

FULFILLMENT MINI-GUIDE

MHTTC Handouts - March 2022

MCKINLEY WITHERS, ED.D.

FULFILLMENT:

A feeling of satisfaction, peace, contentment, purpose, and impact.

Engagement with one's personal and professional life

An active state of wellness maintenance

A way of life dictated by everyday efforts



**STEP ONE IS ADMITTING THAT
YOU ARE POWERFUL.**

YOU HOLD THE BRUSH.

FULFILLMENT

IN YOUR PERSONAL

AND PROFESSIONAL

LIFE

IS YOURS TO CREATE.

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE ELEMENTS

Frequent, difficult conditions in your personal and professional life are inevitable. Though some years, days, or months are better than others you must be proactive to protect yourself from the harsh, ever-changing elements of everyday life. Here are some strategies for *prioritizing* your physical wellness and protecting your mind and body.

I can't prioritize that vs. I don't have time

Telling yourself that you don't have time for your physical health is a nice story but the reality is that you aren't prioritizing it. Next time you face a trade-off, take ownership of your time by saying "I can't prioritize that" rather than "I don't have time for that." This carries much more significance if you have to tell yourself that you can't prioritize your physical and mental wellness. What are you prioritizing instead? If wellness is a priority, you will make time.

Don't count on willpower

The reality is, willpower doesn't work. People who maintain healthy routines are able to maintain and sustain their efforts because they create a system that facilitates maintenance and consistency. People who you admire for being really "motivated" or who have strong "willpower" are actually likely to be the least dependent on "willpower." Depend on reminders, routines, rituals, and supportive relationships—not willpower.

Just get out the door

Some people say showing up or starting is the hardest part of change... and some people, those people, are absolutely right. When you feel the resistance, just get out the door and let your movement generate momentum.

What would it look like if it were easy?

If you are struggling to follow through with a physical wellness goal, ask yourself this question—what would this look like if it were easy? You deserve a pat on the back for working hard, but it doesn't have to be torture to be physically healthy. Try to make it easy for yourself and reconstruct your efforts to take advantage of adjustments that will help you follow through with ease and elegance.

You come first

This is a hard one for educators. Educators have built a career around giving their time and energy freely to a noble cause. The reality is, putting yourself first feels selfish, but it's actually the only way to allow yourself to make your highest contribution. Create time and space in your life to care for your physical health and see how the other parts of your life improve.

Plan, communicate, anticipate

Make a clear plan, communicate it with others and help them anticipate your wellness rituals. It's important to take ownership of your time and allow those around you to support this essential effort

There is no such thing as bad weather, only poor gear choices

ONLY YOU CAN PROTECT THE ASSET

What is one small step that is *positively stated*—not "stopping" or doing "less," but beginning and doing a tiny bit more—that you could take to eat better?

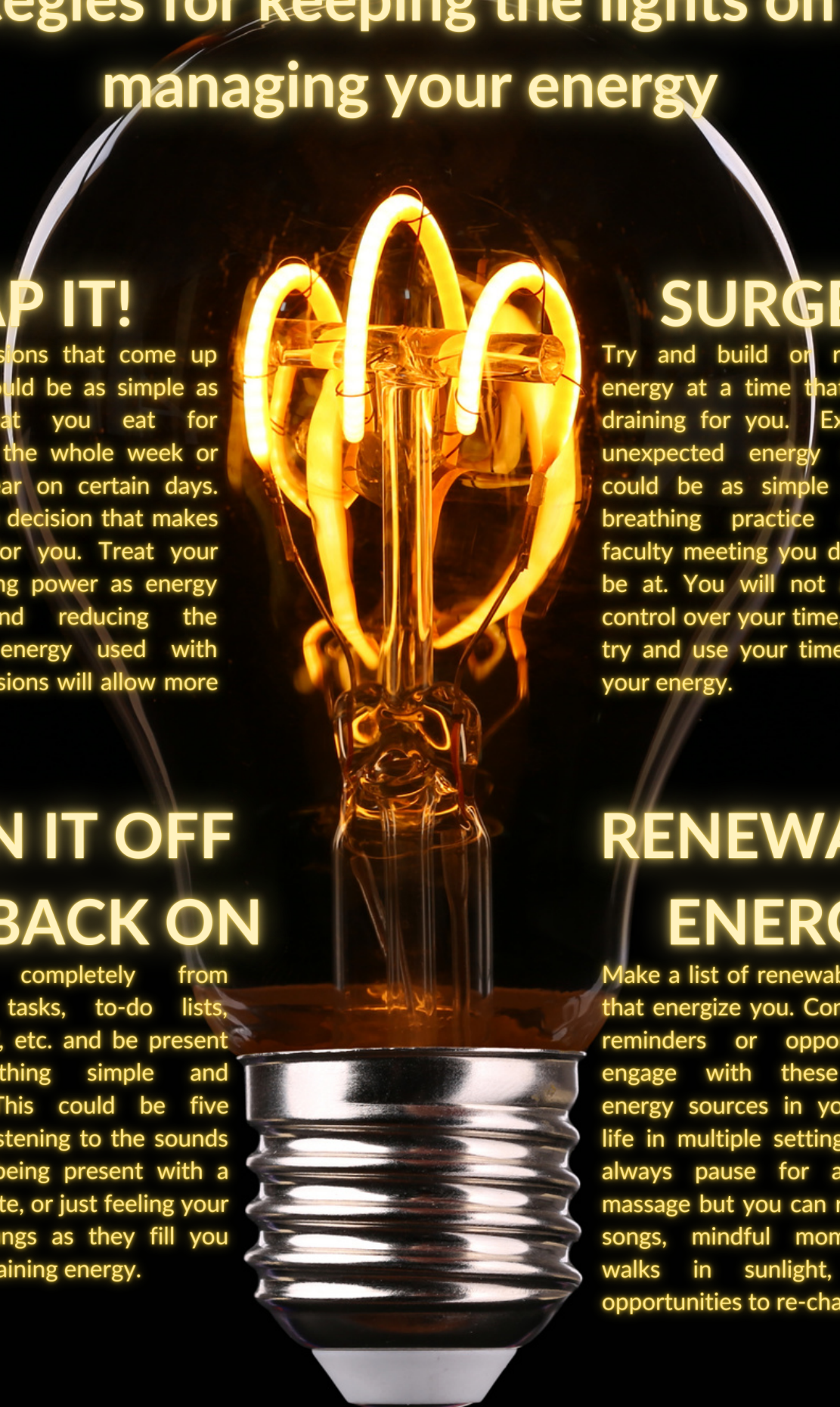
What is one small step that is *positively stated*—not "stopping" or doing "less," but beginning and doing a tiny bit more—that you could take to sleep better?

