

Training Skills to Decrease Stress and Enhance Critical Thinking Dispositions to Improve Persistence

Marilee J. Bresciani, Ph.D.
Professor, ARPE, SDSU and
Founder and President
Rushing to Yoga Foundation
www.rushingtoyoga.org
rushingtoyoga@gmail.com
619-733-3278

Bresciani, M.J.



Session Overview

Definitions

Science Behind it

The Practice

Health Benefits

Questions





What are the Sources of Your Stress?

What do you feel you can do about those sources?



What is Integrative Inquiry?

Integrative inquiry is the process of integrating the knowledge gained from research, course learning, and book learning with the wisdom gained from intuition, sensing, and the mindful experiencing of emotions *with* the ability to embrace the unknown. With the ability to integrate multiple sources of information through generative questions and other training methodologies, participants of integrative inquiry are able to manage stress and creatively problem solve while experiencing ambiguity. This all leads to the promotion of peace and compassion through their conscious-choice making.



Integrated Inquiry

Bresciani, M.J.

Know/Evidence

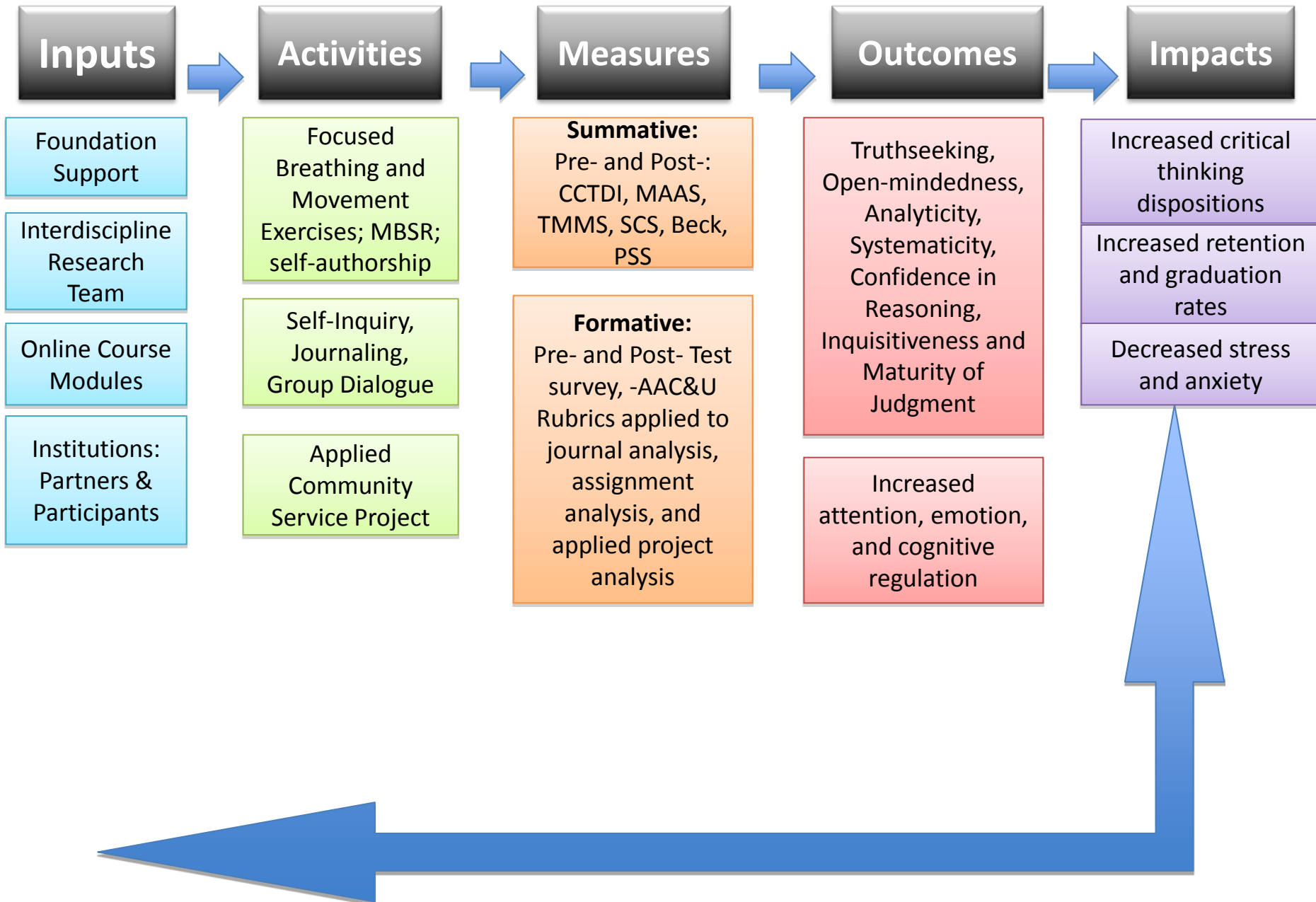
Student learning
and development

**Feel/
Sense**

Unknown/
Spontaneous Creativity/
Pure potential



Table A: Integrative Inquiry (INIQ) Logic Model



Discussion

- Why might integrative Inquiry have a place within higher education today?
- Why might integrative inquiry be a reasonable student affairs professional development curriculum?
- Why might integrative inquiry be a reasonable student success curriculum?



