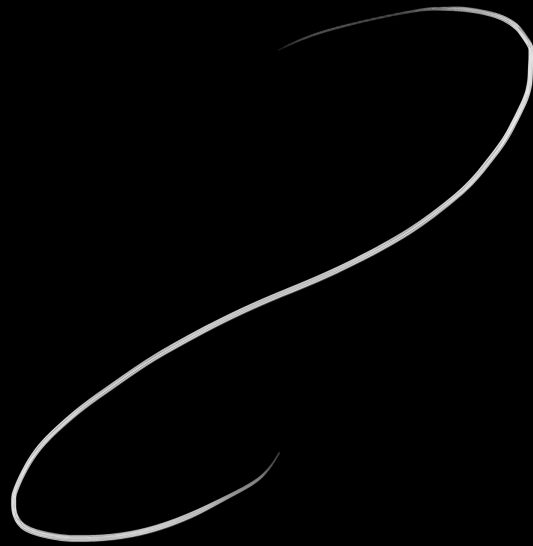


INSIGHT



A MINDFULNESS-BASED PROGRAM
FOR PERSONAL MASTERY
AND ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

DESIGNED BY
NICOLÒ F. BERNARDI
MANAGEMENT SAVVY



WELCOME

*With sincere excitement I welcome you to this
journey of self awareness and self mastery.
By applying these practices on a daily basis,
you are going to literally rewire your brain to become
more focused, more agile and more compassionate.*

I wish you the best for the learning ahead!



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4:	Tracking your progress	
5:	Setting your intention	
6:	Session 1 - Understanding attention	- 2.5 hrs, in person
9:	Session 2	- 55 min, in person
10:	Session 3 - Mastering your mind	- 2 hrs, in person
13:	Session 4	- 55 min, online
14:	Session 5	- 55 min, online
15:	Session 6: Debunking stress	- 2 hrs, in person
18:	Session 7	- 55 min, online
19:	Session 8	- 55 min, online
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24:	Session 11	- 55 min, online
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29:	Personal notes	
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32:	Useful resources	

This journal belongs to _____



Practice journal



- Practice 1 =
- Practice 2 =
- Practice 3 =
- Practice 4 =
- Practice 5 =

Session
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Session
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Session
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Session
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Session
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Session
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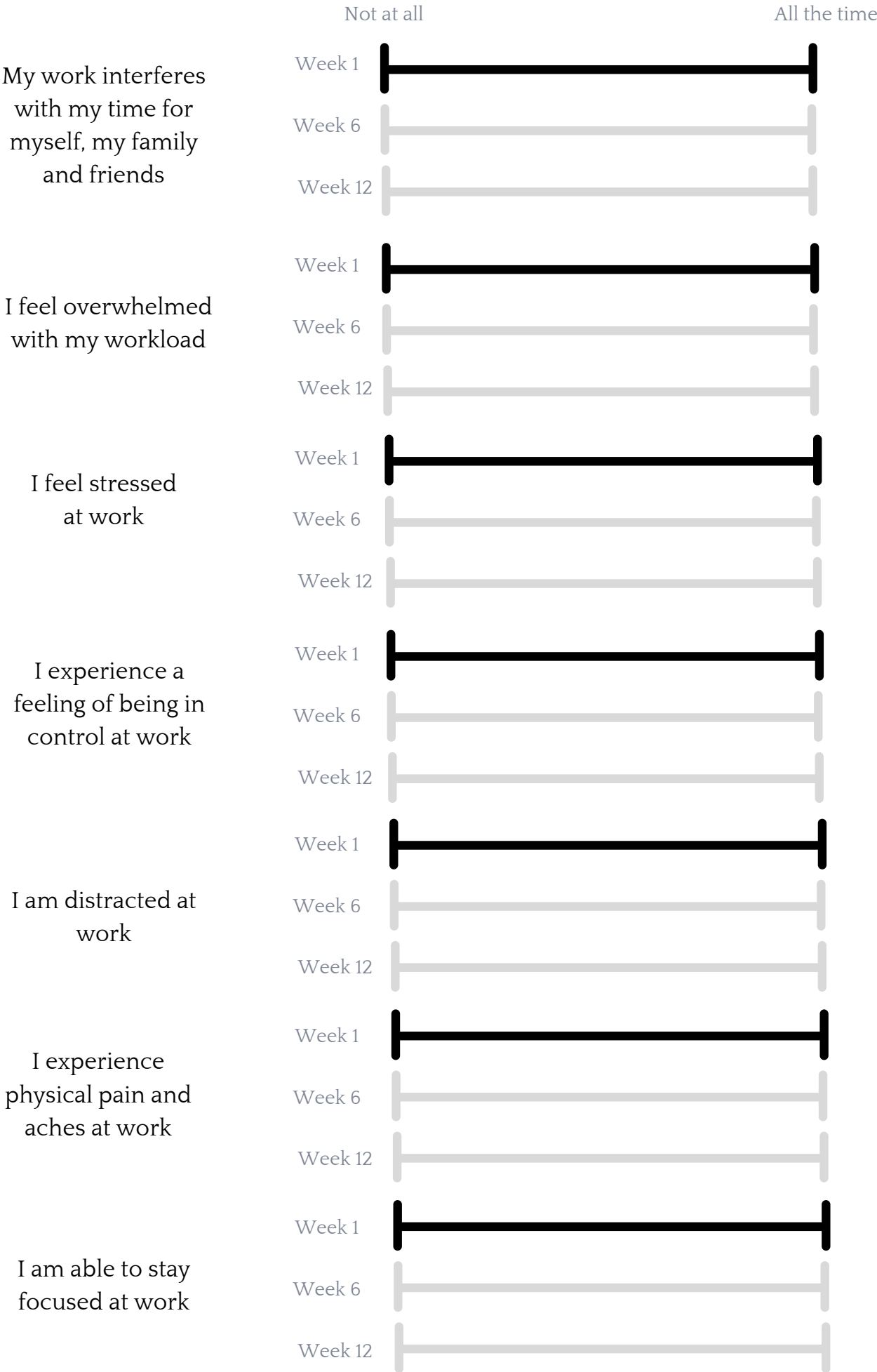
Session
12

