

# Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy for Chronic Pain

Session 2: Facing the Challenge

# Agenda

- Body Scan
- Home Practice Discussion
- Awareness of Thoughts and Feelings
- Mindfulness of Pleasant Experiences
- Mindfulness of Breath Sitting Meditation
- Home Practice Suggestions

# Training the Mind is Like Training a Curious, Wandering Puppy



Mindfulness meditation is **not** about clearing the mind or stopping mind wandering -

“If your mind wanders a thousand times, then simply bring it back a thousand times”



# Body Scan

# Suggested Home Practice Week 1

- Body Scan daily
- Engage in at least three short 3-Minute Breathing Spaces daily at set times
- Mindful activities including eating at least one meal “mindfully”
- Read handout for week 1 - Includes a description of the experience of a past participant
- Consciously note and celebrate any small steps that took time, energy or effort!

A serene landscape at sunset or sunrise. The sky is a mix of deep blue and vibrant orange, with soft clouds. In the foreground, a calm lake reflects the sky and the surrounding landscape. A single, dark, leafless tree stands on the left side of the lake, its reflection clearly visible in the water. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under the colorful sky. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

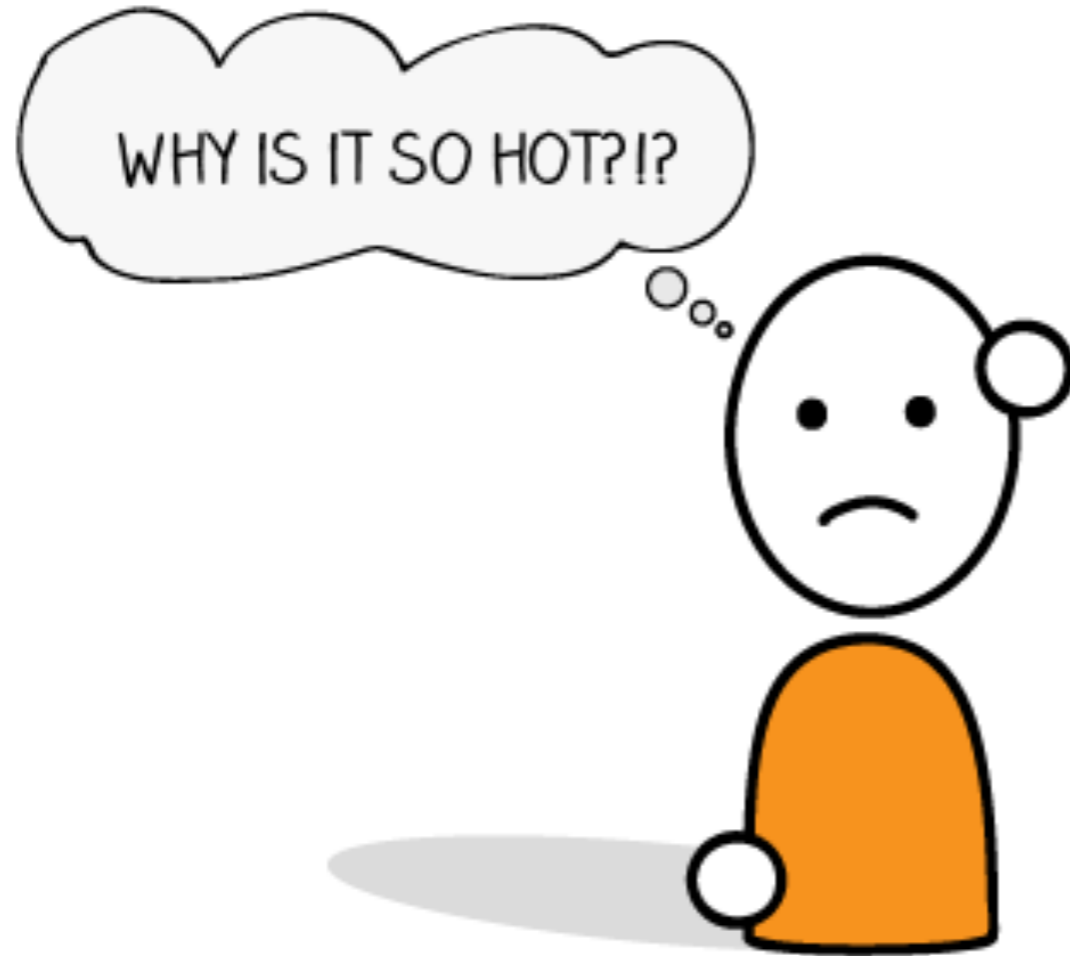
# Home Practice Discussion

# Dinner Party Invitation



Thoughts	Feelings - Emotion/Body sensation	Urges
Today is a good day so it's exciting. If it's not a good day, I'll have to really plan ahead more	Exciting	
Wait a minute, I might not feel good	Exciting, then anxious, needing to breathe, thumbs	
Parking, mobility, seating comfort, how long can I sit, how long a walk in, # stairs	Anxiety	
	Excited	Ignore the pain, pay for it the next day
This will be fun with an elder Also a big challenge Parking Anticipating exhaustion	Excitement, heated emotions from pressure, grateful	
Work night, I'll suffer the next day	Worry	Say yes
How long to walk for? Stand? Less fun, always paid the next day	Excited, anxious	Back out

What effect do you see each of these ways of thinking is likely having on your experience of painful sensations?



