



Be Wineful

## WINEFULNESS TRAINING OVERVIEW

Society Of Wine Educators Annual Conference

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AND NOW FOR SOMETHING

# COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

Wine is many things to many people, but consistently throughout the millenia it has been a drink of joy, celebration, and life. Deep down every bottle contains not just the story of a specific vintage and place, but also of the thousands of years of hard work that ultimately culminated in its existence. Our job in the wine industry is to continue to write this story one glass, and one smile at a time, but how do we do that?

We do it by being prepared to greet each guest who walks through the door as if they were a long lost friend. We do it by being able to approach even the most difficult situations with kindness. We do it by conveying a genuine excitement and passion for our products. And we do it by having the knowledge to convey the excitement of this story to our customers. Or at least we should.

Wine education has often drifted away from these goals in favour of memorized and regurgitated facts and figures. With this program I want to change that. My goal is to create professionals who are prepared to handle the stress of hospitality, who understand the importance of creating outstanding guest experiences, and who have the ability to make their passion for wine contagious.

**Jordan Cowe, CWE**

Co-Founder

# CONTENT

<b>OUR STORY</b>	<b>4</b>
.....	
<b>MAKING YOUR STAFF STAND OUT</b>	<b>6</b>
.....	
<b>HOW WINEFULNESS WORKS</b>	<b>7</b>
.....	
<b>SAMPLE PROGRAM OVERVIEW</b>	<b>8</b>
.....	
<b>WEEK1:</b>	<b>9</b>
.....	
<b>WEEK 2:</b>	<b>10</b>
.....	
<b>WEEK 3:</b>	<b>11</b>
.....	
<b>WEEK 4:</b>	<b>12</b>
.....	
<b>WEEK 5 AND BEYOND</b>	<b>13</b>
.....	
<b>MINDFULNESS WORKSHEETS</b>	<b>14</b>

## ABOUT JORDAN

Jordan lives and breathes his passion for wine. Since he first left his degree in Economics to pursue a career in wine, Jordan has continuously used his fascination with the topic to drive him forward through the industry at breakneck speed. Never afraid to take an opportunity, Jordan discovered his love for teaching others about wine when in the fall of 2013 he found himself simultaneously hosting a radio show, coordinating a sommelier study group, and working as Product Knowledge Manager for a 180 person sales force. He knew immediately that teaching was his passion.

By January 2015 Jordan had become the world's youngest Certified Wine Educator and one of only 400 worldwide since 1977. He was also that year's recipient of the Banfi Vintners Award for his score on the exam. Since then Jordan has had the honour of being a frequent speaker with the Society of Wine Educators and the joy of presenting seminars and courses across North America to a variety of audiences, with his focus being on educating other wine professionals.

Jordan created BeWineful to combine his passion for wine with his belief in the power of Mindfulness to heal and bring perspective in life. Jordan started practicing mindfulness meditation as a teenager when he began experiencing debilitating panic attacks. The early concepts for BeWineful were conceived when he began integrating mindfulness concepts with his work in wine following his car accident. He refined these skills for several years as a personal skill and teaching tool, until a fateful meeting with his co-founder Natalie that would spur the creation and launch of Winefulness as a way of spreading Wine, Happiness, and Mindfulness skills to everyone.



## ABOUT NATALIE

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Natalie is a professional musician with a love for wine and meditation. Since graduating from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor's in Music Performance Natalie has pursued a successful career as a Freelance french horn player that has included performances with the National Ballet of Canada Orchestra, the Bermuda Heritage Orchestra, the Toronto Concert Orchestra, the Arkells, the Panamericana Big Band, and the Canadian Brass along with appearances on TVO Kids, TSN, CBC Radio, and Ici Musique.

The wine industry found Natalie when she returned to Niagara to heal and seek treatment following years of struggling with Anxiety disorder and a neck injury that had interrupted her playing. Having built related skills while working in Alumni Development and Fundraising roles, Natalie found herself working in Sales first for Uncork Niagara Wine Tours, and then as the Sales and Social Media Coordinator for Niagara Vintage Wine Tours. It was during this time that Jordan and Natalie began working on BeWineful.

Today Natalie splits her time between her work as a Freelance French Horn Player, a French Horn Teacher, and as one of the faces of BeWineful.





2

MAKING YOUR STAFF

STAND OUT

CREATING WELL ROUNDED WINE ASSOCIATES

Having been on both sides of the tasting bar we've seen first hand the difference that a winery's staff can make. At the end of a wine tour almost nobody is talking about their favourite wines, instead they're talking about their favourite experience. This can make or break a winery's success. Not only does that experience impact their buying habits that day, but it affects the reviews they leave, what they tell their friends, and whether they come back.

We've created this program to help prepare winery associates to meet this challenge. We want every guest to leave your winery with a smile on their face and wine in their hand. To make this a reality we've identified three areas of focus for this training program: Wine Knowledge, Mindful Hospitality and Sales, and Stress Management.



THE STORY OF WINE

We want your staff to be able to engage your guests and draw them in to the magic of wine. "This riesling is fresh and tastes like apples." just doesn't cut it. We teach our students how to find the story behind the wine. We can't teach every fact in 4 weeks, but we can provide your staff with the tools to find them, and the ability to effectively communicate with guests.



