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*CONSCIOUS CARE & SUPPORT*



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*for People with*

# **Autism & Other Developmental Disabilities**

## **Balancing Body, Brain & Being**

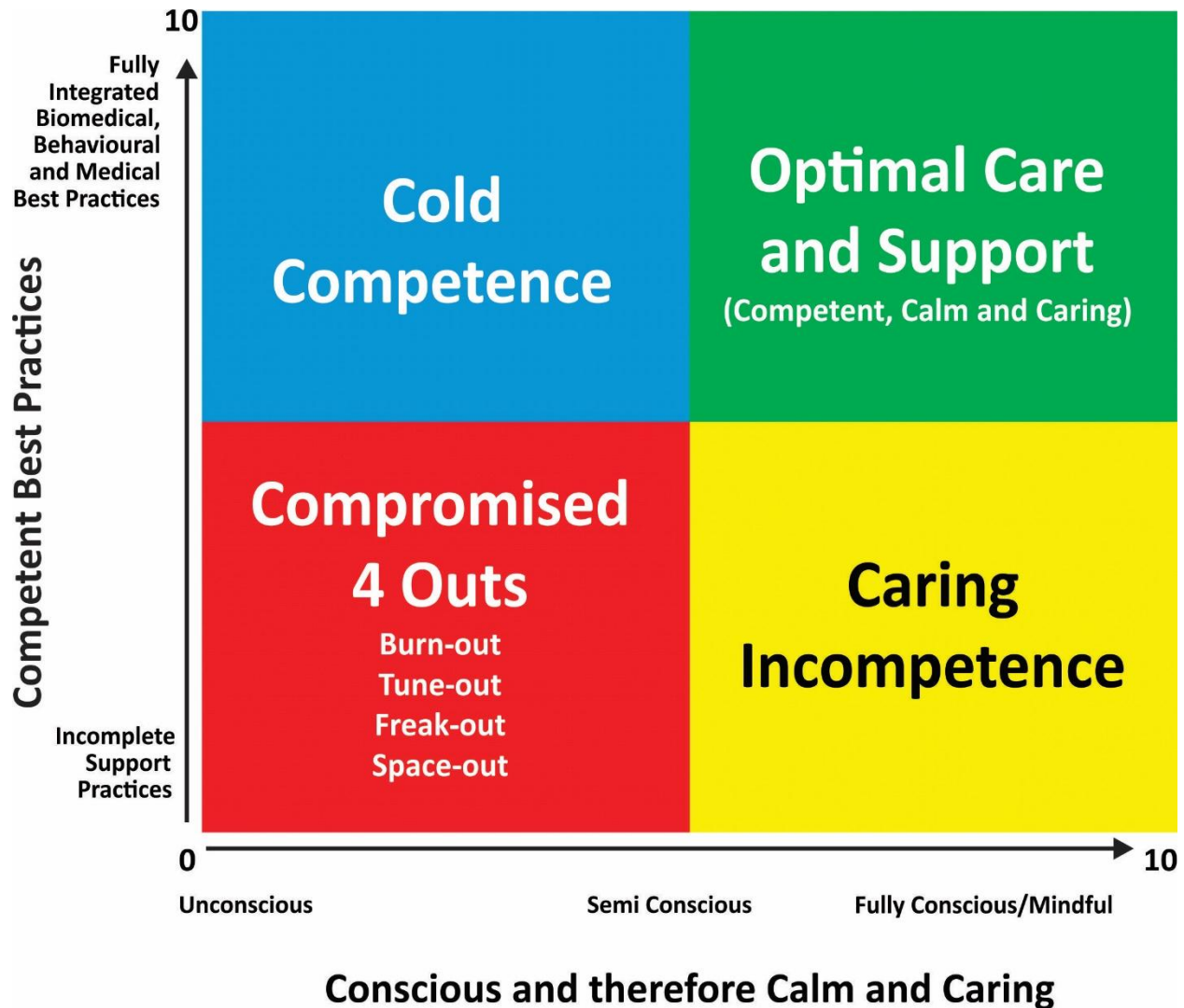
**Peter Marks   Adriana McVicker   Leah Marks**

*"Drawing on many years of experience and supported by extensive Trans-disciplinary research findings, this book has the potential to significantly enhance the quality of support for Thousands of Canadian Citizens. A truly useful and practical resource for any one supporting individuals with autism and any other developmental disability"*

**Michael Bach, Ph.D. - Executive Vice-President,  
Canadian Association for Community Living**

# Optimal Care and Support

The following illustration describes supporter's 0 to 10 continuum for competence and caring. The less competent and less caring we are, the greater our risk to become a victim of the four outs and thereby offer less than optimal support.



