



**Trinity College Dublin**  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin

# Developing resilience

Joanna Kesicka

Trinity Student Counselling Service

Date 04/09/2024

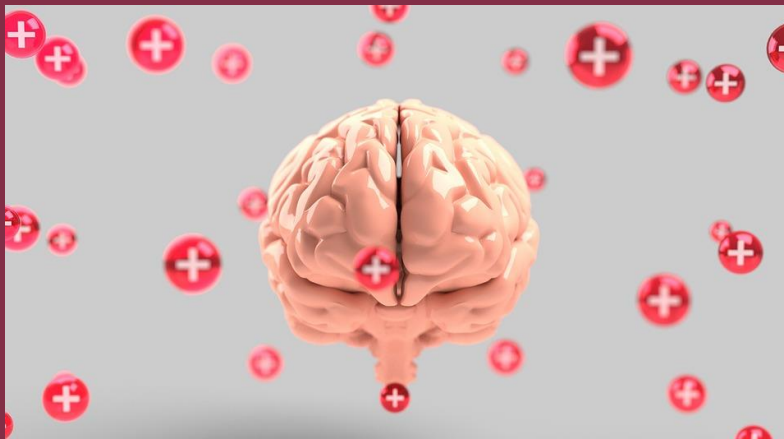
**SCS**   
Student Counselling Services

# Session Aims

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- 1. Learn about mental health and stress**
- 2. Learn coping skills**
- 3. Learn about resilience**
- 4. Learn about Trinity supports**

# What is mental health?



**Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being.**

**It affects how we think, feel, and act.**

# Difficulties arise when...

- Our needs (safety, acceptance, love) are not being met.

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- The demands in our environment outweigh our available resources.
- We feel under threat, unable to take effective action.
- We get stuck in self-critical narratives.
- We feel alone.



# 5 Minute Exercise

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**Speak about how you are feeling about the months ahead:**

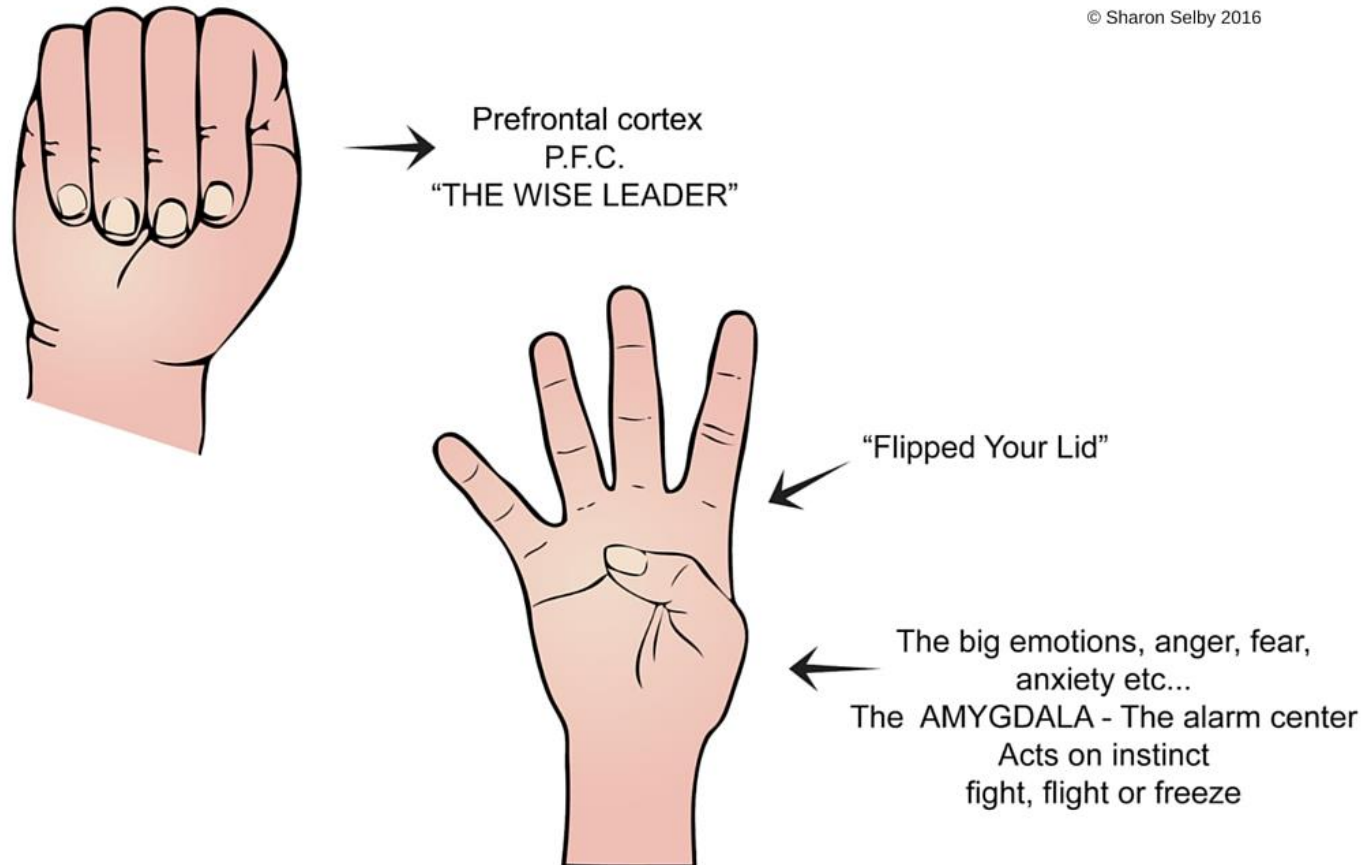
- 1. Name one thing that you maybe find stressful or that you worry about (not too intense).**
- 2. Share something that you do which helps them reduce stress, relax, chill-out, recharge.**