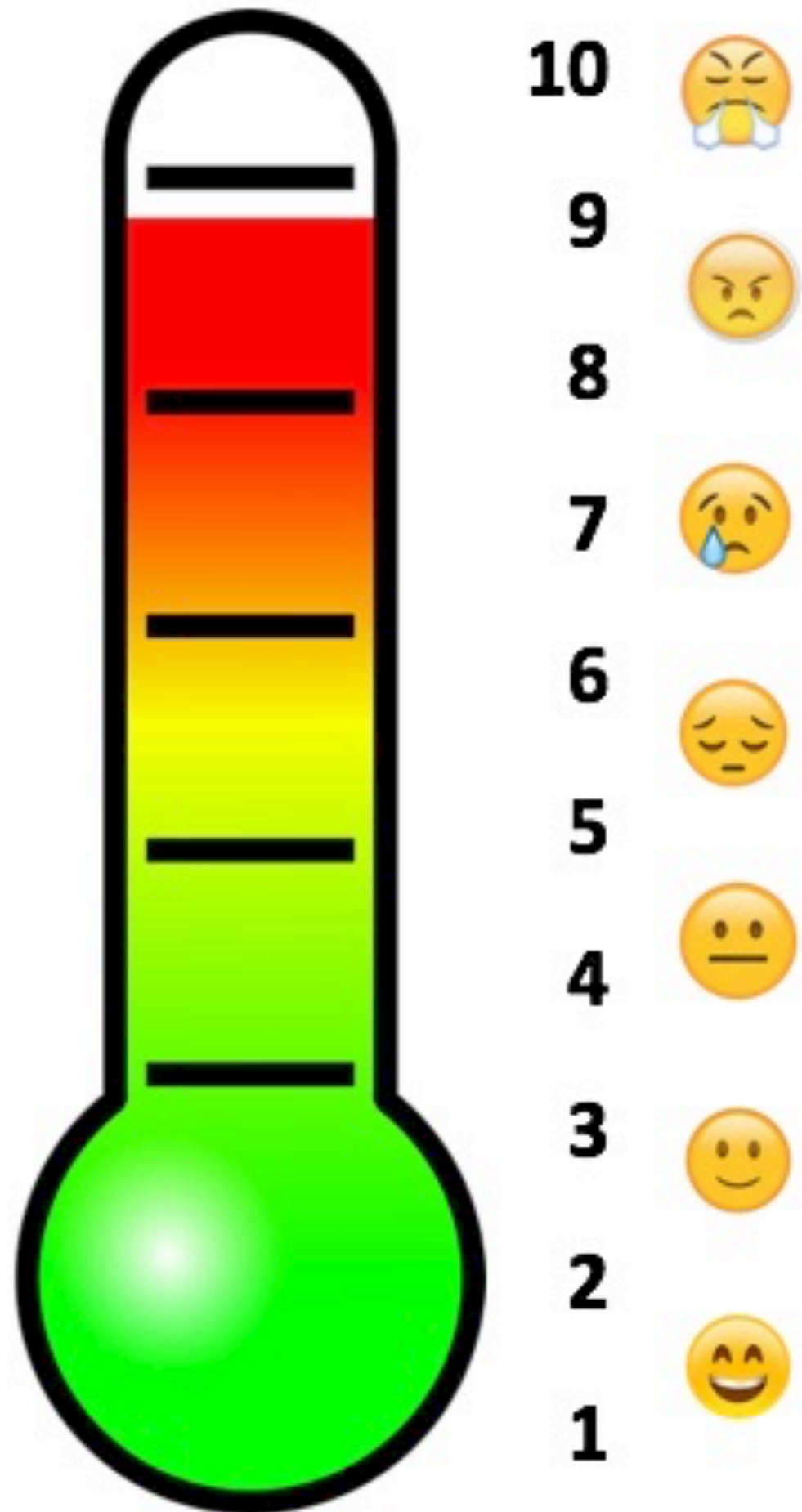
Thoughts are not facts

Thoughts are real but not true

*We don't have to believe everything that we think!*

# Stress-Pain Thermometer

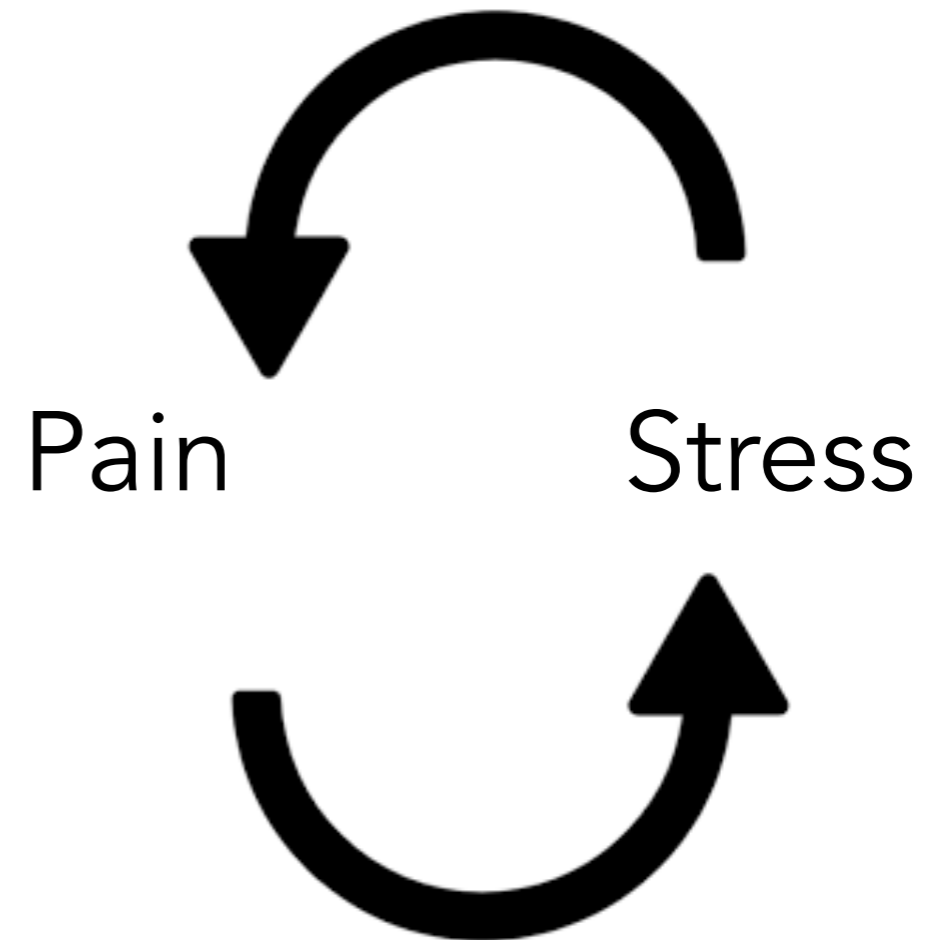
- Hot thoughts raise the temperature
- Thoughts influence pain by **initiating and maintaining a prolonged stress response** that **opens the pain gates**



