

# REWIRE

MINDFULNESS + EMOTIONAL FITNESS = MINDFUL RESILIENCE



"TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE  
FOR HAPPINESS, HEALTH,  
AND ABUNDANCE"

BY BRIAN COONES

We all want a happier and healthier life. We all know that proper sleep, a clean diet, and exercise are the pillars of looking and feeling your best. All these fit together and require intention and discipline to optimize.

But there is another pillar that is often overlooked entirely. That pillar is mind training.

Rewiring our brain and healing our nervous system is not something we commonly approach with intention or understanding.

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### **What does REWIRE mean?**

Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to change (rewire) and adapt throughout life. This involves forming new connections between brain cells or strengthening existing ones.

We can rewire the nervous system, a concept closely related to neuroplasticity. Just as the brain can change and adapt, the entire nervous system has the capacity for plasticity and adaptation.

This book aims to share powerful techniques and practices to help you get there. It takes time, and it's not an easy path. This is the work. But the work compounds over time. Beliefs are malleable; you can tell a new story and reshape your future.

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**“LIFE ISN'T ABOUT  
FINDING YOURSELF.  
LIFE IS ABOUT  
CREATING YOURSELF.”**

— *George Bernard Shaw*



This book is about you, not me. But it might help to share some context of why I have dedicated my life to helping others live mindfully and develop emotional fitness.

What was supposed to be the prime of my life didn't feel that way. I felt anxious, depressed, and like I was living someone else's life. I felt good when I was externally validated or high from the party scene, but the rest felt empty. I sought comfort and pleasure, and I tried to avoid or numb the pain below the surface.

I hit a wall. My risky behavior caught up with me and almost took my life. The birth of my first child was the 'why' I needed to do the work. Not just dabble but go all in on an inward journey. To face my shadows head-on.

I started work at the Mindfulness Center and went deep into meditation. I worked with coaches, mentors, and shamans and engaged in immersive retreats to gain awareness and slowly overcome my patterns and programs.

Over time, I began to help others who noticed my transformation and found my purpose and passion for serving others while continuing to evolve and grow personally.

We all have a story. Are you ready to re-write yours?

## Defining Stress



Stress is a word we all understand and experience that gets in the way of health and happiness.

Stress is not the bad guy. It's a protection mechanism. But it must be understood and managed.

Your ability to manage stress dictates your ability to reach the next level.

Approximately 80% of diseases and sicknesses are related to chronic stress.

The average person lives 70% of their life in stress.

We can become addicted to the hormones of stress (i.e., adrenalin and cortisol). Over time, stress becomes a subconscious program = panic attacks.

The most common sources of stress typically include:

**Workplace Pressure:** Deadlines, workload, job insecurity, and interpersonal conflicts.

**Personal Relationships:** Issues in family or romantic relationships.

**Financial Concerns:** Debt, income instability, and financial planning.

**Health Issues:** Chronic illness, injury, or health crises personally or within one's family.

**Life Changes:** Major life events like moving, job changes, or losing a loved one.

**Daily Hassles:** Commuting, time management, and balancing various life responsibilities.

These stressors can significantly impact mental and physical health, making stress management crucial for well-being.

To become your future self, you need to break the habit of being you.

We will focus on Emotional stress, triggers and traumas, and the fitness required to manage and overcome them.

Mental and emotional patterns are formed by experiences that act as blockages in our consciousness.

Triggers are deep-seated impressions and patterns formed in our consciousness by past experiences. They can be thought of as mental and emotional imprints that shape our reactions, behaviors, and choices.

As a significant source of suffering and inner disturbance, they can keep us trapped in negative emotional states and prevent us from experiencing inner peace.

**“WE CAN’T STOP THE  
WAVES, BUT WE CAN  
LEARN TO SURF.”**

*— Jon Kabbot Zin*





## **Enter the art of Mindful Resilience.**



*What is Emotional Fitness?*

### **Introduction: The Essence of Emotional Fitness**

Emotional fitness is more than just coping; it's thriving in the face of life's challenges. High achievers know this. They don't see setbacks as obstacles but as stepping stones to more tremendous success. They embody resilience and positivity, bringing a dynamic energy to everything they do.