Mindfulness, however, does not happen on its own. Later sections of Part TWO will explore the ways in which the capacity for mindfulness can be developed.

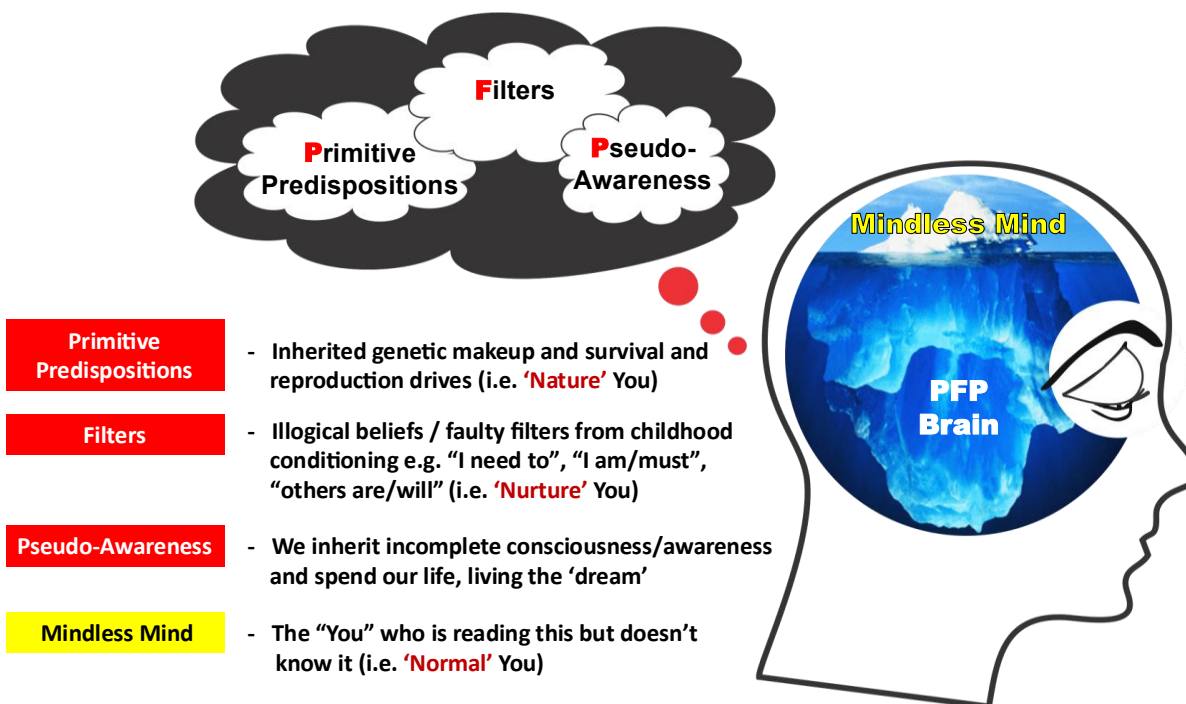
## 12. Free Will Ain't Free – But It Is For Sale: How to Manage A Hundred-Thousand-Year-Old Brain With A Mind of Its Own

Just in case our summary so far of the benefits of mindfulness and our needs assessment have not convinced you to give maximum effort to learn and practice mindfulness, we offer the following evidence to further encourage your awakening.

**No matter what software you program into your brain, the hardware is still a hundred-thousand-year-old brain, and it has a mind of its own until, that is, we enhance the ‘live ware’ through neurodevelopment.**

Below I will give many examples to prove that your ability to be in control of your life and to make optimal support decisions, especially when stressed, is, without mindfulness, extremely limited. You will be introduced to the dark secret that you are unknowingly locked in a prison of primitive brain architecture, brain conditioning (programming) and priming. We call this being locked in PFP Programming prison.

### How to Hack Your Own Hardware



## PFP Programming Definitions and Examples:

Numerous highly credible neuroscientists (reference bibliography) are making a radical claim that you, an average human, are owned/driven over ninety percent of the time by your subconscious PFP Programming and that free will to make optimal decisions based on facts and not PFP feelings is mostly an illusion when you are mindless.

**Primitive Predispositions** are thoughts, feelings and behaviours driven primarily by survival and reproduction brain architecture and the nervous system that came from our hundreds of thousands of years of evolution via genes passed on from generation to generation. They are most definitely directly and indirectly driving much of our physical and emotional survival.

