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### **Progressive Mindfulness Protocol Gates**

There is so much violence and conflict in the world, it appears that we cannot convey our ideas and listen to each other mindfully. We tend to raise our voices, point our fingers, degrade and use pejorative words towards others. We blame others for not listening or being stupid for not understanding. If yelling at each other does not work, we then use our fists, and our weapons. We have lost the art of loving speech and deep listening. Our families, friends, communities, enemies and our world are suffering. The root of which, is the inability to understand how to be globally compassionate.

In order to have global peace, we need to stop, step back and pull up the roots of hatred. We need to take responsibility for our views, check our perceptions for authenticity and be willing to change; to diminish the suffering within ourselves and others. We can do this by gaining a better appreciation of how our minds are affected by our interactions and environment.

One way we can transform a stick used for violence, to a walking stick of understanding, is by learning how to communicate with others based on their perception, and not based on what we feel they should know already. We have the capacity to change. We have watched how a child learns to babble, eat, crawl, walk, talk and play. We have broken down our instructions into small steps in order for our inquisitive child or student to learn. We have stopped, listened and communicated with compassion, and we can do it again with those who are at different levels of understanding.

The ***Progressive Mindfulness Protocol (PMP)*** is one approach to help us learn how to change hatred and intolerance in our hearts, homes, schools, and communities, to compassion and acceptance. It is a systematic positive developmental model on how we mature from infancy to adulthood. It teaches us how to develop a healthier mind, healthier relationships, healthier communities and a healthier world.

The ***PMP*** provides us with the tools to successfully move through six developmental mindfulness gates. As we enter a new gate, we shed the old habits, become aware of our ancestral and parental stories, and reshape those stories and patterns with the developmental base of our cognitive, emotional and mindfulness of the gate in which we stand. When the positive absorbs the negative energy within the chosen gate, success is achieved and the new path is integrated with the old gates.

It is our choice of how we enter the gate, what we want to learn, and how we share our knowledge with others. We have two responsibilities within each gate. The first is to be open to

receive new information, to grow and share with others in and outside our gate. Secondly, to be aware and open to the possibility that the person with whom we are speaking is at a higher or

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lower gate, and for us to stop and listen without our chattering mind. There are many twists and turns to each gate, but there is only one panoramic view at the top.

Neurodevelopmental clinicians and neuropsychobiological researchers are now moving from cognitive-behavioral to neuropsychological affective-based models. Researchers now use a neuropsychobiological framework, from in utero through adulthood, to better understand our brain.

In 1988, Dr. Meyer designed and validated an **Attachment and Loss Scale (A & L)**, which measured the early developmental levels from birth to adolescents. Using cognitive, object relations, the ego, and existential paradigms, she developed the Scale to assess adolescents' abandonment reactions to parental loss before and after age five. In addition, the A & L was validated with the DSM-III Adolescent Borderline Personality Disorder. From 1988 to 2008, the A & L provided a foundation for understanding developmental psychopathology, along with a systematic approach to treatment strategies.

Drs. Meyer and Di Ciacco applied the **A & L Scale** to heal children, adolescents and adults' early childhood wounds. Using the recent developmental neuropsychobiological research, they have, over the past eight years, analyzed and correlated each item of the **A & L**. The developmental levels were redefined as *Gates* to reflect that there is a choice to enter a new phase in one's life. This clinical research is an ongoing effort to expand regulation theory, mindfulness, and an overarching theoretical attachment model.

Shifting from a compare-contrast, attachment and loss archetype, to a new defined, progressive model, provides clinicians and researchers with measurable levels of functioning based on neuropsychological development, rather than pathology. The **PMP** creates systematic, accountable treatment strategies which reflect the *developing mindful mind*.

The *developing mindful mind* is defined in the **PMP** as three progressive domains: **Perception, Attunement, and Mindfulness**. **Perception** is the ability to label, differentiate, reflect, analyze, and synthesize information into deeper internal and external interrelated energies. **Attunement** is the ability to adjust, respond and assimilate familial and new relationships. **Mindfulness** is the awareness of the present moment. Within each domain, there are six progressive *gates* ranging from not thinking to nonthinking (**Perception**), intra attachment to nonattachment (**Attunement**), and "**Bubble Dweller**" mind to a nondual mind (**Mindfulness**).

## Ultimate Goal

Our ultimate goal is to arrive at **Gate Six**, where we have clarity of our ancient purpose. Attachments are released. Ill-being is melted into Well-being. The elements and vibrations of all the previous Gates are present within **Gate Six**. We are one with the universal pulse, the universal intelligence -- free from mindless chatter and clutter. Nothing externally or internally startles us. Even a bird can poop on our heads without judgment.

