

Psychological Decentering Training Programme

Version 1.1: 27th April, 2020

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List of Weekly Topics

Different ways of introducing psychological decentering in daily life will be explored across five weeks. These weeks generally follow the the Taxonomy of Distancing described by Powers and LaBar (2020). However, the exercises are adapted from a range of decentering-related practices (e.g. self-distancing, meta-awareness and cognitive defusion). A general overview of the weeks is described in Table 1.

Table 1: List of weekly topics

Week	Label	Description
1	Temporal Distancing	Distancing performed through thinking about the event from a different temporal position (e.g. thinking of the event as if you are looking back on it from the future)
2	Spatial Distancing	Distancing performed through viewing an event from a differing spatial position (e.g. from a spot on the wall, or from the point of view of an audience member looking at the event happening on a stage)
3	Hypothetical Distancing / Verbal Distancing	Distancing performed through manipulation of verbal descriptions or techniques (e.g. repeating a word until it loses its meaning, or talking about oneself in the third person)
4	Objective Distancing	Distancing performed through imagining observing from the viewpoint of another person with a different view (e.g. a scientist, or a neutral passer-by)
5	Review	Review exercises in which participants can use any of the techniques they have been taught

Overview of Intervention

Each weekday will involve either (1) mindfulness-based exercises, (2) psychological decentering exercises, (3) revision/practice sessions or (4) self-reported measurements on Qualtrics. A day-by-day outline of the five weeks is provided below (Tables 2- X).

Table 2: *Week 1 overview*

Day	Intervention	Control
Monday	Body Scan	TBC
Tuesday	Noticing Thoughts & Feelings	TBC
Wednesday	One Year From Now	TBC
Thursday	Imagine in 10 years	TBC
Friday	Thinking About the Future	TBC
Saturday	Practice an Exercise	Practice an Exercise
Sunday	Qualtrics Weekly	Qualtrics Weekly

Table 3: *Week 2 overview*

Day	Intervention	Control
Monday	Sitting Meditation	TBC
Tuesday	Passengers on a Bus	TBC
Wednesday	Fly On The Wall	TBC
Thursday	Detached Observer	TBC
Friday	Actor on a Stage (Short)	TBC
Saturday	Practice an Exercise	Practice an Exercise
Sunday	Qualtrics Weekly	Qualtrics Weekly

Table 4: *Week 3 overview*

Day	Intervention	Control
Monday	3 Minute Responsive	TBC
Tuesday	Thoughts on a Workbench	TBC
Wednesday	Repetition	TBC
Thursday	Pronouns	TBC
Friday	Noticing	TBC
Saturday	Practice an Exercise	Practice an Exercise
Sunday	Qualtrics FULL	Qualtrics FULL

Table 5: *Week 4 overview*

Day	Intervention	Control
Monday	Mindful Walking	TBC
Tuesday	Leaves on a Stream	TBC
Wednesday	Scientist ER Doctor	TBC
Thursday	Third Party Observer	TBC
Friday	Scientist/Anthropologist	TBC
Saturday	Practice an Exercise	Practice an Exercise
Sunday	Qualtrics Weekly	Qualtrics Weekly

Table 6: *Week 5 overview*

Day	Intervention	Control
Monday	Stretch & Breathe	TBC
Tuesday	The Chessboard	TBC
Wednesday	Review	TBC
Thursday	Review	TBC
Friday	Review	TBC
Saturday	Practice an Exercise	Practice an Exercise
Sunday	Qualtrics FULL	Qualtrics Full

Sample Mindfulness Exercise – Template

There are two types of mindfulness exercises. These are: (1) *grounding exercises* that practice sustaining attention on the present moment: and (2) *noticing exercises* that practice monitoring subjective experiences (like thoughts, feelings and memories) as they occur, moment-to-moment. The goal of these exercises is to improve fundamental capacity to ‘notice’ negative subjective experiences, which is a prerequisite to psychological decentering.

Each week begins with one grounding exercise (Mondays) and one noticing exercise (Tuesday). Each exercise will follow the same format. The general parts and functions of these exercises are described below:

Template format

Part 1 – Opening: We will begin by directing the participant to engage in the present moment by noticing their breathing. This part of the exercise prompts them to find somewhere quiet, slow down, and connect with where their mind and body is at. It includes a basic breathing exercise to centre and ground the participant. Function: This section serves to bring the participant into the present moment.

Part 2 – Mindfulness Content: We then direct the participant to focus their attention on (1) their body in the here-and-now (i.e. grounding exercises) or (2) what is happening in their mind? The former exercises generally involve the use of body scans. The latter exercises generally involve the use of mindful metaphors. Function (Grounding): To engage in grounding exercises involving breathing, stretching or movement. Function (Experiential): To suggest a wider metaphor for thoughts and feelings and their role in the participant’s life, to help them explore and experience their thoughts and feelings in a different way.

Part 3 – Close: We end the mindfulness exercise and provide any reminders/relevant information for the next sessions. Function: To close out the exercise so participants can continue with their day.

Sample Technique Exercise - Template

There are three technique exercises each week. These techniques draw on exercises from a variety of therapeutic schools, including *defusion* exercises taken from Acceptance & Commitment Therapy, and *perspective taking* exercises from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. The goal of these exercises is to take difficult mental events, including difficult thoughts, feelings, and memories, and create psychological distance between the individual and their mental event. Increased psychological distance has been associated with decreased emotional reactivity, decreased distress, and increased wellbeing.

The three exercises take place on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of each week. The general parts and functions of these exercises are described below:

Template Format

Part 1 – Grounding: We will begin by directing the participant to engage in the present moment by noticing their breathing. This part of the exercise prompts them to find somewhere quiet, slow down, and connect with where their mind and body is at. It includes a basic breathing exercise to centre and ground the participant. Function: This section serves to bring the participant into the present moment.

Part 2 – Recall: We then prompt the participant to recall the difficult mental event that they were prompted to select earlier in the week (see weekly introduction and midweek reminder for details). Function: This section aims to help the participant recall the target mental event, including prompts to help the participant immerse themselves fully in the target, with as much detail as possible.

Part 3 – Distance: We subsequently prompt the participant to create psychological distance between themselves and the mental event. This can be achieved in a number of ways, and techniques will differ each time. The techniques will follow a theme each week, for example in week 1, the techniques will be focused around creating temporal distance from the mental event. Function: This section aims to instruct the participant on how to use a technique to create psychological distance between themselves and the target. It contains a number of prompts, both endogenous, prompting the participant about how this distance may alter how they feel and think about the memory internally, and exogenous, prompting the participant to see if there is anything new they notice externally.

Part 4 – Close: We end the technique exercise with a brief grounding prompt, and provide any reminders/relevant information for the next sessions. Function: This section has three aims. Firstly, it aims to help the participant further meditate on the new things they may have noticed or felt about the target. Secondly, it aims to suggest an implementation plan for the technique, and prompt the participant to consider where they might use this technique in their lives. Thirdly, it aims to bring them back to their day through a mindfulness style finishing prompt.

Week 1: Temporal Distance

General introduction
Time: Weekend before Week 1- Day 1.

A general introduction will be recorded and sent to participants before the intervention begins. This will provide a general overview of what to expect in the days ahead. This information will also be recap information sheet provided to participants at in-take. The introduction script is as follows:

“Hello! Welcome to week 1.

Over the next weeks, we are going to post different exercise online. You’ll be able to access these using a link in the text message we’ll send you. These exercises will be about 10 to 15 minutes long and there will be a new one each evening (Monday to Friday).

By participating in this study, you’re making an important commitment to try and complete as many of these exercises as you can. Thanks so much for offering us your time and experience. We hope you will find the experience rewarding and useful.

These exercises explore different ways that we you take stock of the upsetting thoughts, feelings and memories that pop into our minds. There are two types of exercises. Some involve learning ways to pay attention to our mind, which we call *mindfulness* exercises. Others involve learning ways to manage any upsetting things that occur in our minds, which we will call *practical* exercises. Don’t worry if this isn’t too clear now. By the end of this week you should have a clearer idea of what’s going on.”

Week 1: Introduction to Week 1
Time: Week 1, Day 1 (Monday).

Each week will begin with an introductory audio clip. This will give participants (1) a basic overview of the week ahead, (2) describe the goals of this week's exercises and (3) highlight what they need to prepare or think about in the days ahead. The script for Week 1's introduction is as follows:

"Let's start talking about this week. Today and tomorrow, we will send you a mindfulness exercise to try out. Then, later in the week, we will ask you to do some more practical exercises.

These exercises will teach you some different techniques that might help to manage [specific worries or sources of stress that might occur in your day-to-day life. Specifically, these exercise will teach you to project your mind into the future in order to get a new look on the things that are bothering you now.

For these, you'll be asked to try think back and remember a specific memory, feeling or thought from your past that was upsetting. This week, we would like you to consider a current source of stress or conflict in your life, or even simply something you're worried about. Maybe this stress comes from your school or hobbies, or from your family or friends. It just has to be relevant to you, and to right now. So, over the next few days, have a think about some examples of current stress in your live. Try remember the specifics of these experiences (where were you? What made you start feeling worried or stressed? What did you feel and think about this worry?).

It might be a strange thing to try remember but don't feel too much pressure. You won't need any examples until Wednesday, so you have time to think about it and pick something out. You might be unsure what to pick, as its your first week doing it, but give it a go, and hopefully once you have done the first exercise on Wednesday, things will be clearer."

Task Script – Week 1, Grounding Exercise – Body Scan
Time: Week 1- Day 1 (Monday).

A link to a grounding exercise will be sent to participants. The grounding exercises serve to help participants notice their thoughts and feelings. The script for week 1's grounding exercise is as follows:

“Part 1 – Opening

One of the easiest ways to create focused awareness is to really notice on what is happening in your body. To do that, we can use something called a body scan. To begin this body scan practice, find a quiet space where you can sit or lie down. Settle yourself into a comfortable position with your arms by your sides. If it feels alright, allow your eyes to gently close. Take a few moments now to get in touch with the sensations in your body. Bring awareness to pressure or contact with your body, either from the chair beneath you, or perhaps from your clothes. Now, remind yourself of what we are trying to do here. We are trying to bring awareness to each part of the body. There is no need to try to feel any different, or to try to feel more relaxed or calm. The aim is only to notice what sensations there are in the body in each moment, whatever they are. We want to feel the sensations rather than think about them, and do this as kindly and gently as we can.

Part 2 - Content

First focus on the lower abdomen. The sense of inflation as the breath comes in, and deflation as the breath comes out. As best you can, feel the movement of the breath. As the breath leaves the body, allow yourself to sink a little further into the floor or chair. Now, get ready to move your attention as you would a spotlight on different parts of a stage. Move your attention down your legs and into your feet, and into your toes. Bring a gentle awareness to what you may be feeling in your toes. They may be tingling or throbbing, cool or warm, and there may be a sense of touch or contact from your socks or shoes. Or maybe you don't really notice anything; that's okay too. You can just bring your attention to the lack of any sensation. Whatever it is, get a sense of your experience here in this moment. Now, move the focus into the whole foot. What is happening for you there? Do they feel warm or cold? How much can you feel the floor beneath them?

Now, on an in-breath, imagine that the breath can carry on all the way down through the abdomen, and down your legs into your feet. As you breathe out, sense or imagine the air moving all the way back from the feet, into the legs, then abdomen, then chest. Take a moment to experiment with breathing all the way down into your toes on the in breath, and all the way back on the out breath. It might take a moment to get used to doing this, but do the best you can. See if you can experiment with it with a spirit of gentle playfulness. When you're ready, take a breath, and release this area from your awareness.

Move your awareness into your lower legs. Sensing the pattern of sensations against your clothes or against the air. Moving your attention to any tightness that might be there. Notice the calf muscle, and then move your attention round to your shins, getting

a sense of the shinbone. Now taking a deeper breath in, breathing down into the lower legs, and on the out breath, releasing this area from your awareness, and moving your attention into the knees. Perhaps sensing your kneecaps, the sides of the knees. Perhaps the back of the knees, or around the joints. What sensations do you pick up here? Perhaps there's a sense of warmth?

[PAUSE] At some points in this practice, you'll probably realize that your mind has wandered, that is perfectly okay. That's just what minds do. So as soon as you become aware that you aren't focused, just acknowledging where the mind has been, and then reconnect with wherever the instructions are right now.

Now, expanding the focus of attention from the knee to take in the whole of the upper legs. The whole expanse from the knees, right up to the hips. See if it is possible to take your attention fully into the thigh muscles. Perhaps getting a sense of the feel of these muscles. Exploring any sense of softness, tightness or tension within the muscle. If you become aware of any sense of tension or holding either here or anywhere else, seeing if it is possible to use the awareness to carry right into the tension, so with the in breath allowing a friendly interested awareness to enter and explore any tension. With the out breath, allow any tension to leave as it will. Not trying to make anything happen, but allowing whatever happens naturally to occur with the out breath. [pause] Explore that for a moment now.

When you are ready, intentionally take a deeper breath as if you were pushing air all the way down into the legs, then as you breathe out, bring your attention now on the pelvic region. The whole region that stretches from one hip to another. Reminding yourself at this point that you don't need to make anything happen. This practice isn't about changing anything, it's just tuning into your experience whatever it is in each moment. Focus in on the buttocks, and any sensation of weight or pressure that may be there as you sit or lay on the floor. Now for a breath or two breathing all the way down into the pelvic area, and then letting the breath come all the way back out. Letting this region go from your awareness.

Now, move your focus up into the lower back. Often, this area holds tension. On the in breath, allow your awareness to go right into the tension in these muscles. Let the breath penetrate and probe these areas of tension with a kindly, inquisitive awareness. On the out breath, allowing any tension to leave to the extent that it will. Now, extending the focus to the upper back. Becoming aware of the contact of the ribcage with the back of your chair. Noticing the subtle shifts of the ribcage as the breath goes in and out. Moving the focus of awareness now round to the front of the body, to the abdomen. Focusing as clearly as you can on the physical sensations here. The stretching sensations in the abdominal wall as the breath moves in, and the wall falling back in as the breath moves out.

Now, moving the attention up to the chest, as it rises and falls with the breath. Noticing any tightness here, and allowing it to leave as much as it can. If you wish, seeing if its possible to take your focus right into the chest, sensing the movement of the lungs, and the subtle pulsing of the heart as it beats. Breathing in, focusing on all of the torso, and then breathing out, letting it go from your awareness. Re-focusing your attention

to your hands. Noticing what you feel underneath them, noticing whether they feel warm or cold. Gently noticing whether you have sensation in your hands, or a lack of sensation.