Focused Breathing Definition

- “To engage in mental exercise (as concentration on one’s breathing or repetition of a mantra) “ - Merriam Webster definition of meditation
- Yoga Chitta Vritti Nirodha – progressive quieting of the fluctuations of the mind

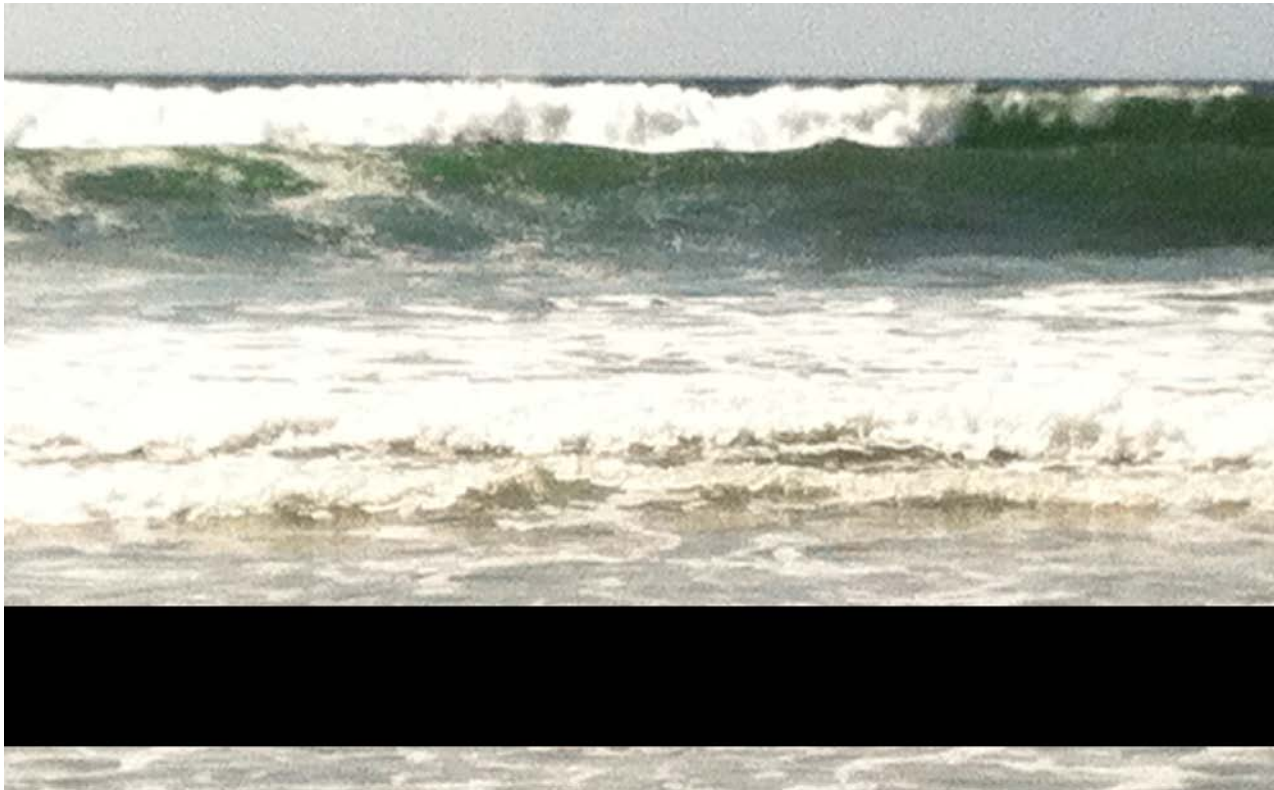


Focused Breathing Definition, Cont.

- It is not ...
 - a religious practice
 - meant to get you to stop thinking all together
 - a replacement for physician's care
- It promotes attention, emotion, and cognitive regulation



Focused BREATHING – positively alters your physiology



Correlates
with
an
immediate
reduction in
Stress
indicators



Let's Practice - Focused Breathing

<http://youtu.be/PF6YJZ04JHk>

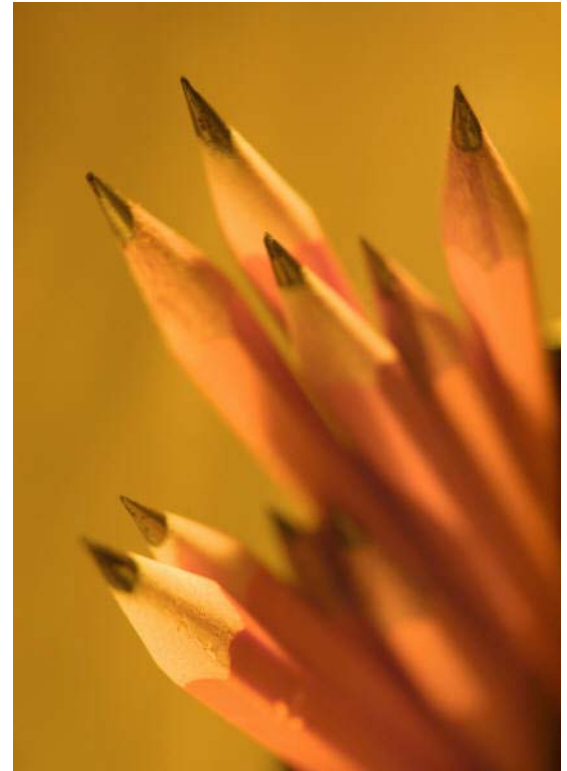


Bresciani, M.J.

