



## TEACHERS' NOTES

LESSON ONE



# PLAYING ATTENTION



TRAINING THE MUSCLE OF YOUR MIND

**LESSON ONE:**

# Playing Attention

This is a sample lesson from the 14-lesson .b curriculum for 11-18 year-olds. For more information about how to train to teach the full course, please visit [www.mindfulnessinschools.org](http://www.mindfulnessinschools.org)

# LESSON 1: PLAYING ATTENTION



## OBJECTIVES

- To introduce pupils to the faculty of their attention
- For pupils to experience that they can direct their attention
- For pupils to understand the untrained mind's fickle nature – it is like a puppy
- To begin to provide some simple tools for training their attention
- To introduce key attitudes to attention-training: kindness, patience, repetition

## LESSON FLOW

### FOR BEST RESULTS

1. CHOOSE STRONG SILENCE
2. BE IN YOUR OWN BUBBLE
3. GIVE SPACE TO OTHERS
4. BE HERE
5. TRY THIS AT HOME



And here are the ground rules for the classroom that will help you make the very most out of the course.

1. "ATTENTION"  
IS LIKE  
AIMING OR POINTING A TORCH  
IN A PARTICULAR DIRECTION



We have this faculty called 'attention'. It works like a torch/spotlight

- We can direct our attention
- We can then explore what we find
- But our attention can be hijacked by what is more immediate and interesting

PLAY ATTENTION!



Let's experience how to direct our attention

A playful mini body scan:

- Start with hands
- Go to feet
- Finish with breathing

PUPPY TRAINING



It's not easy: you can't control it

- Our minds are like puppies
- Train your mind like you train a puppy... with kindness, patience, repetition
- Aim and sustain your attention for 2 minutes

FINGER BREATHING



But it CAN be trained

- There are strategies to help stabilise our attention
- Try 'finger breathing'



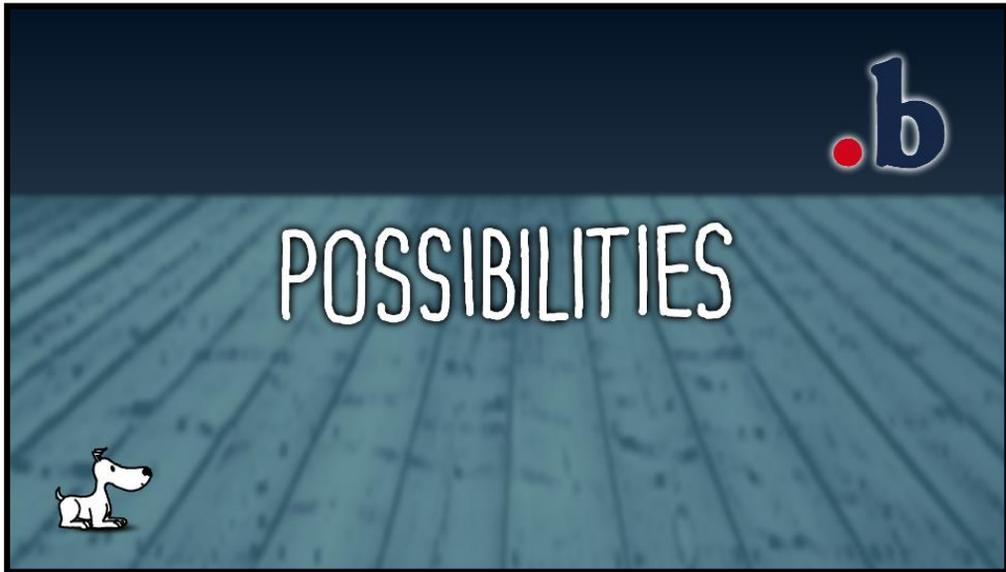
## HOME PRACTICE

1. Watch animation for Lesson 1, and follow the guided practice
2. A 'Having a Go' sheet
3. 'What do you think so far?' sheet



## RESOURCES

- Torch / flashlight
- Animation clip
- Optional worksheets



*We suggest you put the student booklets/worksheets on desks before the class arrives. This works especially well if you have printed them in colour. It reminds the students of the **possibilities** mindfulness may offer them as discussed last lesson.*

*This slide is really a place-holder to give the class something to focus on when they enter the room.*

Welcome to Lesson 1 of our **.b** course. As I said in the Introduction lesson, this mindfulness course is all about **possibilities**: each one of you might find the course helps you in a different way. So what can you remember from the Introduction lesson last week?

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## ACTIVITY

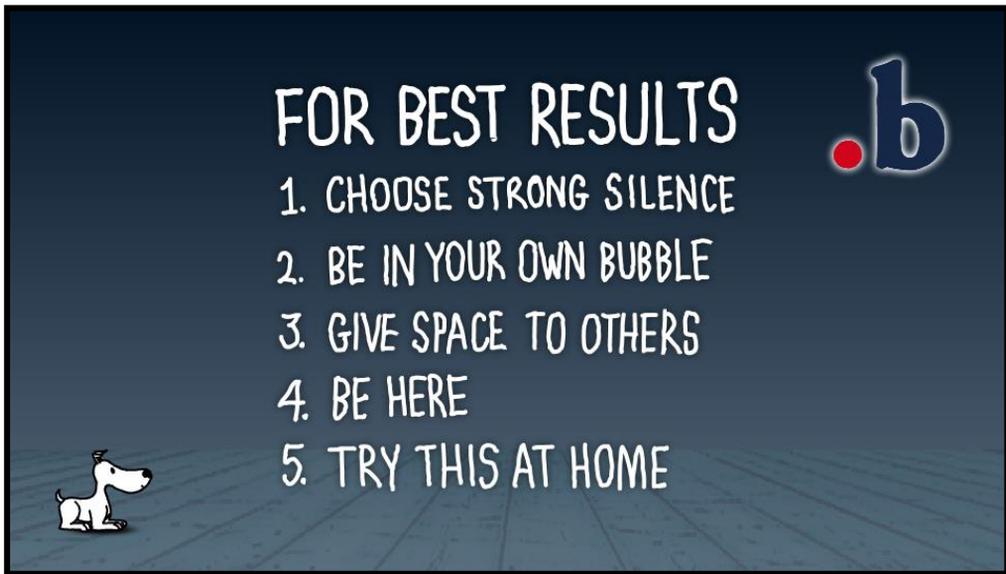
*One option here is to ask them to work in small groups, pooling their ideas and then feeding back to whole group. You might ask one of the class to act as scribe as these are written on the board.*

