

# Pause, Breathe, Lead

Mindfulness Practices for Resilient Nonprofit  
Leadership

Patrick Lyons

# The Cost of Constant Motion

We lead with purpose – but often from **exhaustion**.

- Constant giving, little grounding
- Always reacting, rarely reflecting
- Burnout disguised as commitment

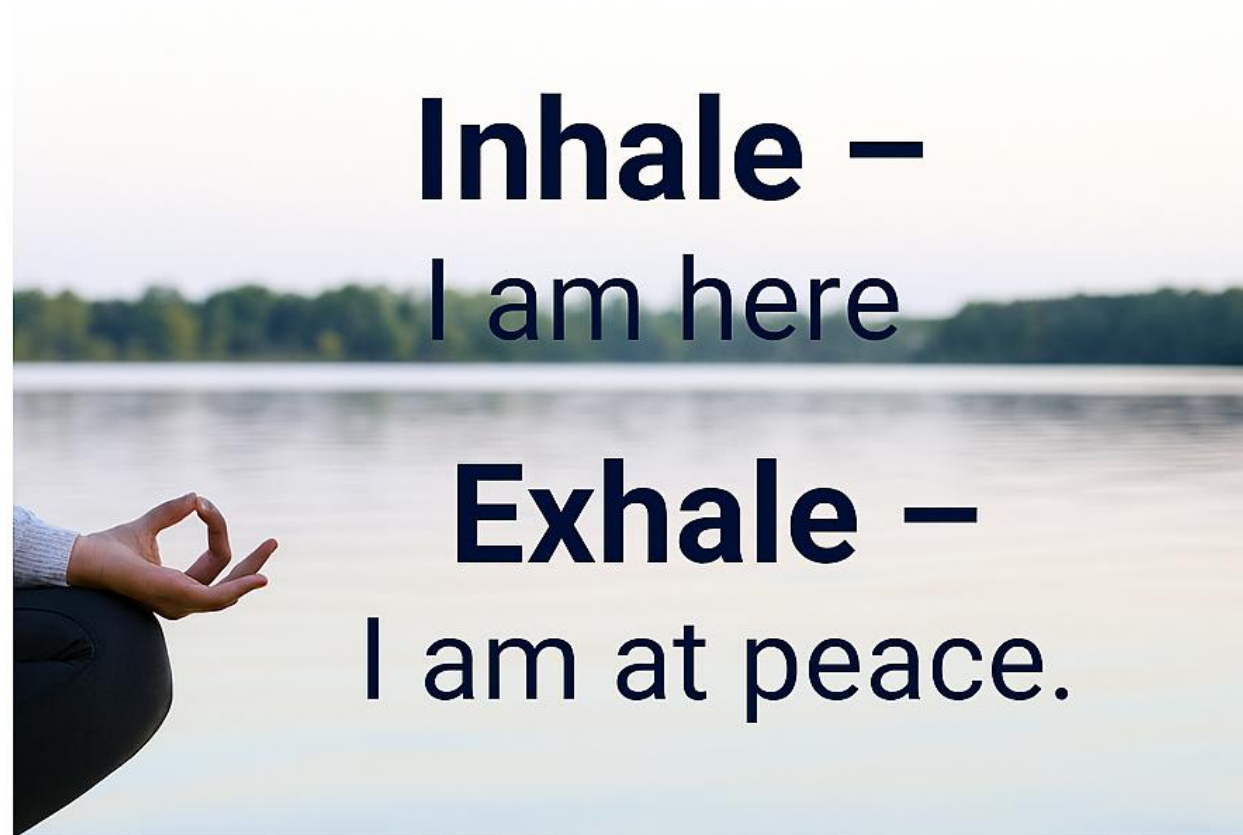
*“You can’t pour from an empty cup.”*

# Power of the Pause

- “Between stimulus and response, there is a space.”  
— *Viktor Frankl*
- Mindfulness helps leaders create space to respond with clarity.

# Why the Breath Matters

The breath connects the body and mind.  
It's our built-in reset button.



**Inhale –**  
I am here

**Exhale –**  
I am at peace.

# Box Breathing – The Power of the Pause

## Box Breathing (Four-Part Breath)

Inhale – 4 counts

Hold – 4 counts

Exhale – 4 counts

Hold – 4 counts

\* Repeat for 3–4 rounds.

“Each side of the breath forms a square – symbolizing balance, stability, and calm under pressure.”

# Mindfulness in Action for Nonprofit Leaders

- Pause before responding to conflict
- Begin meetings with a mindful check-in
- Take one minute of breath between tasks
- “Mindfulness doesn’t add time – it gives you your time back.”

# Everyday opportunities to pause

Before you react

Between meetings

In traffic

In conversations

Mindfulness isn't about finding time –

It's about finding moments

# Mindfulness in Community

“Lean on me when you’re not strong.”  
Bill Withers







# Reflection: Mindfulness in Community

“Peace isn’t the absence  
of problems – it’s the  
presence of awareness.”

# Closing Reflection

- Thank you for sharing this moment of mindfulness

# Pause, Reflect & Share

