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Please contact the researchers for references, full protocol, or any other queries at marc.bennett@mrc-cbu.cam.ac.uk.
**Project Overview**

Welcome to the online Decentering Training Programme designed by Marc Bennett, Rachel Knight and Tim Dalgleish (MRC- Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit).

Overleaf is an infographic that describes the training programme.

Each week will begin with two 10-15 minute mindfulness exercises, perhaps a sitting meditation, breathing exercise or body scan. These exercises aim to help participants notice what is happening for them internally, including noticing thoughts and feelings they can use for the exercises later in the week. The week will then have two decentering exercises of a particular type, described overleaf. Attached to each week is an example exercise which participants will listen to.

**Basic Structure:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Exercise Type</th>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
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<td>Saturday</td>
<td>R</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
<td>SRM</td>
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**Key:**
- M = Mindfulness
- DE = Decentering Exercise
- MV = Movement Video
- R = Review
- SRM = Self-Report Measures
- ES = experience sampling
Decentering training: A combination of different mindfulness-based and practical exercises that prompt participant to change their experiential-perspective in response to negative mental events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start of week</th>
<th>Mid-week</th>
<th>End of week</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experiential Practice (20-25 min)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Didactic Practice (20-25 min)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Revision (20-25 min)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W1</strong> Mindfulness (1) : Open Monitoring of mind</td>
<td>Temporal-based: take a 'future-perspective' when recalling difficult events</td>
<td>Mindfulness 1 + Temporal</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>W2</strong> Mindfulness (2) : Open Monitoring of mind</td>
<td>Spatial-based: adopt a third-person/first on the wall perspective</td>
<td>Mindfulness 2 + Spatial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W3</strong> Mindfulness (3) : Open Monitoring of mind</td>
<td>Verbal-based: replace 'I/me' with first name (e.g. Marc feels embarrassed about his score/bread)</td>
<td>Mindfulness 3 + Verbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W4</strong> Mindfulness (4) : Open Monitoring of mind</td>
<td>Hypothetical-based: as though they were an anthropologist viewing the scene</td>
<td>Mindfulness 4 + Hypothetical</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>W5</strong> Mindfulness (5) : Open Monitoring of mind</td>
<td>Summary of each technique</td>
<td>Total revision</td>
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*script, audio-record and place on a private youtube channel. Send links via ES app.
Week 1 – Temporal Decentering

*Example Exercises: One Year From Now, Ten Years in the Future*

Description: Temporal decentering tasks focus on manipulating temporal distance from events, prompting the individual to see them from a different time, perhaps in the past or the future, rather than the present.

**Example Exercise – One Year From Now**

*Part 1 – Grounding*

*Function: To bring the person into the present moment and focus their mind. Each exercise will start with this.*

*Time [90s]*

If possible, find somewhere quiet and take a seat. Make yourself as comfortable as possible. Acknowledge what is going on in your mind and body at this moment. [PAUSE] Not trying to change anything, but noticing what is there for you in this moment. [PAUSE] Now, close your eyes and focus on your breath. Take a comfortable breath in and count how long it takes you to do so. Most people reach a count of 3, 4 or 5. Keep in mind that the number isn’t important, so long as it is comfortable for you. Whatever number you reached on your inhale, match that number on your exhale. [PAUSE] Whilst you do this, your mind may wander, but each time it happens, acknowledge the thought or feeling you are having, and then re-focus on counting your breath. [PAUSE]

*Part 2 - Recall Negative Thought & Noticing Reactions*

*Function: To recall the negative thought and to notice ones reactions to it.*

*Time [45s]*

Now, I want you to bring to mind a negative thought that you have had over the past week. Focus solely on that thought. What is this thought about? Does it relate to yourself, or others, or both? Is it about the past, present, or future? Notice the thoughts and feelings that come as you hold your original thought in mind. How real does that thought feel? How believable is it?

*Part 3 – Observe Thoughts and Reactions as if they are happening in the past*

*Function: To apply temporal distance to a negative thought*

*Time [45s]*

As you notice your thought, try to shift your perspective. Instead of being immersed within the thought, try to imagine yourself a year from now. Try to imagine what you might think and feel about the thought then. Rather than living in the thought, step out of it, and imagine yourself a year older, looking back on it [PAUSE]. How does the thought feel now, as you look back on it as something that happened in the past, rather than just now?

