



## **MINDFULNESS-BASED POST-OPERATIVE CHRONIC SHOULDER PAIN MANAGEMENT**

In this Manual, you will be guided in using mindfulness skills to relief body pain and prevent injuries from relapsing.

Please be open-minded to any new information that you have never heard before. Be patient in every step of the way and create positive attitudes towards new discoveries of your body and mind.

At a glance of this rehabilitation programme, you will be gradually advancing from stage 1, learning to be absolutely present without going into an autopilot; then progressing to stage 2, learning to breath mindfully and identify the interplay of thoughts, actions, emotions and sensations; then into stage 3, starting to approach stress and problems differently through meditation, and arriving at the final stage, where you can recognize, respond and manage all types of stress with new sets of skills.

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This rehabilitation scheme will run through a period of 12 months which is separated into 4 phases.

In the first phase where you have just had your shoulder operation, your immediate care will be to prevent any chances of re-tear. While your physiotherapist is helping you slowly regain your range of motion passively, I will introduce you the fundamental concepts of mindfulness training.

Entering into the second phase of this programme which is 6 weeks after your initial rehab, I will teach you the essential skills of breathing, body scan meditation, self-affirmation and gentle yoga exercises targeting primarily your shoulders, neck and upper back. These practices will take about 20-30 minutes each day, using audio and video platforms for full guidance.

After 3 months of both physiotherapy and mindfulness training, you are likely to gradually restore full range of motions and initiate a more active life style with deeper awareness to your body and mind. To deepen your experience in mindfulness meditation and bodily awareness, the third phase of this programme will go further to investigate how our behavioural and thought patterns will affect our wellbeing physically and mentally.





The last phrase of this programme builds on all the previous exercises you have done over the three months' period. Besides restoration of full shoulder range of motions and active daily routine, You will develop solid skills on recognising, responding and managing pain sensations and other reactions that come with them. Yoga Therapy will be introduced to show you how gentle yoga exercises not only work grossly on your physical sheath, but also deepen the awareness of breaths and movements. The choreography of breaths and movements is both therapeutic to the gross musculature and the subtle mind in that its synchronicity essentially unblocks physical tensions and release emotional entanglements. You may have heard of many successful stories about the healing aspects of yoga which oftentimes go hand in hand with mindfulness meditation and deliberate breath work.

## **So what exactly is mindfulness and meditation?**

Mindfulness is developed on the basis of meditation where we simply observe what is happening to your thoughts, sensations, emotions, reactions, etc. without criticism and judgement. In other words, it is about pure observation and being an witness of ourselves. When we get to see the world and relate to it with greater clarity and awareness, we are more capable to solve prevailing problems and stress with compassion and an open mind.

You may wonder how mindfulness and meditation can remove physical pain you are experiencing after one or even more surgical operations; or how by simply tuning our senses inward through meditation and breathing can be equally effective as committing to your weekly physiotherapy session.

In essence, mindfulness meditation and subsequent cognitive behavioural therapies create time and space for us to see through all problems and difficulties because it gives us the opportunities to step out of our habitual tendencies, which are oftentimes unconscious and spontaneous. By identifying some of our subconscious or unconscious routines and thinking pathways, we begin to get to the bottom of our senses. We will have greater capacity to observe, to attend, to be aware of, and to be awake in every single moment.

And it has been scientifically proven that it has helped people going through traumas and difficulties, and that the practice has significantly shifted the brain working mechanism.





### **How should we start?**

It is worth taking some time to prepare yourself physically and mentally so that you can commit to this programme with perseverance.

If you have doubts about this practice, it is very likely that your “fleeting” mind will rush on to something else which you are more familiar with or seemingly more important to you. This programme puts a stop sign to your usual track of avoidance or rejection. It makes you work differently, to find a new place for self observation and acceptance rather than immediately washing your hands of it. And that you have a positive, open mindset to receive anything that might arise. It lays down a good foundation for the rest of the programme.

You may have concerns that you have to manage various exercises which you have never heard of or unfamiliar with. These exercises are in fact inter-related and all boil down to the very concept of mindfulness and higher cognition. Each exercise is a gateway to one and other, and their interconnection will allow you to reduce stress at the physical dimension and more. I will take you to the path each step of the way.

It is not a must that you have to complete all exercises in the designated time frame. The choice is left up to you entirely. You can simply roll over an allotted exercise or session for longer until you feel you are ready to move on to the next. It is highly recommended, though, that you complete the programme so that you can receive full benefits of what mindfulness this training has to offer to you. You will have to make time for it than saying “I can't spare the time”. Which means you will have to allocate your time with new priorities so that this programme will not get squeezed out by other “prior engagements”.

Relaxation and a stress-free state are the by-products which do not come until new behavioural changes and mindful manipulations of thoughts and actions become your true elements. Struggles through injuries and pain will still be there. It is very important to understand that at any point of your practice, you will have moments of relapse to old patterns, negative talks to tell you that ‘it isn't working’ or ‘I am not getting it’, and numerous signs of racing off or slipping away. Do your practice and your efforts will come into fruition. Stop whenever you feel the need for a break and continue with my guidance when you are ready again. Current pain, distress, pressure and mental disturbances are independent of your conditions which will be redefined through new learning and persistent practice.