Chronic pain can put us "on edge" and produce a prolonged stress response

More stress produces even more pain, creating a vicious cycle

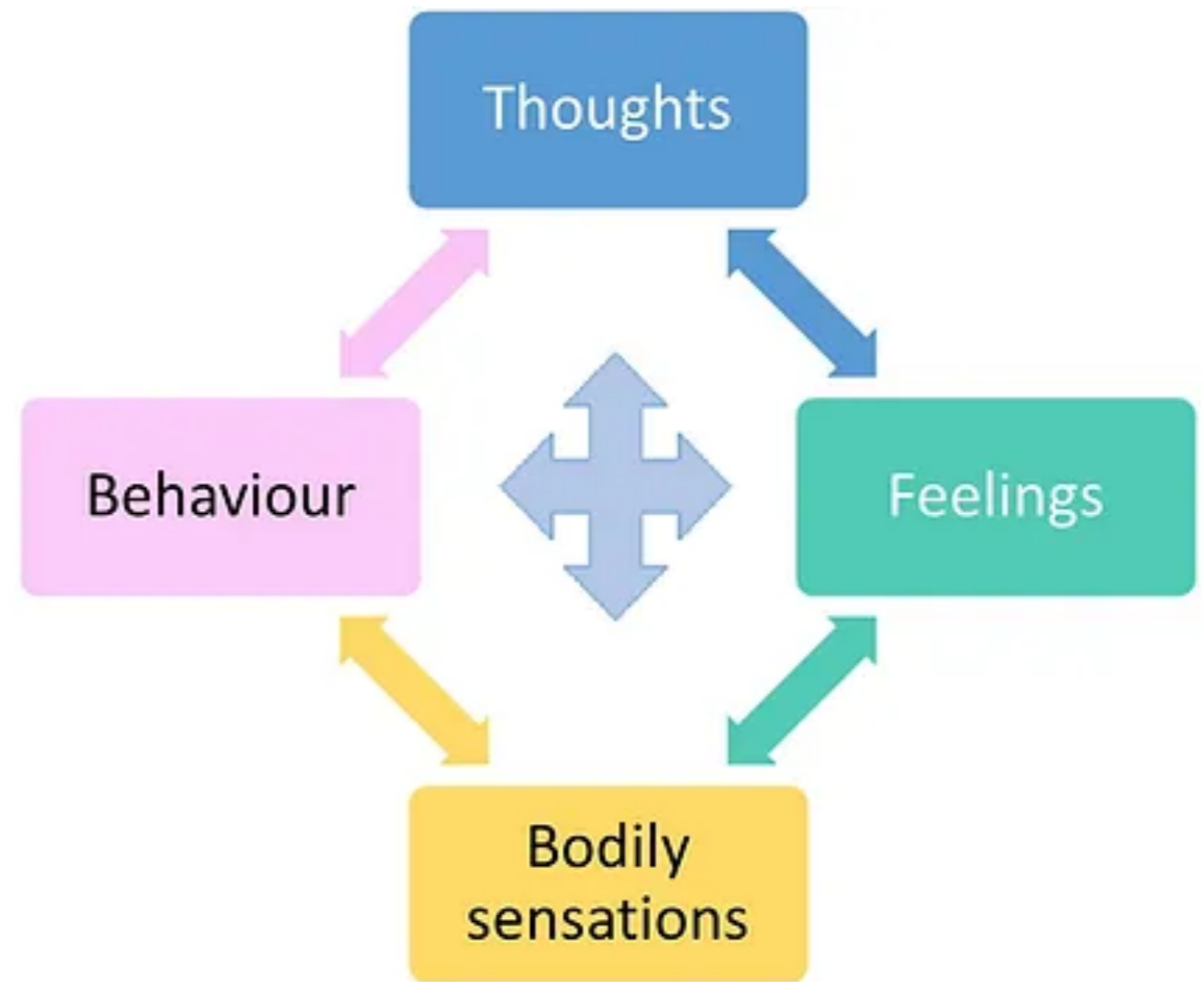
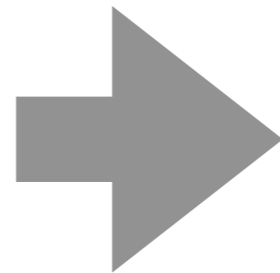
Breaking the stress-pain cycle by using skills lowers the stress-pain thermometer and improves pain



