



COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING ENVIRONMENT

## USER GUIDE

**SOMATICVISION**  
how are you today?

[somaticvision.com](https://somaticvision.com)

# Alive Quick Start Guide

It's easy to get started with Alive. Alive consists of hardware, software and this User Guide, which includes many off-screen tips and techniques that will enhance your experience. An important part of this User Guide is the Alive & Beyond 8-Week Program, which you can use to structure your use of Alive Workshops, Games, and Environments while bringing in off-screen relaxation techniques that have been developed by a leading clinical psychophysiologicalist.



## Technical problems

[www.somaticvision.com/support](http://www.somaticvision.com/support)

## Getting “stuck”?

See Page 7, or Remedial Clinic on Page 38

1. When you launch Alive for the first time, the coach will lead you through an orientation and self-assessment. Once you have completed this you can begin playing games and exploring the many features of Alive.
2. Use Alive as you wish, choosing whether to follow the Coach suggestions. Anytime you feel like better understanding the many parts and purposes of Alive, you can refer to this User Guide, which contains complete product documentation and many tips, explanations, and techniques to try.
3. When you want to boost the effectiveness of Alive, you may choose to follow the Alive & Beyond 8-Week Program included in this User Guide.
4. Have fun! With Alive, you aim to increase your ability to control your stress levels in a visual world that responds to your body's changes. The only goal is your better self, and getting there is fun.

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# Welcome to Alive!

**The Alive™ Comprehensive Training Environment** gives you extensive coaching, individualized performance tracking, and an array of fun games and tools to help you build the mental and physical performance you need to succeed.

In this User Guide, you will find important information about how to get started and use Alive, as well as information about how to use Alive in conjunction with other activities for extended effectiveness.

## WHY ALIVE?

The rate of change in our life is constantly increasing, bringing extraordinary pressures and stressors into daily life.

Though these stressors include major crises, most of the stress we experience is caused by minor hassles: E-mail needing a reply, traffic jams as we go to work, balancing the demands of children and work, etc.

We have too much to do in too little time. Day-to-day stress accumulates. Our autonomic nervous system is responsible for returning us to balance, but it is not designed to cope with an ongoing overload of stress.

When our nervous system is constantly overloaded, daily stress numbs our brain to the urgency of doing something about it. We become accustomed to ongoing tension, strain and worry, and we try to address the effects of stress without getting to the causes.

Our body gives us warning signals to show us something is getting out of balance. Chronically stressed people place an extra load on their bodies. Too much stress hurts us, and can even be a factor in early death.

It is important to develop techniques to reduce stress and improve our health, sleep quality, concentration, time management, effective conflict resolution, and assertiveness.

To achieve these goals, we must learn to:

1. **Monitor our reactions to stress through awareness of the body**
2. **Find new ways to relax and practice in daily life**
3. **Restore energy drained by prolonged stress**
4. **Change habits**

In this User Guide, you'll find everything you need to know about using Alive, including the Alive & Beyond 8-Week Program and details about specific techniques you can use to rebalance your attention and your body to be "in flow."

If you are using Alive with a child or teen, make sure to read the Alive for Young Users section of this User Guide.

## Getting Started

### ABOUT THE ALIVE HARDWARE

Depending on your version, Alive requires either the finger-sensor hardware or the HeartMath® emWave® ear-clip sensor that is included in the complete package. This clinical-quality hardware is simple to use and amazingly accurate, capturing your heart rate variations and sending them to the Alive interactive interface.

How easy is it to use? Slip your fingers into the finger sensors or clip on your ear sensor (see notes under "Launch

Alive” section that follows) then launch Alive. Alive does the rest.

If during your training session your finger sensors become disconnected, Alive will let you know and automatically pause until it detects that the hardware has been reconnected.

Alive will also let you know if it is having trouble reading your heart rate, and in the case of the finger sensors, will suggest that you apply lotion to your fingertips or warm your hands to correct the problem.

*Caring for your hardware: Store in a cool dry place. Do not submerge — if you need to clean the hardware at any time, use alcohol wipes designed for computer screens.*

## MINIMUM SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Alive Hardware — Wild Divine finger sensors or the HeartMath emWave sensor

Windows XP / Vista / Windows 7  
operating system  
2.0 GHz Processor  
128 MB OpenGL Video Card  
1 GB RAM  
CD-ROM Drive  
3 GB of Disk Space  
Internet connection

## INSTALL ALIVE

Close all open Internet Explorer or other browser windows before beginning installation of Alive.

**To install Alive, double-click the Alive\_WD\_Setup.exe file from your installation CD or at <http://www.somaticvision.com/getalive/>**

## Get Comfortable

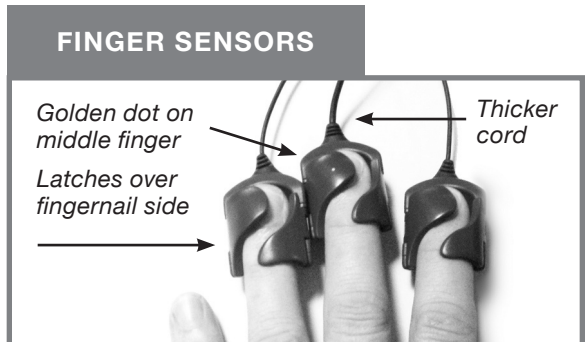
To have success, optimize your physical environment when you are first learning.

- Make sure you are comfortable. Make sure you’re not hungry or thirsty and don’t have bathroom needs.
- Wear comfortable clothing that doesn’t restrict your breathing.
- Remove distractions from your environment: Silence your phone. Turn off the TV or radio.
- Coffee, tea and other stimulants should be avoided, as they make relaxing difficult.

Follow the installation instructions. The default options will work for most users (Simply click Next / OK).

## LAUNCH ALIVE

Before launching, set up and attach the finger sensors or emWave sensor.



1. For finger sensors: Attach the USB cable to the box and to your computer. Put the thin end of the cable into a USB port on your computer. Put the thicker end into the square slot of your hardware box. If you are prompted to install a driver, allow Windows to automatically search for a driver. For the emWave ear-clip sensor: Plug the USB cable into your computer. If you are prompted to install a driver, allow Windows to automatically search for a driver.
2. For finger sensors: Attach the round end of the finger sensor cable to the other end of your box, with the small arrow on the round cable facing upwards (remove the cap on this cable if it is present). Inserting the cable in the correct orientation avoids damage.
3. For finger sensors: Put the finger sensors on, making sure the latches are over the fingernail side of the fingers. The middle finger sensor is at the end of the thicker cord. Put your middle finger through the 'doors' of that sensor, so that the small golden dot on top of the finger sensor is directly above your fingernail. Place the other two finger sensors on your index and ring fingers. Make sure the finger sensors are all oriented so that the latches are near the top of your finger, over your fingernail. For the emWave ear-clip sensor: Clip the ear-clip comfortably to your ear, using the lapel clip to prevent it from catching on anything.

When first running Alive, you may receive a security alert. You must click "unblock" or "always allow" in order for Alive to function.

**Launch Alive! Go to Start Menu -> All Programs -> Alive for Wild Divine and click Alive**

## **ALIVE ORIENTATION WITH YOUR COACH**

The first time you run Alive, you will be walked through an orientation with the Alive Coach.

Set aside about 20 minutes for this orientation, during which you explore your own responses to stress, and learn about the clinical causes for what you are feeling when you are pressured, overwhelmed, or scared.

You will learn how to recognize the symptoms of stress, and will learn several techniques for managing your body's unconscious response to stress. One of the things you will learn to do is pace your breathing using a visual breath pacer.

The Coach will finish the orientation with a Spoon-Bending Test that will demonstrate to you that you're already learning to master your stress.

Once you pass the Spoon-Bending Test, you will be able to access the Alive Main Menu. You'll be able to play games, explore beautiful environments, and practice relaxation techniques. You'll also be able to readjust your breath pacer, review training sessions, add users, and repeat the Orientation session any time you want to.

## **ABOUT THE COACH**

The Alive Coach is integrated throughout the Alive experience. After your orientation, the Coach will monitor your progress, and keep records of your training sessions and progress.

As a complement to your training, the Coach will notice when you may need a hint or a suggestion and offer appropriate advice.

The Coach also offers a series of mini-workshops called Alive Coach Workshops.

# The Alive Main Menu

The first thing you'll notice when you look at the Alive Main Menu is that there are three main categories of training activity: Alive Coach Techniques, Alive Environments, and Alive Games. Each has a drop-down menu of fun activities you can use to train yourself in different ways and for different durations of time.

As you use these games and tools, you will see heart rate smoothness and usage data for each category, reflecting your training and progress.

Here is a quick overview of what Coach Techniques, Environments, and Games are all about, which we'll follow with detailed information.

**Alive Workshops** — A set of short workshops in which our Coach helps you learn stress relief and relaxation techniques.

**Alive Environments** — A much more visual, less intellectual approach to learning to relax and smooth your heart rate.

Lovely abstracts, images, and geometries respond interactively with your breathing and heart rate smoothness levels.

**Alive Games** — For the competitor, and when you're in the mood for fun, Alive offers specially-designed casual games.

Alive provides two versions of its Dual Drive car-racing game (relax to accelerate!) and a series of mini-games that challenge you to smooth your breathing enough to make flowers bloom, change the seasons, build your dream house, and more.

The Coach is always with you.

Use the resource tabs along the left side of the Main Menu.

You can access session review information, repeat the Orientation

## What If I Am Not Seeing Progress?

Some people will find it harder to control their heart rate variation at first.

The best way to “break through” is to practice Progressive Muscle Relaxation (See the section in the *Tools & Techniques* appendix of this User Guide) before playing, to release tension stored in the muscles.

Also, if you are having trouble progressing to higher levels of heart rate smoothness, try changing Environments more often, and doing more and shorter practice sessions with Alive.

session, adjust your personalized breath pacer, and create new users at any time.

