

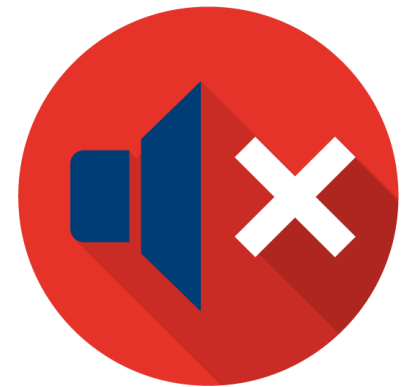
# survive & thrive

moving forward from interpersonal trauma

Week 02

What are the effects of abuse  
and trauma?

# Video-call guidance



Please make sure your **audio is muted** unless speaking



Please **leave your camera on** so we can see each other



Please **ask questions** and use the **chat function** as needed

# Review of last week

- Any questions...?
- How did you get on with the breathing exercise?

## **Remember:**

- Feel free to ask or to catch the course leaders at the break or at the end, if there is anything else you want to ask.
- Do what ever makes you feel comfortable- get a hot drink or take a couple of minutes out.



# Brief breathing exercise



# What we will cover today

- What are the common effects of abuse and trauma?
  - The impact on us physically
  - The impact on us emotionally
- The emotional rollercoaster
- The vicious cycle
- Surviving the surviving
- Safe coping
- Quote to consider

# What is the effect of experiencing abuse and trauma?

**Bodies**



**Minds**



# Effects of abuse and trauma on the body

- May be direct harm
- Effect of stress
- Effect of trying to cope
- Effect of not caring for ourselves
- Effect of not being able to use health services
- Effect of our mental health being less good





# Effects of abuse and trauma on the body

## Direct harm:

- Aches, pains and migraines
- Just not feeling well
- Hangovers
- Scars from self injury
- Stomach problems such as IBS

## Effect of not taking enough care of ourselves:

- Weight issues
- Higher rates of diseases
- Not going to health checks or sticking with treatment

# What can you do?

- One thing is to keep coming to the course
- This will help you build skills in finding effective, safe ways of coping which will start to improve your wellbeing



# What can you do?

- Look at your health and wellbeing.
- Think about possible links between your past experiences and your health
- Do you need to explain this to people who are treating you to help them help you?





# Emotional / psychological effects of abuse and trauma

- Psychological impact
- Emotional impact
- Distress
- Mental health effects
- Psychological trauma



# Key ideas

- Physical
- Physical and emotional impacts are common and understandable responses to interpersonal abuse and trauma.
- These can last many years or even decades.
- This course hopes to help you on your road to recovery





# You are an individual

**Everyone is unique** but we know some reactions are commonly found in survivors of a whole range of traumatic or abusive situations.



