



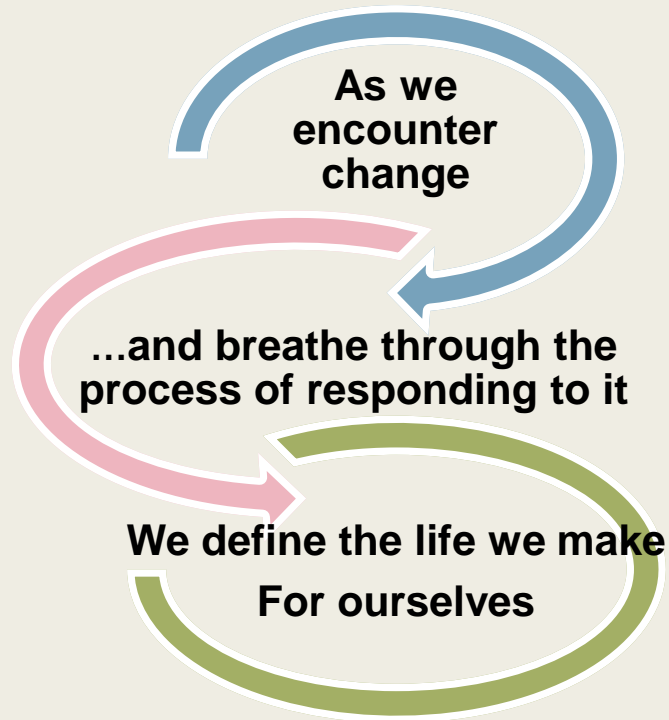
‘I am’ :

the two most important words

**because what you put after them shapes
your life day by day**



As we define who we are – everything around us is not fixed – we are asked each day to face the unknown



April 2021

Health

UK teens hit by mental health crisis during the pandemic, as rates of depression and anxiety more than double

EXCLUSIVE

Research is the latest in a series of studies to highlight how Covid-19 is widening inequality in society

There has been an 80 per cent increase in teens' social media and smartphone use (Photo: Getty/AFP /Gabriel Bouys)



It becomes a case of what shall I pay attention to ?
What shall I choose to 'notice'?

What shall I allow into my awareness to make a nest in my memory?





Slowly, as we practice being 'in the moment' day by day we get used to noticing our physical states.

We also start noticing our thoughts and feelings drifting in and out in our awareness : some are mundane, some darker, and all of them we can see are flitting in and out.





Then we attach words to what feelings we have noticed. We also attach words to describe what comes in through our five senses . . .

Evocative words, precise words – this is our emotional ‘literacy’ developing





Tastes become sharper – more distinct.

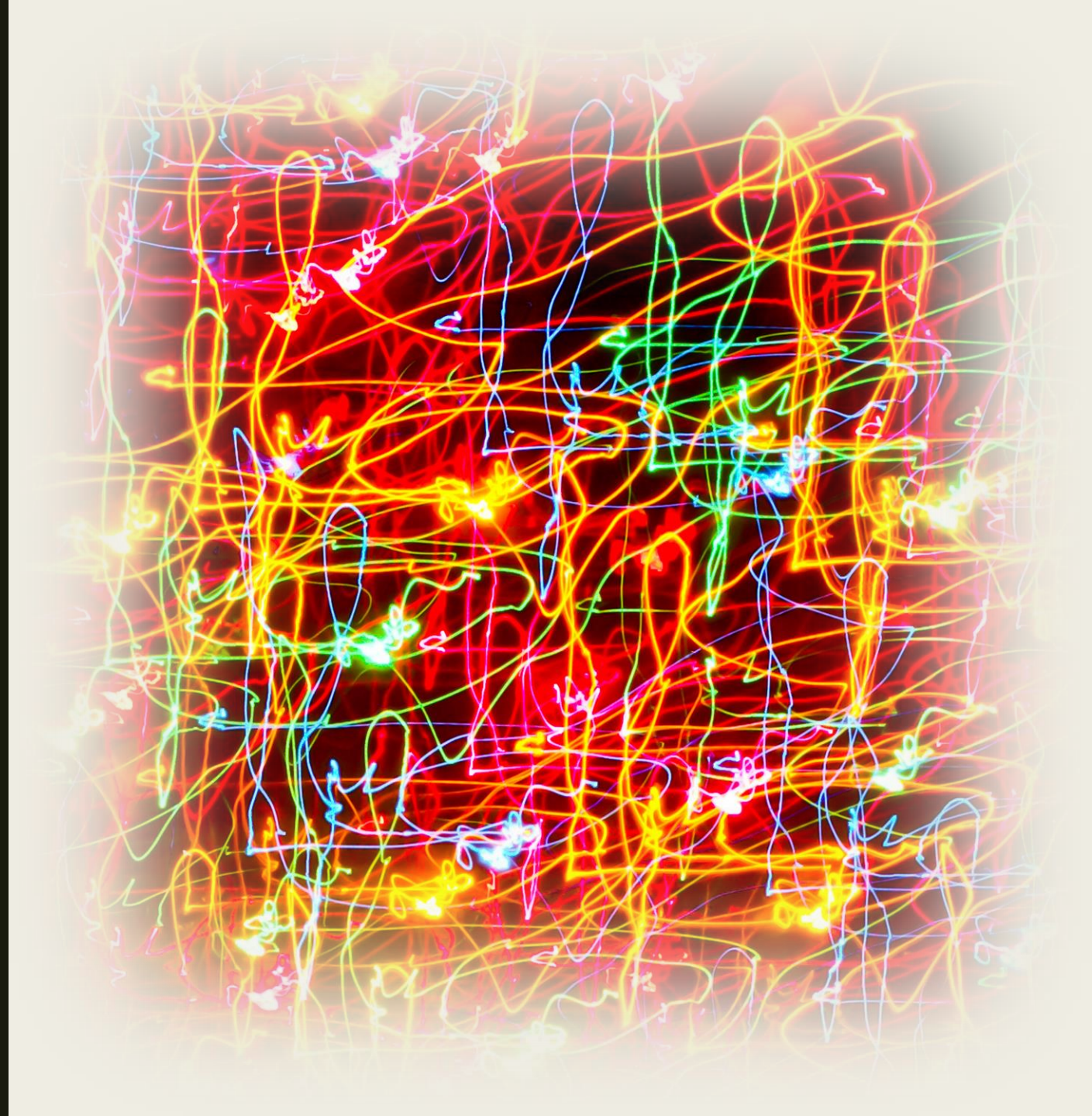
We find we are taking our time to taste our food