When you are ready, taking a deep breath in, and then as you breathe out, allowing your attention to pass into your arms. Noticing each part, the lower arm, the elbow, and the upper arms. Getting a sense of how they fit together, noticing how they feel connected to each other. Now, moving your awareness up into the shoulders. Often, people hold tension in this area. Use your breath to slowly examine if you are holding tension, and if you are, using the breath as we have before to examine it, and then let any go that is able to go. How tight or soft do they feel at this moment? Then, take in a deep breath, and then breathe out, letting this part of your body go from your awareness.

Now, moving into the neck. Notice the sensations in the throat, being aware of the movement of air through the throat as you breathe in and out. On the next out breath, letting go of the neck. Now, noticing the head and face. Focus on each part, the jaw, then the mouth, then your nose, then your eyes. Moving your awareness round to your ears, and then to the top of the head. Noticing the way the air feels against different parts of your head and face. Noticing the pattern of sensations as the breath goes in and out. Now, bringing your awareness throughout the body, as you sense the way the body is as a whole. Beginning at the crown of the head, and letting your awareness sweep through each area right down to your toes.

Part 3

And now, simply sitting. Breathing with the sense of the body as a whole. Gently holding your experience in each moment. Noticing each sensation in the body together with the sense of the breath. Allow your body to sit, or lie as you are. Allow your body to be just as it is. Know that you can return to this moment whenever you would like to, resting in awareness and stillness. Moment by moment by moment.

END OF EXERCISE”

*Task Script – Week 1, Noticing Exercise – Noticing
Time: Week 1 - Day 2 (Tuesday).*

The participants will receive a link to a noticing exercise on the Tuesday of each week. The noticing exercises serve to help participants notice and experience their thoughts, sometimes with the assistance of a metaphor. The script for week 1's noticing exercise is as follows:

“Part 1

Take a moment now to get comfortable, either sitting or lying down. Try to find somewhere quiet away from other people. Get into a comfortable position, where you can fully relax. Keep your legs uncrossed, with your feet on the floor. If you feel comfortable, close your eyes, or simply lower your gaze. Take a moment to take some deep breaths, all the way down into your abdomen. Count how long you breathe in for, and then breathe out for the same number of seconds. Most people find they breathe in for around 3 to 6 seconds, but only do as long as is comfortable for you. Inhale. Exhale. Inhale. Exhale.

Part 2

Take a moment to think back over your day so far. Most likely you have experienced a myriad of thoughts and feelings. Thoughts about the past, the present, and the future. Thoughts and feelings about yourself, about the world around you, and about others. Think back over some of these thoughts and feelings you have had. [PAUSE]. Often, we find it difficult to remember exactly what the content of what we have been thinking and feeling. This is completely normal. We can get so wrapped up in what is happening around us, and all the demands placed on us by both ourselves, and others, that we forget to notice what our thoughts and feelings are doing. Also, sometimes we can be so wrapped up in our thoughts and feelings that we forget to notice them for what they are. But what are they? [PAUSE]. Our thoughts and feelings are transient mental states. They tend to come and go. You may have found that it is very difficult to change thoughts and feelings, and it is even more difficult to make them go away. In fact, sometimes it can be almost impossible. [PAUSE]. What you may be thinking now, is then, what do I do with my thoughts and feelings when they come? Especially the difficult ones, which I'd most like to get rid of?

What I'd like you to do is to sit and continue with your breathing in and out, counting your breath. Sooner or later, your mind will try to take you somewhere else. This is totally normal. The mind is almost like clouds coming and going, gently changing in form and shape. When your mind takes you somewhere else, with a thought, or a feeling, simply notice that you are having that thought, or feeling. Acknowledge the thought, perhaps by saying to yourself “I notice I'm having a thought about X or I'm having a feeling about Y.” For example, you might start to have a thought about what you will have for dinner tonight, or an errand you need to run today. Simply notice that you are having a thought about making dinner, or about errands you need to run, and then return to the breath. Do not try to make the thoughts change or go away. Simply acknowledge them for what they are, a thought or a feeling. Then, bring yourself back

to the breath. Let the thought or feeling stay if they want. But focus on the breath. I'm going to leave you to do this for a few minutes. Sometimes, you won't notice for a while that your mind has become hooked on a thought, this is totally normal. When you notice that you have become caught up in a thought, simply notice where your mind has been, then bring it back to the breath. Try this now. [2 minute pause].

Well done. What thoughts and feelings did you notice as you continued with the breathing exercise? Where did your mind take you? How was it, to simply try to notice these thoughts, without trying to make them change or go away?

Part 3

Now, return to the breath. Inhale. Exhale. Inhale. Exhale. As you breathe, take a moment to reflect on the exercise we did today. How was it to notice your thoughts and feelings this way? How would it be to try to do this when you notice yourself getting caught up in your thoughts and feelings in your everyday life? To not try to change or control your thoughts, but just acknowledge them for what they are. You can try this later today, tomorrow, or any time. Now, as you take three deep breaths, slowly bring yourself back to your surroundings, knowing that you can return to this place at any time during your day."

END OF EXERCISE

Week 1: Midweek Reminder
Time: Week 1 - Day 2 (Tuesday).

Each Tuesday, the participants receive a reminder after their noticing exercise. This reminds them to think about mental events to use for the technique exercises each week. The midweek reminder for week 1 is as follows:

“Hi there! We hope you’re enjoying week 1 so far. Later this week, we’ll explore ways to think about worries and stress that can occur day-to-day. So remember - try to think of an example of a current source of worry or stress. Try notice some details of this stressor (e.g. where did you experience it? Who was there? What did you feel?). You will need this example for later this week. We’ll send you a link to this closer to the time. Thanks!”

Task Script – Week 1, Technique 1 – A Year from Now
Time: Week 1- Day 3 (Wednesday).

The participants receive a link to their first technique exercise on the Wednesday of each week. The techniques follow a theme each week. The first technique exercise for week 1's script is as follows:

Part 1

"To begin, find a quiet place where you can sit. Settle yourself into a comfortable position. Take a few moments now to get in touch with the sensations in your body. *[PAUSE]* Let the sensations of pressure and touch become apparent to you in this moment. Perhaps you can feel your back against the back of a chair, or you can feel your feet placed against the floor. Notice your breath, and how it is beginning to slow and become deeper. *[PAUSE]* Notice how your stomach and chest expand as you inhale and exhale. Focus on the sensation of your breath coming in through your nose and mouth, and how it feels as you exhale. Try to count to three on your inhale, and three on your exhale. Inhale... 2... 3... Exhale... 2... 3... that's good. Continue to do this *[PAUSE]*. You may notice that as you do this, your mind tries to distract you with other thoughts, of things that happened earlier, or things you might do after this practice. If this happens, acknowledge your thought for what it is, simply a thought that is passing through your mind. Then, re-focus on your breathing.

Part 2

Over the past few days, we asked you to think about something in your life that might be stressful, or something that is currently worrying you. Perhaps you have a heavy workload at school? Perhaps you're worried about a relationship with a family member or friend? Perhaps you have something big coming up, like a performance, presentation or an exam? Try to pick out a specific worry or source of stress that has been bothering you recently. Think a bit more now about what that worry might be about. Does it relate to yourself, or others, or both? Is it about the past, or the future? Perhaps its about something happening right now? What sorts of thoughts and feelings come with the worry? Do you feel nervous, anxious or scared when you think of it? Do you have certain thoughts about how you might cope with it, or how you might respond to it? How immediate does the source of worry seem? Is it easy to get away from it? Is it something you feel you genuinely need to worry about? How much do you believe that it is something you need to be concerned about?

Part 3

Now, as you think about this concern or worry, we'd like you to try something. This is the first exercise we are trying together, so it might seem difficult at first. Just try to listen to the instructions and follow along. You can always rewind this tape and try again if you need to. If you don't understand or get it right straight away, try not to berate yourself. You are learning a new skill, it is natural to need time to practice this. Now, come back to the worry you have picked out. As you think about it, try to shift your perspective. Instead of being immersed within the worry, try to imagine yourself a year from now. Think of yourself, a year older, looking back on what you were worried

about. Describe it to yourself, as if you're telling a friend about it a year later. Try to imagine what you might think and feel about the worry then. Rather than living in the worry, 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 source of stress. Describe what you were worrying about for a moment, beginning with the phrase "a year ago". [PAUSE] Does the worry feel different as you imagine yourself looking back on it? Can you feel anything different? How does thinking about the worry as if you are looking back from the future affect how you feel about it now? Do you notice anything different about the worry as you look at it from this older, wiser perspective?

Part 4

Do you see how your perspective has changed as you consider this worry? See how you can notice the source of stress and your thoughts and feelings around it, but not necessarily feel so close to it. Try to focus in on the part of you that is able to see the worry you are having as if you are seeing it from the future. You can always return to this perspective, where you describe your worry to yourself as if you are looking back on it. This perspective is here for you whenever you need it. In fact, if you notice yourself worrying about things over the next few days, you could try this technique. Try describing the worry back to yourself as if you are describing something that happened a year ago, something that is behind you now, something that is in the past. You can now bring your attention back to your breath and the present moment. Notice the way your seat feels underneath you, and how your feet feel touching the floor. Notice your chest rising and falling with your breath. Take three deep breaths, slowly and carefully, bringing yourself back to your day as slowly as you need to.

END OF EXERCISE

*Task Script – Week 1, Technique 2 – 20 Years in Future
Time: Week 1- Day 4 (Thursday).*

The participants receive a link to their second technique exercise on the Thursday of each week. The second technique exercise for week 1's script is as follows:

Part 1

“For this exercise, you will need a pen and paper. Take yourself away from the noise and busyness of the day. Try and find a space away from interruptions, and take a seat. [PAUSE] Try to make yourself comfortable. Now, as you sit, try to look inwards on yourself and notice what is happening for you at the moment. Notice your body. How do you feel physically at the moment? Notice any tension or aches and pains, notice the parts of you that are relaxed. [PAUSE] Now, notice what is going on in your mind. How are your thoughts, are they moving slowly, or racing? What feelings are you having? Are they different from the feelings you had earlier in the day? Take this time to really bring yourself into the present moment. [PAUSE] Notice that as you sit, your breathing is starting to calm and slow. Notice the way your chest and tummy expand as you breathe, and notice how they collapse back inwards as you breathe in. [PAUSE] If your mind wanders whilst you are focusing on your breath, thank your thought or feeling for coming into your mind, and then return to counting your breath. Don't push the thought away or ignore it, but let it be there until it is ready to leave, as you continue to count your breaths.

Part 2

You have probably had a busy week, full of experience and a myriad of thoughts and feelings. But did you notice whether any thoughts or feelings were a source of stress or worry? Was there anything this week that you felt particularly uncomfortable about? Maybe it's some uncertainty about school or friends? Maybe you just have a lot on and you're feeling overwhelmed? It can be anything, either related to you or someone else, about the past, present, or future. Just try to identify something that has been a source of stress or worry. Find one that you can examine now, and note what it relates to. Can you put this worry into a sentence? What would it say? Maybe it would help to write it down? [pause]. As you think about this worry- ask yourself – is it fair? Is it something genuine that could happen (or not happen)? Do you truly believe that this is something you need to worry about and think about? How much time are you spending thinking over this worry? Hold it in your mind as we progress with the exercise.

Part 3

As you hold the worry in your mind, try to take a step back. Instead of seeing the worry as something that is happening right now, try to imagine what the worry will feel like twenty years from now. Imagine yourself, twenty years older, thinking back over this worry. Imagine yourself, so much older and wiser, looking back at this worry you're feeling in this moment now. Take a moment and imagine what an older you might say and feel about the worry, when they describe it. Rather than imagining yourself as you

are now, so close to the thought, think about what it might be like to look back on this worry.

Now, I'd like you to pick up your pen, and describe the source of worry as if you are twenty years older, and looking back. From this new point of view - do you think the worry is still as relevant? Do you think the worry is still as serious? Do you notice anything else when you look back at this event from the future? What would this insight be? What would it say? Try write it down [Pause] As you write, consider how the worry feels now, as you look back on it as something that happened in the past, rather than just now? [PAUSE] Does the worry feel different as you imagine yourself looking back on it from a wiser and more experienced perspective? Can you feel anything different? How does thinking about the worry as if you are looking back from the future affect how you feel about it now? Take a few moments to write about this, and consider how writing about this worry in the past makes you feel about it. Write down your reflections about this.

Part 4

As you write about this worry as if you are writing about something that happened twenty years ago, notice the part of you that is able to imagine this new, distant perspective. This part of you is able to look at your worries, and notice what you may think or feel about them later in your life. This part of you is always there, able to see what you worry about now as something that you will look back on and have thoughts and feelings about. You can always come back to this. If you are feeling worried or stressed about something in future, perhaps it may help to try to write it down as though it happened twenty years ago. Perhaps this will help you create distance between yourself and the worries, and let you see them from a new perspective. You can always write about your worries in this way. Why not give it a try the next time you feel worried or stressed about something? If you continue to feel worried about the subject you wrote about today, you could also come back and read what you have just written. This may help you gain a different, more distant perspective. As you read what you have written, you will be able to experience that same sense of distance as you did as you wrote it. We are now finishing the exercise. 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

Task Script – Week 1, Technique 3 – In the Future
Time: Week 1- Day 5 (Friday).

The participants receive a link to their third and final technique exercise on the Friday of each week. The third technique exercise for week 1's script is as follows:

Part 1

"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

Now, think about the past week. We've been asking you to consider the things that you currently feel worried about. Hopefully you have been able to identify some things you worry about or get stressed by. Whether that be school, relationships, your hobbies, or something else, pick out something that you've been thinking about, something that has been causing you concern. I'd like you to think about a worry or source of stress you've had that felt particularly negative or difficult. Focus in on that worry. What was it about? Was it about something that happened recently, or something that might happen in the future? Was it about you, or something else? Perhaps put the worry into a sentence, say to yourself "I'm worried about... (and then explain the worry)". What happens as you describe your worry to yourself? What other thoughts and feelings come with your original worry? How important does the worry feel? How real does the worry feel? How immediately concerned about this worry do you feel you need to be? Hold this thought in mind as we move forward.