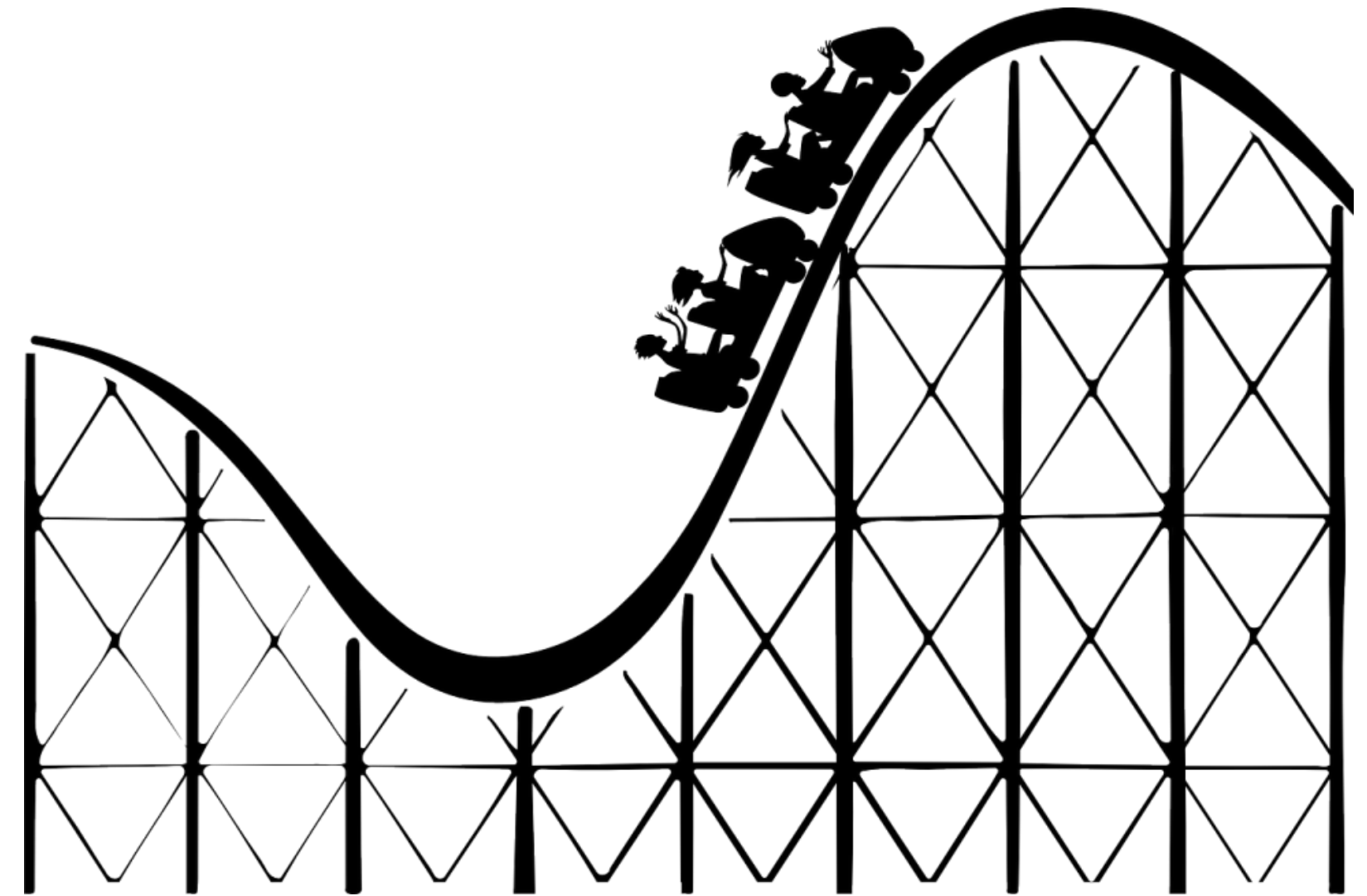
# Common difficulties exercise

- Listen to the list of common difficulties that the course leader is about to describe.
- If you feel able to, write the things that are your biggest difficulties, on a piece of paper.
- What are the most common challenges for the course members?



