

High Performance Mindfulness and Gratitude

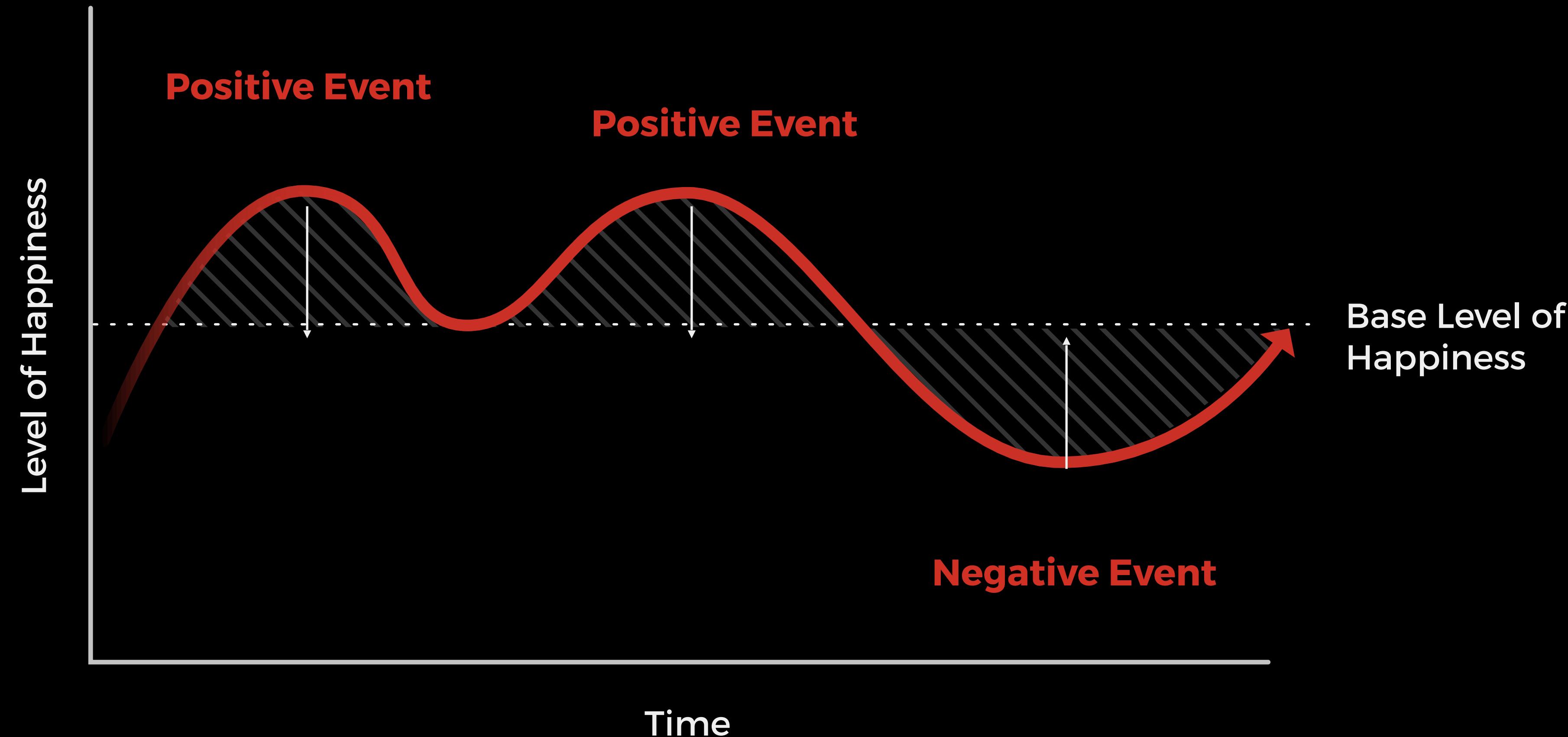
Today's Gameplan

- 1 Gratitude as Peak Performance Primer
- 2 Mindfulness: the Ultimate Way of Being

Today's Gameplan

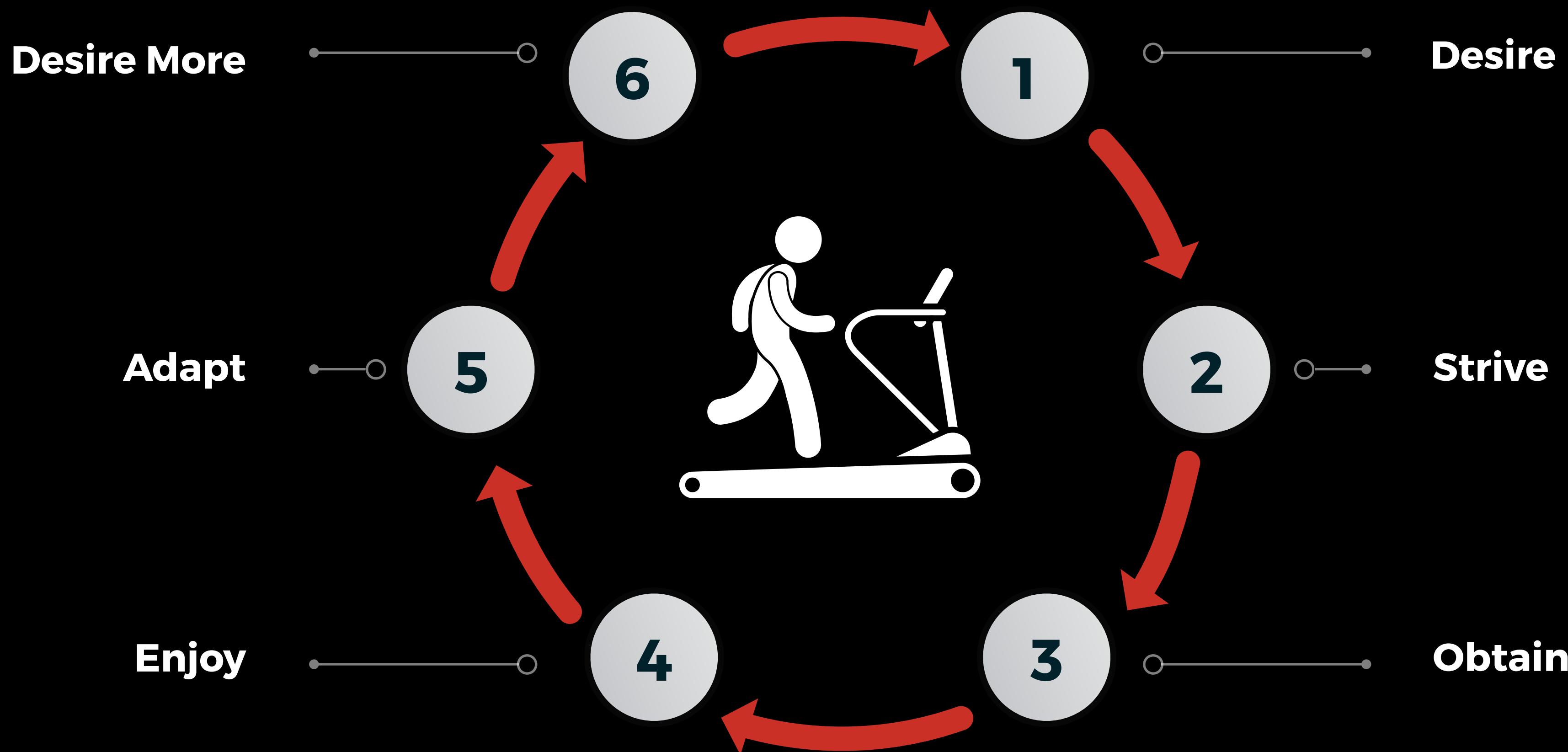
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The Tragedy the Hedonic Treadmill