MINDFUL HOSPITALITY AND SALES

Sales and Hospitality in wine come from a place of understanding. By incorporating mindfulness into our training program we provide our students with the tools to be truly present in the guest experience. Using these skills they can better understand how to serve each guest, how to pay attention to their wants and preferences, and how to make sure they leave with their perfect wine.



STRESS MANAGEMENT

Let's face it, hospitality can be stressful. Whether it's a difficult customer or just a busy day we can all feel a little worn down. It's our ability to manage this stress effectively that can be the difference between a happy guest that sings your praise, or one that walks out and leaves a scathing review. We use mindfulness to teach your staff how to manage stress, stay calm, and work with difficult people.

# HOW WINEFULNESS WORKS

While Winefulness itself is new, we based our program off of age old concepts, and proven Mindfulness meditation techniques used around the world.

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## EASY TO UNDERSTAND

Mindfulness is extremely effective but only if you practice it. The difficulty many newcomers experience when trying mindfulness is working through the confusion. Traditional meditation techniques can seem quite abstract and many learners give up early on. By using easy to understand everyday concepts such as a glass of wine we make mindfulness and its benefits accessible and understandable.

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## SENSORY MEDITATION

There are many types of meditation. We most often think of Mantra meditation like we see in movies, or breath meditation. But there are many others. Our favourite is sensory meditation. By using a focus on the senses you unlock the ability to find calm almost anywhere. That daily glass of wine? Well suddenly it's a perfect time for meditation.

## EFFECTIVE

The problem many wine students face is they get too caught up in memorizing facts and figures and miss the big picture. Using mindfulness we help each learner tap into their natural abilities to smell, taste, and experience. Additionally, we use the age old technique of learning through stories to help our students retain and understand more of what they are learning.

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## IT'S FUN

One big issue with studying any topic is that it can feel like a chore. When students are having fun they feel more engaged and they learn better. We don't want students to think "Ugh, I should probably meditate." or "Oh no, I need to study." Wouldn't you look forward to doing something more if it meant you got to have a glass of your favourite wine?

## 4

# SAMPLE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This is a sample program overview designed to give you an idea of how mindfulness can be integrated into wine education. This is a program outline we created for Niagara Wineries. Such a program can be modified to work in a variety of circumstances with the core learnings of wine and mindfulness.

### THE CLASSES

Each week's lesson provides an interactive hands on look at the week's topics. Over the course of a 2.5-3 hour class we weave together a series of wine topics, meditations, and exercises designed to provide them with skills and knowledge they can apply immediately to their work and their everyday life. Topics will include sales, hospitality, wine tasting, general wine knowledge, managing difficult situations, and more. Each week builds on the last and on readings from the workbook.

### THE WORKBOOK

The BeWineful workbook is designed to compliment the in-class program by providing additional readings and worksheets to reinforce the learning. We use a variety of techniques from meditation logs to colouring sheets to help solidify each portion of the course and keep our students on track. The workbook engages our students in the activities by giving them a physical interaction with the concepts beyond just reading or listening.

### E-LEARNING

The e-learning portion of the course helps us further reinforce the learning by providing weekly quizzes, optional video lessons, and additional meditations for our students to explore. Activities and Quizzes related to the week's topics reinforce the students' learning and make the students better prepared to apply their newfound knowledge in real life. Additionally, eager students who want to learn more have the opportunity to do so. All students will receive 1 year access to the online learning platform to learn and review at their own pace.



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# WEEK 1: BUDBREAK

## WEEK 1 PROVIDES THE FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS FOR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Week 1 introduces students to the basic skills that will provide a foundation for the weeks to come. This week's lesson will focus on getting students up and running using the concepts of winefulness to see an immediate change. We want students to have the ability to learn and adapt on the fly throughout the next four weeks and their career. Some of the topics covered include:

### TASTING MINDFULLY

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#### Tasting to find the joy instead of the judgement.

It's important to be able to evaluate a wine, but even more important is the ability to understand a wine. We introduce the students to mindful tasting to help them find a wine's story, and look for a wine's positive aspects. This positive approach will help students appreciate more wines, expand their horizons, and find stories to share with their guests and help them sell wine.

### INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS

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#### Understanding the ideas that underpin mindfulness.

Mindfulness is based around several core concepts such as present moment awareness, beginner's mind, and non-judgement. We introduce and explain these concepts in the first class so the students are able to understand and apply them in various situations. We will also introduce situations where these can be applied to improve their work efforts.

### MINDFUL HOSPITALITY

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#### Learning to remain present, and truly listen.

In week 1 we introduce the idea of mindful hospitality and provide students with exercises to start applying it to their work. We help students understand the concept of mindful listening, and using mindfulness to adapt and provide guests with their ideal experience. By communicating mindfully the students become more aware of a customer's cues that will lead them to a solution.

### THE HUMAN ELEMENT OF WINE

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#### Helping students find their connection to a wine.

Using the wines we taste we will explore some of the more interesting stories in wine to give students a taste of things to come. The class will explore a brief history of wine and how it connects us to generations of humans stretching back thousands of years. By helping them to find a connection to the product we hope to help spark a desire to learn more.

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6

# WEEK 2: FLOWERING

## **WEEK 2 OPENS STUDENTS TO THE POSSIBILITIES THAT AWAIT THEM.**

In week 2 we help students build their wine vocabulary and build competent communicators. We also help students navigate difficult topics and questions. We continue to expand upon the topics of mindfulness and meditation. Finally we help students understand how to use these lessons to sell more wine.

