

FOOTBALL JOURNAL



THIS BOOK IS PART 1 OF THE SERIES.

FOOTBALL JOURNAL (AGE 10-17)

FOOTBALL JOURNAL ONLY

FLOW IN FOOTBALL (AGE 10-17)

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INTRODUCTION



By picking up the Football Journal you have taken the first step towards your professional football career. In the first part of this journal you will learn through fun tasks, exercises, questions and reflections how to use stress, anxiety and pressure to perform at your best.

This is not your average reflection book; it has been carefully compiled by our company, Flow in Sport, based on years of experience coaching professional footballers.

Do you know what Flow is? Flow is a mental state in which you feel and perform at your best, and it is accessible to everyone. Imagine you are playing an exciting game, focused on every move you make. Your senses are heightened, the environment and time slow down. Everything seems to happen automatically; your brain knows exactly where you are and what to do. You feel invincible, happy, strong and at one with the game. This is flow.

Our mission is to help you experience flow and guide you on your journey to a professional football career. But first we need to lay the foundations, and the good news is that if you are reading this, you have already started. With scientifically proven insights from (sports) psychology and strategies to help you transform.

The second part of the book is a reflection diary in which you prepare for and reflect on the football matches and/or training sessions you have played. Want more reflection pages? Have a look at our website www.flowinsport.com for free content. Or order the 'Football journal, Only' from Amazon!

Psst... We want to know what you think about this journal. Let us know by leaving a review on Amazon so we can help more athletes like you. Let's go!

MY NOTES



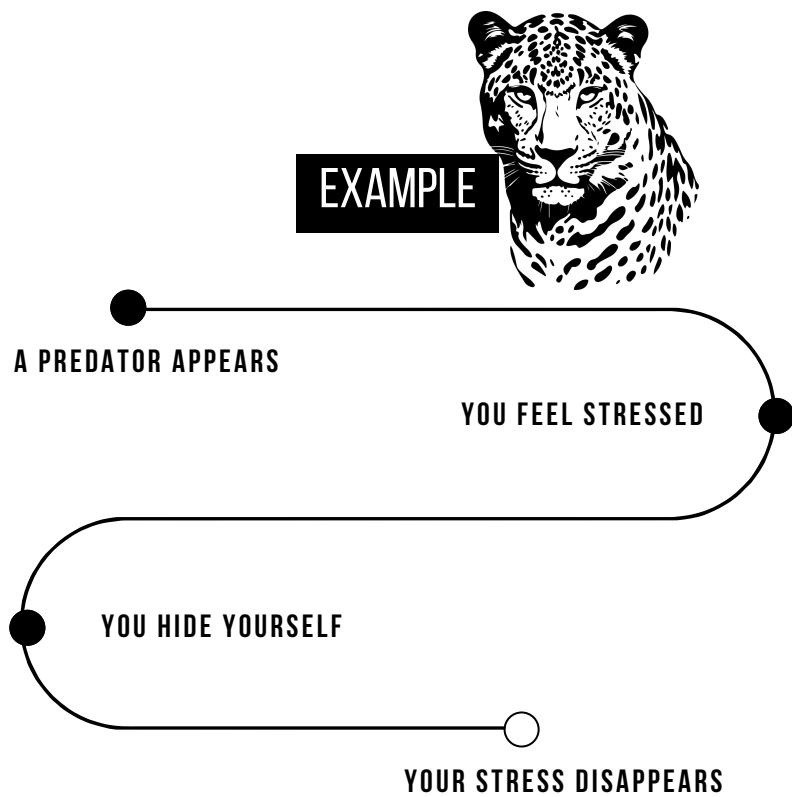
PART 1

KNOW YOURSELF



CHAPTER 1: WORRY, STRESS AND ANXIETY

We humans worry regularly. It can be annoying, I know! But don't forget that it's also a good thing, and completely normal. It is what our brains do. Centuries ago, when humans lived in a primitive environment, emotions like stress, anxiety and worry were useful because they helped us take action in the face of problems.



EXAMPLE

A STORM IS COMING UP

YOU SEEK A SAFE PLACE

YOU FIND SHELTER

YOUR FEAR DECREASES

In our modern world, we use worry as a warning signal. It is a natural response to major events, changes or challenges. Worry is a way of thinking and feeling ahead:

"AM I READY FOR THIS?
WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN?
IS IT SAFE TO CONTINUE?
WHAT IF I GET HURT?
HOW WILL I DO IT?
WHAT IF I'M NERVOUS?"

?

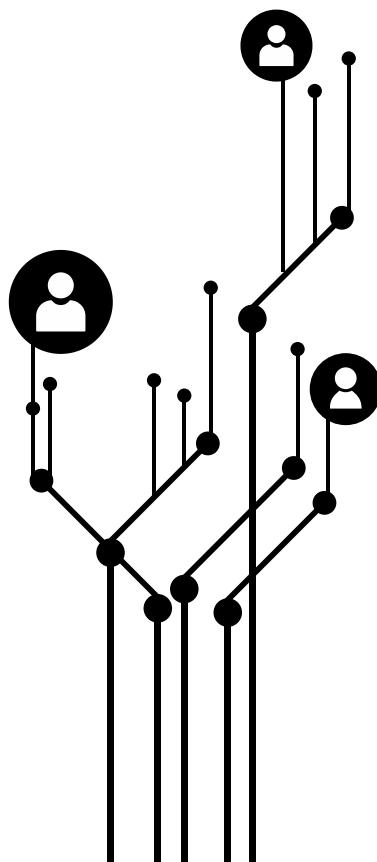
Our brains are programmed to solve acute problems as quickly as possible. If we are stressed or anxious for too long, our brains can start to overthink. This is not necessarily bad; it can be very useful, as long as it does not last too long, become too intense, or happen too often, because then it becomes a trauma.

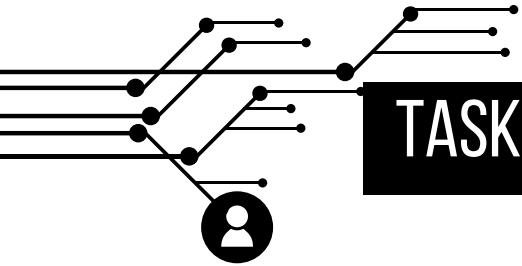
One of the biggest triggers of stress and anxiety is constant uncertainty. Training hard for a football match does not guarantee victory.

FAMILY

One of the most basic human psychological needs is the need to belong. As herd animals, we are part of a family and a long line of ancestors. These people have all contributed to making you who you are today.

In the first assignment we will explore the history of your ancestors. This will give you an insight into how they dealt with different situations in their lives. Learning from your ancestors can be very valuable. Not only does it provide clarity about your heritage, but it can also provide insights that can help you cope better with challenges in your own life.





TASK: INTERVIEW



WHERE DOES MY FAMILY COME FROM?