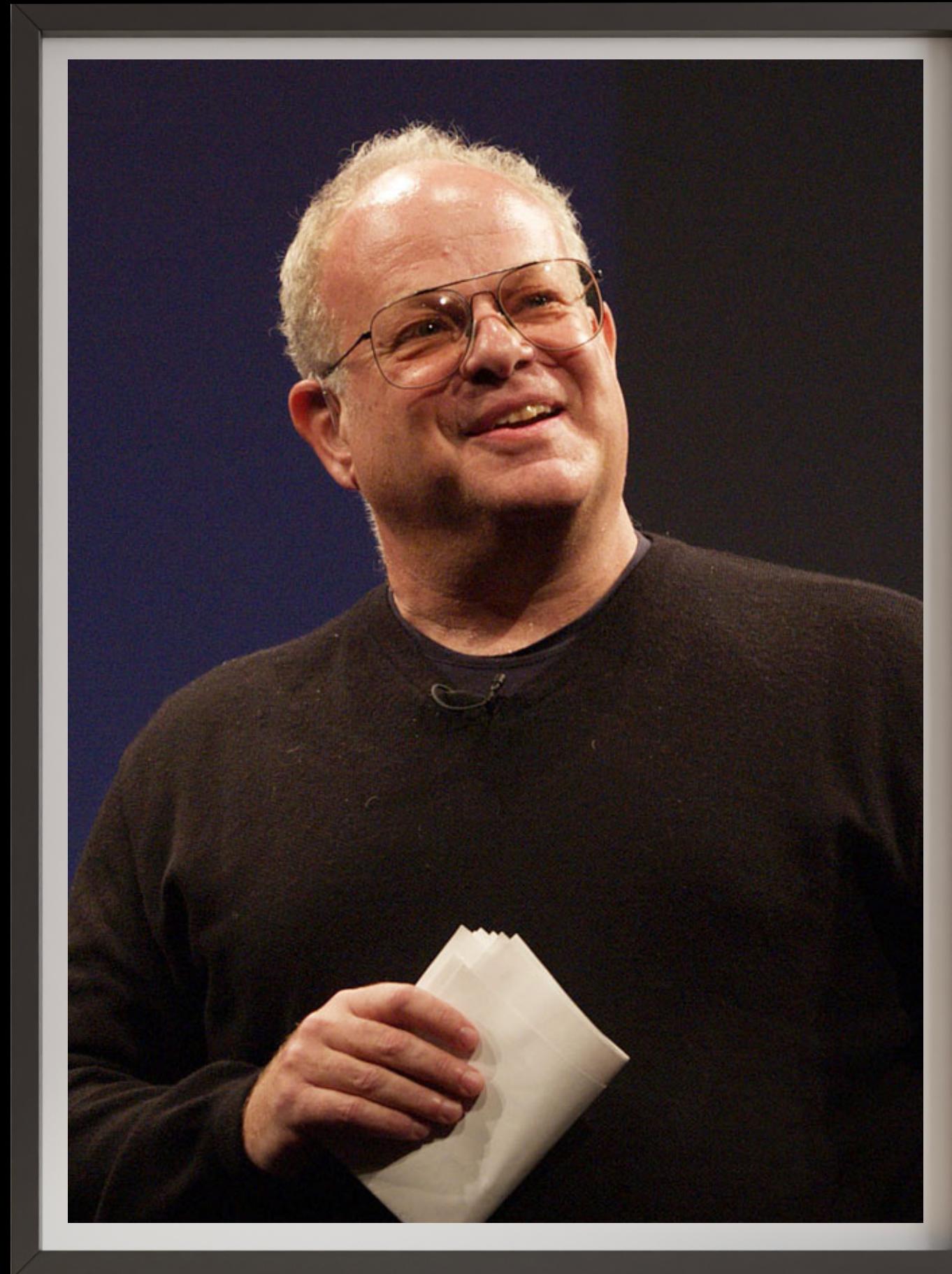


Source: Diener (1984); Business Insider; Psychology Today; Brickman et al. (1971); L.E.K. research

Are We Stuck on the Hedonic Treadmill Forever?



We Can Elevate Our Happiness Set Point But It Takes Work



“The very good news is there is quite a number of internal circumstances . . . under your voluntary control. If you decide to change them (none of these changes come without real effort), your level of happiness is likely to increase lastingly.”

– *Martin Seligman*

The What of **Gratitude**

The quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

Gratitude Deconstructed

1 Gratitude as a Skill

The ability to self-generate a feeling of gratitude and appreciation on command, the more skilled you get the more intense and enduring the gratitude you can feel is.

2 Gratitude as a Personality Trait

A disposition and a way of being that is inherently grateful and appreciative of all experience. Gratitude as a skill can become gratitude as a personality trait with time.

3 A Filtering Mechanism

Over time, as we practice gratitude we begin to filter for more positive information in the external world, this distorts our reality toward the positive which heightens positive emotion.



Gratitude Deconstructed

Gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness.

Gratitude is an easy and effective way of retraining your brain. If you focus on the good. Soon you will see more. Enjoy more and appreciate more.

- 1 Lights up the Brain's Reward Pathway**
Thinking about other people doing nice things floods the brain with positive chemicals and sparks brain activity critical to sleep. orgasms. mood regulation and metabolism.
- 2 Lessens Anxiety and Depression Symptoms**
Challenging negative thought patterns. helps to calm the anxious and boost the moods of those who are depressed.
- 3 Shifts the Heart Rhythm**
Increases coherence of body functions. which facilitates higher cognitive functions. creating emotional stability and facilitating states of calm.
- 4 Increases Heart Rate Variability**
Heart patients who practice gratitude show better moods. better sleep. less fatigue and lower levels of inflammatory biomarkers related to cardiac health.

Gratitude Deconstructed

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- 5 Improves Physical Health**
Strengthens the immune system. lowers blood pressure. reduces symptoms of illness. and makes us less bothered by aches and pains.
- 6 Increases Social Connection**
You can feel greater connection and feel more satisfied with friends. family. school. community and yourself.
- 7 Increases Empathy & Compassion**
The more thankful we feel. the more likely we are to act prosocially toward others. causing them to feel grateful and setting up a beautiful virtuous cascade.
- 8 Increases Resilience**
Helps you bounce back from stressful events and helps you deal with adversity by acting as a buffer against internalizing symptoms.

Building a Gratitude Filter

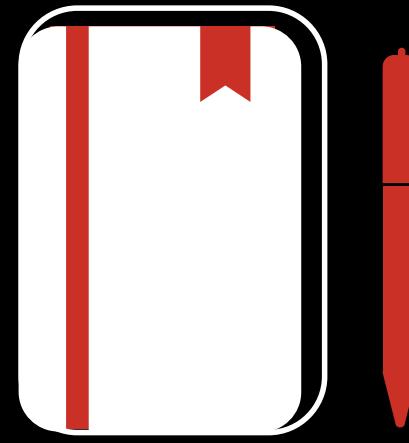


“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.”

— Melody Beattie

Harvard Medical School's Gratitude Protocol

1



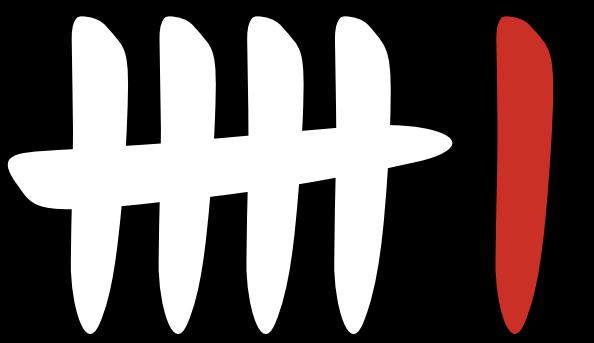
Daily Gratitude
Journaling

2



Write a
Gratitude Letter

3



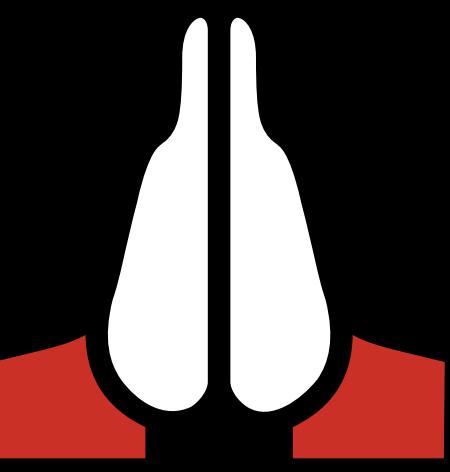
Count the
Gratitude

4

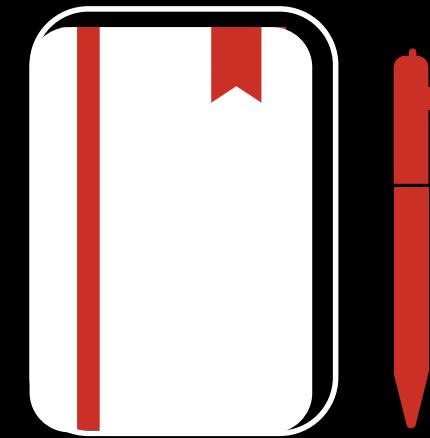


Pray

5



Thank the Subject
of Your Gratitude



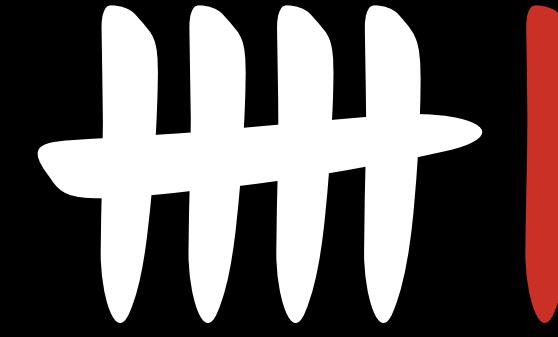
Gratitude Protocol 1: **Daily Gratitude Journaling**

Every morning, jot down three things in your life for which you are grateful. Five Minute Journal is a nice app for this. The key is to anchor to the somatic address.



Gratitude Protocol 2: **Write a Gratitude Letter**

You can make yourself happier and nurture your relationship with another person by writing a thank-you letter expressing your enjoyment and appreciation of that person's impact on your life. Send it, or better yet, deliver and read it in person if possible. Make a habit of sending at least one gratitude letter a month. Once in a while, write one to yourself.



Gratitude Protocol 3: Count the Gratitude

Sporadically, sit down and write out or count out all the things you're grateful for. The key is to pick a minimum number and hit it. Be specific and FEEL the gratitude with each one.

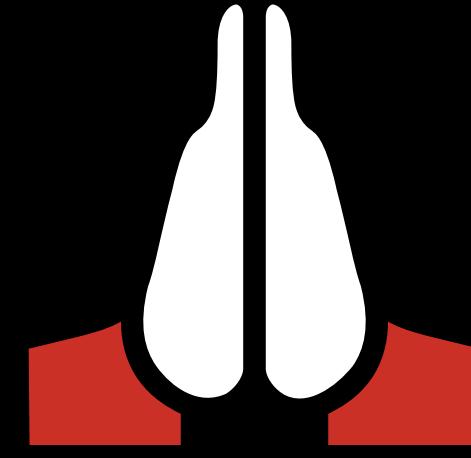


Gratitude Protocol 4: **Pray**

“ Thank you is the best prayer that anyone could say. I say that one a lot. Thank you expresses extreme gratitude, humility, and understanding. ”

— Alice Walker

Prayer is a solemn request for help or an expression of thanks addressed to an object of worship. YOU determine that object of worship. It can be life itself. There does seem to be some power in “worship” to something external to yourself and bigger than yourself. Positive psychology finds that devotion to something greater than oneself is one of the biggest drivers of meaningfulness.



Gratitude Protocol 5: **Thank the Subject Of Your Gratitude**

It's tough to beat real, live, and interpersonal gratitude. Find the specific thing you appreciate most about someone or what someone has done. The more specific and thought-out the better. Then let them know.