Part 3

As you focus on this worry, try to take a step back. Instead of being wrapped up in the worry, right now in this moment in time, try to cast your mind into the future, maybe by a month. Imagine this future you is looking back at the worry you're having now. Is it different when you look back at this worry from the future? Try to put your mind even further in the future. Try to see yourself in one year's time looking back at this worry right now. Sometimes stepping back like this helps us to see things we wouldn't notice otherwise? Sometimes stepping back like this can change how we experience the worry. What's different for you? Does it feel the same in the future than it does now? [Pause] Try putting yourself even further. Two, three, maybe even five years. Imagine this future you looking back at the worry you are having right now. Do you notice a sense of distance from the worry? How much distance? Does it feel different as you imagine yourself looking back on it from a distance in time? Can you feel anything

different? How does thinking about the worry as if you are looking back from the future affect how you feel about it now?

Part 4

How does this source of stress feel as you look at it from a new perspective? Can you see how you can notice your worry and think about it, but consider it from another temporal place? In our lives, it is normal to have worries, and things that make us feel stressed. When you notice yourself having worries, about the past, present or future, about yourself or about someone else, you can always come back to what you have learned here. You can take that worry, and consider it from further in the future. You could write down what you think about the worry as you look back on it from your imagined future perspective, or you can simply imagine what an older and wiser version of yourself might think and feel about the worry. This future observer is always with you, and is a part of you. You can always come back to them, and see things from a new perspective. The exercise is nearly over. Now allow your awareness to come back to your body. Notice how each part feels, starting in your feet, up into your legs, to your hips, up into your torso and then your arms, and then your face. Notice your body as a whole, gently holding your experience in each moment. Notice the sensations that come to you as you come back in touch with your body. Now, open up your awareness to your surroundings. Allow yourself to step back into the world, and gently take three deep breaths, as you reconnect to the rest of your day.”

END OF EXERCISE

Week 1: Friday Reminder
Time: Week 1- Day 5 (Friday).

Each week, the participants receive the following reminder on Friday. This reminder serves to summarise what they have learned during the week, and remind them to continue to respond to experience sampling texts during the week. The script for the Friday reminder for week 1 is as follows:

“Hi again. We hope you found this week’s exercises useful. We explored different ways to think about any worries or stressors that you notice in your mind. For example, you can try take a step back and think about how you might view these issues in the future. Will things seems so bad then? Is there anything different you notice now when you project your mind into the future? Remember: if you notice any worries or stresses in your mind over the next few days - you could try this out. Take a quick moment to notice what’s going on in your mind and then look forward to the future to gain new insights in the present.

Next week we’ll give you some new exercises that explore a different technique. In the meantime, please do your best to respond to the texts that come to your phone. Also, please remember to try and fill in your questionnaire this weekend. We’ll email you a link.”

Week 2: Spatial Distance

Week 2: Introduction to Week 2
Time: Week 2 - Day 1 (Monday).

“Hello! Welcome to week 2. This week will be a lot like last week. We are going to try a couple of short mindfulness exercises today and tomorrow. By doing this, we’re continuing in learning how to notice the things that our minds are telling us. Later in the week, we will try some more practical ways to interact with the events happening in our minds, which we often call “mental events”.

This week, we will be learning some different ways of looking at difficult memories. These negative experiences can often be uncomfortable to remember, and we may often remember them involuntarily without prompting. However, there are some ways of seeing these memories from a different perspective, which we will tell you about later in the week.

This week, we would like you to think about a negative memory from your past that still bothers you today. Maybe it’s a memory from a time when you felt disappointed by something you or someone else did? Or maybe it’s a memory from a moment that didn’t quite go the way you wanted- and that you wish you could fix now? Spend a bit of time trying to pick a memory of a difficult situation, or something that you remember that still makes you feel uncomfortable or bad. What do you notice about this memory? Who was there? What were you thinking? How did you feel?

You have until Wednesday to consider what may be the best example to use. Hopefully last week gave you a bit of an idea of what to expect, and it’s easier to think of an example this week. Remember, you have until Wednesday to think of something if you can’t think of something right now.”

Task Script – Week 2, Grounding Exercise – Sitting Meditation
Time: Week 2 - Day 1 (Monday).

Part 1

“In this practice, we will be sitting for 10 minutes. Taking a moment now to get into a comfortable sitting position, either on a chair or cushion. If you are on a chair, perhaps put a cushion underneath you so your hips are raised slightly higher than your knees. Keep your legs uncrossed, with your feet on the floor. If possible, move your back away from the back of your chair so your spine can be self-supporting. Whatever you are sitting on, allow your back, neck and head to be in line in an erect posture but not stiff. Let your hands rest gently on your legs or in your lap. Your shoulders can be dropped and relaxed so that your posture embodies a sense of dignity, a sense of being awake, aware and in touch with this moment. Let your eyes close if that feels comfortable to you, or lower your gaze.

Part 2

Become aware of the sensations in the body as it sits here, the sensations of pressure or touch as your body makes contact with the floor and whatever you're sitting on. Maybe sensations in the feet or legs, and also perhaps in the hands. And now at a certain point, bringing your awareness to the breath. To the changing patterns of physical sensation in the lower abdomen as the air moves in and out of your body. If you like, placing your hand on the abdomen for a few breaths, becoming aware of the changing pattern of sensations where your hand makes contact with your abdomen. And then when you've taken your hand away, continuing to focus on the sensations in the abdominal wall. Noticing the slight stretching as the abdominal wall rises with each in breath, and then the deflation as it falls with each out breath. As best you can, following the changing physical sensations in the abdomen for the whole duration of each in breath and the whole duration of the out breath. Perhaps noticing the slight pauses between in breath and out breath, and the out breath and the following in breath. [PAUSE].

There's no need to try to control the breath in any way at all, simply allow the breath to come and go. Reminding yourself that you're not looking for anything to happen, there's no particular state to be achieved here. As best you can, simply allowing the experience to be your experience just as it is. Just this breath going in, just this breath going out. [PAUSE]. Sooner or later your mind may wander away from the focus of the breath, carried away by thinking, planning, daydreaming. It is perfectly okay, this is not a mistake or a failure. When you notice that your attention is no longer on the breath, use this opportunity to acknowledge where the mind has been. Then gently escorting the attention back to the changing patterns of physical sensation in the abdomen. [PAUSE]. Each breath unique. Each bringing different sensations. Simply tuning into each breath in its own time, giving it its own attention, allowing each breath to anchor you in the present moment. [PAUSE].

Sometimes the mind wanders for a few moments, sometimes it wanders for a long time. It's easy to find yourself judging yourself and criticising yourself for the wandering

mind. But that's what minds do. Meditation is not about trying to clear the mind, or get rid of thoughts or feelings. But simply to become aware of patterns of the mind, to notice what it's doing. And then, as soon as you notice it has wandered, taking a moment to acknowledge where it went, then gently and firmly bringing it back to the sensation of the breathing. Bringing the attention back to the breath as many times as it wanders, beginning over and over again with the next in breath or the next out breath. Using the stretch of silence now to carry on this practice by yourself. [LONG PAUSE – minute or two].

Part 3

And in the last few moments of this practice, as you sit here breathing. Reminding yourself that you can use the breath at any time to ground yourself during the day. To bring a kindly awareness to your experience as it unfolds moment by moment and breath by breath.”

END OF EXERCISE

Task Script – Week 2, Noticing Exercise – Passengers on a Bus
Time: Week 2 - Day 2 (Tuesday).

Part 1

“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

You might notice as you continue to breathe, your thoughts try to hook you again. Our thoughts often do this, both when we try these exercises, and whilst we are out and about trying to go about our days. Sometimes, we even find that our thoughts and feelings push us towards doing things that aren’t ultimately helpful, or things that aren’t in line with our values or what we’re hoping to achieve. We all do this, especially when our thoughts and feelings are especially loud.

One way to think about this, is to imagine that your life is like a bus. You are the driver of this bus. From the moment that you join the road that is life, you begin to pick up passengers. This might sound strange, but don’t worry, hopefully this will make sense in a moment. Passengers come from all of our unique life experiences, and are made up of feelings, beliefs, bodily sensations, impulses, and everything else. In other words, we can think of passengers as everything that goes on inside us. The road, on the other hand, represents the situations and people we encounter. These things are on the outside. An example of this would be that an ex-friend or a bully cannot get on the bus, but the thoughts and feelings associated with that relationship or situation can... If that makes sense?

Anyway, some passengers are calm, and ineffectual, so don’t affect us very much. But some experiences and people on the road leave marks on us. They form our ideas about what we can expect from the world. Ideas about whether or not others treat us well. Ideas about what we can or should expect from other people, and the world. So, while some passengers sit quietly, others can be like scary thugs that influence the way we drive the bus. We tend to notice our passengers most whenever we need to move in the direction of something important, a new hobby, a new relationship, an important event, or a change of some kind. As the driver, we need to make important decisions about where the bus goes. We generally have a sense of where we need to go. When we want to go in these important directions, the passengers might start to shout at us or run to the front of the bus. Impatience might insist that you “hurry up”, fear may scream “we need to go another way, this way is too scary”, self-doubt might

shout “turn around! This bus will fail to get over those bumpy roads”. Over time, you might start doing what the passengers say. This can be because its easier, or because the thing that is important for us to do is scary, or involves us having to step out of our comfort zone. At different times in our lives, these passengers may be more forceful, persuasive or imposing than others.

You’re probably wondering where we’re going with this. Well, let me tell you. The thing about these passengers on your bus, is that they can shout at you all they like, but they cannot actually get into the booth where you drive from. They can’t force you to go in a direction you don’t want to. They cannot physically harm you. You cannot make them get off the bus, and you cannot make them be quiet, they will get on and off when they are ready, and you will always be able to hear them. But you do not have to let what they say influence where you would like to go. You can drive in the direction that is important to you, towards the things that you value, and they cannot stop you from doing that. They may shout very loud sometimes, and it may feel easier to do as they say, but only you know where you need to go.

Part 3

Now, return to the breath. Count to whatever number you counted to at the beginning of the exercise on your inhale, and then again on your exhale. As you breathe, take a moment to reflect on what we thought about today. How was it to think about your thoughts and feelings as passengers on your bus? How would it be to imagine this when you notice yourself getting caught up in your thoughts and feelings in your everyday life? To acknowledge that sometimes your thoughts and feelings can be loud, and they can want you to act in a certain way, but know that it is you who is driving your own bus. It is you who can choose whether to listen to the passengers and where they want to go, and it is you who dictates the route of your journey. What would it be like to think of this when you feel pushed around or controlled by your thoughts and feelings? You can try this later today, tomorrow, or any time, any time when your thoughts and feelings are loud, or pushing you to go a certain way. Now, as you take three deep breaths, slowly bring yourself back to your surroundings, knowing that you can return to this place at any time during your day.”

END OF EXERCISE

Week 2: Midweek Reminder
Time: Week 2 - Day 2 (Tuesday).

“Hi there! We hope you’re enjoying week 2 so far. Later this week, we’ll explore ways to think about bad memories from our past. So we want you to try pick a memory of a difficult situation, or something that you remember that still makes you feel uncomfortable or bad. What do you notice about this memory? Who was there? What were you thinking? How did you feel? Try notice some details of this stressor (e.g. where did you experience it? Who was there? What did you feel?). You will need an example for later this week. We’ll send you a link to what we’ll be doing with this memory closer to the time. Thanks!”

Task Script – Week 2, Technique 1 – Fly on the Wall
Time: Week 2 - Day 3 (Wednesday).

Part 1

“Try to take yourself away from the noise and activity of the day. Try and find a space away from interruptions, and take a seat. [PAUSE] Try to make yourself comfortable. Now, as you sit, try to look in on yourself and notice what is happening for you at the moment. Notice your body. How do you feel physically? Notice any tension or aches and pains, notice the parts of you that are relaxed. [PAUSE] Now, notice what is going on in your mind. How are your thoughts, are they moving slowly, or rushing between different things? What feelings are you having? Take this time to really bring yourself into the present moment. [PAUSE] Notice that as you sit, your breathing is starting to calm and slow. Notice the way your chest and tummy expand as you breathe, and notice how they collapse back inwards as you breathe in. [PAUSE] It’s okay if your mind wanders while you are focusing on your breath: that’s what they do. Just have to notice the thought or feeling coming into your mind, and then return to focus your breath. There’s no need to try push the thought away or ignore it: just let it be there until it is ready to leave, as you continue to count your breaths.

Part 2

Let’s move on. It is only natural that as we progress through our week we have moments where we feel happy and at ease, and moments that make us feel upset and uncomfortable. Often, it can be the difficult memories of things that have happened that stay with us, and sometimes pop up when we don’t expect them. I’d like you to look back over your week and select a moment that felt tough to deal with. Maybe you had a disagreement with a friend, or family member? Or maybe something happened at school with a grade or a test that was difficult to manage? Perhaps something happened that you weren’t expecting, and it was disappointing or painful. I’d like you to remember this difficult situation with a lot of detail, see if you can close your eyes and recreate the scene. Imagine where you were. Who was there with you? What time of day was it? Were you at home, at work, or somewhere else? As you remember this scene, you might find some of your feelings from the situation coming back to you. Notice each of these as they come. Immerse yourself fully in the situation, we will refer to it as the next exercise progresses.

Part 3

Keep this situation clear and vivid in your mind. See the scene in your mind's eye. Now, in your mind, 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 another, separate, you all over again while this second you watches from a distance. Replay the event as it unfolds in your imagination as you observe from your place on the wall [BREAK].

What can you notice when you take this step back? Are there new things you can see now that you're no longer living the situation from your own point of view? Was anything else happening that you didn't notice? [pause] As you look down from the wall, can you notice anything about how you acted or how you could have been perceived from the outside? How about other people in the situation? Is there anything you notice about them and their behaviour as you look at the situation from the outside? 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 4

Did you notice that you were able to experience your thoughts and feelings from this distant perspective? How far away from them did you feel when you were a fly on the wall- looking down on the events play out? Do your best to focus on this part of yourself, this ability you have to take a step back and see things from a distance? This part of you has always been there,; we just tend to not use it as much as we could. You can come back to this part of yourself at any time. Maybe in the next day or so when you experience a difficult memory or situation - you can take a moment and try take a step back. And imagine you were seeing it from this new perspective – like a fly on the wall. You can use this perspective at any time, and see yourself and a situation from the outside. Why not try this? We are nearing the end of the exercise now, so please, 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

Task Script – Week 2, Technique 2 – Detached Observer
Time: Week 2 - Day 4 (Thursday).