### **BUILDING A WINE VOCABULARY**

#### **Learn how to communicate in a clear and engaging way.**

We help students learn to understand the many terms they will encounter in wine. Using mindfulness we will show students how these aspects show themselves in the wines. We help the students learn to pick terms that are clear and helpful to customers, while avoiding those that might put customers off or confuse them.

### **BUILDING A MEDITATION PRACTICE**

#### **Understanding how meditation can be a part of your life.**

We continue to build upon the short meditation practices from week one and introduce students to ways they can apply these in everyday life both at work and at home. From longer seated meditations, to short one minute mindful check-ins between guests, we help students find the ways they can benefit from practicing.

### **NAVIGATING DIFFICULT TOPICS**

#### **From Oak to Sugar, how to avoid shooting yourself in the foot.**

Wine is full of opinion and preference. We help students learn how to use mindful listening to establish a guest's preferences and navigate difficult topics such as oak, sweetness, earthiness, and more. Learning when 16 months of french oak and a mushroomy earthiness will make the sale, and when it will break it.

### **WHITE GRAPES OF NIAGARA**

#### **Overview of common white wine grapes.**

Students will taste and learn about some of Niagara's most common white wine grapes. Learning the history behind the grapes, where they come from, what to expect, and some of the great stories behind the grapes that they can share with guests. Knowing these grapes helps students make appropriate suggestions when a guest asks for a grape you don't grow.

7

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# WEEK 3: FRUIT SET

## **WEEK 3 REINFORCES THE LEARNING SO FAR AND BUILDS A FRAMEWORK FOR APPLYING IT.**

Week 3 is when everything starts to come together; the students have the basics and they can more than hold their head above water. We continue our exploration with the common red grapes in Niagara, we continue to explore further meditations, we look at how to handle difficult customers mindfully, and begin to look at mindful eating and pairing.

### **RED GRAPES OF NIAGARA**

#### **Overview of common red wine grapes.**

For many students the red wine grapes are where they really get confused. We help students understand the red grapes they'll encounter, how to understand guests' cryptic descriptions and how to avoid common pitfalls when talking about red wines.

### **MINDFUL EATING MEDITATIONS**

#### **Meditating with and exploring food.**

Mindful eating has exploded in the past several years and for good reason. Many of us have an unhealthy relationship with food - simply eating on auto-pilot. We show students the concepts of a mindful eating meditation, and how they can use it to improve their sensory abilities and knowledge of food and wine culture.

### **HANDLING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS**

#### **You can't control difficult people, you can control your reactions.**

Difficult situations will happen, it's the reality of working in hospitality. The way your staff reacts to them though can be the difference between catastrophe and a glowing five star review. We look at how to use mindfulness to approach difficult situations with kindness and curiosity in order to improve outcomes and create happy guests.

### **FOOD AND WINE PART 1**

#### **Beginning to understand food and wine pairing.**

Food and wine pairing will be introduced with students beginning to understand the structural elements behind it such as sweet, sour, and bitter. Short exercises will introduce students to the introduction of these components. The class will also introduce the idea of traditional or cultural food pairings. They will be asked to research a traditional food pairing for their favourite wine.

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# WEEK 4: VERAISON

## WEEK 4 FINISHES THE DEVELOPMENT INTO WELL FORMED MINDFUL WINE PROFESSIONALS

Week 4 takes the skills learned over the past few weeks and adds the finishing touches needed to create a well developed wine professional ready to wow your guests. We'll finish our exploration of wines with dessert and sparkling wines, we'll look at the power of perception, and we'll look at how to stay calm and focused under pressure.

### DESSERT, SPARKLING, AND OTHER WINES

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#### Getting to the fun and unique stuff.

We'll take a look at the history, styles, and winemaking techniques behind icewine, traditional and charmat method sparkling, and fortified wines. We'll explore the unique considerations behind pouring, presenting, and selling these wines in order to help your staff show them in the best possible light.

### STAYING CALM UNDER PRESSURE

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#### Managing stress and staying focused under pressure.

This lesson is the culmination of the mindfulness techniques learned so far. This week we'll take a look at how to use the concepts and techniques learned so far to stay calm under pressure and continuously provide outstanding service no matter how busy or how stressful it gets. Customers only see what they experience, so forget the context, keep calm, and carry on.

### THE POWER OF PERCEPTION

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#### How our perception influences our reality.

Both how we deal with people, and what we think about a wine are heavily influenced by our perception. Students will learn how to use mindfulness to notice when their perception could be clouding their judgement and how they can use perception to their advantage when presenting and talking about wines.

### FOOD AND WINE PART 2

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#### Using food and wine pairings to sell.

We continue to build on week 3's discussion of food and wine pairing by exploring the food and wine pairings the students found in homework, and working together to come up with new ones. We also explore how to help guests find the perfect wine by helping them to picture it on their dinner table.

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# 9 | WEEK 5 + BEYOND: HARVEST

## **THE COURSE IS DONE AND NOW IT'S TIME TO GET OUT THERE AND APPLY IT.**

The course might be finished but the journey isn't. To give students time to practice and study, an optional final exam is available in week 6 online for certification. We also continue to provide tools and support former students after the course in various way including:

### **E-LEARNING CONTENT**

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#### **Continue to learn or refresh as needed.**

The course might be over but the learning isn't. Supplementary lessons about a variety of wine, mindfulness, and meditation topics continues to be available for up to a year after the course to allow your staff to continue developing as wine professionals on their own time.