# What did we hear from each other?



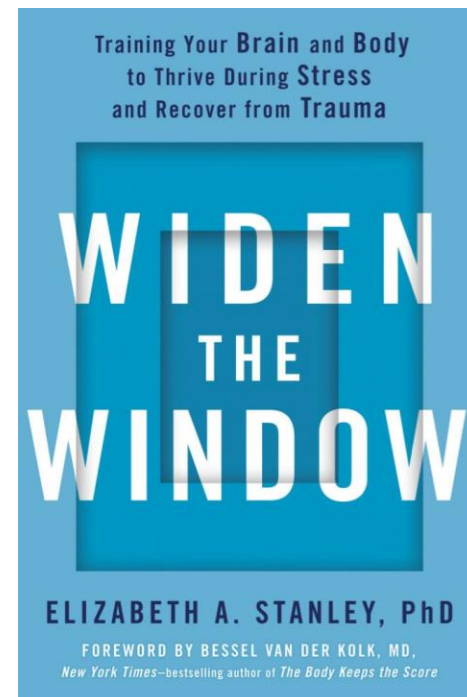
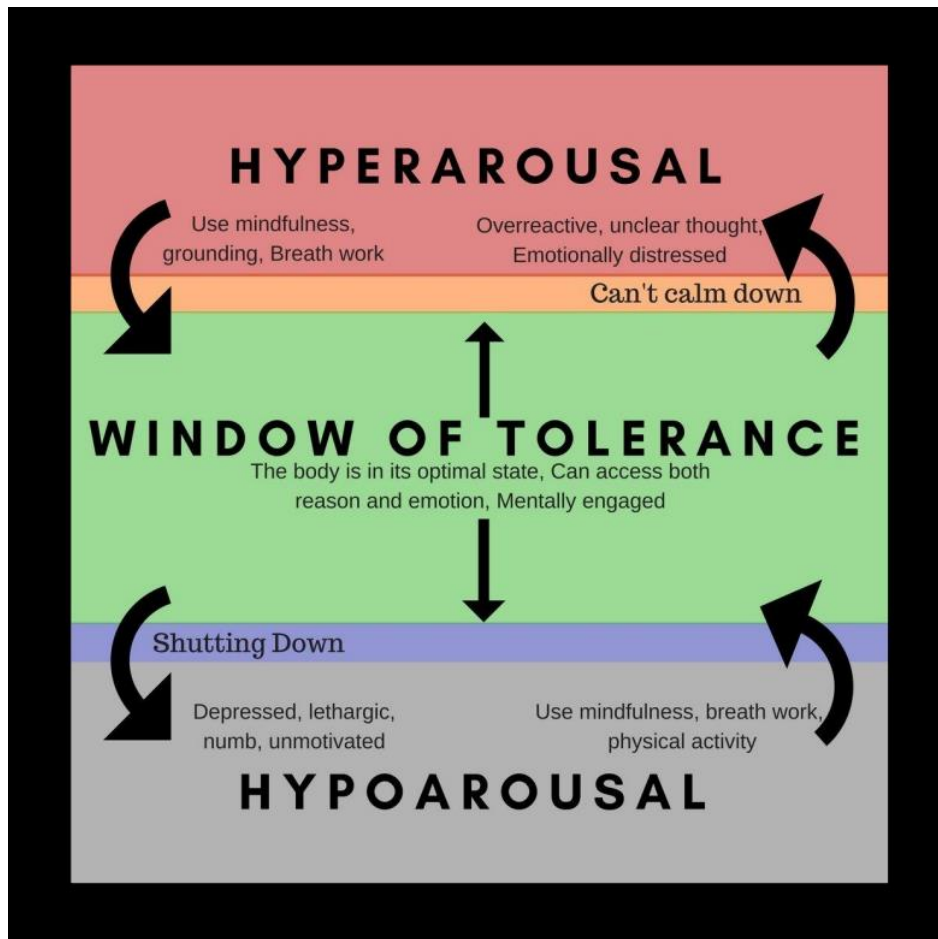
# Brain – Hand Metaphor (Dr. Dan Siegel)

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Adapted from Dr. Daniel J. Siegel's Hand Model of the Brain found in *Mindsight: The New Science of Personal Transformation* (Bantam Books, 2010)

# Stress & The Window of Tolerance





# Widening the Window

**SIX WAYS TO PRACTICE GROUNDING**  
with anxiety + intense emotions



**body**  
lay on the ground, press your toes into the floor, squeeze playdough

**5 senses**  
wear your favorite sweatshirt, use essential oils, make a cup of tea

**self-soothe**  
take a shower or bath, find a grounding object, light a candle, feel something soft

**observe**  
describe an object in detail: color, texture, shadow, light, shapes, size, weight

**breathe**  
practice 4-7-8 breathing: inhale to 4, hold for 7, exhale to 8

**distract**  
find all the square or green objects in the room, count by 7s, say the date

 THE GROWLERY

@tothegrowlery

Credit: <https://www.tothegrowlery.com/blog/2017/4/18/six-different-types-of-grounding-exercises-for-anxiety-intense-emotions>

# Accept difficult feelings

- Emotional pain is like physical pain – it can act as a **messaging system** telling us what we need.
- Our challenge when we have a strong emotional response is stop and name it as accurately as we can.
- Make space for our unpleasant thoughts and feelings without trying to get rid of them or deny them. Without the struggle, our emotions unfreeze.
- Trust that our emotions are telling us something important.



