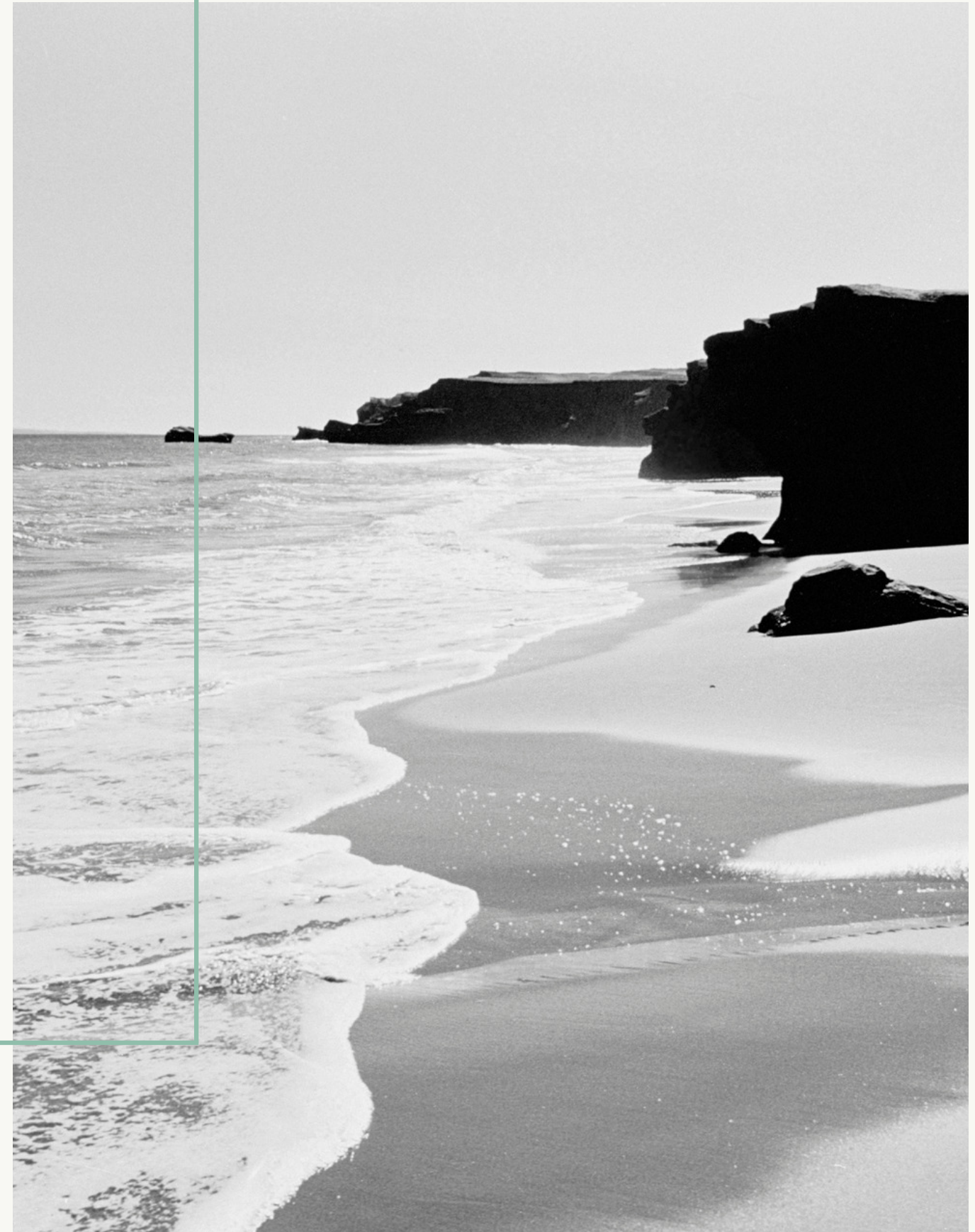


5 MINUTES TO FEEL RADICALLY CALMER



Plum Counseling & Wellness, LLC



Hey friend,

I see you – you're totally frazzled. You have 15 other things you need to be doing right now, and your muscles are in knots.