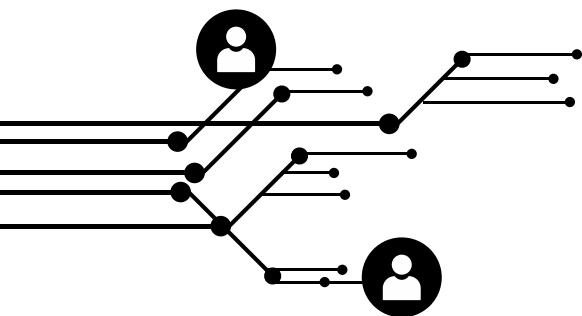
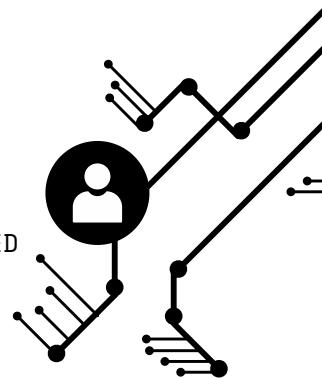
WHAT SIGNIFICANT EVENTS DID MY ANCESTORS
EXPERIENCE?

WHAT IMPORTANT EVENTS DID MY ANCESTORS
EXPERIENCE?

WHAT DIFFICULTIES DID THEY FACE?

WHAT HISTORICAL EVENTS HAVE THEY LIVED THROUGH?

CAN YOU THINK OF SOME QUESTIONS?
WHAT HISTORICAL EVENTS HAVE THEY LIVED
THROUGH?



THE MASKS WE WEAR

Thinking about our identity and who we are can help us in the future. For example, do you dare to show your true personality on the pitch? Or do you prefer to hide it behind a mask?

In life, it is good to think about who you are and what is important to you. Call it self-awareness. It is the basis of a mindset that allows you to feel and perform at your best.

We often hide our true personality because we are afraid that people will see a part of us that we are ashamed of or that makes us feel weak or not good enough. The opposite is true: showing yourself without a mask is the bravest thing you can do!



The questions on the next page are about your true identity. What is behind your mask? Find a quiet place to think about this and answer the questions. It does not have to be about football.

TASK: MY MASKS



WHEN I AM TRUE TO MYSELF, I REACT IN A
DIFFICULT SITUATION...

IN THESE MOMENTS I FEEL INSECURE...

THINK ABOUT YOUR MASKS, WHAT DO YOU SOMETIMES DO THAT
YOU KNOW ISN'T WHO YOU ARE?

I DO THIS BECAUSE...

MAKE A LIST OF THINGS YOU HAVE DONE IN YOUR LIFE
THAT YOU ARE PROUD OF...

WHY ARE YOU PROUD OF THESE THINGS?

WHAT OBSTACLES DID YOU OVERCOME?

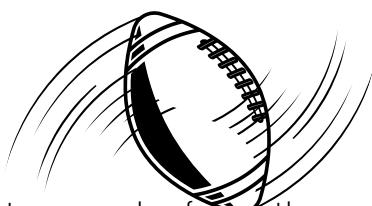
CHAPTER 2: MY PERFORMANCE VALUES

Now that we know who you are and who you are not, you will choose performance values that are important to you. These will give you an idea of what you think is important in football and in life. For example, if respect is an important value to you, then the choices you make will be measured against that value. Do you get respect? Are you treated with respect? Do you treat others with respect? A lack of respect can have a significant impact; you may deal with the situation immediately or remain angry for the rest of the day.

Although we focus more on your personal development in this journal, it is important to emphasise that teamwork also plays a crucial role in performance scores.

ALL BLACKS

While this journal is more for you personally, we want to send you the message that values are also about team performance. A great example from the world of elite sport is the New Zealand rugby team, the All Blacks. A well-known saying in the club culture is "Great men make great All Blacks, and no individual is greater than the team".



**"GREAT MEN
MAKE GREAT ALL
BLACKS, AND NO
INDIVIDUAL IS
BIGGER THAN
THE TEAM".**

ALL BLACKS



As any successful athlete knows, performance values are only really meaningful when they are applied in practice. For example, fun for the All Blacks means playing a specific song during the bus ride, namely The Gambler by Kenny Rogers.

Example

EXAMPLE

When you are NOT in alignment with your values:

Performance value: CARE

- An opponent is injured during the match
- You want to ask him/her how he/she is doing.
- You don't because it's not cool to be caring.

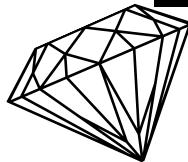
When you ARE in line with your values:

Performance value: POSITIVE

- Your team is 1-0 down
- Your team-mates start to get negative
- You encourage them to keep fighting

The next task is to determine your values.

TASK: MY VALUES



CHOOSE 5 VALUES THAT ARE
IMPORTANT TO YOU.

ATHLETE	PLEASURE	THINKER
LOVE	ENERGETIC	KIND
HAPPINESS	CRITICAL	FLEXIBLE
RESPECT	FUNNY	HONEST
LEADERSHIP	OPEN	EASY GOING
GROWTH	PATIENT	FIT
COURAGE	DIPLOMATIC	IMAGINATIVE
PHYSICAL	COMPETITIVE	POSITIVE
INSPIRATIONAL	CREATIVE	COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDSHIP	CONNECTION	EXCELLENT
MINDFULNESS	FREEDOM	HOPE
TEAM PLAYER	RELIABLE	CARING

PERFORMANCE VALUES:

Words and thoughts are very powerful. You can use them as positive rewards for achievements and/or behaviours that you are proud of. This is called an affirmation.

By repeating positive affirmations, we teach ourselves to think more positively and increase our motivation and confidence.

So reward yourself with the following affirmation, which can be in your mind or out loud:

**"I'M GLAD I BEHAVED LIKE THE
PERSON I WANT TO BE TODAY
AND THAT I DIDN'T CHANGE
BECAUSE OF THE
CIRCUMSTANCES."**



TASK: AFFIRMATIONS

“

CREATE YOUR OWN AFFIRMATIONS
(USE ONE OF YOUR PERFORMANCE
VALUES).

CHAPTER 3: SETTING GOALS



We live in a world of goals. Goals can be great because they give us direction.

By combining direction and structure we can more easily immerse ourselves in a football activity, it gives us focus. However, be aware that if your goal is solely focused on winning the game, you are likely to lose focus. This is because you will be concentrating too much on the result and not enough on the process.

Formulating goals is a powerful tool for growth and improving your performance, but it also comes with challenges. It is therefore important to formulate goals carefully, to be realistic and to remain flexible in adjusting them.

COMPETITION

In field and team sports such as football, you have to score goals to win. Did you know that the word "competition" comes from two Latin words: *con petire*, which means "to seek together"? The aim of competition is not to beat someone else, but to find the best in yourself.

The word "*con petire*" reminds us that competition is a journey, not a destination. It is a process of learning and growing, of pushing ourselves to be better. By focusing on the process, we are more likely to achieve our goals and find the best in ourselves.

Focus and direction: Goals give you a direction to work towards. They help you stay focused.

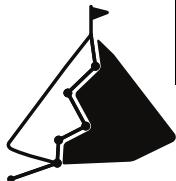
Motivation: Goals can inspire you to work harder and put in more effort.

Self-confidence: Achieving your goal boosts your self-confidence.

Confusion: Confusing your goal with someone else's. Is this what you want or what your parents, coach or friends want you to do?

Stress: Goals can cause stress, especially if they are too difficult or too ambitious.

Disappointment: Failure to achieve a goal can be disappointing. It's important to set realistic goals and be prepared to adjust if necessary.