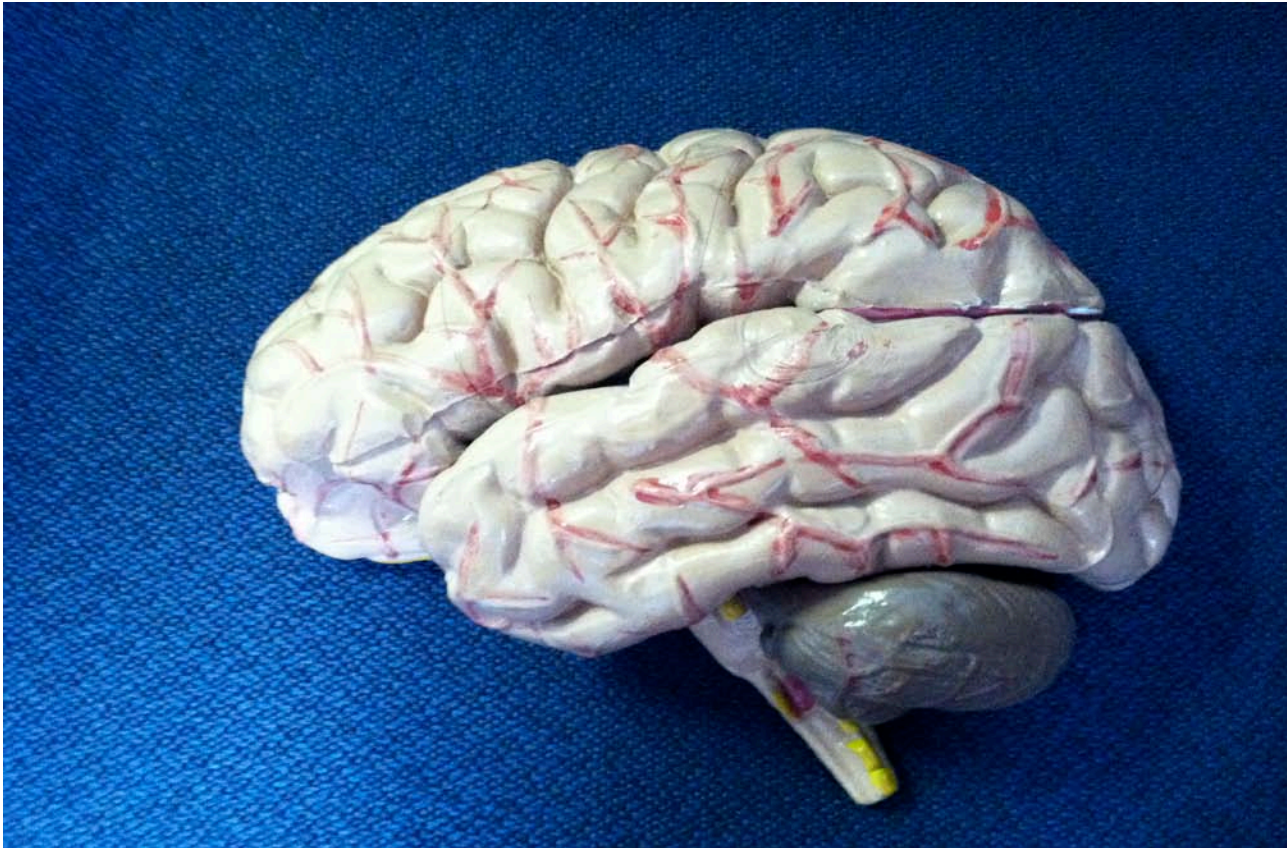


Let's Reflect

- Who am I?
- What do I want?
- What is my life's purpose?
 - How can I serve?
 - What brings me happiness?
- What is my perspective on all of that?
 - What do I think about it?
 - How do I feel about it?
 - What do I want to do about it?
 - How do I want to be?



What You Focus on Changes the Structure and Function of your Brain



(Alvarez & Emory, 2006; Chan, Shum, Touloupoulou, & Chen, 2008; Chiesa, Calati, Serretti, 2011; Goldin & Gross, 2010; Hölzel, Carmody, Vangel, Congleton, Yerramsetti, Gard, & Lazar, 2011; Kozasa, Sato, Lacerda, Barreiros, Radvany, Russel, Sanches, & Mello, 2012; Lutz, Slagter, Dunne, & Davidson, 2008; Todd, Cunningham, Anderson, & Thompson, 2012)

Neuroplasticity



- “thinking, learning, and acting actually change both the brain’s functional anatomy from top to bottom, and its physical anatomy.”