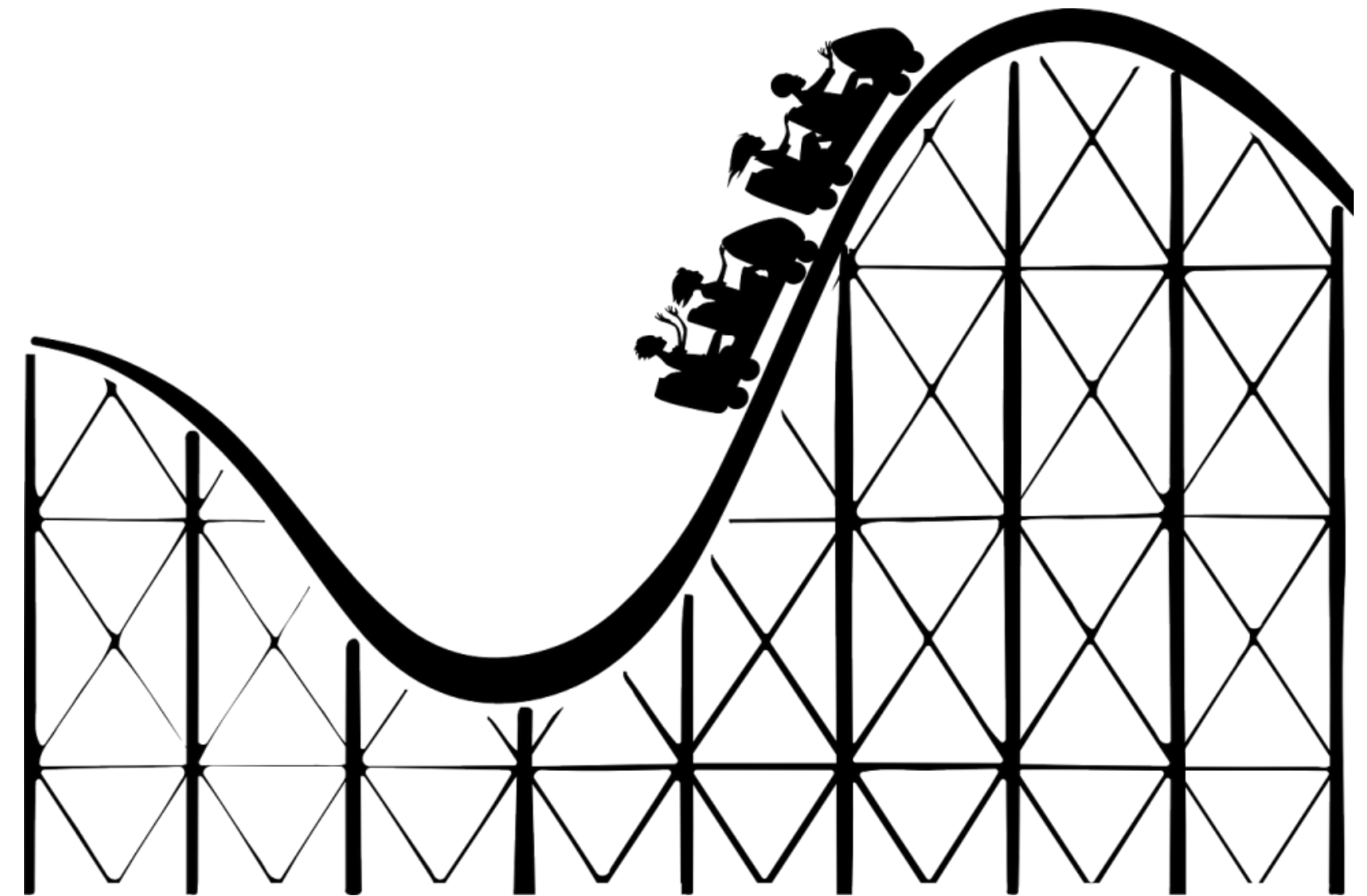
# Do you have difficulties managing feelings?

- You feel as though your emotions are on a rollercoaster and are very difficult to control:
  - Anxiety
  - Sadness or depression
  - Anger



# Emotional rollercoaster

Emotions may feel like they are on a rollercoaster from one extreme to another and you may find it hard to keep on the level emotionally.



# Difficulties with how you view yourself?

- Low self esteem
- Self-blaming
- Sense of being different to other people
- Believe you are not good enough
- Believe you must be bad to 'deserve the abuse'
- 'Bad things happen to bad people'



# Difficulties with how you view others?

- Others can't be trusted
- People will hurt you and let you down
- People have to prove they are worth it
- I need someone to sort everything out for me
- I need to keep out of everyone's way



# How do you feel about the people who hurt you?

- I can't stop thinking about them
- I want revenge
- I believe what they said about me
- I believe they have a lot of power over me still





# Do you have difficulties with memories?

- Flashbacks or intrusive memories
- Nightmares
- Patchy memories
- Not always aware of what is happening around me currently
- Feeling like I am watching things from far away



# How do you feel about the world and the future?

- Do you have difficulties which result in you having a sense of despair or hopelessness about the future?



# Key ideas

- We now understand more about the way survivors often think and feel following abuse and trauma.
- The ‘emotional rollercoaster’ can be a useful image to understand the way survivors react to emotions.
- Relationships with other people can be more difficult following abuse and trauma.