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Remember, mindfulness practice it takes time for your body and mind to fully set in just like anything in life. By playing the videos daily or as frequently as you possibly can, you are working diligently to achieve your overall wellbeing in a more sustainable way without rushing through any of the steps that contribute to the ultimate goal of rehabilitation.

Last but not least, by committing yourself to this programme, you will see how it complements your current rehabilitation regime such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy, regardless of your age and health conditions.





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**MODULE 1. Breath Work**

**MODULE 2. Body Scan Meditation**

**MODULE 3. Self Affirmation**

**MODULE 4. Gentle Yoga Exercises**

**MODULE 5. Guided Cognitive Training**



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## MODULE 1: BREATH WORK



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We will learn to breathe mindfully by observing the innate qualities of in-breath and out-breath and what it does to your body and mind. Then we will learn to control and adjust our breath patterns to be fully with ourselves and awake moment by moment.

You will need a room which is quiet, softly lightened, warm and undisturbed. Other than the device you use for this programme such as a mp3 player or your mobile phone, turn off all other electronics if possible. You want to make sure that the time of the day that you set for your practice is adequate so that you can be fully WITH yourself and BE yourself. In the initial phases of breath work, mindfulness meditation and cognitive training, you do not have to spend long time but rather set aside a time daily for it.

Now, find a position that you feel comfortable and relaxing. A well-supported posture allows you to be struggle and fidget free. Perhaps also close your eyes to turn your senses inward to look closely into what is going on in your mind and body. This sets the tone for your breathing exercises.

### **Now breathe....**

Bring attention fully to your in-breath and out-breath without the intension to change it. Be curious of their natural tendencies. Just observe and notice its coming and going.

Start to feel the breath at the tip of the nose, at both left and right nostrils, the lips, or at the back of the throat, down to the chest or right down in the belly, and down below the navel centre.

Observe the way the belly rises, the abdomen wall stretches or expands on the in-breath; and falls away and recedes on the out-breath. On every exhale, simply allow your body to let go a little more, let your entire musculature be loose. You may notice your body becomes a little heavier into the floor, being fully supported by gravity without gripping.

Putting both in-breath and out-breath together, you are aware of each distinctive, vivid movement. Each cycle is unique and profound, that you can make use to the breaths as a steering wheel to bring you back on track of the present moment. Every time you find your mind is being distracted by thinking, planning, analyzing, fantasizing, dreaming, and what have you, you return to the breaths.

Adopt this technique whenever you wander off from time to time. As many times as you have to. Simply escort your mind back to your breathing and beginning again just like the first time.





## Diaphragmatic breathing

It sets the foundation for all other breathing and mindfulness exercises that align your intention, awareness and focus. This is the very FIRST step.

Firstly, place one hand on your stomach and one on your ribcage or chest. Inhale deeply through the nose, letting the abdomen rise and the ribcage expand sideways. Feel your hands rise. Then exhale deeply through the nose, letting the abdomen soften and ribcage sink. Feel your hands descend. Repeat the cycle for at least 5 minutes up to 10 minutes.

Be fully awake and aware of what is going on in your mind and body. What thoughts are you having right now? Any feelings that come with them? What are the sensations of your body? You are not trying to change anything, but totally opening to what is already here and what might come and go. If at any time you notice that your mind starts to wander off, simply acknowledging where it went and gently escorting it back to the present moment and attend to your breath qualities again, such as its length, rhythm, depth, etc.

## Equal nostril breathing

It intends to create an equal ratio of INHALATION and EXHALATION through natural flow of your breaths.

1. Allow yourself to be fully relax
2. Inhale through the nose to a count of 3, then exhale to a count of 3.
3. We gradually increase the counts to 8. Let's begin.
4. Try to keep your breathing natural, that the pace is even and smooth, and most importantly, you do not hold your breath.
5. Repeat for 8-10 rounds

## Two-part 1:2 (2:1) breathing

It intends to deepen your focus on the moment by regulating the duration of your breaths. You will double the length of either the inhalation or the exhalation.

1. Allow yourself to be fully relax
2. Inhale through the nose to a count of 3, then exhale on 6.
3. Here we intend to double the length of the exhalation.
4. Repeat 8 to 10 times







5. The purpose of doubling the exhalation is to help release pressure, stress and any anxious emotions by switching on your parasympathetic nervous system
6. Now we reverse the pattern. Inhale through the nose to a count of 6, then exhale on 3.
7. Longer INHALATION can brighten your senses by activating your sympathetic nervous system to fight against fatigue, lethargy and low moods.
8. Repeat 8 to 10 times
9. You can experience a different count ration such as 4:8, 5:10
10. Make sure that you give yourself the time to experience both patterns

### **Alternative nostril breathing**

It has powerful positive impacts to your mind. It is often used to settle a busy mind, flickering emotions, racing thoughts, and cure insomnia. The principle is to re-balance your brain hemispheres by regulating the airflow through your nostrils.