*Part 4 - Recall Negative Event*

*Function: To recall the negative event and ones reactions to it.*

*Time [60s]*

Now I want you to bring to mind a negative event or situation that has happened to you over the past week. Focus solely on that negative event. Picture yourself in that moment. Try to remember
where you were, who was with you if there were people around, and what was going on around you. Picture yourself in that setting as clearly as you can. Recall the thoughts and feelings that came with it. How were you feeling at that moment? What thoughts were running through your mind? How easy were those thoughts and feelings to manage? How much did they affect the rest of your day?

**Part 5 – Observe Thoughts and Reactions as if they are happening in the past**

*Function: To apply temporal distance to a negative event*

*Time [75s]*

As you recall the event, try to shift your perspective. Instead of being immersed within the thought, try to imagine yourself a year from now. Try to imagine what you might think and feel about the event then. Rather than living in the memory, step out of it, and imagine yourself a year older, looking back on it [PAUSE]. Imagine how an older and wiser version of yourself might feel about this memory. Describe what happened back to yourself for a moment, beginning with the phrase “a year ago”. [PAUSE] Does the event feel different as you imagine yourself looking back on it? Can you feel anything different? How does thinking about the event as if you are looking back from the future affect how you feel about it now?

**Part 6 – Close**

*Function: To close out the exercise*

*Time [45s]*

Now, notice this part of you that is able to notice your thoughts and feelings from the perspective of an objective, neutral observer. This part of you can also notice how you feel right now. Do your best to focus on this part of yourself. It has always been there, observing what you are experiencing, and is noticing how you are feeling right now. You can come back to this part of yourself at any time. Now, slowly bring your attention back to your body, and your breath. Take three more deep breaths, bringing yourself back to the present more and more each time you inhale and exhale.

**END OF EXERCISE – Total Time Elapsed 375 seconds = 6 mins 15 seconds**
Week 2 – Spatial Decentering

Example Exercises: Fly on the Wall, Detached Observer

Description: Spatial decentering tasks focus on manipulating spatial distance from events, prompting the individual to see them from across a room or from far away. The individual creates distance between them self and the event by watching oneself do something rather than recalling doing it from ones original perspective.

Example Exercise – Fly on the Wall

Part 1 – Grounding

Function: To bring the person into the present moment and focus their mind. Each exercise will start with this.

Time [90s]

If possible, find somewhere quiet and take a seat. Make yourself as comfortable as possible. Acknowledge what is going on in your mind and body at this moment. [PAUSE] Not trying to change anything, but noticing what is there for you in this moment. [PAUSE] Now, close your eyes and focus on your breath. Take a comfortable breath in and count how long it takes you to do so. Most people reach a count of 3, 4 or 5. Keep in mind that the number isn’t important, so long as it is comfortable for you. Whatever number you reached on your inhale, match that number on your exhale. [PAUSE] Whilst you do this, your mind may wander, but each time it happens, acknowledge the thought or feeling you are having, and then re-focus on counting your breath. [PAUSE]

Part 2 - Recall Negative Thought & Noticing Reactions

Function: To recall the negative thought and to notice ones reactions to it.

Time [45s]

Now, I want you to bring to mind a negative thought that you have had over the past week. Focus solely on that thought. What is this thought about? Does it relate to yourself, or others, or both? Is it about the past, present, or future? Notice the thoughts and feelings that come as you hold your original thought in mind. How real does that thought feel? How believable is it?

Part 3 – Observe Thought from A Spatial Distance

Function – To apply spatial distance to a thought

Time [30s]

Now you have recalled a thought, I’d like you to imagine you are looking in a mirror and saying the thought to yourself. As you do this, I’d like you to try to take a few steps back from this. Observe yourself saying it as if you are a fly on the wall in the room. Notice that you are now separated and watching yourself, rather than immersed in the thought. How real does the thought feel now, as you watch yourself say it from far away?

Part 4 - Recall Negative Event

Function: To recall the negative event and ones reactions to it.