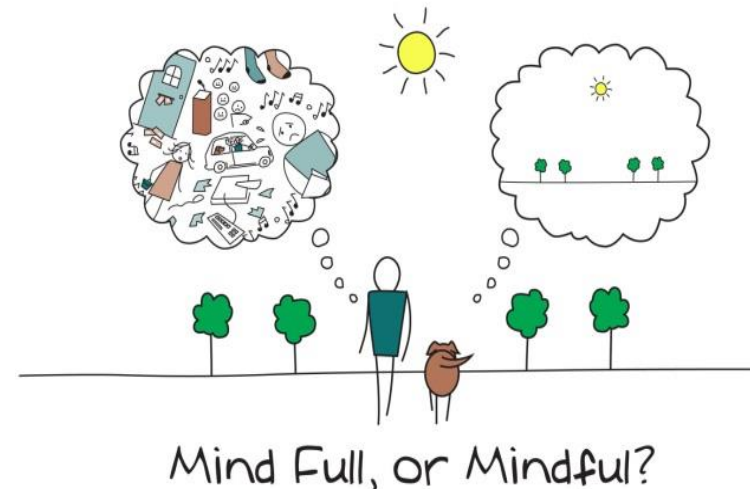
# Mindfulness

## What is it?

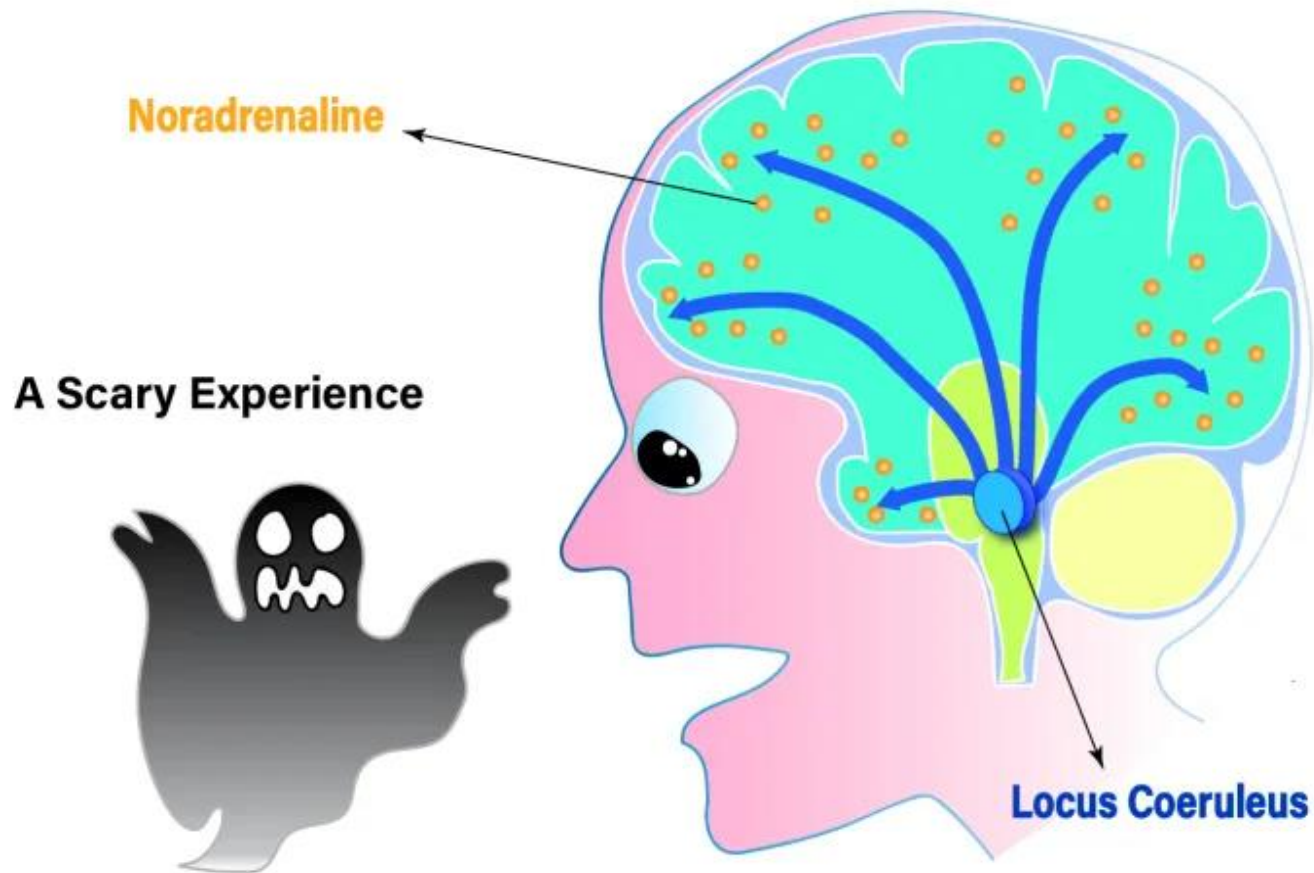
- ❖ Moment-to-moment, non-judgemental awareness
- ❖ Paying attention in a specific way – in the Present
- ❖ Non-reactively, non-judgementally and open-heartedly
- ❖ The capacity to know what is actually happening as it is happening  
(we already have it!)

## What does it involve?

- ❖ Training the mind to concentrate
- ❖ Becoming more aware in our everyday lives
- ❖ Practice anywhere, any time

