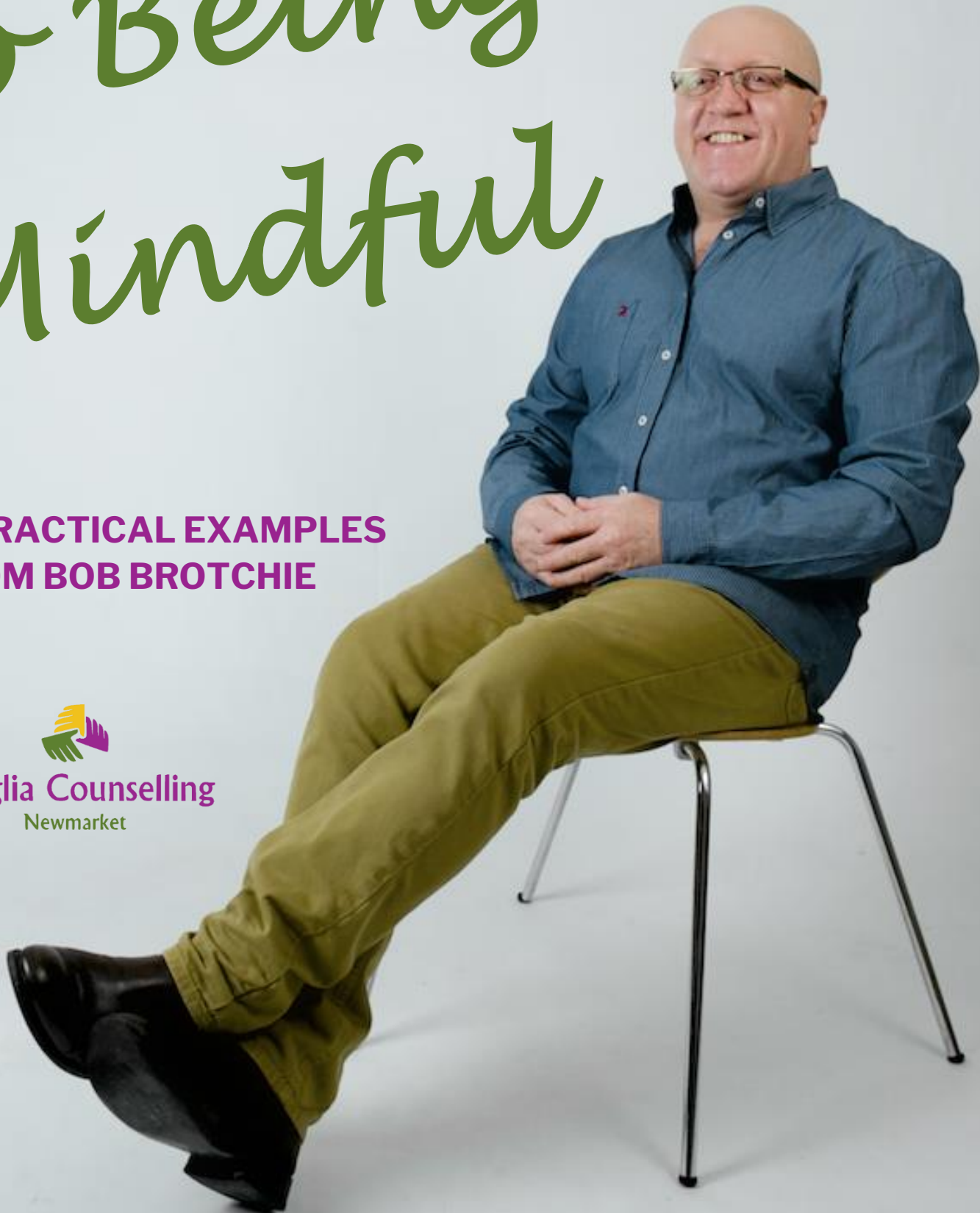


8 Steps to Being Mindful

**WITH PRACTICAL EXAMPLES
FROM BOB BROTCHE**



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Are you aware?

Step 1: Attention

Attention is the most fundamental building block of change and insight.