### **The Core of Emotional Fitness: Resilience, Positivity, Focus**

Life throws curveballs. How you react defines your emotional fitness. It's about shifting from negative states like anger or anxiety to constructive emotions and actions. It's bouncing back stronger after each challenge, armed with resilience and a focused mindset.

### **Training Your Emotional Mindset**

Controlling emotions and deriving lessons from life's trials isn't innate – it's learned. Emotional fitness training is akin to physical training. Strengthen your mind to navigate life's obstacles with agility and grace.

### **Why Emotional Fitness is Crucial**

Your emotional fitness shapes your life's trajectory. It's your shield against adversity, aligning you with your purpose and inner strength. This skill empowers you to overcome difficulties without derailing your mission.

We all fall off the path in life. The question is, how quickly do you notice this? (Mindfulness)

What tools and practices do you have to recenter and get back on track?

What was the lesson?

**Rinse and Repeat. That's it.**

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*What is Mindfulness?*

Mindfulness is a mental practice focusing on the present moment while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations. It's often used as a therapeutic technique.

**Mindfulness is Awareness. Awareness is Mindfulness.**

**“AWARENESS IS THE  
GREATEST AGENT FOR  
CHANGE.”**

— *Eckart Tolle*

What you are aware of, you are in control of. What you are not aware of controls you.

We spend a significant percentage of our waking lives on autopilot.

Being on autopilot means engaging in routine behaviors, thoughts, or emotional patterns without conscious intention or awareness.

Mindfulness is like having a check engine light in your body that you notice whenever you are outside your safe tolerance window.

The Tool of mindfulness is our ATTENTION. Attention = focused awareness.

The attitude of mindfulness C.O.A.L. (Curiosity, Openness, Acceptance and Love (the confluence of all 3))

**Curiosity** – Having a beginner or child-like mind and seeing each moment unfold as something new and exciting.

**Openness** – Excluding nothing from the Experience.

**Acceptance** – Accepting pleasant and unpleasant equally – this one is tricky but so important.

**Love** – This is the confluence of all.

Add a dash of kindness and compassion for self and others.

## Mindset – how to change your mind.



A significant part of Mindful Resilience is our Mindset. This quote by *Henry Ford* says it all.

**“WHETHER YOU THINK  
YOU CAN OR CAN’T,  
YOU’RE RIGHT.”**

It is estimated that 25% of our health, wealth, and happiness is how we think. (Victim / Scarcity) Vs. (Empowered / Abundant)

When you start changing thoughts and feelings, you stop being a victim of your life and become a creator of your life.

With a growth mindset, you can improve via disciplined practice. This is precisely how the brain changes. Not by doing things you’re good at over and over but by practicing what you struggle with until you get better.

It is good to push beyond limits. Real change starts outside your comfort zone. DO HARD THINGS.

Believe that you can overcome the past to allow space to create a new version of you.

## My top three most Powerful Science-backed tools to create Mindful Resilience.



Understanding the theory of training your mind to be stronger than your emotions is essential.

But the only way to create lasting change is by practice. You are doing the work every day. Even on the days you don't feel like it. The old you will rarely feel like it. Every day is an opportunity to overcome the old story.

Change is hard at first, messy in the middle, but beautiful at the end. With consistent practice, we create momentum. We can see and feel this momentum, inspiring us to keep going.

## 1 Breathwork and Meditation



I practiced meditation occasionally and read a few books about techniques and their benefits. When I hit the wall, I stopped dabbling and went all in. I joined the Mindfulness Center, started with the MBSR (Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program) under Dr. Stephane Treyvaud, and have been there ever since. There are good and bad days, but the only bad meditation is the one you miss. This practice has rewired my mind and given me greater depth and clarity into who I truly am and how I fit into the world.

### **Meditation:**

Meditation is a practice of focused attention, where you bring your awareness to a single point of reference, such as your breath, a sound, or a visualization. There are other powerful techniques as well. We will focus on mindfulness meditation in this book. It's about being present and observing thoughts and feelings without judgment. This practice helps to calm the mind, reduce stress, and enhance self-awareness. It's training for the mind, allowing you to cultivate a calm and centered state that can be accessed outside your meditation sessions.