1. You will be using your right thumb to close the right nostril and middle or ring finger to close the left nostril while you are only breathing only through one nostril. Your left arm can relax on your lap throughout.
2. Remain sitting tall and your spine being upright. Feeling ease and soft in your musculature including your muscles and joints.
3. Now exhale fully, expelling out all the air in your system,
4. Raise your right hand slowly, close the left nostril with your middle or ring finger and INHALE through the right nostril to a count of 3
5. Close your right nostril with your right thumb and hold your breath for 3-2-1
6. Then open your left nostril and EXHALE through the left nostril for another 3 counts.
7. Then INHALE on the left side for 3, pause again for 3, and then release right nostril and EXHALE on the right side for 3 counts. This is one complete cycle (meaning you start the inhalation and finish the exhalation both on the right side)
8. Repeat 3-5 cycles at first, then try to extend to 10 cycles
9. It is important that you do not rush to complete all cycles. Take your time to experience each of them. It is about doing less but feeling more. Try to align the lengths of inhale, pause and exhale throughout. If holding your breaths seem to difficult, you can practice without it first. Then you add on the pause in between the inhale and exhale as you refine your practice and feel more at ease when holding your breath.





## Cooling breaths

It is one of the mainstream breathing techniques in yoga therapy. When the body is under stress or agitated because of that, cool air entering into the body can create soothing sensations like summer breeze.

The first type of cooling breath is called "*Sitkari*"

1. Sitting and lying comfortably, take a deep breath in and out of your system.
2. Bring your top and bottom teeth together with your lips open
3. INHALE slowly through the space between the upper and lower palate of the mouth cavity. Bring your attention to the gentle sizzling sound of the breath
4. Then close your lips and hold the breath for a few counts for about 2-4 counts
5. EXHALE slowly and calmly through your mouth. This is a complete cycle
6. Repeat 5-10 cycles.
7. Embrace the cooling breeze in your system. And you are light, restful and free

The second type of cooling breath is called "*Sitali*"

1. Resume proper breathing posture as before. Take a deep breath diaphragmatically.
2. Curl the sides of the tongue inward by forming an oval shape with your lips, and slightly stick it out of your mouth.
3. INHALE through the tongue as though you were sucking through a straw. Pay your attention to the cooling sensation of the breath into your system
4. Then close your lips and hold the breath for a few counts for about 2-4 counts
5. EXHALE slowly through the nose, keeping your jaws relax as much as possible. This is a complete cycle
6. Repeat 5-10 cycles.

If you are not feeling comfortable when holding the breath before you exhale, you can first practice without holding the breaths. Once you begin to feel more at ease, you can resume all steps as I instruct you here.

If you cannot curl your tongue, it is ok to practice the first type only, and extend this exercise longer up to 10-minute. Because this type of breathing would reduce your body temperature, it is important that you keep yourself warm or you are settled in a warm place.





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## MODULE 2: BODY SCAN MEDITATION



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This is a guided body scan meditation. *It incorporates mindful breathing and sitting meditation to deepen your inner senses. You will learn to see your thoughts and feelings from a new perspective, relate to them just as we relate to sounds and sights, and discover that thoughts, internal self-talks and emotions often come and go like clouds in the sky.*

To prepare yourself, settle in a personal place that is cozy and warm; safe and secure that is not interrupted by anyone and your daily chores.

Now lie down on your back. If you feel any tensions at your joints such as shoulders, neck, knees, ankles, etc., you can use soft padding such as a blanket or pillows for support if that's necessary.

When you lie down, set your arms down by your sides, palms facing up, or you can place your palms on your abdomen loosely so that you can feel the subtle movements of your breath when it comes and go naturally. Let your hips be relaxed, feet loosely fall to the sides. Begin to feel the contact between your skin and the surface underneath you.

As you are lying here, begin to experience your body through breaths. You are being sensitive but not over-reacting. You start to cultivate moment-to-moment awareness of what exactly you are feeling in your body non-judgmentally, with openness and gentleness. Your attention is on your breathing, the sensations of the cyclical nature of inhalation and exhalation. Perhaps notice the subtle gaps between the in-breath and the out-breath. Expand your attention not only to your abdomen but the body as A WHOLE in all dimensions, as though the whole body is breathing from the top of your head to the bottom of your feet, out to the surface of your skin and into the internal organs

You are simply lying here to rest, observe and acknowledge, to let it be in the stillness of being here and now. This is what we're doing, resting and becoming aware of whatever comes up. Come and aware of the space within your body and around it, and also the gap between these two spaces, the skin. Feel the skin is breathing, and your whole body is breathing into and out of this space that you are in. You may start to have discomfort or pain in the muscles, joints or somewhere. And if that happens, then we can adjust our posture ever so slightly but within the zone of meditation. You are aware of the movement, the intention to move and the outcomes of the movements.