Attention ensures that we are aware; if we are not aware of something, we cannot change it.

It's important to learn what:

- demands attention
- regulates attention
- causes us emotional imbalance

Are you living on auto-pilot?

Step 2: Automaticity

Automatic patterns of behaviour can be very helpful - like when we drive a car!

However, automatic patterns can also cause unwanted behaviour - like getting angry when we receive criticism or automatically worrying when we appraise something as negative.

Automatisms keep us from changing. Only by becoming aware of them and our cycles of thinking, behaviours, patterns, emotions and impulses can we change them.





They are... This is... I am...

Step 3: Judgement

We all automatically judge - it's one of the automatisms we contend with daily.

We judge others, situations, our experiences, events and even ourselves.

An important part of mindfulness is to understand judgements.

Judgements often happen automatically as this is the conditioned functioning of our mind.

Are you fighting it?

Step 4: Acceptance

Acceptance plays a key role in mindfulness.

By adopting or accepting what is, we immediately free ourselves from the identification of our mind.

Mindfulness training helps us explore the meaning of acceptance in both pleasant and unpleasant situations, the conflict that arises and resistance.

By accepting and letting go of this struggle and fight, we save precious energy.





I'll be happy when...

Step 5: Goals

Goals are a crucial part of our society but by focusing too much on our goals, we lose attention to the here and now.

Mindfulness helps us to see:

- the pitfalls
- the ineffectiveness of over-focusing on goals
- the discrepancy between goals and the present moment
- how it can relate to both anxiety and illusions

Ugh! I'm such a...

Step 6: Compassion

By increasing compassion for others and ourselves, the separation between us and others gets smaller.

Compassion helps us to connect both to others and ourselves.

By learning compassion, we become aware of both self-criticism and self-compassion and how loving-kindness can benefit us.





This is my [house, job...]

Step 7: The Ego

The term “ego” can be used to indicate a controlling part of the personality.

In this context, it refers to a self-image that is based on identification. It’s an invented identity.

Mindfulness teaches us how to:

- recognise the ego, its characteristics and identification
- the factors that form it
- control our identity and fear

I can't understand why or how...

Step 8: Integration

Mindfulness is not something that we can 'achieve' after eight weeks of training.

We cannot become mindful – we can only be mindful.

The more we incorporate mindfulness into our daily life, the greater the impact will be.

It's also important to remember that whilst learning and training mindfulness can be of benefit to our wellbeing, the greatest benefit is to understand how what we have learned links together and how all its parts relate to each other.





An Example of Acceptance

When I complain about the task in hand, I identify with it emotionally.

It IS so much harder (well, at least that's the perspective) when I run through this 'future event' and how much I'd rather be doing something else.

But when I accept the task with full heart and without condition, I can choose to mindfully undertake that duty without thoughts other than 'What is this experience?'.

The pen, the paper and the textures and the information I'll be providing. The soap, the water and perhaps, some gratitude that we have what we need available.

Now, it is not so heavy, or arduous, a task.

An Example About Goals

A teacher passionate about his year-end results and performance and what they'll look like is subconsciously unaware he is fearful and anxious about his aspirations (goals) not being met.

This manifests in his present by his behaviours. He exerts fear-based control over his students in an inappropriate attempt to achieve 'end of term' goals.

This behaviour leads to the students (who love the subject) fearing the lesson and the teacher. As a result, the students' performance is diminished because of the energy in motion (emotion) - of fear.

When we are emotional, all our *Attention* is diverted to that we wish to avoid, or to that we are pursuing. This leads to a lack of performance for the task in hand.

The students fail to thrive - and the teacher fails in his goals.



Find Joy in the Journey

From my own personal experience, the best way to train mindfulness – and set us up for our life-long mindful journey - is over an eight-week period to cultivate the fundamentals. You can also see from the examples I shared how not being mindful can affect both ourselves and others.

By giving attention to one topic per week, it enables us to learn mindfulness in stages and build upon the links between them and see how they all incorporate into, and form, 'mindfulness'.

Why not allow me to be a part of YOUR journey?

Bob Brotchie



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