## Alive Workshops

There are many ways to approach relaxation, and you can use Techniques anytime to work one-on-one with your Coach on specific elements of heart rate control.

Explore the menu of Techniques to learn ***Ways to Breathe, Relax Your Muscles, Pace Your Breathing, Optimize Your Breathing***, and see if you are ***Trying Too Hard***. Some Alive Workshops are audio-based: ***Safe Place, Mental Imagery, Letting Go, Finding Gratitude, Progressive Muscle Relaxation, Zoom Out, Body Scan***, and ***Mindfulness***. Each Workshop takes about 5-10 minutes.

Also in Workshops, you'll see ***Graph***



**Training.** Graph Training is a display of heart rate and heart rate smoothness graphs that can be a very useful way to train. In Graph Training, you simply follow the graph lines as they develop, aiming to make them smoother as you breathe evenly and effortlessly.

The **Clinical Version** of Alive has expanded Graph Training features which include skin conductance data displays. There is a supplemental User Guide for the Clinical Version of Alive.

## Alive Environments

We don't always achieve the best results when we rely only on our intellect to modify behavior. Environments use interactive audio and visual cues to lead you to make shapes glow, morph and move — or to increase the volume and calming impact of music selections.

Clinical use of these environments has proven that using them improves motivation, compliance with a set training program and trainees' commitment and self-regulation skills. They are especially good for people who respond poorly to tests, avoiding the negativity of a pass/fail polarity.

## Alive Games

And now for the really fun part! Games are developed with many different types of users in mind. People of any age or taste can easily find a game that is fun and engaging to use to help them advance to a higher Stress Control Level.

### DUAL DRIVE

Games include two versions of the **Dual Drive** car racing game. *Dual Drive Auto Pilot* enables you to build and master techniques for self-regulation, while *Dual Drive Manual Pilot* challenges you to maintain these

self-regulating skills under a more stressful environment, better suiting your learning to day-to-day stress.

Try to complete each race in as short a time as possible. To do this, relax and use the breathing pacer (if you like) to keep the heart rate line smooth and the smoothness slider high, well into the green.

Before you start a race, try selecting your car and customizing the color.

Once you select a mission, you're off and racing! You don't need to steer — this is all about relaxing to build speed. You can however, use the following keyboard input if you'd like:

Ctrl-P	Take a screenshot (saves to My Documents/Somatic Vision Sessions/user
Alt-Enter	Toggle Full Screen (restore to windowed mode / maximize Dual Drive window)
Escape	Exits a level
Ctrl-O	Show options menu
Ctrl-R	Reset the car, use this if the car gets stuck or lost

As with all Alive Games, when you return to the Alive Main Menu and select Review Session, you can look at the history and see your progress overall or for each Game specifically.

Alive gives you a graph with average smoothness level for each session, labeled with the date.

### MINI GAMES

Games also includes a growing array of mini-games: You will begin the session in a starting state and use your heart rate smoothness to achieve a goal. Build Your **Dream House**, use your **Green Thumb** to make a hyacinth bloom, propel a natural scene through the **Four Seasons**, dock your **Alien Shuttle** into the mothership, and enjoy a **Golden Sunrise** or a scenic **Night Flight** through a cityscape.



# The Breath Pacer

Though the breath pacer is easy to use, many beginners will not be relaxed by paced breathing until they have practiced it a bit. Some will never enjoy following a pacer, instead breathing slowly at their own rhythm, which is also OK. One of the benefits of the pacer, however, is that it can be adjusted to help you slow your breathing from its natural rate to a more relaxing, lower pace.

Whether or not you incorporate the breath pacer into your intermediate and advanced Alive exercises, paced breathing is important. When stressed, you can consciously slow your breathing down and release pressure very efficiently.

## Creating Your Own Alive Program

Every person who begins using Alive has different existing strengths and weaknesses, a different level of exposure to stress, and a different way of learning.

Your results will spur you forward, increasing the level of challenge when you succeed and encouraging you to follow Coach suggestions when you need to build skill in order to advance.

You can use Alive in your own way, crafting a program that works for your life and learning style.

Your own program works best if you to set aside a total of an hour a week for Alive, trying to make each session last at least 10 minutes.

## Extending Alive Beyond the Computer

If you are looking for a more comprehensive way to use Alive, we

encourage you to follow our **Alive & Beyond 8-Week Program™**, which extends Alive beyond your computer into other practices that will help you.

Alive & Beyond has been developed to help you get the most out of Alive, bringing in off-screen concepts and exercises to complement the Alive software.

If you are a parent or guardian using Alive with a child, make sure to read the **Alive for Younger Users** section that follows the Alive & Beyond 8-Week Program information.

## The Alive & Beyond 8-Week Program

*Somatic Vision developed the Alive & Beyond 8-Week Program to give people a structured process for creating change in their lives.*

*The program uses techniques and principles from disciplines including yoga, meditation, and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy CBT) .*

*CBT is a particularly important source of techniques. CBT treatments have been effective in addressing mood disorders, anxiety disorders, personality disorders, eating disorders, substance abuse disorders, and even psychotic disorders.*

*You may want to follow the Alive & Beyond 8-Week Program exactly, or you may want to tailor it to your needs. Either approach will help you achieve stress relief and peak performance.*

*Full program detail on the next several pages.*

## ALIVE & BEYOND

### WEEK 1

1. Go through the Alive Coach Orientation, which begins when you use Alive for the first time. Alive will teach you about stress, heart rate variation, and breathing. You'll also complete a questionnaire and set your own optimal breathing rate.
2. Explore at least one Alive Environment, playing for at least 5 minutes.
3. Between sessions with Alive, practice optimal effortless breathing 3 times a day, for five minutes at a time: twice while laying down, and once in a seated position.

### WEEK 2

1. Take the Alive Relax Your Muscles Workshop, which will teach you a technique called Progressive Muscle Relaxation.
2. Read the Progressive Muscle Relaxation section in the *Tools & Techniques* Appendix to this User Guide.
3. Practice the long version of Progressive Muscle Relaxation for the first 3 days, then alternate daily between the long and the short versions.
4. Play at least one Alive Game daily, adding a daily game of Dual Drive on Auto Pilot toward the end of the week.
5. Between sessions with Alive, take 2 daily breathing breaks of 5 minutes each.
6. Read the Today Log section in *Tools & Techniques*. Keep a simple Today Log of your responses to stress, using any format you choose. Examples of logs can be found in *Tools & Techniques*.
7. Try to gain more than 100 Alive points daily and reach 800 total points by week's end.

### WEEK 3

1. Take the Alive Zoom Out Audio Workshop. Add Zoom Out, an attention-shifting technique, to your routine.
2. Take the Alive Body Scan Audio Workshop twice this week.
3. Read the Mindfulness section in *Tools & Techniques*. Take two 5-Minute Daily Breaks each day.
4. Add a twice-weekly Body Scan technique to your practice, either by yourself or through the Mindfulness Audio Workshop).
5. Play Alive Dual Drive on Auto Pilot at least twice, and Alive Dual Drive on Manual Pilot 3 times.

6. Keep logging your responses to stress. Consider using a 1-10 scale to represent how much stress you're feeling in each situation.
7. Try to gain more than 200 Alive points daily and reach 2000 total points by week's end.

## WEEK 4

1. Add the Body Scan Audio Workshop to your regular daily practice.
2. Continue to take 2 5-Minute Daily Breaks each day and Progressive Muscle Relaxation routines twice during the week.
3. If you wear a wristwatch or use a cell phone to tell the time, cover the time readout with a sticker — this will remind you to let go. Any time you notice the sticker, take a moment to notice if any muscles are overtensed...then take one deep breath, relax and let go...return to your daily activities.
4. Play a new Alive Game. When getting "stuck," read the Change the Channel section in *Tools & Techniques*.
5. Read the Mental Mini-Breaks section in *Tools & Techniques*. Practice one of the Mental Mini-Breaks.
6. Read the Internal Dialogue technique section in *Tools & Techniques*. Go over your Week 2 log. Use one of the Internal Dialogue techniques: Choose a moderately-stressful situation that caused you stress, and make an internal decision to respond differently. Make a commitment to let go once you encounter this type of situation again, and apply your new behavior in the coming week.
7. Try to gain more than 200 Alive points daily and reach 3500 total points by week's end.
8. Stress naturally accumulates in our muscles. To improve the results of this Alive program, we highly recommend you engage in a half-hour of physical activity at least twice.
9. Yoga, though demanding at first, and T'ai Chi are highly recommended.

## WEEK 5

1. Continue taking 5-Minute Daily Mindfulness Breaks twice daily, and perform short Body Scans and Progressive Muscle Relaxation routines twice during the week. Try also practicing Mindfulness of the Breath twice this week.
2. Use the sticker on your wristwatch or cell phone to remind you to let go. Practice one of the Mental Mini-Breaks.
3. Try some Audio Environments in Alive, finding one that helps you the most. If you can't find one you like, record a piece of music you're fond of and try the Alive Graph Training Workshop along with it. If you like this, make it a habit twice each week.
4. Play a new Alive Game. When getting "stuck," take a Mental Mini-Break.

5. Go over your Week 2 Today Log. Use one of the Internal Dialogue techniques: Choose a situation that caused you moderate stress, and make an internal decision to respond differently. Make a commitment to let go once you encounter this type of situation again, and apply your new behavior in the coming week.
6. Try to gain more than 200 Alive points daily and reach 6000 total points by week's end.
7. Continue with a half-hour of physical activity twice during the week.