Time [60s]
Now I want you to bring to mind a negative event or situation that has happened to you over the past week. Focus solely on that negative event. Picture yourself in that moment. Try to remember where you were, who was with you if there were people around, and what was going on around you. Picture yourself in that setting as clearly as you can. Recall the thoughts and feelings that came with it. How were you feeling at that moment? What thoughts were running through your mind? How easy were those thoughts and feelings to manage? How much did they affect the rest of your day?

**Part 5 – Observe the event from a spatial distance**

*Function: To apply spatial distance to a memory*

*Time [60s]*

Go back to the time and place of the experience you just recalled and see the scene in your mind's eye. Now take a few steps back. Move away from the situation to a point where you can now watch the event unfold from a distance and see yourself in the event, almost as if you are only a fly on the wall in the place where it happened. As you do this, focus on what has now become the distant you. Now watch the experience unfold as if it were happening to the distant you all over again. Replay the event as it unfolds in your imagination as you observe from your place on the wall [BREAK] As you continue to watch the situation unfold to your distant self, try to understand his or her feelings. Does it feel different as you watch this event from your place on the wall? Can you see anything different from this perspective? How does seeing it from this outsider’s perspective affect how you feel about it now?

**Part 6 – Close**

*Function: To close out the exercise*

*Time [45s]*

Now, notice this part of you that is able to notice your thoughts and feelings from the perspective of an objective, neutral observer. This part of you can also notice how you feel right now. Do your best to focus on this part of yourself. It has always been there, observing what you are experiencing, and is noticing how you are feeling right now. You can come back to this part of yourself at any time. Now, slowly bring your attention back to your body, and your breath. Take three more deep breaths, bringing yourself back to the present more and more each time you inhale and exhale.

END OF EXERCISE – Total Time Elapsed 330 seconds – 5 mins 30 seconds
Week 3 – Verbal Decentering

Example Exercises: Repetition, Pronouns

Description: Verbal decentering tasks focus on manipulating verbal distance from events, prompting the individual to create distance using pronoun manipulation, or perhaps semantic satiation to remove meaning from words or experiences.

Example Exercise – Repetition

Part 1 – Grounding

Function: To bring the person into the present moment and focus their mind. Each exercise will start with this.

Time [90s]

If possible, find somewhere quiet and take a seat. Make yourself as comfortable as possible. Acknowledge what is going on in your mind and body at this moment. [PAUSE] Not trying to change anything, but noticing what is there for you in this moment. [PAUSE] Now, close your eyes and focus on your breath. Take a comfortable breath in and count how long it takes you to do so. Most people reach a count of 3, 4 or 5. Keep in mind that the number isn’t important, so long as it is comfortable for you. Whatever number you reached on your inhale, match that number on your exhale. [PAUSE] Whilst you do this, your mind may wander, but each time it happens, acknowledge the thought or feeling you are having, and then re-focus on counting your breath. [PAUSE]

Part 2 - Recall Negative Thought & Noticing Reactions

Function: To recall the negative thought and to notice ones reactions to it.

Time [45s]

Now, I want you to bring to mind a negative thought that you have had over the past week. Focus solely on that thought. What is this thought about? Does it relate to yourself, or others, or both? Is it about the past, present, or future? Notice the thoughts and feelings that come as you hold your original thought in mind. How real does that thought feel? How believable is it?

Part 3 – Observe the “Hot” Word in a thought using repetition

Function: To apply semantic satiation to a single thought.

Time [120s]

You might have noticed in the past that when you repeat a word again and again, it beings to lose its meaning. Try this now using a neutral word, for example, lemons. Say the word lemons once, notice all the functions that occur when you hear it, for example yellow, sour, fruit. Now, repeat the word lemons to yourself for 20 seconds, and see how it becomes only a collection of sounds rather than something with meaning. [Pause 20s]. Good. Now, as you notice your thought, try to pick out the “hot” word, that is, the word or phrase that is the most distressing part of the thought. Now, do the same thing you did with the lemons. Repeat the word or phrase back to yourself again and again for 30 seconds, until it loses its meaning entirely. [PAUSE 30s] How real does it feel now, as you repeat the word until it loses its meaning? Does doing this change your relationship with the word?