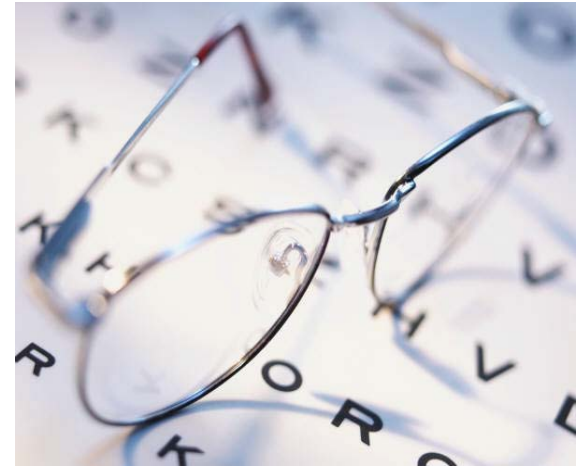
-

<http://www.learninginfo.org/neuroplasticity.htm>

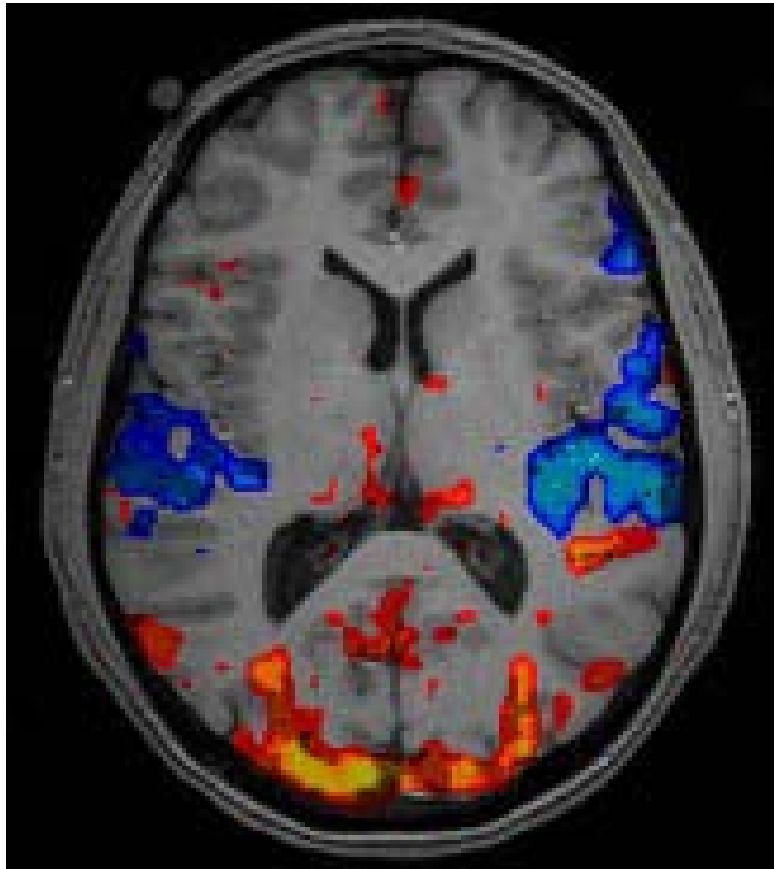


Upon what do you want to Focus?

- Stress
- Present Moment Truth
- Emotional Interpretation
- Creative possibilities
- ?



We can Intentionally Change the Structure and Function of your Brain



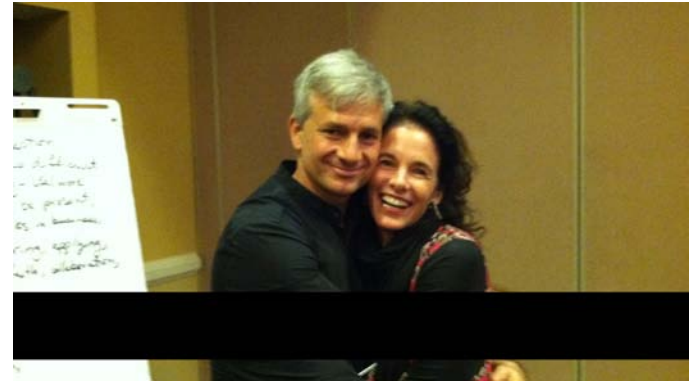
Via
Attention,
Emotion,
and
Cognitive
Regulation
Training

Brain Stuff

- Decreases the activation in the amygdala
 - Fight/flight
- Increases the activation in the pre-frontal cortex and anterior cingulate cortex
 - Attention/focus
 - Executive functions
 - Problem solving
 - Complex reasoning



The Neuro-Science



- Neuroplasticity -
<http://www.medterms.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=40362>
- The benefit of focused breathing -
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sf6Q0G1iHBI>