It seems that almost regardless of your personality, many, many decisions are made according to how hungry, tired or sensory stimulated or depleted you are. These conditions together with the accompanying hormone levels, neurotransmitter balances and gut health dominate and often override nurture. For example, for the same offense and similar conditions, if your case for parole is heard just after lunch rather than just before it, you will have a thirty-percent better

### Our Human Predicament

**Understanding Our Human Predicament** is vital to breaking out of this PFP prison. A brief summary of the way 'Nature' is that I have concluded from my own inner journey and the best consensus thinking of evolutionary biologists goes like the following:

- We humans have evolved as a species with our prime design feature being to survive and pass on genes to a future generation.
- To live and survive, nature has specifically designed us to be motivated to hunt food, hunt mating partners and stay safe/physically comfortable.
- To guarantee this motivation, every normal person has inherited (not developed) automatic dopamine (the pleasure neurotransmitter) rewards when they anticipate eating, having sex, impressing others 'like you' and competing against/beating others who are 'different' from you. Note the word anticipate! We are actually designed to crave these things by being given significantly greater dopamine when we anticipate these needs versus actually getting it. This is so we will continue to 'do it again' to ensure a daily diet.
- This inheritance, keeps us basically unsatisfied with our life because gratification is given significantly fewer rewards and is therefore fleeting. This is the main reason we can be living in the top 5% of social and environmental conditions on the planet and still be craving more because of discontent.

These four factors then keep all folks, especially we who are supporting and caring for others in need of growing to be more conscious to be able to have a consistently caring response to override nature's more self-centered setup. More reminders of this primitive predisposition human predicament will follow throughout Part TWO.

chance of gaining parole.

**Filters** are rules of “I am, others are and the world is” that are developed during childhood and adolescent conditioning.

**Did You Ever Wonder Why...**

- Certain things trigger your irritability (or worse) but don’t bother other people whom you know and respect the same way?
- When you’re stressed out you too often say and do things that are not your “A-Game”?
- You become emotionally hijacked but are not aware of it in time to stop it?
- You want to feel kindness for someone but can’t?
- Relatively minor “stuff” can make you angry, anxious or sad, even though you know your quality of life is that of the top ten-percent of the world’s population?

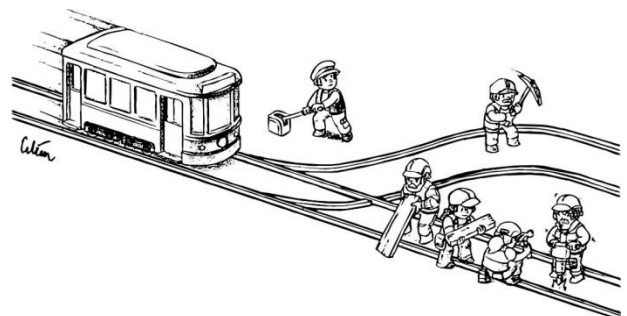
These things all happen because your conditioned filters are “controlling your keyboard.” One of hundreds of examples of how just your birth order in your family programmed your priorities as an adult is that, of the first twenty-three American astronauts, twenty-one were only-children or eldest-children who were unknowingly programmed to be responsible, take charge, get good grades in school, be a leader and not make mistakes. This programming happened during the times when they experienced thousands of life situations (like taking care of younger siblings) that demanded these traits for them to gain approval or not get scolded by Mom and Dad. In Part TWO, Appendix I you will determine many of your hidden faulty and fruitful filters, i.e. filters.

**Primed Prompts** refers to exposing a person without their knowing (i.e. subconsciously) to an influencing message, like a word or picture or sound, that then directs their thoughts, feelings and behaviour to act in accordance with the message.

For example, if you are given ten sets of six scrambled words and asked to make ten four-word sentences, you will walk measurably slower after the exercise if, without your knowing it, each list contains a reference to being old: for example, grey, wrinkles, forgetful.

**A Brain Experiment Using Your Hundred-Thousand-Year-Old Brain Architecture**

I invite you to participate in the following experiment. You are witness to a train trolley running out of control and likely to kill four workers on the tracks 100 yards away from the trolley. You are standing by a switch, however, that could shunt the trolley to another track where only one worker would be killed. Before reading on decide if you will pull the switch to the track with only one worker.