# Ways we cope can make life harder

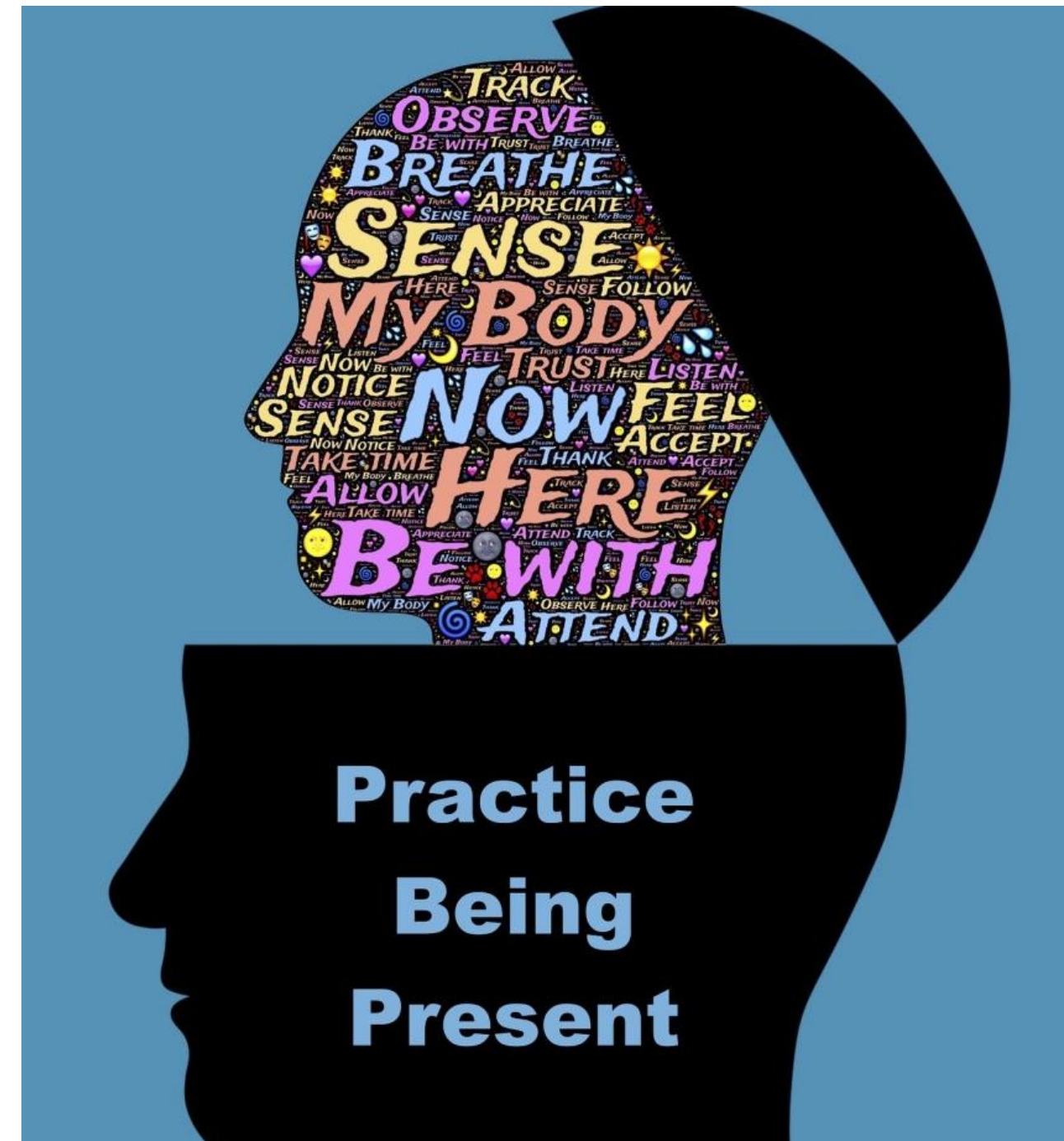
- You may have found some ways to ‘get off the rollercoaster’.
- Some of these will be safe and effective—please feel free to share these.
- Other ways of coping may not be safe and may be getting you into other difficulties in your life.
- We call this ‘surviving the surviving’.