# Stress Response

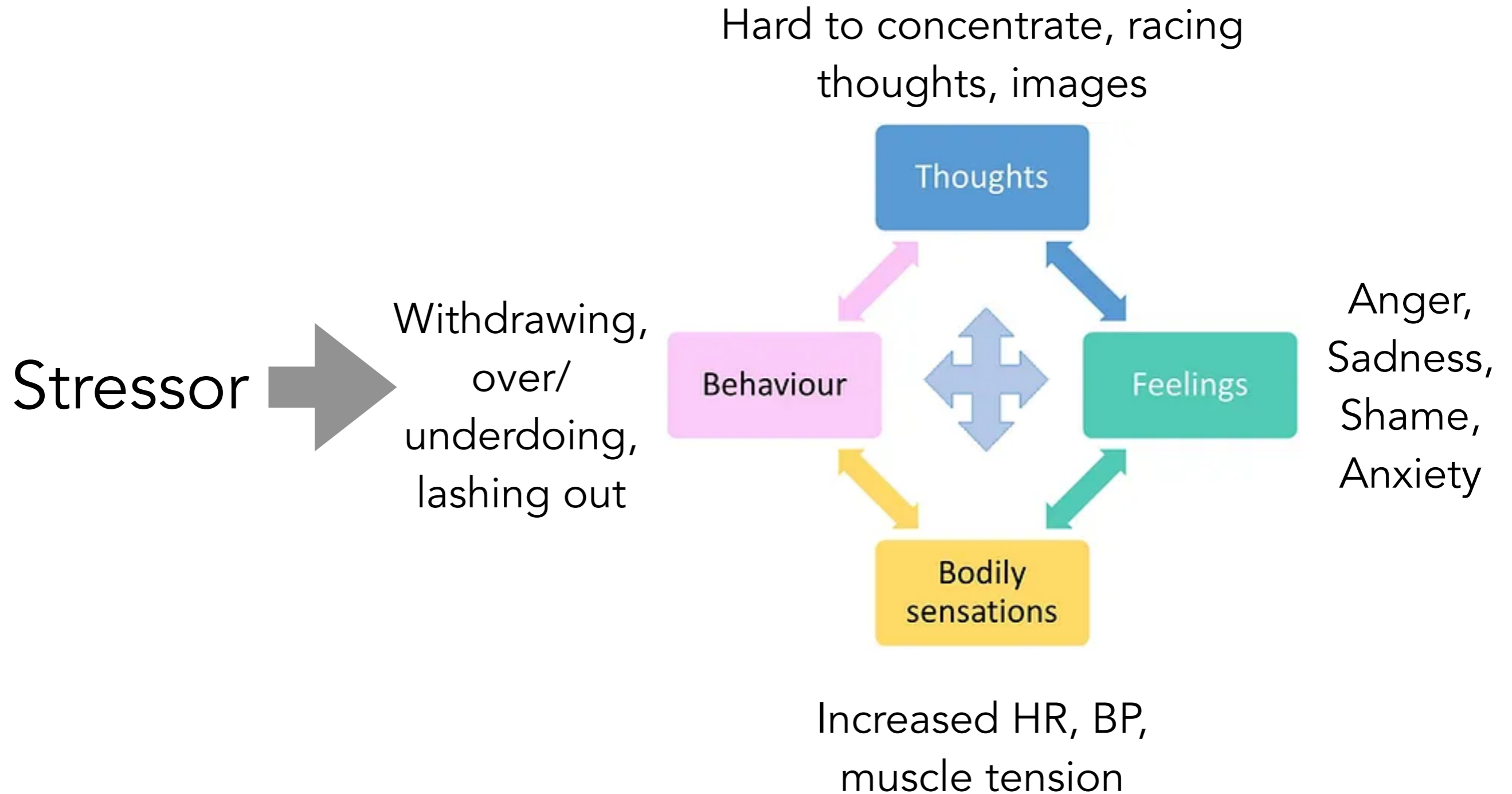
## 4 Part Reaction

Stressor =  
Situation/event,  
thought, emotion,  
body sensation



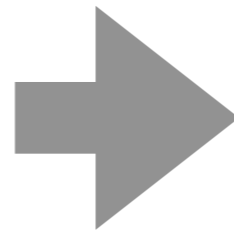
Can you think of examples of reactions for each of the 4 components?

# Stress Response - 4 Part Reaction



**Situation (A):**

On a bus in traffic jam  
and need to get to the  
other side of town for an  
appointment



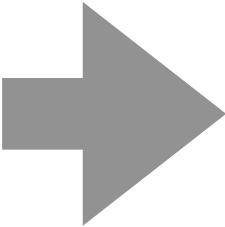
**Consequence (C):**

Anxiety about running late  