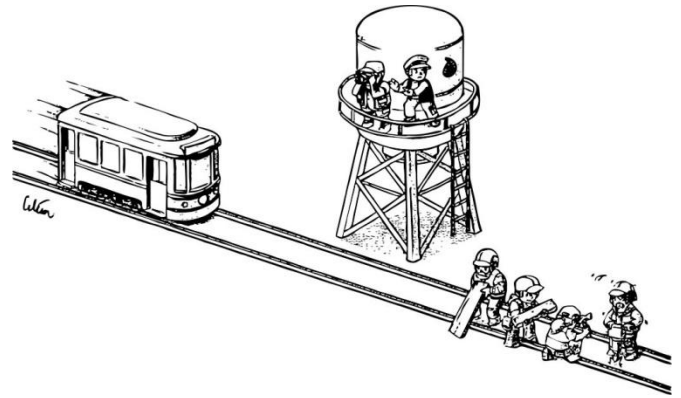
☐ Yes

☐ No

Now you are faced with the same dilemma, but you are not beside a switch. You are standing in a water tower above the tracks where the trolley is about to kill the four workers. In front of you is a large person. If you push them off the bridge, their dead body will derail the trolley and save the four men. Would you push the person to their death to save the four workers?

☐ Yes

☐ No



90+% of people (regardless of nurture conditioned ‘traits’ or nature inherited ‘states’, ethnicity, culture or religion) say yes to the first scenario and no to the second. Why?

Welcome to the world of how your brain architecture drives many of your decisions. In this case, the first scenario was driven by a different part of your brain (i.e. the dorsolateral pre-frontal cortex) than the second scenario (i.e. the medial pre-frontal cortex - MPFC). The first, because it is relatively impersonal was basically a logical math problem. Saving four is worth the loss of one life. The second scenario however, being more ‘personal’ activated emotional centers in the brain developed for surviving in the herd or tribe: don’t hurt or kill other members of our herd because they are needed for protection, mating and survival tasks requiring cooperation, such as hunting.

Below we offer a glimpse at some of the challenges that just your primitive brain architecture provides. This summary is offered at this time (and expanded on below) to emphasize the essential message that B-FIT Mindfulness is vital to “awaken” you to a world not driven by mindless PFP Programming. This world of PFP Programming produces your emotional hijacks and resulting power struggles that unintentionally too often adds to the unnecessary suffering of individuals whom we support.

As a species, we have arrived at the top of the food chain. We can build hundred-story buildings and survive illnesses that killed thousands only a few years ago. And yet, with a few rare exceptions, the average good person and even our most intelligent and powerfully influential minds in medicine, technology and psychology become for example, emotionally hijacked when they absolutely don’t want to. Without an enhanced understanding and the necessary mindfulness skills, they can’t begin to break out of this maximum security prison or even get the odd weekend pass.

## **Breaking Out of PFP Prison Is an Inside Job**

Every one-on-one interaction includes 6 people!

They are ‘Mindless You’ (the you who is reading this but probably didn’t know it until I reminded you), ‘PFP Programmed You’ and potential B-FIT ‘Mindful You’ plus the other person’s trio.

Typically, for untrained folks, the degree to which ‘PFP You’ hijacks your air time is directly proportionate to how actively ‘Mindful You’ participates in the interaction. The more ‘Mindful You’ engages, the less ‘Mindless You’ is driven and distracted by ‘PFP You’.

This mindless drivenness is what accounts for ‘your’ near total lack of Free Will to make optimal choices to bring your “A-Game” to the field of life, both personally and professionally.

Let’s refresh your memory with an example of how ‘PFP You’ owns your willpower to make choices. Right now, think of someone you know. Do this now before reading on. Let’s say Uncle Fred came to mind. Where did that thought of Uncle Fred come from? Did **you** decide before Uncle Fred came to mind that it would be Uncle Fred who would come to mind? No you did not. In other words, why didn’t ‘you’ think of someone else, say Aunt Martha? The only plausible answer is that ‘you’ don’t know. In fact, it would appear that some process totally beyond your conscious ‘free will’ made the determination for you.

‘PFP You’ for whatever reason selected Uncle Fred for you. Even more concerning should be that mindless normal you, (the reader of this sentence) in all probability is driven by ‘PFP You’ autopilot for virtually all thoughts and therefore feelings that you have every day as well.

Remember also that you do not know what your next thought will be before you have it; it happens to you. Like the car that now parks its self, you are being parked probably most every moment by ‘PFP (Brain) You’.