## WEEK 6

1. Read the Mindfulness section in *Tools & Techniques* again. Add the Mindfulness of Thoughts practice at least twice this week.
2. Choose a positive resolve — for example, try “I will feel safe,” instead of “I will not feel anxious.” Repeat this chosen phrase whenever you feel a need for affirmation.
3. In Alive, as you play Games or explore Environments, work with the graph of your heart rate smoothness or try it in the Graph Training mode. Try to “stress yourself out” and then create a smooth graph as you consciously relax. This will enhance your self-efficacy, the belief in your ability to succeed in specific situations. A well-developed sense of self-efficacy can play a major role in how you approach goals, tasks, and challenges.
4. Decide to take a short break at a time that is unusual for you. You may invite someone and share a thought or dilemma. Social support is a great way to reduce the effects of stress.
5. See the Gains vs. Drains section in *Tools & Techniques*. Make a list of Gains and Drains.
6. Manage the amount of time you spend watching television during this week. Choose an activity from the Gains column instead. Do it at least once a week for the rest of the program. Try to make this a permanent habit.
7. Try to gain more than 200 Alive points daily and reach 7500 total points by week's end.
8. Continue engaging in a half-hour of physical activity at least twice during the week. Try to make this a permanent habit.
9. Try to make the 5-Minute Daily Break a habit each morning — it can really help you in the day ahead.

## WEEK 7

1. Keep practicing Mindfulness twice a week.
2. Train with Alive at least 10 minutes a day, playing any Game you wish.
3. Choose a new resolve for this week. Whenever you notice tension, let go

of it...say your resolve phrase

4. Practice breathing in crowded places, in your office, or at home when children are around.
5. Do at least one Gain activity from your Gains and Drains list. Commit to avoiding at least 2 draining things you tend to do.
6. Try to gain more than 200 Alive points daily and reach 9000 total points by week's end.
7. Continue with regular physical activity and at least one positive social interaction.
8. Read the Daily Mindfulness Skills section (within the Mindfulness section in *Tools & Techniques*) and begin practicing these exercises.

## WEEK 8

1. Practice at least 2 of the techniques you felt helped you the most during the past 7 weeks.
2. Use the short Change the Channel Mini-Breaks to cue bodily reactions and make them your habitual techniques for reducing stress.
3. Choose regular times to practice your techniques, perhaps pairing them with another habit such as brushing your teeth.
4. Play Alive Games using those techniques.
5. Continue with physical activity to maintain the results you achieved using this program.
6. Keep practicing Mindfulness Daily Skills.

## ALIVE & BEYOND RECAP

*This recap list can help you each week if you have chosen to follow Alive & Beyond exactly.*

### Week 1

Alive Orientation, Alive Environment, practice optimal breathing

### Week 2

Relax Your Muscles, PMR, Alive Games, practice optimal breathing, start a Today Log, 800 Alive points

### Week 3

Zoom Out, 5-Minute Daily Breaks, Body Scan, Alive Dual Drive, Today Log, 2000 total points.

### Week 4

Zoom Out, Body Scan, Daily Breaks,

PMR, sticker, Alive Game, Change the Channel, Mental Mini-Breaks, log, Internal Dialogue, 3500 total points, physical activity

### Week 5

Zoom Out, Body Scans, 5-Minute Daily Breaks, Progressive Muscle Relaxation, Mindfulness of the Breath, sticker, Mental Mini-Breaks, Alive Audio Environments, Alive Graph Training Workshop, a new Alive Game, log, Internal Dialogue, 6000 total points, physical activity

### Week 6

Zoom Out, Body Scans, Mindfulness of Thoughts, play Games or explore Environments, usual break, Gains and

Drains, limit TV, try to reach 7500 total points, physical activity, 5-Minute Daily Breaks

### **Week 7**

Zoom Out, Body Scans, 5-Minute Daily Breaks, Mindfulness, Alive Games, new resolve, Gains and Drains, 9000 total points, physical activity, social interaction, Daily Mindfulness Skills

### **Week 8**

Zoom Out, Body Scans, 5-Minute Daily Breaks, Change the Channel Mini-Breaks, Alive Games, physical activity, Mindfulness Daily Skills

## After Completing Alive & Beyond

After completing the Alive & Beyond 8-Week Program, you'll want to sustain the sense of inner balance you have gained. Here are some ways that have proven effective and easy to work into daily life:

1. Make it a habit to take at least two 5-min Daily Breaks each day.
2. Continue following the principles of Daily Mindfulness Skills.
3. Continue with at least 2 weekly physical workouts, especially yoga.
4. Once a month, make a new Gains and Drains list — make sure you are giving yourself enough opportunity to bring Gains into your life.
5. Make it a habit to train with Alive 3 times each week.
6. Volunteering and giving to others is a sure way to maintain happiness and even prolong life! Consider giving volunteering a place in your life.
7. Make a weekly list of things you are worrying about. Ask yourself, "Which of these is in my control?" Let go of those things beyond your control.

8. Make a weekly list of mistakes you may have made. Now, take time to learn from these mistakes, acknowledging that you are human and that humans make mistakes. Avoid criticizing yourself.
9. Make time to be "off phone duty" — let it go to voicemail. Manage your time so you can spend more with loved ones. Don't let others manage your time outside of work.
10. Before entering home after a long day at work, take a 3-5 minute Mindful Breathing break, regenerate, and give your best to your loved ones.

## Alive For Younger Users

Many adults seek therapy to learn new ways to cope with stress or to recover from stressful childhood experiences.

Children also confront difficult challenges, social stressors, and changes but lack the control over their lives that adults enjoy. It makes a lot of sense to give children and teens tools to gain control and deal with life in a flexible manner.

Very young people are usually unaware of tension and stress, but often look for better ways to gain control of their lives. The breathing and awareness of the body Alive teaches can give a sense of control that keeps a complex or stressful situation from becoming more difficult or confusing.

The brain and emotions function in a harmonious way, the heart playing a very important role in shaping our thoughts and responses. The sooner we learn how to regulate our emotional state, the sooner we will enjoy better health and well being. We will be able to use our inner wisdom and potential and better fulfill our potential.

Alive training is a wonderful way to



teach children to calm their minds and emotions, focus into their heart and learn how to have a happier, more caring, productive and safe environment.

Relaxation is not a natural concept for very young people; focusing instead on calm and attentiveness can be more effective, aiming to improve their flexibility in confronting daily stressors. They are usually not aware of tension and stress, and do not understand how it affects them physically. But they are looking for better ways to gain control of their lives.

The process of using Alive to help children and teens can include these stages:

1. Identifying stressors and their effects on daily life.
2. Explaining the physical effects of stress
3. Teaching better, more flexible ways to cope with stress using Alive Games and Environments.
4. Taking the process into their daily lives.

Don't be surprised if a child using Alive finds it easier than an adult — most children learn faster than adults.

Some children with an impulsive nature or with attention issues find it hard to concentrate for a long time, get bored quickly, or have a low threshold for noise (are easily distractible) and should be given frequent changes of Environment. The learning process should be made playful for them.

## HOW DOES YOUTH UNDERSTAND STRESS?

Young people can identify stressed behavior: people yell and scream, or become very quiet, or run away.

Young people should be asked to understand that stress affects everyone, including their teachers, mothers, and fathers.

## Behind Alive

Alive Techniques, Games, and Environments have been created in partnership with a leading biofeedback expert.

Oded is a Clinical Psychophysiologicalist who has developed biofeedback programs to help military personnel keep a clear head and effectively face difficult situations, and effectively manage an array of decisions and tasks at hand.

Since stress is one of the main causes of such medical conditions as anxiety disorders, chronic illnesses and neurological problems, Oded's clinical approach is focused on effective and sustainable stress management. He integrates biofeedback in his treatment programs to help patients manage stress and condition them for further therapy.

They can see that stress passes from one person to another. If you are working with a young person, give examples of this that they can recognize from past experience. Perhaps they remember feeling stressed before a test, when they stay alone with strangers, when other kids pick on them, or when their parents argue or do not adequately listen to their problems.

Next we will explain our reaction to stress by exploring the evolutionary roots of the stress reaction, deriving from when our ancestors were "cavemen," hunting or being suddenly attacked in the wilderness.

This caused immense stress and these ancestors had to quickly confront



immediate and extreme danger. To enable an effective reaction, many changes had to quickly occur in the body: our ancestral hearts pounded faster, we sweated and our muscles filled with energy so we could run away to a safer place — or fight.

Today, fear of failing an exam or being late to school can trigger the same reactions — Our stress mechanism reacts much the same way as our ancestors' did when they confronted a dangerous animal or a life-threatening situation. Rather than being helpful this reaction hinders performance.

While teaching children and teens new coping skills we have to emphasize the link between inner and outer worlds while training. A good way is to explore their inner reactions with the **Alive Workshops Graph Training**. We can discuss the results with them and then encourage them to take this new physical awareness into daily activities. For example:

*Dave, 12, is very upset because children are teasing him for being short. They call him a dwarf. In return, he gets angry and explodes at them, making the whole process of mocking him fun to other children.*

How can he break this cycle?

1. While Dave is training with the Alive Graph Training, we can talk to him about his experiences as he watches his heart rate smoothness and other measurements changing on the screen.
2. Then, we can teach him a basic breathing technique using Alive Workshops **Ways to Breathe**. Because sometimes children get bored, feel free to be creative and adapt the breathing technique as you wish. For instance, you can use soap bubbles to teach your child the pursed lips breathing technique.

3. Start with a physical exercise or by having the child tense and release his fists with rubber balls. This is to help build a familiarity with letting go, which is much easier to do after tensing and releasing the muscles (see also the **Progressive Muscle Relaxation** section of the *Tools & Techniques Appendix*).
4. After that we can use children's great visualization abilities — ask the child or teen to imagine lying on the couch like a rag doll or some very well cooked spaghetti... no tension in the muscles.
5. Then we can start teaching effortless breathing in a playful way, using soap bubbles. They can first blow bubbles without guidance.
6. Now begin blowing big bubbles and small ones, differentiating. This will have to be done by changing the speed of the exhale.
7. After that, talking about abdominal breathing vs. chest breathing is helpful. Direct the child or teen to blow gently, filling the abdomen on inhale.
8. Depending on the child's age, continue determining the natural breathing pace. Expect anything between 6-10 breaths per minute, depending on fitness and age.
9. The last part: Play any Alive Mini-Game.
10. Homework for this session is to take some time to blow bubbles effortlessly and at the natural breathing rate at home.