What is one small step that is *positively stated*—not "stopping" or doing "less," but beginning and doing a tiny bit more—that you could take to move or exercise more?

What is one small step that is *positively stated*—not "stopping" or doing "less," but beginning and doing a tiny bit more—that you could take to hydrate or breathe better?

Physical Wellness is the foundation to the hierarchy of needs, it's time to treat it that way

Strategies for keeping the lights on and managing your energy



ZAP IT!

Ritualize decisions that come up often. This could be as simple as deciding what you eat for breakfast for the whole week or what you wear on certain days. Make the one decision that makes a thousand for you. Treat your decision-making power as energy expended and reducing the amount of energy used with everyday decisions will allow more efficiency.

SURGEry

Try and build or restore your energy at a time that is typically draining for you. Experience an unexpected energy surge! This could be as simple as doing a breathing practice during the faculty meeting you don't want to be at. You will not always have control over your time, but you can try and use your time to improve your energy.

TURN IT OFF AND BACK ON

Disconnect completely from electronics, tasks, to-do lists, podcasts, TV, etc. and be present with something simple and enjoyable. This could be five minutes of listening to the sounds in a room, being present with a smell or a taste, or just feeling your heart and lungs as they fill you with life-sustaining energy.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Make a list of renewable resources that energize you. Consider adding reminders or opportunities to engage with these renewable energy sources in your everyday life in multiple settings. You can't always pause for a 60-minute massage but you can regularly find songs, mindful moments, short walks in sunlight, or other opportunities to re-charge.

You have choices

What are some of your top energy drainers?

What energizes you?

What are some ways you can exchange energy drainers for energy gainers?

What's your plan for maintaining your energy efficiency - including breaks. Remember, if you don't schedule it, it won't happen!

Take ownership of your energy, even if you don't always have control over your time

FIRST, PUT ALL THAT FRUSTRATION HERE IT'S OKAY TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE BAD STUFF

Name and describe the people that have been the most difficult to work with in your career.

(Don't worry, we won't tell them ...and you probably shouldn't either)

Describe an instance where you questioned and doubted your impact as an educator.

Describe all of the things that make you feel empty and tired in your daily work.

List the top 10 reasons to quit this job. A local fast food restaurant is hiring.

THEN, PUT ALL THAT POSITIVITY HERE ...

IT'S OKAY TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE GOOD STUFF

List and describe the people you are most grateful to have worked with in your career.

(Don't worry, we won't tell them ...but you probably should.)

List and describe everything that energizes you and gives you purpose in your daily work.

Describe an instance where you knew that your work in education made a positive difference.

List the top 10 things you would miss most if your job were to change today.

LOOK BACK AT THE PREVIOUS TWO PAGES.

WHICH PRACTICE FELT BETTER?

**HOW OFTEN DO YOU SHARE ALL THAT GOOD
STUFF WITH OTHERS?**

**HOW OFTEN DO YOU SHARE ALL THAT BAD
STUFF WITH OTHERS?**

**WHICH ONE OF THOSE PAGES COULD THE
PEOPLE YOU WORK WITH (AND LIVE WITH)
PASS A QUIZ ON?**

**REMEMBER THAT A SUCCESSFUL HUNT TAKES
INTENTION AND ATTENTION,
THE GOOD STUFF IS OUT THERE.**

WE'LL GET BETTER.

