



BRAIN ON ICE

Getting the Mind to Chill

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Brain on Ice: *Getting the Mind to Chill*

By Wendy Landry

The brain is the best example of an *Every Ready* battery there is. It is forever creating thoughts at a feverish pace. Someone estimated that our brains averages 50-70,000 thoughts a day. Whoever calculated that must have been on brain overload. If the brain was an unattached, isolated organ operating in its own little world, then its constant output of worries, warnings or wonders would not create such wear and tear in its path. However this is not the case and as a result, our physical, mental and spiritual health and well-being are at stake. The brain generates thoughts and those thoughts are a form of energy that either rejuvenate us or breaks us down, often times it's the latter. Putting the *Brain on Ice* not only lets the mind know who is in control but also allows us to slow down and streamline the thought process. We are therefore able to discover the cracks or gaps in between those thoughts. It is those cracks that give us a glimpse into the meaning of true peace, joy and the awareness of who we really are.

Chilling the mind can happen in a variety of ways – no assembly or disassembly required. That is what this topic is all about – cooling the brain down so that you can find peace, calm, joy, and insight no matter where you are or what is happening around you. I want to share with you ten methods or techniques that I have gathered throughout the years and found to be very

effective. I encourage you to try each of them out, to play with them and adopt those that work best for you. Have fun with them but resist the urge to over analyze (that is the brain trying to bud in). Just know that any time you do provide your brain with some down time, that the benefit is always there.

Let's get started. The most basic Brain Chill tool begins with something we all do every day – breath. Not our regular, shallow upper chest breathing but the slow deep fill your belly type of breath. This breath is magical and it is this breath what connects our heart to the world around us – it feeds our bodies and nourishes our soul. As long as there is air available, calm is but a breath away. I will describe the technique first and then we can try it out together. The number of times you repeat the exercise depends on you and your situation at the time – but just know that even a 30 second Brain Chill reaps its rewards.

Here we go:

Brain Chill One:

Take a deep breath, keeping the shoulders down and focusing on the air entering through the nose or if you are more comfortable through the mouth for a slow count of four – if you start to turn blue – shorten your count. Picture your stomach as a balloon – give it a colour or pattern if you like – see it or feel it slowly inflating as you breathe in – your tummy should stick out (a good thing) and then hold it there for a count of four (again, you judge

your comfort level). Exhale through the mouth for a count of four – pulling in your tummy as the balloon deflates – if no one is around or you feel comfortable – lightly close your lips together and allow the air to escape in a manner similar to that of air escaping from a runaway balloon. Remember to always give yourself permission to modify the exercise if you start feeling too light-headed or in any way out of sorts. Changing breathing patterns can take practise. Now let's try it together.

Take a deep breathe in focusing on the air coming in filling and expanding your balloon, shoulders staying relaxed – holding your breathe comfortably for four counts and then slowly exhaling for four with lips gently closed. Try it one more time on your own. Now breath normally – no analyzing, no expectations just know that your body is thankful and your brain was a little startled (it will adjust) by this foreign action of mindful breathing.

Brain Chill Two:

To tame the brain even more than just deep breathing in and out, add the statements out loud or in your head – as you breathe in say “I am breathing in energy” and as you exhale say “I am breathing out fatigue”. Your turn.

Inhale “I am breathing in energy” and exhale “I am breathing out fatigue”. Attempt it on your own for a few more times.

Brain Chill Three:

This next chilling exercise benefits not only the person doing it but others as well. You start by taking the three deep cleansing and calming breaths in and out to centre and focus the brain – then breathe effortlessly in and out as you repeat to yourself the phrase – “In with Love”. As you say that phrase, picture or feel your heart filling with warm, soft, comforting, pink light and then as you exhale, repeat the phrase “Out with Love” and experience that loving light radiating out from your heart to the world around you, showering everything or everyone in your path with Love. Definitely a beautiful and inexpensive way of sharing. For a more dramatic effective you can place your hand on the centre of your chest near your heart area.

Now your turn. Take three deep, slow and gentle breaths in and out keeping the shoulders down and allowing the stomach to extend on the inhale and contract on the exhale.

Continue to breathe at a normal pace with or without your hand on your heart. As you breathe in – repeat “In with Love” – filling your heart with warm, pink light and as you exhale repeat “Out with Love”, visualizing or sensing pink light radiating out around you for others to share. Don’t worry if you are not able to see or feel anything – use the sound and vibration of your breath as you inhale and exhale as an indication of Love on the move.

