
A 60-MINUTE PRESENTATION

The Disciplined Mind

Meditation as Attention Training for the High-Performing Lawyer

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ROADMAP

What We'll Cover

- 01 The Case for Attention**
Why meditation is performance training, not relaxation
- 02 What the Research Shows**
The evidence — stated honestly, limits included
- 03 Four Practices**
Body scan · breath · metta · open awareness — with guided reps
- 04 Matching Practice to Moment**
The right skill for the right situation
- 05 The Throughline**
Judgment, leadership, and a sustainable career

THE PREMISE

Attention Is the Asset

Lawyers are paid for the quality of their attention.

Meditation, practiced with discipline, is not a wellness accessory. It is structured attention training — the push-ups that build the muscle of presence and focused attention.

The rep: every time you notice the mind has wandered and bring it back — that's one. *Do enough reps and the muscle you use to think shows up stronger.*

THE STANCE

Not Relaxation. Reps.

THIS IS NOT

- An escape from challenge
- A spa or a bubble bath
- Therapy in disguise
- A way to become less sharp

THIS IS

- A structured cognitive practice
- Attention and response training
- Repeated reps that build a capacity
- A way to be more discerning
- Sharper — not softer — under pressure

Attention & Control

Fewer errors, caught faster

Experienced meditators made fewer errors on a control task and showed a stronger brain signal for catching their own mistakes. The advantage came through emotional acceptance — not suppression.

Better attention & executive control

A meta-analysis of randomized trials in healthy adults found small-to-moderate gains in attention and executive control (working-memory findings were mixed).

A consistent, modest signal

Across the better-designed studies, the effect is real enough to be worth fifteen minutes a day.

Notice earlier. React less. Decide better.

Source: [Teper & Inzlicht \(2013\), SCAN](#) · [Yakobi et al. \(2021\), Cognitive Therapy and Research](#)

Decisions & the Brain

Decision-making

Meditation may support decisions through cognitive control, emotion regulation, and reduced reactivity.

Gray matter

An 8-week mindfulness program was associated with increased gray-matter density in regions tied to learning, memory, and self-regulation.

Brain networks

Focused-attention practice consistently engages the brain's executive-control and salience networks.

Source: [Sun et al. \(2015\), Frontiers in Psychology](#) · [Hölzel et al. \(2011\), Psychiatry Research](#) · [Ganesan et al. \(2022\)](#), [Neurosci. Biobehav. Rev.](#)

THE TOOLKIT

Four Bite-Sized Practices

Each trains a different capacity. The goal isn't to do all four daily — it's to know which one the moment calls for.

01

Body Scan

Noticing the body's signals early

INTEROCEPTION

02

Breath

One anchor, the skill of return

FOCUSED ATTENTION

03

Metta

Steadying the relational field

**REDUCED
REACTIVITY**

04

Open Awareness

A wide field, non-reactive

**COGNITIVE
FLEXIBILITY**

PRACTICE 1 OF 4

Body Scan

WHAT IT IS

A slow sweep of attention through the body — feet to crown — noticing tension, bracing, grip, and breath, without trying to fix anything.

THE SKILL IT TRAINS

Interoceptive accuracy — catching stress in the body before it shapes your tone, your listening, or your decision.

WHEN LAWYERS USE IT

- In the elevator before a difficult call
- Before a deposition or witness prep — find where you're already gripping
- Between back-to-back contentious meetings
- Before sending the email you want to send fast

Breathing Meditation

WHAT IT IS

One anchor — the breath. Notice an inhale, notice an exhale. When the mind wanders, return. No frustration. The wandering isn't the failure; the return is the practice.

THE SKILL IT TRAINS

Focused attention and the executive-control loop: hold a goal, notice departure, disengage, re-engage. The skill of returning — not of never leaving.

WHEN LAWYERS USE IT

- Before a complex drafting block — set the attentional baseline
- Between matters — a one-minute reset to avoid cross-contamination
- Before oral argument or a high-stakes presentation
- Inside a long meeting — invisible breath attention to recover focus

PRACTICE 3 OF 4

Metta • Loving-Kindness

WHAT IT IS

Silently offering simple phrases — “may you be steady, may you be clear, may you meet this moment wisely” — first to yourself, then outward. A stance, rehearsed.

THE SKILL IT TRAINS

Down-regulating reactive hostility and contempt; steadying the relational field so listening and judgment stay clean.

WHEN LAWYERS USE IT

- Before a difficult call with a client whose narrative frustrates you
- Before a hard conversation with a partner, associate, or co-counsel
- Before a negotiation where contempt has crept into your strategy
- Before a feedback conversation, a review, or a termination

PRACTICE 4 OF 4

Open Awareness

WHAT IT IS

No anchor. Let attention open — sounds, sensations, thoughts, the emotional tone of the moment. Nothing to fix. Notice the pull, and let the field stay open.

THE SKILL IT TRAINS

Field-level awareness and non-reactive clarity — holding many variables at once without collapsing into any single one.

WHEN LAWYERS USE IT

- Inside complex meetings, mediations, and multi-party negotiations
- During internal investigations with many threads to hold
- In witness examinations — track answers, demeanor, and your next move
- Whenever the right response is pause, not move

TRANSLATION

Match the Practice to the Moment

SITUATION	PRACTICE	CAPACITY TRAINED
Complex negotiation	Open awareness + breath	Composure + attentional baseline
Client counseling	Body scan + metta + open awareness	Empathic listening without absorption
Internal investigation	Open awareness + breath + body scan	Sustained attention + flexible updating
Drafting & analysis	Breath + short body scans	Sustained selective attention
Hard conversation / leadership	Metta + body scan	Relational steadiness + presence
The urge to send that email now	Open awareness + breath	Strategic patience

THE THROUGHLINE

Judgment Is What Attention Does Under Pressure

Every practice points at one capacity: noticing the right thing, at the right time, under the right pressure, without being captured by the wrong forces.

Body scan

notice the signal before it shapes the move

Breath

hold the goal across distraction

Metta

keep the relational field workable

Open awareness

see the whole picture without flinching

Pick one practice. Use it for two weeks. It compounds quietly — until you notice you handled something better than you would have a year ago.

Thank you.

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Attention is the asset. Meditation is the training.

Questions welcome.