To strengthen our ability of bringing mindfulness to help our body recover, I would like you to purposely sit with these intense sensations as they arise and stay. Hold on to that sensations for a moment. They may change, stay, disappear and come back to you at some point. Whatever happens, simply be here and continue breathing into the body and out of the body with moment-to-moment awareness. You are alert, attentive but not rejecting and avoiding.

We will start from the **LEFT** side of the body. Slowly direct your focus, down from the belly region, down the lower body, through the left leg and all the way down to the left foot and out to the toes of the left foot.

Now expand your awareness to the sides, sole and top of the foot, the instep and the heel, up to the ankle, shin, calf and knee; even the inside of the leg such as the ligaments, tendons, bones and muscles. Be in touch with the skin layering across the thin muscular tissues and bones of the ankle.

Imagine a cobweb of blood vessels, fine tissues and fascia that interweave the interiors of the lower left leg.

Now continue this process from the knee up towards the left thigh.

Letting the breath help you explore right into the kneecap, back and sides of the left knee, its muscles and cartilage and joint.

Expand your awareness of the facets of your left thigh, on the outside from the left knee to the left outer hip bone, on the inside from the left knee to the groin. Penetrate deeper from the surface of the skin to the inside structure of our knee and thigh. You may begin to notice its strength and complexity of it. When you exhale deeply, let your left knee and thigh completely soften and relax.

So you are allowing the trail of attention to move along the entire left side of your body.

Take a moment to stay at this vision: You could breathe in from the nostrils down to the toes; and then you breath out from the toes, up the leg, up through the trunk, through the chest and eventually out of your nostrils again.





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It is possible that you feel nothing in which case you just have to simply stay blank there. Whatever you are feeling right now, it is all ok. Just Simply feel and acknowledge what is already here.

So now take a deep breath. As you breathe out, let your senses shift to the **RIGHT** leg and out to the toes of the right foot, the big toe, the little toe, the toes in between. And then breathe into the top, the sides and the sole of the foot, the instep and the heel; up to the ankle, stay in whatever sensations arising from every single breath.

Slowly move your focus and awareness to the right side of the lower body between the ankle and the knee. Can you feel the inside and outside of the shin bone, the calf muscle and the knee? You might feel tingling, twitching, tightness or none at all. Be fully in touch with this region of the body, breathing down into it and breathing out from it. Receive those sensations and allow them to be just as they are.

Now take another deeper breath, breathing into the calf muscle, shin bone up towards your knee; and on the out-breath, let go a little more and follow your out-breath to the right knee, through the kneecap into the joint and out to the surface of the knee, the front, back and sides.

Another deep breath in, you will shift your focus of your awareness to the right thigh, the big strong muscles and the long heavy bones that attach your right knee and hip.

You will try to let go of any tension that may exist. Take a deeper breath, breathing into your right thigh again, and then on the out-breath, bring your attention to the hips, the buttocks at the back, the genital area in the front, the sitting bones, and the entire pelvic girdle. Breathe down into this region and remain open and relax to whatever sensations there may be.

Remain present and still now.

Adjust your postures and breaths and then direct your intention to the upper body from the hips up to the spinal column and neck regions.

Our back and shoulders are often where most of the tensions are rooted and accumulated on a daily basis. I would like you to bring your awareness and breaths down into the lower back.





How do you feel right now? Remember that we are not trying to change our natural sensations but to observe and simply tune in.

Take a deeper breath in then a deeper breath out, let yourself go. Then move your breaths from the lower spine, around to the front of the spine and to the entire rib cage. Allowing deep breaths to fill your ribcage, to expand to the sides, up to the solar plexus and to the chest.

Breathe in now to the upper back, to your shoulder girdles and across both shoulder blades. What are the sensations you are receiving here in this moment?

As tension, tightness and discomfort are commonly stored in these parts of our body, we are now going to explore a little bit deeper with curiosity and alertness, to check in what is right there.

Are the sensations remaining the same or changing with intensity, duration and location? Try to lean into them a little more with acceptance and calmness. It may take some time to happen, so be patient and take deep breaths from moment to moment.

Now take a deep breath into your arms, elbows, hands and wrists, and to your fingers right down to the fingertips, try to free yourself from expectations about what you wish to feel.

Tune in at your very best to the feelings you have in this moment. Is there any tingling, buzzing, pulsing, spasm at the tips of your fingers and thumbs? Or none at all? Just stay with any feelings you have right now.

Let the awareness expand from all your fingers, the palms, along the arms, then to your upper and lower back and to the front and sides of the spine, and out to both shoulders.

As you breathe in, imagine the breath could radiate from the hands, wrists, forearms, elbows, upper arms, and to the shoulders. Then a deep breath out, let it all go

Now move your awareness to your neck and breath into the sides, front and back of the neck. What feelings can you receive on all facets of the neck and also perhaps around the jaws and inside the throat? Tune in to whatever you can find here. Allow them to stay or wander off,





to appear and disappear. Once again remind ourselves that we are not going away with any sensations. we simply acknowledge their presence. It is ok to say to yourself, *"I feel unease, I am bored, or I cannot bear the pain, etc."*. *"This is normal and natural."*

See if it is possible to let go of our usual habits to want things to be a certain way; to feel in a certain way; to judge how well we are doing in order to match our expectations and ideals. See if it is possible to let go of all of that, especially when we are emotionally unstable or suffering from pain. Continue to follow my voice all the way through as best as you can.