Brain Chill Four:

This break can be done standing, sitting or lying down. Picture or sense tree roots connected to the bottom of your feet and running down to the floor into the ground and deep into the earth's crust. The day's negativity or toxins are flowing from your body, through the roots and spilling into the depths of the earth where they are transformed and purified. Picture those toxins in the form of dirty water, black tar or flowing lava draining, flushing or seeping through the roots. This visualization or sensation will entice the brain to better rationalize and process what is happening. Now that the toxins have been released, picture the earth's energy as bright red, warm liquid or light travelling up the roots and filling the body with stimulating energy, strength and vitality. Now, feel the warmth of crystal clear energy from the sun enter through the top of your head in the form of white light or rainbow coloured gel that expands to fill the head, neck, shoulders, arms, chest, pelvis, legs and then feet with comforting, soothing energy of love, joy and harmony.

This is a great Brain Chill for those low energy periods throughout the day. Give it a try. If you are doing something that already requires your full focus, like driving for instance, then maybe save this one until later.

Take a deep cleansing breathe in and out three times. Now visualize those roots extending from your feet to the earth. As

you are breathing at a comfortable normal pace, picture or sense the day's stressors being flushed from your body like dirty water or brown sludge on each exhale. Do this a few times if you feel you need to. When you are ready to move on, inhale to gradually raise up the level of the earth's warm, red, invigorating liquid or light until it swallows up the whole body. Once the body is saturated with the earth's energy, exhale and then focus on inhaling the white, pure light energy of the sun through the top of your head. Experience it mixing and blending with the earth's energy creating a lighter and refreshed body and mind.

One more time. Release the toxins to the earth with as many exhales as needed. When cleansed, use the inhale action to engulf the body completely with the warm, red earthy energy. Once filled, use the inhales to mix in the white light of the sun.

Brain Chill Five:

Affirmations are another means to grab the brain's attention and have it take the time to consider a positive concept or statement rather than allow the mind to continue at its usual mad crazed pace. Affirmations are powerful and uplifting statements that, like all focused thought, influences the very cell of our being.

Statements such as:

I am love. I am loved. I am joy. I am at peace. I am powerful. I am safe. I am beautiful. I am successful. I have abundance. I

have the perfect job for me. I am healthy and strong. I am full of positive energy. I am youthful and vibrant.

The affirmations are always in the present. If you have something that you desire, then state and feel it in the present tense. This method will work towards re-wiring your brain to think in a more positive light and start that creative energy in motion.

Single words are also affective for chilling the mind. Continually repeating such higher vibrational words as love, joy and peace as you breathe in and out give birth to a settled and serene mind. However, choosing any positive word that resonates with you will have the same calming and inspiring affect.

Mantras or ancient sacred sounds, words or syllables such as "Om" are another avenue to explore if it sparks your interest.

Now let's try an example of this Brain Chill. Pick a statement or word and repeat it over and over as you gently, slowly, and deeply breathe in and out – adjusting your breathe so nothing is strained. After 30 seconds or so, check in with yourself – notice a more uplifting feeling? Inject this exercise throughout your day for a strong dose of positivity.

Brain Chill Six:

Putting your attention on one of the five senses is another way to coax the brain to tone things down. After taking the three deep breaths, take the opportunity to concentrate on your hearing.

Separate and distinguish each sound that you hear depending upon where you are at the moment. Do you hear such sounds as the phone ringing, the fluorescent lights buzzing, traffic outside the window, human voices, someone typing on a keyboard, music playing, a dog barking, paper rustling, a cell phone going off, the wind in the trees, water running, a bird singing, or footsteps on a tile floor?

Take a moment and listen.

If you have a keen sense of smell, you may prefer the nose game. Smell the air or the objects around you. This is especially effective as you are strolling through the neighbourhood or sitting at your lovely work cubicle. Is the smell pleasing or pungent, intense or faint, citrus or floral, musty or fresh, burnt or smoky, grassy or herbal, earthy or synthetic, or minty or spicy?

Take a moment and sniff.

You can stretch your visual muscle by taking the time to describe your surroundings. You can do this in your mind or if you have always dreamed of being a radio commentator, then proceed to verbally paint your picture out loud. Be as detailed as you can so that your imaginary audience feel as if they are viewing the landscape through your eyes.

Take a moment and describe.

As for the taste test, try it out during a snack or meal break. Take the time to mindfully eat by carefully examining the texture, temperature and taste of the food in front of you. Ignore or shut out outside influences such as TV, magazines, cell phones or other distractions. Consciously chew and mince the food and be aware of the sensation as it slides down your throat. Change that fast food into slow food with a purpose. Is the taste bitter, sweet, sour or spicy? Is the piece of food soft, dense, flaky, smooth or warm?

Take a moment and chew.

