

## MINDFUL PAUSE INSTRUCTIONS

### **PAUSE and arrive in this moment and step out of autopilot –**

- Best to schedule regular pauses or mini-practices during your day. Build them into routines and habits so you build mental muscle for when something stressful happens.
- Put post-it notes in places that help remind you to take a mindful pause, such as on the steering wheel of your car.
- Print out this sequence and post it somewhere.

#### **1. Deep diaphragmatic breathing**

Long breath in through the nose all the way into your belly – make sure your belly is expanding with that in breath. Then take a longer breath out through pursed lips as if you are blowing out a candle. Do at least 5 cycles. You can also add in pausing at the end of the in breath and holding your breath here for a second or two. Pause this practice if you begin to feel that you are hyper-ventilating.

#### **2. Brief body scan**

Allow your breathing to be natural. Drop your attention down into the soles of your feet. Wiggle your feet a bit if it helps you to feel your feet. The aim is to FEEL INTO the sensations of your body. Then gently move attention up from your feet through your legs, pelvis, torso starting at the back and moving to the front, down your arms and finishing with your neck and head.

Take time when you get to your torso to notice any places there is tension or pain. Include your neck, which is often a place we feel tension. Finish the body scan by seeing if you can let go of any places of tension in your body with the out breath. Really relax your body and let go.

#### **3. Do a few gentle stretches**

Especially where you have felt any tension, stretch, or move your body a little. You might give yourself a little massage.

#### **4. Mindful self-compassion**

Finish this sequence of practices by thinking of something you can be grateful for in this moment. Perhaps your body supporting you through the day. Or say a few phrases of self-compassion. “May I find ease and peace.” “You are doing great.” “You’ll get through this.”

### **You can choose to do one of these practices on their own.**

Try the recording of the whole sequence a few times so you learn how to do each.