

Mindfulness: Awareness, Concentration, & Focusing

A Presentation Using Baseball Concepts by Tom Rohrer, PhD, LMFT

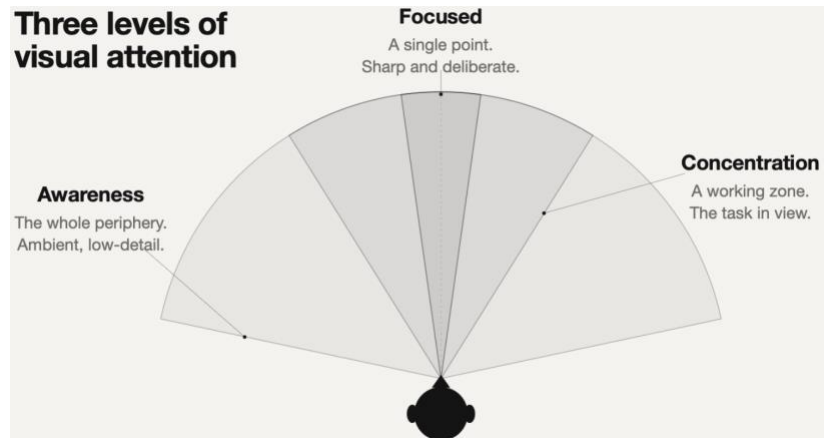
Your coach is yelling at you, “get your head in the game” or “focus up.” But how? We’ll review how to do that and how to regroup when distracted.

The Two Aspects of This Presentation:

1. Mindfulness:

- **Awareness:** seeing the inner and outer, awareness of the important things, the big picture. Often used interchangeably with mindfulness.
- **Concentration:** Narrowing your inner and outer attention onto your field of performance, like limiting the width of a flashlight beam.
- **Focus:** Narrowing your attention onto your task at hand, even hyper focusing on a specific spot and moment, long enough to be successful. An ex: keeping your eye on the ball.

Three levels of visual attention



Awareness



Concentration



Focus



2. Distraction Control

- Offers you the ability to:
 - Disconnect from internal and external distractions
 - Refocus quickly on the task at hand
 - Stay focused (hyper focused) long enough to succeed at the task at hand



Your Mindfulness Approach:

- Staying present, paying attention to your experience:
 - Inner: Notice your thinking, breathing, tension, etc., and your:
 - Feeling safe, connected, and ready, and in the flow state
 - Mind wandering: Disciplined Response:
 - To returning your focus to the task at hand and commit to staying focused
 - Outer: Focused on performing the task at hand: Hitting a ball, giving a speech, etc.
- Notice and respond to what else happens:
 - Be open, curious, realistic, and optimistic to circumstances that arise
 - Quickly evaluate incoming information and its importance
 - Decide on your best action(s)

Ex: You are tense and not performing your best: you remember/reexperience your best past performance, relax, and optimistically keep your eye on the ball.



Focusing Routine

- During Your Performance use pre-established:
 - Reminders: Built in visual, sound, or tactile cue that remind you of something important.
 - Ex: My mini-personal awareness check-ins: leads to therapeutic breathing, focused relaxation, increased optimism, and the flow state.
 - Personal Ex: When I grab my bat I remember to ... _____



Improving Your Response to Distractions

- Self-Awareness, Information Gathering, and Your Best Response
 - Internal distractions
 - What thoughts, feelings, or sensations distracted me? _____
 - External distractions
 - What sounds, behaviors, and situations, etc., was I distracted by? _____
 - Identify your patterns of distractions by observing: yourself/others
- Effective Responses
 - Note and prioritize your negative responses: _____
 - Which one will you work on first? _____
 - What would be an effective response to the above distraction? _____
 - How and when will I implement these responses? _____
- Example of Changing Distracted Response:
 - Old response: When I see the ball coming and I'm about to hit it, I think "What if I miss it?" I become anxious, my muscles tighten up and my mind freezes."
 - New response (practiced): As I ready myself to hit the ball: I think "I keep my eye on the ball and hit it in the sweet spot," then I take a quick deep breath in, a slow breath out, keep my eye on the ball, take a smooth swing, and CRACK!



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Exercises



- Mental Focusing: Finger moving: eyes open, eyes close: _____
- Reminder: Remember or create a symbol, sound, or sensation: give it meaning: _____
- Self-spotting: Eye location: _____
for: _____

Notes: _____