### **OTHER BEWINEFUL CONTENT**

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#### **Continuing Education**

From our 30-day meditation challenges, to our regular courses and seminars at wineries throughout the region there are plenty of opportunities for students to continue learning if they want. We also provide a list of interesting outside resources for the students in the e-learning portion.

### **DOWNLOADABLE WORKSHEETS**

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#### **Practice Makes Perfect**

For students that enjoy using the worksheets we provide downloadable copies for them to use after the course on their own. Any of the individual worksheets from the workbook can be downloaded and completed as a refresher from time to time.

### **THE HUMAN ELEMENT**

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#### **Reach out and ask**

We love helping current and former students, as such for anything not covered in the other resources we provide our direct email. This allows students to follow up, ask questions, and get clarification down the road. Sometimes you don't think of a question until after class, and we understand that.



# MINDFULNESS WORKSHEETS

The power of mindfulness comes through practice. Ideally some of this practice will be formal meditation, but even informal mindfulness practices when completed with intention can lead to life changing outcomes. To complement this session we have included a number of worksheets for you to try out on your own in addition to what we've learned here.

## **APPROACHING THE WORKSHEETS**

On our mindfulness journey we each find practices that resonate more or less deeply with each of us. This is ok, we invite you to read the instructions and try each exercise at least once. If an exercise just isn't for you don't feel bad, just set it to the side and consider coming back to it at a later date. The only thing we ask is that you approach each exercise with an open mind, and a willingness to observe and learn from your present moment experiences.

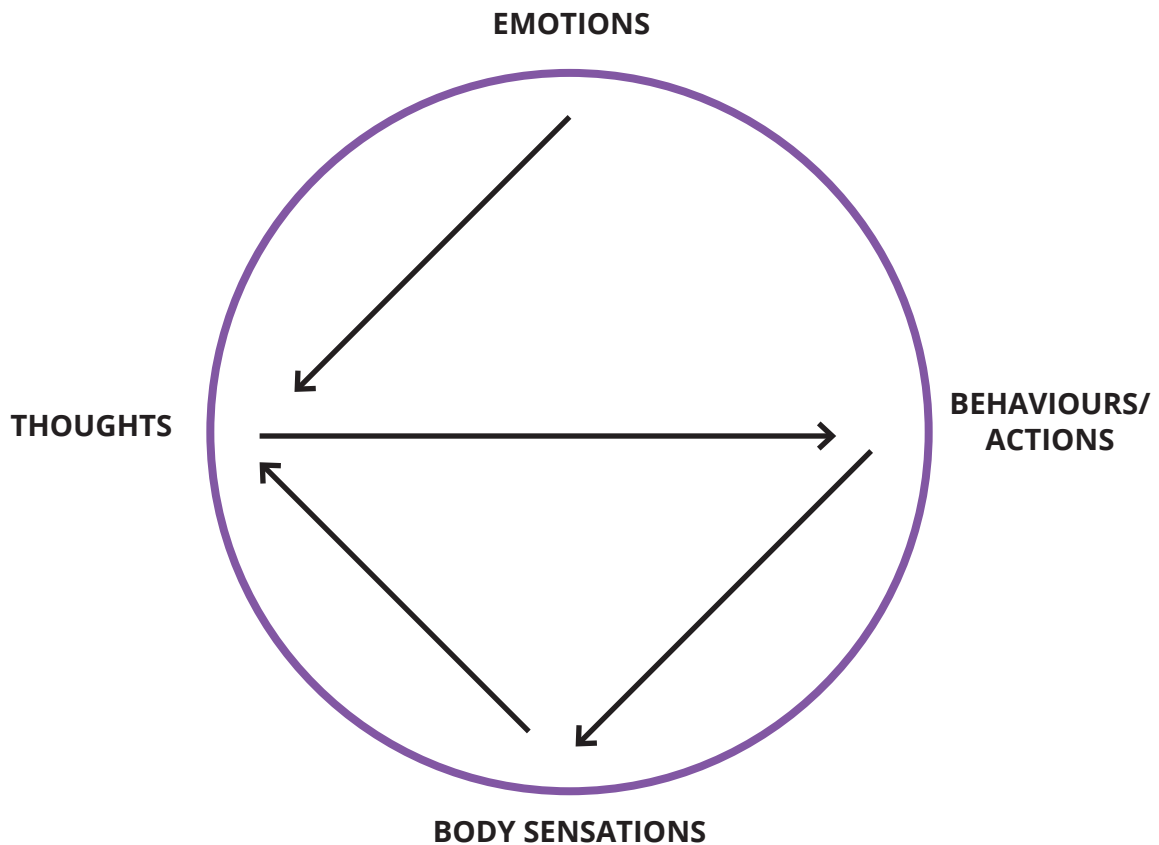
## **FORMAL PRACTICES**

Based off of the experiences in this conference session you may decide to take what you've learned and simply try out the ideas on your own. Alternately we also have several audio files of guided meditations for you to use as needed. Finally, as mentioned before, each person experiences mindfulness individually. As such we also recommend trying out other guided meditations such as those on the Headspace or Insight Timer apps.