Part 4 - Recall Negative Event

Function: To recall the negative event and ones reactions to it.
Time [60s]

Now I want you to bring to mind a negative event or situation that has happened to you over the past week. Focus solely on that negative event. Picture yourself in that moment. Try to remember where you were, who was with you if there were people around, and what was going on around you. Picture yourself in that setting as clearly as you can. Recall the thoughts and feelings that came with it. How were you feeling at that moment? What thoughts were running through your mind? How easy were those thoughts and feelings to manage? How much did they affect the rest of your day?

Part 5 – Pick out the “hot” word in the memory, and repeat it

Function: To apply semantic satiation to a memory.

Time [75s]

Now, as you recall the event, I want you to pick out the “hot” word or phrase that most encompasses what was most distressing about the memory. [PAUSE 10 seconds] Now, do the same thing you did with the lemons. Repeat the word or phrase back to yourself again and again for 30 seconds, until it loses its meaning entirely. [PAUSE 30s] Does it feel different as you repeat it? Can you see anything different from this perspective? How does seeing it from this perspective, where the thought is only a collection of sounds, affect how you feel about it now?

Part 6 – Close

Function: To close out the exercise

Time [45s]

Now, notice this part of you that is able to notice your thoughts and feelings from the perspective of an objective, neutral observer. This part of you can also notice how you feel right now. Do your best to focus on this part of yourself. It has always been there, observing what you are experiencing, and is noticing how you are feeling right now. You can come back to this part of yourself at any time. Now, slowly bring your attention back to your body, and your breath. Take three more deep breaths, bringing yourself back to the present more and more each time you inhale and exhale.

END OF EXERCISE – Total Time Elapsed 435 seconds = 7 mins 15 seconds
Week 4 – Hypothetical Decentering

*Example Exercises: Observing Thoughts & Feelings, Third Party Observer*

Description: Hypothetical decentering works by manipulating hypothetical perspective in an individual. This can involve asking them to imagine watching an event from a different perspective, perhaps a scientist or some kind of neutral observer, and consider the event from this perspective.

**Example Exercise – Third Party Observer**

**Part 1 – Grounding**

*Function: To bring the person into the present moment and focus their mind. Each exercise will start with this.*

*Time [90s]*

If possible, find somewhere quiet and take a seat. Make yourself as comfortable as possible. Acknowledge what is going on in your mind and body at this moment. [PAUSE] Not trying to change anything, but noticing what is there for you in this moment. [PAUSE] Now, close your eyes and focus on your breath. Take a comfortable breath in and count how long it takes you to do so. Most people reach a count of 3, 4 or 5. Keep in mind that the number isn’t important, so long as it is comfortable for you. Whatever number you reached on your inhale, match that number on your exhale. [PAUSE] Whilst you do this, your mind may wander, but each time it happens, acknowledge the thought or feeling you are having, and then re-focus on counting your breath. [PAUSE]

**Part 2 - Recall Negative Thought & Noticing Reactions**

*Function: To recall the negative thought and to notice ones reactions to it.*

*Time [45s]*

Now, I want you to bring to mind a negative thought that you have had over the past week. Focus solely on that thought. What is this thought about? Does it relate to yourself, or others, or both? Is it about the past, present, or future? Notice the thoughts and feelings that come as you hold your original thought in mind. How real does that thought feel? How believable is it?

**Part 3 – Observe Thoughts and Reactions in the Present Moment**

*Function: To apply the perspective of a neutral observer to a single thought.*

*Time [30s]*

As you notice your thought, try to shift your perspective. Instead of being immersed within the thought, try to see it from the point of view of an observer in this present moment. Rather than living in the thought, simply notice the thought. Notice it for what it is, a string of words which you have brought to mind. How real does it feel now, as you notice it from the point of view of an observer?

**Part 4 - Recall Negative Event**

*Function: To recall the negative event and ones reactions to it.*

*Time [60s]*

Now I want you to bring to mind a negative event or situation that has happened to you over the past week. Focus solely on that negative event. Picture yourself in that moment. Try to remember
where you were, who was with you if there were people around, and what was going on around you. Picture yourself in that setting as clearly as you can. Recall the thoughts and feelings that came with it. How were you feeling at that moment? What thoughts were running through your mind? How easy were those thoughts and feelings to manage? How much did they affect the rest of your day?