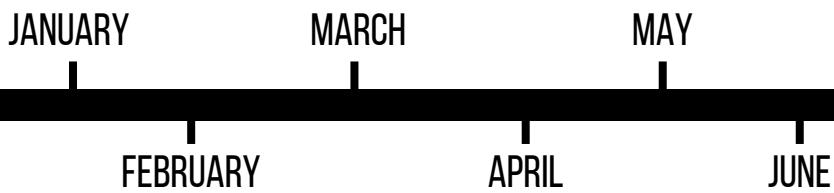
TASK: DREAM GOAL

MY ULTIMATE DREAM GOAL:

Now that you know what your goal is and where you want to go, it's time to break your goals down into smaller sub-goals. The next task is to create a yearly plan for your ultimate dream goal. Sub-goals are specific, small steps that help you achieve a larger goal. This makes your progress measurable and keeps you motivated.



TASK: YEARLY PLANNER



JULY

SEPTEMBER

NOVEMBER

AUGUST

OCTOBER

DECEMBER



TASK: MONTHLY PLANNER

01
02
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31



TASK: WEEKLY PLANNER

M O N D A Y

T U E S D A Y

W E D N E S D A Y

T H U R S D A Y

F R I D A Y

S A T U R D A Y

S U N D A Y

TOP PRIORITY



TASK: WHAT, WHERE, WHEN



In this task we will break down the steps even further with a what, where and when plan to give us a structured approach.

EXAMPLE

WHAT? 20 minutes of shooting with my weak foot

WHERE? against the garage wall

WHEN? 4pm next monday

WHAT?

WHERE?

WHEN?

NOTES



PART 2

MINDSET



CHAPTER 4: FIXED- EN GROWTH MINDSET

Have you ever heard of fixed and growth mindset? Someone with a growth mindset believes that skills and results are influenced by deliberate training. Footballers with this mindset quickly stand out from the crowd because they are constantly working to correct their bad habits and improve their game.

The opposite of the growth mindset is the fixed mindset. Players with a fixed mindset believe that they are unable to change or grow, and that their performance is limited to what they already know.

EXAMPLES OF A FIXED MINDSET:

- A footballer who does not accept feedback and refuses to learn from mistakes.
- Someone who avoids new techniques and does not want to move out of their comfort zone.
- Refuses to experiment with different strategies.

EXAMPLES OF A GROWTH MINDSET:

- Learns from mistakes and uses them to improve performance.
- Accepts loss as a learning opportunity for better future performance.
- Seek innovative ways to improve performance.
- Focuses on the process, not just the end result.

TASK: MINDSET

THIS TASK HELPS YOU TO SHIFT TO A GROWTH MINDSET THROUGH ALTERNATIVE SELF-TALK.



"I CAN'T DO IT"

"THIS WILL HELP ME GAIN MORE CONFIDENCE"

"IT IS TOO DIFFICULT"

"I CAN GET BETTER AT THIS"

"I AM NOT GOOD AT THIS"

"DIFFICULT IS GOOD, THIS IS A GREAT CHALLENGE"

"I WISH I HAD MORE CONFIDENCE"

"I AM NERVOUS AND I WILL DO IT"

"I AM TOO NERVOUS TO DO THIS"

"I AM NERVOUS AND I WILL DO IT"

"IT IS NOT MY STRENGTH"

"WHAT PLAN OR STRATEGY CAN I USE?"

"I WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO DO THIS"

"I WILL DO MY BEST TO DO THIS"

CHAPTER 5: PREPARATION

There are always obstacles that can prevent us from performing at our best. For example, do you find it difficult to wake up in the morning for school or training? Do you lose motivation easily? Do you get upset and angry easily? Have you forgotten your football boots? Or are you very stressed before a game?

CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLE

There are some things we have little or no control over, such as the weather, refereeing decisions, injury or the actions of the opposition. But we can choose how we react to these situations and prepare ourselves by knowing what the potential obstacles might be.



TASK: PREPARATIONS

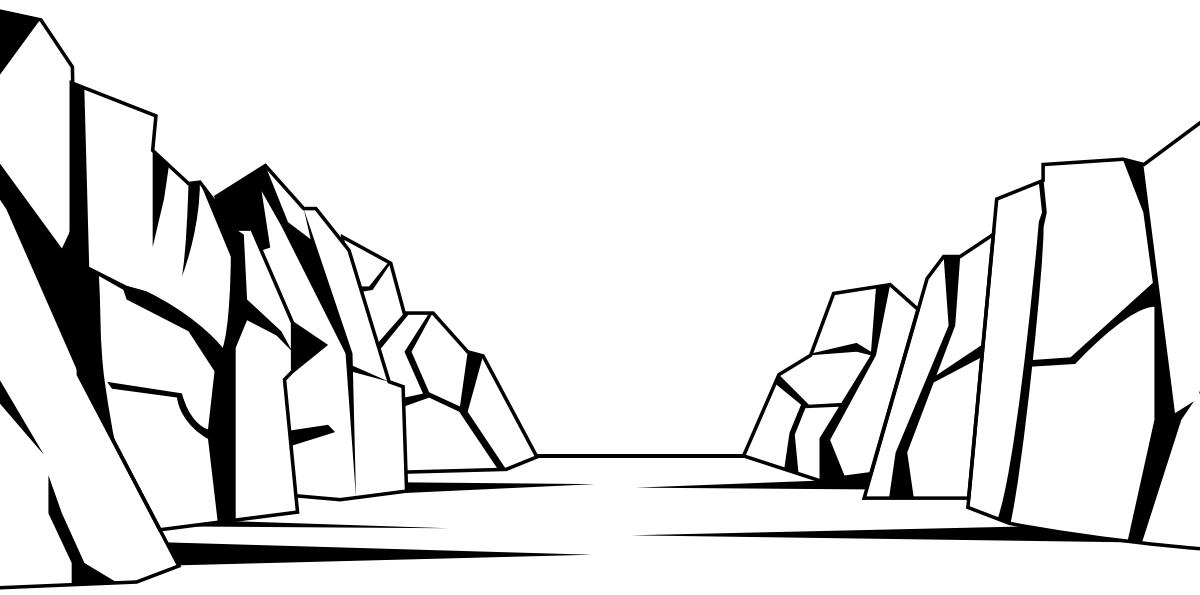


MY PREPARATIONS:

TASK: OBSTACLES

TRY TO PREDICT THE THINGS THAT CAN HINDER
YOUR PERFORMANCE.