*To help guide their discussion, the following questions could be written on the board:*

- *What is mindfulness?*
- *How might it help you?*
- *When can it be used?*
- *What practices did we try?*
- *What do we need to do if we want mindfulness to **really** help us (home practice)?*

*Take a couple of minutes to hear any responses.*

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We particularly learned about how training your attention can help you in a whole range of ways.

*If you discussed strong/weak silence in the introduction then you could ask whether the class remember the two types of silence. If not, introduce this concept here in order to make sense of bullet point one.*

To help us achieve some strong silence when we want it, and get the most out of our time together in these lessons, let's spend a few minutes discussing some ground rules. A bit like when you follow a recipe, we're going to call the list 'For Best Results'.

## ACTIVITY

If we were to put together a list of things we need to help us create the best environment for learning mindfulness together what would it include? How could we help each other and ourselves to create some strong silence? How could we all help to create an environment that allows us to get the most out of our mindfulness sessions?

Discuss with a partner, and see if you can agree on 5 'ground rules' that will help us in these lessons. Jot these down on the 'For Best Results' worksheet.



*Ask for some feedback or just a few of their ideas.*

*Note – this activity shouldn't take too long otherwise you may find yourself rushing through key parts of this lesson. If you only have 40 minutes, a few minutes should be enough on ground rules.*

There have been some really creative ideas here. I have also put together a list of my own ideas... [\[Click\]](#)

*There is a copy of this list in the back of the booklet for reference. Again, take care not to spend too long on this if you only have a 40 minute lesson.*



How many of the following rules have you included [\[Click through each point\]](#) :

**1. Choose strong silence:** We've already talked about the value of strong silence. What else we might do to help us get the most out of the course?

**2. Be in your own bubble:** During the lessons, try to stay in your own 'pod', as if you had come along to a custom-built training session for your mind. You won't be able to focus if you're thinking about what your neighbour is doing or thinking, or the next witty line to make your friend laugh. Try to hold a sense of being with others, sharing an experience, but being in your own virtual bubble so you can get as much out of the lesson as possible.

**3. Give space to others:** When a discussion does open up, **everyone needs to feel safe, so they can say what they like** without fear of comments shouted out or laughter. Respect each others' views, whatever they may be.



*Having said this, as a teacher, it will be important not to encourage pupils to share **too much** personal information which might then be used against them when they are in the corridor or in the playground. This is **NOT** a therapy session! As Susan Kaiser-Greenland puts it so eloquently, don't 'reveal the soft-underbelly' of a child in a classroom context.*

**4. Be here:** Please be **punctual**. We only have this one lesson each week, so our time together is really valuable. If you arrive late and the lesson has already started, slide in as quietly as you can. Please don't disturb others - don't even catch anyone's eye - just come in, sit down, and begin.

**5. Try this at home:** I'll be giving you some suggested 'homework', but not like the usual homework – hopefully, it might even be fun!

*At this point, you can ask them for any further ideas they may have and suggest they add into the blank spaces on the 'For Best Results' worksheet any that they feel are particularly useful or personally relevant to them. You might use their sheets for a wall display throughout the course as a gentle reminder. If you have time you might want to use the electronic blank version of the 'For Best Results' poster in the resources for this lesson to create you own class version of the poster. Alternatively, you could ask them to create their own posters as part of the 'homework' for the coming week.*

So, how do we feel about these ground rules? *[Discuss]*

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So let's begin Lesson 1. **.b** is about training our minds, and we're going to be looking at one of the most powerful and least understood aspects of our minds: **the power of our ATTENTION.**

Let's look at this word "attention". Hands up if you've ever been told to "**pay attention**"! **What does this phrase mean to you?**

When do people/teachers tend to say it and why? Does it have a positive or a negative feeling to you?

*[Young people often think of "Pay Attention" as a negative injunction. Try to encourage them to let go of this and reframe the way they think about this word.]*

But "attention" is much more subtle and interesting than that. On this course we'll pay attention to things in a completely different way... to the way you think, the way you move, the way you eat, the way you breathe, the way you live every moment of your life.

Because "**attention**" really *matters*! Every moment of every day is spent paying attention to one thing after another. *[Give examples: waking up, alarm clock, shower, breakfast, thinking about school, family, the bus coming, sights and sounds of the day etc. Or in the classroom now: teacher talking, pictures on walls, what's happening through windows, people around us, sounds, memories, body sensations of hunger, daydreams etc.]*

**We're never not paying attention to something**, except perhaps when we're asleep, and perhaps even then...



*[For this part of the lesson use a **Maglite** torch/flashlight (or equivalent) as a visual aid, pointing its beam to one thing after another in the classroom or even onto your body, zooming in and out to illustrate how we can narrow or widen the beam of our attention. Consider how to darken the room.]*

**Paying attention to things is a bit like pointing a flashlight** at one thing after another. Our attention scans around selecting things to focus on...