Once the child has mastered abdominal breathing, we can teach how to perform a mental shift using Alive techniques such as **Change the Channel** or **Zoom Out** (see Appendix I).

Once these techniques have been used successfully and the young person can see a shift in physiological state,

we can suggest using this technique in school and to keep track of the results in the **Today Log** (see Appendix). As he gets better training in the longer techniques the child can move to **Mental Mini Breaks** (see Appendix I) and enjoy a similar effect.

Keep the Graph Training in the mix, as it serves as a wonderful way to show a young person how it is possible to gain control of responses to stresses in daily life.

This learning process enables the child to develop continuity of awareness between what happens inside the body and how it later influences behavior.

After this the child can build skills in a fun way by playing **Alive Games Dual Drive**. Every time the car stops, he can use a short Mental Mini Break to regain momentum, and then return to racing.

The same Mini Break can then be applied whenever the child needs to change his attitude towards something that “threw him out of balance.”

Benefits of Alive training for children and teens include:

**Concentration** — The ability to concentrate is a component often missing in educational programs.

Acquiring better concentration ability requires a lot of training and is dramatically influenced by the state of involvement. Combining both factors with an Alive Game such as **Green Thumb** or **Dream House** is an efficient way to train for better concentration.

**Impulse Control** — **Alive Workshops Graph Training** is good for this.

**Imagery & Visualization** — Imagination is a main contributor to children’s fears; it can also be used by the child to confront them.

Children are less habit-prone than adults, so imagery and visualization are wonderful techniques to bring them to a relaxed state.

With practice, a child or teen can learn to consciously create images to distract them from various environmental stressors and help them feel safer.

1. Instruct the child to find a quiet comfortable place, let go, and be relaxed
2. Start with 5 abdominal breaths.
3. They should then close their eyes and visualize a scene with a sensory image. Start with a sensory image that is happy for them (smell, sight, touch, taste). Perhaps it’s a stone sinking into a pond, clouds passing in the sky, the smell of Grandma’s muffins, memories of a special place where they felt happy and secure). Review several images — daydream! — and simply let them emerge before selecting one that works well at any given time.
4. Move their focus from outside experiences and distractions in the environment into inside experiences within their body.

Make it fun! Encourage the child or teen to use active imagery and a return to focus on the body whenever needed during the day.

If you are guiding a very young user with Alive, make sure to walk them through Alive Workshops, Games and Environments at first, reminding them that confidence and belief in their ability to succeed will give them higher scores and better performance.

## Stress Control Levels

Throughout Alive, you will see references to Stress Control Levels. What do these mean?

Stress Control Level ratings reflect your mastery of the techniques you are using to gain control over your stress, reducing its effect on your ability to breathe, think, and react calmly.

## **Levels 1 to 5 — Novice**

You advance through these levels as you complete the initial Orientation, and as Alive records your successes with smoothing your heart rate as you play Games, explore Environments, and use Workshops.

As you move through these levels, you'll receive bonuses for training for at least 10 minutes in a single day, and for training for at least 10 minutes each day for all 7 days Sun-Sat in one week. By the time you have completed Level 5, you'll have accrued 800 Alive points.

## **Levels 6 to 15 — Intermediate**

As you move through these more advanced levels, your sense of well being is enhanced and you feel that you have more control over your thoughts and emotions. By the time you have completed Level 5, you'll have accrued 5000 Alive points.

## **Levels 16 to 20 — Advanced**

Users have mastered many techniques and are achieving consistently high heart rate smoothness levels.

At this level, the tools and techniques you have learned are easier to remember and you are using them regularly to achieve better concentration, decision-making, and emotional balance. By the time you have completed Level 5, you'll have accrued 9000 Alive points.

## **Above Level 20 — Expert**

You'll be so skilled at reducing stress and facing challenging situations calmly and efficiently, with "flow," that you will practice your techniques often and share them with others who can benefit from your expertise.

# Music and Relaxation

Relaxation with music is among the easiest, most effective forms of stress management. It affects your body, mind and emotions. Listening to music induces physical changes — it can promote relaxation of tense muscles and enable you to effortlessly release some of the tension you are carrying from a stressful day. Music can help you get into the zone when practicing heart rate smoothness and it distracts from unwanted, stressful thoughts.

Music can also help you feel energized when it is desired. It can help dissolve the stress when you're just melting into the couch, riding the waves of the music. Some kinds of music help your brain get into a meditative state.

Try some of the musical environments in Alive to find which aids you the best. You can also use your own music accompanied with some pictures or a slide show of loved ones or favorite locations.

# Tools & Techniques

*Optional Off-Screen Exercises and Techniques to use in conjunction with Alive.*

### ALIVE IN YOUR LIFE

*The off-screen techniques in this Appendix have been shown to help with:*

- **Improving quality of sleep**  
Shallow, interrupted, or elusive sleep can be caused by extra adrenalin...Worries, anxiety, racing mind, overtensed muscles and even positive expectations.

**Try this:** Do the Short Progressive Muscle Relaxation sequence in this Appendix, followed by 20 abdominal breaths counted backward. Then do a Body Scan, from the Body Scan section of this Appendix.

- **Improving preparation stage before an exam or an oral presentation**  
Anticipation anxiety and stressful emotions are very common

**Try this:** 5 minutes of abdominal breathing counted backward from 100. Then try the Change the Channel technique in this Appendix, visualizing a positive

outcome (such as feeling great after giving an optimal performance).

- **Alleviating intense stress**  
Had a great disappointment in work, an argument with a child or a friend?

**Try this:** The Zoom Out technique in this Appendix, combined with abdominal breaths. Cultivate warmth and openness (You can use Mental Mini-Breaks from this Appendix) while practicing effortless pursed-lip breathing

- **Relax and focus after waking up groggy**  
In the morning, before you start another busy day, take a few minutes to fine-tune and reset your emotions, thoughts, and body — the way an orchestra tunes up before a concert.

**Try this:** Focus on your exhale and count to 4...Focus on your inhale and count to 4... And so on. Now take one of the Mental Mini-Breaks, choosing the one that best suits your hopes for the day.

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## PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION — FULL FORM

*Before practicing Progressive Muscle Relaxation you should consult your physician if you have a history of serious injuries, muscle spasms, neck or back problems. The deliberate muscle tensing of the PMR procedure could exacerbate any of these conditions. Progressive*

*muscle relaxation is a wonderful, research-based way to get rid of tension accumulating in your body. It's been shown to have numerous health benefits.*

*There are three steps to Progressive Muscle Relaxation:*

### 1. **Deliberately tensing muscle groups**

*The process of applying tension to a muscle is essentially the same, no matter which muscle group you're addressing. Let's begin with your right hand. First, focus your mind on the muscle group. Then inhale and simply squeeze your hand tight, fully contracting without straining yourself, for about 10 seconds. Avoid pressing your nails too hard into the palms of your hands.*

### 2. **Releasing the induced tension**

*This is the best part because it is so pleasurable! Now focus on the muscles in the right hand you have been squeezing. When the 10 seconds are up, quickly and suddenly let go. Let all the tightness and pain flow out of the muscles as you exhale. Feel the muscles relax and become loose, tension flowing away like water from a faucet. Focus on — and notice — the difference between tension and relaxation.*

### 3. **Letting go of any residual tension**

*Enjoy the feeling of letting go and focus on that feeling, here and now.*

Sit in a comfortable chair. Get as comfortable as possible, relaxing into the chair as deeply as you can. Loosen any tight clothing, and take off your shoes if possible. Uncross your legs.

Think of a time when you were unusually relaxed and carefree. Take a couple of deep breaths, letting them out slowly.

What you'll be doing is alternately tensing and then relaxing specific groups of muscles. Once you have brought tension to a muscle group, and relaxed it, those muscles will feel more relaxed than before you performed this

exercise. Concentrate on the feel of the muscles, specifically the contrast between tension and relaxation. In time, you will recognize tension in any specific muscle and be able to reduce that tension.

Let go of all muscles other than the specific group at each step. Remember to breathe effortlessly, without trying too hard. Breathe slowly and evenly and think only about the tension-relaxation contrast. Each tensing is for 10 seconds; tense a muscle group for 10 seconds, then relax that muscle group for 10–15 seconds. Count “one 1,000, two 1,000...” until you have a feel for the time span.

Do the following sequence once a day if you can, until you feel you are able to control your muscle tension. Progressive Muscle Relaxation procedure as follows, you may spend about 10 minutes a day maintaining your proficiency by practicing the shortened form of the procedure, detailed at the end of this section. Again, if you have problems with pulled muscles, broken bones, or any medical contraindication for physical activities, consult your doctor before engaging in Progressive Muscle Relaxation.

1. **Hands.** Tense both hands into fists, making sure that all of your other muscles groups remain relaxed.

Breathing slowly and evenly, count out the ten second time tension period: one 1000, two 1000, three 1000, four 1000, five 1000, six 1000, seven 1000, eight 1000, nine 1000, and ten 1000. Now, while exhaling, relax both hands and let go.

Notice the blood flow into your fingers and sense the pleasant heaviness and warming feeling of letting go.

Think about the relaxation / tension contrast. Extend your fingers and then relax: Take a deep breath and while exhaling just let go.

2. **Biceps and triceps.** Locate your biceps, the muscle group found on the outer upper arms. Now tense your biceps. Shake your hands to make sure you're not tensing them into a fist. Then relax and let go. Drop your arms to the chair... really drop them.