## **LEARNING MORE**

If you have any questions at all, do not hesitate to reach out directly by email at [jordan@bewineful.com](mailto:jordan@bewineful.com). I'm always more than happy to help. To learn more about mindfulness itself and how it applies to stress and health there are a multitude of providers of MBSR and MBCT programs which can be life changing courses. There are also hundreds of wonderful books on the topic of mindfulness published every year. Andy Puddicombe and Chade Meng Tan are two authors who I believe are the best at both explaining mindfulness and making it fun.

# CIRCLE OF AWARENESS

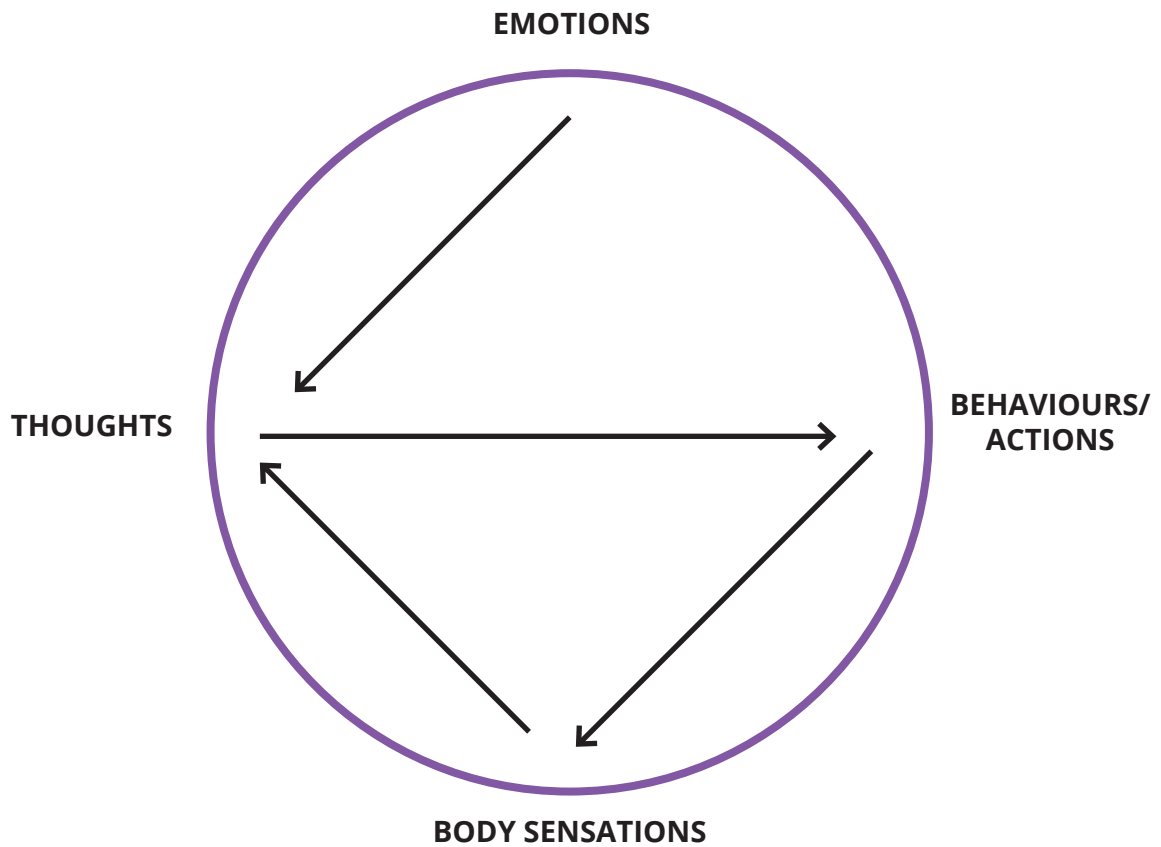
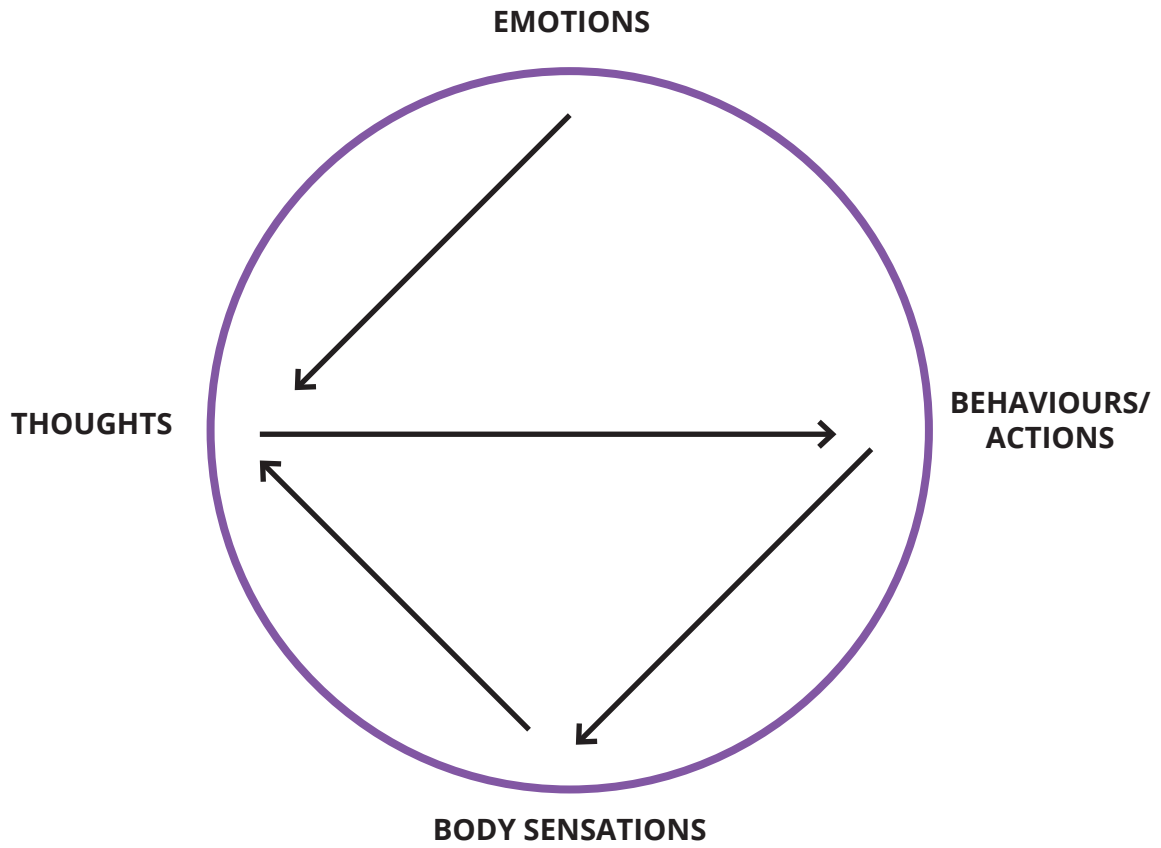