For example, **let's DIRECT OUR ATTENTION onto THIS.** *[Shine light on an object in the room, perhaps one they might not have noticed. Encourage them to look at the object as if for the first time: at the line, at the colour, at the shape of it.]*

What's more we can choose either to **zoom our attention in** *[narrow the beam to highlight one aspect of the object]* or we can choose to **expand it** *[widen beam of light]*.

We can even do this with our own body *[shine the light on the other hand, then move it up close to pick out a single finger]*.

However, we can't always control our attention, as sometimes it will be pulled away by something that is **more immediate or exciting.** *[Drop a book / kick a dustbin / throw something that makes a noise]*. See how our attention is hijacked by something else that it hears or sees.



At other times our attention just **wanders around like this** [*let the torch roam around the room, stopping here for a moment, then going on to the next thing*].

And at other times **it can even feel like it does this** [*switch off the torch*]. We just feel dozy or vacant. Do you ever feel like that?

We can notice something else: that **when the attention finds something that it's interested in, it tends to stay there for a while and explore the experience** – maybe it listens to someone as they're talking, or looks at people out of the window, or thinks about a painful or a pleasant memory, or has a fantasy about what's for lunch.

We can call this **“Exploration”** or **“Investigation”**. This tends to connect us to what we're paying attention to, helping us to be curious about, and stay focused on that experience, whatever it might be.

Earlier I shone the torch on THIS [*the object from previous page*], and we spent a few moments **exploring and investigating** it, looking at it carefully and with **curiosity**. Sometimes we even begin to notice things we didn't realise were there before.

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Now as our first practical mind-training exercise, we're going to use these qualities of **DIRECTING ATTENTION** and **EXPLORING / INVESTIGATING** and see what happens. Some of what follows will be familiar from our Introduction session.

Rather than “pay attention” let's [Click] “**PLAY attention**”



## PRACTICE

*[This builds on the “hands” practice of the Introduction so it shouldn't feel completely alien to them.]*

We're going to start by **repeating the clapping exercise** that we did last week. Feet shoulder width apart on the floor and sitting nice and tall. I'm going to clap three times - 3, 2, 1 - and then straight afterwards, in the same rhythm, you clap as hard as you can 1-2-3. And then just hold out our hands as if you're holding a football or netball. Ready?



*YOU CLAP 3-2-1, then they clap 1-2-3*

Now, placing your attention into your hands, “paying attention” to them, without looking at them, kind of like you are feeling them from the inside, **noticing any physical sensations you might feel there**, maybe a tingling, fizzing, pulsing sensation, maybe a warm “pins-and-needles-ish” feeling, maybe numbness or cold... it doesn’t matter... simply noticing as best you can whatever is there.

Try closing your eyes, if that feels OK, and see if that helps - just paying attention to **whatever** is happening in these things we call hands.

**Zooming that spotlight of attention** even closer: can you feel the **thumbs**, or just one of the thumbs?

Now, as best you can, try hopping your attention from the thumb into the finger next to it. Don’t worry if you can’t, but seeing if you can **walk your attention from finger to finger** until you reach your little fingers.

Again, don’t worry if you can’t, but see if you can zoom in on the very tip of one or both of your **little fingers**.

If you can’t do this, just exploring any sensations at all that are happening right now in the hands.

Now let’s move a little further afield. Resting your hands on the desk or in your lap [**don’t forget this instruction or they’ll be left holding their hands out for the whole practice!**], and dropping your attention down into your **feet**.

Can you feel where your feet are touching the floor? Where, exactly are the contact points with the floor?



Again, let's zoom in more closely. Can you feel the left **big toe**? How about the **little toe**? Can you feel anything in between? Or is it just a bit blurry at the moment? Do they all feel kind of similar?

How about your... **stomach**. Your belly. What does that feel like? As you breathe, can you feel your belly expanding and contracting? Or is that rise and fall happening a bit higher up, in your chest?

And let's explore a bit further. Can you feel...

The small of your **back**? The **ribs** on your left side? Your **right knee**? Your **right elbow**? Your left **earlobe**? Your **tongue**?

And now, your **nose**...? Try taking a slightly longer, deeper breath and seeing if you can feel the physical sensation of the breath at the tip of your nose, or passing in and out of your nostrils. Becoming aware that when you breathe in, the breath feels quite cold, but then once it has had a whizz around your lungs and you breathe out, it feels slightly warmer...

See if you can widen the lens and **feel your whole body breathing**. Feel how breathing is a whole body experience – feeling how the upper body expands as you breathe in, and contracts, lets go, as you breathe out... feel your body sitting and breathing...

Finally, where in your body is it easiest to notice these sensations of breathing? **Where EXACTLY in your body are these sensations of breathing most clear for you? Where do you feel this most vividly or most strongly** – is it in the nose? Or is it in the belly? Or maybe somewhere else? There is no correct answer to this, but see if you can tell where you find it easiest to pay attention to the breath, as we'll come back to this in the next exercise.

And then, when you're ready, gradually opening your eyes.



So, how was that? What did you notice?