Part 5 - Observe As a Third Party

Function: To apply the perspective of a neutral observer to a memory.

Time [45s]

Now, as you recall the event, try to shift your perspective. Try to see it from the point of view of a non-involved observer, thinking about it in a neutral way. Notice it for what it is, a situation that happened, that is observable by people outside the situation. Does it feel different as you look at it through the eyes of an observer? Can you see anything different from this perspective? How does seeing it from this neutral perspective affect how you feel about it now?

Part 6 – Close

Function: To close out the exercise

Time [45s]

Now, notice this part of you that is able to notice your thoughts and feelings from the perspective of an objective, neutral observer. This part of you can also notice how you feel right now. Do your best to focus on this part of yourself. It has always been there, observing what you are experiencing, and is noticing how you are feeling right now. You can come back to this part of yourself at any time. Now, slowly bring your attention back to your body, and your breath. Take three more deep breaths, bringing yourself back to the present more and more each time you inhale and exhale.

END OF EXERCISE – Total Time Elapsed 315 seconds = 5 mins 15 seconds
Week 5 – Complex Exercises

Example Exercises: Actor on a Stage, Leaves on a Stream

Description: Complex exercises work using a variety of types of decentering, often framed in a more experiential way.

Example Exercise – Actor on a Stage

Part 1 – Grounding

Function: To bring the person into the present moment and focus their mind. Each exercise will start with this.

Time [90s]

If possible, find somewhere quiet and take a seat. Make yourself as comfortable as possible. Acknowledge what is going on in your mind and body at this moment. Not trying to change anything, but noticing what is there for you in this moment. Now, close your eyes and focus on your breath. Take a comfortable breath in and count how long it takes you to do so. Most people reach a count of 3, 4 or 5. Keep in mind that the number isn’t important, so long as it is comfortable for you. Whatever number you reached on your inhale, match that number on your exhale. Whilst you do this, your mind may wander, but each time it happens, acknowledge the thought or feeling you are having, and then re-focus on counting your breath.

Part 2 - Recall Negative Event

Function: To recall the negative event and ones reactions to it.

Time [60s]

Now I want you to bring to mind a negative event or situation that has happened to you over the past week. Focus solely on that negative event. Picture yourself in that moment. Try to remember where you were, who was with you if there were people around, and what was going on around you. Picture yourself in that setting as clearly as you can. Recall the thoughts and feelings that came with it. How were you feeling at that moment? What thoughts were running through your mind? How easy were those thoughts and feelings to manage? How much did they affect the rest of your day?

Part 3 – Observe the event as an actor on a stage

Function: To recall the event whilst applying complex distancing techniques

Time [120s]

Now, go back to the time and place of the experience you just recalled and see the scene in your mind’s eye. Imagine the scene is happening on a stage in a theatre. Now, step down off of the stage and watch the scene play out from the audience. Whilst you are in the audience watching the memory, I’d like you to try a number of strategies. Firstly, try to think about similar events you experienced in the past. How did they turn out? Was there anything you did differently? Now, try to consider how you will feel about this event in future, perhaps years from now. How do you think you will remember what happened? Now, I’d like you to think about some other positive areas in your life. Perhaps consider what good could come of this event, or how you might learn from it. Lastly, consider what you might say to someone else who experienced the same event. What would you advise them to do?
different perspectives, notice how it makes you feel. Do you feel differently now you have created space between yourself and the event? How does seeing it from other perspectives affect how you feel about it now?

Part 4 – Close

Function: To close out the exercise

Time [45s]

Now, notice this part of you that is able to notice your thoughts and feelings from the perspective of an objective, neutral observer. This part of you can also notice how you feel right now. Do your best to focus on this part of yourself. It has always been there, observing what you are experiencing, and is noticing how you are feeling right now. You can come back to this part of yourself at any time.

Now, slowly bring your attention back to your body, and your breath. Take three more deep breaths, bringing yourself back to the present more and more each time you inhale and exhale.

END OF EXERCISE – Total Time Elapsed 335s - 5 mins 15 seconds