

# HELPING US FIND A CLEARER MIND



Centre of  
Excellence  
HEALTH



# WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?



## Mindfulness is:

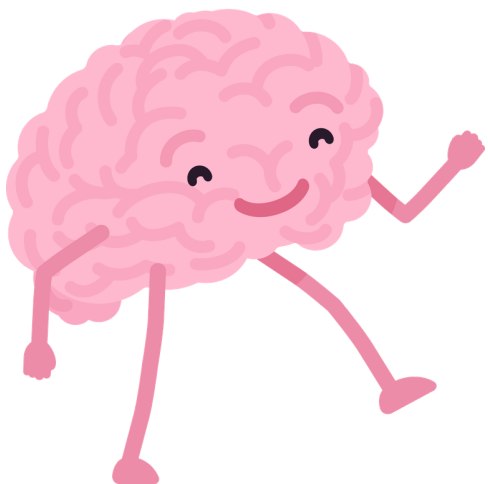
- Noticing what is happening in your mind and body without immediately reacting to it.

## Mindfulness is NOT:

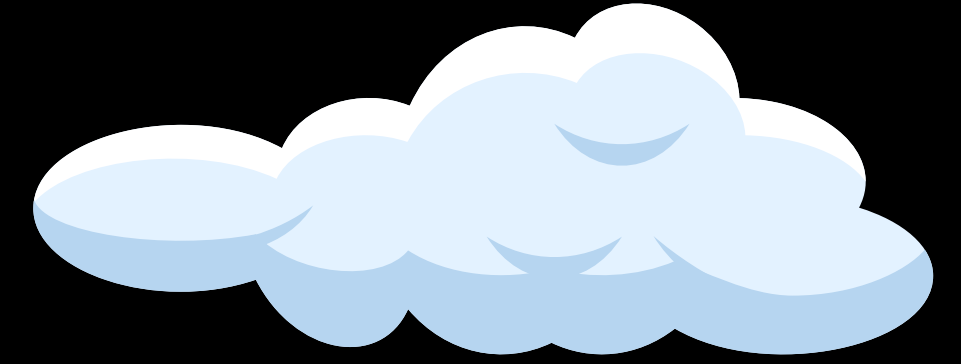
- Emptying your mind
- Making thoughts disappear
- Being calm all the time
- Sitting perfectly still

## 3 Parts of Mindfulness

- INTENTION — I choose to pay attention.
- ATTENTION — I notice what is happening right now.
- ATTITUDE — I notice with curiosity instead of judging.