Mindfulness

Non-judgmental, present state awareness

Paying attention, on purpose

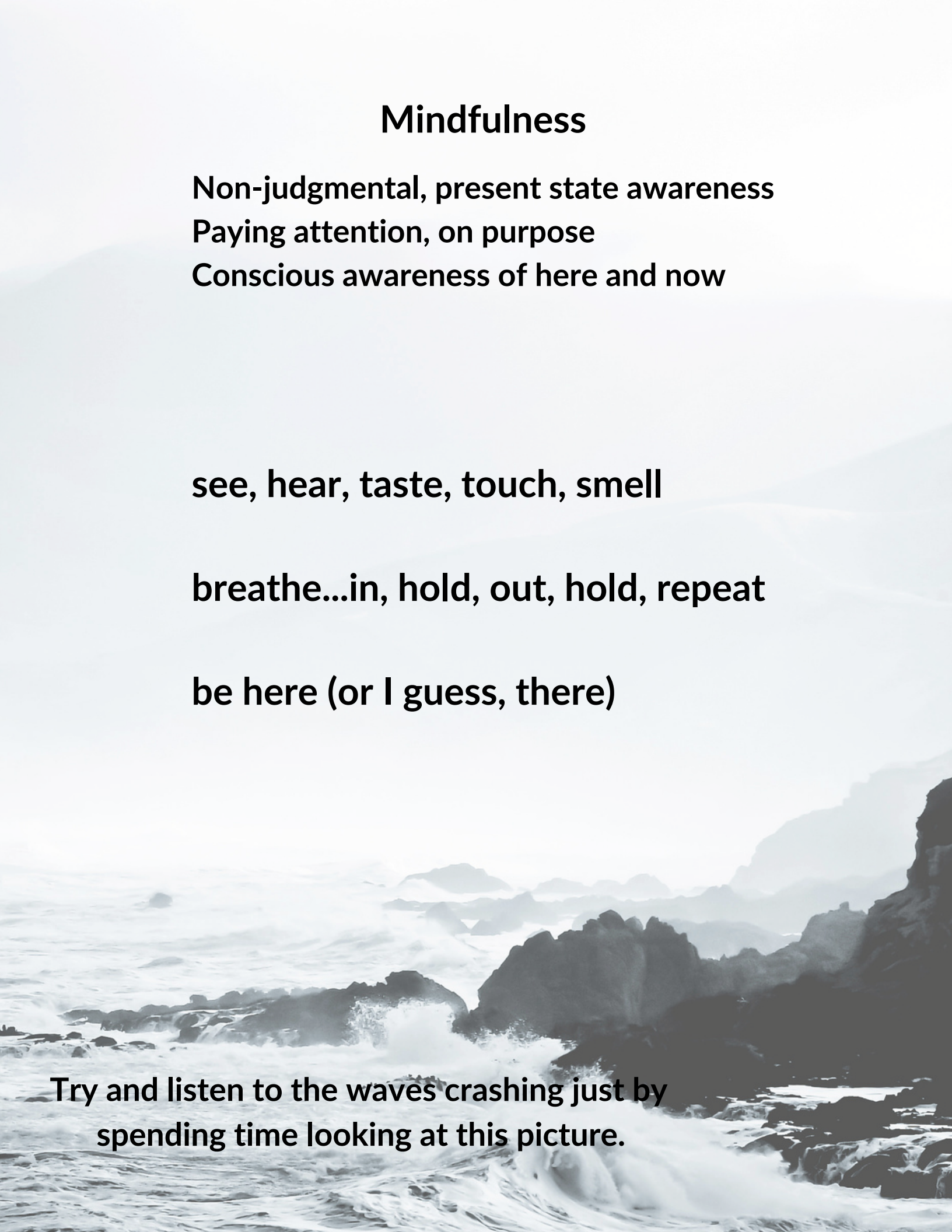
Conscious awareness of here and now

see, hear, taste, touch, smell

breathe...in, hold, out, hold, repeat

be here (or I guess, there)

Try and listen to the waves crashing just by spending time looking at this picture.



Unfortunately there will never be an exact line in the sand between your personal and professional life, but conscious effort to be present at work, and present in your life outside of work can help you get more out of both.

YES

YES


NO

NO

Take some time to celebrate your unique journey

What are you most proud of in your career? What can you celebrate from your unique journey? What is on your gratitude list from this year? What adjustments have you made that have helped you find greater fulfillment?

Consider creating a ritual like graduation that you could use to *regularly* celebrate your meaningful, difficult work and contribution. This could be a list of questions (like those above), an outing with colleagues or friends, or other ceremony



Look at all
the ground
you've
covered, all
the good
you've done.

WHAT WILL BE YOUR NEXT SMALLEST STEP TOWARD PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL FULFILLMENT?

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