“ Feeling Gratitude & Not Expressing it Is ”
Like Wrapping A Present & Not Giving It.

— William Arthur Ward

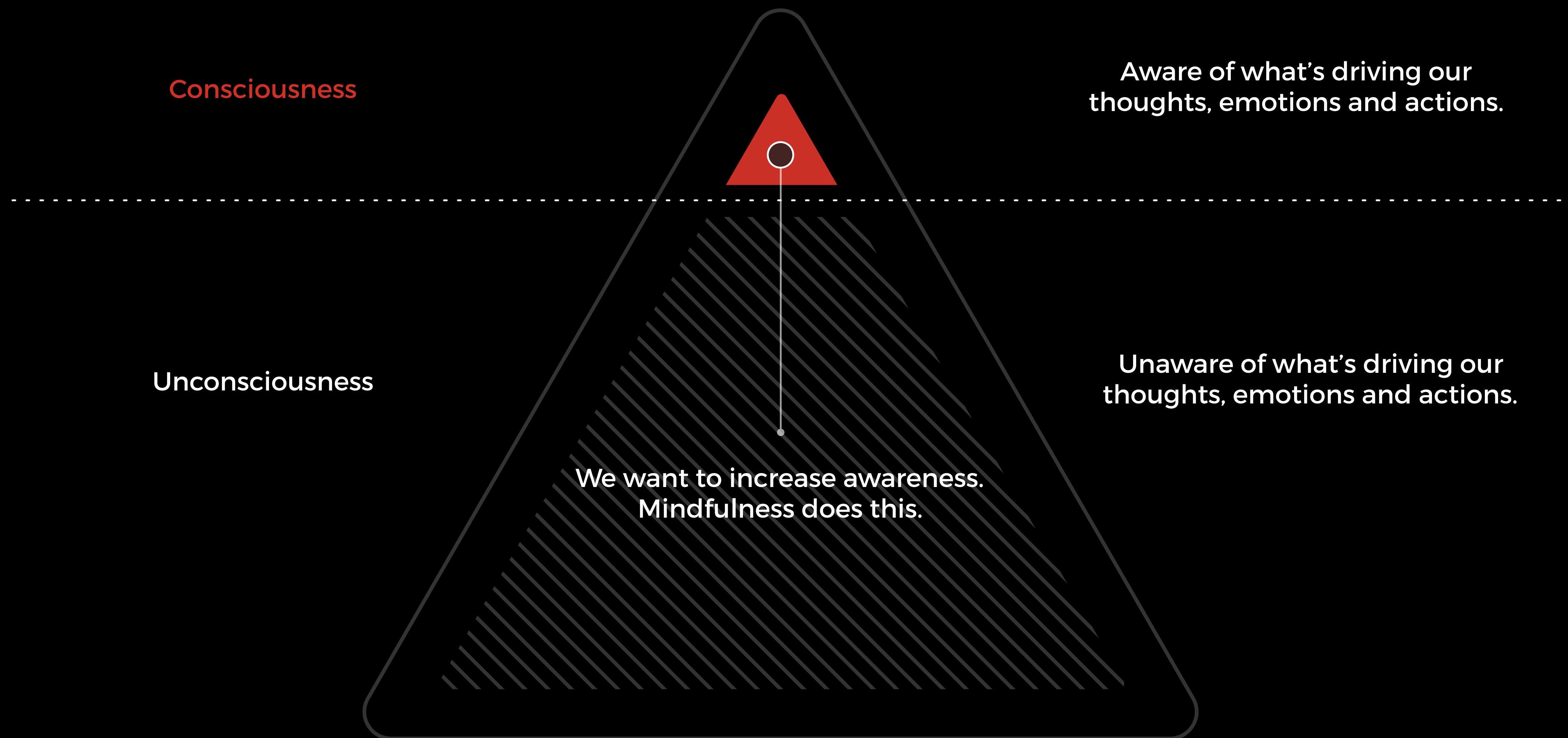
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What Is Mindfulness?

