nerve?  
(choose 3)

**Answer:** Exercise, Correct breathing, Relaxation

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**25.** Which is the MFC recommended order for the Six Hats?

**Answer:** Blue White Red Green Black Yellow Blue

**26.** Which of the 3 levels of mental processing is concerned with immediate decisions

**Answer:** Level III – Control, short-term level

**27.** Which is the FIRST of the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> 4-step process?

**Answer:** Recognition

**28.** What does the phrase “Think Things Through” encourage?

**Answer:** Look not only at the immediate effects of your choice, but also at what will happen next.

**29.** What is metacognition?

**Answer:** Thinking about thinking

**30.** What type of thinking is “Blue Hat“?

**Answer:** Synthesis

**31.** What type of thinking is “Red Hat“?

**Answer:** Emotional

**32.** What type of thinking is “White Hat“?

**Answer:** Objective

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**33.** What type of thinking is “Black hat“?

**Answer:** **Critical Analysis**

**34.** During which stage of the MindfulChoice<sup>SM</sup> process do we analyze how well we made our choice?

**Answer:** **Self-assessment**

**35.** Is this statement true?  
“We choose everything including the misery we feel.”

**Answer:** **Yes, it is true.**

**36.** Because every step we take involves a choice:

**Answer:** **There is ALWAYS another option.**

**37.** Binary choice means that:

**Answer:** **Every time we choose, we are choosing between two options.**

**38.** Why is it important to have your destination in mind when making a choice?

**Answer:** **Because the destination is where we are aiming to go; each choice takes us closer or further away from our destination.**

**39.** What advantage do we gain by viewing each choice as binary?

**Answer:** **We reduce mental stress, thereby avoiding tunnel vision effect.**

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**40.** Multitasking is stressful because

**Answer:** Multitasking is really an illusion. The brain is really jumping from one task to another very quickly.

**41.** A decision tree is

**Answer:** the branching path of our decisions as we make one binary choice after another.

**42.** Each binary choice we make leads to

**Answer:** another binary choice.

**43.** Backward design is useful in the decision-making process because

**Answer:** it helps us trace our decision from our destination to the current choice.

**44.** Choice is a fundamental tool because

**Answer:** we are constantly making choices. Everything we do, and think is a choice.

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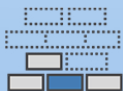
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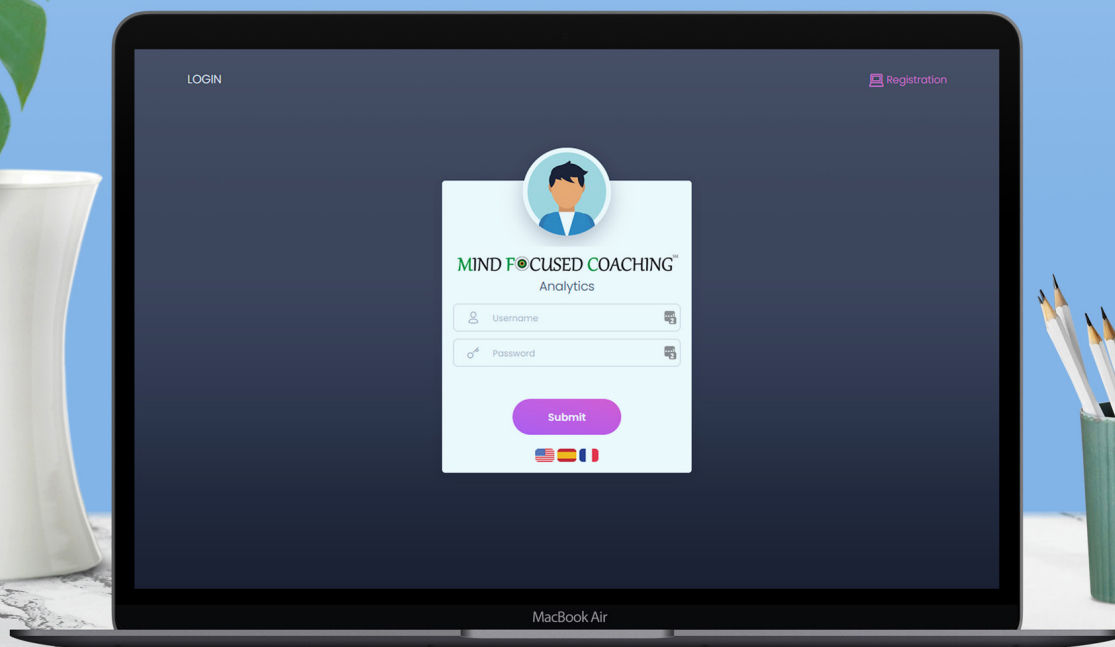
Thinking Style



Procrastination Questionnaire



Mind Focused Questionnaire





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# 7 SCIENTIFICALLY PROVEN TOOLS TO IMPROVE YOUR WAY OF THINKING FOR BETTER DECISION-MAKING AND A SATISFYING LIFE

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