This is happening virtually every second in most aspects of ‘your’ (or should we say PFP’s) life, unless of course you are B-FIT mindful. In fact under high resolution fMRI, before we begin to do anything, billions of PFP Neuron Cells are firing as they prepare their next set of behavioural instructions for the unsuspecting you to deliver. If, for example you decide to lift one hand versus another – that command is shown to come from preprogrammed brain processes that are activated approximately 1.4 seconds before ‘you’ do it.

By extension of this logic then, if your thoughts and feelings ‘just happen’, your behaviour is also going to ‘just happen’ to obey PFP commands. If by the way you enjoy a normal amount of happiness, are reasonably caring and compassionate and can relate to others most of the time with respect, patience and encouragement, at this point in your life be grateful for your good fortune, not so much very good management.

So how does B-FIT Mindfulness significantly help your ideal self ‘you’ to ensure more optimal thoughts, feelings and behaviour and improved quality of ‘willpower’?

B-FIT Mindfulness has been specifically designed to interrupt this authoritarian regimes’ power in the following 4 ways:

1. **A reminder of being in Prison.** Firstly, mindfulness reminds you that your Mind has a Mind of its own e.g. thoughts come from nowhere and they sometimes are awful – not who ‘you’ really are. These insights show us how we are locked in a kind of prison which motivates our breaking out.

2. **Awareness right now of what's happening.** Even when you are somewhat mindful, your thoughts and feelings are still driven by 'PFP You'. You however are more aware as this is happening, e.g. you spontaneously remember that you are talking to someone. Because of this B-FIT 'supervisory' process, you therefore have a greater likelihood of not being as subconsciously driven to behave in accordance with PFP thoughts' and feelings' directives as a more conscious you – immediately 'rethinks' what is happening. I call this the Catch, Calm and Clarifying process (reference Part THREE for details).
3. **Upgrade your live drive.** As you mature in B-FIT insights and intrapersonal skills, the PFP live drive seems to be upgraded to a more complete version so even the PFP autopilot thoughts and feelings are more aligned with the more conscious 'ideal self' you. For example, using B-FIT as our 'server', we can literally re-prime our PFP to put forth more of our ideal self by practising, for example, mindful visualization and intentional exercises (reference Stress Rehearsal).
4. **Those thoughts are not me.** And finally, as we are 'just naturally' more and more mindful, the 'Mindful You' (witness, noticer, observer) less and less identifies with the thoughts and feelings as 'me'. They seem to become more like messages from another 'sense door' i.e. 'there is a tight chest versus I am angry'. Relatively speaking, this is real freedom.

## Summary

There are other subjective experiences of the 'Mindful You' but these 4 will give you lots of homework. So then, to the extent that your 'PFP Programmed You' is reprogrammed with values, beliefs and conscious intentions that reflects your maturing 'ideal self', and further when this version 2.0 of you is aware and alh-hllowing in each present moment, your 'thoughts, words and deeds' will manifest more as a competent, conscious and authentically caring person, regardless of how 'you' are feeling at the time.

In the absence of this rebooted upgrade version of you, you will live throughout your entire life in the illusion of being totally in charge of your thoughts, feelings and behaviour but sadly so often experience many less than optimal human interactions – because you are not in charge.

The following 'Breaking Out of PFP Prison' strategies are proven to help you enhance your support and other relationships.

*I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of men and women to elevate their life (and the lives of others) by conscious endeavours.*

Henry David Thoreau

The following table explains how just one quality of PFP Programmed you— i.e. primitive architecture over which you have very, very little control (unless you are mindful)—virtually

owns you and keeps you limited in your ability to feel and relate competently and compassionately (e.g. playing your “A-Game”).

## ***Mindfully Breaking Out of The PFP Prison of Cognitive Bias A Hundred-Thousand-Year-Old Brain – With A Mind of Its Own!***