Anger towards other vehicles  
Muscle tension  
Increased Pain

We're often not aware of thoughts

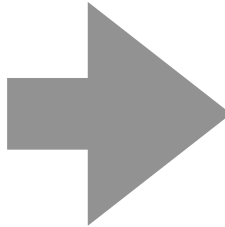
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On a bus in traffic jam and need to get to the other side of town for an appointment



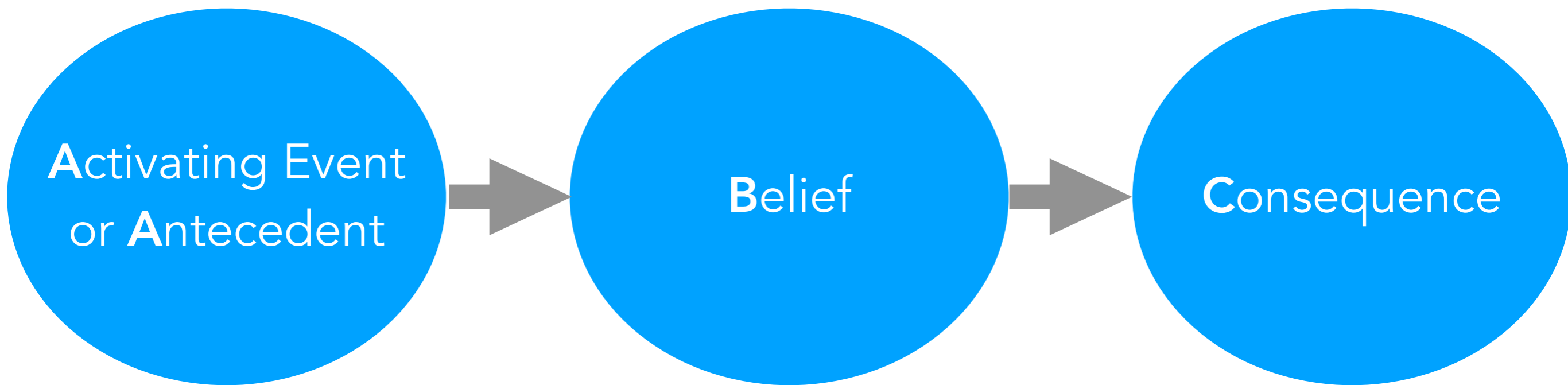
**Belief (B):**

*"My doctor isn't going to see me if I am late, and I am going to have to wait a whole two more months for another appointment"*