*This is a good opportunity to refocus the energy of the class, and get them discussing in pairs and feeding back to the group.*

*Responses are likely to include: the exercise is really hard to do; attention keeps wandering; some bits of my body were easier/harder to focus on than others; why are we doing this?; that was weird!*

*Remind students to stick with it, constantly reassuring them that there is no right or wrong, or being 'good' or 'bad' at these exercises. They are just having a go, and seeing what happens. This is all part of training our attention.*

*There is guidance on how to do 'enquiry' sessions like this in the **How to Teach .b** booklet.*

*There is also a **worksheet** – **Experimenting with the Searchlight of Attention** – where students can note how easy or difficult it was to feel anything in particular parts of the body.*

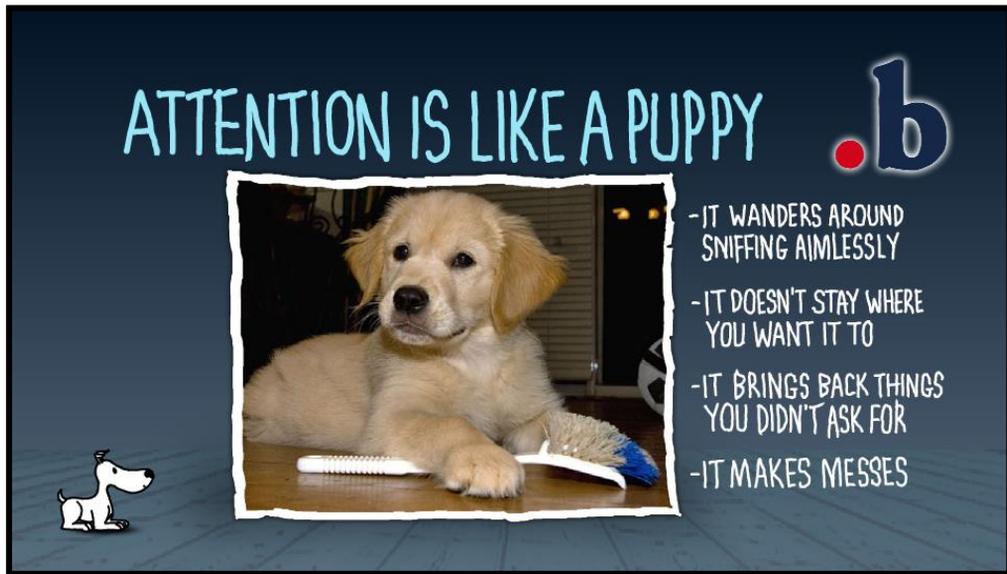
LESSON ONE:  
**EXPERIMENTING WITH THE SEARCHLIGHT OF ATTENTION**

On a scale of 0-10, how easy is it to feel anything?  
(0 = 'I can't feel a thing', 10 = 'It's really easy to feel sensations there').

Body Part	Score out of 10	If you sensed something, what was it like? For example, buzzing, tingling, coolness, heat?
Left big toe		
Left ear		
Right knee cap		
Tongue		
Left rib		
Right elbow		
Other		

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Given what you experienced in that last exercise, in what ways might training our attention be a bit like training a puppy?

*Listen to their responses, which tend to include: 'it's naughty', 'it won't sit still', 'it chews things'.*

So, what we know about our attention, and about puppies is....

*[Click]* I tell my attention to focus here, or focus there, or do this, or do that, but it doesn't stay still. It doesn't do what I say. It wanders.

*[Click]* **It's like training a puppy to "stay" or "heel"**. You tell it to "stay". Does the puppy listen? No. It gets up and runs away. You sit the puppy back down again. "Stay". And the puppy runs away again and again. Sometimes it jumps up and down, sometimes it yelps, pees in the corner or worse. Minds tend not to stay still either, at least not to begin with.

*[Click]* The other thing the puppy does is **bring you things that you didn't even want**. It runs off and finds an old sock or a half-chewed shoe. This is just like the mind trying to pay attention. You ask it to pay attention to one thing, and it goes off and thinks about something completely unrelated!

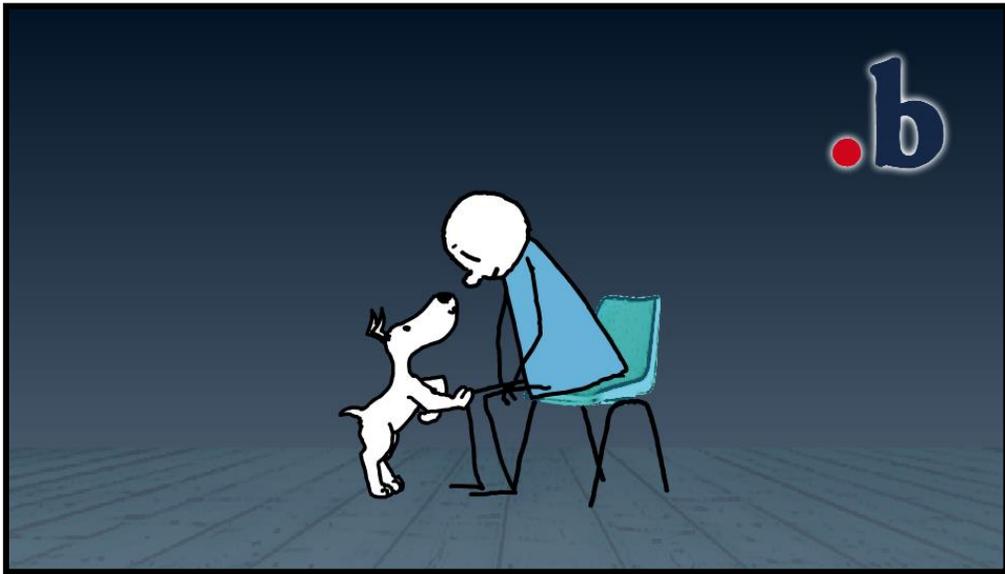
*[Click]* As mindfulness teacher Jack Kornfield says: **"Our minds are like puppies, only they create bigger messes."** What do you think he means?