You can't remember the last time you felt fully relaxed. Is that even a thing that's possible if you're not on a tropical beach sipping Mai Tais?

Yes, it is! And it's a lot closer (and cheaper) than a trip to the Caribbean.

I know you already feel like you're pressed for time, so we'll get right to it. Ready... Set... Relax.

First, find a comfortable spot to sit.

I like sitting cross-legged on the floor with my back up against something (like a soft chair or couch).

Turn your phone to silent and set the timer for at least 5 minutes.

IF YOU HAVE EXTRA TIME:

I find it super helpful to do a short yoga routine or gentle stretching to get tuned into my breathing and loosen some of the tension in my muscles before sitting down.





**CLOSE YOUR EYES, AND PRESS YOUR
PALMS FLAT AGAINST SOMETHING.**

(This could be the floor, your thighs, your chest,
or the table in front of you.)

Really feel yourself *grounded* into your hands.

Pay close attention to your breath.

**Notice the textures that you feel under your
palms - warm, soft, cool, smooth...**

Take 10 good, deep breaths...

Feel your forehead relax and smooth.

Let your jaw soften.

Gently drop your shoulders.

Let your elbows hang loosely by your sides.

To deepen your relaxation further, start at the top of your head and work down your body, relaxing each muscle at a time.

First, relax your scalp, then your forehead, then your eyes, then your cheeks and jaw, then your neck, and so on...

Work intentionally down to your fingertips, through your stomach, and down to your toes.

Inhale for 5
counts, exhale
for 8 counts.



When we get stressed, the sympathetic nervous system kicks in to protect us from “danger,” releasing cortisol and adrenaline to prepare us to run or fight.

Deep belly breaths activate the parasympathetic nervous system, which switches off the stress response and allows the body to relax.

Don't try to control your thoughts.

Simply notice them coming and going.

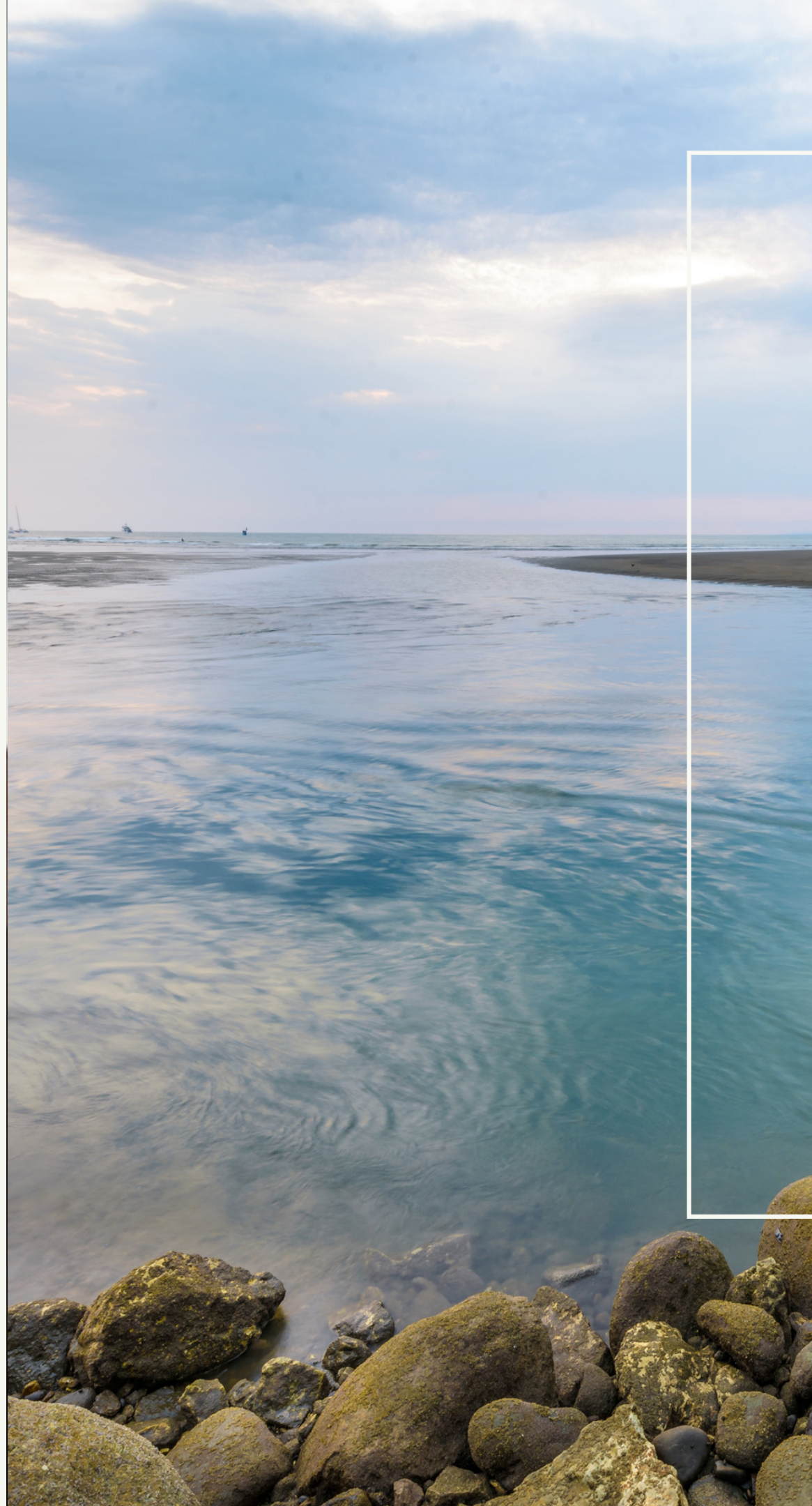
Let them drift gently by, like leaves floating on a stream,