Part 1

“To begin, find a quiet place where you can sit. Settle yourself into a comfortable position. Take a few moments now to get in touch with the sensations in your body. [PAUSE] Let the sensations of pressure and touch become apparent to you in this moment. Perhaps you can feel your back against the back of a chair, or you can feel your feet placed against the floor. Notice your breath, and how it is beginning to slow and become deeper. [PAUSE] Notice how your stomach and chest expand as you inhale and exhale. Focus on the sensation of your breath coming in through your nose and mouth, and how it feels as you exhale. Try to count to three on your inhale, and three on your exhale. Inhale... 2... 3... Exhale... 2... 3... that’s good. Continue to do this [PAUSE] You may notice that as you do this, your mind tries to distract you with other thoughts, of things that happened earlier, or things you might do after this practice. If this happens, acknowledge your thought for what it is, simply a XX that is passing through your mind. Then, re-focus on your breathing.

Part 2

This week, we’ve been encouraging you to think about difficult memories you have of uncomfortable situations. These memories often come back to us, sometimes without us even meaning to think of them. I’d like you to select a memory now. Perhaps it’s a memory of something inconvenient, that felt like a big deal at the time, like missing a bus or having plans cancelled? Perhaps it’s a memory of a disagreement with a family member or friend? Maybe a situation where someone did something that hurt your feelings, or something you felt was very unfair? Bring to mind that memory Picture yourself in that moment. Try to remember where you were. Who was with you, if there were people around? What was going on around you? Picture yourself in that memory as clearly as you can. Recall the thoughts and feelings that came with the memory. 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? Keep all of this in mind as we move to the next part of the exercise.

Part 3

Go back to the time and place of the memory 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 standing in the room watching it happen. 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 [BREAK] As you continue to watch the memory unfold, notice what is happening around you. Do you notice anything new about what was happening as you look around the room where it happened? What do you notice about the way that you acted in that memory? Do you notice anything about

the way the people around you acted? What new information can you get as you look at the event from across the room? 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? 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 4

Do you see how your perspective has changed as you consider this difficult memory? See how you can notice what was happening for you in that moment, but not necessarily feel so close to it. You can watch it unfold from across the room, and look at yourself experiencing the moment as you remember what it was like. Try to focus in on the part of you that is able to see and feel difficult things happening, and not be overwhelmed. You can always return to this perspective, where you see your thoughts and feelings as transient and subjective, rather than totally immediate. This perspective is here for you whenever you need it. The next time something difficult happens, you could maybe try to see it from this perspective, as if you are watching yourself from across the room? Or, the next time a difficult memory pops up in your mind, as they often do, you could try to notice it, and think about what it would look like if you were watching it from across the room. Give it a try next time! You can now bring your attention back to your breath and the present moment. Notice the way your seat feels underneath you, and how your feet feel touching the floor. Notice your chest rising and falling with your breath. Take three deep breaths, slowly and carefully, bringing yourself back to your day as slowly as you need to."

END OF EXERCISE

Task Script – Week 2, Technique 3– Actor on a Stage
Time: Week 2 - Day 5 (Friday).

Part 1

“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

This week, we have considered our difficult memories, and how to look at them from a different perspective. Think back, and see if you can identify a last difficult memory for this week. Was there a moment in your week that was particularly difficult or negative? Or perhaps you can think further back? Maybe something unexpected happened that was unfair or uncomfortable? Maybe something disappointing happened, either involving someone else, or perhaps it was something that made you feel disappointed in yourself? Take a moment to talk through that situation to yourself. Try to create as much detail as possible, and picture yourself there again. Who was there with you? Where were you? Indoors? Outdoors? Surrounded by people or by yourself? What was the thing that was difficult for you? What was most difficult about it? You may notice thoughts and feelings from the time coming back to you as you do this. That’s okay: notice these experiences. How did you feel at that moment? How uncomfortable was it? What thoughts came with the situation? Were you able to manage your thoughts and feelings in that difficult situation? Did the situation stay with you for the rest of your day? Focus in on the situation, with yourself at the centre. Picture yourself there, in that memory.

Part 3

Now, I’d like you to try something different. In your life, perhaps you have been to a play, a concert, or a musical. If not, imagine what the inside of a theatre, perhaps you’ve seen one in a film or a TV series. In a theatre, we watch situations play out on a stage, and we watch the actors portray a range of characters and their emotions. Now, I’d like you to bring the memory you’ve been thinking about back into your mind. If you can, I’d like you to imagine a theatre, and imagine your memory playing out like a scene in a play. Imagine the stage, and how the scenery on the stage might look. Imagine the actors in the scene, how they are dressed, and how many of them there are. Notice yourself there, played by an actor. Watch as the actors start to act out the scene. Now, take a step back. In fact, try to imagine yourself stepping down off of the stage and walking toward the audience. Imagine yourself taking a seat in the front

row, and watching the scene play out on stage. Focus on the actor playing you in the scene. Watch the experience unfold as if it were happening to the acting you all over again. Replay the event as it unfolds in your imagination as you observe from your seat. [BREAK] As you continue to watch the situation unfold around the you who is acting, see what you can notice about the memory. Do you notice anything new about your actions in that memory? Or perhaps about the way someone else acted? Maybe you can suddenly think of reasons why you or someone else acted the way you did? Do you notice anything that could have been done differently? Maybe something you would have changed as the director of this play? [PAUSE]. Now, try to understand the feelings of the actor playing you. Does it feel different as you watch this event from your place? Do you have any thoughts and feelings watching this memory that are different from those you had at the time? Do the feelings you had at the time feel different as you imagine watching them play out?

Part 4

How does this difficult moment feel as you look at it from your seat in the audience? Can you see how you can notice what happened and think about it, but see it from a distance as if it is being acted out before your very eyes? How distant from the situation did you feel when you tried to take a step of that stage and watch the scene play out from the audience? These difficult memories and experiences are a part of being human, and may happen at some point in the next week, month, or year. Remembering difficult experiences of the past is also part of being human, and that may happen to you sometimes, even when you don't want it to. However, when it does, you can always imagine it as we have today, as if you are watching a group of actors play out your memory on a stage. Think for a moment about what sorts of memories often come back to you. Are there any that you have been trying to forget that keep popping into your mind? What if next time this happens, you see them as if you are watching them from the audience? The exercise is now coming to an end. Please bring your attention back to your body. Notice how each part feels, starting in your feet, up into your legs, to your hips, up into your torso and then your arms, and then your face. Notice your body as a whole, gently holding your experience in each moment. Notice the sensations that come to you as you come back in touch with your body. Now, open up your awareness to your surroundings. Allow yourself to step back into the world, and gently take three deep breaths, as you reconnect to the rest of your day."

END OF EXERCISE

Week 2: Friday Reminder
Time: Week 2 - Day 5 (Friday).

“Hi again. We hope you found this week’s exercises useful. We explored different ways to think about any bad memories from the past that pop into your mind. We hope that the ways we talked about can help you see your memories from a different, more neutral perspective. Can you notice anything different about these memories when you try this? Are the memories as impactful as they were before?”

Remember: if you notice any bad memories that pop into your mind you could try this out. Take a quick moment to notice what’s going on in your mind and then imagine watching this memory from further away to gain a new perspective on it.

Next week we’ll give you some new exercises that explore a different technique. In the meantime - please try to continue answering the texts that come to your phone. Also, please remember to try and fill in your questionnaire this weekend. We’ll email you a link.”

Week 3: Hypothetical distance (verbal exercises)

Week 3: Introduction to Week 3
Time: Week 3 - Day 1 (Monday).

“Hello! This is the introduction to week 3. Thanks so much for staying involved and trying your best to do try the exercises and keep up the surveys.

Like the last weeks, we will share two new mindfulness exercises with you. These help us to notice what it is our mind is doing, moment-to-moment. We’ll also try out some new practical exercises that explore different ways we can actively engage with the things we notice in our minds, like thoughts, feelings or memories.

This week we’ll explore the different things that our mind can tell us about ourselves. What is it that you think about who you are as an individual? What do you tell yourself, about yourself? Do you tend to reflect positively on your strengths, or do you tend to beat yourself up over things you wish you did differently? In the exercises we’ll do this week, we will try to see if there’s a different way of noticing these thoughts that we have about ourselves, and how different ways of describing these thoughts can change how we experience them. This might sound a little confusing at first, but hopefully it will make sense once you have practiced a couple of the exercises.

Like the last weeks, we want you to come up with a specific experience that is relevant to you. We would like you to try and identify a negative thought that you tend to have about yourself. From time to time, we all notice that our minds are saying bad things about us? Maybe you tell yourself you’re not very good at something in comparison to the others in your life? Maybe you think that you have poor qualities that you or others don’t necessarily like? We can call these a negative self-judgements: like when someone forms a bad opinion of who you are - only that someone is you. How does it make you feel when you notice yourself having this negative judgement, from time to time? What kind of situations do you notice yourself making these judgements in?

Try and choose something that is a common judgement for you to make of yourself and that can make you feel bad. Then later we’ll explore ways to distance ourselves from these thoughts and the negativity that they can bring.

As always, you have until Wednesday to pick something out, so don’t worry if nothing springs to mind right now.”

*Task Script – Week 3, Grounding Exercise – 3 Minute Responsive
Time: Week 3 - Day 1 (Monday).*

Part 1 – Opening

“To begin our exercise, please find somewhere quiet where you can take a seat. Take a seat, and allow yourself to relax. Take some deep breaths, becoming aware of the sensations of breathing, of the in breath, and the out breath. Up until this point, you have been taking a breathing space when instructed to do so during these meditations. Now, we’d like to think about these breathing spaces in a more responsive way.

Part 2 - Content

The responsive breathing space, is designed for when you feel troubled in body or mind, as a first step in noticing what’s really going on. To prepare, deliberately adopt an erect and dignified posture. Allow this change to signify moving out of automatic pilot. Allow your eyes to close, or simply lower your gaze if you prefer. When you are ready, notice what is going on for you right now, in thoughts, feelings and body sensations. You may find it helpful to describe and identify what is arising for you, putting your experiences into words. For example, a feeling of sadness is arising, or, self-critical thoughts are here, or, a feeling of anger is present, or, there is tightness in my neck. [PAUSE]. Our thoughts often try to hook us and take us somewhere else during these exercises, but also more generally when we go about our day. This is something everyone struggled with, as sometimes our thoughts can make it harder to go about our day or act in a way that is in line with our values and what we want to achieve. Right now, as you breathe, I’d like to draw your attention to your thoughts. Where are they right now? Where are they located, above you, behind you, in front of you, or to one side? Are they pictures? Words? Or sounds? [PAUSE] And notice, are they moving or still? If they are moving, what speed, and what direction? [PAUSE]. Notice there are two separate processes going on here: the process of thinking, and the process of noticing... There is a part of you noticing all these thoughts. So there go your thoughts, and there is a part of you able to notice them coming and going. Your thoughts keep changing. But the you that notices them does not change. You are able to simply notice them for what they are, thoughts that come and go, and then return to whichever activity or part of day you are in. Let’s try this now as we continue the exercise.

Now, gently directing your attention to the physical sensations of the breath in your abdomen. As best you can, following the breath all the way in and all the way out. Using the breathing itself to anchor you in the present moment. If the mind is very busy, bring it gently back to the breath. Perhaps counting each breath if you choose, to help focus the attention. In-breath 1, out-breath 1, in-breath 2, and so on up to 5, then starting over again. [PAUSE]. Now, moving to step three, expanding the field of awareness around your breathing, so that in addition to the sensations of the breath, it includes a sense of the body as a whole. Your posture, your facial expression, just as they are right now. If you become aware of any lingering thoughts that are troubling, becoming aware of any sensations of tension, bracing or contraction that they bring with them. Breathing into the sensations on the in breath, and breathing out from them

on the out breath. Perhaps softening and releasing them a little on the out breath. Perhaps saying to yourself “its already here, whatever it is, its already here, let me feel it.” If it stops pulling for your attention, return to the sense of just sitting here, just as you are, your whole body, just breathing. If you notice any thoughts or feelings coming up, acknowledge them for what they are, and then return to the sensation of the breath. See how you can notice your thoughts happening, but continue with the activity you are currently doing. These thoughts may linger, but you can continue to focus on the breath. Simply acknowledge your thought for what it is, and then move your focus back to that initial feeling of breath, the counting, the sensation in your abdomen and your chest, and the feeling of breath rushing in, then out.

Part 3

Now, as best you can, bringing this expanded more spacious awareness to the next moments of your day. Allow yourself to come back to your surroundings, but know that you can come back to this expanded awareness at any time in your day.”

END OF EXERCISE

Task Script – Week 3, Noticing Exercise – Thoughts on a Workbench
Time: Week 3 - Day 2 (Tuesday).

Part 1

“Welcome to the exercise. Please take a moment now to get comfortable, either sitting or lying down. Try to find somewhere quiet away from other people. Get into a position where you can fully relax. Keep your legs uncrossed, with your feet on the floor. If you feel comfortable, close your eyes, or just lower your gaze. As you feel still, start to take some deep breaths, all the way down into your belly. Count how long you breathe in for, and then breathe out for the same number of seconds. Most people find they breathe in for around 3 to 6 seconds, but only do as long as is comfortable for you. Inhale. Exhale. Inhale. Exhale. [PAUSE 30 seconds] You might notice over time that your mind starts to wander, but that’s alright, simply notice where your mind has been, and then come back to your breath.