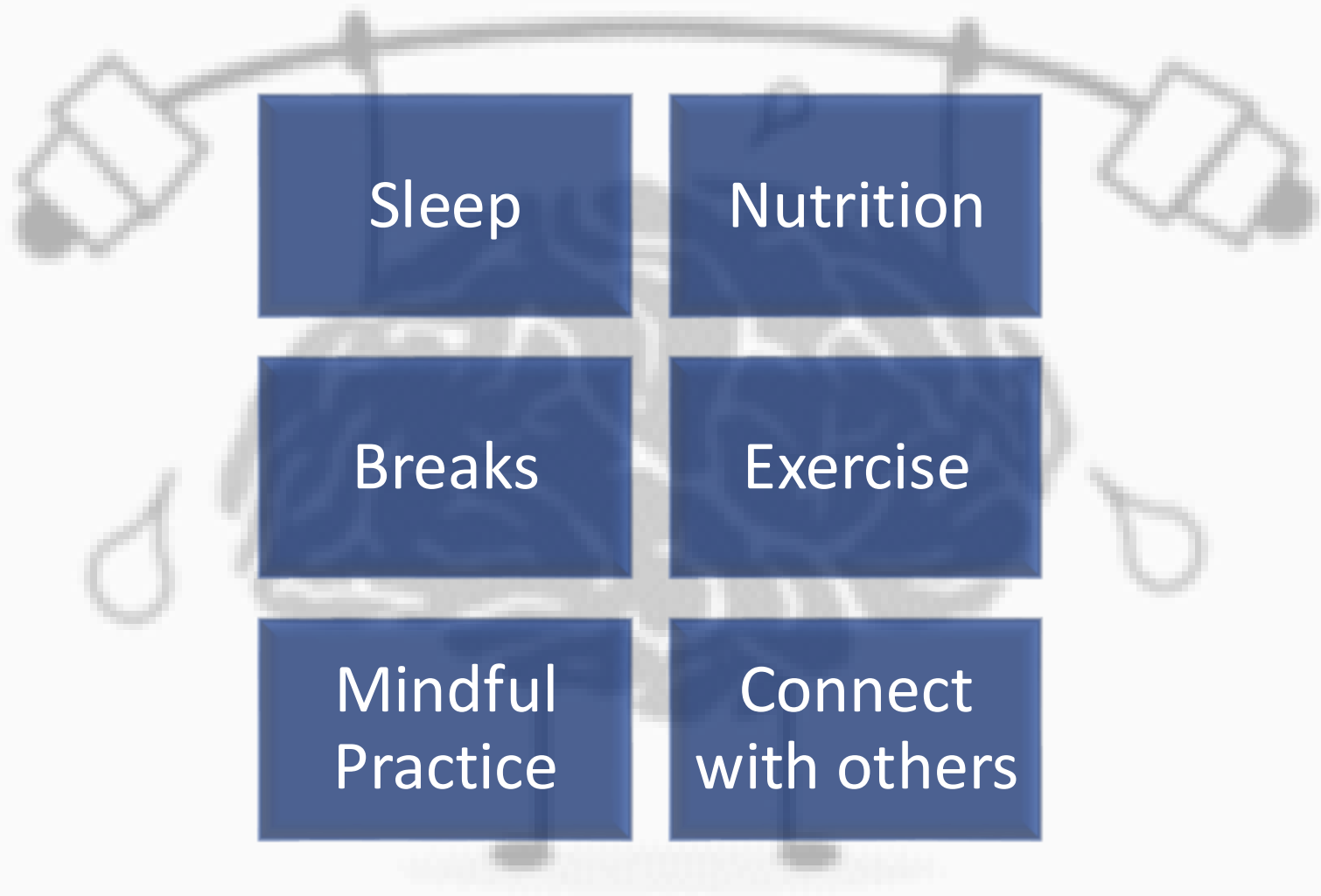


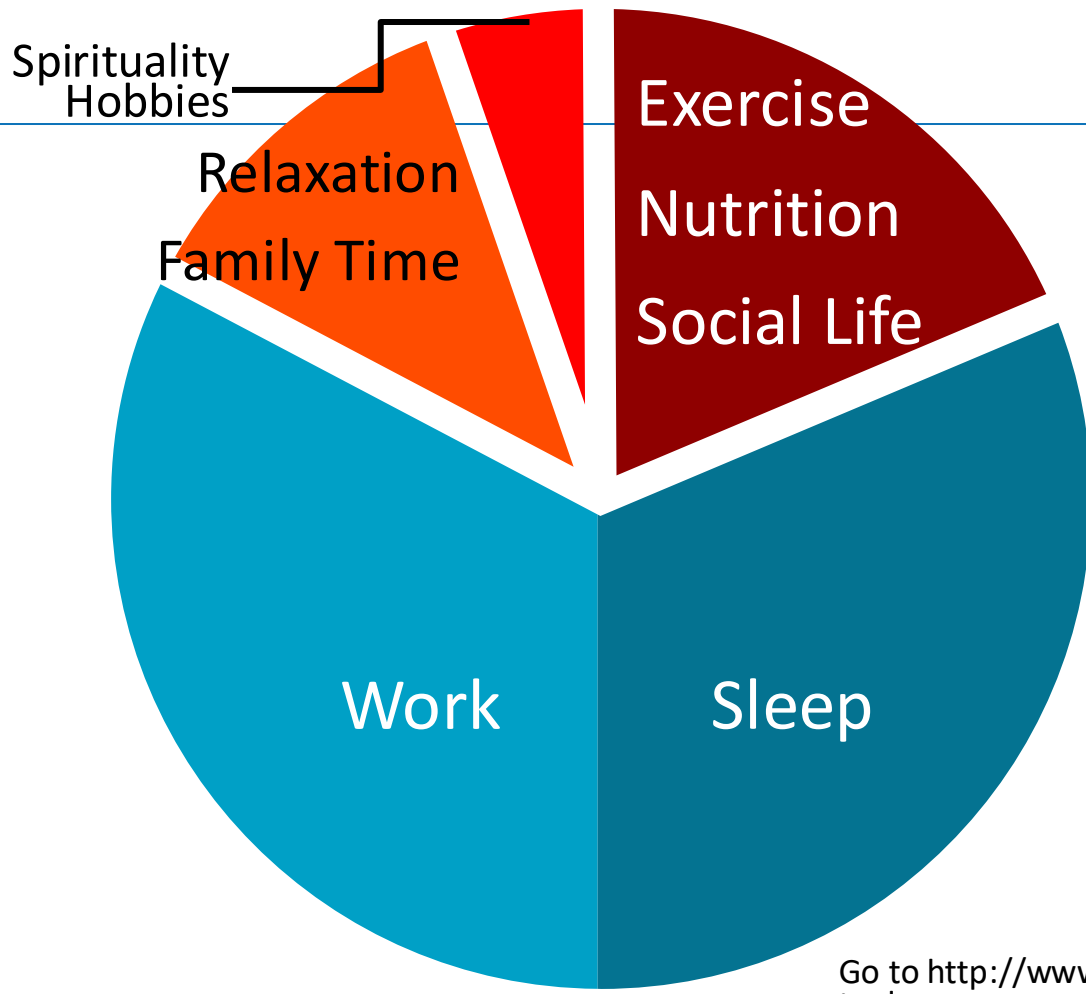
# Neuroscience of Survival Brain Training



Source: Prof. Ian Robertson, Trinity College Dublin

# Widening the Window





What does your life pie look like?

Does it contain self-care activities?