Now locate your triceps. Your triceps is the muscle group under the upper arms. You can feel these muscles being used when you extend your arms behind you. Tense your triceps and now relax and let go. Drop your arms and feel the ease in the muscles.

3. **Shoulders.** Pull your shoulders back (careful with this one).. now relax...then let go. Push your shoulders forward (hunch)... then relax and let go. Raise your shoulders as if to touch your ears. Relax and let go.

Again, feel the pleasant feeling of letting go, of warmth and of heaviness.

4. **Neck (side-to-side).** With your shoulders straight and relaxed, turn your head gently and slowly to the right, as far as you can... then relax and let go. Turn to the left; relax and let go. Continue breathing slowly and evenly.
5. **Neck (forward).** Dig your chin into your chest — then relax, let go and slowly return your head to its original position. Avoid bringing the head back, as you can risk damage to your neck.
6. **Mouth.** Take two deep breaths, then open your mouth as wide as

possible...then relax. Bring your lips together and purse them as tightly as possible...then relax.

*Optional:*

7. *Tongue.* With your mouth open, extend the tongue as far as possible. Then relax, letting your tongue sit in the bottom of your mouth. Bring your tongue back in your throat as far as possible ...then relax.

*Now dig your tongue into the roof of your mouth...now relax. Dig it into the bottom of your mouth... then relax.*

8. *Eyes.* Open your eyes as wide as possible...then relax. Close your eyes tightly...then relax. Make sure you completely relax your eyes, forehead, and nose after each time you create tension.
9. **Breathing.** Take a deep breath ...and then take a little more. Let it out and breathe normally for 15 seconds.  
  
Let all the breath in your lungs out...and then a little more. Then inhale and breathe normally again for 15 seconds
10. **Back.** With your shoulders resting on the back of the chair, push your body forward so that your back is arched...then relax and let go. Be very careful with this one: Make sure not to try too hard and only arch your back as far as your flexibility permits.
11. **Buttocks.** Tense your buttocks tightly and raise your pelvis slightly off your chair...then relax and let go. Dig your pelvis into your chair ...then relax and let go.
12. **Thighs.** Extend your legs and

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raise them about 6" off the floor or footrest, without tensing your stomach. Exhale. Relax and let go. Dig your heels into the floor or footrest...then relax and let go.

- 13. Stomach.** Pull in your stomach as far as possible...then relax completely. Push out the stomach. Tense your stomach as if you were preparing for a punch in the gut. Remember to keep breathing... then relax and let go.
- 14. Calves and feet.** Point your toes without raising your legs...then relax and let go. Point your feet up as far as possible (beware of cramps — if you get them or feel them coming on, shake them loose)...then exhale, relax and let go. Breathe slowly and evenly. Notice the contrast between when you are tensing and when you are relaxing.
- 15. Toes.** With your legs relaxed, dig your toes into the floor. Then relax and let go. Bend your toes up as far as possible...then, while exhaling, relax and let go.
- 16. Now just relax for a while.** Mentally scan your body for tension, beginning at the top of your head and slowly moving down to your toes. Notice any residual tension. If you find an area that remains tense, just tighten those muscles for a few seconds, and then on an exhale relax and let go.
- Visualize a pleasant wave of relaxation flowing from your head to your forehead, to your

eyebrows, your eyelids, your jaw, your chin, your neck, your hands, your arms, your torso, your legs, your feet, and your toes. Everywhere the wave of relaxation has flowed, relaxation is present instead of the tension that was there before. Experience a pleasant feeling of letting go, peacefulness. Stay and enjoy this state for a few more moments.

*To move into the day from this relaxation state, just "pump" your palms a few times, take a deep breath, open your eyes, and stretch your arms. Sit for a moment and take this pleasant feeling with you for the rest of the day.*

*As your days of practice progress, you may wish to work only with muscle groups that appear to be a problem for you. Once you have become able to recognize your own areas of tension, which can happen in just a few weeks, you need only focus on and work with those muscle groups that you find to be tense.*

*These exercises may not eliminate all of your tension, but they can increase your awareness of tension so you can then do something immediate to relieve it. When you notice an area of your body is tense, you can 'tense-relax' away the tension or just acknowledge it and let it go.*

*After learning the full PMR procedure, you may spend about 10 minutes a day maintaining your proficiency by practicing the shortened form of the procedure, detailed at the end of this section.*

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## PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION — SHORT FORM

*In the shortened form of PMR, you will work with larger groups of muscles rather than individual muscle groups,*

*and then you'll begin to use visual or verbal cues to control your relaxation.*



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**Muscle groups:** Arms, fists, shoulders, abdomen, lower limbs.

**Cue-controlled relaxation.** Use the same tension-relaxation procedure as full-form PMR, working with the summary groups of muscles.

Focus on your breathing during both tension and relaxation. Inhale slowly as you apply and hold the tension. Then, when you let the tension go and exhale,

say a cue word to yourself.

This will help you to associate the cue word with a state of relaxation, so that eventually the cue word alone will produce a relaxed state: relaxed, calm, serene.

You can use a mental image instead of a cue word that evokes a feeling of letting go, if you prefer.

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### GAINS VS. DRAINS™

*We engage in a lot of activities and have worries that drain energy. Usually these take up most of our time. Though we usually don't take the time, it is important for us to do things that can help us regenerate and add happiness to our lives.*

*The lists that follow show examples of things that drain vitality and things that are "gains" in life. Make your own list of Gains and Drains. Ask yourself:*

1. How much time do I spend during a week on things from each list?
2. Can I commit to doing more activities from the Gains column and reduce Drains?

3. What can I add to the Gains that is reasonable and will make me happier?

#### DRAINS

- A work load that is too heavy
- Financial burdens that seem overwhelming
- Bad relations with neighbors
- Headaches

#### GAINS

- Seeing theater or performing arts
- Practicing yoga, T'ai Chi, or Aerobics
- Having coffee with a friend or a family member

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### CHANGE THE CHANNEL™

*This technique helps you to shift from thoughts of fear and failure to a positive feeling of capability and power.*

- Choose a TV show you enjoy
- Choose a song you like a lot
- Imagine a TV with only 3 channels:
  1. A fear channel showing your worries and negative scenarios for the future

2. A favorite-show channel
3. An audio channel playing the song you love

Close your eyes and choose a channel, imagining this channel until you see it vividly. Wait for a few seconds and then change to another of the channels.

*Try actually pressing the button with your hand to better set this technique in your memory.*

## MENTAL MINI-BREAKS™

Sometimes we can get “stuck” in a self-defeating thought cycle.

Taking one of the following Mental Mini-Breaks can help turn a few moments into an attitude change, renewing your energy and opening you up to the positive potential in any situation. Each of the five Mental Mini-Breaks focuses on a different outcome. At any time, select from among them based on the specific challenges you are facing.

Because each of us interprets life differently, some mini-breaks may be more effective for you than others. Make sure to try them all.

### Openness

<b>STOP</b>	Let go of daily hassles and worries
<b>SHIFT</b>	Bring your attention to your breath
<b>FEEL</b>	warm air as you exhale and the cool air as you inhale
<b>THINK</b>	<i>I will relax and feel calm and safe</i>
<b>VISUALIZE</b>	yourself sitting relaxed, calm. Add a loved one to be with you
<b>RETURN</b>	to reality, more open and flexible

### Balance

<b>STOP</b>	Make a decision to take a mini-break
<b>SHIFT</b>	Bring your attention to your left hand
<b>FEEL</b>	warmth spreading from your shoulder to the tip of your fingers
<b>THINK</b>	<i>I relax and let go</i>
<b>VISUALIZE</b>	yourself in a hot jacuzzi...the temperature is perfect
<b>RETURN</b>	to your daily life feeling balanced and calm

### Appreciation

<b>STOP</b>	Make a decision to take a mini-break
<b>SHIFT</b>	Bring your attention to your heart
<b>FEEL</b>	openness and acceptance toward loved ones in your life
<b>THINK</b>	Count from ten downward slowly
<b>VISUALIZE</b>	a moment of meeting a loved one, feeling your heart open
<b>RETURN</b>	with a feeling of love and appreciation

### Perspective

<b>STOP</b>	Make a decision to take a mini-break
<b>SHIFT</b>	Bring your attention to your heart
<b>FEEL</b>	joy, care or compassion
<b>THINK</b>	<i>My mind is clear and I am confident</i>
<b>VISUALIZE</b>	a time you felt self-confidence and were “in flow”
<b>RETURN</b>	with a new perspective or a solution

Vitality

- STOP
- Make a decision to take a mini-break
- SHIFT
- Bring your attention to neck muscles and shoulders
- FEEL
- all tension dissolving and draining away —relax and let go
- THINK
- My mind is clearing. I dissolve all negative, limiting beliefs*
- VISUALIZE
- every second that ticks, feeling better and better...
- RETURN
- energetic, full of vitality

TODAY LOG™

Keeping a Today Log helps you identify what things that happen during the day cause you to succeed or hinder your success.

You can use any format you choose, though the example below is a good starting point.

Stressful event	Stress 1–10	Undesired thoughts	Feelings & symptoms	I wish I had been thinking...	What did I do that helped me cope?	Something fun or boosting	What I did that was unhelpful
Preparing for an interview	8	I am going to fail. I will not get the job	Anxiety, fast heartbeat, lack of focus, memory black-outs	I am doing my very best. Worst case, I keep looking.	Took break. Walked, breathing exercises, felt better	Had coffee with a friend	Worrying, emotional eating

For a younger Alive user, the Today Log might look more like the example below.