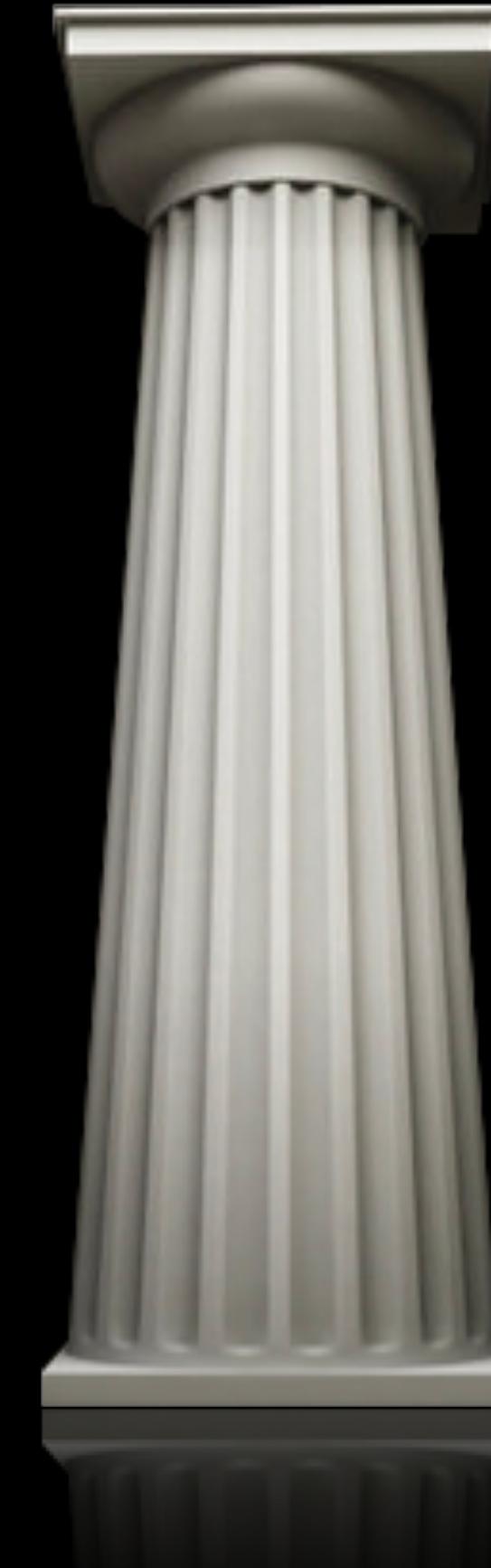


Expanding Our Consciousness—simply Put

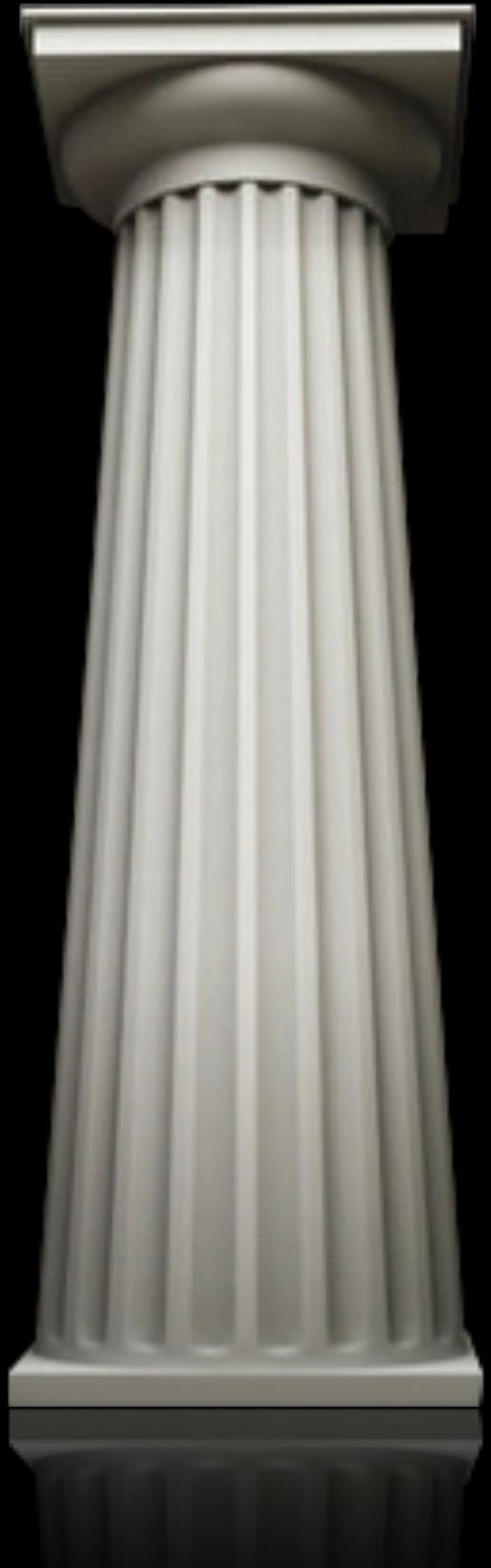


Three Pillars of Mind Training

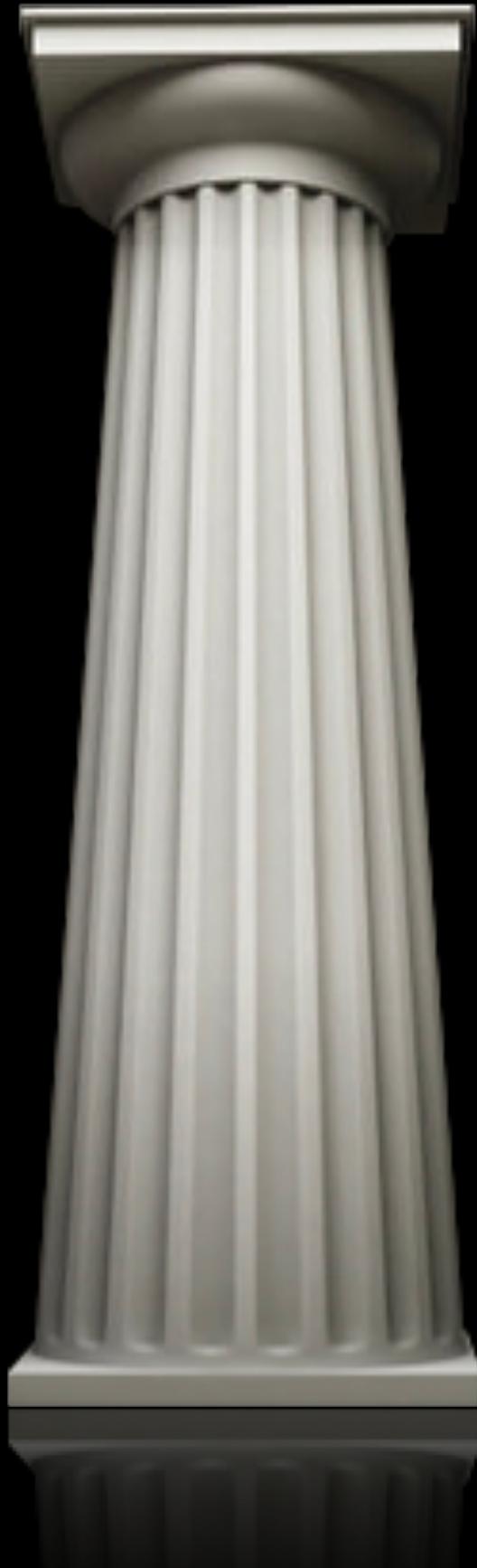
1 | **Focused
Attention**



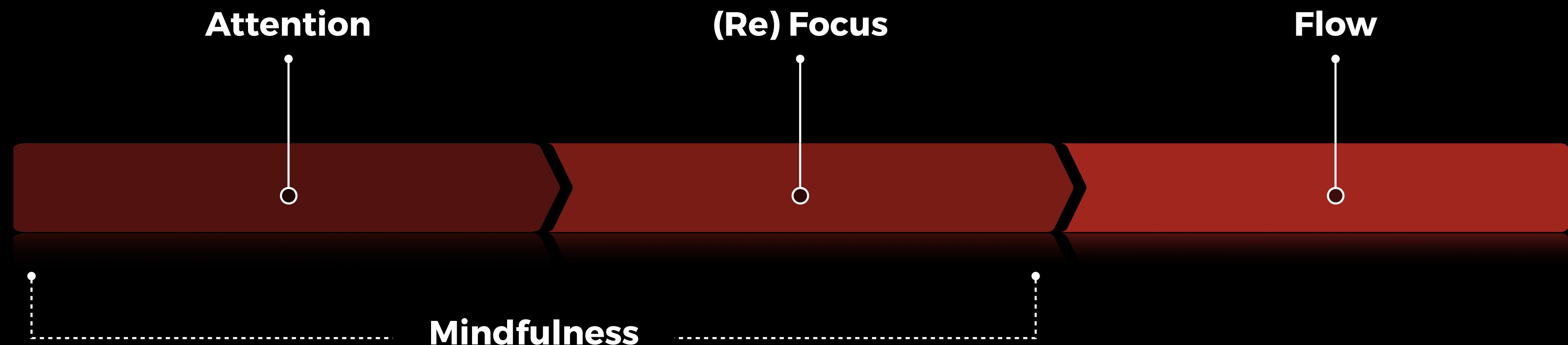
2 | **Open
Awareness**



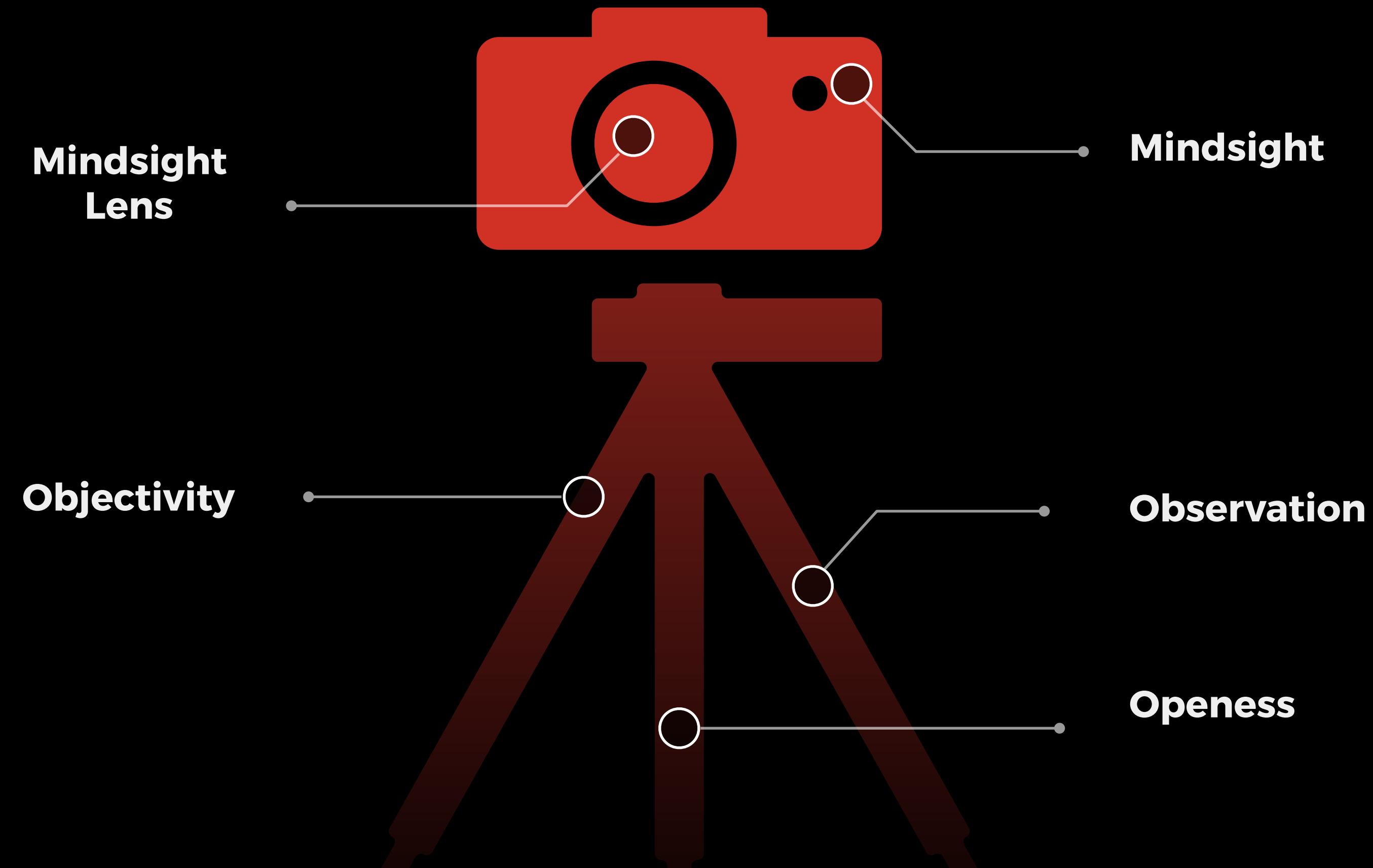
3 | **Kind
Attention**



Focused Attention Is Crucial to Flow



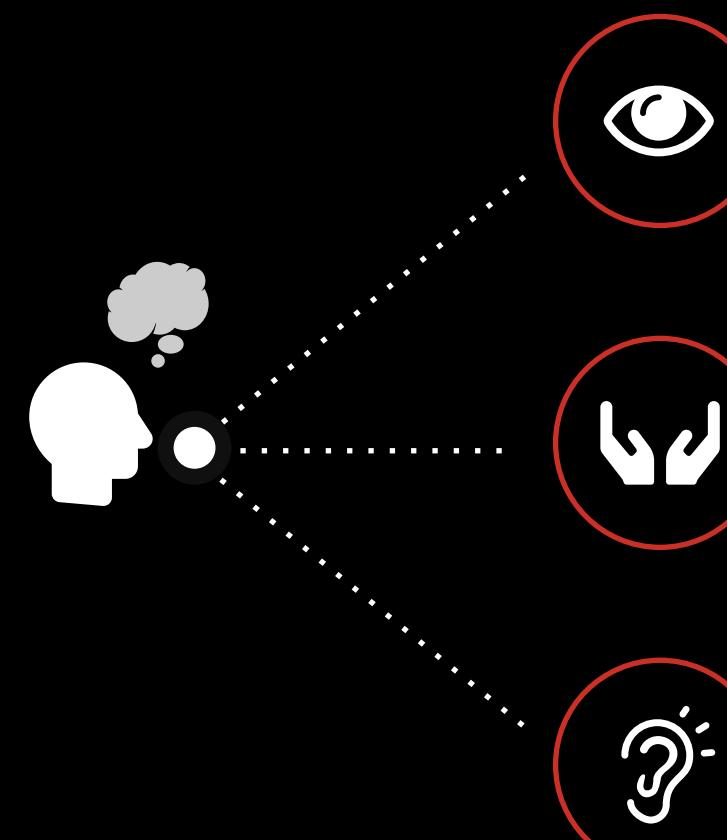
Overtime Mindfulness Builds the Three O's