For most of us, it is almost our second nature that we take our body for granted until something goes wrong such as physical trauma, injuries or merely discomfort.

So now we are learning to take charge of our senses to be with our body with full attention, to notice what sensations that are coming and going without prior conditionings and judgements. Simply reckon that there's no definite way as to how we should feel. Whatever we're feeling is just what we're feeling right at this moment.

Now take a deep breath in and as you breath out, let go of the neck and direct your attention onto the face and the head.

We'll start with the lower jaw, from the jawline all the way to the bottom tip of your chin.

Then pay attention to the sensations inside the mouth cavity, the teeth, the gums, the tongue, the palate and the back of the throat where the air passes to the lungs through the trachea (windpipe).

Perhaps also feel the areas around the mouth: the lips and then to the nostrils.

Slowly shift the focus of your awareness to the cheeks, the temples and the ears. Then to the eyes, around the eyes, the eyelids, the eyeballs, the space between the eyebrows and up to the forehead. Notice the subtle connection among all sensual organs. By turning your senses inward, check to see if you can switch on all your senses including sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch.

Imagine that you can breathe into the whole cranium through the skin and scalp. Now take a deep long breath in, from the base of the spine, up into your lungs, then continue all the way up to the crown of your head. Then you breathe out from the head, the lungs and you empty your breath completely when it reaches down to the base of the spine again.







Imagine also that you could breathe in through the vertical spinal column and that the breath could radiate to the limbs and internal organs, eventually out through the bottom of your feet.

And when you take the next breath, you could direct the breath from the bottom of your feet, up to the trunk and limbs in all dimensions and ultimately out of the top of your head.

Stay at this vision for a moment and observe what it does to your senses.

.....

Slowly return to all of your senses once again, and resume to your original position when you first started this practice, either lying down or sitting up with good support.

Simply being here now.

Tender and relax

As bright as sunbeams

As soft as clouds

Not trying to find a particular feeling.

Allowing yourself to be exactly as you are.

Allowing your body to be exactly as you find it right at this moment in time.

***Invite a sense of letting go, a sense of quietness within the body, a sense of surrender to the space you are now***





## MODULE 3: SELF AFFIRMATION





*'Vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.'* ~ Carl Jung

### ***Take just a minute...***

1. I am quiet and still
2. I speak to my senses, "for a moment stop, just stop, relax and be calm"
3. My thoughts begin to slow down... my mind becomes clear...
4. My mind is free and at rest
5. I breathe slowly. My mind relaxes, is refreshed
6. I breathe in, I gather all tensions and anxious thoughts; I breathe out, I blow them all away. The body relaxes and my mind becomes free.
7. I let go of the past, fear and uncertainties.
8. Today I live with joy and love, and least resistance
9. I focus only on what makes me feel good at the present moment





With a list of self-affirmation statements, you now use it to reinforce your core beliefs associated with these statements and repeat them as often as you can, even every day. Rehearse the self-talks by making these statements accessible to you so that they are your daily reminder to be positive, confident and resilient to any situations.





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## **MODULE 4: GENTLE YOGA EXERCISES**

*(\*SEE APPENDIX 1 FOR A FULL INSTRUCTIONAL MANUAL)*



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We'll be doing some simple stretches in various body positions and in a progressive manner, so that you will see the improvement of your body after your shoulder operation besides the current physiotherapy exercises.

During the practice, we learn our limits in a very gentle way without identifying success or failure, but more in being curious about our body from moment to moment.

The exercises are best done after you finish the simple/extended breath work exercises so that you are more in tune with your breathing.

### **Progressive muscle relaxation exercises**

We will start by doing a few progressive muscle relaxation exercises on a standing position. At some stage, you will have to contract certain muscles, but only mildly to feel slight tension which then goes with subsequent muscle release.

During standing, you want to be struggle-free to the best of your ability. So if you want some supports, you can stand by a wall with your back resting against it.

Stand upright with your feet flat on the floor, pointing forward, legs can be together or slightly apart parallel to each other and your arms at your sides, palms facing out.

Your head is in its natural position and up. Imagine you were a mountain that roots to the earth and rises up to the sky at the same time.

Start to bring your attention to your hands and arms.

Make a very small fist with your hands and then raise your arms forward and up slowly by an inch or two.

Gradually feel the tension from the fists up to the shoulders and perhaps even the neck. Hold that position for a few breaths.

Then resume to their neutral position alongside the body. Now relax your arms entirely.

Secondly, shrug your shoulders up ever so slightly towards your earlobes. Feel the tension in the shoulders and neck. Hold that for a few breaths.

Then slowly lower the shoulders back down. Now relax your arms entirely. Let the sensation of tension completely go.