The Circle of Awareness explores the way our body and mind act together creating a feedback loop in relation to stressors. The circle uses the abilities learned through mindfulness to allow us to observe and map out how we react in a given situation.

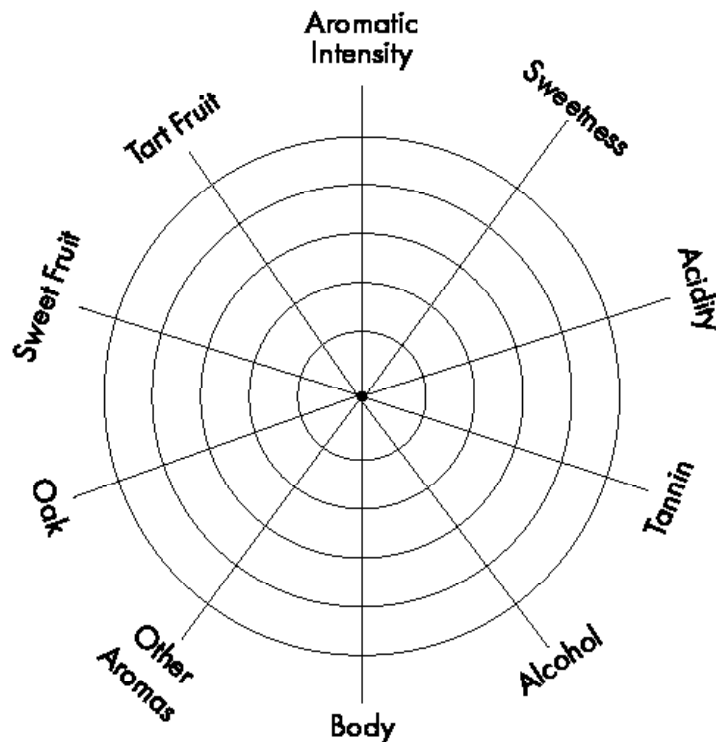
When you find yourself in a stressful situation pay attention to what you notice first, is it a thought, a sensation, or an emotion? Maybe you've already started reacting. Notice what happens next. Perhaps you start worrying about an exam (thought), which makes your heart rate increase (sensation), as this happens you begin to feel scared (emotion), when you feel scared and your heart is racing maybe you tell yourself you're going to fail (thought).

Another common situation is in difficult interactions with others, whether it's a negative interaction with a co-worker, employer, or loved one, or even a sales call. Perhaps the customer says something that makes you think they aren't interested (thought), you then get frustrated at missing another sale (emotion), because of this you tense up (sensation), and now you decide they're probably not going to buy anything (thought), and because of this maybe you forget key points or stop trying.

Both of these are situations that are avoidable. With the skills learned through mindfulness we can notice this cycle, and exit the circle. There are some extra circles on the next page. Try filling them out with a stressful situation you experience.



# VISUAL TASTING



Think of visual tasting as a body scan for wine. The goal is to break our typical tasting routine, build our awareness of the story a wine tells us, and map it visually. Many tasters find blind tasting hard because they are unknowingly creating a story for the wine. They smell a wine, a thought happens and subconsciously they make the characteristics of a wine fit that thought. With visual tasting we train ourselves to fully observe the process and take the time to mindfully observe how we interact with each component individually.