THIS HABIT OR SITUATION HINDERS MY PERFORMANCE:





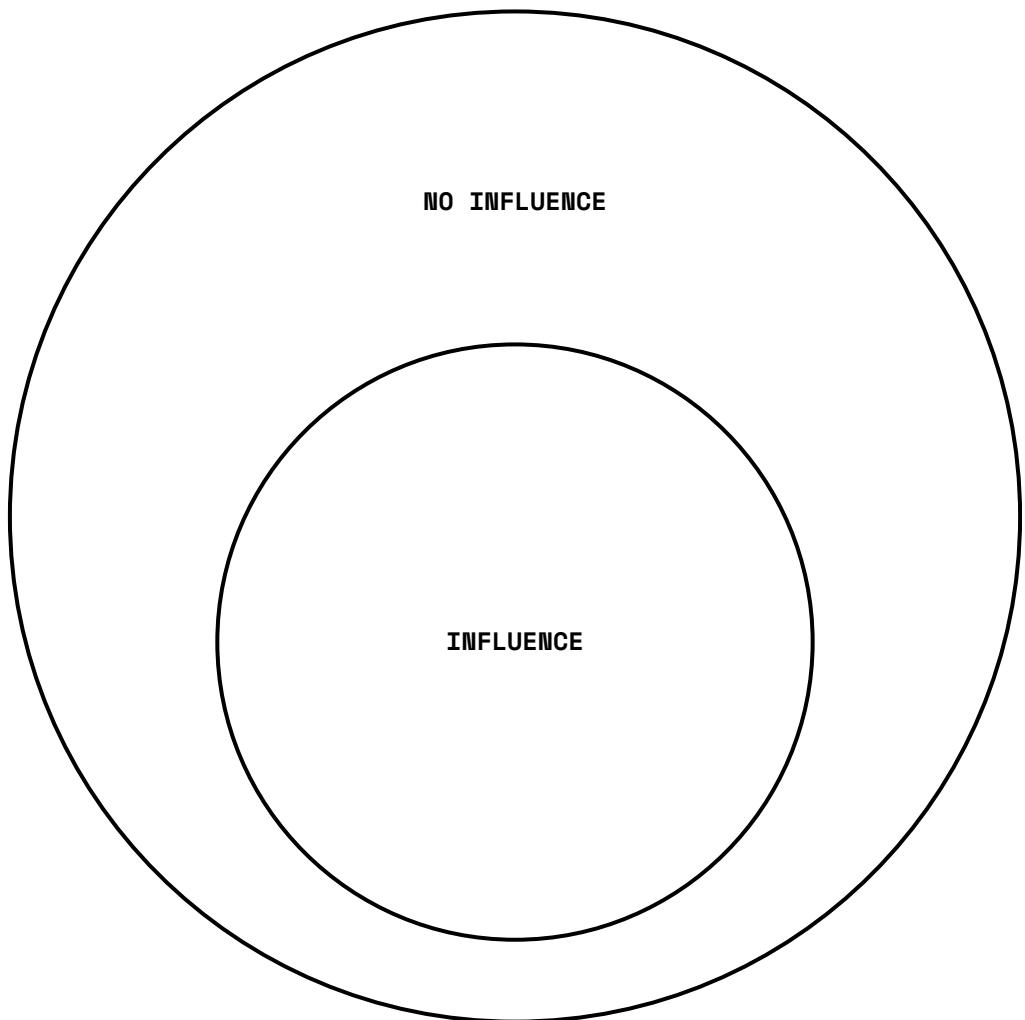
THE CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE

The circle of influence is a model that helps us to understand what we can and cannot control. It is important to be aware of our energy and not to waste it.

Learn which actions and thoughts have a positive impact on your performance and identify which are beyond your control. Use the obstacles you wrote down in the previous task.

*Founded by Stephen Covey

TASK: CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE



IF-THEN PLAN

Now that you know which obstacles you can influence, it's time to think about how you'll deal with difficult situations. You can do this by making an 'if-then' plan. For example:

"IF I find it difficult to get up for school in the morning,
THEN I will set my alarm clock half an hour earlier".

Or:

"IF I feel nervous before a game, THEN I will do a breathing exercise to relax".

This exercise is not limited to the football pitch; it can also be used in everyday life.



IF: you practise

THEN: you get better at it.

IF:

THEN:

CHAPTER 6: HABITS

Habits shape our lives. They make life easier, save time and energy, and help us achieve our goals. However, bad habits can be detrimental to our health and performance.

Have you ever heard the saying, "How we do one thing is how we do everything"? If something is easy and comfortable, we are more likely to do it. This principle applies to both good and bad habits.

Imagine you are trying to eat healthier. It might be hard to resist that tempting chocolate bar in the kitchen, because you'd have to go all the way to the supermarket to find a healthy alternative. But it also works the other way round. For example, if you want to spend less time on your phone, put it in a place where it's not easily accessible.

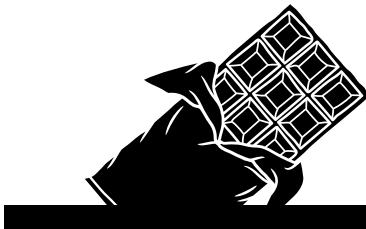


It's important to remember that changing habits takes time and effort. Don't expect to have perfect habits overnight. Start small and make progress one step at a time. In the next task we will identify your good and bad habits.

TASK: HABITS



GOOD HABITS:



BAD HABITS:

MY NOTES



PART 3

MINDTOOLS



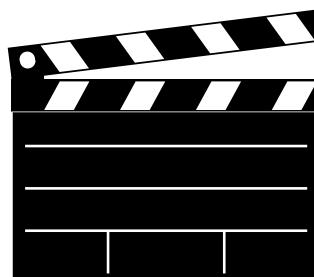
CHAPTER 7: VISUALISATION

Visualisation is a highly effective way to improve your football performance. By rehearsing certain situations in your mind, you can train your brain to handle these situations better in reality. This will boost your confidence, increase your motivation and help you learn new techniques.

Here are some tips on how to use visualisation in football:

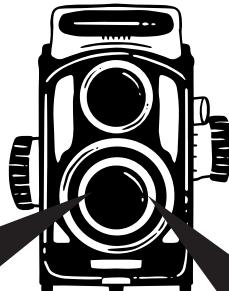
- **Be specific:** Visualise as specifically as possible. Try to see all the details of the situation, such as the position of the players, the ball and the surroundings.
- **Use your senses:** Don't just use your eyes to visualise the situation. Try to use your other senses too, such as hearing, feeling and smelling.
- **Emotions:** Feel the emotions you would experience in the situation you are visualising.
- **Practice:** Practice regularly to get the most out of your visualisation (a few minutes a day).

Another powerful way to use visualisation is to imagine things going wrong and practise how to respond positively.



TASK: VISUALISATION

WRITE IN DETAIL UNTIL IT FEELS LIKE YOU'RE
EXPERIENCING THE MOMENT.



CHAPTER 8: SURF THROUGH YOUR EMOTIONS

You've probably seen how big and powerful waves can be. They come in, reach a peak, crash on the shore and then disappear. Our emotions are like waves; they come, peak and then disappear. This is a natural process regulated by our bodies.

If we suppress or try to avoid emotions, this can lead to negative consequences such as stress, anxiety or depression. By acknowledging your emotion in the moment, for example by saying "I feel angry right now" or "I feel sad right now", you can create awareness and allow the emotion to peak and then consciously subside.

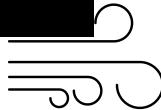
Remind yourself that it's just an emotion. You don't have to identify with it.

BREATHING

Breathing exercises can be a powerful tool for managing your emotions.



EXERCISE: PRE-SLEEP PREP



Many people breathe through their mouths during sleep and wake up feeling groggy and irritable. When we talk about football performance, it starts the night before...