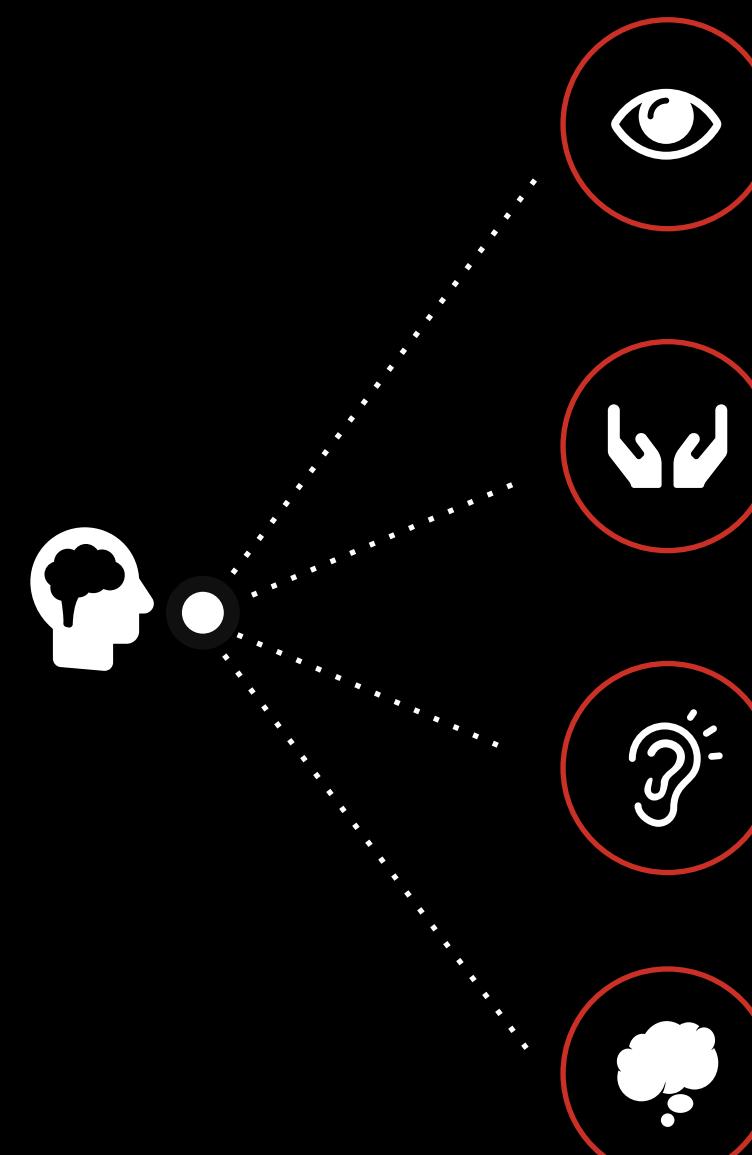
From Daniel J. Siegel, M.D., Mindsight; The New Science of Personal Transformation,
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What Happens with Sufficient Mindfulness

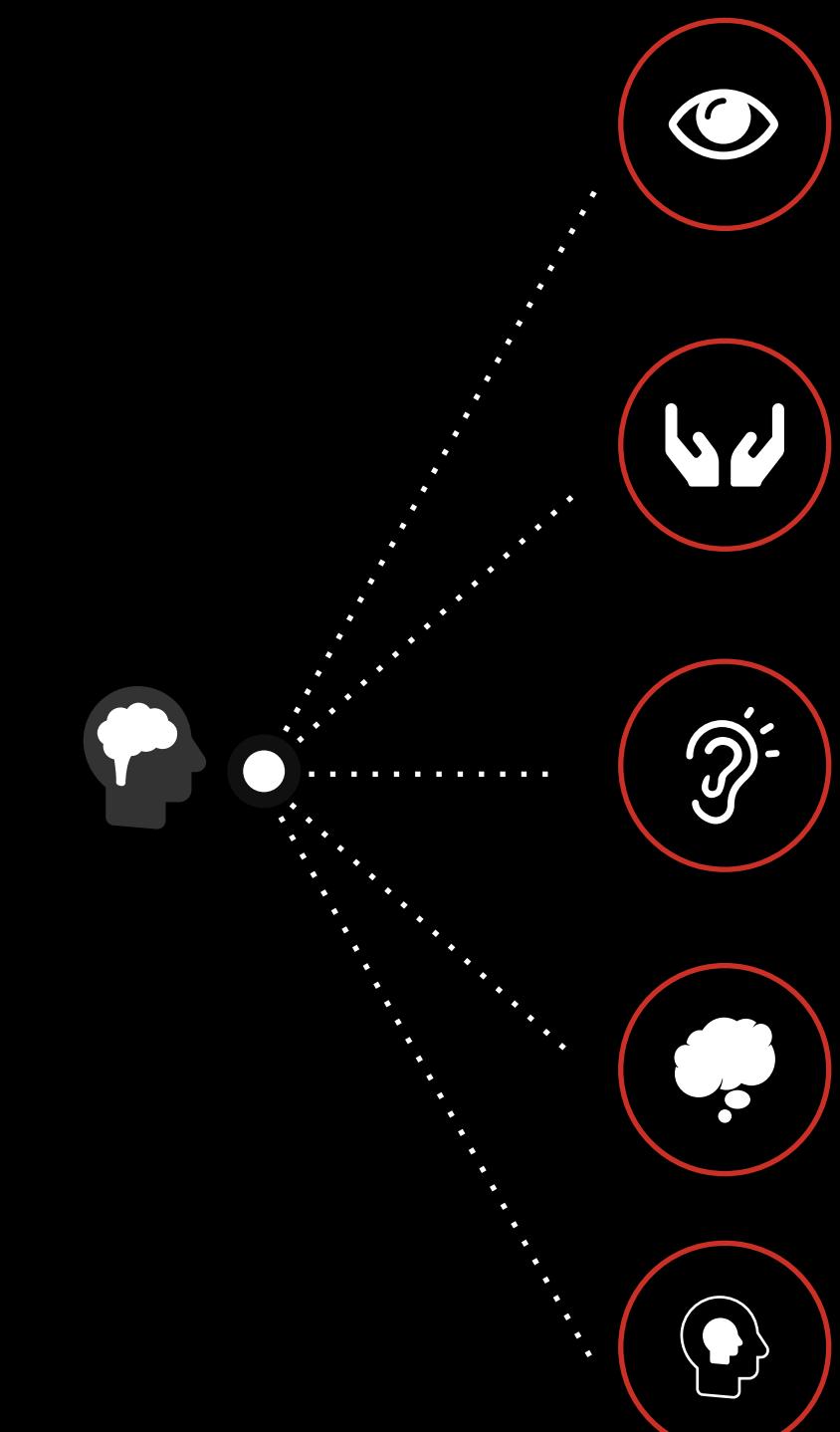
1 What being lost in thought feels like:



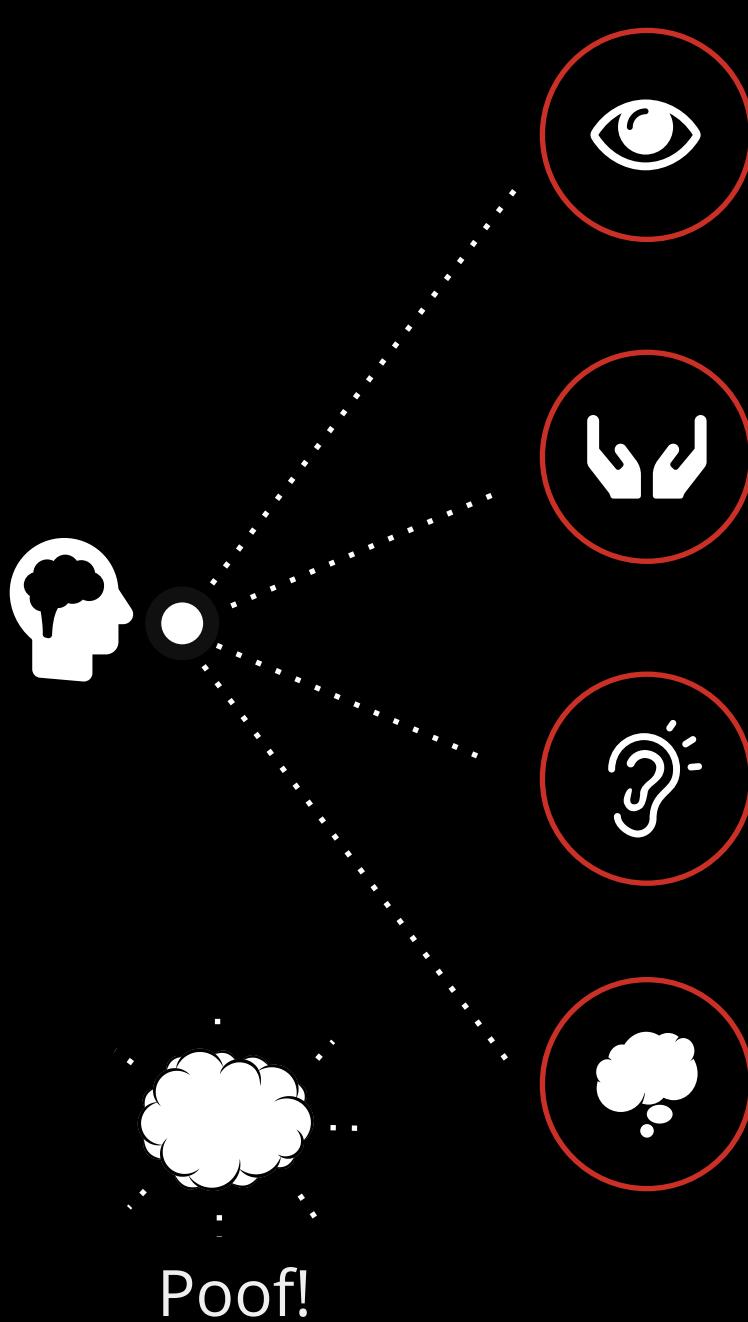
2 What meditation feels like at first:



3 What is really going on:



4 And what is possible with practice:



Sight



Feeling



Hearing

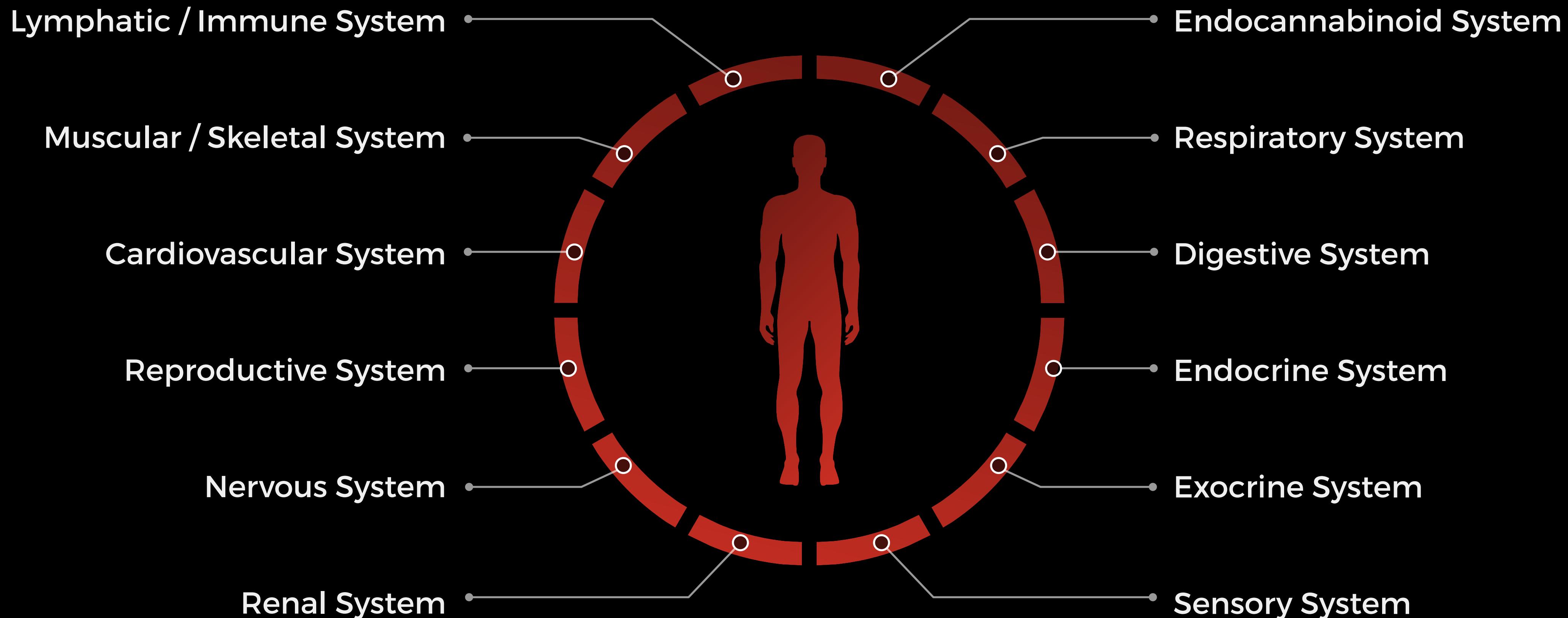


Thoughts



Sense of Self

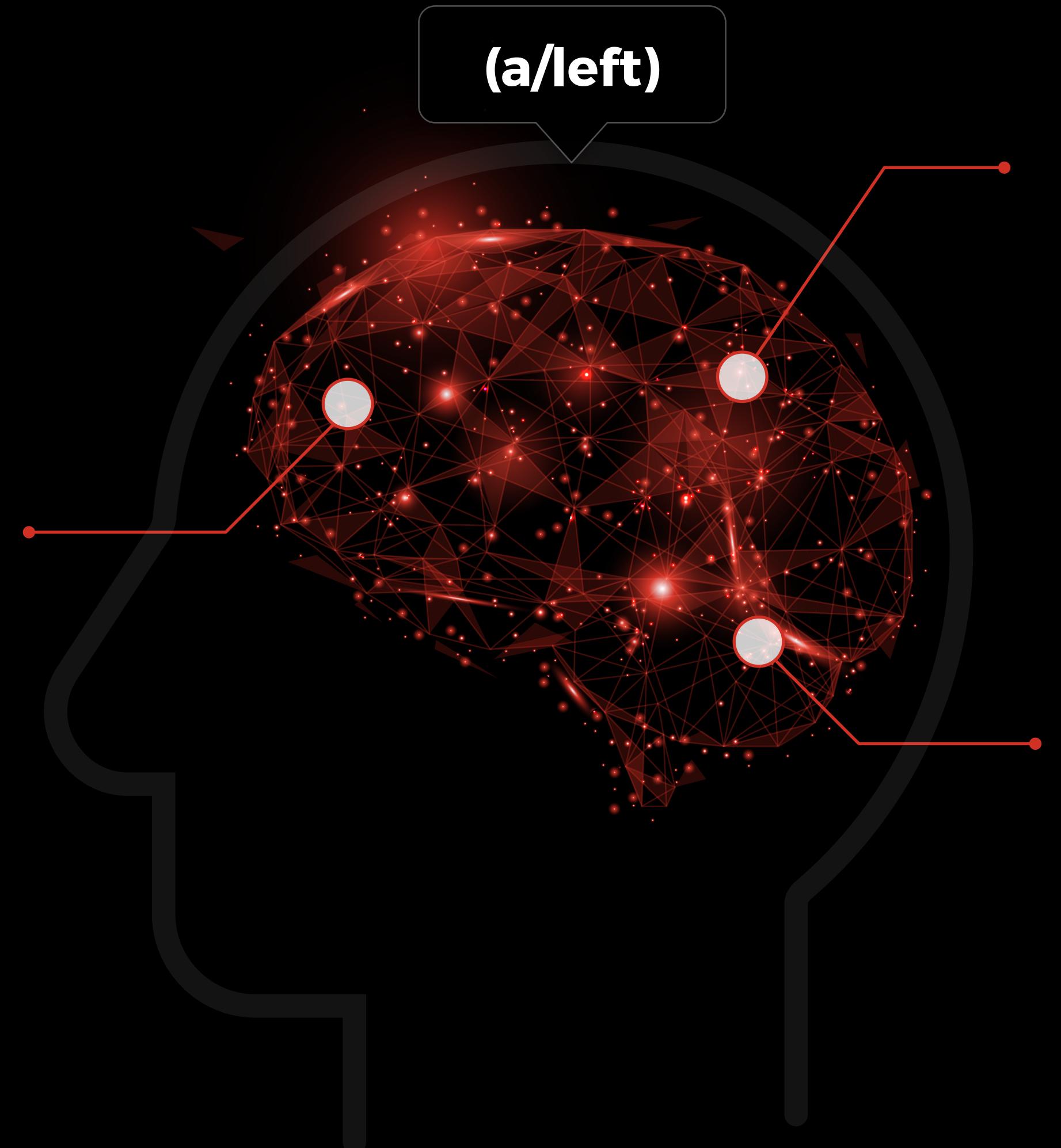
The Positive Psychology Panacea



The Effects of Meditation on the Brain

Gyrification

MRI scans have shown that meditation increases Gyrification, or cortical folding, which allows the brain to process information faster. The extent of gyrification is highly implicated as being positively related to intelligence.



Focus

Meditation improves focus by causing an increase in cortical thickness in regions of the brain responsible for attention.

Stress Reduction

Meditation decreases stress and anxiety by downregulating cortisol and adrenaline creating a state of deep relaxation in which our breathing, pulse rate, blood pressure, and metabolism are decreased.

The Effects of Meditation on the Brain

Mood

Meditation increases dopamine and serotonin levels by stimulating regions of the brain which are associated with happiness and positivity.

Cognition

Meditation improves cognitive function, mindfulness and the ability to sustain focus by increasing grey matter, brain volume and cerebral blood flow.