## Gate One

In **Gate One**, we are in a womb water world, bouncing around, kicking the walls, doing somersaults and sucking our hands and feet, preparing to interact with new experiences upon leaving the womb. We are creating our neuro rhythms to help us manage our external stresses in

the earth/air world. Our senses of sound, taste, smell, sight, touch, temperature and movement are being developed during this critical time. These sensory modalities are referred to as *Hidden*

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*Regulators* (M. Hofer). They are the neurological footprints used to negotiate our complex world. As we develop in the womb, we hear our mother's lullabies. Our experience in the womb shapes our brain and lays the groundwork for our personality, perceptions, relatedness and mindfulness.

At the moment of birth, our first breath, we experience our first separation (from the water world to the air/earth world). Upon hearing our mother's voice, we turn our heads to reconnect. During our first year, we search for attunement with our mother's familiar *hidden regulators* – her voice, song, touch, heartbeat, smell, taste, and movements. We long to reattach to her for fear of being annihilated and/or abandoned. We experience an unconditional, absolute symbiosis with our mother. When we become anxious, fearful and overwhelmed, we climb back into our neuropsychological *Bubble* of safety and zip it up. The *Bubble* becomes the filter from which we view our world. We perceive that all of our interactions with our mother are powerful and imposed. Unlike the earlier water world, we now unzip our *Bubble* to satisfy our needs.

As *Bubble Dwellers*, we become dissatisfied and want to explore, connect and grow. Our mother allows us to do so by gently encouraging us to expand our world. We spend many hours cuddled up on her lap and breasts, learning her songs and stories. Still functioning on a nonverbal level, we slowly slide off our mother's lap, crawling or walking onto the path of *Gate Two*.

## **Gate Two**

Leaving *Gate One* is very frightening for us. In *Gate Two* we now notice many choices and many *Gates* from which to choose. Although we have left our mother's lap, we still assume that what we perceive or feel is what our mother is sensing and feeling. We need our parents and caregivers to protect us from so many choices and rely on them to narrow the choices to just two.

In our expansive world, we look at objects as if they have our feelings. We assume that the oatmeal has the same nutrient value as candy and rocks. As we explore our song, our mother is imitating our notes, and we in turn, are echoing our mother's song.

New information is absorbed when there is familiarity and intensity based on the vibrational energy of our parents and ancestors. The vibrational force can be sustained and internalized for up to two minutes. When the attention span diminishes and the vibration becomes weak, we search, through trial and error, for the familiar learned habits. Our parents help us increase our attention span by putting a label to our objects, our movements and our gestures. We are learning the value of "yes" and "no". Our caregivers redirect our harmful actions to favorable behaviors. At *Gate Two*, we don't wait for approval or rejections, because our gestures are based on imitations.

## **Gate Three**

Stepping through *Gate Three*, we begin to differentiate between what we, and those around us, perceive. Our world is expanding to include siblings, extended family and teachers. Often, our early learned behavior is judged differently by our extended family and teachers, creating confusion and expansion. This tension creates new learning and new relationships.

We hear prompting and simple rhymes from our elders. We internalize their speech, songs and actions. We practice words and phrases and try to convey our thoughts using language and gestures. We often tell our siblings and playmates that they are wrong based on what we saw and

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heard, and not necessarily what was said. We dance and sing for our parents, grandparents and teachers.

We add information to our foundation, linking the familiar to the novel, and we hold the blended data up to five minutes in our knowledge bank. Based on our different emotions at the moment, we generalize our experiences. Our judgments, discriminations and generalizations are often rooted in partial reality.

### **Gate Four**

Stepping through *Gate Four*, we move from deductive to inductive reasoning. We break down our earlier solid, established thoughts, into more complex, expansive subgroups. We take apart old concepts, accept new ideas from our peers and transform them into acceptable meaningful wholes. We write mottos and sing songs that support our memberships. Our connections are gradations of hues, textures, sounds, sizes, and smells. We are tolerant of disconnected information up to ten minutes. Then, we are driven to tie them into meaningful bundles.

We have a powerful yearning to belong to peer, social and spiritual groups. Moving from our family values, we find ourselves grasping for the fixed, orderly, sequential laws of peers and clubs, which are often in conflict with our familial and spiritual elders' teachings. We feel ourselves in a polarity with affiliations. Their laws are rigid, inflexible and unquestionable. The leaders of the affiliations are intolerant of any deviant behavior. This tension redefines our judgments and beliefs. From the fear of abandonment, we acquiesce.