Part 2

You might notice that over time, your mind hooks you into thinking about different things. Each time this has happened, in many of these mindfulness exercises, we’ve simply acknowledged these distracting thoughts, and then returned our attention to focusing on the breath. This time, try notice where your mind has gone to. Instead of bringing attention back from a thought or feeling, now see if it is possible to allow the thought or feeling to remain on the workbench of the mind. Then, shifting the attention to the body, seeing if you can become aware of any physical sensations that come along with the thought or emotion. Perhaps, if the thought or feeling is unpleasant, noticing where in the body there may be tensing, or bracing, or contraction. When you’ve identified such sensations, deliberately moving the focus of attention to this part of the body. So if now you find distracting thoughts and feelings coming up, feeling free to explore this new way of responding to them. Allowing them to remain, then deliberately moving your attention to where in the body these sensations are strongest. Perhaps imagining you can breathe into this region on the in breath, and out of this region on the out breath, just like we practiced in the body scan. Not to change the sensations, but to explore them, to sense them clearly, opening to whatever is here. Perhaps even saying to yourself “it’s okay, let me feel it whatever it is, let me be open to it.” Breathing into it on the in breath, and breathing out of it on the out breath. Then, if it stops pulling for your attention, simply coming back to the sensations of sitting or breathing. [PAUSE]. And if no particular difficulty or concern arises for you, you may wish to experiment with this new way of responding, by deliberately bringing to mind some concern or difficulty that is happening in your life at the moment. It doesn’t have to be particularly big but any situation or person or difficulty that you feel able to bring to mind for these moments. If nothing comes to mind, why not pick something from the past, recent or distant, that once caused some unpleasantness. And so now, if you choose to do this, bringing such a difficulty to mind now, letting it be here. [PAUSE]. When it’s come to mind, allowing it to remain on the workbench of the mind. Then deliberately moving your attention into the body, and noticing any physical sensations that the difficulty brings with it. Deliberately bringing

your attention to the place where the sensations are strongest, allowing them to be centre stage in your awareness. As best you can, moving up close to this region of the body, investigating what precise sensations are here, becoming mindful of these physical sensations just as they are in each moment. Breathing into them on the in breath, and breathing out of them on the out breath. Opening to them, perhaps even saying to yourself, “whatever it is, let me be open to it”. Then seeing if it is possible to stay with the awareness, exploring these bodily sensations and your reactions to them, breathing with them, accepting them. Letting them be. [PAUSE]. Allowing them to be just as they are best you can. And as you breathe out, deepening the attitude of acceptance and openness. Perhaps even saying the words silently to yourself, opening, softening on each out breath. Not to try to change the sensations themselves, but to explore them deeply, with friendly curiosity and compassion. [PAUSE]. And if you have no sensations, when you have a difficulty in mind, simply practicing breathing into any sensations in the body, whether you feel they have something to do with this difficulty or not. [PAUSE]. Reminding yourself from time to time, that you do not have to like these feelings. It is natural to not want to have them around. Maybe even saying to yourself “its okay not to want these feelings, they are already here, let me be open to them, let me explore them as they are.” [PAUSE]. And when you notice that the body sensations are no longer pulling your attention to the same degree, either deciding simply to return 100% to focus on sitting, on the breath moving in and out of the body from moment to moment. Or, if you want to do the experiment again, bringing to mind another difficulty and exploring it through the body. [PAUSE].

Part 3 - Close

And in the last few moments of this sitting, bringing your attention back to the breath. Focusing your attention on the in breath and the out breath, the sensations, wherever you feel the breath moving most distinctly right now. Allowing your attention to reside in this place moment by moment, breath by breath. Using the breath to ground yourself in this moment, a source of strength, of presence, of peace.”

END OF EXERCISE

Week 3: Midweek Reminder
Time: Week 3 - Day 2 (Tuesday).

“Hi there! We hope you’re enjoying the third week of this programme. From Wednesday, we’ll be thinking about the ways we can manage the negative things we tell ourselves. So, we’d like you to try to pick out a negative thought that you tend to have about yourself. Perhaps it’s to do with how well you do things, or ways you would like to be different or better than you are. Take some time to consider how it makes you feel when you notice that you are judging yourself negatively in this way. We’ll send you a link to what we’ll be doing with this memory closer to the time. Thanks!”

Task Script – Week 3, Technique 1 – Lemons Lemons Lemons
Time: Week 3 - Day 3 (Wednesday).

Part 1

“To begin, find a quiet place where you can sit. Settle yourself into a comfortable position. Take a few moments now to get in touch with the sensations in your body. [PAUSE] Let the sensations of pressure and touch become apparent to you in this moment. Perhaps you can feel your back against the back of a chair, or you can feel your feet placed against the floor. Notice your breath, and how it is beginning to slow and become deeper. [PAUSE] Notice how your stomach and chest expand as you inhale and exhale. Focus on the sensation of your breath coming in through your nose and mouth, and how it feels as you exhale. Try to count to three on your inhale, and three on your exhale. Inhale... 2... 3... Exhale... 2... 3... that’s good. Continue to do this [PAUSE] You may notice that as you do this, your mind tries to distract you with other thoughts, of things that happened earlier, or things you might do after this practice. If this happens, acknowledge your thought for what it is, simply a XX that is passing through your mind. Then, re-focus on your breathing.

Part 2

In the last couple of days, we asked you to think about thoughts that you have about yourself. We all have things about ourselves that we like, and things that we don’t. Sometimes, we can be very harsh with ourselves about the things that we don’t like. Perhaps, even harsher than we would be with someone else about the very same thing. We asked you to consider what things you are most harsh with yourself about. What sorts of things did you think about? Maybe it was something about your appearance, your abilities, or about how you are with other people? Hopefully you were able to think of something. Now, I’d like you to see if there is a key word in this thought. For example, if it is to do with your talent or ability, the thought may be something like “I never get good enough grades, I’m a failure.” The key word in this thought would be “failure.” Try to pick out a word or perhaps 2-3 word phrase if one word won’t do. Think for a moment about this word. How does it make you feel when you think about it? What thoughts come with it? Do examples or memories of things that, in your mind, confirm this word, come with it too? How much do you believe that the word you’re using to judge yourself is true and applicable to you?

Part 3

We can easily buy into the words that pop into our minds. These words can bring with them very intense and negative feelings. So it could help to try take a step back and notice these words for what they are: simply sounds in our minds. You might have noticed in the past that when you repeat a word again and again, it begins to lose its meaning. Try this now using a neutral word, for example, lemons. Say the word lemons once, notice all the features it brings - maybe you see a lemon? Maybe if you were hungry you might notice the flavour of a lemon. It could be that you can even smell the fresh scent of lemon as you say the word lemon. Perhaps features of it come into your mind, such as “yellow, smooth, sour”. Now try this: instead of saying lemon once, say

the word lemon to yourself for 20 seconds, and see how it becomes only a collection of sounds rather than something with meaning. Are you ready to try this: just keep repeating the word lemon to yourself until we stop you: Start now. [Pause 20s]. Good. Now, think back to the word you picked out, that you use to judge yourself or be harsh with yourself. Say this word to yourself once. In the same way you did with the lemons, see what pops into your head as you say it. Perhaps you hear it being said by someone else? Perhaps you see something you did in your mind's eye that confirms this judgement? Perhaps an array of words come into your mind as you say it, words that are related in some way to that first word. Now, we'd like you to do the same thing you did with the word lemon. Repeat the word or short phrase back to yourself again and again for 30 seconds. [PAUSE 30s]. Well done. What do you notice when you took a step back and repeated this word over and over again? Did the word have the same impact? How real does it feel now, as you repeat the word until it loses its meaning? Were you so quick to buy into the word after repeating it again and again? Did it mean the same thing after 30 seconds as it did the first time you saw it? Did doing this change your relationship with the word? [PAUSE 30S] Do you have a different perspective on the word now that you see it for what it is, simply a collection of sounds? How does seeing it from this perspective, where the thought is only a collection of sounds, affect how you feel about it now? Is it still as painful and immediate? Or does it feel further away, and less hurtful?

Part 4

Do you see how your perspective has changed as you repeat the word back to yourself over and over? Do you see how you can still experience this word, but not necessarily feel so close to it? As time passes, you will notice that sometimes you use certain words to judge yourself, or to speak to yourself unkindly. When you notice the words you are using to speak to yourself, perhaps try to think back to this exercise. Why not try repeating the word back to yourself until it loses its meaning? Until you see it for what it is, just a collection of sounds, rather than a word with which you can berate yourself? You can always return to this technique. This perspective is here for you whenever you need it. Next time you notice yourself speaking to yourself judgementally, try repeating the word back to yourself, until the meaning falls away. You can now bring your attention back to your breath and the present moment. Notice the way your seat feels underneath you, and how your feet feel touching the floor. Notice your chest rising and falling with your breath. Take three deep breaths, slowly and carefully, bringing yourself back to your day as slowly as you need to."

END OF EXERCISE

Task Script – Week 3, Technique 2 – Pronoun Manipulation
Time: Week 3 - Day 4 (Thursday).

Part 1

“You will need a pen and paper for this exercise. Take yourself away from the noise and busyness of the day. Try and find a space away from interruptions, and sit for a moment. [PAUSE] Try to make yourself comfortable. Now, as you sit, try to look inwards on yourself and notice what is happening for you at the moment. Notice your body. How do you feel physically at the moment? Notice any tension or aches and pains, notice the parts of you that are relaxed. [PAUSE] Now, notice what is going on in your mind. How are your thoughts, are they moving slowly, or racing? What feelings are you having? Are they different from the feelings you had earlier in the day? Take this time to really bring yourself into the present moment. [PAUSE] Notice that as you sit, your breathing is starting to calm and slow. Notice the way your chest and tummy expand as you breathe, and notice how they collapse back inwards as you breathe in. [PAUSE] It’s okay for your mind to wander a bit away from focusing on your breath. In fact why not take a moment to notice where your mind went? Notice the thought or feeling or memory that is drawing you in... and when you’re ready come back to your breath.

Part 2

As these weeks go by and as you give more attention to your mind, you have probably noticed a lot more thoughts and feelings. Sometimes, you might even notice some of the bad things you tend to think about yourself. We’ve been talking about this during this week. We can all be a bit tough on ourselves at times: we can remind ourselves of the things we wish we’d done better, or the ways we wish we were different. In fact, we all sorts of negative judgements about ourselves. Can you recall an example of this? Is there a thought you tend to have about yourself that makes you feel bad? Maybe something from the last week? Find one that you can examine now, and note what it relates to. Is it about something you did, or some characteristic of yourself? Something physical, or a personality trait? As you think about it, consider how much you feel this judgement of yourself to be true. Do you 100% believe this judgement? Are there things that come into your mind that confirm this judgement for you? How does it feel when you think about the words you speak to yourself? Hold all of this in your mind as we progress with the exercise.

Part 3

As you notice your thoughts about yourself, try to shift your perspective. I’d like you to pick up your pen, and write out the self-judgement and the feelings around it. Sometimes it can help to try notice these thoughts from a bit of a distance. And one way to do this could be to try to re-phrase the thought. We can do this by using third person pronouns when you write about your self-judgements. For example, rather than writing “I am... I was...”, you could replace “I” with your name, or with “they”. So for example, instead of writing “I sometimes don’t study enough for tests, and then I get bad grades and I feel like a failure”, perhaps write “Jane sometimes doesn’t study for

tests, and then she gets bad grades and feels like a failure.” Try this out - take that difficult thought and replace I or me with your name, or with they? [PAUSE 30s] How real do these self-judgements feel now as you write the thought as if you were speaking about someone else? Take some time to write some more about it, maybe about the situations in which these thoughts arise, and what your thoughts are before and after this self-judgement. Maybe write a little about the feelings you have when you speak to yourself this way. Take your time over this, there is no rush. [PAUSE 30s] When you are ready, move onto the final part of the exercise.

Part 4

How does it feel, to think about these self-judgements as if they belong to someone else? Do the judgements feel as immediate and painful? Or perhaps, do they feel more distant now it seems that they are happening to someone else? Is it as easy to get wrapped up in those harsh ways you speak to yourself when you describe them like this, and write them down? Remember, you can always come back to what you have written and re-read it. This may help you gain perspective or distance when you speak to yourself harshly. If you notice yourself speaking to yourself harshly in the coming weeks, or notice yourself using the words that you use when you want to berate yourself the hardest, you could try coming back to this technique. You could try writing out your judgements, but as if you are saying them about someone else. Maybe you'll even have negative judgemental thoughts relating to the process of this programme, perhaps that you could be working harder, or that you've missed a day. Try to take thoughts like that as an opportunity to practice the techniques. Perhaps you can write down your thoughts and feelings, as if they were happening to someone else. You are now coming to the end of the exercise. 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

Task Script – Week 3, Technique 3 – Noticing You Are Having a Thought
Time: Week 3 - Day 5 (Friday).

Part 1

“You will need a pen and paper for this exercise. 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

This week, we’ve been talking about negative thoughts we have about ourselves. We’ve talked about how uncomfortable these can be, and how harsh we can be on ourselves. We’ve talked about specific words that we use, and the thoughts and feelings that come with them. Have you noticed or experienced negative thoughts about yourself this week? A bad judgement you made about yourself? Maybe a way that you could have acted differently, or something you could have done better at. Maybe a personality trait, or maybe something about the way that you look? Try to pick out one of these thoughts. Pick something out that starts with “I”. For example, “I’m boring”, “I’m so impatient” or “I never get anything right.” Find an example like that that you say to yourself a lot. What is this thought about? Is it about something that happened recently, or something that might happen in the future? What other thoughts and feelings come with your original thought? Does the thought feel believable? How real did it feel when you had it? Hold this thought in mind as we move forward.

Part 3

As you notice your thought, I want you to try something. Take your pen and paper. Write out these negative self-judgement on the page, for example “I’m boring.” Take a look at it for a moment. Notice how close or far away from you it feels. Do you feel very close to this thought? Does it feel more real? Do you feel like you’re wrapped up in this thought as you look at it? [Pause]

Now, I would like you to write the words again, but this time, I’d like you to place the words “I’m having a thought that...” in front of your original thought. So, for example, if your thought was “I’m boring”, write “I’m having the thought that I’m boring”. Good. Write that out for yourself a few more times. Notice what happens as you look at it. Does it feel the same as when you simply wrote the thought? [PAUSE 20s]

Look at it again. Notice your original thought for what it is, a thought, which existed at a particular moment. Now, I would like you to write out the phrase you just wrote again, but this time, add the words “I am noticing that...” to the front of what you just wrote.

So, our original example of “I’m boring” would become “I am noticing that I am having the thought that I’m boring.” Notice what happens as you add this to the front of your thought. Write this down for yourself again. As you do, notice how you have had a thought at a particular time about yourself. Notice how this thought may change as a function of being noticed for what it is. How real does this self-judgement feel now, as you look at it on the page whilst labelling it as a thought you are noticing yourself having? Does it feel closer to you, or further away? How much emotion is attached to the thought when you present it to yourself in this way?

Part 4

How does this difficult thought feel as you take a step back and notice it from this different point of view? Can you see how you can notice what happened and think about it, but consider it from a distance? This exercise is something you can do on paper, or you can do by repeating the words to yourself out loud, or in your head. At this point, hopefully you are starting to get better at noticing when you are having difficult thoughts and feeling about yourself. Next time you notice this, why not try labelling the process of noticing for yourself? Instead of letting the thought be as it is in your mind, try labelling that you are noticing a thought that says a certain thing about you. Hopefully, this will help you create some distance between yourself, and these difficult thoughts about yourself. You are now near the end of the exercise. As you finish considering what we have learned about today, allow your awareness to come back to your body. Notice how each part feels, starting in your feet, up into your legs, to your hips, up into your torso and then your arms, and then your face. Notice your body as a whole, gently holding your experience in each moment. Notice the sensations that come to you as you come back in touch with your body. Now, open up your awareness to your surroundings. Allow yourself to step back into the world, and gently take three deep breaths, as you reconnect to the rest of your day.”