Date	Time	What happened	How I felt (1-10)	What I thought	What helped
6/24	Night	Found out that Steve is getting a new bike tomorrow	Jealous 6 Sad 5 Offended 6	Why don't I get a bike? Why the secrecy? Jealous. Sad that my parents didn't think I deserve a bike. Am I loveable?	Talked to my parents about it; found out that they also ordered a new bike for me. Ate a great sandwich.
6/25	Afternoon	Beth went to a movie a with Meg	Jealous 7	I am not their real friend. Why do they always leave me out?	Was upset until I came home but then I hung out with John and forgot about it.
6/26	Midnight	Saw a sad movie	Sad 5	Thought about all the other sad things in my life.	Went to sleep.
6/27	Midnight	Saturday afternoon and I hadn't done anything I was planning to.	Anxious 8	I am no good. My parents will really be disappointed with me.	Ate ice cream, slept, then did as much as I could until midnight.
6/28	Dinner time	I have nothing urgent to do but a million things to do, in general	Overwhelmed 5 Nervous 4	Worried about being yelled at. Worried that I won't do the things I need to do. What do I do first?	Talked with my parents, they helped me make a list.

### INTERNAL DIALOGUE

You will probably notice that some of the undesired thoughts in your Today Log are recurring.

1. Focus on one of them, for example, "I always fail."
2. Add a question mark: "I always fail?"
3. Think of examples for the opposite situation — in this example, an event when you have succeeded.
4. Remember how good it felt.
5. Think what you would have said to a good friend who was expressing the undesired thought, discouraging all-or-nothing thinking ("I failed once, so I will always fail").
6. Treat yourself like a good friend. Tell yourself, "Just because you are disappointed, don't be discouraged. Next time is always an opportunity to do better."
7. Try to notice when you have this undesired thought and change it to a more balanced one such as, "Sometimes I don't succeed as I hoped to, but I can always learn from it."

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### MINDFULNESS

*Inspired by the work of Zindel Segal*

*Mindfulness is calm, moment-by-moment awareness of the body running itself, feelings, and consciousness. While most relaxation methods are designed to directly reduce body reactivity, mindfulness is broad enough to help us reduce mental, emotional, and body reactivity.*

*Mindfulness practice is a scientifically proven method for reducing the hazardous effects of stress on our immune system. It is also known for improving brain control over exaggerated fight-or-flight responses — which cause harmful effects on mind and body. Regular mindfulness practice improves overall well being.*

*Together with Alive training, mindfulness can become even more powerful. We designed a few techniques to help you use this powerful tool in transforming stress.*

#### **Mindful Breathing**

*You may find that your performance*

*and mood at work are enhanced by using this technique. Mindfulness practice may result in deeper concentration, relaxation, and sense of well being, and fewer errors and accidents. Try it and see if this is your experience.*

Breathe naturally, sitting in your work area, at your home or any other place you choose. Pay close attention to your breathing without attempting to consciously alter anything you notice. Notice yourself breathing in and out. Eventually, there is just the observation of inhaling, then exhaling. Build your ability to observe your breathing gradually; at first you may use this practice for a only few minutes a day. If you find it very difficult in the beginning to pay attention only to your breathing, try silently counting "one, two, three, four..." as you breathe in, "one, two, three, four..." as you breathe out. If you lose track, start over again. Saying the following phrases in coordination with

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your inhalations and exhalations may help:

“Breathing in...I am aware of breathing in”

“Breathing out...I am aware of breathing out”

*As you continue practicing, you will find it easier and easier to practice for longer periods of time.*

### 3-Minute Mindful Breathing Breaks

*Breathing mindfully can also serve as a wonderful regenerating break to get you fine tuned to whatever you are about to do.*

Take 3 minutes a few times a day to focus exclusively on your breathing. You may notice how each 3-minute Break can energize you.

### Body Scan

The Alive Body Scan Audio Workshop is an important tool for building mindfulness. You can also practice this technique off-screen, using the script on Page 32 of this User Guide.

### 5-Minute Daily Break

**1** — Allow yourself to become aware of the present moment, deliberately adopting good, upright posture. Feel free to sit or stand, whatever is more comfortable for you. Close your eyes if it feels comfortable for you. Rest in an awareness of your inner experience, opening to it and asking, “What is my

experience right now?” Acknowledge the thoughts that are going through your mind, making a gentle note of those thoughts, regarding them as temporary mental events....perhaps becoming aware of their content in words. “What feelings are here?” Feel yourself opening to any sense of emotional discomfort or unpleasant feelings. “What body sensations are here right now?” Quickly scan your body to notice any sensations of tightness or bracing.

**2** — Gather or redirect your attention and focus on the physical sensations of breathing itself. Move in close to the sense of the breath, feeling the abdomen as it expands with each breath you take in and falls back with each exhale. Use your full awareness to follow the breath all the way in, and all the way out. Use breathing itself to anchor you in the present moment.

If you find your mind racing and distracting you from your breath, try this counting method:

As you breathe out, count 1 in your mind, breathe in count 2. Breathe out, count 2 and continue through 10, then return to 1 again. This overlapping counting is like a string, which attaches your attention to your breath.

**3** — Expand the field of awareness to include also a sense of the body as a whole. With any sensations of discomfort, tension or resistance, notice how some are lingering, some are changing. Acknowledge the fact that sensations will change even if you don’t try to influence them. Experiment with gently breathing into them as you inhale, and breathing out from them as you exhale. Notice a softening and releasing on each exhale, and perhaps try saying to yourself, “Let me feel what is here.”

And now, bring this experience of open and accepting awareness to the rest of

### TIP — Guiding your Attention

It is normal for your attention to wander as you practice. Don’t judge yourself. Simply return your focus to your breathing once again. Distraction can be used as a reminder to pay attention to your breathing.

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your day. As the day unfolds, whatever circumstances you find yourself in, notice any negative thoughts lingering and just take a few minutes to bring your attention into the body and then return — with a new perspective.

### Letting Go of the Judgmental Mind

While you practice mindfulness, you serve as a witness to everything that passes through your consciousness. As natural judgments arise, treat them with the same gentle attitude as you have been treating your breath: “just now, judgments are arising”; “just now, judgments are passing.”

You may be amazed by the many attitudes, feelings, interpretations, and impulses that float by on your river of consciousness. Learning to be an observer of them as *they are* makes you very powerful!

As you go through the day mindfully and with awareness, work at allowing things to unfold without forcing them to happen. See what happens, and how you react when you make time during the day to do nothing but just *be*, with no agenda.

Observe your emotions and thoughts when they arise, especially negative

## EATING A RAISIN WITH ALL OF YOUR SENSES

*Try this simple exercise for moment-by-moment observation: Mindful eating. By slowing down and paying close attention to different aspects of the sensory experience.*

*By immersing in the here-and-now, we notice things that we have not noticed before and that go unnoticed when we act without mindfulness.*

- First, take the raisin and hold it between your thumb and finger. Close your eyes. Roll it between your fingers...feel its texture...lightly squeeze it how does it feel at your finger tips?
- Open your eyes gaze at it does it look like it felt? Examine the shades and dark hollows, its features, its surfaces.
- Now smell the raisin a few times while inhaling. Notice any sensations in your mouth or throat.
- Gently place the raisin between your front teeth and hold it there, touch it with your tongue and notice any sensations arising in your mouth, throat or stomach.
- Without chewing on it yet, notice how, moment by moment, changes occur inside your mouth and in the raisin, too. Place it on your tongue and roll it around, sensing moment after moment.
- Now before chewing it, notice what conditions the intention to chew causes. As you chew, what do you hear? Before swallowing the raisin, notice any physical conditions the intention to swallow causes.
- Notice how the whole body feels after swallowing.

## DAILY MINDFULNESS SKILLS

- When waking up in the morning, before getting out of bed, gently focus on your breathing. Observe 12 breath cycles (inhale and exhale). Fine tune yourself for the upcoming day as you breathe.
- Notice your body while engaging in different activities: while walking, standing, sitting, driving, brushing your teeth, taking off your shoes, etc. Notice changes in your posture, and how your body and mind feel when you are noticing.
- Practice mindful eating or drinking, as in the raisin exercise detailed on page 28.
- Notice any regions of tightness in your body and try breathing into them
- Observe talking or listening... how your body and mind feel. Is it possible for you to listen without judging? Or without planning how you'll reply?
- Take a few 5-minute Daily Mindfulness Breaks.
- When waiting for something, such as a window to pop up on your computer screen or waiting in line, as impatience builds, observe your breathing and check with yourself whether you can choose to adopt an accepting attitude of what is already here, right now, just as it is.
- Before going to sleep, take 12 mindful breaths.

ones. What are the emotions or thoughts telling you, and what are they telling you to do? Give some thought to why you are feeling and reacting that way. What is it about the triggering event that caused your reaction?

See if you can adopt a different perspective about these emotions or choose an alternative, more positive thought. Seek to adopt a perspective that sees things unfold *in their own time, and for their own reason*.

### Expanding Observation

As you develop mindfulness, you may want to observe sensations, thoughts, imagery, feelings, and actions. These more complex phenomena are like whirlpools within the stream of consciousness. They may capture attention and diminish overall awareness. Against the background of busy everyday life, try choosing a single phenomenon you wish to give your attention. It might be eating a raisin. Ordinarily a person would simply pop the raisin into the mouth, chew a few times and swallow, without thinking. Mindful, meditative raisin eating is much different.

It begins with looking intently at the raisin, considering its shape, weight, color and texture. Next comes placing the raisin in the mouth, focusing on how it feels on the tongue as the mouth welcomes it with salivation. The mindful raisin-eater then chews the raisin slowly, thoroughly, focusing on its taste and texture. Finally, swallowing the raisin involves following it all the way down to the stomach.

So being a mindful eater means that instead of mindlessly eating you simply observe, moment by moment, the sensations while eating. Mindful eating is a wonderful way to control food intake if overeating is a something you are prone to.



## APPENDIX I

After developing the ability to remain mindful for a period of time in a calm environment, you may begin to practice in busier places. By challenging the ability to remain aware in more stimulating locations, that ability will develop further.

Once you commit to mindful actions — sipping a cup of coffee, eating fruit, shaving, or petting your dog — it becomes easy to work many more mindful moments into each day.