# Some ways of ‘surviving the surviving’

- Alcohol and drugs
- Self harm
- Over or under eating
- Dissociation
- Avoidance

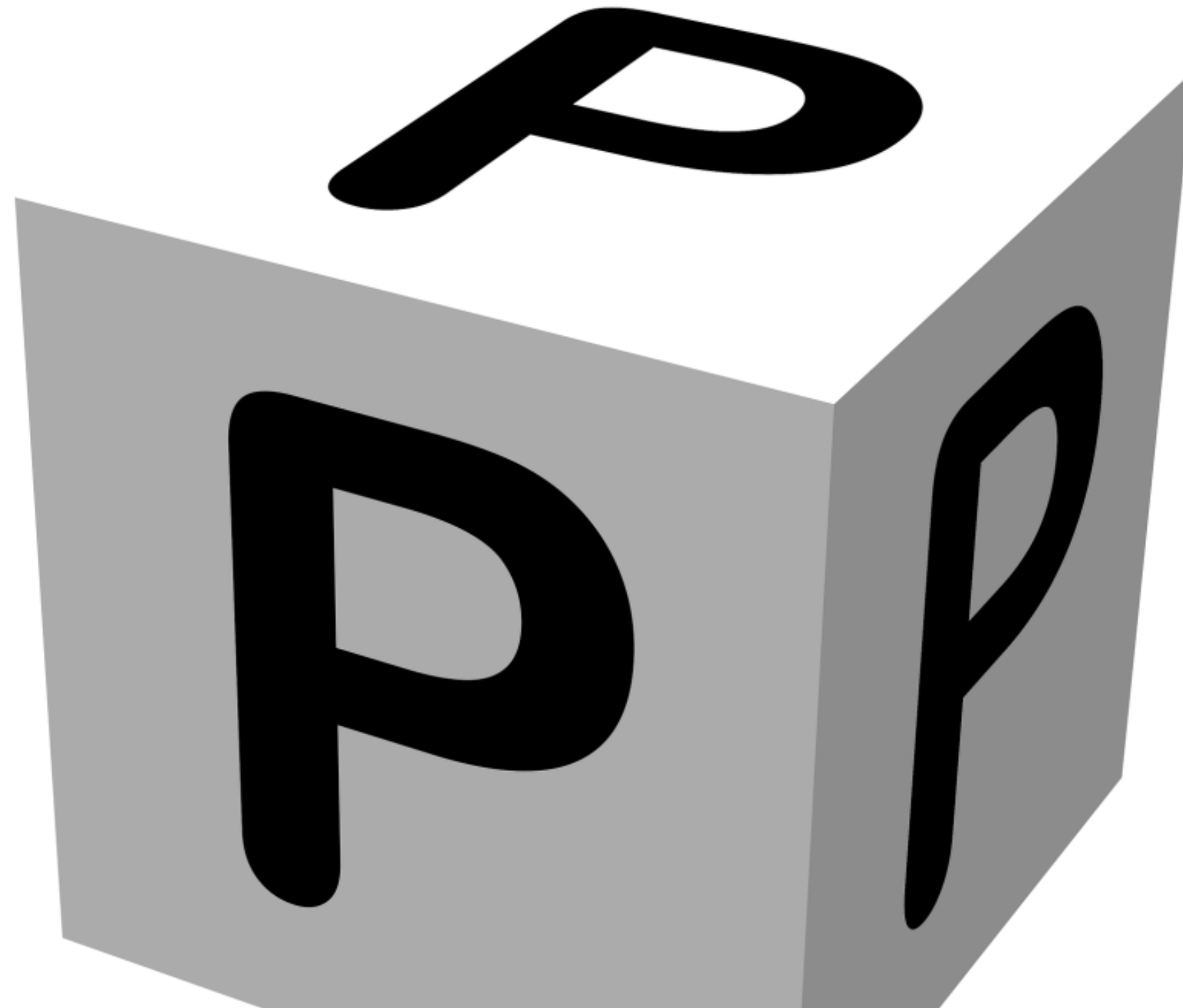


# Mindfulness exercise



# The 3 Ps

- Preparation
- Practice
- Patience





# A minute for planning

- Either do a one minute ‘mindmap’ (on paper or in your mind) of what you have learned today and what you will want to work on.

**OR**

- Have a look at the home practice exercise in your pack and make a plan to do that.

# A word of wisdom

“You don’t have to be great to get started,  
but you have to get started to be great.”

**Les Brown**