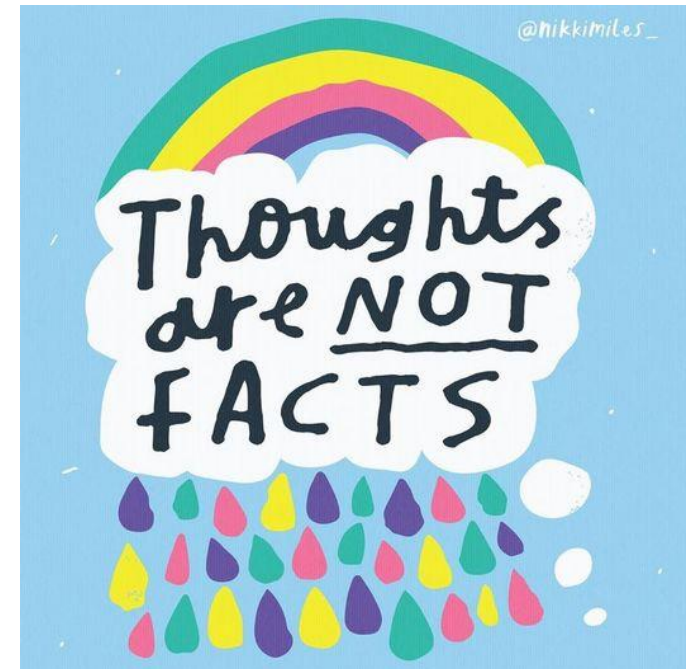
Take a moment to reflect.

A balanced structure is a vital aspect of wellbeing.

Go to <http://www.smartne.org/worksheets/lifestyle-balance-pie.pdf> to draw your own life pie

# Stress & Thoughts

- ❖ Some thinking traps can intensify stress (catastrophizing/emotional reasoning)
- ❖ Take them to be reality (flooded)
- ❖ We can become fused with our thoughts
- ❖ Struggle to take in other information
- ❖ Hands as Thoughts Metaphor



# Thought Diffusion

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**S**tep Back from the situation, in your mind. Don't act immediately or automatically. Pause.

**T**ake a Breath.

**O**bserve. What am I thinking and feeling? Are the thoughts accurate or inaccurate? Helpful or unhelpful?

**P**ull Back - Put in some Perspective.



# Getting Things Done

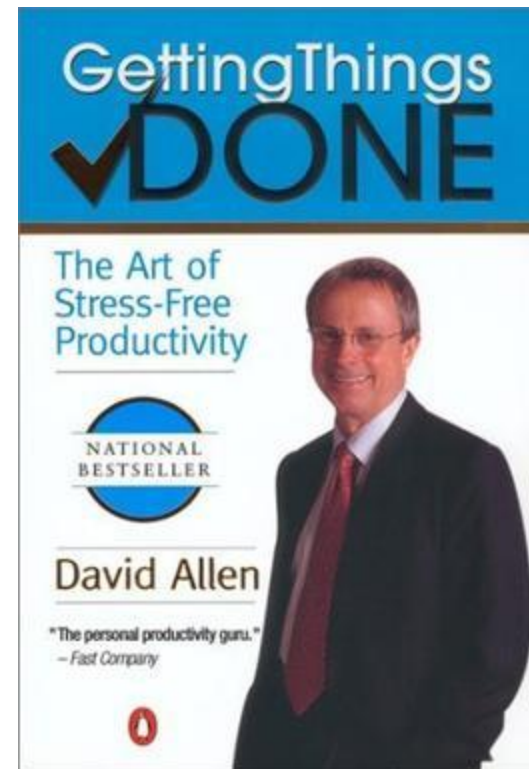
- Find a system that works for you. Store tasks and ideas in the system, not in your head.

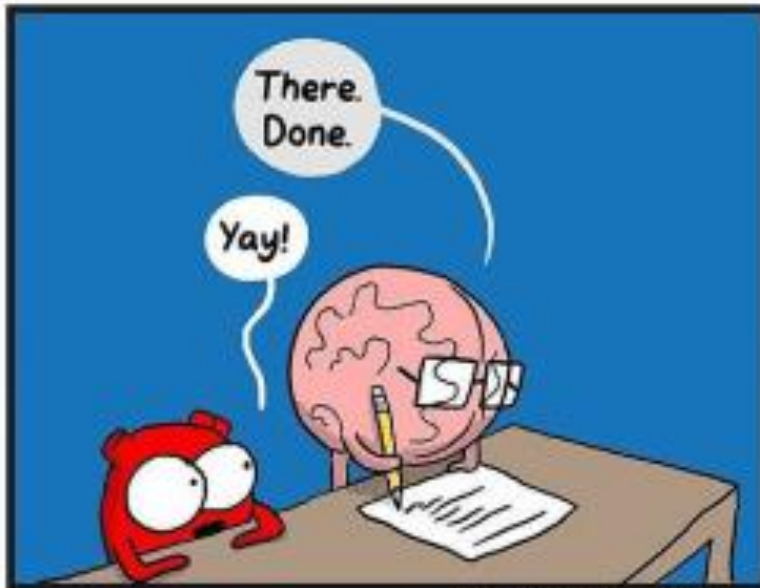
**When new “stuff” arises, immediately add it to your system.**

**Set aside time each day (10-15 mins) to prioritise / set deadlines for new stuff**

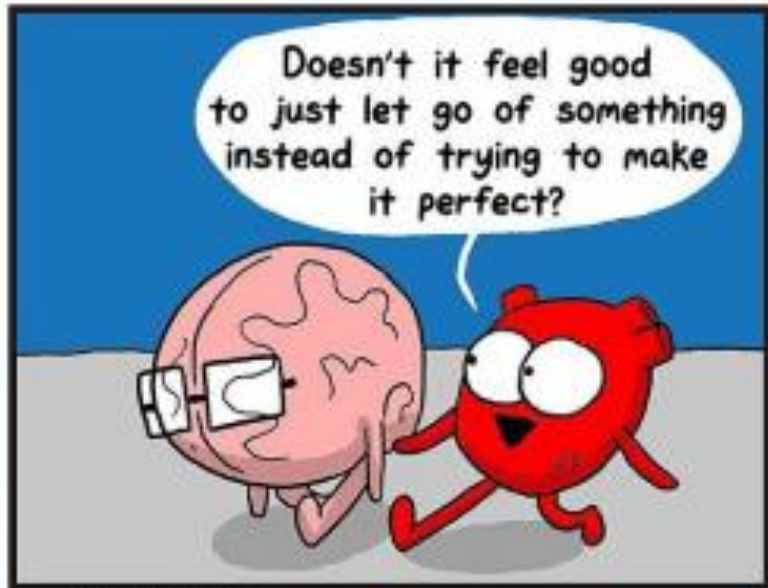
**(e.g., journal, task list on your phone or laptop)**