| <b><i>Four Challenges to Mentally Surviving In Our World</i></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b><i>How Our Mindless Brain and Body Have Evolved to Cope i.e. Cognitive Bias</i></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b><i>How We Can Use Mindfulness to Minimize the Consequences and Enhance Better Processing</i></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| <p><b>1. Information Overload:</b></p> <p>The world sends our seven senses hundreds of times more information each minute than we can possibly consciously process/be aware of.</p> <p>This is why you can drive down the same road for two years and then one day (for the first time) notice a three-story building that you probably have looked at hundreds of times before.... <i>or</i></p> <p>You cut yourself in the garden but don’t notice that you have until you are in the shower that evening.</p> | <p><b>We aggressively filter out and therefore miss most input. We have inattentional blindness:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We stay mainly focused on the task at hand</li> <li>▪ We are drawn only to detail that confirms our beliefs/filters</li> <li>▪ We mainly notice when something has changed and even then not readily.</li> </ul> <p>For example, if we are asked to count the number of times in a minute that four men pass a basketball, 80% of us will miss a person dressed as a gorilla who walks front and center across the court for 15 seconds.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p><b>Awareness Processing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consciously concentrate</li> <li>▪ Become aware in the moment that your brain is filtering out most new information</li> <li>▪ <b>When supporting someone</b>, be constantly asking “what am I missing here?”</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <p><b>2. Meaning is a Must and Memory Makes Meaning:</b></p> <p>The overload of messages per minute is very confusing but we must make sense of them to feel safe and secure.... <i>but</i></p> <p>We must also conserve vital brain processing energy to meet a potential vital survival crisis in the next minute/hours.</p> <p>Our conditioning gives us an open personal file on most subjects. We call this file memory.</p>                                                                                | <p><b>We mainly only pay attention to information for which we already have an open file:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As “primed,” or experienced over and over, we very selectively pick and choose bits and pieces from the “new” information that fits our values, expectations, preferences, and beliefs because that which is familiar is more readily meaningful to us. This also conserves valuable brain energy needed for survival.</li> <li>▪ The brain creates meaning from bits and pieces of new data as it links to existing files in our brain (i.e. memory).</li> <li>▪ The brain then, without our knowing, fills in the gaps to make a rational (left brain) story (e.g. we unknowingly confabulate or colour the stories with stereotypes and generalities from memory files of people and ideas of which we are familiar).</li> </ul> | <p><b>Catch:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stay conscious of the moment-by-moment B-FIT reactions during this “sorting and selling” processing.</li> <li>▪ The body (which has a mind of its own) will give signals when the brain is processing contrary to universal values.</li> <li>▪ Become Calm and Clarify.</li> <li>▪ <b>When supporting someone</b>, use your B-FIT awareness to know when your PFP Programming is demanding that a primed directive is blocking your compassion by creating thoughts and feelings of self-righteous judgementalness, prejudice or exclusion.</li> </ul> |

| <i><b>Four Challenges to Mentally Surviving In Our World</b></i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <i><b>How Our Mindless Brain and Body Have Evolved to Cope i.e. Cognitive Bias</b></i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i><b>How We Can Use Mindfulness to Minimize the Consequences and Enhance Better Processing</b></i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| <p><b>3. Speed Kills:</b></p> <p>We were wired to make fast decisions to survive in the neolithic and paleo jungles.</p> <p>To test this, raise your index finger. 1.4 seconds before you saw it raised, billions of neurons fired in your brain. This firing scans thousands of rules from your past to tell you it is safe to do so.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p><b>We Speed Dial with Rapid Processing and Jumping to Conclusions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are addicted to options that appear simple and can be done quickly.</li> <li>▪ From the too many pieces of filtered information in front of us, we rapidly process the easiest (based on our programmed memory files) so that we can make quick decisions. This gives us an artificial sense of confidence and security.</li> </ul>                                                          | <p><b>Non-driven Processing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>When supporting someone,</b> inform the process with mindfulness to experience the slow motion affect (i.e. more data per minute makes the process more complete and non-driven).</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <p><b>4. Memory is Master:</b></p> <p>We build our data base only from information that is critical for our personal perception of physical and emotional survival. It is highly subjective, based in great part on conditioned filters and Primitive brain processing.</p> <p>Our memory, therefore, (even from last week) is very inaccurate regarding, for example, relationships, social and emotional experiences.</p> <p>This is why eye witness accounts are usually quite inaccurate when compared to video of the same event.</p> | <p><b>Memory Made Easy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ PFP Programming memory drives your world. For example, can you tell me what your next thought will be before you have it? No, because you are not in charge – your PFP Programming memory is!</li> <li>▪ We edit and reinforce some memory files after the fact based on our preferences and prejudices.</li> <li>▪ We store data according to easy access to the simple stuff and not necessarily the most important or accurate.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Capacity Building of Values:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mindfulness capacity building seems to order memory data on needs to follow universal values and principles, (e.g. love and compassion versus security and gratification).</li> <li>▪ <b>When supporting someone,</b> stay mindful and your conscious you (not the PFP Programming you) will manifest your compassionate thoughts, feelings and behavior.</li> </ul> |

### **No Self No CEO**

So then, not only is your sense of an 'I' self not as real as you would like to think but the 'you' who experiences body sensations, feelings and thoughts is not nearly in control as much as you think either. There is no 'in control' CEO on the ORG chart.