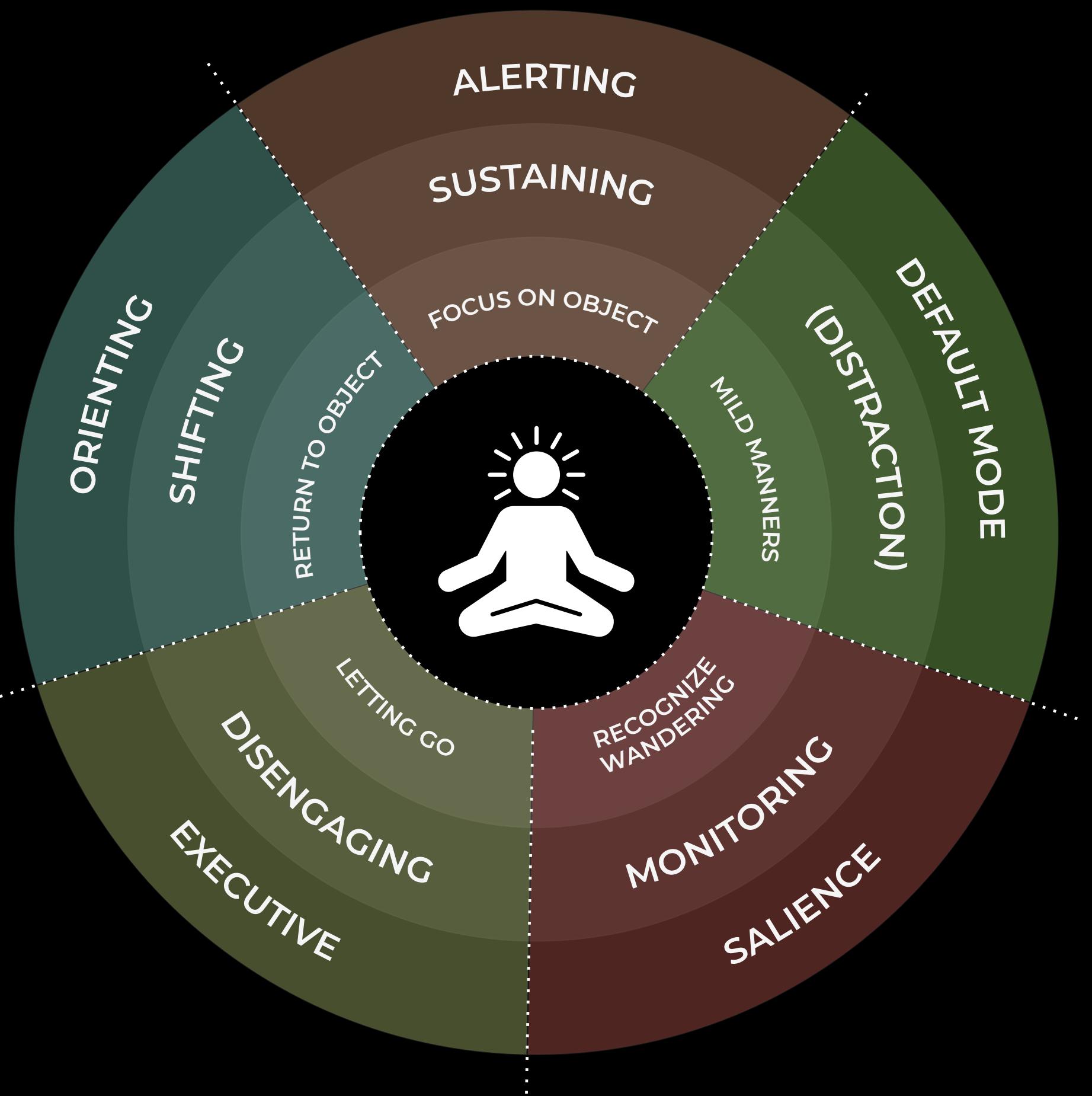


Brain Function

Meditation increases whole brain function, by synchronizing the right and left hemispheres of the brain while increasing balance and amplitude in alpha, theta and delta brain-wave patterns.

