

A woman with dark skin and curly hair tied back is shown in a meditative pose, eyes closed, with her hands pressed together in front of her chest. The image is overlaid with semi-transparent red and blue circular shapes, creating a dual-colored effect. The background is a solid dark blue.

RED2BLUE

CONTROL OF ATTENTION EXERCISES

These are a series of exercises/rituals to assist you in getting out of a loop (Red Head) and getting back to the present moment with a clear head (Blue Head).

Like any other skill they need to be practiced to find out which ones work best for you and in what situation.

EXERCISE 1

RITUALS

When you start to become aware of yourself slipping into the 'Red':

01

Do some physical action, e.g. holding the wrist, brushing hands, stamping foot. The action will be largely dependent on the context and situation you're operating in.

02

Place your attention on something external. Notice its shape, texture. Notice the space around it.

03

Choose the next task.



EXERCISE 2

GROUNDING

When you start to become aware of yourself slipping into the 'Red':

01 Place tongue on the bottom of your mouth.

02 Feel ground under your feet.

03 Feel your stomach move in and out as you breathe.

04 Hold the first two fingers of your left hand (optional).

Learning Point

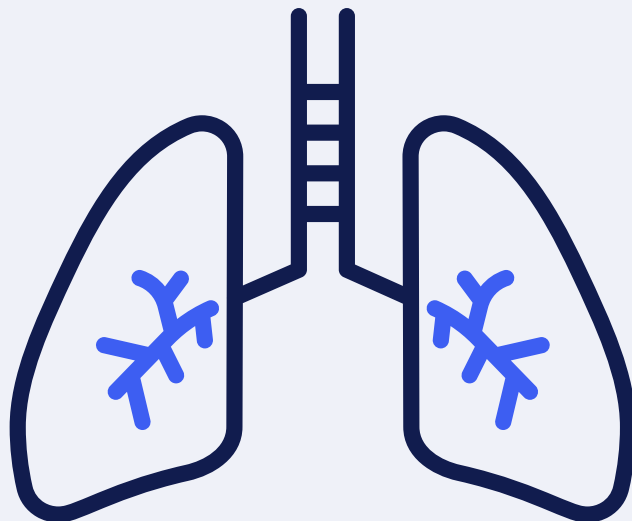
This helps take the emotional heat out of a situation and because you are engaged in a deliberate activity (placing tongue, feeling the ground) it facilitates a sense of control over the situation.



EXERCISE 3

STOP

- › Take one to three breaths, count of five in, count of seven out. The out breath needs to be longer than the in breath. This indicates that you're being deliberate which means you have regained control.
- › Observe thoughts and feelings. When you're observing you're not participating, which means you're detached and not caught up in the moment unless you choose to do so.
- › Proceed purposefully with the next steps.



EXERCISE 4

SPACES

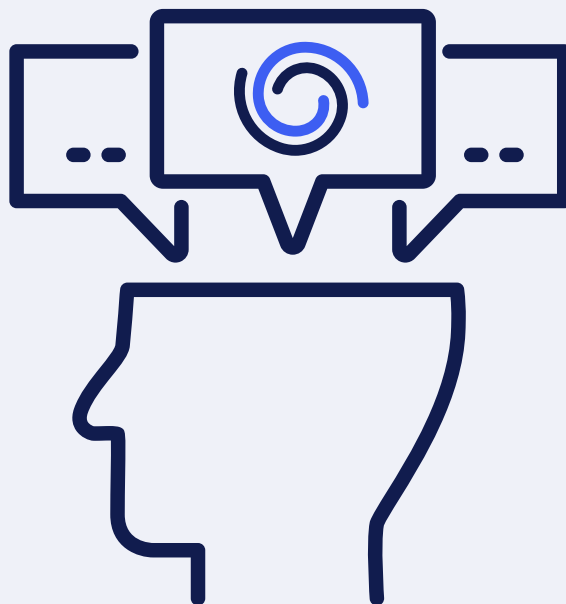
- › When you feel yourself drifting off or becoming busy inside your head, try looking up and noticing as many spaces around you as possible. Count them.

Learning Point

The purpose of this exercise is to enable us to become aware of when we are fixating and to be able to shift our attention.

The above exercise helps us become aware of our internal dialogue, our internal map and to snap out of it.

It also helps you see spaces, which in some situations is useful.



EXERCISE 5

LASER GUIDED

- › When you feel yourself drifting off or becoming busy inside your head, try looking up and focusing on objects around you. As you see each one, imagine a laser dot (colour of your choice) right in its centre, or wherever you want to put it. Then shift your attention to the next object and do the same thing, being as deliberate as possible about where you want to point the laser.
- › In between placing the dot on each different object look up and around you.

Learning Point

You have control over your attention. Being specific about where you place it is your choice. Sometimes it helps to shift back up to an overview. But it's always useful to be as specific as possible.



EXERCISE 6

INSIDE OUT

- Notice when you stop 'seeing' what is going on outside or notice when you are having continuous thoughts of a negative nature. Deliberately shift your attention to the 'outside' – observe something external – it could be an object, a person, anything – as long as it is on the outside.
- Practising this exercise when you're driving, or when you are in a boring meeting, or whenever you feel yourself going into a trance listening to the voices in your head. It will develop the ability to break your state when desired. You'll be interested to see how much of your day is involved with some kind of internal dialogue. Sometimes this internal dialogue is useful, but many times it is not.

Learning Point

Some people have said that we live our lives in a series of trances. We get caught up in our own internal dialogue, particularly when there is an emotional connection. Partly this is to do with our attention fixating on our response. Rather than attending to the issue, we become involved with our 'story': our feelings dominate, and we can lose sight of the issue that often doesn't get addressed. And when it doesn't, we then head towards the Red which is a particularly destructive kind of trance. The above exercise helps us become aware of our internal dialogue, our internal map.



EXERCISE 7

LABELLING 1

- › Look around and observe an object or thing without giving it a label. Notice everything you can about 'it'. How would you describe that object to someone who had never seen it before?
- › Now, observe a person without 'naming' them. What do you notice? How does that make you feel when you do this?
- › Now, observe this person and give them a name other than their own. How does this make you feel?
- › Now, give them the name of the object you observed.
- › How does this make you feel?

Learning Point

What we label can have a profound effect on the way we respond to people, places and things. Often by changing the label, or not giving a label at all changes our perception, which in turn changes our response and often impacts on our performance.



EXERCISE 8

LABELLING 2

- › Think of a time when you were confronted by a person or a situation where there was a great deal of emotional heat.
- › What label did you give it, what judgements did you make around them? What assumptions did you make? Did this help?
- › When you run the event through your mind, giving the situation another label, what difference do you notice?