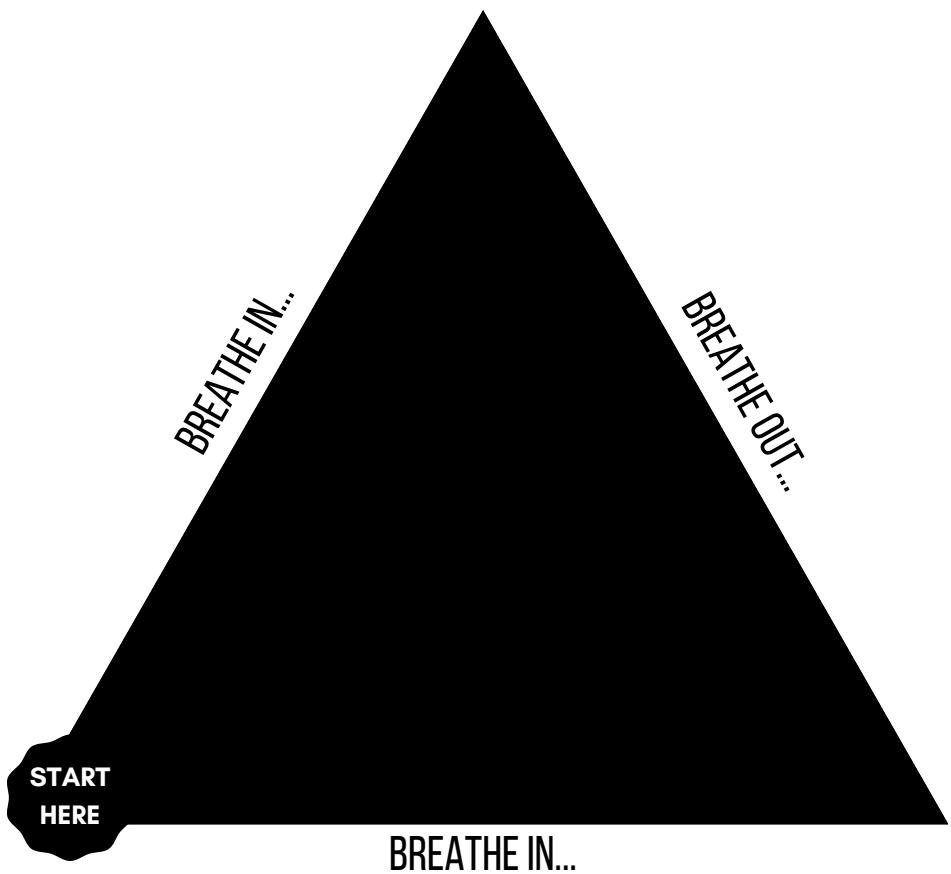
When? Every night before you go to bed. Do this 10 minutes before you go to bed and you'll down-regulate. Before you know it, you will be in a deep sleep.

How?

1. Place one hand on your chest and the other just above your naval, or place your hands on your lap.
2. Breathe in gently through your nose and out slowly and gently.
3. The key is to breathe slowly. When you breathe slowly, carbon dioxide builds up in your lungs and blood, which stimulates the **vagus nerve* and eventually you'll feel drowsy.

This exercise will not only make you feel sharper before the next day's training, but can also improve sleep recovery after a football match.

**The vagus nerve is a nerve that starts in the brain and travels to organs in the chest and abdomen.*

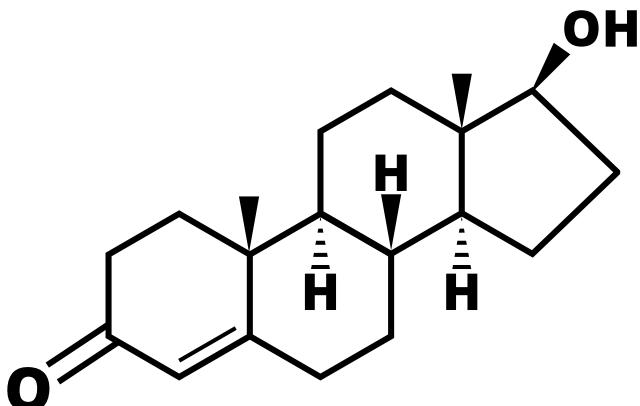


H9: POWER POSE

Amy Cuddy is a Harvard researcher who has studied how our posture affects our confidence. She's found that certain postures make you feel better and more in control, even when you're nervous, like before a game.

Cuddy's research showed that people who adopted a power pose had higher levels of testosterone and lower levels of cortisol. Testosterone is a hormone associated with confidence, assertiveness and competitive performance. Cortisol is a hormone associated with stress, anxiety and depression.

If you're feeling nervous before a game, you can try the power pose to boost your confidence. Let's give it a go!





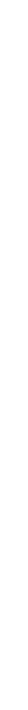
EXERCISE: POWER POSE

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your knees slightly bent. Raise your arms in a V-shape above your head and hold for two minutes. You should feel strong and balanced.
2. Pay attention to your breathing. Are you breathing in and out quickly? Try inhaling through your mouth for 1 second, hold it for 1 second and then exhale through your nose for 3 seconds.
3. Now focus on the task that is important to you. You can repeat an affirmation or a performance value.

Remember that these postures are not intended to impress others but to allow your body to communicate with your mind.

TIP:
FIND A QUIET PLACE
WHERE YOU CAN BE ALONE,
SUCH AS A BATHROOM.

MY NOTES



FOOTBALL REFLECTION



FOOTBALL JOURNAL



We have now reached the 28-day reflection period. This reflection journal will prepare you and help you to look back on the football matches and/or training sessions you've taken part in.

Reflection is a valuable tool because it supports your growth in football. By reflecting regularly, you can improve your performance, set goals and stay motivated.

Remember that it's also important to be flexible. Not everything goes to plan and you never know what will happen. It is up to you how you use the diary. However, we recommend that you stay consistent once you start.

Do you want more reflection pages? We understand. Check out our website www.flowinsport.com for free content. Or order the 'Football Journal, Only' on Amazon! You can also complete the journal with a coach, teammate or parent.

MORNING JOURNAL

DATE : _____

DAILY SCHEDULE

MY VALUES

TOP PRIORITY

NEW HABIT

PREPARATION

NEW EXERCISE

EVENING JOURNAL

DATE: _____

WHAT WENT WELL TODAY AND WHY?

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF TODAY?

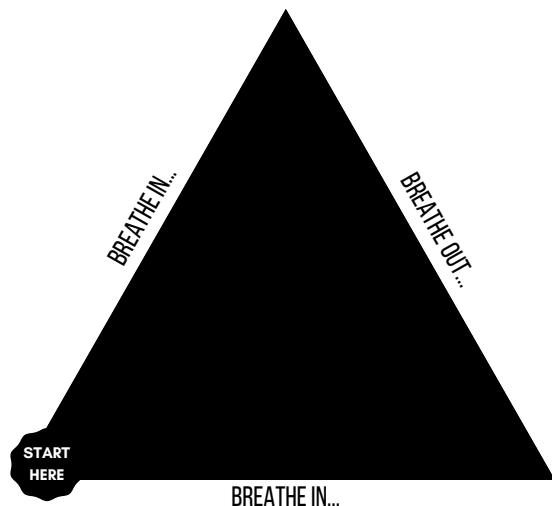
WHAT SITUATION DID YOU HANDLE WELL TODAY AND HOW DID YOU DO IT?

WHAT GOOD THINGS HAPPENED TODAY OVER WHICH YOU HAD CONTROL?

WHAT GOOD THINGS HAPPENED TODAY OVER WHICH YOU HAD **NO** CONTROL?

IF YOU WERE YOUR OWN COACH, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF?