END OF EXERCISE

Week 3: Friday Reminder
Time: Week 3 - Day 5 (Friday).

“Hi again. We hope you found this week’s exercises useful. We explored different ways to change how we react to the types of negative thoughts we have about ourselves. The goal this week was to see how even the language we use, or the way in which we talk about things, can change how we experience our own self-judgements. Do you notice anything different about this negative self-talk when you try the exercises? Do these thoughts feel more difficult or easy to manage when you describe them in a different way?

Remember: if you notice that you’re having any negative thoughts about yourself, you could try this out. Take a quick moment to write down that you are noticing that you are having a thought, or repeat the negative phrase to yourself until it just sounds like well, sounds.

Next week we’ll give you some new exercises that explore a different way of managing your difficult memories. Meanwhile, please continue to make an effort to answer the texts that come to your phone. Also, please remember to fill in your questionnaire this weekend. We’ll email you a link.”

Week 4: Objective Distancing

Week 4: Introduction to Week 4
Time: Week 4 - Day 1 (Monday).

“Hi there! You are now at the start of week 4. Thanks for coming back. Hopefully over the weekends in previous weeks, you might have had some time to think about and try out the different exercises we’ve been learning. In each of these, we’ve explored ways that you can notice what’s going on in your mind. And then looked at what you can do to with the things that you notice. Maybe you can take a step back and project your mind into the future? And try see things from that point of view? Maybe you can see things from far away, as if you’re watching yourself in a movie or on a stage? Or maybe, you can simply describe your thoughts in a way which labels them as what they are: just thoughts, which are transient mental events rather than something you need to get caught up and hooked on.

Like before we’ll try some mindfulness exercises this week. This help us to notice the thoughts, feelings and memories that go on in our minds. Then we’ll try some practical exercises- and explore different ways to manage this content of our minds.

This week, we will be thinking a bit more about negative memories, or situations that happened which are difficult to think about. Perhaps you even try not to think of them, and distract yourself so you don’t have to manage the discomfort of thinking of them. This week we will be playing around with the idea of seeing these memories from the perspective of someone who might see things differently, and describe the situation without being caught up in it. This might sound a little similar to what we have done in the past, but don’t worry, there will be some new and different things too.

Over the next couple of days, we would like you to think again about a negative memory you have. Try to think of something recent, and try to make it something that was difficult to manage, or is uncomfortable to think about. Try to picture as much about the event as you can in your mind’s eye. For example, where were you? Who were you with? What was uncomfortable about the situation? What thoughts and feelings do you get as you remember it? We will be exploring some different ways to think about this situation. As usual, you won’t need this example until Wednesday, so not to worry if you cannot bring something to mind just now.”

Task Script – Week 4, Grounding Exercise – Mindful Walking
Time: Week 4 - Day 1 (Monday).

Part 1

“In this practice, we will be doing some mindful walking. So to begin the practice, finding a path of five to ten paces that you can walk up and down where you’ll not be overlooked or disturbed. If you want to, removing your shoes and socks so you can feel the floor if that feels comfortable. Standing still at one end of the path, feet parallel to each other, hips width apart, and with your knees slightly flexed. Allowing your arms to hang by your sides, or holding your hands loosely together in front of or behind the body, and directing your gaze softly straight ahead. [PAUSE]

Part 2

When you are ready, bringing the focus of awareness to the bottom of your feet. Getting a direct sense of the physical sensations of the contact of the feet with the floor or ground. And of the weight of your body, carried through your legs and feet to the ground. [PAUSE] And now, allowing the weight of the body to shift gradually to the right leg, then allowing the left foot to lift from the ground and moving it forward, placing it and landing. Experiencing the weight of the body shifting now forward onto the left foot as the right foot comes off the ground, moving it forward, placing it and landing. Focusing your attention on the whole of the right foot now as it takes the weight of the body, and then noticing the rising of the left foot beginning again. [PAUSE] Continuing to walk slowly in this way from one end of the walking lane to the other. There is no need to make this very slow, choose a pace that works best for you, and allows you to focus most clearly on the lifting, moving, placing, and landing of each foot in turn. If you wish you can say to yourself silently “lifting, moving, placing, landing.” [PAUSE] When you come to the end of your path, pausing, turning slowly around, appreciating the complex pattern of movement through which the body changes direction. [PAUSE]. And then, when you’ve turned, perhaps pausing again before continuing to walk up and down your chosen path. Really feeling the sensations of the feet as each in turn lifts, moves, is placed and lands. Perhaps doing this in time with your breath, on the in breath lifting and moving, on the out breath placing and landing. Experimenting with this if you choose. [PAUSE 60s]. If you notice at any time that your mind has wandered away from the sensations in your feet, acknowledging where the mind went, then gently escorting the attention back to the sensations of the feet, using the feeling as an anchor to bring the mind back to the body and the walking. [PAUSE 60s] If your mind is very agitated, or keeps wandering away from the intended focus, it is okay to stop for a moment and just stand here, feet hips width apart, in touch with the breath and the body as a whole, then gathering the attention that has been scattered, and resuming the mindful walking when you’re ready. [PAUSE 150s]. At a certain point, if you choose, you could expand the focus of your awareness to the whole of the body if it moves this way, noticing what other sensations that are in your body as you walk, always remembering that you can return to the sensations of the soles of the feet if your mind begins to wander. [PAUSE 120s] At a certain point, feeling free to expand the awareness to around the body, to notice the air on the skin as you move, the

sounds around you, the sense of the body moving through space. Always remember that if your mind keeps wandering you can pause at any time, or simply come back to the sensations of the soles of the feet making contact with the ground as you walk.
[PAUSE 120s]

Part 3

And as this practice comes to a close, reminding yourself that you can ground yourself at any time as you move around during the day, outside or inside by bringing the same kindly awareness that you've been cultivating here to your everyday experiences of walking."

END OF EXERCISE

Task Script – Week 4, Noticing Exercise – Leaves on a Stream
Time: Week 4 - Day 2 (Tuesday).

Part 1

“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

Now, I would like you to imagine a gently flowing stream, with leaves that are floating on the surface. Imagine it however you’d like – it’s your own imagination. The stream is flowing so as time passes, the leaves float away downstream. For the next few minutes, notice each of your thoughts as it pops into your head, then place it onto a leaf, and allow it to come and stay and go in its own time. Don’t try to make it float away, just notice what it does. The thought on a leaf may float away quickly, or it may go by very slowly, or it may hang around. Put the thoughts on a leaf regardless of whether the thought is positive or negative, happy or painful, even if they are the most wonderful thoughts, just place them onto a leaf. Allow them to stay or come and go in their own time. They may float away quickly, or slowly, or they may hang around, simply notice what happens, without trying to alter it [PAUSE]. If your thoughts stop, just watch the stream. Sooner or later, your thoughts will start up again. [PAUSE] Allow the stream to flow at its own rate. Don’t speed it up. This exercise isn’t about washing the thoughts away with the leaves, its about allowing them to come and go in their own time. Its about making space for your thoughts. [PAUSE]

If you find visualization hard, or you can’t get the stream to look the way you want it to, then instead imagine your thoughts blowing away into the breeze. If your mind says “I can’t do this” or “it’s too hard” then put these thoughts on a leaf too. [PAUSE] It is natural that you may get distracted and pulled out of the exercise by other thoughts, but if you do, gently bring yourself back and put those thoughts on a leaf too. [PAUSE] Then, start the exercise again. [PAUSE] If a difficult feeling arises, such as boredom or impatience, simply acknowledge it. Say to yourself “here’s a feeling of boredom” or “here’s a feeling of impatience”. Then place those words onto a leaf. Allow your thoughts to come and go, and let them float away on the leaves, as slowly or as quickly as they like.

Part 3

Now, as you do the exercise, notice this part of you that is able to notice what is happening with your thoughts and feelings. This part of you has always been there

observing what you are experiencing, and is noticing how you are feeling right now. Sometimes, it is hard to remember or realise that we can notice our thoughts and feelings for what they are, temporary events that may stay for a short time, or a longer time. You can come back to the stream whenever you like, noticing your thoughts and letting them be for a moment. 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

Week 4: Midweek Reminder
Time: Week 4 - Day 2 (Tuesday).

“Hi! Thanks for all your hard work thus far, we hope this week has been useful for you so far. On Wednesday, we will be thinking about ways we can consider our negative memories. So, don’t forget to have a think about some examples of difficult memories to use in our exercises this week. Take some time to remember as much specific information about them as you can. As usual, we will send you a link explaining what to do with this memory later in the week. Thank you!”

Task Script – Week 4, Technique 1 – Scientist or Anthropologist
Time: Week 4 - Day 3 (Wednesday).

Part 1

“For this exercise, you will need a pen and paper. Take yourself away from the noise and busyness of the day. Try to find a space away from interruptions, and take a seat. [PAUSE] Try to get yourself comfortable. Now, as you sit, try to look inwards on yourself and notice what is happening for you at the moment. Notice your body. How do you feel physically at the moment? Is there any tension or aches and pains, or are there parts of your body that are particularly relaxed. [PAUSE] Now, notice what is going on in your mind. Are there any thoughts in your mind right now? How are they? Are they moving slowly, or racing? Or maybe you’ve noticed that your feelings are certain way? What can you notice in particular about them right at this moment? Take this time to really bring yourself into the present moment. [PAUSE] Notice that as you sit, your breathing is starting to calm and slow. Notice the way your chest and tummy expand as you breathe, and notice how they collapse back inwards as you breathe in. [PAUSE] If your mind wanders while you are focusing on your breath, it’s okay to just notice the thought or feeling for coming into your mind, and then return your focus to your breath. Don’t push the thought away or ignore it, but let it be there until it is ready to leave, as you continue to notice each of your breaths.

Part 2

Over the past few days, we asked you to think about a memory of a difficult or uncomfortable situation you experienced recently. Perhaps you had an argument with a family member or friend. Perhaps something happened at school or when you were with friends that was upsetting or embarrassing. These things happen to all of us, and are often uncomfortable or difficult for us to remember. Most of the time, we may find that we try to avoid thinking of these difficult memories at all. Did you think of anything over the last couple of days, perhaps something you’ve been trying to forget about? I’d like you to focus on that memory now. I’d like you to remember the situation you were in in that memory with as much detail as possible, see if you can close your eyes and recreate the scene. Imagine where you were. Were other people there? What time of day was it? Were you at home, at work, or somewhere else? As you remember this scene, you might find some of your feelings from the situation coming back to you. Notice as much detail as it comes to your mind. Immerse yourself fully in the situation, we will refer to it as the next exercise progresses.

Part 3

Now, as you recall the situation, try to shift your perspective. Imagine, in that moment, that you were a scientist or an anthropologist. As a scientist, your role is to simply observe the situation with a sense of a curiosity and also with a sense of objectivity and distance. A scientist simply notices things for what they are: natural events that can be dissected and studied and learned from. Consider the situation now as if you’re describing or studying it as a natural phenomenon within our species (like how a muscles flexes or a pupil dilates): the situation had clear and concrete features that

are more obvious when you take a step back and notice the situation as if you were a scientist. Describe what happened from this perspective, as if you were a scientist writing your notes. Take some time to describe what happened, and make observations. [PAUSE FOR WRITING] Does it feel different as you write about it as a scientific observer? Can you see anything different from this perspective? Maybe, when you step back, you can see the events that came directly before this event or directly after? What were the different patterns of events in this situation? How did each person behave? As you look at the situation, consider how seeing it from this curious perspective may affect how you feel about it now? Do you perhaps notice yourself starting to feel differently about the event? Maybe more like a scientist would feel when observing a natural phenomenon?

Part 4

Now, what just happened? Was there was a part of you that is able to notice your thoughts and feelings from the perspective of an objective, neutral observer. Do your best to focus on this part of yourself. Perhaps you could call on this part of yourself again when you think you need it? This part of you has always been there, observing what you are experiencing, and is noticing how you are feeling right now: we just don't always give it a lot of attention. It is normal to have hard moments, moments that you will look back on and still perhaps feel uncomfortable or upset. But, if something difficult does happen from now on, you might be able to come back to being a scientist. Maybe you could try to see the situation from your curious scientific perspective, as if you are observing a phenomenon of human behaviour. This technique is always available to you, as is the part of yourself that is able to take the step back as an observer of your thoughts and feelings. You can come back to this part of yourself at any time. You could also come back to it by reading back over what you wrote during today's session.

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

Task Script – Week 4, Technique 2 – Third Party Observer
Time: Week 4 - Day 4 (Thursday).

Part 1

“If possible, find somewhere quiet and take a seat. Get yourself as comfortable as possible. Now, close your eyes and focus on your breath. Let’s check in with the things going on in your mind and body at this moment. [PAUSE] There’s no need to try to change anything... simply notice what is there, in your mind, for you in this moment. [PAUSE] 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 when you exhale. [PAUSE] While you do this, your mind may wander and that’s okay. It’s what minds like to do. Every time you notice that your mind has moved away from the breath, acknowledge where it has gone to. Is there a thought or feeling you are having? And when you’re ready re-focus on counting your breath. [PAUSE]

Part 2

This week, we’ve been asking you to think about memories of difficult situations. You’ve had some time to consider some of these memories. Could you pick one out now? Is there a memory from the past week which is particularly difficult or uncomfortable to remember? [Pause]. If you can’t, maybe think back a little further. What was the last difficult or negative situation you found yourself in? [Pause] Take a moment to talk through that memory to yourself. Try to create as much detail as possible, and picture yourself there again in that moment. You might even notice the thoughts and feelings from that time coming back to you as you do this. That’s okay - just notice what these sensations are and try recall that moment. How did you feel? How uncomfortable was it? What thoughts came with the situation? Were you able to manage your thoughts and feelings in that difficult situation? Did the situation stay with you for the rest of your day? Focus in on the situation, with yourself at the centre.