The process for visual tasting is very similar to the body scan:

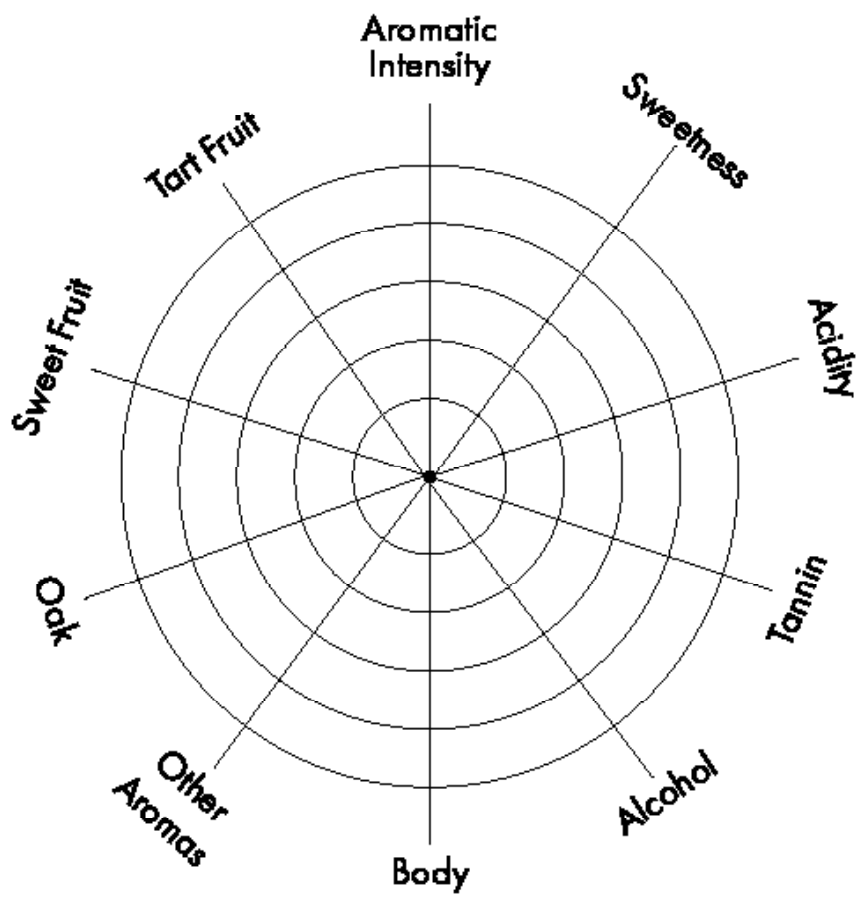
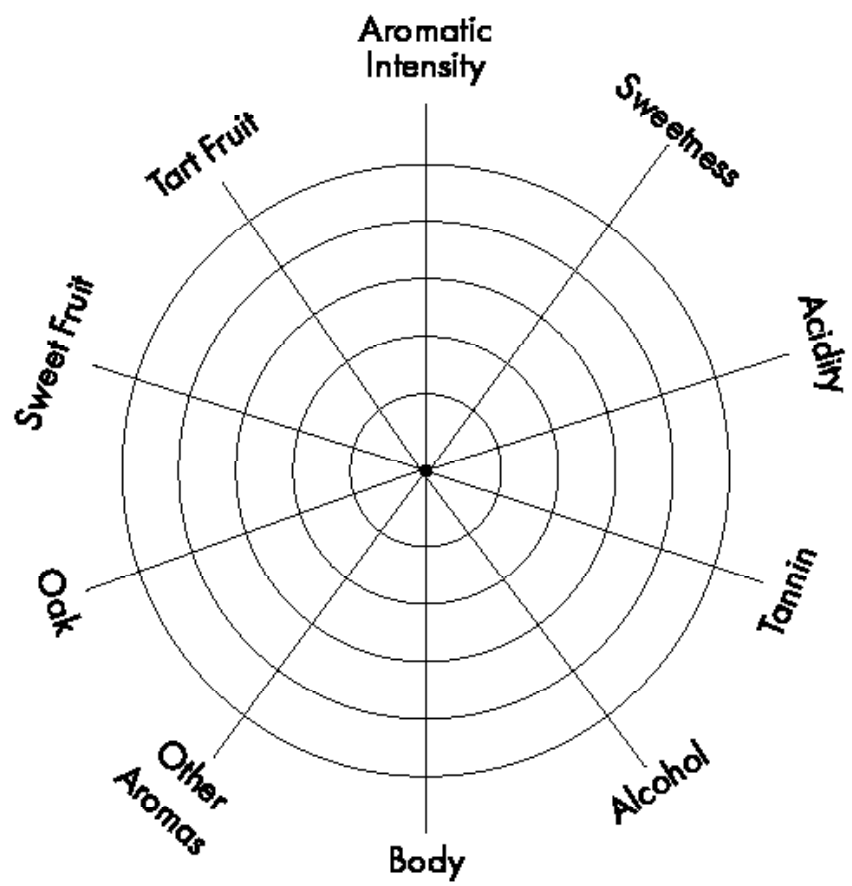
- 1) Take a few deep breaths before softening your gaze and bring your focus to the wine.

- 2) Begin by bringing your focus to the aromatic intensity and noticing how your body experiences this component of the wine. Mark your observation on the sheet. Let this process linger over several breaths.