And the jumbled, difficult inner 'mind chatter' becomes like the 'radio in the next room'

- the comedian, Ruby Wax said this in her presentation to MPs in a committee room at the House of Commons. She is now a mindfulness teacher.



Mind states become more obvious – we become aware of our :

- Intellect at work – as we analyse and make judgments**
- Feelings as they ebb and flow**
- Decisions we make and actions we take at home and in the world outside**

We also start noticing more clearly the inputs into our inner space :

Health statistics, politics, advertising copy, jokes, the built environment, artworks, our own interpretation of recent events, reported stories of joys & loss, books, film reviews, TV news



**“politics
is more
difficult
than
physics”**

Albert Einstein



And we slowly learn to breathe through all of that.

We become more aware of the quality of our breath. Some days, we stop and breathe, in the middle of feeling something strongly, and slowly . . .

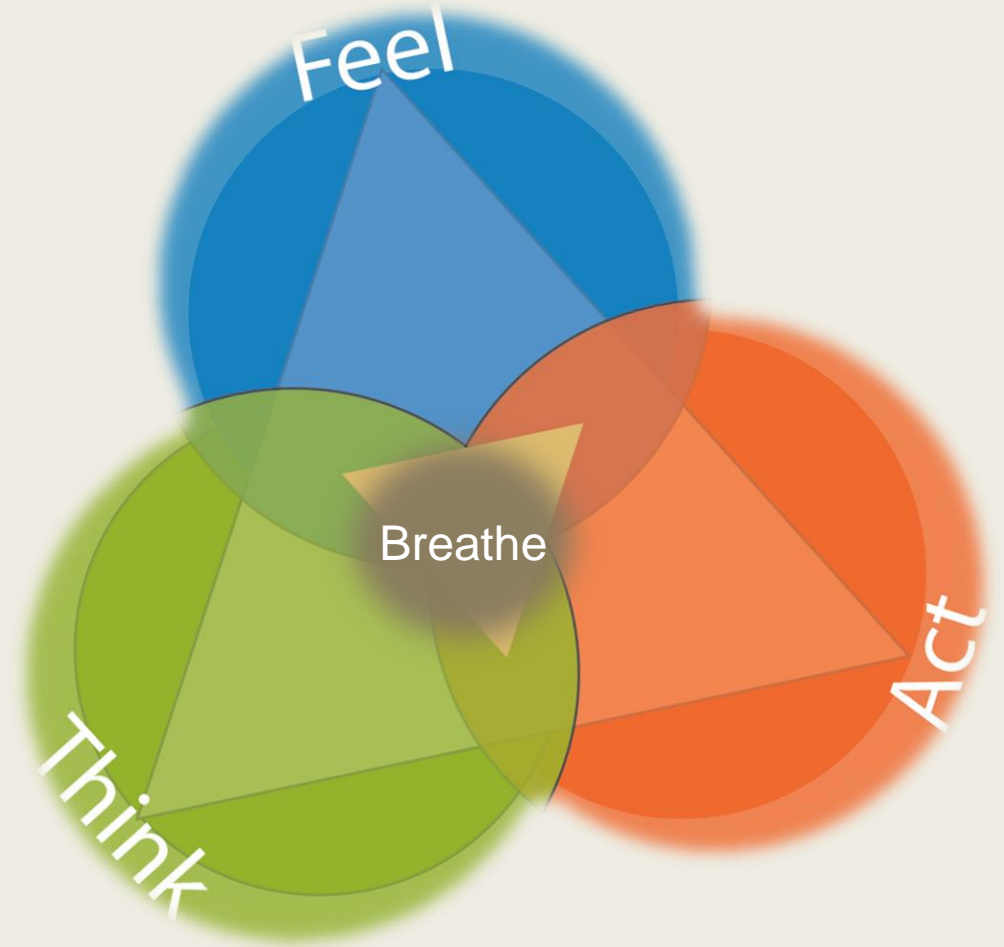
. . . we can see that our feelings are not actually facts – they come and go.

Just watching our feelings do that gives us a sense of distance – and a bit of a ‘reality check’





How are you breathing today?
take a minute and check yourself out



The 'Feel, Think, Act' diagram comes from Joshua Freedman, of 6 Seconds. We added 'Breathe' in the middle. Breathing through emotion is a core self regulation tool – and using it effectively is a life skill which determines the quality of how we experience our own lives. **One breath in between – makes a difference, and enables us to do what we need to do**