And

- <http://vimeo.com/11916833>



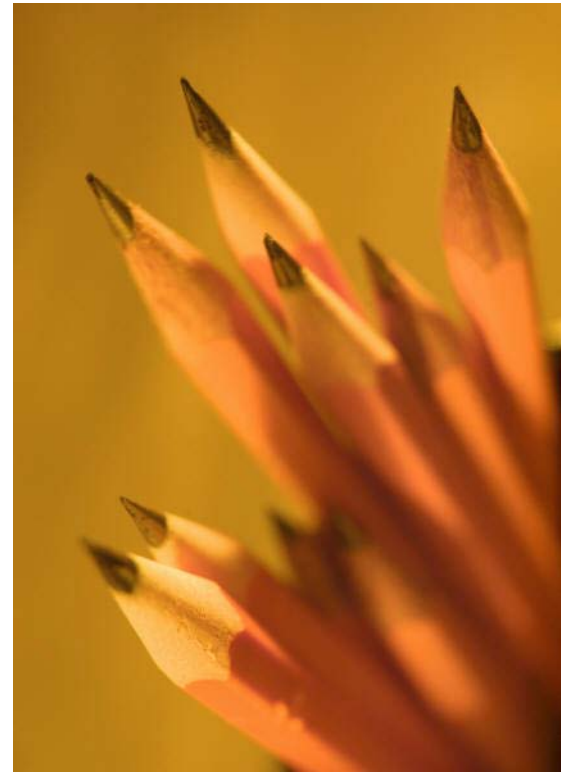
Let's Practice – Focused Movement and Breathe with Movement

<http://youtu.be/4zq4HOp7qr0>

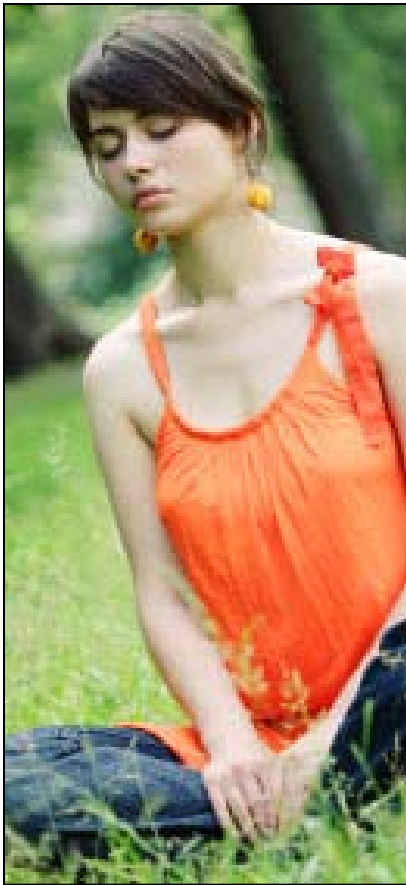


Let's Reflect

- Who am I?
- What do I want?
- What is my life's purpose?
 - How can I serve?
 - What brings me happiness?
- What is my perspective on all of that?
 - What do I think about it?
 - How do I feel about it?
 - What do I want to do about it?
 - How do I want to be?



Basics of the Practice



- Take one focused breath every day
- Practice focused breathing up to 30 minutes/twice a day
- Avoid judgment
- Practice inquiry
- Hold no expectations for practice only expect to practice
- Laugh often

Fight/Flight vs. Peace

Fight/Flight

- ↑ Heart rate
- ↑ Blood pressure
- ↑ Respiration
- ↑ Perspiration
- ↑ Stress hormones
- ↓ Anti-aging hormones
- ↑ Platelet stickiness

Restful Awareness

- ↓ Heart rate
- ↓ Blood pressure
- ↓ Respiration
- ↓ Perspiration
- ↓ Stress hormones
- ↑ Anti-aging hormones
- ↓ Platelet stickiness