Brain Chill Seven:

Thoughts originating in the brain create emotions which in turn are felt energetically by the body. It has been proven that the body responds to thoughts as if they were real. If the thought is scary, the heart pounds. If the thought is sad, the chest feels heavy. If the thought is aggravating, cortisol starts pumping through your veins reading you for flight or fight. Why not use this phenomena to fool the brain and chill the mind into a more peaceful state. How?

Daydream. Think about strolling along a tropical beach, sailing in your luxury yacht, flying in your private jet, having the winning lottery number, travelling anywhere in the world, achieving a personal goal, or finding that perfect mate. You are only limited by your imagination. What does that daydream look and feel like?

Take a moment and daydream.

Even easier than daydreaming is re-calling a wonderful memory – a past holiday, an accomplishment, a gift, an event, or a family gathering that conjures up a loving, warm and secure feeling or a sense of well-being. Once more, the brain is taken away from its borage of sporadic thoughts and gently basks in the warmth and happiness of days gone by. The rest of the body also relaxes, breathes a sigh of relief and enjoys the trip down memory lane.

Take a moment to recall.

Brain Chill Eight:

Visualizing different colours as you breath in and out is another method of providing a holistic bath of relief, energy, peace and healing to both brain and body. The seven major subtle energy centres or vortexes (referred to as chakras) of the body allow the Universal Life Force Energy to flow through our physical and spiritual bodies. The Root Chakra is located at the base of the spine in the tailbone area and is associated with the feeling of being grounded. The Sacral Chakra is located around the lower abdomen about 2 inches below the navel. It governs our ability to accept others and new experiences. The Solar Plexus is situated in the upper abdomen around the stomach area. A healthy Solar Plexus Chakra means we are confident and feel in control of our lives. The Heart Chakra is located in the centre of the chest. It is concerned with our ability to love. The Throat Chakra is next and

is located in the throat. This chakra deals with our ability to communicate our truth. The Third Eye Chakra is situated between the eyes on the forehead. An open third eye permits us to look through life's illusions and to perceive the true picture. The Crown Chakra is positioned at the very top of the head. This chakra represents our ability to fully connect spiritually. When the chakras are open and healthy, the Universal Life Force Energy flows through them unobstructed. However, when we are faced with life's challenges and we allow our brain rather than our heart to dictate, perspectives get skewed and fear raises its ugly head. It is this fear that causes blockages in any of the energy centres and subsequently emotional and physical consequences arise.

Each chakra has a corresponding colour. Our sixth Brain Chill makes use of the colour chakra chart to assist in revitalizing and re-balancing the mind and body.

Visualizing the red colour associated with the Root Chakra, as you breathe in helps increase energy and a sense of being grounded. Orange for the Sacral Chakra is linked with creativity. Yellow for the Solar Plexus deals with personal power. Green for the Heart Chakra relates to healing energy. Blue for the Throat Chakra is aligned with speaking your voice. Indigo or purple for the Third Eye Chakra governs intuition or clarity. Violet or white for the Crown Chakra centres on your spiritual connection with the Life Force Energy.

Based on your needs, you breathe in the colour of your choice. If you are feeling insecure or ungrounded, perhaps filling your body with red light, is your colour to breathe in through your Root Chakra. If you have need some support or encouragement to speak your truth, then then try bringing in blue light through the throat area and then expanding from there. When breathing it out, visualize expanding your aura in the process. Your aura is an energetic field or layered bubble that encompasses your physical body.

Now let's pick a colour. Breathe in the colour through its associated chakra or any part of the body if you prefer (let your heart dictate not your brain) and sense your corps from head to toe being immersed in that colour's nurturing, cleansing and balancing properties. As you breathe out have the colour seep through your pores building up layer after layer until your body is surrounded by an egg shaped shield or bubble of protective and vibrant colour. You can make that bubble transparent, translucent or solid. Continue the exercise as long as you feel the need.

Brain Chill Nine:

I am very much a believer in angels and their role of support in each of our lives. Angel assistance can range from helping with minor day to day annoyances like locating lost keys or searching out a parking spot to the more miraculous feat of preventing our untimely exit from this earth. To the skeptics or doubters, I

encourage you cater to your curiosity and to keep an open mind as we continue on. Angels are here to support us with our daily lives here on earth and will do so only when asked. Under normal circumstances they will not intrude on our free choice but quietly hang around, loving us while waiting for that call to duty. What do they have to do with Brain Chills? Well next time you need to lasso or re-charge the brain – take in a few deep breaths and while doing so ask the angels in your mind or out loud, to raise your energy level or fill you with a sense of calm, stillness or peace. What do you have to lose? Play with them, have fun. They do have a sense of humour and most importantly they love you no matter what you believe. They also admire you for being brave enough to be a part of this great adventure called being *Human on Earth*.