So, the question is, if we're going to train our attention to work well for us – to become our 'best friend', how do we go about doing that? How would you train a puppy?

*This can often lead to a great deal of energetic discussion and personal storytelling about their own pets, so can run on a bit if not managed carefully. Simple hands up and selecting a few answers is best.*

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## ACTIVITY

Let's now have a look at a section of an animation you're going to have access to at the end of this lesson.

These animations were put together by a hugely talented animator called **Martin Pickles**. They took over a year to create, involving hundreds of hours of discussion and redrafting. We hope you enjoy them. More of his work is at [martinpickles.com](http://martinpickles.com).

You'll also hear the voice of **Niamh Bruce** – a trained **.b** teacher from Ireland and a very experienced mindfulness instructor. She'll guide each practice and help train your attention.

As you watch the following clip, pay close attention to the advice given and see if it is similar to the ideas you've had about how we might train this puppy mind of ours.

*Play first part of Lesson 1 animation, up to the words "you can teach it just to settle down". At the end of the clip:*



So what was the advice?  
Was it similar to yours?  
*Hear their answers.*

So in training our minds  
we have to use the same  
qualities of..... *[Click]*



[Click] **FIRM, PATIENT, KIND REPETITION.** We need these qualities to train a puppy. So too, let's keep **patiently bringing our attention back when we notice that it has wandered off.** If it wanders off a hundred times, we bring it back a hundred times.

And just as with training a puppy, it doesn't help if we treat our minds harshly. We need to be **FIRM**, yes, but also **PATIENT** and **KIND**. If a puppy doesn't do what you want, you wouldn't kick it across the room! Similarly, **if your mind doesn't do what you want it to do, don't worry!** Be gentle with yourself; don't beat yourself up over it.

Please bear this in mind when you're doing the various practical exercises over the weeks to come. A lot of time will be spent sitting, seeing if we can steady our attention and settle it on one thing, for example, our breathing. At some stage, you're likely to find it tricky, but just keep doing the exercises as best you can and over time you'll find your attention beginning to settle more easily.

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Hands up if your puppy mind wandered in the last 5 mins.

*Expect quite a few hands to go up! It's good to remind them at this point that it's quite normal for the mind to wander – that's what it does! They have been sitting down for quite a while so it is worth getting them on their feet if you can. They could stretch, or if you're comfortable with it, get them 'patting' the body. You might start with the arms, work down the front of the body and up the back of the body, finishing with some gentle self-massaging of the scalp and face. Try to encourage a quality of firm, kind, repetitive movements as they do this.*

## PRACTICE

*They can do the next practice either standing or sitting.*

Now let's see if we can bring our attention to this thing that keeps us alive – the physical sensations of breathing. See if you can train the puppy mind to 'sit and stay' through **FIRM, PATIENT, KIND REPETITION.**

*[NB. This exercise can 'throw down the gauntlet' to students who still seem disengaged. You can frame it as a challenge: "Do you have your thoughts, or do your thoughts have you?", or "Do you have any control over what happens in your own head?"]*



*If you're teaching a more vulnerable or lower self-esteem group, keep the tone to "Let's see what happens" instead of a challenge.*

*Some students may find paying attention to their breathing 'weird' and even distressing. Always give them the option of keeping their attention in the feet, hands or tummy, and keeping their eyes open.*

With a puppy, we ask it to "heel", to "sit", to "stay". With our attention we're going to ask it to **"stay" on the physical sensation of breathing for 2 minutes**, and see how it feels to try and keep it there.

Do you remember **at the end of the "Play Attention" exercise I asked where in the body it was easiest for you to feel the sensations of breathing?** Different people feel it more clearly in different places: some find it easier to pay attention to the breath as they feel it coming into their nose; others find it easier to feel breathing in the chest or in the belly.

Let's explore that again. As you breathe right now, and closing your eyes if you find it easier to concentrate, see if you feel the physical touch of the air as you breathe through **your nose**, perhaps at the nostrils, or inside your nose, or even in your throat? **Or do you feel it more in your chest or stomach**, feeling the expansion and contraction of your breathing there. If you can't feel anything anywhere then try putting your hand on your belly or chest and feel it rising and falling.

So now **choosing one of those things to concentrate on**, either the nose or the belly or chest, try paying attention to that point for 2 minutes from the moment I say to start / ring the bell. Aiming your attention at the physical sensation of the breath and trying as best you can to sustain it there.



**AIMING and SUSTAINING.** If during these two minutes your mind wanders away somewhere, just like the puppy would, then gently, patiently, bringing your attention back to the sensations of the breathing in the place that you've chosen, and starting again. Aim and sustain, and if the mind wanders, keep bringing it back to the physical sensation of the breath: cool as you breathe in, warm as you breathe out.

*[After 1 minute simply say "that's one minute" as a way to help bring back anyone whose mind has wandered.*

*[After 2 minutes, simply say "okay, 2 minutes" or ring the bell.]*

So, how did you find that? What did you notice?

*If it feels more appropriate, e.g. if the mood is calm and focused, you might simply ask them to jot down their observations on the 'Training the Puppy Mind on the Breath' worksheet in the student booklet.*

LESSON ONE: **TRAINING THE PUPPY MIND ON THE BREATH**

During this practice you were asked to hold your attention on a part of your body where you could feel the sensations of breathing most clearly for 2 minutes.