### **Breathwork:**

Breathwork involves consciously controlling your breathing patterns to influence your mental, emotional, and physical state. It's a powerful tool for managing stress and emotions. By altering the depth, pace, and breathing pattern, you can activate different responses in the body. For example, deep, slow breathing can stimulate the body's relaxation response, helping to reduce stress and anxiety. Breathwork is not only about relaxation; it's also about gaining a deeper understanding of your inner state and learning how to regulate it through breathing.

We take 20,000+ breaths every day. Many of us do not take one conscious breath!

There is magic when these two practices are combined. Protecting time daily to practice breathwork and meditation is like doing bicep curls for the brain. Breathwork gives us conscious control over the nervous system and may help discharge stored trauma in the body. Meditation rewires the brain.

Breathwork & Meditation [\*\*DOWNLOAD\*\*](#)

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### **Insight from Research**

One notable study is by Sara W. Lazar et al., published in “Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging,” which showed that an 8-week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program led to increases in gray matter density in brain regions associated with learning and memory, emotion regulation, self-referential processing, and perspective taking. This study highlights the structural changes in the brain that can result from regular mindfulness meditation practice, underscoring its potential benefits for emotional and cognitive health.

## 2 Deliberate Cold Exposure



When I talk to anyone about cold exposure therapy, most people become very tense and fearful or quickly announce how much they hate cold water. Despite the resistance, I have transformed hundreds of people into cold water enthusiasts with the right approach and a strong mindset. The benefits are undeniable.

I started doing cold showers almost a decade ago. During the COVID lockdown in 2020, I began to sneak out to the lake near my home to do solo cold plunges. Since 2020, an extensive community of cold plungers has been established, and I've helped lead over 1000 people simultaneously into Lake Ontario for a 2-minute submersion.



Cold water has created a massive transformation in my personal development and healing over the years. Every time you go into the cold, your sympathetic nervous system (fight, flight, freeze) goes online, and you overcome this with your breath and your mind. This gives you conscious control over your nervous system response when under stress.

A cold shower is a great way to start.

Here are just a few of the studied benefits.

**Reduced stress levels.** Regularly taking cold showers imposes little stress on your body, leading to a hardening process. This means your nervous system gradually gets used to handling moderate stress levels. The hardening process helps you keep a cool head the next time you are in a stressful situation.

**Higher level of alertness.** Cold showers wake your body up, inducing a higher state of alertness. The cold also stimulates you to take deeper breaths, decreasing the level of CO<sub>2</sub> throughout the body and helping you concentrate. Cold showers thus keep you ready and focused throughout the day.

**More robust immune response.** Scientific studies have found that a cold shower increases your body's white blood cells. These blood cells protect your body against diseases. Researchers believe this process is related to an increased metabolic rate, which stimulates the immune response.

**Increased willpower.** It takes a strong mind to endure the cold for extended periods. Incorporating cold showers into your daily routine strengthens your willpower, which benefits many aspects of (your) everyday life.

**Weight loss.** Research has shown that cold showers (and exposure to cold in general), in addition to increasing metabolic rate directly, stimulate the generation of brown fat. Brown fat is a specific type of fat tissue that generates energy by burning calories. Cold showers, then, are an effective tool for people who are looking to lose a few pounds.

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### **Insight from Research**

“Immersion at 14°C increased plasma noradrenaline and dopamine concentrations by 530% and by 250%” while “cortisol concentrations tended to decrease” (resulting in long-lasting vast improvements in mood, clarity, focus, and cognitive function).

*\*North American Journal of Medical Science.*

“Consider doing deliberate cold exposure for 11 minutes per week TOTAL. NOT per session, but 2-4 sessions lasting 1-5 mins each distributed weekly. Again, the water temperature should be uncomfortably cold yet safe for a few minutes. You can do more, but this should be the minimum to achieve the benefits of cold exposure. You can do very cold, brief exposures for adrenaline release too, but the 11 minutes is based on a recent study exploring a range of effects and is a good solid, basic protocol for ongoing use.”