# Off-Screen Audio & Other Workshops

*This Appendix contains off-screen versions of some of the Alive Audio and screen-based Workshops. You can have a friend read them to you as you practice, or you may want to record your own voice and use that recording as a guide.*

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## SAFE PLACE™

Take a moment to picture a scene that symbolizes comfort, relaxation, safety, warmth, and the absence of outside pressures.

Choose a scene that could create a feeling of peacefulness and serenity for you. It can be somewhere you have been, or it could be a place you now imagine. Feel free to use whatever environment works for you. Some people choose their bedroom, a beach, or a scenic view. Be sure the place feels peaceful and safe to you.

Close your eyes and picture yourself in your peaceful spot. Now imagine you are a movie director. Take a few moments to create the scene for your safe place. Develop all your senses within this scene, adding as many details as you like to make this image as vivid as possible.

**Visualize.** Visualize your entire safe space. As you gaze around you, can you notice any colors or shapes within your peaceful spot?

**Listen.** Use your imagination to begin listening to the sounds in your special place. Can you sense the quality of the sounds that are here? Are they loud or soft? Enjoy the vibrations that these sounds make!

**Taste and smell.** Now imagine your world has various scents. Are any of these fragrances pleasantly familiar to you? Feel the aromas around you moving through your mouth and nose, developing depth and comforting you.

**Feel.** Now get in touch with the

feelings this world produces in you. What satisfying sensations are you experiencing within your body when you are in your serene place? Feel the temperature and quality of the air on your skin as you relax into your comfortable spot. Enjoy any feelings of contentment that you may now feel. While being in this wonderful place, what pleasurable emotions have been arising? Enjoy the feeling of relaxing into your special world.

**Relax and enjoy.** This is your own safe place where all your worries are far away.

If you notice any unwanted thoughts or feelings, acknowledge them. Then simply let them go...attach them to a leaf floating away, downstream, or to a bird flying off over the horizon — and return to experiencing the wonders of your world.

Staying with the special feelings you've created — calm and relaxed feelings — keep your eyes closed. Begin to realize that you can stay connected to these feelings; they are yours. Perhaps you can even sense the essence of that serene place, wherever you are. When you are ready, preserving the feelings and state that you created, slowly open your eyes.

This safe place, this peaceful feeling, is always a part of you. Remember, you can always call it forth, create it again, and feel it anytime during the day, wherever you are. Enjoy creating relaxation in your life!

### BODY SCAN

*The Body Scan exercise is more effective when done lying down, especially the first time it is practiced, although it can also be done seated if necessary.*

*After working or going about the day in a thinking-intellectual mode, the Body Scan technique increases our ability to shift our attention, and return “home” to our body; this empowers us to cultivate a quiet mind.*

*At the end of a stressful day, doing a Body Scan is an excellent way to prepare yourself for a deeper, more refreshing sleep. A Body Scan is also very useful before going into longer Mindfulness practices.*

*Set aside at least 30 minutes, and turn off your cell phone. If you can, lie down in a comfortable place, such as your bed or a cushy mat on the floor. Lie on your back with your legs uncrossed, your arms at your sides, your palms up, and your eyes open or closed, as you wish.*

Become aware of sounds in the distance. Become aware of the most distant sound that you can hear. Use your sense of hearing like a radar beam, searching out distant sounds and following them for a few seconds.

Move your attention from sound to sound, without trying to identify the source.

Gradually bring your attention to closer sounds...to sounds nearby...and then to sounds closest to you.

Become aware of the existence of your physical body. Feel yourself from within your body. Sense your relationship to the space surrounding you. Now focus your total awareness on your physical body.

Keep your body as still as possible...

If you need to make any movements to position yourself differently, please make them now... Give yourself the time to now tune into your body.

Begin to notice the parts of your body that are holding tension – such as your jaw, neck and shoulders – even tense muscles in your calves.

Feel or imagine that the tension in your body — and the feelings of fatigue associated with it — are flowing out on each exhale and that, on each inhale, you are breathing in energy, vitality, and relaxation.

If you feel pressure or tension anywhere, imagine those areas softening. Allow yourself to let go of any thoughts and feelings about the past or the future.

Let everything fade into the background but your body. Agree to meet what you find in your body with friendliness.

Now, as you lie in your body, become aware of all the meeting points between your body and its surroundings.

Notice those parts of the body in contact with the bed or mat.

Become aware of your breath — your deep, natural, easy, spontaneous breath.

The practice of Body Scan begins now. Say mentally to yourself: “I am going to practice Body Scan. I will not sleep. I am going to practice Body Scan.”

This is the time to make a resolve. A simple resolve. Something like: “Every day that goes by, I will feel better and better.” Choose your resolve, making sure it is worded in a positive way. Pronounce your resolve clearly with feeling and awareness three times.

## APPENDIX II

Now, gently return your attention to your natural and effortless breathing.

As you begin to feel comfortable and relaxed, imagine you're taking a tour of your body, looking to see what's there today. Simply notice and experience your body parts one by one.

Direct your attention to your right hand. Tune into any sensations in that part of your body while remaining aware of your breathing.

Concentrate on...

Your right hand thumb, index finger, middle finger, ring finger, pinky, the palm of your right hand, the back of your hand, your right wrist, right lower arm, right elbow, right upper arm, right shoulder, right underarm, the right side of your waist, right hip, your thigh, your knee, calf muscle, right ankle, your heel, the sole of your right foot, the top of your right foot, your right big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe, pinky toe...

Now put your attention on parts of the left side of your body, starting with the thumb on your left hand, your index finger, middle finger, ring finger, pinky, the palm of your left hand, the back of your hand, wrist, your left lower arm, elbow, upper arm, shoulder, underarm, the left side of your waist, hip, thigh, knee, calf muscle, ankle, heel, the sole of your left foot, the top of your left foot, your left big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe, pinky toe.

Now focus on your right shoulder, your left shoulder, your right shoulder blade, your left shoulder blade, your pelvis

from right to left, your spine...your whole back.

Now concentrate on the top of your head, your forehead, your right eyebrow, your left eyebrow, the center of your eyebrow, your right eyelid, your left eyelid, your right eye, your left eye, your right ear, your left ear, your right cheek, your left cheek, your nose, the tip of your nose, your right nostril, your left nostril, your upper lip, your lower lip, your chin, your jaw, your throat, your right collarbone, your left collarbone, the right side of your chest, the left side of your chest, the middle of your chest, your navel, your upper abdomen, your lower abdomen.

Your whole right leg, your whole left leg, both legs together, your whole right arm, your whole left arm, both arms together, your whole back, your whole front, your whole head together, legs, arms, back, front, head, together...your whole body together.

Now remember the resolve you made at the beginning of the practice.

Repeat your resolve now three times with feeling and emphasis — using the same words and the same attitude.

Become aware of your breathing, then lie quietly for a few moments, taking your time to slowly open your eyes.

*You can now choose to repeat one more complete round, taking a slower tour of your body. Focus on the sensations you feel in each part of your body: heaviness and lightness, warmth and coldness, tension and relaxation.*

### ZOOM OUT™

*Inspired by the work of Les Fehmi*

*Reserve at least 15 minutes, and turn off the ringer on your phone. Lie down in a comfortable place, perhaps your bed or a cushy mat on the floor.*

Let go of any tension in your muscles. Feel as if you are sinking into the mat. Your mind is focusing on the present... here and now.

Just follow the instruction, without any effort.

Sometimes, when we are overwhelmed by our emotions, deep in anger or anxiety, our suffering stems from our inability to grasp reality from a different perspective, a perspective with wider focus, from which you see the whole picture.

A wider perspective helps us become aware of what is in our control and what is not...and lets us simply accept what we cannot change. From this perspective we can also clearly see those things in life we are happy about.

When we are overpowered by our emotions, we are more likely to overreact. This often occurs because a current situation we are in has triggered a survival response. One of these alarm-system responses is called a “fight or flight reaction.” This response produces immediate changes in our body and mind causing us to want to be aggressive or flee. It tries to control what we put our attention on.

The next thing we know we have entered an unhelpful cycle of worrying or feeling the world is against us, leading us to feel separated out and lonely. It can take just one moment to get caught in this downward emotional spiral.

The Zoom Out technique is designed to shift us from being controlled by reactive survival programming to being

free to deal with our current situations more rationally and compassionately.

Zoom Out helps us to stop spiraling and sinking into negative emotions and thoughts...to stop feeling helplessness when we are engaged in emotional or physical pain...to reverse the strains of stress... and instead to grasp reality in a proportional way, remembering we are not alone in this world and that there are many more things happening besides this negative state we are in.

So, if you feel you want to change your perspective on some event or a negative emotional state you have sunk into, simply state to yourself quietly, “It’s time to start feeling better, and I can do that right now.”

Then gently shift your focus from your uncomfortable thoughts or emotions to your right hand.

Imagine that the thumb on your right hand is filled with space. You may choose to fill this space with a color that you like.

Zoom out...

Imagine the space between the palms of your hands, back of your hands extending into your wrists, lower arms, elbows, upper arms, shoulders, underarms, waist, hips, thighs, knees... calf muscles, ankles, heels, the soles of your feet, the top of your feet, big toes, second toes, third toes... fourth toes, pinkie toes — all filled with space. Sense space between the palms of your hands and the back of your hands. Now extend this space into your wrists, your lower arms, your elbows, your upper arms, your shoulders, your underarms.

Zoom out even more.

Imagine connecting all this space with...

## APPENDIX II

The space in the region between your eyes and the back of your neck, between the bridge of your nose and the back of your head, between your temples. Imagine the space of your forehead, brain.

Your whole head and your face are filled with space, which unites all the parts into a whole.

Now connect the space between your shoulders and in your shoulders and arms, hands and fingers and inner organs.

