



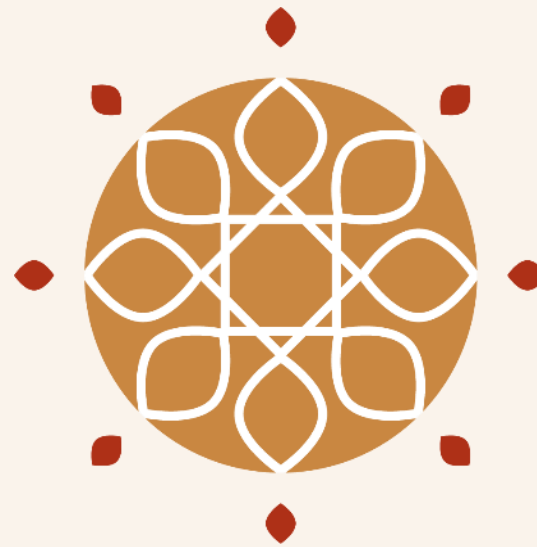
The Insurance  
Institute of London  
Chartered Insurance Institute

# The Insurance Institute of London

*CII CPD accredited - demonstrates the quality of an event and that it meets CII/PFS member CPD scheme requirements.*

*This lecture and podcast count as 45 minutes of CPD and can be included as part of your CPD requirement should you consider it relevant to your professional development needs. It is recommended that you keep any evidence of the CPD activity you have completed and upload copies to the recording tool as the CII may ask to see this if your record is selected for review.*





**ENLIGHTENED  
LEADERS**



# MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGIES FOR THE WORKPLACE

*Created by*  
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13 February 2019

The background features a repeating pattern of white geometric shapes on a light beige background. The shapes include large 'X' marks, triangles, and hexagons. At the top and bottom, there are decorative borders consisting of a repeating pattern of small, interconnected loops. In the center, a large white hexagon contains the text 'THOUGHT EXPERIMENT' in a bold, dark red, serif font.

**THOUGHT  
EXPERIMENT**

TAKEN ON A RECENT VISIT TO THE CAVE WHERE SHE SPENT 3 YEARS IN SOLITARY MEDITATION

CREDIT KAREN KOTZE (RECEIVED BY A&U NOVEMBER 2010)




**HEAVEN**

*“The mind is its own place, and in it self  
Can make a Heav'n  
of Hell, a Hell of  
Heav'n”*

John Milton, Paradise Lost




**HELL**

A silhouette of a person sitting on the floor against a wall, looking out a window. The person is sitting with their back to the wall and their feet flat on the floor. The lighting is dramatic, with the person's form in shadow against a bright background from the window.

*“All men's miseries derive  
from not being able to sit in  
a quiet room alone.”*

Blaise Pascal

A narrow, cluttered alleyway in a tenement building. The ground is covered in trash, including plastic bags and crumpled paper. The walls are covered in air conditioning units, pipes, and satellite dishes. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting an overcast day or a shaded area.

*“My mind is like a bad  
neighbourhood - I try not  
to go there alone.”*

Anne Lamott

## ADDICTION TO STIMULATION

“In 11 studies, we found that participants typically did not enjoy spending 6 to 15 minutes in a room by themselves with nothing to do but think, that they enjoyed doing mundane external activities much more, and that **many preferred to administer electric shocks to themselves instead of being left alone with their thoughts.** Most people seem to prefer to be doing something rather than nothing, even if that something is negative.”

(Wilson et al, 2014)

