

## HERE AND NOW FOCUS and MINDFULNESS for Everyday Life and Sport.

Learning to focus your mind is really helpful for improving attention and concentration in your sport. The good news is you already do it !! You do it when you watch television or play computer games and you already do it when you play your sport, tennis or golf. Sometimes in a match you can be distracted with unhelpful thoughts and your body affected by tension and shallow breathing. Much worry or “words in your head” is a busy mind thinking over past and future events. For example the last shot “Ahh I missed !” or the next shot, serve or putt. The best state of mind is when we are focused in the present. To achieve this, we can learn to focus on the Here and Now and Mindfulness of the Breath,

### Here and Now

- Focus your attention on what you See, notice what you **See Now**, colour, light, shapes
- Listen to what you can **Hear Now**, sounds, far and near, the rhythm of sounds
- Make contact with what you **Feel Now**, the chair, the floor, the feeling of your body
- Keep your attention focused on the **Here and Now** by this attention to what you See, Hear and Feel. **Notice – your thoughts may wander – simply return to the focus of your senses in the Here and Now.**

### Breathing

Turn your attention to your breathing; the air in, the air out. Notice the temperature and feel the breath going in your nose and down to your chest. Gently slow your breathing down to slower deeper breathing. The way to do this is to **breathe out longer and slower** and you will breathe in naturally more deeply and more freely. Do this in a gradual and natural way without over forcing breathing. Notice if your thoughts wander and refocus attention on your breathing.

### Muscle Relaxation

Scan your body for muscle tension. Start at the top of your head; notice any tension - let it go. Slowly move your attention down through your body, your neck and arms, your chest; notice the slow breath out as you relax your tummy muscles. Relax buttocks, thighs and calf muscles; focus the body scan down to the arches of your feet and your toes. Be aware of the state of each muscle and let go of any tension. **Notice your mind may wander – refocus on your body, your muscles and your breathing.**

### Visual Imagery

As your mindfulness deepens you may like to drift from a Here and Now sensory awareness to a deeper state of meditation using pictures in your mind. Focus your visual imagery on a favourite place, your best shot, or winning play, scene, or a colour, and let your mind settle on the detail of what you see in your minds eye **Now.**

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### Awareness of Focus of Attention

From time to time wherever you are, whatever you are doing reflect on whether you are thinking about the past or future, notice any pattern of thoughts - chose to focus your mind in the Here and Now? How are you breathing? Are you holding any tension? Body scan ? What is your focus? Where is your imagination ?

### Rehearsal and Practice

While developing your ability to be more Mindful it is well worth setting aside 5-10 minutes a day to practice the method and develop your own unique pathway to peaceful Mindfulness. This will develop to help your focus and play winning tennis or golf.