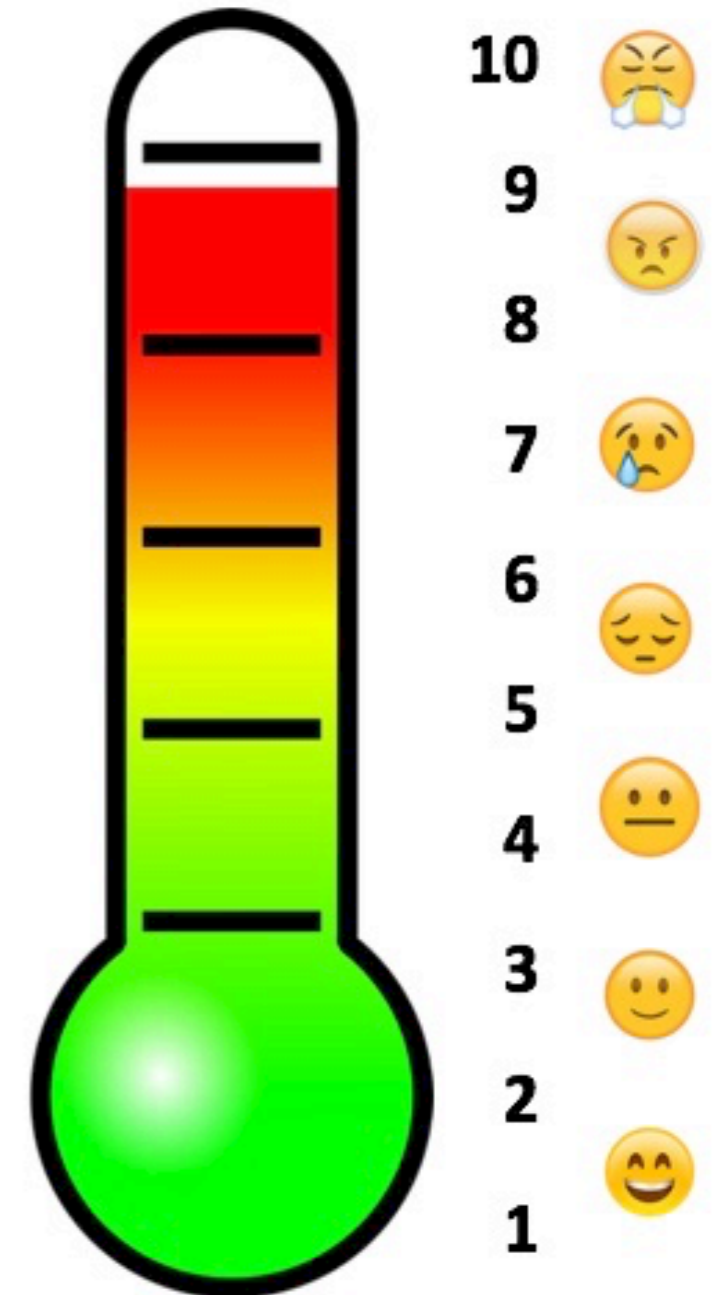
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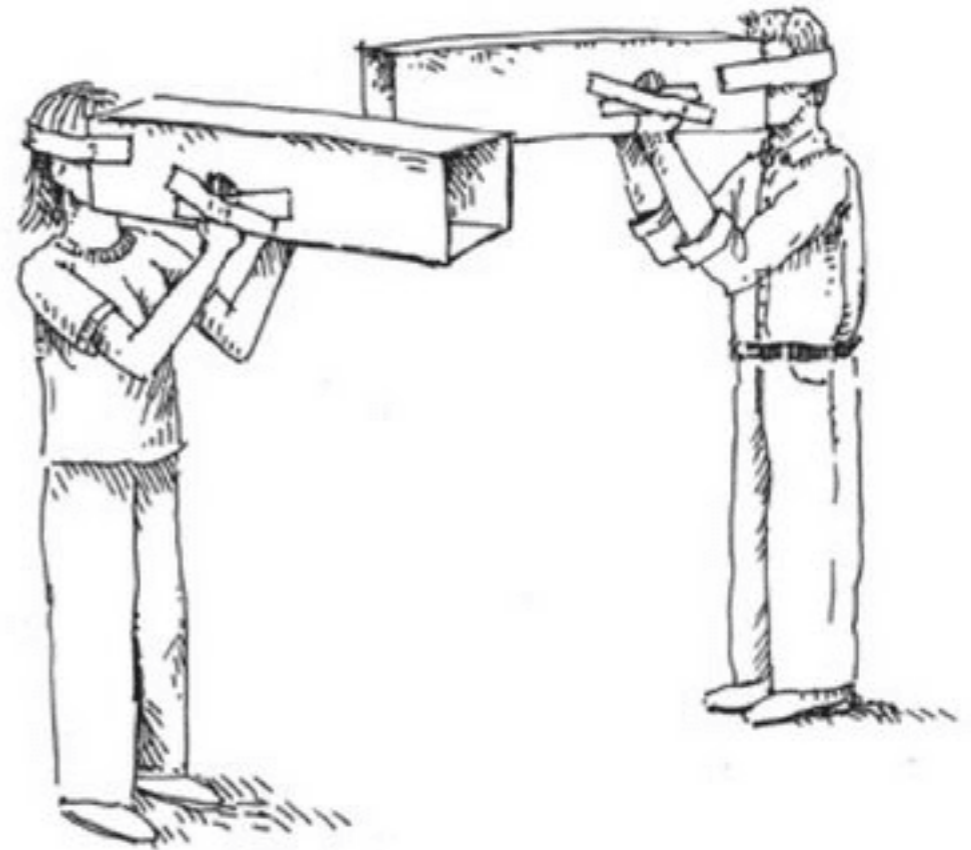