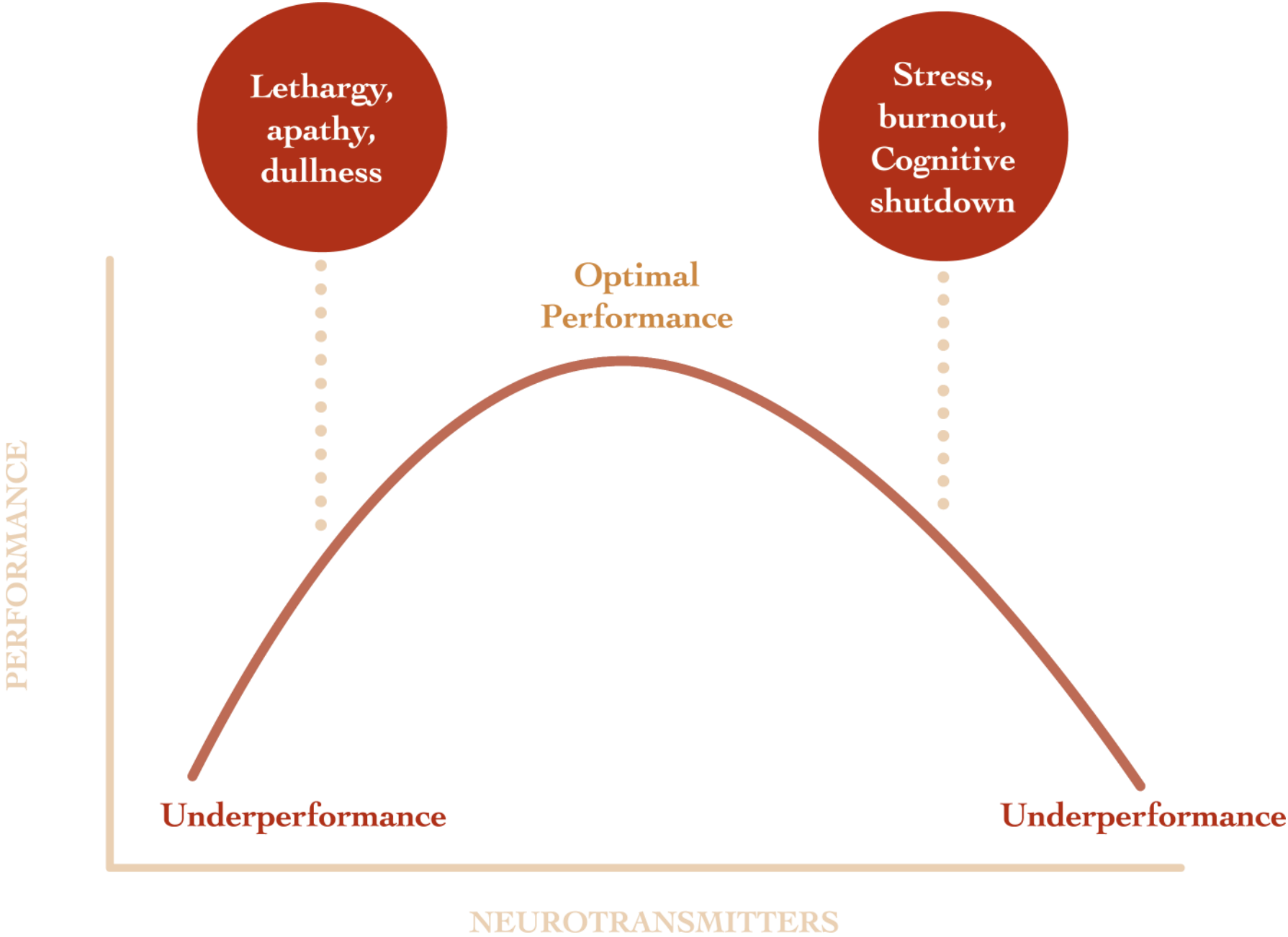


## EXECUTIVE CENTRE LIMITATIONS

- Energy intensive
- Small
- Limited capacity
- Serial processor
- “Goldilocks” of the Brain



# OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE CURVE

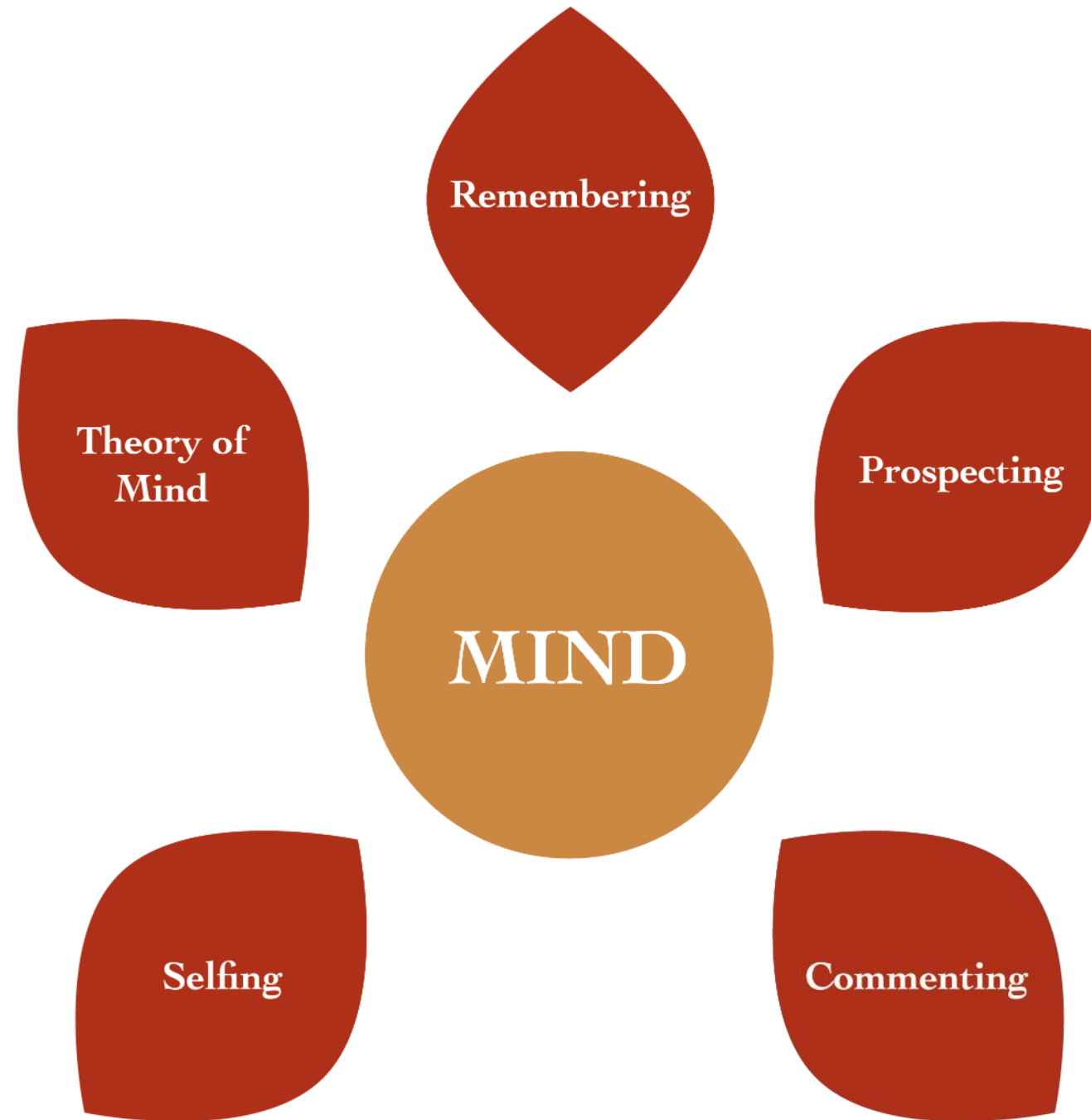


## EXERCISE

**1 minute**

**Relax and give your brain a rest**

# WHEN WE ARE DOING "NOTHING"...





**A REVOLUTIONARY DISCOVERY**

**...the brain is active at rest!**

**Default Mode Network**

**OCDD**

**OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DELUSIONAL  
DISORDER**

B. Alan Wallace

# DMN AND COGNITIVE FUSION



ATTENTION FOLLOWING THOUGHTS

# DMN HYPERACTIVITY

## An Overactive Default Mode Network



Unhappiness

Attentive  
Lapse

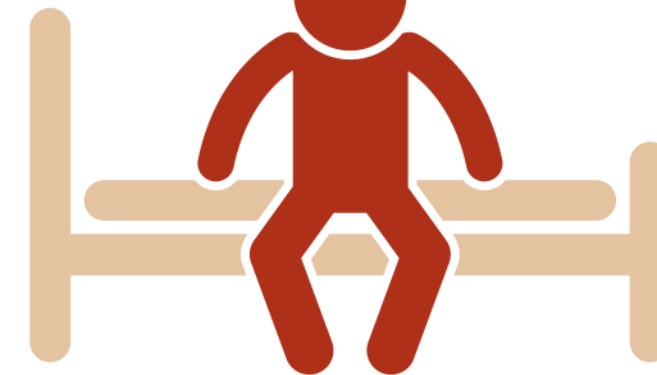


WORK



Anxiety

Can't turn  
your mind off



HOME



# DMN AND PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

Psychological conditions associated with

## DMN hyperactivity/ overconnectivity:

- Schizophrenia
- Depression
- ADHD
- Autism

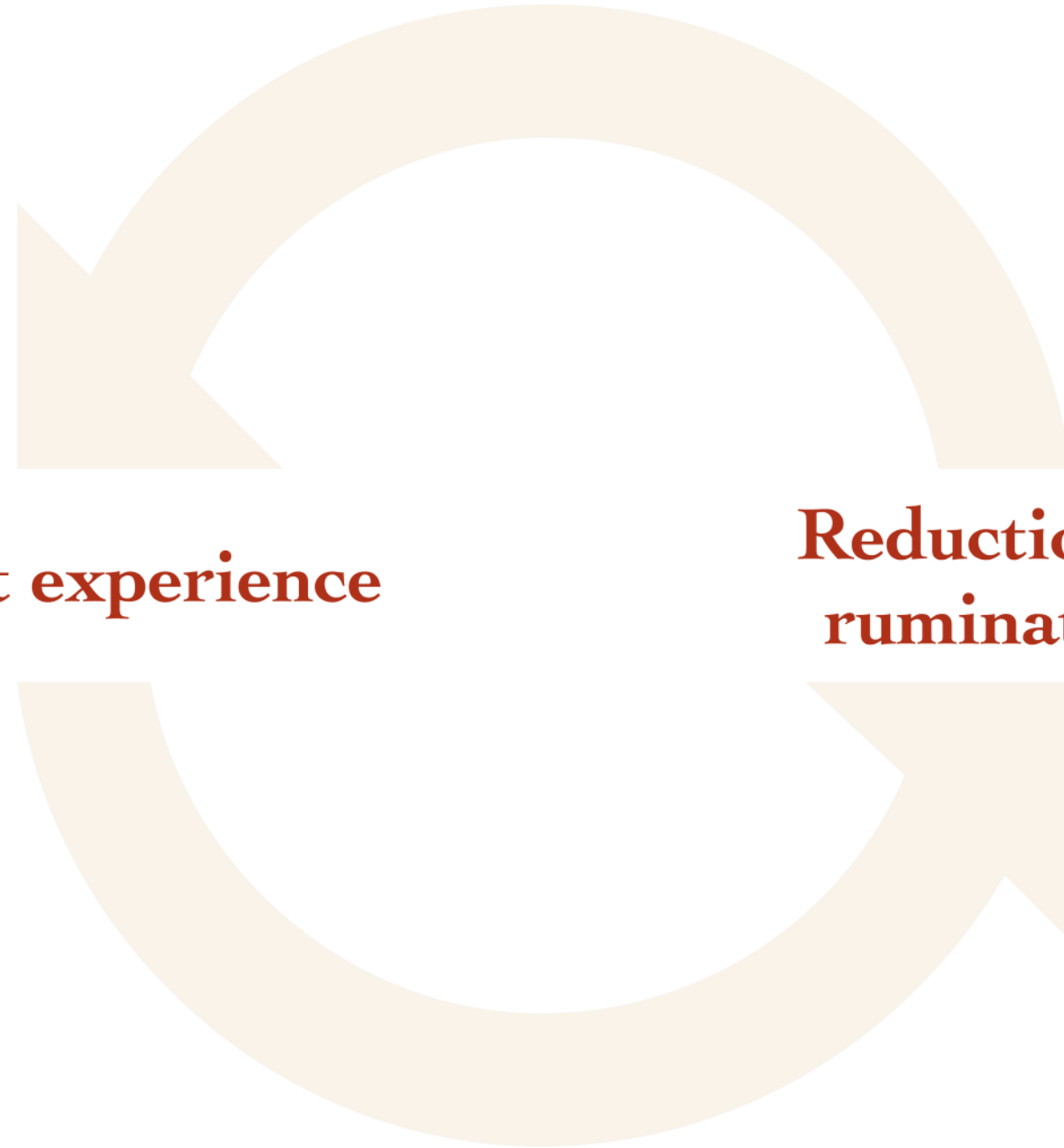
## DMN underactivity/ disconnectivity:

- Alzheimer's Disease

# MINDFULNESS

**Direct experience**

**Reduction of  
rumination**



## MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

*“Mindfulness directed to the Mind”*

# DIRECT EXPERIENCE WITHOUT COGNITIVE FUSION

*Observing* > *Inhale* > *End of Inhale* > *Exhale* > *End of Exhale* > *Inhale...*

ATTENTION REMAINS WITH THE OBJECT.

## MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGIES

- Observe thoughts as mental events
- Don't get carried away to referent
- Don't identify or fuse with them
- Let go and return to present moment
- Note the space between thoughts
- Maintain vantage point of stillness

## **CONCLUSION**

**Mindfulness helps us Cultivate a New Default Mode  
in the service of Optimal Mental Health In the  
Workplace and Beyond**



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