Jot down in the space below a few things you noticed during this practice.

1. Draw an arrow pointing at where you noticed your breath most clearly. Head? Chest? Belly? Throat? Somewhere else?
2. Draw an arrow (ideally a different colour) pointing at where you noticed your breath was it less clear or more tricky to feel?
3. Did you notice your attention wandering off away from what you were trying to focus on? If so, where did it go?
4. Was there anything else you noticed?
5. Were you just too tired/busy/not bothered to notice anything at all? If so, what did you do? Give up? Keep trying? Anything else?

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## PRACTICE

There are lots of different techniques we can use to help **stabilise our attention**. One strategy is to count your breaths as you breathe. So what we'll do now, in the last practice that we're going to do today, is to **count how many breaths we do in one minute**.

*The **Finger Breathing** practice is optional. You may just choose to allow them to count breaths as outlined further down this page.*

*Demonstrate finger breathing – with the index finger tracing 'up' the one finger of the other hand on the in-breath and 'down' the other side of that finger on the out-breath].*

*If this isn't comfortable for any reason, e.g. students find it difficult to breathe normally while tracing the breath up and down their fingers, suggest they simply count one in-breath and out-breath by touching or holding one finger at a time. Or they could simply count, not using fingers. If you feel they have been sitting down for too long, you could ask them to stand up and do this practice:*

You may choose to give your attention to the place in the body where you feel the breathing most clearly, as you did before. Or, you may like simply to feel the breathing as it moves through the whole body.



I'll tell you when to start, and then simply count the breaths as they happen 1,2,3 etc. until I say "Stop". **Each in-breath and out-breath together count as one**, so In/Out "One"; In/Out "Two"; In/Out "Three" etc. Are you ready? Let's begin....

*Bring the practice to an end simply by saying "okay; stop" or sound a bell or a sound bar if you prefer.*

How did that go? *[It is **best not to ask 'how many did you do?'** as this easily triggers judgement/ competition/evaluation.]*

*This practice tends to be very popular as a really 'portable' practice they can do anywhere. However, some also find the movement of the fingers 'tickly' or distracting. If so, this is a great opportunity to simply encourage some curiosity around this. You can also introduce the idea that, during this course, they will have opportunities to experiment with different practices they connect with, and which they notice their own resistance to.*

If you do that exercise regularly, you'll notice that at different times of day and in different moods, your breath count may change.

In fact, I'm going to set you a little bit of practice to do between now and the next time I see you. *[Click]*

***In a longer lesson*** you might try the following alternative strategies for stabilising the attention:

1. Really **exploring and investigating** the raw sensations of only a handful of breaths. When we explore or investigate something this really helps us to settle our attention in whatever it is that we're giving attention to. See if you can focus just on the raw physical sensations themselves, without adding anything to them, such as thoughts or judgments.
2. You can **quietly say in your head the words "In" and "Out"** while you're breathing in and out. This can help keep your attention focused on the breathing process.



An important part of this course is you doing some **brief mindfulness practices at home**. As with any skill such as a sport, or playing a musical instrument, **you improve according to how often and how much you practise**.

*[Click through each line of the instructions]* For your Home Practice this week I'd like you to visit [www.dotbe.org](http://www.dotbe.org) – a website just for .b students - and try **using the animation and guided practice** for Lesson One ('Playing Attention' – look for the Puppy icon) **at least once** before the next lesson. If you can do this even more often, that's even better!

*Now explain the Home Practice, maybe using volunteers to read the instructions. Explain how they can access the animations via [www.dotbe.org](http://www.dotbe.org).*

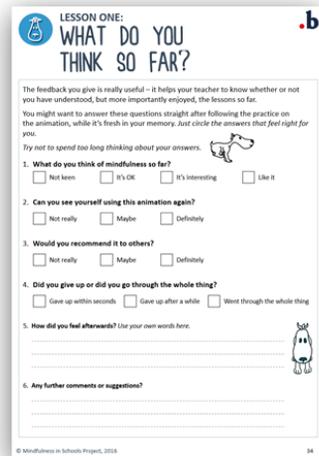
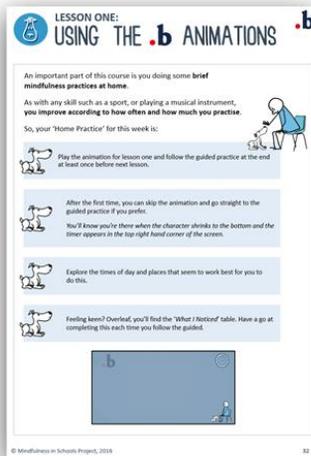
*Every week, they will be asked to:*

- Go to [www.dotbe.org](http://www.dotbe.org) and watch the animation that accompanies the lesson, and then follow the guided practice that leads straight on from this.
- There are also worksheets that go with home practice:
- A 'Having a Go' sheet that encourages them to observe and record their experiences around the practices set (a journal of sorts), and also

*Additional sheets to further develop their understanding of the core intentions and themes associated with the practices.*



You can clearly identify any sheets associated with Home Practice as they will have the app icon for that lesson on the top left hand corner (see over).



It is up to you whether you set them one or more of the worksheets and whether or not you choose to collect them in each week if you do so. These are certainly a good way of focusing the students and giving them a task to complete, but each group is different.

Each time you sit down to do your practice, you can either watch the whole animation or go straight to the guided practice section. You'll know you're there when the character shrinks to the bottom and the timer appears in the top right hand corner of the screen.

Check that they all understand the tasks, and that they are all clear about what they're being asked to do.