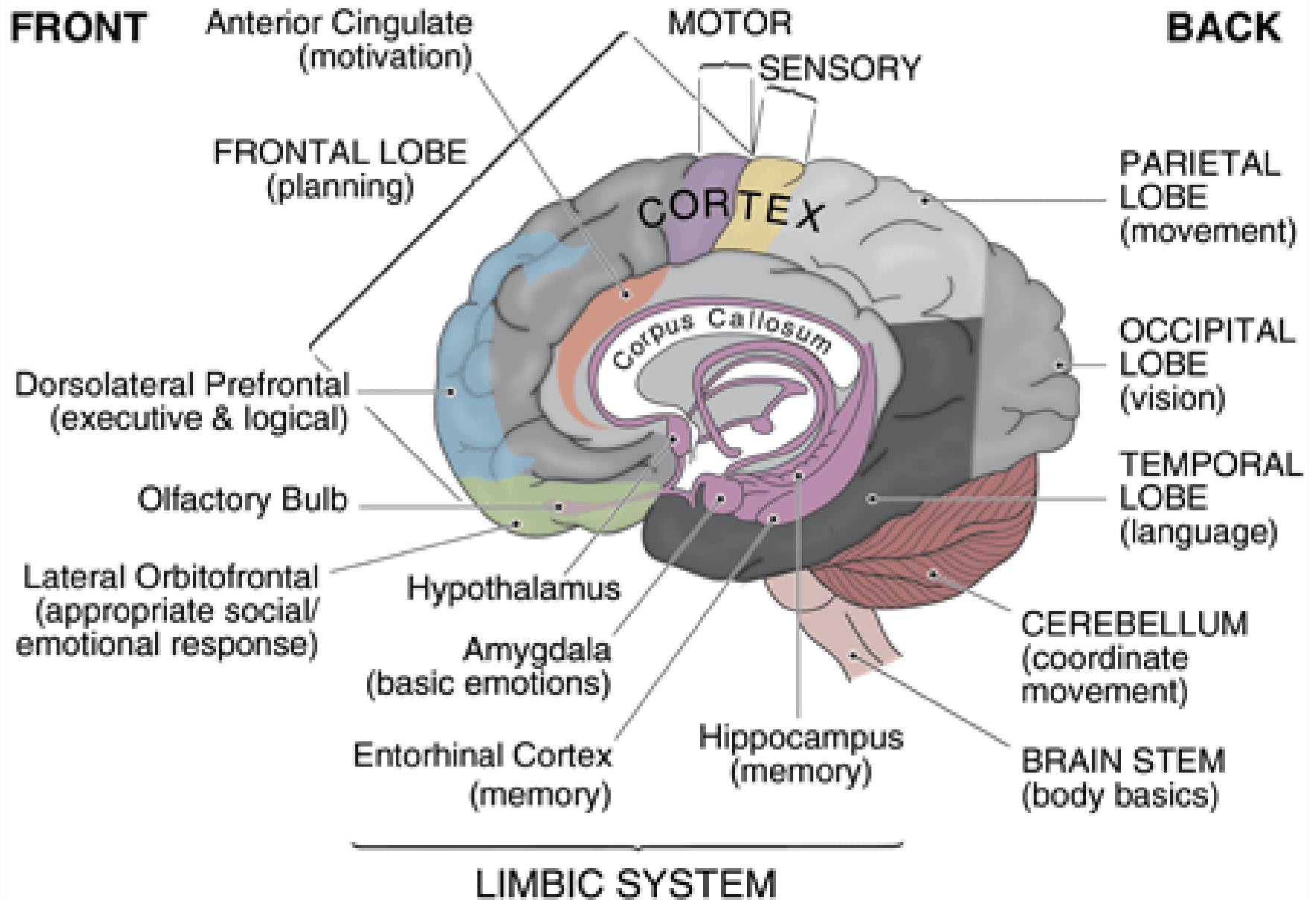


Let's Practice with Inquiry

- Choose from:
 - Body Scan
 - Police Car Scenario
 - Difficult Conversation Scenario
 - Conflicting values
 - Fact versus interpretation
 - Political and authentic