Part 3

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 - as if you were bystander who just happened to be passing by at the time. Try to change your point of view on this situation and see it from this new neutral place. Notice it for what it is, a situation that happened, that is observable by people outside the situation. When you take a step back and see the situation as if you were a neutral observer, maybe you can notice new features that weren’t so obvious before? What features of the situation would this person see? Take a moment and describe the situation from this neutral perspective. [Pause] Can you see yourself, and how you were reacting or behaving in that situation? Can you see any other individuals who were involving? How are they behaving? Do you notice anything different about your, or their behaviour, as you look at the situation from this place? [pause] 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? Perhaps you feel further away from the situation than you did before?

Part 4

How does this difficult moment feel as you look at it from a new perspective? Can you see how you can notice what happened and think about it, but consider it from another place. This distant and neutral observer is always with you, and is a part of you. We just don't always notice it because we tend to remember things from as if we are right there, living them and seeing through our own eyes. You can always take a step back and see things from a new perspective: as a neutral observer. You may find over the coming weeks, and after, that you experience situations that are difficult or uncomfortable. Experiencing difficult things is a key part of the human experience. Perhaps next time this happens, you can imagine yourself walking past the situation, and noticing it as a neutral observer. Now allow your awareness to come back to your body. Notice how each part feels, starting in your feet, up into your legs, to your hips, up into your torso and then your arms, and then your face. Notice your body as a whole, gently holding your experience in each moment. Notice the sensations that come to you as you come back in touch with your body. Now, open up your awareness to your surroundings. Allow yourself to step back into the world, and gently take three deep breaths, as you reconnect to the rest of your day."

END OF EXERCISE

Task Script – Week 4, Technique 3 – Through a Microscope
Time: Week 4 - Day 5 (Friday).

Part 1

“To begin, find a quiet place where you can sit. Settle yourself into a comfortable position. Take a few moments now to get in touch with the sensations in your body. [PAUSE] Let the sensations of pressure and touch become apparent to you in this moment. Perhaps you can feel your back against the back of a chair, or you can feel your feet placed against the floor. Notice your breath, and how it is beginning to slow and become deeper. [PAUSE] Notice how your stomach and chest expand as you inhale and exhale. Focus on the sensation of your breath coming in through your nose and mouth, and how it feels as you exhale. Try to count to three on your inhale, and three on your exhale. Inhale... 2... 3... Exhale... 2... 3... that’s good. Continue to do this [PAUSE] You may notice that as you do this, your mind tries to distract you with other thoughts, of things that happened earlier, or things you might do after this practice. If this happens, acknowledge your thought for what it is, simply a thought that is passing through your mind. Then, re-focus on your breathing.

Part 2

Now I’d like to bring your attention back to the exercises we’ve been doing this week. As you may remember, we’ve been looking at different ways of managing difficult memories, perhaps the things we would rather not remember at all. Hopefully over the past couple of days, you’ve gotten more of an idea of the sort of memory we are looking for. Can you bring one to mind now? Perhaps the memory is recent, or perhaps today you can think back to something that happened a while ago. Perhaps the memory is something you have been holding onto, or something you try to avoid thinking of but often still do. Now, bring that memory to the forefront of your mind. Picture yourself as you were in that memory. Try to remember where you were. Who was with you? What you’re your surroundings like? Were you indoors, if you were, can you see the room you were in? Were you outdoors? If so, what was the weather like? What was going on around you? Picture yourself in that setting as clearly as you can. What were you thinking and feeling as the situation unfolded? How were you feeling at that moment? What thoughts were running through your mind? How easy were those thoughts and feelings to manage? How were other people behaving in this situation, if there were other people involved?

Part 3

Now, as you recall the difficult memory, try to shift your perspective. Try to see it from the point of view of a scientist looking down through a microscope, observing it with a scientific curiosity. Perhaps you can even see the microscope in your mind’s eye, and you can look down it and see the memory from above, like a birds eye view. How does it look from above? Can you notice the memory for what it is, a situation that happened, that is observable by people outside the situation? What can you notice objectively about the situation as you observe it from this perspective? Does it feel different as you look at it through the eyes of a scientist? Can you see anything different from this

perspective? Can you see things about how you behaved that are different from how you remember the situation? Try to see the memory through a lens of curiosity and openness. Observing it, almost investigating it, but with a gentleness and an objectivity. What happens to the event when you see it this way? How does seeing it from this curious perspective affect how you feel about it now?

Part 4

Do you see how your perspective has changed as you consider this difficult moment? See how you can notice what was happening for you in that moment, but not necessarily feel so close to it. Try to focus in on the part of you that is able to see and feel difficult things happening, and not be overwhelmed. You can always return to this perspective, where you see your thoughts and feelings as transient and subjective, rather than immediate and distressing. This perspective is here for you whenever you need it. Perhaps, the next time something difficult or uncomfortable happens, you can remember what we tried here, and see if you can change your perspective on what happened. See if you can step back from yourself, and the situation. Now, you can now bring your attention back to your breath and the present moment. Notice the way your seat feels underneath you, and how your feet feel touching the floor. Notice your chest rising and falling with your breath. Take three deep breaths, slowly and carefully, bringing yourself back to your day as slowly as you need to.”

END OF EXERCISE

Week 4: Friday reminder
Time: Week 4 - Day 5 (Friday).

“Hi again. You’ve reached the end of week four’s exercises. We hope you’ve found this week’s exercises interesting. This week, we talked a bit more about how to think about difficult memories you may have. This involved seeing things from the perspective of someone different than yourself, sometimes simply a neutral observer, and sometimes someone more specific like a scientist, an emergency room doctor, or an expert on human behaviour. How was it to think about memories from this perspective? Did you notice anything new or different from this perspective?”

Remember, you can return to that perspective at any time. You could even apply this technique to situations outside of negative memories, perhaps seeing yourself right now from the outside, or seeing your difficult thoughts and feelings, and the ways which you try to manage them, from these outsider viewpoints. Give these a try if you have any difficult mental events over the coming days.

Next week will be the last week of our programme. Hopefully by now, you are starting to notice your thoughts and feelings a little better, and notice what is happening in your mind. We will be practicing the techniques you have learned about over the past weeks, so take some time this weekend to think about which worked best for you, and which were more difficult. In any case, until then, please remember to keep responding to the texts we’re sending you. Lastly, please do your best to get your questionnaire done over the weekend! We’ll make sure to email you a link to this. Thank you!”

***Week 5: Pooled
Decentering Strategies
(review week)***

Week 5: Introduction to Week 5
Time: Week 5 - Day 1 (Monday).

“Hello! Welcome to week 5.

Congratulations on coming with us as far as week 5. We are very grateful for your time and effort. We hope you found this useful and we’re really looking forward to getting your feedback.

Week 5 is the last week of our course, so this week we will do things a little differently. The mindfulness exercises this week will be uploaded today and tomorrow as usual. After that, we will be uploading exercises that will help you pick out difficult thoughts, feelings, or memories, and pick out a technique we have practiced to create distance between you and the target thought, feeling, or memory.

This week, we are really hoping you will be able to practice the techniques we have taught you. In life, we experience an array of difficult thoughts and feelings. We are often judgemental of ourselves, and can speak to ourselves in a way that is harsh, or unkind. Sometimes, we will remember difficult things that have happened, they might play over and over in our minds as we try to think how we can change them, or could do them better next time. All the techniques we have talked about over the last few weeks are designed to help you manage these thoughts and feelings. They won’t make these thoughts and feelings go away, they won’t make you less likely to have them, but they may help you manage them better when they come. After all, these difficult internal experiences are part of being human, so we can only learn to manage what we think and feel, rather than trying to erase them, change them, or “make them better.” We hope you have found that using the techniques we have suggested will help you manage your thoughts and feelings. In fact, we hope that in future when you notice yourself having difficult thoughts and feelings, you might use the techniques we taught you to see these internal experiences from a more distanced, neutral position.

This week, we’d like you to think of a range of difficult thoughts, feelings, or memories. Perhaps pick something that you haven’t used before, something perhaps that has stayed with you for a long time and is difficult to let go of. Write down a few examples for yourself, and we can use them to practice on later in the week.”

Task Script – Week 5, Grounding Exercise – Stretch & Breathe
Time: Week 5 - Day 1 (Monday).

Part 1

“In this exercise, we will be doing some simple stretches in a standing posture. In these stretches, we explore the body as it moves in a gentle way. Experimenting with the eyes closed sometimes, and then sometimes with the eyes open. So now, finding somewhere where you can be by yourself, a place where you can stand you’re your feet parallel, about hips width apart, with the knees unlocked so the legs can bend slightly, so the arms can simply hang by the sides, and the head is up so the body is standing tall. A sense of dignity and presence, but without being stiff. The shoulders can be dropped and relaxed. And as you stand here, reminding yourself of the intention of this practice, not pushing yourself beyond your limits, but rather to become aware as best you can of all the physical sensations and feelings throughout the body as you do these gentle stretches. Its important especially if you have any physical problems with your body at the moment, to feel free to remain still or to move only very slightly. Cultivating awareness of the body just as it is, whether at rest or in movement. As you stand here coming now to focus on your breathing, on the sensations of your breath at the centre of your body. Right down in the lower abdomen around the navel. Sensations of the breath as you breathe in, and sensations as you breathe out.

Part 2

When you’re ready, on an in breath, beginning to move the arms up slowly to the sides, perhaps pausing for a moment when they’re parallel with the ground, then slowly up past the shoulders, and up above your head, keeping them there above your head parallel to each other. Continuing to breathe, and noticing any changes in the sensations and feelings in the body and breath as you continue to hold the stretch. Sensations in the muscles and joints of the body, all the way from the feet and legs, up through the back and shoulders, into the arms and hands and fingers. Including any sense of tension or discomfort, and if so, opening to that as well as you breathe. [PAUSE]. And then, on an out breath, releasing the stretch and letting the arms begin the journey back down, very slowly coming down, perhaps bending the wrists so the fingers point upwards and the palms are pushing outward, very slowly coming down, taking time to become aware of the changing pattern of sensations as you move. Until the arms come to rest. [PAUSE]. When they’re by your sides again, noticing the after effects of that stretch. If your eyes haven’t been closed up til now, maybe closing them at this point, and tuning into the sensations in your body right now. Aware of any and all sensations as well as the sensations of the breath in the abdomen in the centre of the body. Now, when you’re ready, stretching up with the right hand, just the right hand, above your head. As if you were picking a piece of fruit from a tree and its just out of reach so you’re stretching up with the right hand. And you may find the left heel comes off the floor to help you stretch up to reach. And now, noticing a stretch down your right arm, down your right side of the body, as you stretch up, perhaps opening your eyes, looking beyond your hand. [PAUSE]. Then, on an out-breath, letting the left heel come down onto the ground, and the right arm slowly comes down until it comes

to rest at the side of the body. Once again, letting your eyes close if they've been open. Tuning into the sensations of the body, the effects of stretching this way. Standing here, breathing. On an in-breath, stretching up the left hand now and opening the eyes and looking beyond the left hand beyond this imaginary fruit that is just out of reach. Perhaps the right heel comes off the ground to help you stretch up. Notice the effect of the stretch down the left side of the body, and tuning into these sensations. Then, on an out-breath, letting the heel come down flat on the floor, and letting the arm come down slowly very slowly, coming down to rest by the side of the body. Simply standing here in this posture, breathing, tuning into the after effects of having done these stretches. Remembering all the time to honour your own limits, remembering not to stretch beyond your limits. It's not a competition, not a sense of success or failure, just an opportunity to move the body in this way, and tune into the sensations. To be present with your body as you stand here and move in this way, and as you breathe. [PAUSE].

Now, lets do some shoulder rolls. There are four positions for the shoulders, first of all moving the shoulders up as if they wanted to cover the ears, then moving them back as if they could touch behind the back, then letting them drop completely down, then letting them go forward as if they wanted to touch in front of your body. Now, putting these four movements together into a continuous rolling of the shoulders, up, back, down, forward. Doing this at your own pace, perhaps breathing in for half the roll, and out for the other half of the roll. [PAUSE]. Then at a certain point, rolling the shoulders in the other direction, breathing in and breathing out. [PAUSE]. Now, coming to rest. Allowing yourself to tune into the sensations of having done these stretches of the shoulders. Noticing the after effects of the stretching and the movement. Noticing any tension here at all, and seeing if it leaves on the out breath. Then, coming to rest and simply standing. Noticing the after effects of the movements, aware of the sensations along with the sensations of the breath moving in the centre of the body. Letting the body be just as it is.

Part 3

And now, as the practice draws to a close, noticing your body as a whole as you stand. Noticing that you can come to your body at any point during your day, and notice the way it moves in a similar way to what we just did. Bring your attention back to the breathing in the abdomen, tuning into the sensations of the in-breath, out-breath, and pauses in between. [PAUSE]. Then, slowly bringing your attention back to the room around you, ready to go about your day.”

END OF EXERCISE

Task Script – Week 5, Noticing Exercise – The Chessboard
Time: Week 5 - Day 2 (Tuesday).

Part 1

“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

Now, imagine yourself looking down at a chessboard. On this chessboard, think of the black pieces as the thoughts and feelings you want, perhaps resilience or self-esteem, and the white pieces as the feelings and thoughts you don’t want, for example anxiety or hopelessness. In this game of chess, our instinct is to want to defeat the white pieces. At difficult times in our lives, it looks like we are losing, with the white pieces knocking most of the black pieces off the board. As you look at your difficult thoughts and feelings through this lens, it may seem that you are losing the game. [PAUSE] However, if you look closely at the board, you might see something different. What happens when you knock the white pieces off the board? Do they stay off forever, or do they come back sooner or later? Sometimes new white pieces will replace the old ones. [PAUSE] At very least, at some point this game will end and a new one will start, and the pattern will play out again. [PAUSE] The problem is, when we try to fight the white pieces, we are fighting a part of ourselves. We can become absorbed in our struggles, and disconnected from the things around us. [PAUSE]. In fact, in this metaphor, you are actually the chessboard. The chessboard does not get affected or damaged no matter how the game turns out. What if you could focus your energy on carrying both the positive and negative with you, rather than being absorbed in your internal chessgame? [PAUSE] Now, as you think of your difficult thoughts and feelings, try to project these onto the pieces. But this time, understand that you are the chessboard, the arena where all of this happens, but can still continue about your day without being directly affected by the game. What is it like to see your thoughts from this perspective? Do you feel differently now you have created space between yourself and the event? How does thinking of your thoughts as just pieces on your own internal chessboard affect how you think and feel about your thoughts?