Another angel exercise that will send chills through the logical brain is the process of asking the angels for a sign of their presence then keeping the brain on high alert as you go about your day. You may discover a feather in a strange place, a coin on the sidewalk, a song on the radio referring to angels, a statue or picture of an angel, a person with the name “Angel” or a book, article or story about angels. There is no limit to the angel’s creativity. *A Brain on Ice* provides opportunity for our hearts to make many wonderful discoveries and to hear the quiet murmur of our inner voice or the gentle voice of angels without a lot of brain competition and interference.

Brain Chill Ten:

Some people will find it easy to take any of the seven Brain Chills that we have previously discussed and incorporate them throughout their day and for the most part anywhere or anytime the need arises. Other individuals, with all good intentions, will find themselves swallowed up by the craziness of their days and the opportunities for brain pauses elusively slip away. By using certain cues or indicators, the brain is more easily programmed to tune in and chill out.

For example, cue or train the brain that when you first wake up every morning before leaping from the bed you are to centre yourself with a few deep cleansing breathes and repeat a positive intention for the day. Positive intentions such as: *Today everything works out smoothly; My day will be productive; I will meet very positive and inspiring people; Everything will work to my highest good, My day will be filled with Love, Joy, Harmony and Abundance.*

Cue the shower. Be mindful of the water splashing over you and mentally transform it to a brown colour as the water collects dirt, toxins, and any other form of negativity flushing from your body. The contaminated water is then washed down the drain and back to the earth where it is purified and re-energized.

Cue your brain when walking. With each step, be conscious of the ground beneath your feet, the air that caresses your face, the

motion of your hips, the swinging of your arms and the warmth generating in the body.

Cue while driving. Put the brain to work becoming that smooth talking, witty and very descriptive radio commentator as you focus on the road ahead.

Cue your food. Really eat your meals free from distractions and examining each bite with all your senses.

Cue your conversation. With heartfelt interest and sincerity talk to another individual with your full attention.

Cue your daydreaming. Take a moment during the day to stare out the window, to be a non-judgemental, a neutral observer of your immediate world or simply Brain Chill by staring at the topical beach scene on your computer background.

Carve other cues from your habits or routines throughout the day. These bookmarks will signal to the brain that it is time to slow down, concentrate and be mindful of what really is happening in the moment.

Up to this point we have discussed Brain Chills with very little props required. However, if you are someone who is a little more tactile and would prefer some extras to add to the mood or effectiveness of a Brain Chill session, I can offer a few suggestions. I leave it up to you to mix and match the accessories as you so desire.

Candles are a great focusing tool. Consider your favourite colour, fragrance or no fragrance, soya or beeswax, short and fat or tall and thin. Gently gazing at a burning candle, like the flames of a campfire is very alluring and soothing to an overactive brain.

Music that uplifts you, stirs up an emotional response and sends shivers down your spine is another means of persuading the brain to give up control, to be in the moment and let the heart take over.

Books in a variety of forms and topics of interest will also give the brain the pleasure of diving into the world of imagination, problem-solving or healthier perspectives.

Incense and essential oils appeal to the sense of smell and can soothe the brain into a state of peace, calm and contentment.

Passion is a great prescription to brain health and holistic well-being. If your brain is concentrating on your passion or your creative outlet be it writing, painting, music, crafts, exercising, construction, gardening, teaching, playing sports, cooking, volunteering, business, public speaking etc. then the concept of time will disappear and worries will drop away only to be replaced by the joy of creating and feeding a purpose.

Whether you prefer the simple, deep breathing Brain Chill technique done anywhere, anytime or a corner space complete with candles, incense and music to do your best chilling, the chose is yours. What shouldn't be a chose but rather a well

ingrained habit is putting your *Brain on Ice* at various times throughout the day. Today's way of life demands that our brain take on more tasks and to process more information than it is effectively capable of doing. We have allowed it to take the place of master controller of our life overriding its original role as servant assigned to handle our most basic survival needs. The true master is our heart. Our heart really knows us and knows what is good for us. It becomes difficult to tune into our heart when the brain is continually generating thousands of thoughts and scenarios that tend to be founded on negative based experiences. The idea that the past is the past and today is a new day is a foreign concept to the brain. Now don't get me wrong - the brain is an excellent problem-solving tool when it comes to determining how to handle imminent dangers such as crossing a busy highway, escaping from a burning building or determining the best route for outrunning a charging grizzly. It is also effective at solving a good puzzle or learning a new task. Nevertheless, the true source of inspiration and encouragement should come from the heart. Unlike the brain, the heart works from a place of love not fear. So every once in a while throughout the day put that *Brain on Ice, Get that Mind to Chill* so that you can re-connect with your breathe and in turn re-connect with your heart. Only then are you able to glimpse and discover your true essence, your raison d'être and your spirit within.