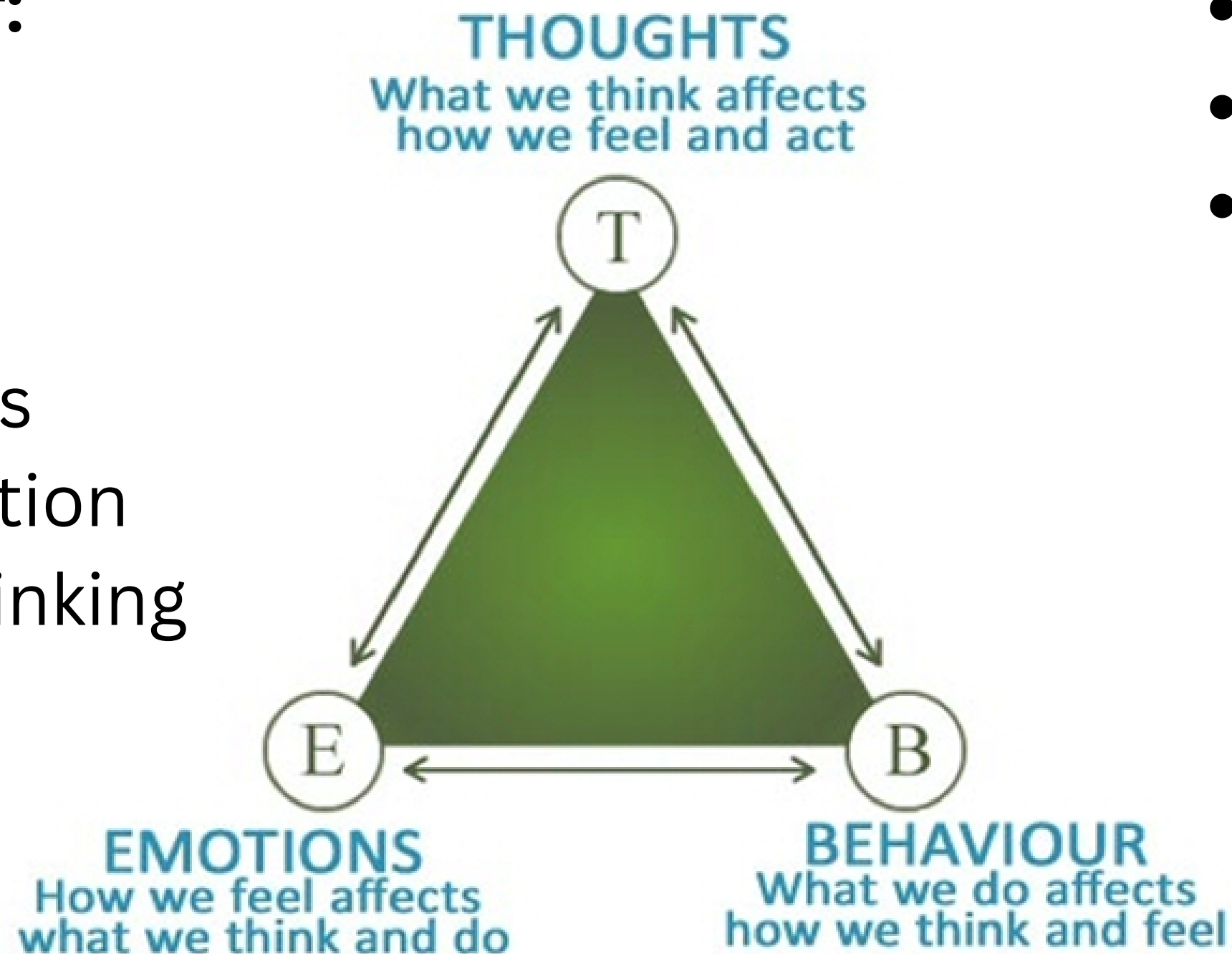


# WHEN YOUR MIND GETS CLOUDY



**Sometimes our minds get cloudy because of:**

- Worry
- Anger
- Stress
- Sadness
- Frustration
- Overthinking



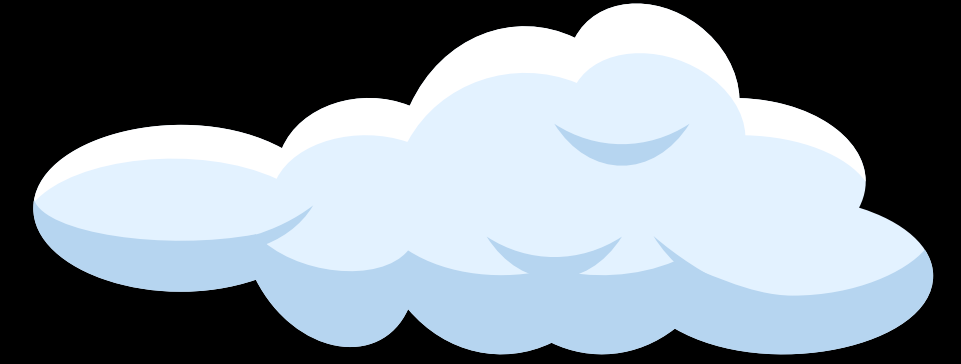
**A cloudy mind might sound like:**

- “I can't deal with this.”
- “Everyone is against me.”
- “I'm going to fail.”