Part 3

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

Week 5 – Midweek Reminder
Time: Week 5 - Day 2 (Tuesday).

“Hi there! You’re nearly at the end of our project. As we said on Monday, we’d like you to think about some more examples of difficult thoughts, feelings, and memories to use in our exercises this week. Think of a range so you can practice on a different one each day. As this is the last week of our training programme, we’d like to remind you of a few other things too. You are probably booked in for an MRI session later in the week or next week, and a debriefing session. Please remember to come to this and let us know well in advance if you cannot attend. Also, we will be sending you a final questionnaire and some tasks like the ones you did earlier in the project to complete. Please remember to complete these! Thanks so much for all your hard work thus far, we hope you enjoy the final few days!”

Task Script – Week 5, Technique 1 – Review Day 1
Time: Week 5 - Day 3 (Wednesday).

Part 1

“Welcome to the review week of the project. This week, we will be doing things slightly differently. But, as usual, we will start by breathing. To begin, find a quiet place where you can sit. Settle yourself into a comfortable position. Take a few moments now to get in touch with the sensations in your body. [PAUSE] Let the sensations of pressure and touch become apparent to you in this moment. Perhaps you can feel your back against the back of a chair, or you can feel your feet placed against the floor. Notice your breath, and how it is beginning to slow and become deeper. [PAUSE] Notice how your stomach and chest expand as you inhale and exhale. Focus on the sensation of your breath coming in through your nose and mouth, and how it feels as you exhale. Try to count to three on your inhale, and three on your exhale. Inhale... 2... 3... Exhale... 2... 3... that’s good. Continue to do this [PAUSE] You may notice that as you do this, your mind tries to distract you with other thoughts, of things that happened earlier, or things you might do after this practice. If this happens, acknowledge your thought for what it is, simply a thought that is passing through your mind. Then, re-focus on your breathing.

Part 2

Now I want you to try and recall something difficult or negative that came to your mind this last week and that made you feel bad. Maybe you’ve been bothered by memories of a difficult situation? Or maybe you’ve noticed that you’ve had some difficult thoughts about yourself, about who you are, or about things you’ve done, or not done? Could it be that you’ve noticed that you’ve been having a feeling that you really didn’t like or appreciate? Or, perhaps you’ve even experienced a combination of these different difficult thoughts, feelings, or memories. What different examples come to mind now? Just try to call back something unpleasant in your mind that you had a little struggle with. [Pause]. It’s okay if you can’t recall anything to specific. Then, just try to remember the last bad thought, or feeling or memory you noticed. Try to recall it as clearly as you can, and with as much detail as possible. As we have before, we’d like you to recall the thoughts and feelings that came with what was happening. Can you name the feelings you were having? What thoughts were running through your mind? How easy were those thoughts and feelings to manage? Were you able to manage them easily, or did they stay with you?

Part 3

Now, I’d like you to think back over the last few weeks. Maybe you’ve learned that there are many different ways you can take a step back and notice these difficult experiences from a distance. We’ve talked about seeing things as if you are looking back on them in time. We’ve also talked about ways of using language to create distance between you and your thoughts. We’ve even thought about how to become a neutral observer of difficult memories, or situations. Perhaps there were things that we tried that didn’t work so well for you, and perhaps there were exercises that worked

much better. Pick out whichever exercise you would like, and apply it to the event, thought, or self-judgement you have chosen. Perhaps you found that exercises where we wrote things down worked best for you, or perhaps you liked the exercises where we imagined something in our minds. Choose whichever exercise you found worked best, or felt most natural to you. Today, it may help to go back and find the audio instructions for this exercise, and play them for yourself again. Go through them, and practice this technique on the thought. [Pause]. It's okay if you're not sure what one to pick. Maybe just try the technique you remember the best.

Now that you've thought of an exercise- try it out. Try to shift your perspective on the difficult experience that you've recalled from this week. Notice how it changes your perception of the thought, whether it brings up any different thoughts and feelings about it? Do you notice anything new from this perspective? Anything different about the thought, feeling or memory? Do you feel like you've taken a step back? Does the memory, thought, or feeling feel less intense from this perspective? What can you learn as you look at the situation from this perspective?

Part 4

Do you see how your perspective has changed as you consider this difficult moment? See how you can notice what was happening for you, but not necessarily feel so close to it. Try to focus in on the part of you that is able to see and feel difficult things happening, and not be overwhelmed. You can always return to this perspective, where you see your thoughts and feelings as passing and subjective experiences, rather than totally buying into them and what they mean for you. This perspective is here for you whenever you need it. In fact, if you notice yourself becoming distressed by your thoughts, feelings or memories, you can always think back to the technique you used today. You can call on it whenever you need it.

You can now bring your attention back to your breath and the present moment. Notice the way your seat feels underneath you, and how your feet feel touching the floor. Notice your chest rising and falling with your breath. Take three deep breaths, slowly and carefully, bringing yourself back to your day as slowly as you need to."

END OF EXERCISE

Task Script – Week 5, Technique 2 – Review Day 2
Time: Week 5 - Day 4 (Thursday).

Part 1

“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

As you know, this week we have been focusing more generally on applying the exercises you have learned over the course of the programme. Yesterday you had the opportunity to pick out a difficult thought, feeling, or memory and apply a technique you have learned. Today, we will do something similar. Think back and try to recall something difficult or negative that came into your mind recently. Perhaps it was a memory of a difficult time? Perhaps it was a thought about how you’d like to act differently, or be different? Perhaps it was a worry you’ve been having lately about something that is currently stressing you out? Maybe it’s a combination of all of these things, as our thoughts often are. Try to pick out something specific and uncomfortable, perhaps something that you try to avoid but would like to find a new perspective on. Welcome it into the forefront of your mind. Try to recall the thought, feeling, or memory as clearly as you can. If it is a thought, what triggered it? What thoughts come with it when you start thinking about it? If it is a feeling, what does it feel like? Approach it with curiosity, as if you are feeling it for the first time. Does it feel hot or cold, spiky or smooth, heavy or light? Does the feeling prompt any thoughts or other feelings? If it is a memory, try to close your eyes and take yourself back to that moment. Who was there? What were you doing? What happened next? Can you see your surroundings? Put yourself completely into the thought, feeling, or memory, and remember as much detail as possible.

Part 3

Now, I’d like you to think back over all the different techniques we have practiced in the last few weeks. Try pick out a different exercise from the one you used yesterday. Apply it to the event, worry, or self-judgement you have chosen. Remember, the goal is to create a different perspective, where you might feel more distant from the event, worry, or self-judgement. You can do this through imagining seeing it from a different time, from a different spatial perspective, or perhaps playing with the language that you use to describe it. But, above all, pick whichever one you feel suits the mental event you have selected best. If you need to, go back and find the audio instructions

for this exercise, and play them for yourself again. Go through them, and practice this technique on the thought. How do you feel when you look at the event, worry, or self-judgement from this different, more distanced perspective? Do the feelings around it feel as immediate? Do you notice any new thoughts or feelings that come as you notice from this perspective? What about noticing external things about the event, worry, or self-judgement? How did you behave in response to the thought or worry? Or, how did you or someone else behave if it was a situation involving others? As you look at the event, worry, or self-judgement from this perspective, do you notice anything new?

Part 4

How does this difficult moment, thought, or feeling feel as you look at it from a new perspective? Can you see how you can notice what happened and think about it, but consider it from another place, time, or viewpoint? This detached observer, who can notice new things, is always with you, and is a part of you. You can always come back to it, and see things from a new perspective. Perhaps when you notice any thoughts or feelings or memories that make you feel bad in future - you can take a step back and try to see things from this detached perspective. Try to remember which techniques worked best for you for each type of difficult experience. Perhaps you can write some notes about what works best, to come back to in difficult times?

Now allow your awareness to come back to your body. Notice how each part feels, starting in your feet, up into your legs, to your hips, up into your torso and then your arms, and then your face. Notice your body as a whole, gently holding your experience in each moment. Notice the sensations that come to you as you come back in touch with your body. Now, open up your awareness to your surroundings. Allow yourself to step back into the world, and gently take three deep breaths, as you reconnect to the rest of your day.”

END OF EXERCISE

Task Script – Week 5, Technique 3 – Review Day 3
Time: Week 5 - Day 5 (Friday).

Part 1

“Welcome to our final review session of the week. Take yourself away from the noise and busyness of the day. Try and find a space away from interruptions, and take a seat. [PAUSE] Try to make yourself comfortable. Now, as you sit, try to look inwards on yourself and notice what is happening for you at the moment. Notice your body. How do you feel physically at the moment? Notice any tension or aches and pains, notice the parts of you that are relaxed. [PAUSE] Now, notice what is going on in your mind. How are your thoughts, are they moving slowly, or racing? What feelings are you having? Are they different from the feelings you had earlier in the day? Take this time to really bring yourself into the present moment. [PAUSE] Notice that as you sit, your breathing is starting to calm and slow. Notice the way your chest and tummy expand as you breathe, and notice how they collapse back inwards as you breathe in. [PAUSE] If your mind wanders whilst you are focusing on your breath, thank your thought or feeling for coming into your mind, and then return to counting your breath. Don't push the thought away or ignore it, but let it be there until it is ready to leave, as you continue to count your breaths.

Part 2

This week, we have thought together about how to best apply the things you have learned to different experiences. How has this been? Have you noticed that some techniques are easier for you than others? Have you been able to notice when you're having difficult mental experiences, and apply the techniques we have learned? If this has been difficult, don't worry. Noticing your thoughts and experiences, and applying the techniques, are both skills. Skills take time and practice to get better at. Today, we will be practicing again what we did earlier in the week. So, we would like you to pick out a difficult thought, memory or feeling. If you can, try to pick out something you haven't worked on before. Perhaps for the last couple of days, you have used difficult memories or situations, or perhaps you have spent time focusing on the negative judgements you make about yourself. If you can, pick something else, or pick something that involves a combination of difficult experiences, thoughts, or feelings. Have you found something? Over the weeks, we have also practiced noticing detail around these thoughts, feelings, and memories. We would like you to do that now. If it's a thought, perhaps think about how the thought makes you feel. Try to think about what thoughts come as a result of this thought. Perhaps consider what usually brings on these thoughts. If it is a feeling, perhaps investigate that feeling further. What exactly is the emotion you're feeling? What emotions come with it? What happened before you started to feel this emotion? If it is a memory, imagine you are describing it to someone else. Try to describe to yourself where you were. Think about who was there? Imagine yourself completely in that moment... what were you wearing? What was the context of this memory? What thoughts and feelings come to you as you consider this memory?

Part 3

Now, think about the different techniques we have used over the weeks. We have been through quite a selection, ranging from imagining ourselves at a different time in our lives, imagining watching ourselves from across a room or from a spot on the wall, changing how we describe our thoughts and feelings, and thinking of ourselves as somebody else observing our thoughts, feelings, and memories. Try to select one of the techniques we have practiced in the last few weeks. If you can, choose one that you feel might suit the mental event you have chosen, and apply it to the event, thought, or feeling that you have chosen today. You could pick whichever exercise you think best applies. Perhaps you can choose one that you feel you may need a bit more practice at, or perhaps you'd like to use a similar technique to those you used in the last few days, to build on your experience. Whichever you would like to use is fine. Try to take a moment to apply this technique on the thought, feeling, or memory. Notice how it changes your perception of the thought, whether it brings up any different thoughts and feelings about it? What is your perspective now you've practiced the technique with this thought? Do you notice anything different about it now? How about something new, that you haven't noticed before?

Part 4

Well done, you have now completed the final exercise in our programme. Congratulations, and thank you for staying with us for this time. Hopefully, you've now had some practice and are starting to be able to notice your feelings and thoughts better. This part of you, that is able to notice what is happening for you from a different perspective, is something that is always available to you. This part of you can also notice how you feel right now. It has always been there, observing what you are experiencing, and is noticing how you are feeling right now. Whenever you have difficult thoughts and feelings, or when things happen that are difficult or uncomfortable to remember, you can always come back to these techniques. When you catch yourself judging yourself or punishing yourself for an aspect of who you are, or things you have done, you can describe these feelings back to yourself in a way that creates space. You can think about your current worries or stressors as if you are much older and wiser, and looking back on them. You can notice your difficult memories from a distance, as if you're watching from the audience of a theatre, or simply are a fly on the wall. You have a range of techniques with which to manage difficult thoughts and feelings that might cause you discomfort. You can come back to these recordings at any time. Now, for one final time, 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

Week 5: Friday Reminder
Time: Week 5 - Day 5 (Friday).

“Hello! You’ve now come to the end of the programme. Wow! Well done and thank you so much for coming on this journey with us. We hope you’ve enjoyed the programme and found it interesting. We hope also, that perhaps it will have made you think about how you experience your thoughts and feelings, notice them a little more, and learn a few different ways of viewing your thoughts from a new perspective. We hope you’ll be able to continue to use the techniques we have taught you, when you’re getting caught up in your thoughts and feelings. Know that no matter what the thought is, there are a myriad of ways to manage it. You can imagine how it will seem when you’re older and wiser, you can imagine yourself as someone else looking in. You can imagine you’re watching difficult memories as a fly on the wall, and you can play with the words you use to speak to yourself so it brings in a new perspective. We hope some of these ways will have resonated with you, and will be useful to you in the future. You can come back to the exercises at any time, and listen to them again if you need a reminder of what we did. Take a minute to reflect... which was your favourite exercise? Which of the ways we described thoughts felt most real for you, the clouds, the leaves, the passengers on a bus, the chessboard? We hope you’ll be able to consider these as you continue about your days, seeing your thoughts from a new perspective that doesn’t try to push them out or judge yourself for having them, but simply notices them for what they are, temporary events that can be seen from a new perspective, and don’t need to dictate where we are going.

Over the next few days, you will need to fill out our questionnaire for a final time. We will also have some tasks for you to do, a bit like the ones we’ve done previously. We’d also like to remind you that you have a scanning session booked in, please make sure to come to this! We will also do a debrief at this session, which just means we will have a chat about how you found the intervention and sort out any administrative things, like paperwork, that need doing.

We’d like to take this opportunity to thank you again for your contribution to this scientific project, we couldn’t do things like this without volunteers! Please feel free to offer us any feedback about how you found the project, or ways we can make it better for the next lot of people who do it! Even if you found the programme really hard, and didn’t understand some of it, or all of it, we’d love to hear about that, so whatever you think about the programme, please let us know! Have a think about this over the next few days before we see you.

Until then, take care, and thanks again for all your hard work!”