- Practice saying "No" as a complete sentence.
- Identify your **TIME BANDITS**

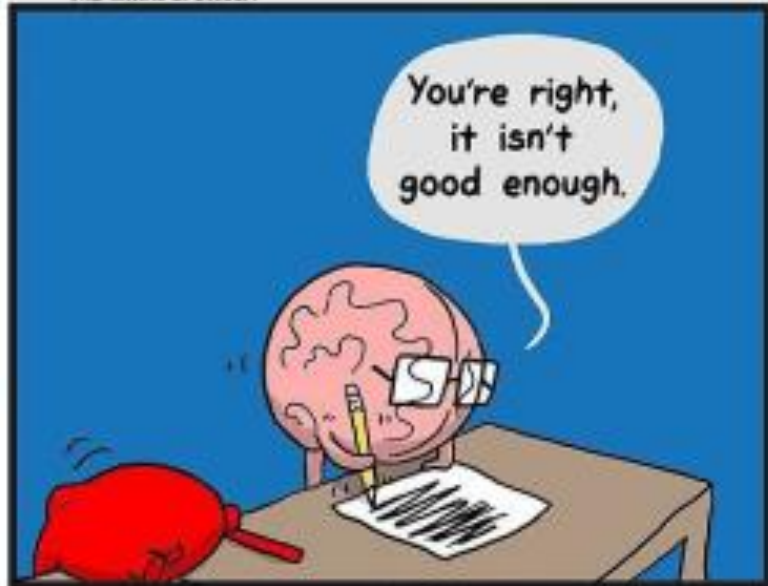
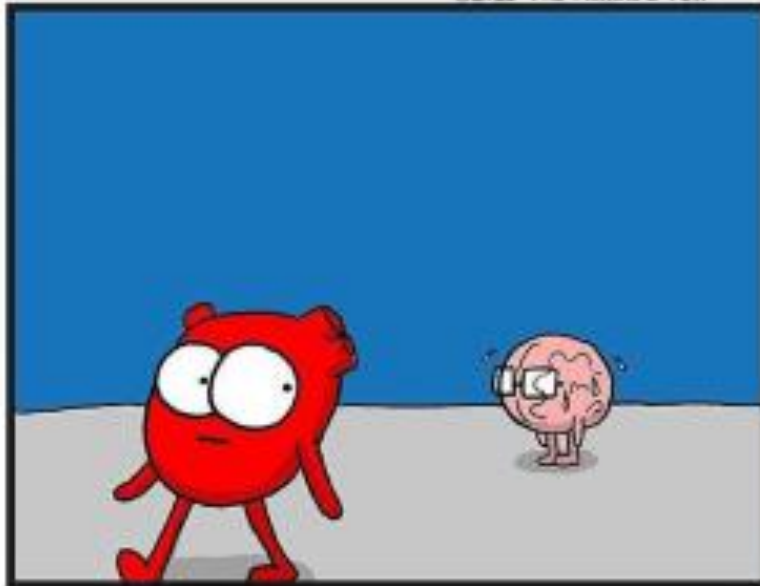




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## The “Inner Critic”

- What does it sound like when you beat yourself up?
- Imagine that self-critic stepping outside of you – personify it (*mentalizing = down-regulating*)

# Build Self-Compassion (1) - Changing your critical self-talk

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**Step 1:** Notice when you are being self-critical. Whenever you're feeling bad about something, think about what you've just said to yourself. Try to be as accurate as possible, noting your inner speech verbatim.

**Step 2:** Make an active effort to soften the self-critical voice with compassion rather than self-judgment

**Step 3:** Reframe the observations made by your inner critic in a friendly, positive way.

*Source: Dr. Kristin Neff, [Self-compassion.org](http://Self-compassion.org)*

# Build Self-Compassion (2) - How would you treat a friend?

On a sheet of paper and answer the following questions:

- How do you respond to a close friend who feels bad about him or herself or is really struggling in some way (when you are at your best)?
- How do you typically respond to yourself in when you feel bad?
- What's the difference? Why? What factors or fears lead you to treat yourself and others so differently?
- Write down how you think things might change if you responded to yourself in the same way you typically respond to a close friend when you're suffering.

*Source: Dr. Kristin Neff, Self-compassion.org*

# Learnings from PG life:

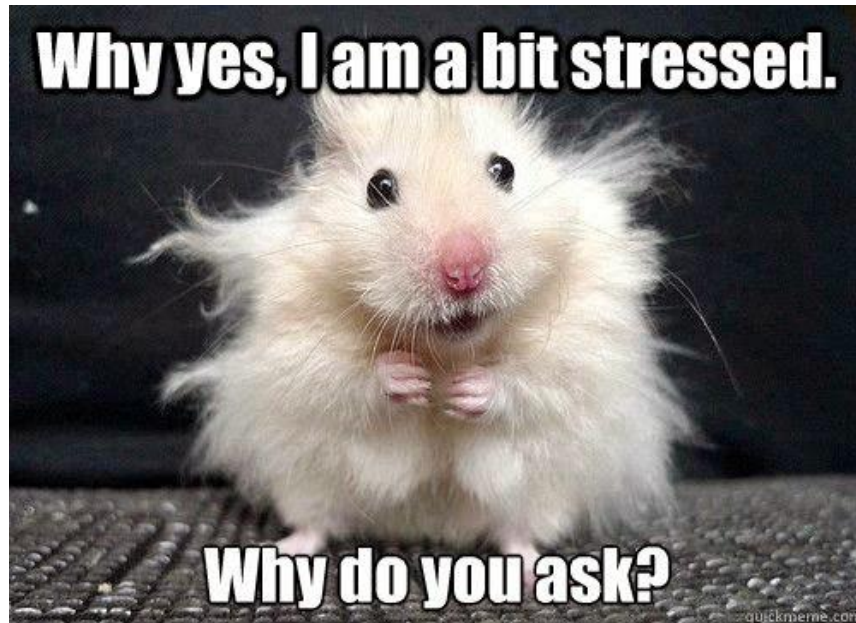
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- Make friends with your imposter syndrome and perfectionism.
- There will be failures and that's ok, you are here to learn.
- There is a way of coming back from setbacks. What's the worst that can happen?
- The unicorn: work and life balance?
- It's OK not to be OK. How do you know you are not OK?
- Regular check – ins. The longer you leave it the worse it gets.
- When to reach out?