Connect the space inside your lungs, inside your bronchial tubes as you inhale and exhale, the space inside your throat, your nose, as you inhale and exhale.

Zoom out...

Your body from the diaphragm down is filled with space. This includes your stomach, your belly, your pelvis and your feet and toes.

Your whole head... face... neck... your whole body, including your hands and pelvis, are filled with space.

Your whole being fills with air when you inhale and your whole being is filled with space when you exhale.

Zoom out...

Sense the space inside your whole body and the space around your body, the space above your head and beneath your chair, and the space in front of you and to your sides.

Let yourself attend equally to all the sounds that are available to you, the sound of my voice, the sounds of you and others in the room, and any other sound that you are able to hear.

Now observe yourself as if you were above your body and looking down at yourself through a camera.

Zoom out to see yourself and your surroundings. Zoom out more to see

yourself within the larger space you are in, the neighborhood you are in connecting you to the people you love.

Within the larger area where your loved ones are, see them as they smile at you. As you visualize these loved ones, choose one of them to shift your attention to, according to what you need most this very moment. Perhaps it is security, perhaps it is someone's wisdom, or kindness — or maybe just their unconditional love. While shifting your attention to this person as he or she smiles at you, zoom into your heart and feel it open and secure.

With that enhanced feeling of love and safety, gently return to your daily activities.

As you continue to practice Zoom Out, you will increase your ability to zoom out and shift your attention faster, more completely and more effortlessly. Your imagery will become more vivid.

**Zoom Out can also be performed as a quick visualization technique if you wish to change perspective:**

Imagine looking at yourself just as you are, right now, from above, as if through a camera placed a couple of yards above you. Now zoom out a little to see yourself within the context of your immediate surrounding. Now take the camera even higher and imagine the building you are in.

Now zoom out a little to see yourself within context of your immediate surroundings.

Now take the camera even higher and imagine the building you are in.

Zoom out...

and see the neighborhood you are in

Zoom out...

and see the city you are in

Zoom out...

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and see the whole region as seen from a satellite.

Now keep your perspective where it is, no longer zooming out. Focus on a mental image of loved ones smiling at you for a few moments.

This feeling, this experience of your loved ones smiling at you, is one you can call back when you would like to...and whenever you let the feeling fill you, you will feel better.



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## FINDING GRATITUDE AND TRUST™

Emotions are quite interesting. You know that they can vary tremendously: you can feel happy, peaceful, sad, angry, etc. But do you also know how powerful your emotions are? They can actually direct your body and put it into different states. For instance, when a situation in your life is challenging, it may trigger you to feel stressed-out. That emotion will then direct your body into a stressful state. And if you feel at ease, your body will then be directed into a state of ease.

With training, you can intentionally shift your emotions so that your body can be brought into a state of ease. This will get you through your day with more energy, fewer errors, and more productivity — even if you are experiencing external circumstances that are difficult for you.

Changing your emotional state is really about shifting your attention from a negative viewpoint to a positive viewpoint, and then noticing the feelings you begin to experience after deciding to shift your attention to a

positive viewpoint.

A wonderful positive viewpoint you can shift your attention to is gratitude. It is often associated with being thankful for the goodness in your life. You can even feel grateful for the challenging lessons that life sometimes brings.

Reflect on what gratitude means to you. Does it include appreciation? Thankfulness? Do you see gratitude as being a mental, emotional, physical or spiritual experience?

Gratitude has been recognized for centuries, by every culture, as one of the most powerful human emotions. Gratitude is also an attitude that can be used to change emotional states.

To shift to a state of gratitude, think of a time, a place, a person, a pet — something or someone that brings you comfort. Sense the comfort that it brings you and then feel the emotion of gratitude or love for that person or thing.

Gently allow the thought of the person, place or object you have chosen to



## APPENDIX II

fade out as you enjoy maintaining your attention on this positive feeling.

Where in your body are you feeling this gratitude? Is it soft or exhilarating? Is it accompanied by a feeling of love or happiness? Does it make you want to smile?

Now think of other things or people in your life that you are grateful for. Each time you realize one, start to focus on the many positive feelings gratitude produces in you.

The more you practice shifting your attention to a thought of gratitude and then to its positive emotions, the easier and more gratifying it will become. So practice finding gratitude often.

Another powerful way to change your emotional state is to observe when you are feeling either doubt or trust in any given moment. Consider what doubt and trust mean to you. Doubt leads us to fear, panic, suspicion, and bitterness.

Trust, however, leads us towards possibility, creative thinking and joy in our living. Learning how to hold a deep sense of trust, even in doubtful situations, can help you cope more effectively with stress.

So, now let's re-experience a state of gratitude for whatever you realized brings you comfort.

Stop and let go of daily hassles and worries.

Gently allow the thought of what brings you comfort to fade out and maintain that feeling of gratitude and any other positive emotions, like love and happiness, it is producing in you.

Make a decision to take mini breaks throughout the day so that you can

cultivate the state of gratitude in your daily life.

Bringing your attention back to your heart while consciously breathing into it may help you to cultivate gratitude.

Let's practice this. Shift your attention to your heart. We'll count a few breath cycles backward, while you focus on the feelings in your heart. Imagine exhaling and inhaling through your heart.

5 breathing in...5 breathing out  
4 breathing in...4 breathing out  
3 breathing in...3 breathing out  
2 breathing in...2 breathing out  
1 breathing in...1 breathing out.

Now experience a feeling of openness and acceptance for loved ones in your life in general.

Think of someone that you love unconditionally, and concentrate on the feeling that focusing on that person gives you. It can be a child or your pet. Feel the love and openness towards this being.

Visualize a special encounter and maintain your attention on the positive feeling and joy of being in that moment.

Can you feel gratitude for this encounter?

Take a moment or two to let these feelings settle in and feel it permeating through your entire body. Realize that you can create this feeling and state at will.

Imagine sharing this feeling of gratitude with people you appreciate.

As you now gradually begin to return to your daily activities, carry this feeling of gratitude, love and trust with you and find moments when you can enjoy gently radiating them out to others.

### THE POWER OF MENTAL IMAGERY

Science and experience both support the fact that conscious exercises like visualization, imagery, and self-hypnotism improve mental and physical performance.

The brain thinks in pictures, and these techniques use information in physical forms and images, instead of words. By imagining events and actions while engaging all five senses we can create a powerful tool, a kind of mental reprogramming.

When we create a mental image and repeat it, the brain becomes familiar with the image and then stimulates in us the confidence that we will succeed.

Seeing yourself already achieving your goal makes you believe that attaining that goal is possible.

Let's consider that when something is embedded into your mind in clear detail, it becomes part of your reality. Your subconscious mind does not know the difference between something that is real and something that was vividly imagined.

When you continually see yourself achieving your goal, your subconscious mind will move you into actions that align with the mental image you hold.

The clearer the image, the greater the effect it has on the body. Visualization positively informs the nervous system, muscles, and fibers of the body.

Now pick something you wish to perform successfully. Close your eyes and picture yourself doing it. Feel your muscles and the rest of your body while you are doing this thing. Feel yourself under complete control of the situation. Mentally picture this occurring with perfect form and with perfect success. See the images as clearly as you can. Mentally, turn your head around to see whatever is behind you. Try to visualize yourself 5 minutes after you have successfully completed your task. Embrace the feeling of satisfaction and fulfillment. Always focus on what you want to happen, on the desired outcome and not on what you are afraid will happen.

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### REMEDIAL CLINIC

#### **Have you felt dizzy while breathing with Alive?**

Breathing with too much effort can make us feel dizzy. Breathing should be wavelike, without unnatural pauses, effortless. Sometimes dizziness means exhalation is too deep or air intake is directed into the chest, rather than to the abdomen.

Try pursed-lip and abdominal breathing again, focusing on effortlessness.

#### **Are your heart rate changes staying choppy and uneven when you're playing Games?**

Try really focusing on slowing down your breath. Slowing down the breath has many mental and physical advantages, and most important is slowing exhalation.

People tend to try to breathe deeper in order to become relaxed. As long as you lengthen the time you take to exhale, deeper breathing will naturally occur. Without effort!

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Some of your problems may have to do with posture. Make sure you're wearing clothes that let you fully relax your abdominal muscles...open a button if needed, lean back into your chair. Your air passage should be free...Breathe through your mouth or nose, whichever is more comfortable.

### **Another thing that may be happening is that you find yourself trying too hard.**

We have all been taught that in order to achieve a goal, we should put more effort into it, try harder. This is not the case with using breathing to smooth the natural changes in your heart rate. Just let go, bring your attention to "here and now," focusing on your breath, free of worries, and it will happen. Breathing should be smooth and gentle...breath flowing like a wave, not held at any stage... inhalation is not drawn out. Be kind... adopt a calm and accepting attitude towards your practice...don't worry about how well you're doing or about interruptions. Instead, know that with repetition, your ability to regulate yourself and your breathing will grow.

### **Negative emotions, worries and intrusive thoughts can cause Alive's heart rate waves to become uneven, even if you are using these breathing techniques.**

Try focusing on the Alive wave line while counting, as you did during paced breathing. We all have a limited capacity to store different bits of information simultaneously, so counting can help us let go of thoughts...You can also try one of the other Alive Workshops: Finding Gratitude and Trust, Awareness Shift, Body Scan or A Safe Place.

### **Following the heart rate line waves you see on Alive screens can also be helpful.**

Try pacing and leading the line: while you are relaxed and breathing slowly and gently, make a long exhalation to the count of 4 or even 5 as long as it feels comfortable to you.

When your heart rate wave just begins to rise, start your next inhale. Do it for a few breaths. Keep "following the line," inhaling as your heart rate line starts to rise. Gradually, you may find the line starts to show a more harmonious, smooth pattern as if your breathing "tamed it".

### **Avoid practicing within an hour before or after a meal; both hunger and feeling full may distract you.**

## NOTES

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