**Gillian Reingold**

**Why it’s essential to slow down right now, and three ways to do it**

In challenging times, we often find ourselves overwhelmed and helpless. We are not sure if or how we can care for ourselves, our loved ones, and never mind our planet. But it is certain that speeding up will not improve this situation. The inverse of mindfulness is distraction, speed, and dissociation.

**Fake it till you make it**: Neuroscientists have proven that behavioral shifts that result from slowing down, like deepening and lengthening the breath, calming the mind, and relaxing the body, can be experienced instantaneously. Cortisol levels drop, oxygen floods the blood, and euphoria can happen. We learn from our bodies what our bodies need.

**Visualize Inner Peace**: When I facilitate a mindfulness class, I often begin with this prompt: Visualize yourself as a seated Buddha, sitting on a mountain overlooking a vast river rushing below. If we can do this successfully, our mirror neurons are able to experience these sensations.

**Make Me One With Everything**: We do not live in isolation, even if it feels like it. We are inter-connected. If you bruise a finger, your entire body will feel pain, including your mind. Every part of our precious green planet depends on every other part. Knowing this can shift the way we walk upon the earth.