# Practice Gratitude & Acceptance

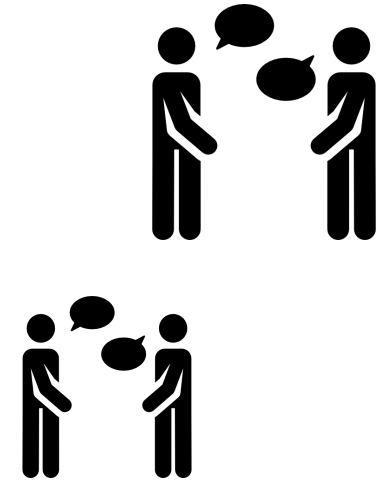
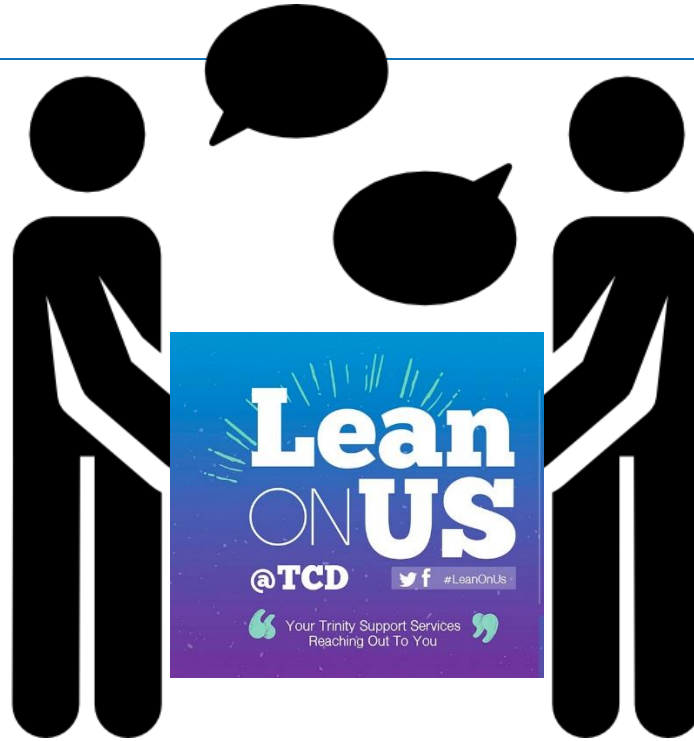
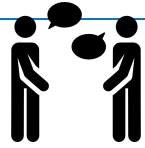
- ❖ **Remember: you don't have to be perfect!**
- ❖ Expecting too much of yourself fuels feelings of worry & anxiety
- ❖ Each day focus on & savour what you **appreciate, value & have achieved** instead of spending time worrying about what you haven't done or are missing.
- ❖ 10-finger Gratitude Exercise
- ❖ Capture the moment!