# Hot Thoughts Raise the Stress Pain Thermometer

- "Pain is ruining my life"
- "This pain is unbearable"
- Or because of the pain -  
believe one is no longer  
"whole", or "disabled" or  
"worthless" or "dysfunctional"
- Easy to get carried away by  
hot thoughts



- ***Thinking can get distorted and narrowed with chronic pain from stress***
  - Think about your whole body and all the things that need to work together for you to breathe, eat, remove waste
  - May realize there is ***more right with you than wrong with you***
- Work on ***catching "hot thoughts"*** earlier, ***less likely to get swept away***







# Mindfulness of Pleasant Experiences

- We unconsciously judge things as pleasant or unpleasant automatically - can lead to being swept away by thoughts/emotions
- Intentionally bring attention to pleasant events
- Notice thoughts/feelings/body sensations

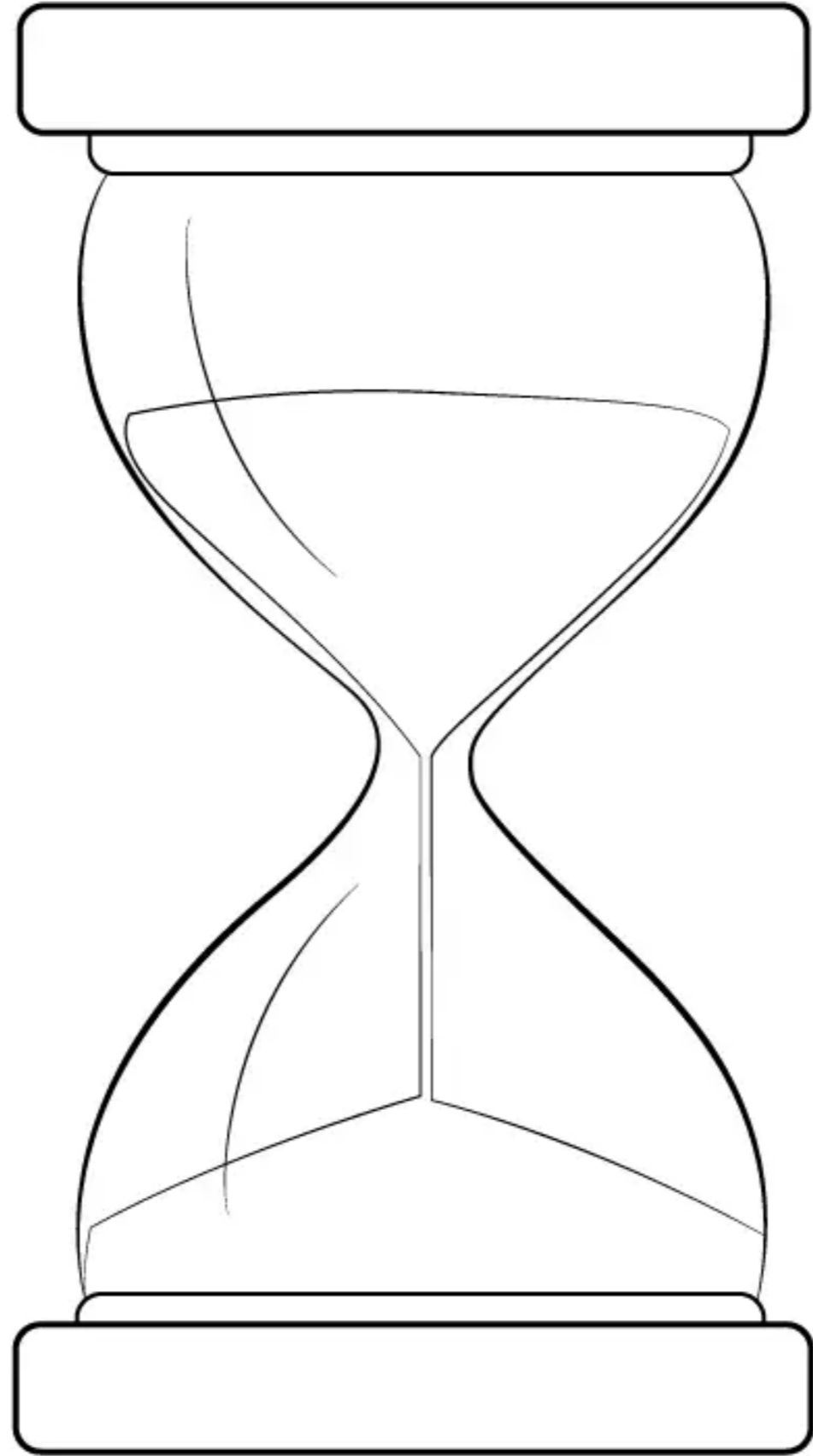


# Three Minute Breathing Space



# Steps for the 3 min Breathing Space

1. **Awareness** - Stop, switch from “doing” to “being” mode, notice and acknowledge what is present (T/F/BS)
2. **Anchoring** - Gather attention and rest in an anchor to the present moment (breath, feet, sounds etc)
3. **Opening** - Expand awareness to include breath and body, then to present experience, holding it all in open, spacious awareness