Thirdly, move the arms from to the side of your body, up past the shoulders and over your head, keeping them there parallel to each other by the ears; or if it is possible, hook the thumbs together.

Keep this posture for a moment and feel the stretch down the arms into the armpits, and along the sides of your body.

Notice what happens as you breathe in and out, that the sensations from the stretch may shift slightly.

Now slowly let the arms fall to the sides of your body and hang down naturally.

Come to rest and simply stand and notice the after effects of these postures that you have been adopting. Remember that you are not going beyond your limits that you start to feel pain and cannot breath steadily. You are simply let your body move along with each inhalation and exhalation, and then tune into the present sensations just as you find them.





## Practice Manual Overview

### WHO FOR?

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*AFTER* Rotator cuff tear repair surgery

- Postoperative persistent chronic pain
- Arm weakness and stiffness
- Discomfort when laying on side
- Dull ache and soreness around shoulders, neck and upper back
- Keen to try alternative options besides medication and physiotherapy

### LEVELS

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L1 – FUNDAMENTAL

L2 – PROGRESSION

L3 - ADVANCING

### STYLES

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FLOW (SIMPLIFIED AND FULL)

STATIC







## **MODULE 5: GUIDED COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY (CBT)**





**We are largely responsible for the way we feel and behave.**

Cognitive behavioural therapy is based on the principle that we are potentially capable of knowing our thoughts, speech, actions and emotions. Through a series of self assessments and examinations, we learn that our thoughts, actions, reactions, beliefs, etc. affect our lives and emotions that go with them. By doing so, we change our habitual patterns (both thinking and acting) to improve the quality of our lives, especially after experiencing physical traumas such as injuries and years of persistent pain.

**The meaning of CBT ....**

**COGNITIVE** - thinking processes

Our thinking processes (repetitive) affect the way we make decisions, opinions of ourselves and how we feel

**BEHAVIOURS** - doing processes

Our behaviours (habitual actions) are either conscious or unconscious as a result of what we learned and become accustomed to

**THERAPY** - treatment for a condition, diagnosis or assessment

1.Observation: Notice what is happening to you RIGHT NOW, such as thoughts, feelings and emotions in your body.

Be open to their coming and going without judgement for a short while

Allow these sensations to be there, just the way they are now in your mind and body

Try to let go of our habitual thinking pattern to want to change or get better

Tune in to their existence that are inside you

2.Enter to the breathing space

3.focus on the breath, the body, sounds, thoughts and feelings





- A. Breathing**
- B. Guided Imagery**
- C. The Raisin Meditation**
- D. Positive Thinking**

### **A. Mindful Breathing**

In this section we will cultivate our attention to the breath itself, and to the breathing space that we reside in.

Remember, you are not forcing or pushing the body to be in a certain way; but rather, with intention to nurture it with higher awareness to explore your physical and mental territories and limitations.

To begin, find a comfortable position which is either lying down or sitting up on a chair with firm support so that you have good posture and align our spine, shoulders and head readily. Your posture should be firm and erect but not stiff. Allow gentle adjustments as and when you need it to maintain a balanced poise throughout.

Now see if you can steer your intention to the movement of breath. I would like you to create a landscape of your body, that your breaths are traveling through all limbs, penetrating into the internal organs, and navigating on the surface of your skin.

On your *inhale*, notice the breath entering into the nostrils, through the windpipe downward and into the lungs. Send your awareness to the front, back and sides of the ribcage, the chest, the belly...expanding and opening

On your *exhale*, you begin to soften the body fully and let it be quiet and still. Notice the breath gradually recedes away from the body, releasing and emptying. Observe closely this cyclical pattern of in-breath and out-breath which makes your muscles and joints relax and soften....your breaths continue rising and falling naturally, filling and emptying, receiving and releasing, just as they are....

And now notice the brief pause between the in-breath and out-breath, where there is no breath, that there is complete calmness and silence in that moment.....adjoining the steady heartbeat, one beat at a time. Then you re-open the body and let the breath come back in again momentarily.





With the gentle flow of in-breath, out-breath and the subtle pause in between, you whisper in your ear, “I am here, breathing, feeling safe, calm, painless....I am as strong as I need to be”.... Allow the whispering voice repeat over and over again so that you can stay at the sensations for as long as you can.

Your mind is likely to wander again and again and again. You simply notice the nature of the wandering mind, and then you come back to the breaths. While you are breathing mindfully, you check in from time to time to see if you are alert in the present moment, your posture is well-balanced just as you started, you are awake without falling into the dark lethargic space, and that you are fully aligned to your intentions. Mindful breathing can help you explore your state of mind and the emotions that go with it, whether it is normal and regular, or abnormal and requires your special attentions. The patterns of your breaths are red flags that alert you when something has to be adjusted.

## **B. Guided Imagery**

With all guided imagery, the first step is set up an environment where you are able to release physical and mental tension so that you can fully indulge in the imagery that is created for you here. For now, set yourself up in a comfortable position, which can be sitting on a chair or lying on a bed or on the floor. Find extra supports if necessary such as a blanket, yoga blocks, soft pillows, etc.