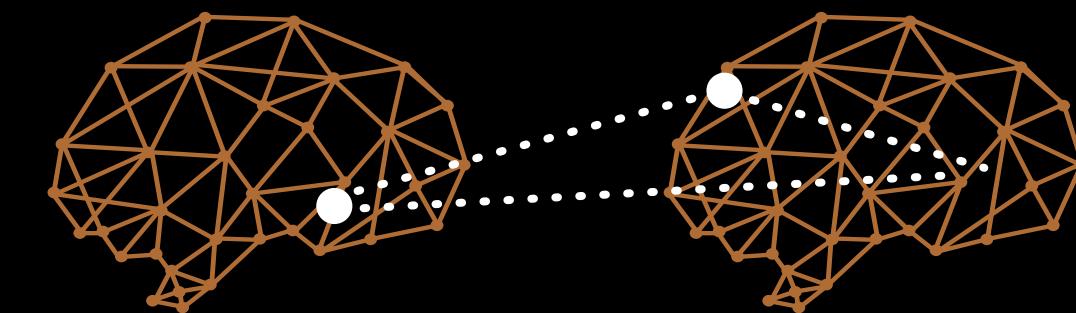
The Process of Mindfulness & the Brain

A Meditation Process

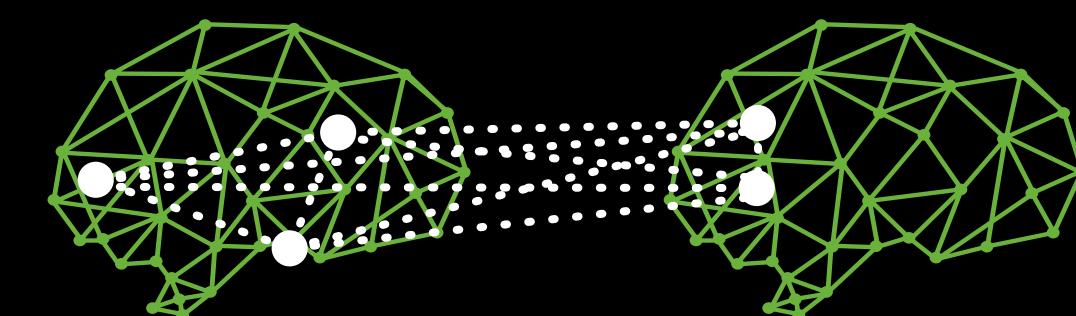


B Meditation Process

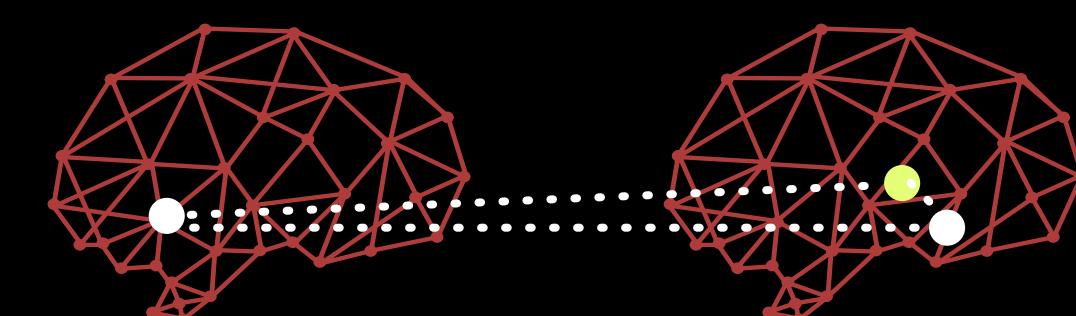
Alerting



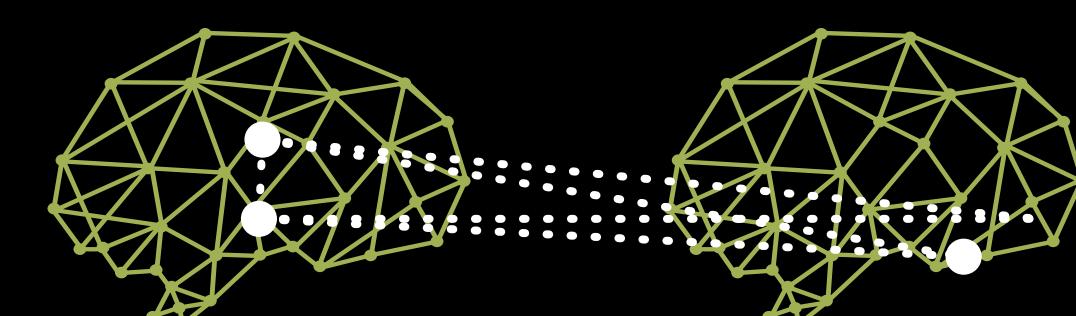
Default Mode



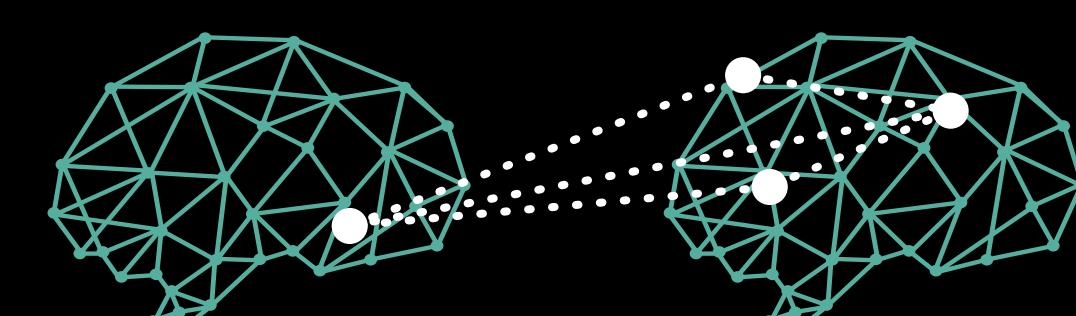
Salience



Executive

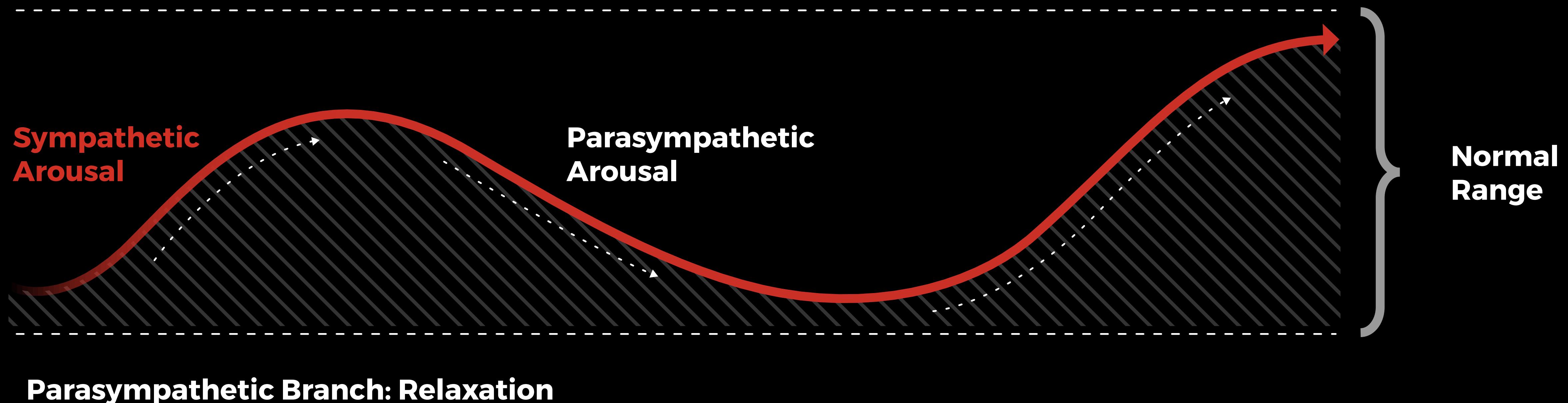


Orienting



A Healthy Nervous System

Sympathetic Branch: Activation

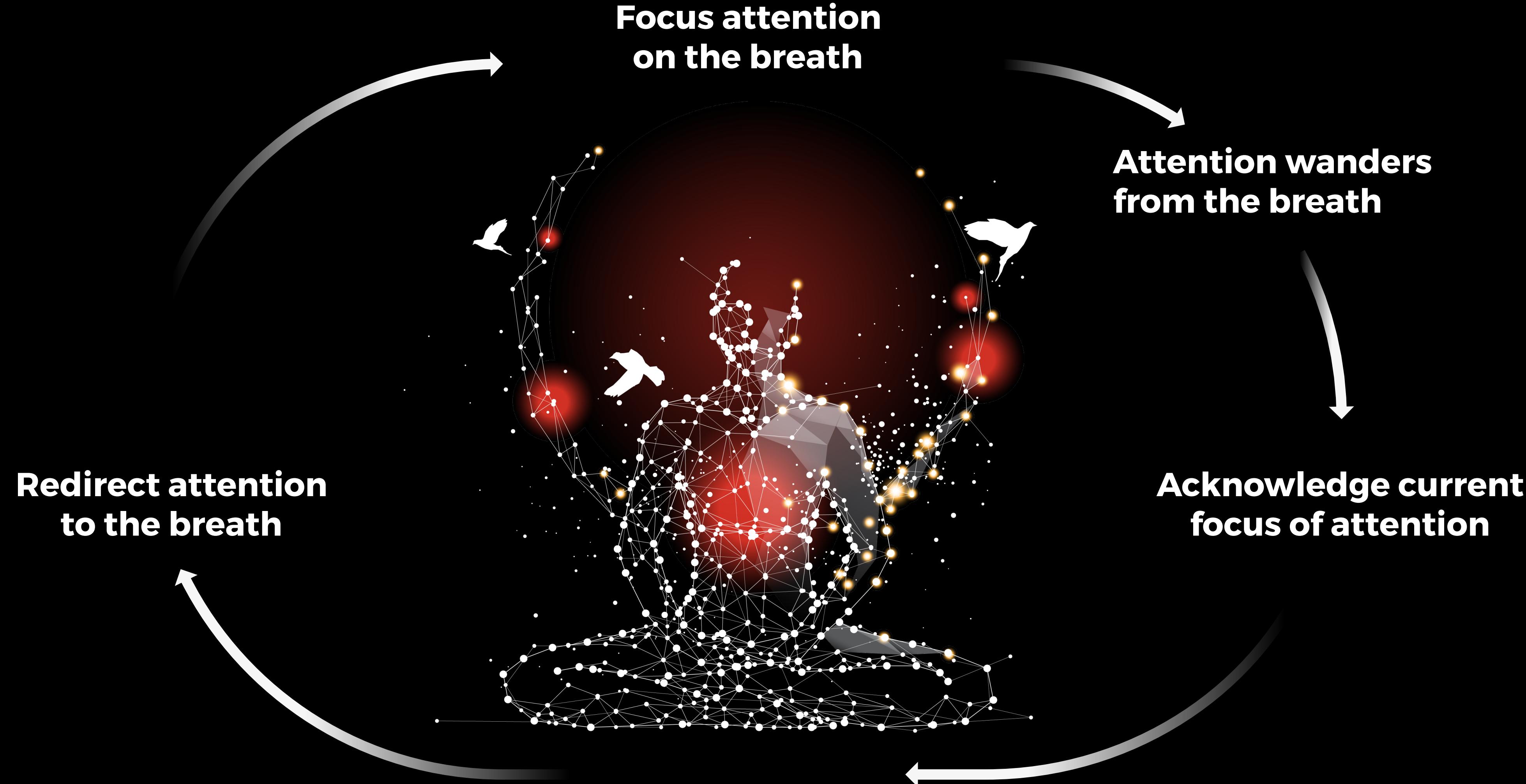


Parasympathetic Branch: Relaxation

The How of Meditation on One Page

- 1** Sit comfortably, with your spine erect, either in a chair or cross-legged on a cushion.
- 2** Close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and feel the points of contact between your body and the chair or floor. Notice the sensations associated with sitting—feelings of pressure, warmth, tingling, vibration, etc.
- 3** Gradually become aware of the process of breathing. Pay attention to wherever you feel the breath most clearly—either at the nostrils, or in the rising and falling of your abdomen.
- 4** Allow your attention to rest in the mere sensation of breathing. (There is no need to control your breath. Just let it come and go naturally.)
- 5** Every time your mind wanders in thought, gently return it to the sensation of breathing.
- 6** As you focus on the breath, you will notice that other perceptions and sensations continue to appear: sounds, feelings in the body, emotions, etc. Simply notice these phenomena as they emerge in the field of awareness, and then return to the sensation of breathing.
- 7** The moment you observe that you have been lost in thought, notice the present thought itself as an object of consciousness. Then return your attention to the breath—or to whatever sounds or sensations arise in the next moment.
- 8** Continue in this way until you can merely witness all objects of consciousness—sights, sounds, sensations, emotions, and even thoughts themselves—as they arise and pass away.

Self-Regulation of Attention



The How of Meditation on One Page

1 **Meditation**

2 **Extreme Unitasking**

3 **Slowing Down To Boost Deliberation and Intentionality** (Rushing)

Stimulation Removal

4 — eating plain unsalted food, walking with no music, removing caffeine

Movement

5 — And everything we talked about to heighten interoception

Nature

6 — soothes the nervous system, downregulates us

Live Mindfully

7 — Meditate “in life” while doing things from eating to listening to music to sitting on a ski lift.

Stack on Mindfulness to Repeating Activities

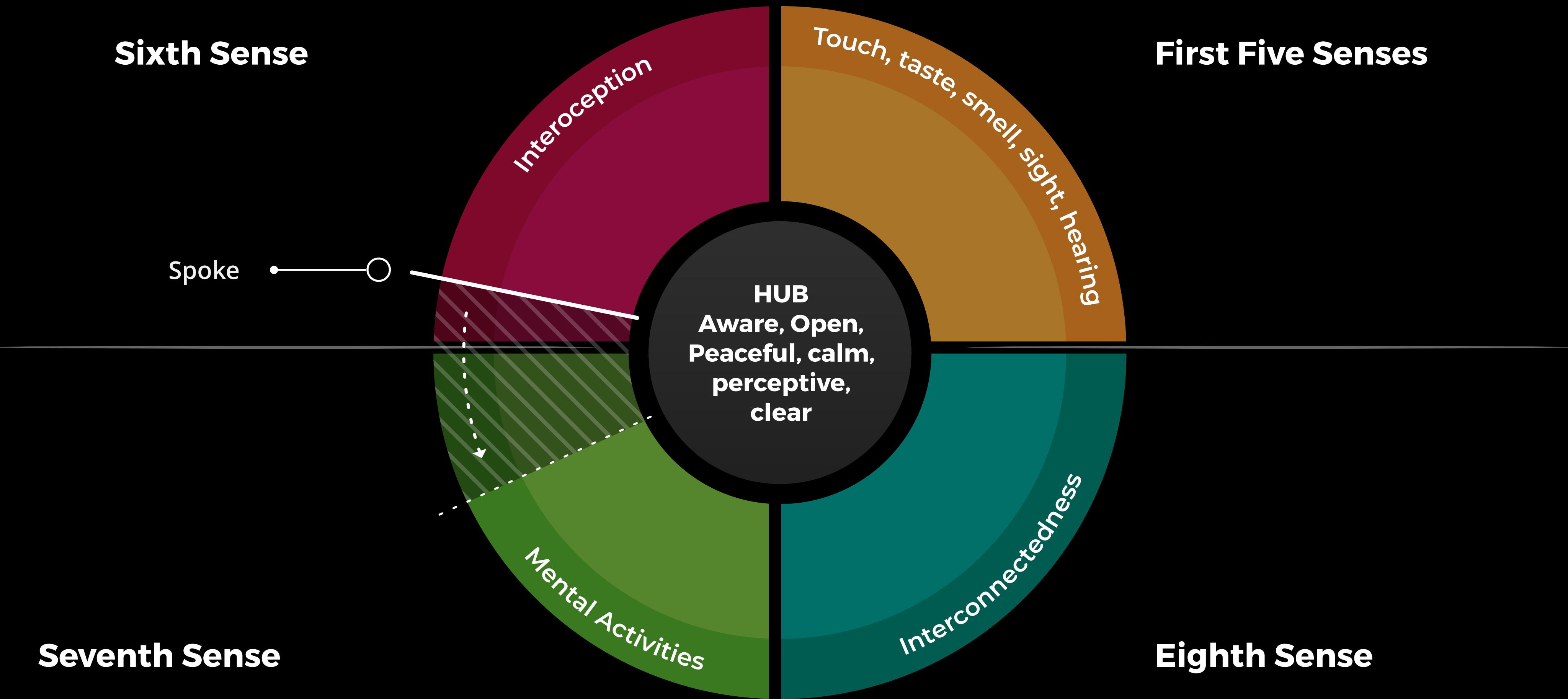
8 — E.g. Meditate whenever you are in an uber. Meditate as soon as you sit down at your desk.

9 **Journalling**

What We've Covered:

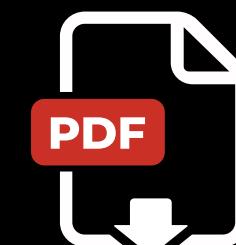
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Exercise – Listen to the Wheel of Awareness Every Day for 7 Days



Exercise:

Write and Send Your Gratitude Letter



Download Workbook
To get started

- 1 Make it massively personalized. Go all out. If it's uncomfortable, lean in and say it.
- 2 Be specific. Highlight the exact things you appreciate and provide clear examples of when.
- 3 Emphasize WHY you appreciate that person or what they've done. Talk about how it's enhanced your own life.
- 4 Let us know in the comments who you're sending your gratitude letter to and when.