This is a sample lesson from the 14-lesson .b curriculum for 11-18 year-olds. For more information about how to train to teach the full course, please visit [www.mindfulnessinschools.org](http://www.mindfulnessinschools.org)



## ACTIVITY

*If you finish early you might use the time remaining to **get feedback on the animation**. Did they like it? What did they / didn't they like? This will help you to pitch it to them in different ways, depending on their age. An older class may find the first animation 'young', whereas a younger class may find it harder to connect with the later ones. **Manage their expectations by encouraging an openness and curiosity.***

*You might **show them the first 11 seconds again** and use the swirling bubbles and .b for discussion. What is this suggesting?*

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# LESSON ONE:

# POSSIBILITIES

happiness

pain

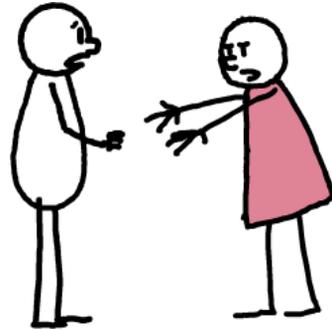
hate

relationships

worry



depression



fitness

stress

love

calm

family

joy

kindness

image

fear

illness

home

sport

exams

peace

music

anger



food

future

faith

school

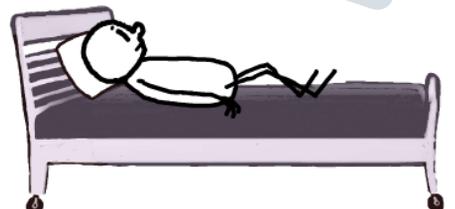
money

addiction

bullying

self-confidence

sleep





LESSON ONE:



# FOR BEST RESULTS

1. How to create the best environment for learning mindfulness together:

- A. ....
- B. ....
- C. ....
- D. ....
- E. ....

2. Can you think of any more? If so, write them below...

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

1

**CHOOSE  
STRONG  
SILENCE**

'Weak silence' is when you're quiet because you're made to be. Strong silence is when you're quiet because you want to be... because you understand that it will benefit you. Sometimes it feels strange to begin with, but once you get used to it, it is tremendously nourishing.

2

**BE IN  
YOUR OWN  
BUBBLE**

Come into the class as usual... banter, laughter, whatever. But so that the right atmosphere in each lesson can be created quickly, there will be a kind of transition exercise. This is a signal that says "relax, take it easy" but also cues you to get 'into the zone'. Think of it as turning up for a training session for the mind, as if you're entering a mind-lab. On the one hand you're sharing an experience, but to get the most out of it you want to be in your own virtual bubble for the lesson.

3

**GIVE SPACE  
TO OTHERS**

In discussions everyone needs to feel safe that they can say what they like, without fear of teasing or laughter flying back at them because of what they've said. Please respect each other's views, whatever they may be.

4

**BE HERE**

Please be punctual. We only have a set number of lessons so our time together is valuable. If you arrive late and the lesson has already started, slide in as quietly as you can. Please don't disturb others - don't even catch anyone's eye - just come in, sit down, and begin.

5

**TRY THIS  
AT HOME**

We can't force you to do the Home Practice, but all the research says that the more you practise, the more you'll learn. Find a time every day when you can do the exercises ... the most you will be asked to do in any one session is 15 minutes. And if you are a bit sceptical about this mindfulness stuff then it's even more important. You just won't 'get it' until you've tried it. Have a go!

# LESSON ONE: FOR BEST RESULTS



What to do	Why?
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	



## LESSON ONE:



# PLAYING ATTENTION

### In this lesson you will learn to...

- 1 Direct your attention
- 2 Explore and investigate what you find
- 3 Train your mind to *"aim and sustain"*

### Attention is like a puppy



- We ask the mind to 'sit' or 'stay' in a certain place
- But it isn't very good at staying still for long
- It wanders off
- It keeps fetching things (thoughts) we didn't ask for
- Sometimes it makes a real mess
- **Every time it wanders off we bring it back**

You can help your mind to settle by **investigating** and **exploring** physical sensations with real **curiosity**.

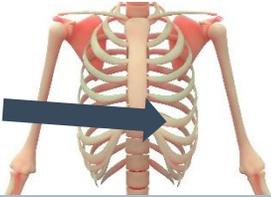
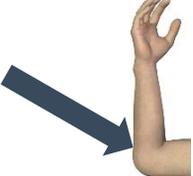
There is no 'right' or 'wrong' sensation. What we're doing is **noticing whatever is there**, be it comfortable or uncomfortable, familiar or 'weird'

LESSON ONE:



# EXPERIMENTING WITH THE SEARCHLIGHT OF ATTENTION

On a scale of 0-10, how easy is it to feel anything?  
 (0 = 'I can't feel a thing', 10 = 'It's really easy to feel sensations there').