*Andrew Huberman Ph.D.*

# 3 Gratitude



I started a gratitude journal after watching an episode of Oprah on the benefits of this practice to health, happiness, and well-being. The practice for me then was writing down five things I'm grateful for daily. This powerful practice forced me to find something to be grateful for, especially on the darker days.

Another beautiful and unexpected part of this practice is looking back at my entries from many years ago to remember who I was and how far I have come.

Gratitude can Rewire your brain.

It's essential not just to check the box and list an item but also to feel grateful for what it is.

To practice gratitude effectively, consider these steps:

**Daily Reflection:** Set aside time each day to think about things you're grateful for.

**Be Specific:** Focus on details about what you're grateful for to deepen the practice.

**Incorporate Writing:** Use a gratitude journal to write down what you appreciate daily.

**Express Gratitude to Others:** Share your gratitude with friends, family, or colleagues.

**Mindfulness:** Be present and notice the good in your current environment or situation.

Being specific and consistent in your gratitude practice enhances its benefits, helping to shift your perspective towards positivity and abundance.



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## Insight from Research

Gratitude is not just a social construct; it's a real neurobiological phenomenon powerful for bringing a deep sense of well-being and connections and enhancing our relationship with self, others, and everything.

Like any neural circuit property, learning as an adult can take some practice, but it is amenable to Neuroplasticity.

*Andrew Huberman, Ph.D.*

Numerous studies have highlighted the benefits of gratitude practice. For example, research published in the "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology" by Emmons and McCullough (2003) found that regular gratitude journaling can significantly increase well-being and life satisfaction. Another "Psychosomatic Medicine" study by Sheldon and Lyubomirsky (2006) showed that gratitude interventions could have lasting effects on positive mood and happiness. These studies suggest that incorporating gratitude into daily routines can enhance emotional well-being, improve relationships, and boost physical health.

## Practical Steps for Emotional Fitness



**“MOST GROWTH  
HAPPENS AS A RESULT  
OF MANY SMALL STEPS.  
THE KEY IS TO KEEP  
TAKING THEM.”**

— *Dan Sullivan*

**Identify Your Emotions:** Pause and reflect on your true feelings. It's about understanding the deeper emotions beneath the surface reactions. This is the new self-awareness or mindfulness to wake up and notice when stuck in the autopilot program.

**Gratitude for Emotions:** Embrace each emotion as a guidepost, a messenger telling you what's working and what's not. Be curious, open, and accepting of whatever it is. What you can feel, you can heal; what you resist persists.

**Discovering Confidence:** Recall past moments of emotional victory. Use these memories as confidence boosters for current challenges. Don't get caught in the gap; life has no destination. It's a journey, moment by moment. Focus on the small wins each day. They add up and compound over time.

**Creating an Emotional Fitness Plan:** Ask yourself transformative questions. Turn emotional challenges into learning opportunities and actionable goals. Action creates transformation! Don't just hope; create a plan to help you overcome old patterns and programs.

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### **Making Emotional Fitness a Lifestyle**

Consistent practice of these steps cultivates an unshakeable resilience. This journey isn't just about overcoming obstacles but building a life of unstoppable success and inner peace. Remember, emotional fitness is about mastering the art of bouncing back, transforming each experience into a pillar of strength and confidence.

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We all fall off the path in life and become overwhelmed.

### **Remember life's journey in 3-steps.**

- 1 How quickly do you notice when you are off-center?  
(Mindful awareness)
- 2 What tools and techniques are available to find your way back to the center? Returning to the center becomes faster as you develop your emotional fitness.
- 3 What was the lesson? Please write it down in your journal.

Thank you for taking the time to invest in yourself and read this book. It's challenging to do this alone. Connect with others on the same path and work together. There are communities of people expanding their consciousness and letting go of the past.

Practicing and making this a part of who you are is essential. Use my meditation download as a springboard for the work.

If you feel now is a time to go deeper with accountability and coaching with this work, reach out anytime to discuss how I may best support you or your organization on the journey of Mindful Resilience and ultimately a happier and healthier life.

Join the Journey to  
Mindful Resilience  
and Get Exclusive

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WITH BRIAN COONES



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