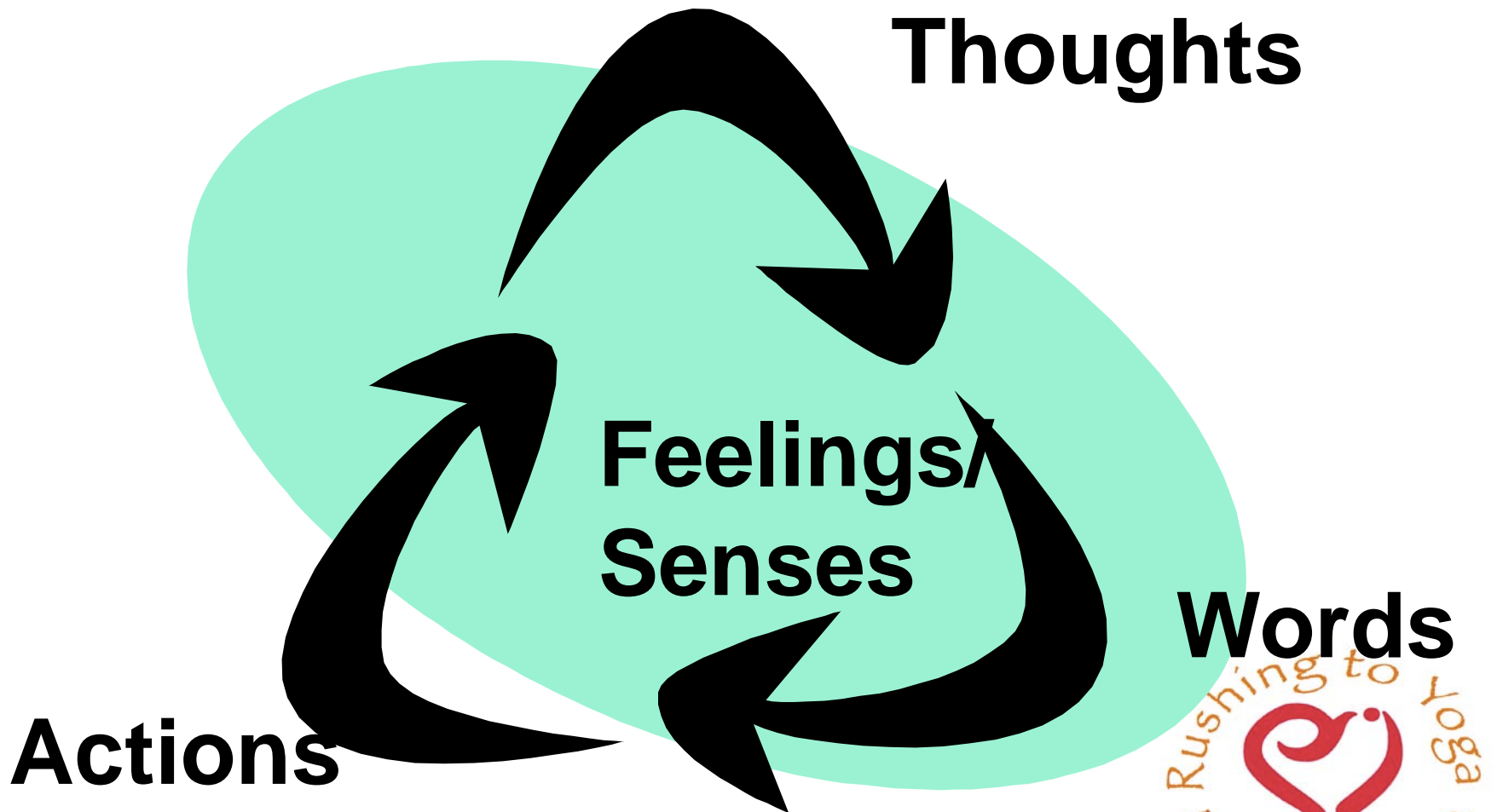
Revisiting Constructs



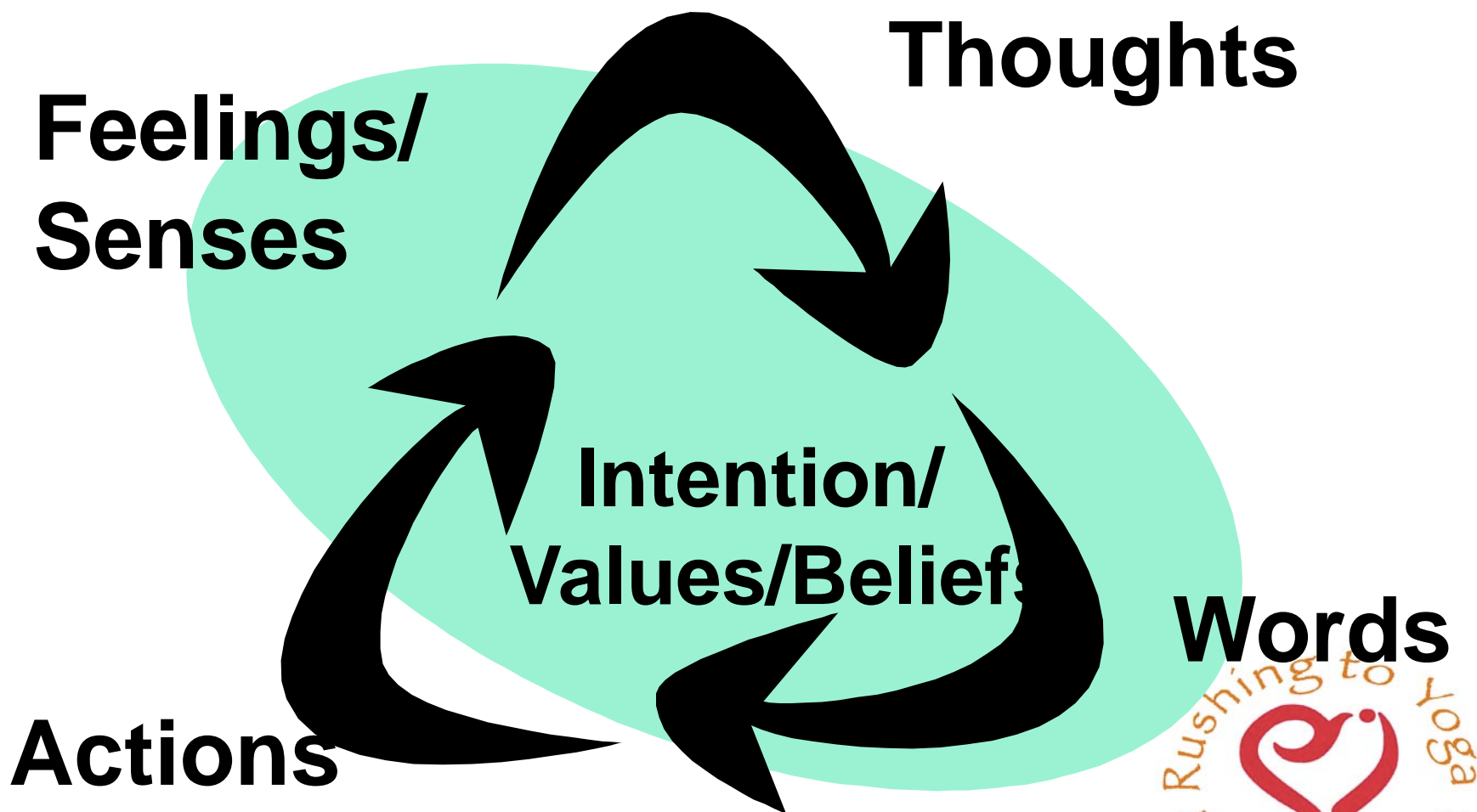
The First Step in Inquiry



Mindful Cycle



It May Begin with Intention or Values
or Beliefs



Your Life



Conscious Choice-Making

Bresciani, M.J.

Do I also choose the potential consequences of this choice?

Who am I?

Who am I
In relationship to this in this moment?

Which choice will be the most loving for me, while also serving the greater good?

