

BE THE MASTER OF YOUR MIND

MINDFULNESS IS A SUPERPOWER

“Soak up the views. Take in the bad weather and the good weather. You are not the storm.” - Matt Haig

At times like this our mind is full. There is a lot we wonder about and many things we do not have answers for. If we can learn to calm our mind now, it will serve us well in the present and when we return to competition. Did you know that doing mindfulness training three times per week for 10 minutes at a time can serve to keep your brain working well and ready for action?

You work very hard to keep your bodies healthy so that you can handle the load of your sport. Many of you have sophisticated routines to keep your bodies healthy such as rolling out or stretching after practice, and we pay quick attention to injuries through physiotherapy or athletic therapist support. But what are you doing to keep your minds well and your emotions in check? What is your mental and emotional recovery routine? A great place to begin *mastering* your mind is through mindfulness. ***Here is how you can start today:***

- When you start with mindfulness training, attempt to do it for two or three minutes. Then try to do 5. Eventually you will be able to do 10 minutes.
- Mindfulness does not have to be intimidating or scary. It is simply learning to bring your mind back to focusing on one cue or thing.
- In order to practice mindfulness, get comfortable. Sit with your legs crossed or on a comfortable chair. Do some *SEAS* breathing for about one or two minutes ([review week 1](#)).
- Then pick one cue such as your stomach going in and out, or the feel of your breath coming in and out of your nose or looking at an object in the room. Then pay attention to what your mind does.
- As your mind wanders, gently bring it back to the cue you are focusing on. You will learn how active your mind really is. As it wanders to other things, be kind to yourself. Don't judge. Simply notice, then gently bring your focus back to your chosen cue.
- You will need to do this many, many times and minutes will feel like hours. But over time, you will develop this skill.

Some people may find apps such as Headspace beneficial for doing mindfulness or listening to people on YouTube such as Jon Kabat-Zinn. It doesn't matter how you do it, and you do not need to do it perfectly. The most important thing is to simply start or try.

In time, you will learn that you can choose what you want to focus on. You are in control. You are not your thoughts. Practicing mindfulness will help us truly live our *ABCs* ([review week 2](#)).

Remember:

10 minutes per day, 3 times per week. Be still. Focus on one cue. As your mind wanders, notice and gently bring it back.



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