# Summary

- **Stress Response** - 4 parts - thoughts, emotions, body sensations/physical and behaviours
- **Hot thoughts or negative automatic judgments raise stress-pain thermometer**
  - Higher risk of reacting which can lead to negative consequences
- Mindfulness brings awareness so we can choose how to respond skillfully
- With chronic pain, **can be so focused on the pain that no longer aware of pleasant experiences**



# Mindfulness of Breathing

## Sitting Meditation

# Sitting Meditation



**Option 1**



**Option 2**



**Option 3**

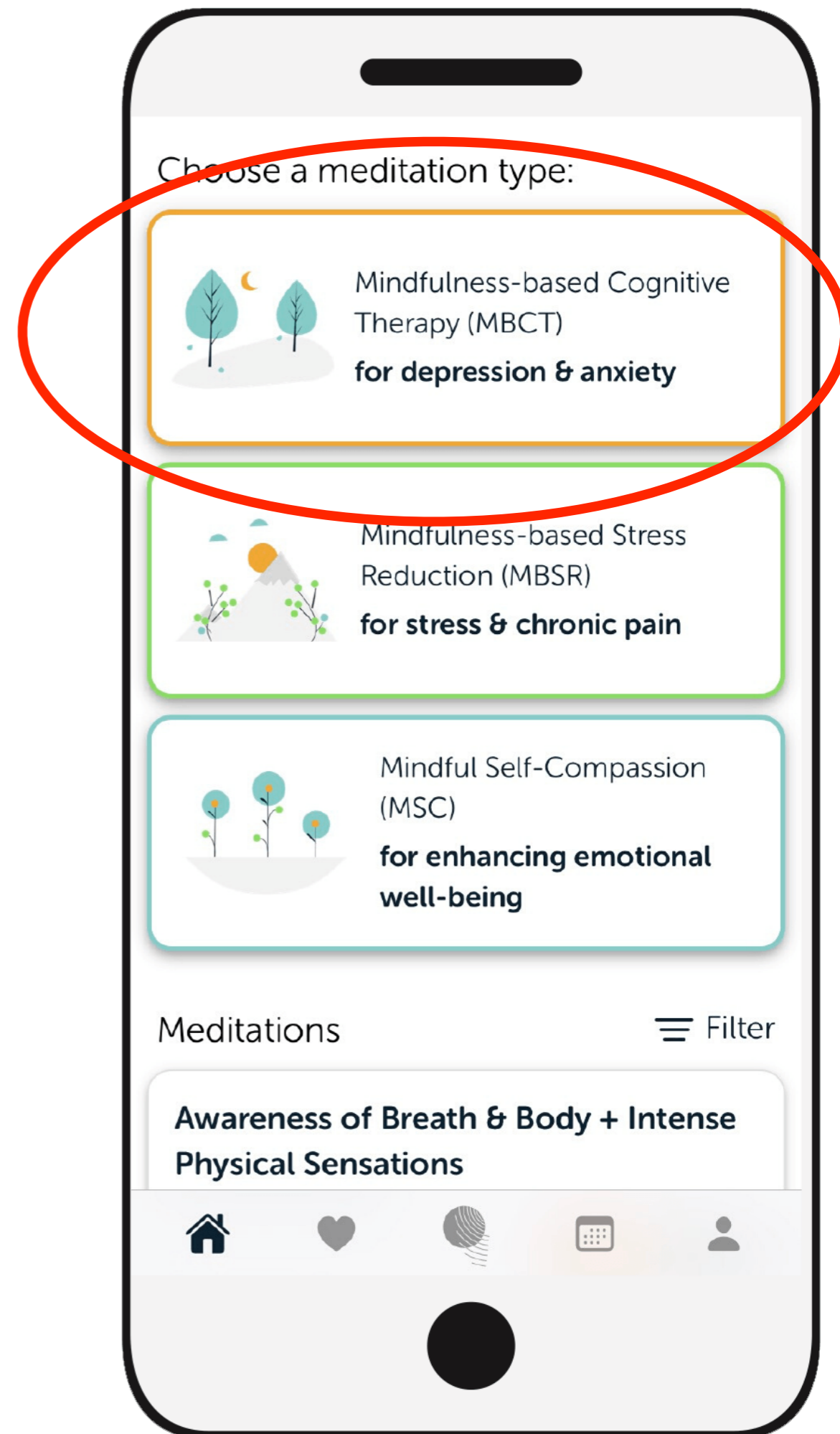
# Suggested Home Practice

- **Body scan** daily
- 3-Minute Breathing Space scheduled x 3
- Mindfulness of Breathing for 10-15 min daily - this may be seated, standing or lying
- **Pleasant Experiences Calendar** - one example daily
- Mindfulness of a **new routine activity**
- Consciously note and celebrate any small steps that took time, energy or effort!



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Mindfulness  
Studies

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# Insight Timer Free content