Our brains naturally want to fill any blank space with new thoughts –
notice them and let them pass without judgment.

Keep coming back to your breath and let yourself be anchored to the
sensations under your palms.

Don't be hard on yourself - the purpose is not to completely clear your mind, but simply to continue to turn your awareness and attention back to your breath.

Think of it like exercising a muscle. The more you practice, the easier it will be to quiet your mind and anchor yourself in this feeling of calm.



**Coping
with a
wandering
mind is
difficult.**

**Sit in this
stillness for
as long as
you can.**

When your timer goes off,
slowly open your eyes.

Gently bring yourself
back to full awareness,
with intention and
kindness.



Thank you for taking this time for yourself!



Research has shown that just five minutes of mindfulness practice a day can produce measurable health benefits and an increased sense of wellbeing.

The more time you can devote to quieting your mind and body, the greater the results.

With regular practice, you'll be better able to recognize areas of tension and tightness that alert you to sources of stress in your life (which will help you address those issues more effectively).

Moreover, as you become more familiar with this place of stillness and calm within yourself, you can take refuge in it throughout the day and enjoy moments of peace wherever you are.



A LITTLE ABOUT ME...

Hello! My name is Jessie Bohnenkamp and I'm a Licensed Professional Counselor providing online therapy to clients throughout Virginia and Louisiana.

I am passionate about helping women get unstuck, find balance, and create the meaningful, joyous lives they dream of!

If you're interested in getting additional guidance or support through regular therapy, please contact me at jessie@plumcounseling.com or read more about my services at www.plumcounseling.com. I look forward to hearing from you!

Jessie

REFERENCES & RESOURCES



An interview about Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction with Elisha Goldstein:

<https://shrinkrapradio.com/152-mindfulness-based-stress-reduction/>

More on progressive muscle relaxation:

<https://www.healthline.com/health/what-is-jacobson-relaxation-technique>

An excellent 15 minute video on the benefits of mindfulness & meditation:

Why Meditate? | Change Your Brain's Default Mode

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aAVPDYhW_nw