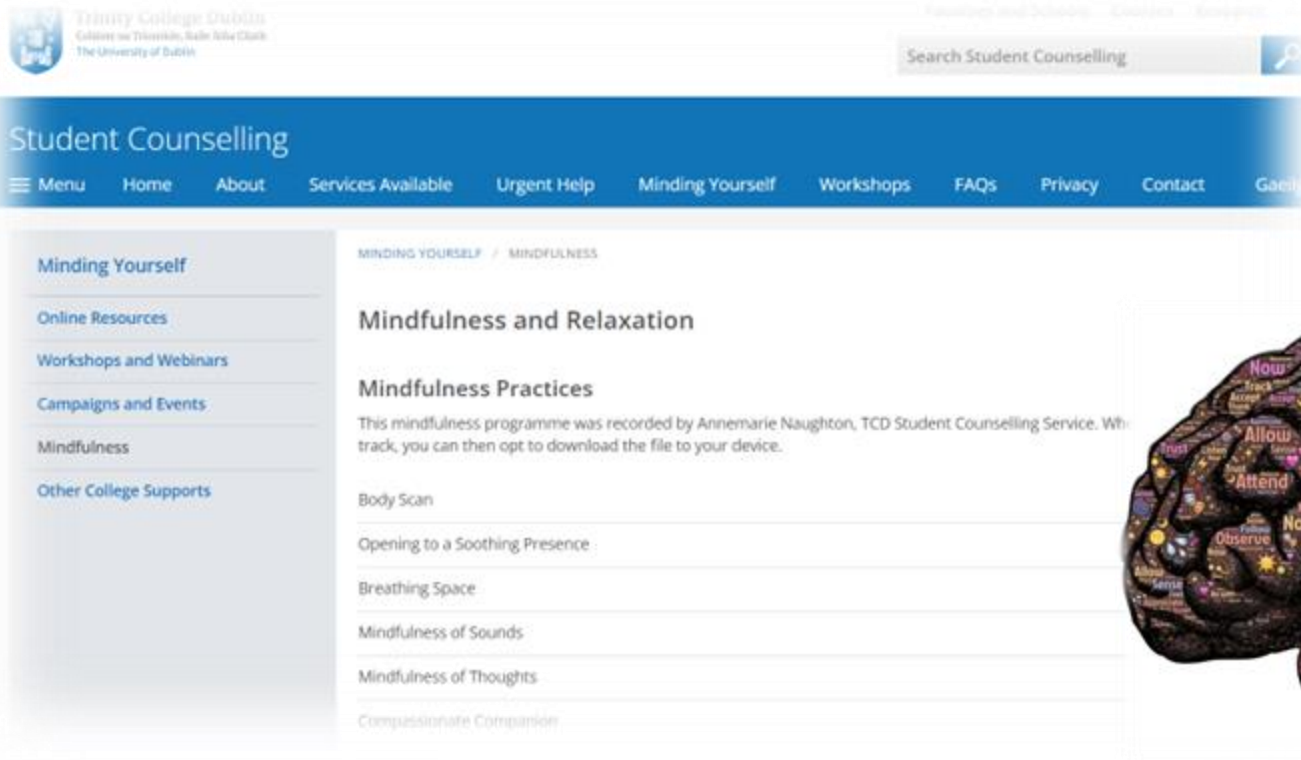


# Other (free!) supports.

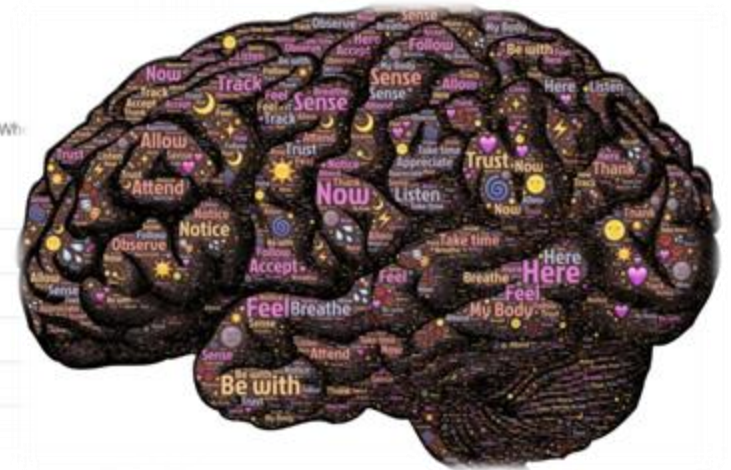


# Free Brain Training Resources

[https://www.tcd.ie/Student\\_Counselling/self-help/audio/](https://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/self-help/audio/)



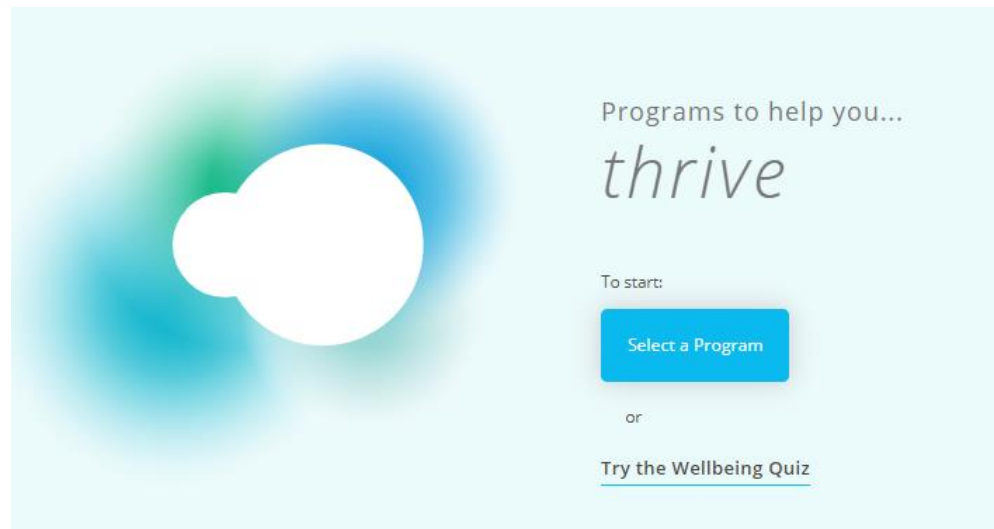
The screenshot shows the Trinity College Dublin Student Counselling website. The header includes the college logo and name, a search bar for 'Search Student Counselling', and a navigation menu with items like 'Menu', 'Home', 'About', 'Services Available', 'Urgent Help', 'Minding Yourself', 'Workshops', 'FAQs', 'Privacy', 'Contact', and 'Gaeilge'. The main content area is titled 'MINDFULNESS' and lists several practices: 'Mindfulness and Relaxation', 'Mindfulness Practices' (with a description of a programme recorded by Annemarie Naughton), 'Body Scan', 'Opening to a Soothing Presence', 'Breathing Space', 'Mindfulness of Sounds', 'Mindfulness of Thoughts', and 'Compassionate Companion'.



# Free Online Courses



SilverCloud



<https://ie.silvercloudhealth.com/signup/tcd/>

# Free, Confidential (brief) Counselling

## Counselling Services



Considering Counselling



One-to-One Counselling



To inquire, email: [student-counselling@tcd.ie](mailto:student-counselling@tcd.ie)

# Learning Support



For queries, email:

**student.learning@tcd.ie**



'Learning to Learn Online in Trinity'

New Blackboard Module for TCD Students

Includes:

- Getting Started for Learning Online
- Working Together Online
- Creating a Study Routine
- Preparing for Assessments

[Click here for more details](#)



# Other Trinity Supports



- **College Health Service**
- **Trinity Disability Service**
- **Chaplaincy: 01 896 1260/1901**
- **Trinity Sport**
- **Your Academic Tutor**

# Out of Hours Support

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Crisis Text Line:

**text about it**

**Niteline**

**[www.niteline.ie](http://www.niteline.ie)**

**Tel: 1800 793 793**

**text TCD  
50808**

**Samaritans**

**[www.dublinsamaritans.ie](http://www.dublinsamaritans.ie)**

**Tel: 116 123**

**24 Hours helpline**

# A question:

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- What is one way you would like to commit to looking after yourself?

(Write it down.)





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# Questions?





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**Thank You**