The following imagery is designed to help ease pain. After the operation, you are likely to suffer from physical pain for quite some time now. I would like you to stay open to the sensations of pain, and then to be receptive to the possibility of being in comfort.

Begin to become aware of your breathing. You don't have to change anything or work at it, just notice it.....the steady rise and fall of your breath....breathing in with nourishment, life-force and innate power; breathing out with that which is no longer serving you, the worry, anxiety, or discomfort...

If thoughts, feelings and emotions should arise and draw for your attention, there's no need to engage or jump on them. Simply let them be as clouds in the sky, appearing and disappearing. Whenever you are distracted by them, there is no need to feel bad about it. Remember that your responses are normal, this is what your mind does. Just simply return to your pure attention of the inhalation and exhalation, the rising and falling, the nourishing and releasing.

Notice your muscles and joints begin to soften, your chest wide open.





Feel that the tension begins to drain away as you let your breath pass through your torso, across the shoulders, down the spine, along the arms and legs and into the finger tips and toes. Now that you become more and more relaxed, the tensions melt further away from all dimensions of your body: your throat, chest, ribs, belly, backside, hips, thighs, knees, calves, ankles, exiting whole outer shell of the body.

Until now, you may still have some ill spots and pain somewhere in your body that you just cannot shake off because perhaps of long-term ordeals in the past. I would like you to direct your full awareness to that particular region by placing your hands over there. Firstly, rub your hands gently together to generate a layer of heat, then you place them over that area. Feel that the warmth of your palms are penetrating into that region. Taking your breaths with you, you inhale deeply to send out vital power, you exhale deeply to send the unease away. Continue this process for a while and notice the subtle change, flux and stillness.

Now that you are comfortable and free of tension, imagine that you are in your favourite place which makes you feel relaxed, at ease and calm. Allow your inner vision to see a landscape composed of all sorts of natural scenes: the Sun, the Earth, water, wind and air. You watch as it comes into your sight...you are simply taking in the beauty of this place. With all your sensual organs switched on, visualize the colours, aromas, sounds, temperature, etc. of each element:

The **warmth** from the Sun,  
The **gentle blows** of the wind,  
The **fragrance** of the air,  
The **rattling sounds** of the vegetation. etc.

Allow your own sensations to go with the tranquility and peace of all scenes.

You become aware of the movement of air as birds flying across the sky: the whooshing sound of wings flapping in the air... and you see other birds drifting aloft on the wind and making soft landing on the water surface as they hunt for fish...

In the midst of all natural happenings, you are experiencing right now, you perhaps have a whiff of desire for support to help you deal with current discomfort and pain. Allow this desire to stay while you are enjoying the peace and quiet offered by the natural scenes we have arrived at. No need to engage in figuring why or what or how this desire come along. Simply let them pass and leave.





As you take one more look around at this place of beauty, peace and connection, note the colors, sounds, aromas and sensations --- all are readily available to you whenever you desire. Your mind and body know the way and will bring you here.

Notice the peaceful sensations within your body.....

Make the brief trip back to your chair, or bed or floor. Find yourself being at ease, relieved, calm, rejoiced, you are here.

Each time you allow this experience of nourishment and release to happen, you strengthen your willpower and you are reinforcing the inner ability to heal.

There is a new sense of comfort, refresh and renewal for pain has eased away and vitality reunites with your body.

### **C. The Raisin Meditation**

The purposes of this exercise are

- 1/ To increase your awareness and curiosity in one single object (raisin) and also during an activity
- 2/ To be mindful of every single action you take
- 3/ To have full attention to what is right in front of you, the here and now
- 4/ To take small steps and be slow in cultivating absolute focus

Now prepare a few raisins or alike such as nuts or dried fruits. Take a pen and a piece of paper to record all your sensations and their changes during the process.

There are 8 steps of this exercise. Each stage lasts between 20 and 30 seconds. Each step touches upon one of your basic senses, allowing you to be mindful to all your behaviours and subsequent reactions.

#### **Step 1 - Hold**

Take one raisin and hold it in the hand or between two fingers

Approach it as though you have ever seen it before

Feel the weight of it on your hand, and the subtle texture against the skin of your fingers or palm

#### **Step 2 - Sight**





Remember that you have never seen a raisin before  
Look at it carefully and with full attention  
Explore every feature of it such as the colour, the shadows, the hollow bits, the ridges on the surface of the raisin

### **Step 3 - Touch**

Gently rub the raisin between your index finger and thumb  
How does it feel on your skin? Is it dry or moist?  
Any textural contrasts such as stickiness, smoothness, squishiness, etc.

### **Step 4 - Smell**

Bring it to your nose and smell it  
What scent do you discover? No scent, a little or a distinctive smell?