EXERCISE: PRE-SLEEP PREP



MORNING JOURNAL

DATE : _____

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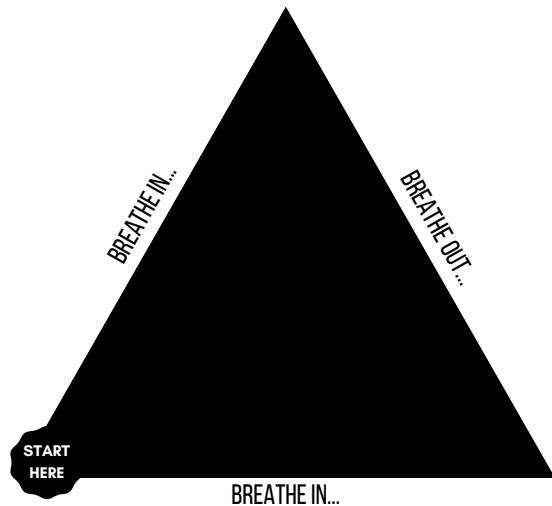
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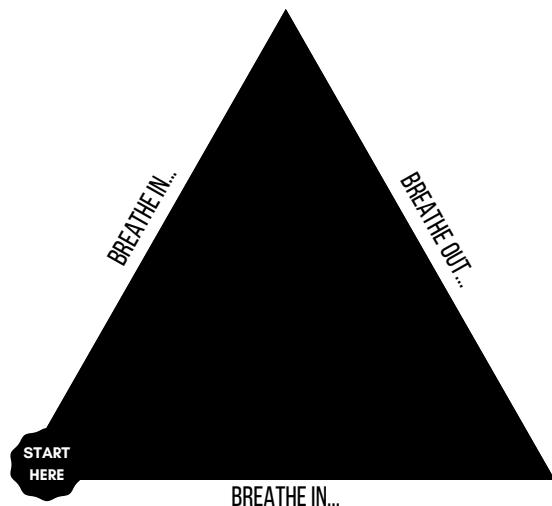
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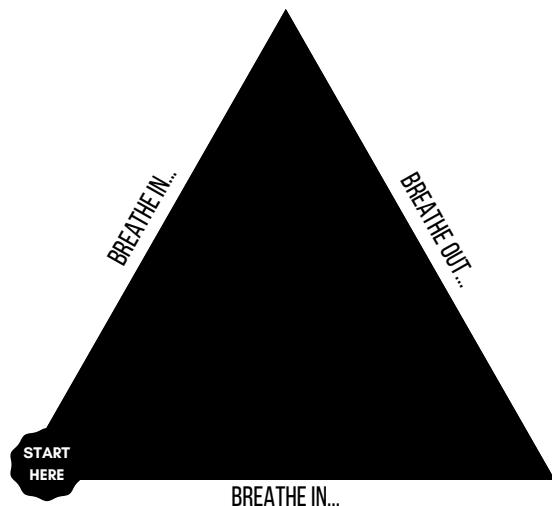
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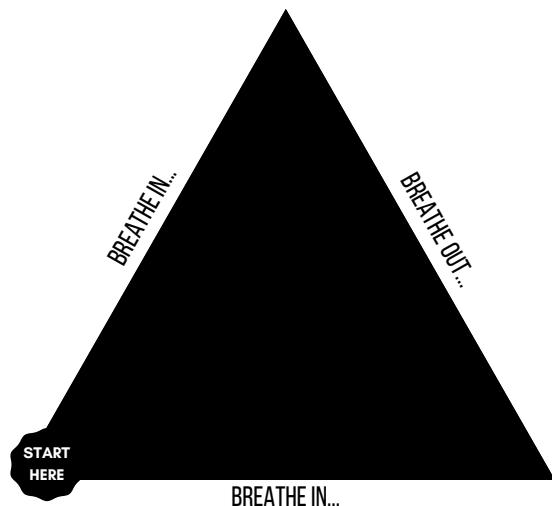
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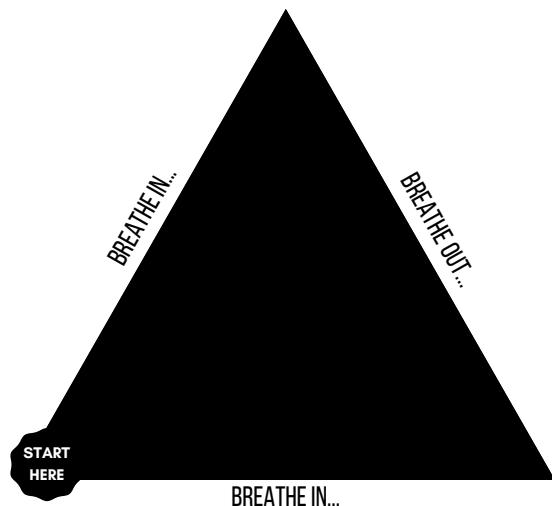
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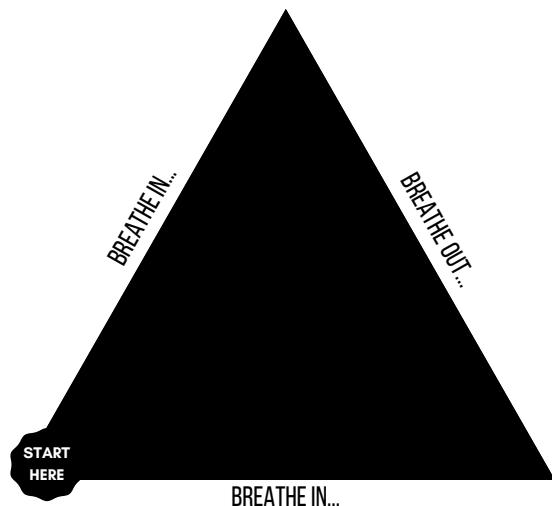
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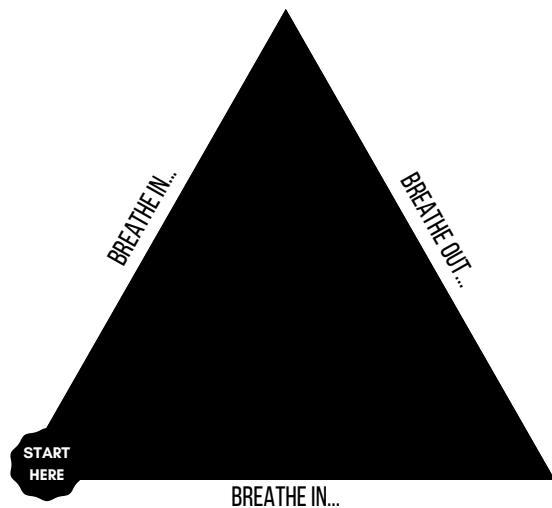