Body Part	Score out of 10	If you sensed something, what was it like? For example, fizzing, tingling, coolness, heat?
Left big toe 		
Left ear 		
Right knee cap 		
Tongue 		
Left rib 		
Right elbow 		
Other		

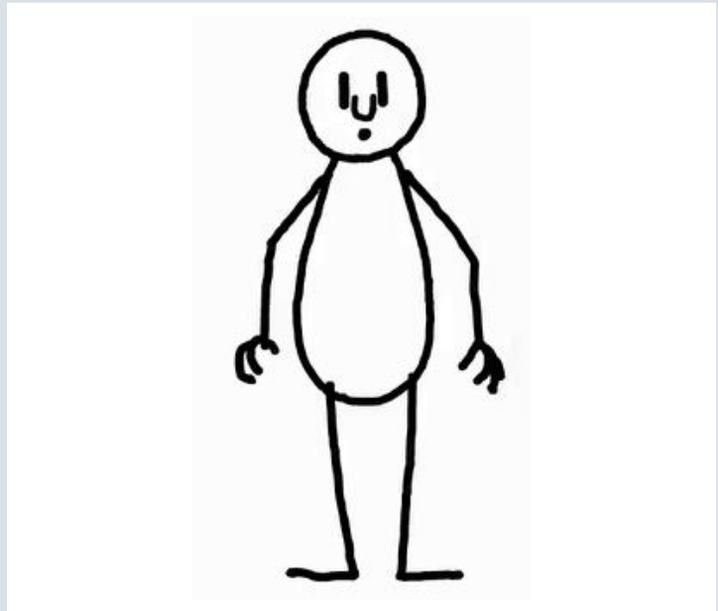
# TRAINING THE PUPPY MIND ON THE BREATH

*During this practice you were asked to hold your attention for 2 minutes on a part of your body where you could feel the sensations of breathing most clearly.*

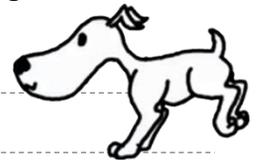
*Dot down in the space below a few things you noticed during this practice.*

1. **Draw an arrow pointing at where you noticed your breath most clearly.**  
Nose? Chest? Belly? Throat?  
Somewhere else?

2. **Draw an arrow (ideally a different colour) pointing at where you noticed your breath was less clear or more tricky to feel.**



3. **Did you notice your attention wandering away from what you were trying to focus on? If so, where did it go?**



.....  
.....

4. **Was there anything else you noticed?**

.....  
.....

5. **Were you just too tired/busy/not bothered to notice anything at all? If so, what did you do? Give up? Keep trying? Anything else?**



.....  
.....

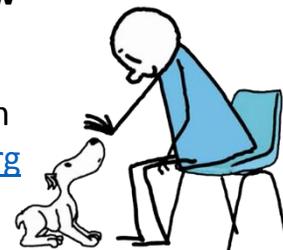


# LESSON ONE: HOME PRACTICE



An important part of this course is you doing some **brief mindfulness practices at home**. As with any skill such as a sport, or playing a musical instrument, **you improve according to how often and how much you practise**.

So, to access the animations and guided practices to help you with your 'Home Practice' each week, you need to go to [www.dotbe.org](http://www.dotbe.org) and find the 'Playing Attention' folder (look for the puppy icon). Then.....



Play the animation for lesson one and follow the guided practice at the end at least once before next lesson.



After the first time, you can skip the animation and go straight to the guided practice if you prefer.

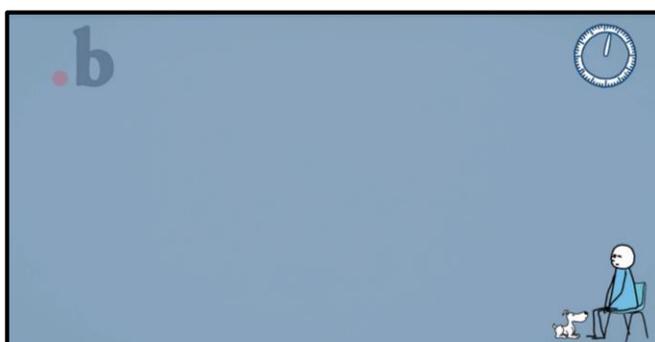
*You'll know you're there when the character shrinks to the bottom and the timer appears in the top right hand corner of the screen.*



Explore the times of day and places that seem to work best for you to do this.



Feeling keen? Overleaf, you'll find the 'Having a Go' table. Have a go at completing this each time you follow the guided practice.





# LESSON ONE: HAVING A GO

Each week you'll have the option to keep a journal of observations.

This is a great way to begin to explore each practice a little more. As the weeks progress, it's also interesting to look back over how things might have changed for you... or not!

Practice	Time /day	<b>Observations</b> Write your ideas here or even draw them if that feels right for you.
<b>FOR EXAMPLE</b> Watched animation Followed the guided practice at the end of the animation Finger breathing	<b>FOR EXAMPLE</b> 10am	<b>FOR EXAMPLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Did your puppy mind wander?</li><li>• Did you notice where it wandered off to?</li><li>• Were there particular parts of your body that showed up more clearly for you than others during the practice?</li><li>• Describe any sensations that you noticed, e.g. prickling sensation in the hands, 'fizzy' big toe, heat at back of the knee.</li></ul>



# LESSON ONE:

# WHAT DO YOU THINK SO FAR? **.b**

The feedback you give is really useful – it helps your teacher to know whether or not you have understood and, more importantly, enjoyed the lessons so far.

You might want to answer these questions straight after following the practice on the animation while it's fresh in your memory. *Just circle the answers that feel right for you.*

*Try not to spend too long thinking about your answers.*



1. **What do you think of mindfulness so far?**

- Not keen     
  It's OK     
  It's interesting     
  Like it

2. **Can you see yourself using this animation again?**

- Not really     
  Maybe     
  Definitely

3. **Would you recommend it to others?**

- Not really     
  Maybe     
  Definitely

4. **Did you give up or did you go through the whole thing?**

- Gave up within seconds     
  Gave up after a while     
  Went through the whole thing

5. **How did you feel afterwards?** *Use your own words here.*

.....

.....

.....



6. **Any further comments or suggestions?**

.....

.....

.....

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