### **Step 5 - Space**

Slowly bring it into your mouth and place it on your tongue before chewing it  
Simply explore the sensations of having it on your tongue before the next step

### **Step 6 - Taste**

Carefully take a small bite of the raisin  
Feel the small bits of the raisin start to fall apart inside your mouth as you continue to chew it  
Continue to chew it very slowly but do not swallow it just yet  
Can you identify the change in taste and texture before and during the bites?  
Perhaps discharge released from your saliva glands as the taste buds get stimulated?

### **Step 7 - Swallow**

Bring your awareness to the moment when you are ready to swallow the raisin  
Experience the full process from the instinct to swallow it to actually do it  
How do the tongue and throat react to the movements of the raisin?





Can you attune to your minute sensations as it slowly move down from your throat, along the esophagus and into the stomach? Notice every second of the swallowing process until it finally disappears from your mouth

### **Step 8 - Aftereffects**

Take a few moments to register the aftermath of this eating process

Is there an aftertaste?

What happens when the raisin disappears from your fingers to your mouth and finally to your stomach?

Do you have the urge to look for another raisin or a desire to eat something else?

Try to check in your instinctive responses. Can you catch yourself even in just a split second that you could only see the raisin but nothing else, no past stories, no future longings, no plans, nothing at all?

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### ***The New Way....***

*We can sometimes zoom in and out as though we were checking in through the camera aperture. Let's sit for a while in this way.*

*When our attention is taken away by random thoughts and stories, we know we can return to our breaths and reset our mind flow again.*

*But here is another option for you: To embrace the tensing, bracing and holding on. Open to whatever it is. Purposely direct your attention to where those feelings are the strongest and remain there. Perhaps even saying to yourself, it's OK, I can bear and cope with it, letting it just as it is. Let me sit with it, even be critical about it. Remember you are not trying to like your feelings. It's OK not to like them. I say to myself quietly, 'I breathe into the challenge, allow it to be the centre of my awareness, and I breathe out to let it go.'; 'I have compassion to my thoughts, I am curious about them but not rejecting, I am willing to explore them deeply with both softness and strength'. Continue this conversation until these sensations are no longer haunting you. Then you step forward to meet the challenges once again.*

*Then simply return to sitting and breathing.*

*Each in-breath you take is newness and nourishment.*

*Each out-breath you take is release and relief.*







- Be open, curious, compassionate and determined.
- To be kind to ourselves
- To make smart choices

### D. Positive Thinking

Your beliefs are from demands or expectations imposed by yourself, others, or the world around you. The recurrent pattern of rigid, imperative statements can create pressure to your behaviours and then result in frustrations if those demands cannot be met.

On the contrary, you can reverse this negative pattern by changing the ways you express your intentions or goals. You acknowledge the inevitable fallback from time to time but you are also determined that your goals to restore from pain and past defeats will be attained.

This exercise will help you make better choices of thoughts and actions rather than making rigid demands. In doing so, you can move away from unrealistic self-imposed expectations and cultivate more flexible beliefs about living

Negative/Rigid/Unhealthy beliefs and statements	Positive/flexible/healthy beliefs and statements
1. I do not think I can do it	1. I will have a good try
2. That is too difficult	2. It is challenging but I believe I can do it
3. I give up, it's not helping or too much	3. I do not give up easily, I am resilient
4. I am too old for that	4. It is me regardless how old I am
5. I am not strong or flexible	5. I will still go for it





Negative/Rigid/Unhealthy beliefs and statements	Positive/flexible/healthy beliefs and statements
6. I do not think this is going to work on me	6. I am open to possibility of change
7. I am not good at it	7. I look forward to learning
8. I fail	8. I am worthy, I am not a loser

Next step after creating powerful, constructive and positive self-talks, we recite these statements as often as we can. Repetition is the key to self-empowerment. Just like our habitual way of thinking and behaving negatively, we repeat them again and again and they become automatic and believable. Likewise, if we repetitively commit to healthy beliefs and positive thoughts, we can reinforce our beliefs and goal-setting habits.

When we experience physical pain in our body, many of us would immediately find a solution to remove it or change it to a lesser degree at least; rather than switching our pattern into paying full attention inward to check our psyche in the first place.

As we grow, we must learn to confront our day-to-day challenges of stress and discomfort and to know the skills that tackle them properly. By integrating different modalities of mindful exercises, we will learn how to embrace negativities as a result of physical trauma and alike.





Discomfort, tensions, tightness, disturbance, etc. surrounds us whether we like them or not. By employing the exercises to keep our hand in, we will not be haunted by fear, self-doubt and negative talks. They are the solid skills that you can always apply in your own right.

### Takeaway messages

- \* Remind yourself that each experience is an experience without being good or bad, or a set target. You are here to explore and meet what comes to you.
- \* Start and finish a practice with fresh eyes and an open mind. Say to yourself that each time you practice, there is something different and special from the last one.
- \* If you find it difficult to concentrate, try to count your breaths: I breathe in for 1-2-3, I breathe out for 3-2-1... Repeat on the same counts for a few more cycles until your mind comes to rest again.
- \* Set a routine to practice, whichever part of the programme you think is best for you at the time, for however long you can manage. For just a minute, just move on to your seat and let it begin naturally.