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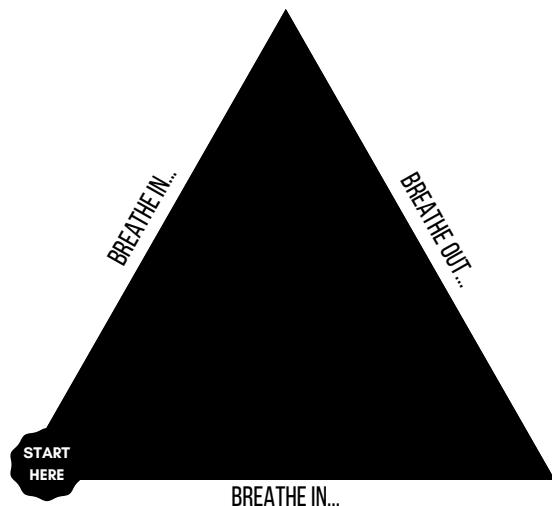
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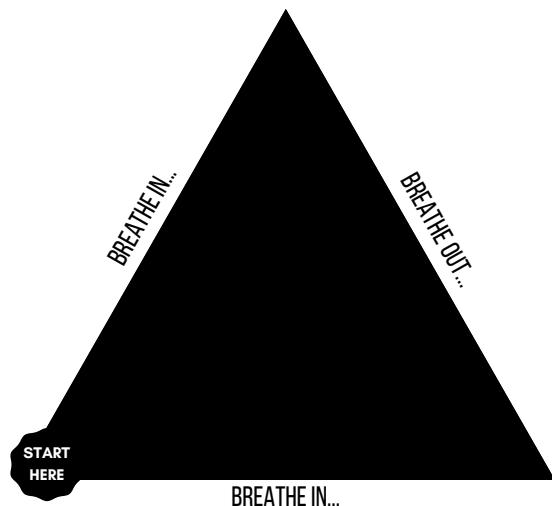
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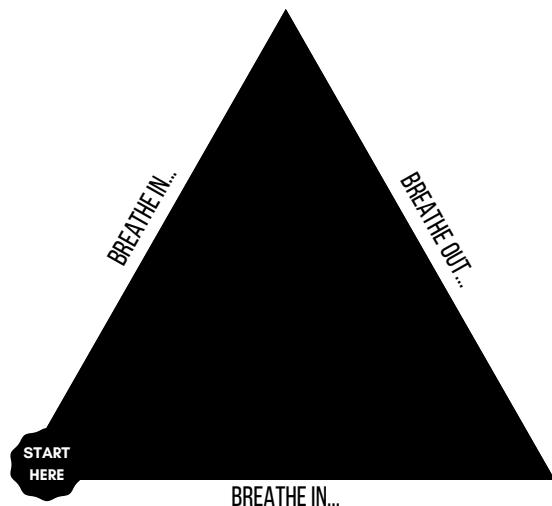
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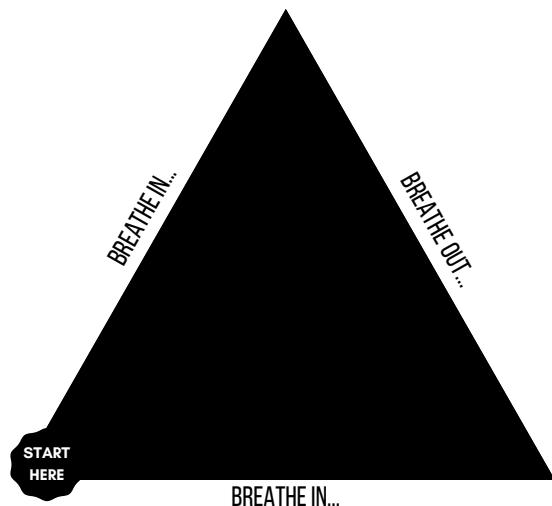
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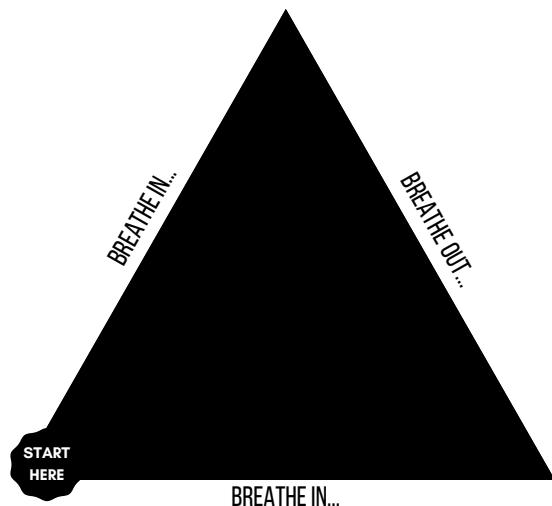
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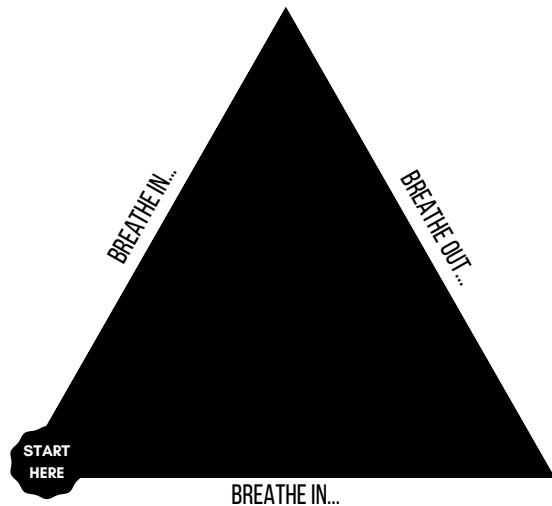
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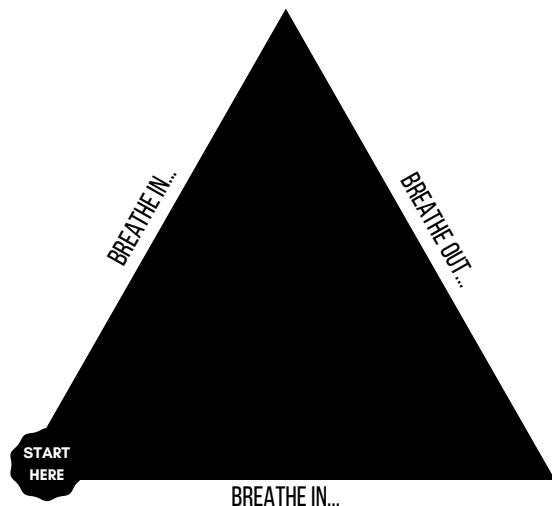
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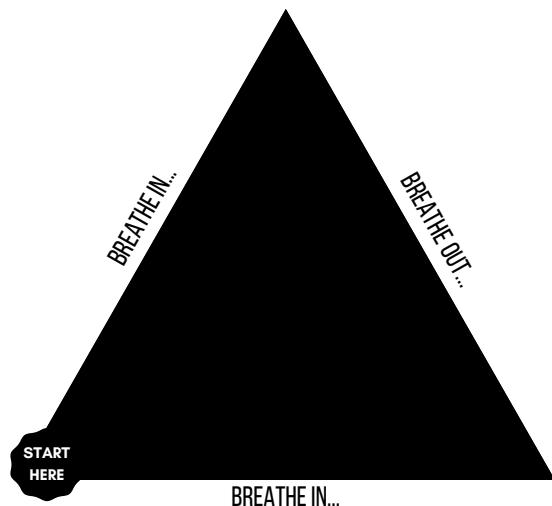