**When our mind feels cloudy, it can be harder to:**

- FOCUS
- LEARN
- LISTEN
- MAKE DECISIONS

# THE CLOUDY WATER EXPERIMENT



## Clear Water

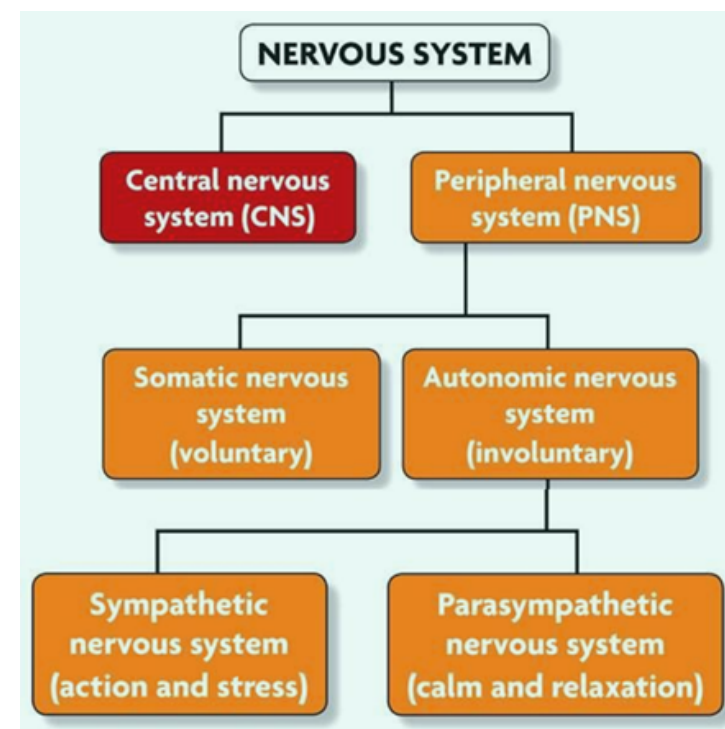
- You can see clearly.
- You can focus on what is in front of you
- You see the “Toy”/Object behind the jar

## Cloudy Water

- This can represent stress in our bodies and minds.

## Stop Stirring - Watch - Wait - Breathe

- You don't have to force the water to become clear.
- As the particles settle, the water gradually becomes clearer.
- Sometimes our minds are like the water.
- We don't have to fight every thought or feeling.
- We can pause and let ourselves settle.



**Stress=Strong emotions=Lots of thoughts**

- Can make things harder to see clearly

# MINDFULNESS IS THE PAUSE

## NOTICE - PAUSE - BREATHE - CHOOSE

### Let's Try It:

- 1. NOTICE
- “What am I thinking or feeling?”
- 2. PAUSE
- Give yourself a moment.
- 3. BREATHE
- Take a slow, steady breath.
- 4. CHOOSE
- “What do I want to do next?”



**A 2 minute mindfulness practice can  
help introduce the  
NOTICE → PAUSE → BREATHE → CHOOSE  
concept to middle school students**

# YOUR TURN: WHAT DID YOU NOTICE?

## Learner Reflection:

- What happened when the water became cloudy?
- What happened when we stopped stirring?
- Did you notice anything in your body?
- When does your mind feel “cloudy”?
- What helps you create a little clarity?

## Key Takeaways:

- We can't remove every stressful thing from our lives.
- But we can learn skills that help us respond to stressful moments.
- Mindfulness gives us a pause.
- NOTICE → PAUSE → BREATHE → CHOOSE
- You don't have to control every thought.
- You can choose what you do next.

# SCIENCE OF MINDFULNESS

(CAN BE USED AS A REFERENCE OR BE SHARED WITH LEARNERS)

- Mindfulness has been proven to be a successful intervention for calming the amygdala's impulsive reaction to stressful or negative thoughts and experiences.
- Mindfulness enables us to access the pre-frontal cortex (rational, thinking mind).
- The pre-frontal cortex (PFC) also helps us to calm down by keeping the emotional brain in check.
- Mindfulness instils the practiced ability to stop, breathe (putting on the brakes of the amygdala) and think rationally.
- Since Mindfulness develops the prefrontal cortex, especially the left side where mood enhancement occurs, it makes sense that this practice also leads to more happiness.

# SCIENCE OF MINDFULNESS

## (MIDDLE SCHOOL LANGUAGE)

**The Research on Mindfulness in school-based contexts reveals the following list of core beliefs for learners:**

- Increased ability to pay attention
- Increased memory, planning and organization
- Increased self esteem
- Increased sense of calmness, relaxation, and self-acceptance
- Increased quality of sleep
- Decreased test anxiety
- Decreased ADHD behaviors- hyperactivity and impulsivity
- Decreased negative emotions
- Fewer anger management events



# THANK YOU!!!

## **Curriculum Connections:** **Personal Wellness 6**

### **Strand: Wellness**

*Big Idea:* Healthy Lifestyle

*Skill Descriptor:* Examine personal health habits and their impact on the seven domains of wellness.

### **Strand: Mental Fitness**

*Big Idea:* Positive Mental Health

*Skill Descriptor:* Describe strategies to support positive mental health.

For more information about the Center of Excellence for Health, please visit:

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