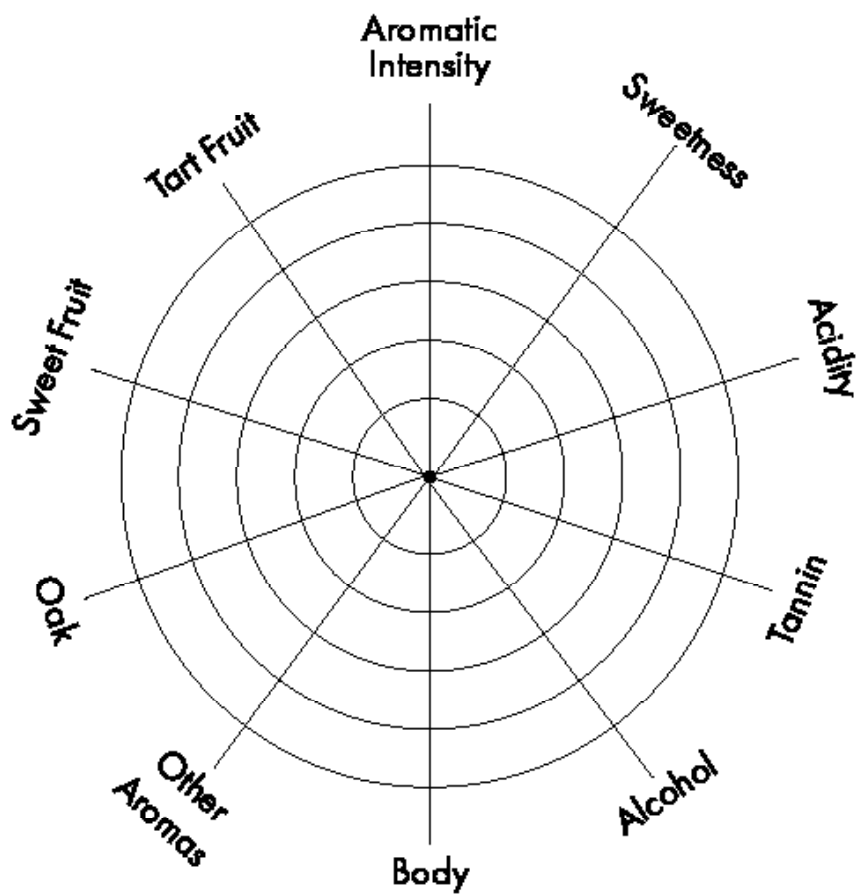
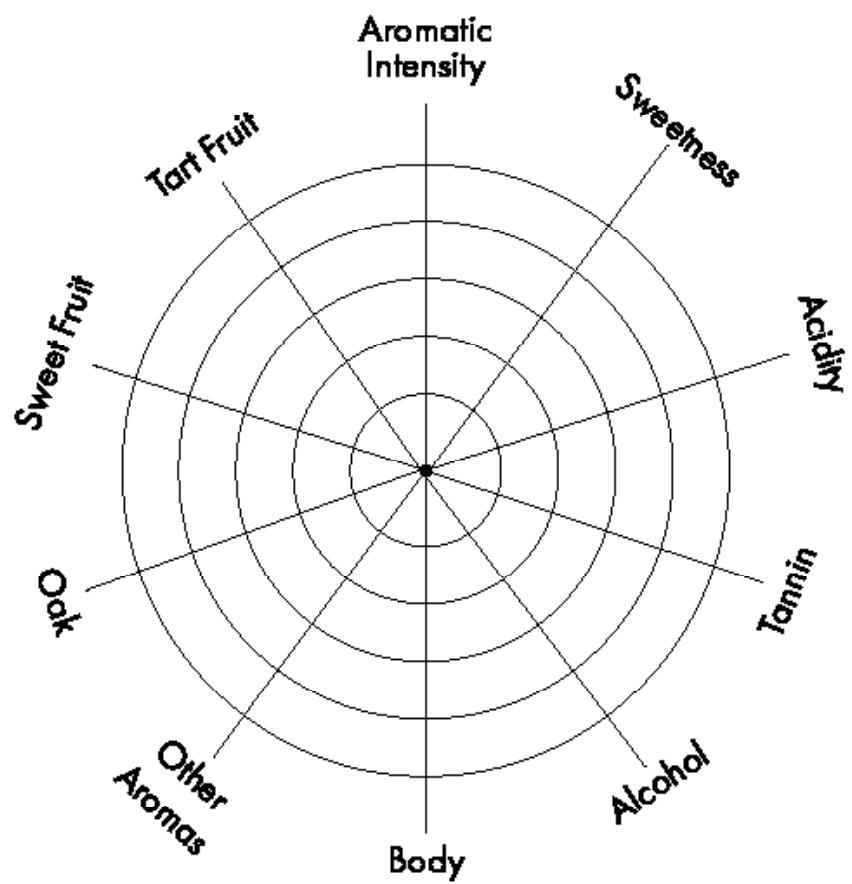
- 3) Next, work your way through the aroma categories, followed by the taste categories. With each category take the time to be fully aware of the thoughts and sensations that arise.

- 4) After the tasting reflect briefly on the overall experience of the wine and fill in the shape noticing the distinct form of this wine.

The visual tasting process also provides another method for interacting with wines and improving our ability to recall a wine when conducting a blind tasting. You can find some blank visual tasting sheets on the next page. A guided meditation is available for download.







# PLEASANT EXPERIENCES

What was the experience?	Were you aware it was pleasant?	How did you feel physically?	What moods/ Thoughts did you experience?

What was the experience?	Were you aware it was pleasant?	How did you feel physically?	What moods/ Thoughts did you experience?

# PRACTICE LOG

Date	Practice	Comments