Own
the
Choice

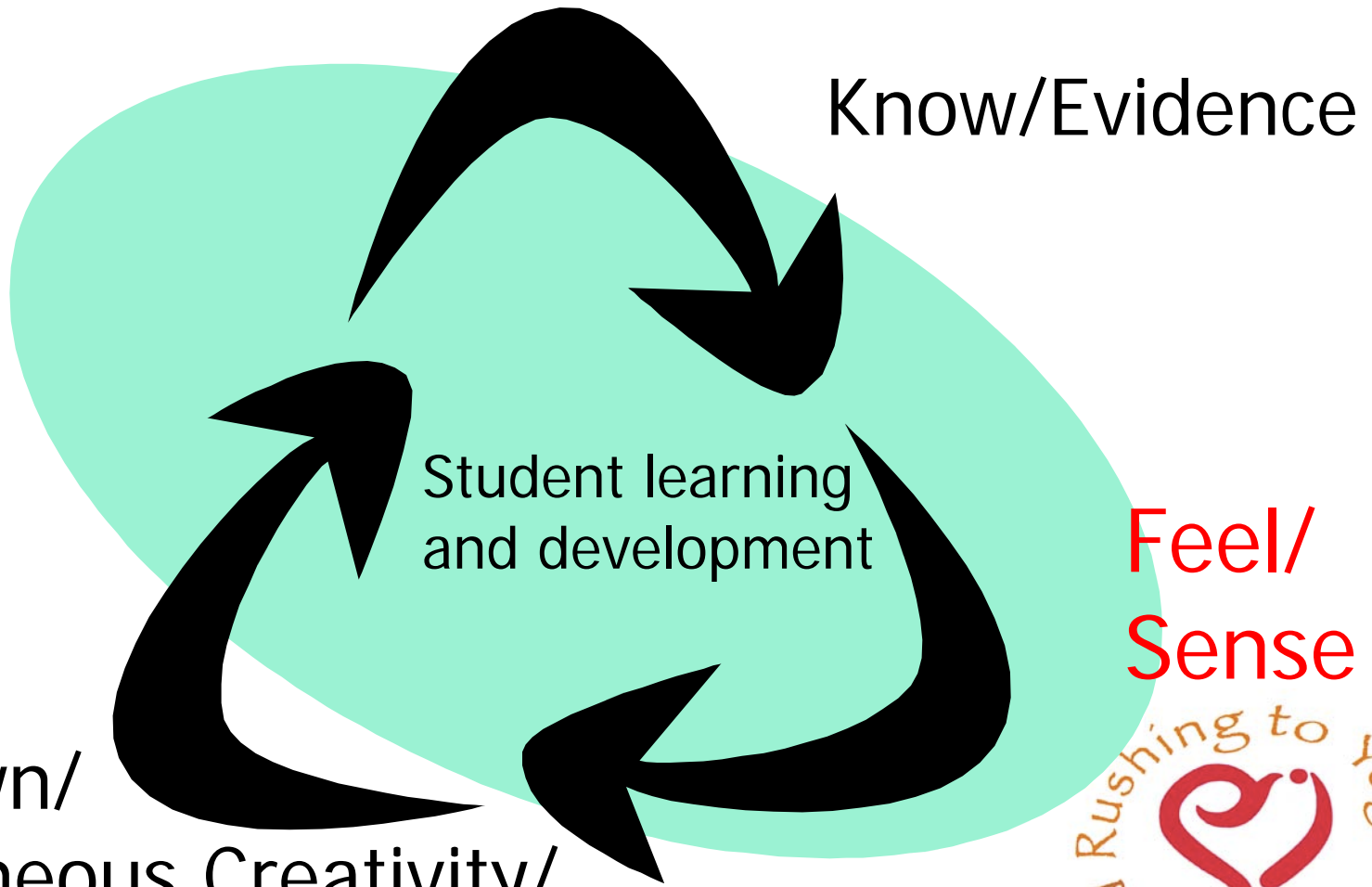
How do I feel about this in this moment?

What are the options (within my locus of control) that I have to feel better in this moment?

What is my role in how I feel?

Integrated Inquiry

Bresciani, M.J.



Unknown/
Spontaneous Creativity/
Pure potential

Resources

- Mindfulness - <http://www-psych.stanford.edu/~pgoldin/Mindfulness.html>
- UCSD - <http://health.ucsd.edu/specialties/mindfulness/Pages/default.aspx>
- SIYLI - <http://www.siyli.org/take-the-course/siy-curriculum/>
- Rushing to Yoga Foundation – www.rushingtoyoga.org
- Integrative Inquiry – www.integrativeinquiry.org



Final Reflection

- What is the one lesson you have learned today that you can apply to your day-to-day?
- How can you re-allocate time to invest in this practice?
- What will be the one signal you give yourself to take one mindful breath?
- How will you provide yourself with a non-judgment opportunity to not take yourself so seriously?



Movement

- Song:



- Israel Houghton – The Power of One (Change the World) from the Power of One
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgyMNxYVTOK>





Questions?

Contact Marilee Bresciani at
rushingtoyoga@gmail.com



Rushing to Yoga Foundation

*Strengthening Peace and Compassion in
Higher Education*

Contact Marilee Bresciani at
rushingtoyoga@gmail.com

www.rushingtoyoga.org