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2

TRACKING YOUR PROGRESS





What would I like to accomplish in this program?
Why is it important to me?

How will I know that I have achieved this?
How will success look, feel and sound for me?



SESSION 1

2

THE **P.A.I.D.** REALITY

Under constant **P**ressure
Always on
Information overload
Distracted

THE **ATTENTION ECONOMY**

- Attention is a finite resource
- Where attention goes, energy flows
- More information = Less attention available
- In a P.A.I.D. reality, attention is the single greatest competitive advantage

UNDERSTANDING **TASK-SHIFTING**

Longer completion time for each task
Greater likelihood of mistakes
Energy drain
Shift time
Reward-based addiction

DEFINING **MINDFULNESS**

- Paying attention
- On purpose
- In the present moment
- Non-judgementally
- Anchored in the body

THE MINDFULNESS

GYM: EVERYDAY LIFE

Bringing mindfulness to moments of your life,
such as:

- The beginning of your day at home
- The beginning of your day at work
- Listening to a colleague
- Walking to a meeting
- Giving a presentation
- Going to bed at night
- Eating
- Playing with your kids
- ...



SESSION 1



Patterns I'm noticing:

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Key take aways:

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Actions moving forward:

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Notes





SESSION 2



Patterns I'm noticing:

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Key takeaways:

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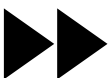
My intention:
progress and evolution

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Actions moving forward:

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SESSION 3

2

UNDERSTANDING

NEUROPLASTICITY

- Our brain structure is flexible and constantly changing
- How a habit is formed: Neurons that fire together, wire together
- Brain development continues for the entire lifespan
- Practice and repetition strengthen neural networks for the task, making it easier and more effortless
- When your mind changes, your brain changes, leaving a detectable trace

PRACTICE

S.T.O.P.

Stop
Take a breath
Observe
Proceed

THE

TWO RULES OF MENTAL EFFECTIVENESS

- 1) Focus on what you choose
 - Identify a task and set a time for completion
 - Notice internal or external pressures to shift your focus to something else
 - Evaluate significance of the distraction
 - If appropriate, consciously stay on the original task, ignore the distraction or schedule it for a future time
- 2) Choose your distractions mindfully
 - Evaluate significance of the distraction
 - If appropriate, consciously let go of the original task
 - Direct your full attention to the new task
 - Schedule returning to the original task

THE MINDFULNESS

GYM: BREATH AWARENESS

- 1) Connecting with your body, establishing posture
 - 2) Use breathing as the anchor for attention
 - 3) Use counting for Focus (optional)
 - 4) Distractions are your allies: Notice, Release, Return
- +
Relaxation, Focus, Clarity



SESSION 3



Patterns I'm noticing:

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Key takeaways:

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My intention:
progress and evolution

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Actions moving forward:

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Notes





SESSION 4



Patterns I'm noticing:

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Key takeaways:

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My intention:
progress and evolution

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Actions moving forward:

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SESSION 5

2

Patterns I'm noticing:

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Key takeaways:

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My intention:
progress and evolution

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Actions moving forward:

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SESSION 6



DEMISTIFYING:

STRESS

- Parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous system
- The fight-flight response
- The amygdala hijack
- The brain negative bias

OVERCOMING

ACTION ADDICTION

Mindfulness expands the bandwidth of conscious awareness to notice unconscious goals and prevent action addiction hijack

Defusing the bomb tactic:

- 1) Becoming aware of a competing goal being activated
- 2) Unplugging the detonator: noticing body sensations, applying equanimity to overcome discomfort
- 3) Physical defusing: Breathing
- 4) Cognitive defusing: Reconnect with purpose + 80/20 principle
- 5) Applying the 2 rules of mental effectiveness

UNDERSTANDING

THE FAST AND SLOW BRAIN

- Fast brain = Brainstem + Subcortical structure ("Reptilian brain"): ancient, simplistic, concrete, fast, huge processing capacity, largely unconscious, motivationally intense
- Slow brain = Cortex: evolutionary recent, used for complex, rational, abstract thinking, conceptualizing, slow, limited processing capacity, motivationally diffuse

LEVERAGING

BREATHING

- The master switch: fast/slow brain + sympathetic/parasympathetic
- Anchor for mindfulness

THE MINDFULNESS

GYM: BODY SCAN

- Systematically examining body sensations
- High-resolution camera on inner states (mental + physical)
- Pleasant, unpleasant and neutral
- Balancing Awareness & Equanimity



SESSION 6

2

Patterns I'm noticing:

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Key takeaways:

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My intention:
progress and evolution

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Actions moving forward:

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Notes





SESSION 7



Patterns I'm noticing:

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Key takeaways:

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My intention:
progress and evolution

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Actions moving forward:

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SESSION 8



Patterns I'm noticing:

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Key takeaways:

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My intention:
progress and evolution

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Actions moving forward:

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SESSION 9

2

THE

MATRIX OF MENTAL EFFECTIVENESS

UNDERSTANDING

DOPAMINE & SEROTONIN BALANCE

- Dopamine: rewarding, motivating, promotes seeking behaviors
- Serotonin: mood stabilizer, relaxation, clarity, inhibit impulsive behaviors.
- Dopamine-Serotonin balance = enjoying pleasures without becoming addicted + meet challenges without avoiding or reactivity

APPLYING

MINDFUL PLANNING

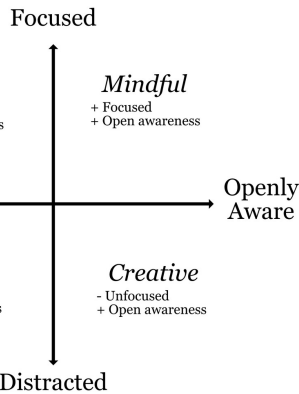
Speeding up by slowing down:

- 1) 2-min mindfulness practice: focus + intuition + panoramic view
- 2) Identify 80/20 activities
- 3) allocate time for: high-priorities, preparation, urgent & emergent matters, recharging, lunch, transitions (travel, follow up), emails
- 4) Get to work
- 5) Track and review the plan as you go through the day

DESIGNING

MINDFUL MEETINGS

- 1) Mental preparation: anchoring in present moment (breath awareness or other), alone or together
- 2) Meeting: I DO ART, tangents management, timeline + Interpersonal mindfulness + Explicit agreements on distraction management
- 3) Ending: finish 2 min early to allow transition + assign action items and follow ups + set next meeting + allow for gratitude & appreciation



THE MINDFULNESS

GYM: OPEN AWARENESS

- Breath awareness warm-up (relaxation + focus + clarity)
- Notice when something enters your focus
- Let it be the focus, without acting upon it
- Remain open for anything that enters your field of awareness
- Anchor on the experience as a whole



SESSION 9



Patterns I'm noticing:

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Key takeaways:

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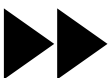
My intention:
progress and evolution

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Actions moving forward:

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Notes



SESSION 10



Patterns I'm noticing:

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Key takeaways:

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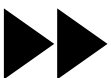
My intention:
progress and evolution

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Actions moving forward:

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SESSION 11

2

Patterns I'm noticing:

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Key takeaways:

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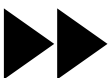
My intention:
progress and evolution

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Actions moving forward:

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SESSION 12



SURVIVAL STRATEGY ONE:

SEEK PLEASURE + AVOID DISCOMFORT

Problems with seeking pleasure:

- Pleasures are sometimes not reachable
- Brain motivational circuits exaggerates anticipated pleasures
- Pleasures often come at a cost
- Pleasures don't last
- The seeking itself tends to be painful

Problems with avoiding discomfort:

- Brain negative bias creates diffuse anxiety
- Brain negative bias exaggerates anticipation of discomfort
- Brain negative bias prioritize negative memories and perceptions over positive ones
- Avoiding discomfort prevents from tapping into life super-power: adaptation

SURVIVAL STRATEGY TWO:

STRIVE TO KEEP THINGS STABLE

Problem: Everything changes all the times

SURVIVAL STRATEGY THREE:

ENFORCE SEPARATION

Problem: Everything is interconnected

SURVIVAL STRATEGY FOUR:

LIVE IN THE SIMULATOR

Problems:

- High performance & real happiness only exist in the present moment
- Exaggeration of rewards & threats
- Constant replay of upsetting past memories
- Simulations are built on untested assumptions & beliefs

THE MINDFULNESS

GYM: CARVING YOUR PATH TO EVOLUTION

Before you start, remember to fasten your seatbelt: Innocence + Curiosity + Patience + Persistence.

Many possible practice fields: physical, emotional, cognitive, interpersonal; on your own, with others; formal practice, informal practice.

- 1) Explore giving up pleasant experiences + explore having unpleasant experiences;
- 2) Explore instability and experiences that seem out of balance;
- 3) Explore interdependence where you would usually enforce boundaries
- 4) Explore mindfulness where you would usually engage in mental simulation



SESSION 12

2

Patterns I'm noticing:

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Key takeaways:

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My intention:
progress and evolution

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Actions moving forward:

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Notes





2

Looking back at yourself 12 sessions ago:
What has changed? How did you accomplish that?



Personal notes





About Nicolò F. Bernardi



Nicolò has a PhD in Cognitive Neuroscience from the University of Milano-Bicocca (Italy), and several years of work as a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Psychology of both McGill University and Université de Montréal. His neuroscience research has focused on the physiological mechanisms of learning and adaptation, particularly with reference to the cardiorespiratory and motor systems.

He is a certified Yoga teacher (Sivananda Yoga Vedanta), and has deepened his training in mindfulness-based stress reduction at Jon Kabat-Zinn's Center for Mindfulness, part of the University of Massachusetts Medical School. He regularly attends multi-days silent meditation retreats in the Vipassana and Zen traditions.

Keenly aware of the systemic nature of the challenges faced by modern organizations, he has taken on a Masters degree in Organizational Development and Change Management at Concordia University, has trained in the u.lab method at the MIT-based Presencing Institute and refined his design and facilitation skills with the Danish KaosPilot approach.

A certified music therapist, lover of creative and performing arts, he delights in the company of others sharing his violin playing and all sorts of improv theatre acts.

Selected Publications

- Bernardi NF, Bordino M, Bianchi L, Bernardi L (2017). Acute fall and long-term rise in oxygen saturation in response to meditation. *Psychophysiology* 54:1951-1966.
- Bernardi L, Bernardi NF, Passalacqua G (2016). Yoga therapy for respiratory disorders. In Khalsa, Cohen, McCall, Telles (Eds), *The principles and practice of Yoga in health care*. Pencaitland, UK: Handspring Publishing Ltd.
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- Codrons E*, Bernardi NF*, Vandoni M, Bernardi L (2014). Spontaneous group synchronization of movements and respiratory rhythms. *PLoS One* 9: e107538 (*equal contribution).
- Bernardi NF, De Buglio M, Trimarchi D, Chielli A, Bricolo E (2013). Mental practice promotes motor anticipation: Evidence from skilled music performance. *Frontiers of Human Neuroscience* 7:451.

You can reach out to Nicolò for any question via email or phone:

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Autobiography in Five Short Chapters

I.

*I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk
I fall in.
I am lost ... I am helpless.
It isn't my fault.
It takes me forever to find a way out.*

II.

*I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I am in the same place
but, it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.*

III.

*I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in ... it's a habit.
my eyes are open
I know where I am.
It is my fault.
I get out immediately.*

IV.

*I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.*

V.

I walk down another street.

PORTIA NELSON



Suggested readings



Books

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- Hougaard, R., Carter, J., & Coutts, G. (2016). *One second ahead: enhance your performance at work with mindfulness*. Springer.
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- Meister, J. (2015). Future of work: Mindfulness as a leadership practice. Forbes Online, April.
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- Steelman, L. (2017). The mindful habit that could transform your workday. Time magazine, January.

Scientific papers

- Antonova, E., Chadwick, P., & Kumari, V. (2015). More meditation, less habituation? The effect of mindfulness practice on the acoustic startle reflex. PLoS One, 10(5), e0123512.
- Goldin, P. R., & Gross, J. J. (2010). Effects of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) on emotion regulation in social anxiety disorder. Emotion, 10(1), 83.
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