Mindfulness

What is Mindfulness?

- **Intentionally living with awareness in the present moment**

(Participating and being present in our own lives, rather than going day-to-day on "auto-pilot".)

- **Being non-judgemental and not rejecting the moment**

(Not labelling thoughts, feelings, experiences as good or bad but rather just acknowledging them.) E.g. Rather than, "I feel nervous - this is bad," thinking/saying, "I am nervous."

- **Without attachment to the moment**

(Allowing yourself to experience each new moment, rather than not being present by ruminating on the past or worrying about the future)

Why Practice Mindfulness?

The main goal of mindfulness is to have more awareness and to be able to live in the present moment. Part of being mindful is about being non-judgemental of our thoughts, feelings and experiences.

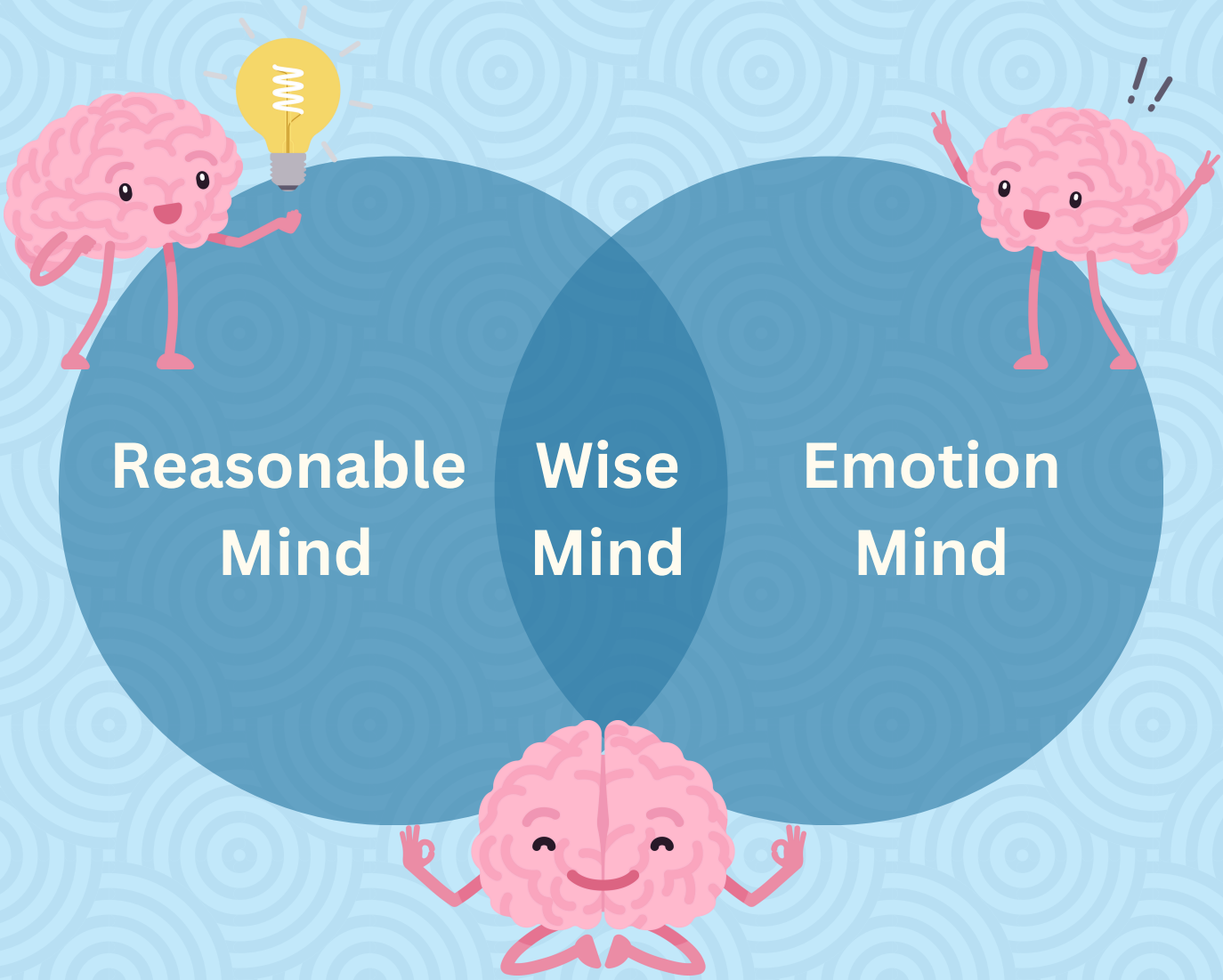
Generally, there are 3 goals when practicing mindfulness:

1. To reduce suffering and increase happiness

2. Increase control of your mind

3. Experience reality as it is

States of Mind



Reasonable Mind is:

- Cool
- Rational
- Task Focused

When in 'reasonable mind', you are using facts, reason, logic and pragmatics. Values and feelings are not important.

Wise Mind is:

When reasonable and emotion mind are working in harmony.

Seeing the value of both reason/facts as well as emotion.

'The middle path.'

Emotion Mind is:

- Hot
- Mood-dependent
- Emotion Focused

When in 'emotion mind', you are ruled by your mood, feelings and urges to do or say things. Facts, reason and logic are not important.

States of Mind

The ultimate goal of mindfulness is effectively to learn how to access and use our 'wise mind'.

But it is important to remember that mindfulness skills require a lot of practice. It is important to start learning the skills when you don't necessarily need them, so when a time comes where you need it (e.g. if you are feeling overwhelmed worrying about the future, or getting caught up in a feeling of sadness), it becomes more automatic and you don't have to think about it.

Some Ideas for Practicing Wise Mind

1. Stone flake on the lake.

- Imagine that you are by a clear, blue lake on a beautiful, sunny day.
- Then, imagine that you are a small flake of stone - flat and light.
- Imagine that you have been tossed out onto the lake and are now gently, slowly, floating through the calm, clear blue water to the lake's smooth, sandy bottom.
- Notice what you see and what you feel as you float down, perhaps in slow circles, towards the bottom.
- As you reach the bottom of the lake, settle your attention there within yourself.
- Notice the serenity of the lake; become aware of the calmness and quiet deep within.
- As you reach the centre of yourself, settle your attention there.

2. Breathing "Wise" in, "Mind" out.

- Breathing in, say to yourself, "wise"; breathing out, say, "mind."
- Focus your entire attention on the word "wise", then focus it again entirely on the word "mind."
- Continue until you sense that you have settled into Wise Mind.