### **Gate Five**

Tolerating differences within affiliations and belonging to various groups of like-mindedness, we step through *Gate Five*. Taking into consideration past and present information and experiences, we hypothesize, analyze and synthesize. Due to our expanded mind, we reshape our concrete ideas into abstract reasoning. Taking multiple resources and comprehending similarities and differences within them, we create new ideas, inventions and actions. We allow the law of chaos and error. We are comfortable with unique metaphors and accept ambiguity without judgment.

We listen to the customs and mores of other cultures and find the common seeds of acceptance. We bring to the table our independent ideas, and with deeper concentration, we collaborate with others to build new concepts. Becoming part of global awareness, we reshape national laws for the betterment of mankind. We join hands and circle the globe with a new song of world peace. Swaging back and forth, we experience the vibration of the universe.

### **Final Destination**

Dissolving our ego and being fully aware of our ancient purpose, we walk through the universal, *Gate Six*. Without words or form, we feel the vibrational energy of our breath in the many. We sing our song of joy, peace and liberation.

## **Progressive Mindfulness Protocol Glossary**

**Absolute** – The first Gate in the Attunement Dimension and is the emotional relationship to oneself.

**Abstract** – The fifth Gate in the Perception Dimension, approx. from age twelve to adulthood.

**Affiliated Minds™** – The Fourth Gate in the Mindfulness Dimension and is a person who is connecting with groups based on concepts, rituals and mores.

**Attachment and Loss Scale™** – Model designed by Dr. Meyer to measure the developmental stages of Cognition, Attachment and Moral Development from age one to adulthood.

**Attunement** – The resonance of energy and information between people.

**Bubble** – space which provides primitive and initial physiological security and psychological safety.

**Bubble Dweller™** – The first Gate in the Mindfulness Dimension and is a person who requires a safe haven from external world.

**Concrete** – Third Gate in the Perception Dimension, approx. from age two to age six.

**Consciousness** – developmental levels which one is alert and responsive to oneself and to one's environment.

**Core** – First Gate in the Perception Dimension, approximately in utero to age one.

**Developing Mind** - "The mind emerges from the activity of the brain, whose structure and function are directly shaped by interpersonal experiences." (Seigel, 1999. The Developing Mind: How relationships and the brain interact to shape who we are).

**Dyadic™** – The Second Gate in the Attunement Dimension and is the emotional relationship between oneself and his/her primary significant other.

**Gates** - The archway approached with tools learned from previous gates to help to walk on a path on which we do not know and yet have the courage and curiosity to walk continuously on the path. It is the willingness to change and reshape our thoughts, emotions and consciousness. Along the way, we reassess our old habits, repair our perceptions and acquire new visions that are helpful for growth on the well-worn path.

**Generalization** – Fourth Gate in the Perception Dimension, approx, from age six to age twelve.

**Global Minds™** – The Fifth Gate in the Mindfulness Dimension and is a person who is connecting based on universal mores throughout the world.

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**Group** – The Fourth Gate in the Attunement Dimension and is the emotional relationship to two or more with common affiliations.

**Hidden Regulators** – Preferences for highly specific sensory features in a significant other. It includes all the various sensory modalities: auditory, olfactory, temperature, visual, taste and movement (M. Hofer, 1984, 1996, 2005).

**Imitation** – Second Gate in the Perception Dimension, approximately from age one to age two.

**Mindfulness** –Intentional consciousness of being alert moment by moment.

**Neuropsychological** - The branch of psychology that deals with the relationship between the nervous system, especially the brain, and cerebral or mental functions such as language, memory and perception.

**Nonattachment** – The ability to be aware of all conditions within one's self and environment without grasping, judging and/or resisting.

**Nondual Minds™** – The sixth Gate in the Mindfulness Dimension and is a person who is able to see the common seeds and feel the universal vibrations in all things.

**Parallel Minds™** – The second Gate in the Mindfulness Dimension and is a person who responds through side-by-side relatedness.

**Perception** – is the recognition and interpretation of sensory stimuli and the person's ability to organize his experiences.

**Practicing Minds™** – The third Gate in the Mindfulness Dimension and is a person who is rehearsing concepts, rituals and mores.

**Progressive Mindfulness Protocol (PMP)™** – Model founded on developmental, neurological, and psychological research. This Model is based on the notion that each developmental stage contributes to the growth of the next developmental stage. All growth or development is continuous, and electrified by spontaneous connection of necessary and sufficient conditions for change.

**Triadic™** – The third Gate in the Attunement Dimension and is the emotional relationship between oneself and his/her secondary caregivers.

**Ultimate** – The sixth Gate in the Attunement Dimension and is interconnectedness without grasping.

**World** – The fifth Gate in the Attunement Dimension and is the emotional relationship to all beings based on common causes.

**Quantum** – The sixth Gate in the Perception Dimension.

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