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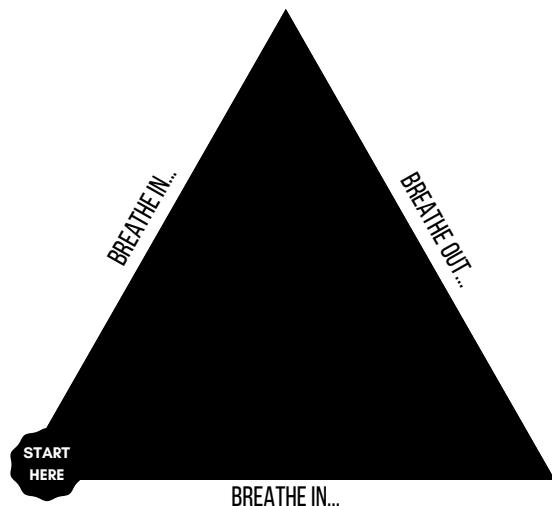
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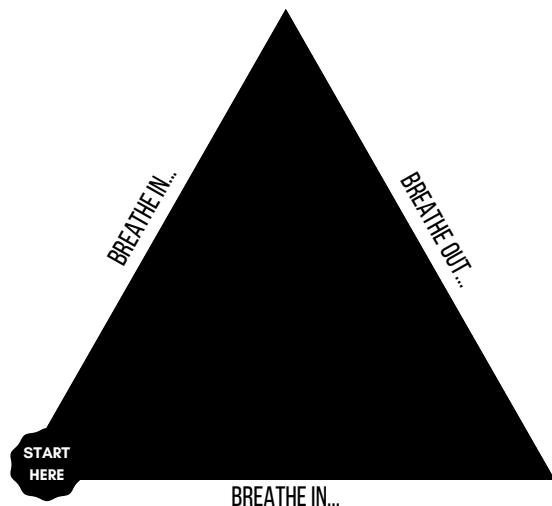
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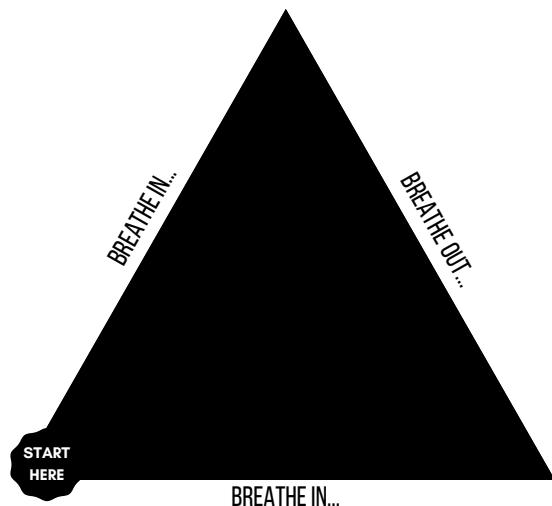
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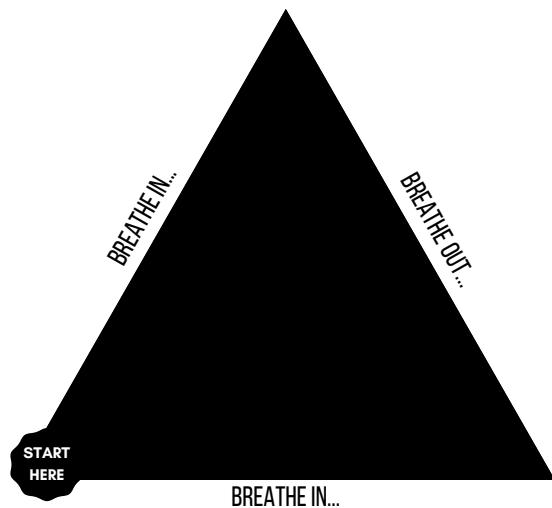
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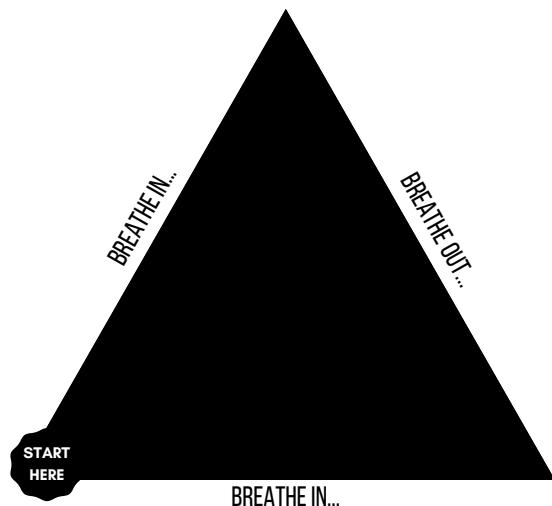
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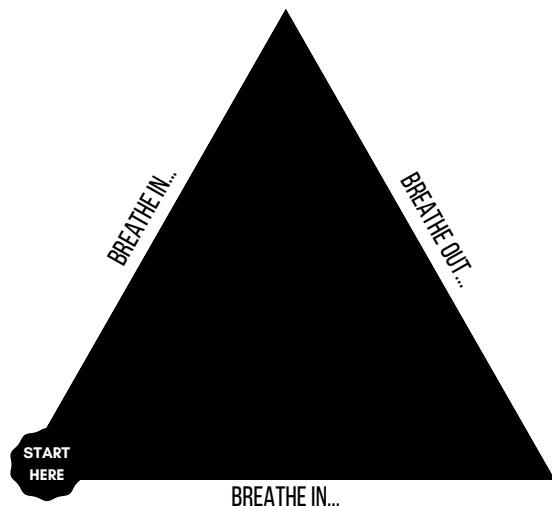
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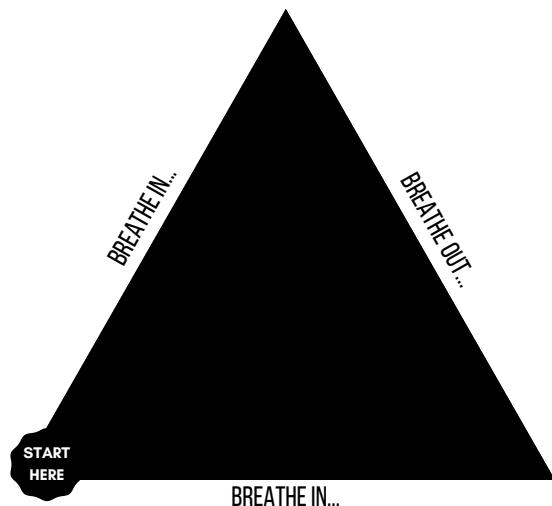
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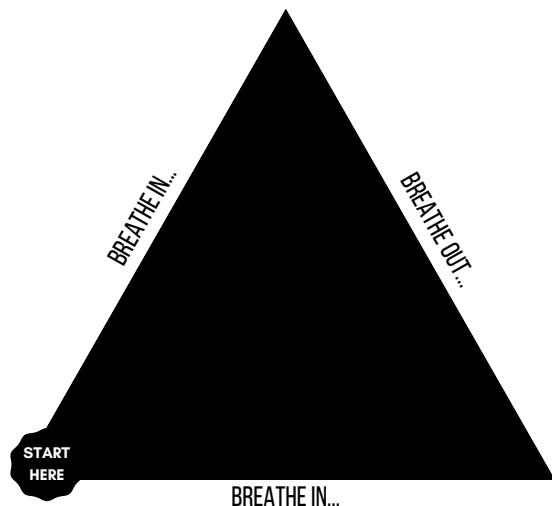
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