

MINDFULMOMENTS

WYIM Newsletter

December 2025

A person with dark hair, wearing a white hoodie and blue jeans, is seen from behind, looking out through a circular opening in a dark, leafy structure. The view through the circle shows a bright, sunny outdoor scene with green foliage and a clear blue sky. The person's hand is visible on the left side of the frame, holding onto the dark structure.

Looking Back, Moving Forward
Intentional Reflection for 2026



What to Expect

This month, our newsletter focuses on transforming past experiences into future wisdom and strength through intentional reflection. Inside, you will find a practical Toolbox exercise to set compassionate New Year intentions. We explore the wisdom of balancing tenderness for the past, courage for the present, and hope for the future and reframing struggles into crucial learning moments.

We hope these pieces inspire your reflection and prepare you for a new, courageous year!

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OUR BLOG

Noticing the Gold: How to Find the Wisdom in Your Hardest Moments



The Listening Room:

The Gift of Closure: What My Clients Taught Me About Letting Go in 2025

As the year draws to a close, December brings a natural urge to reflect on the journey we've travelled. For many, this time highlights the unresolved chapters and lingering questions from the past months.

I've had the privilege this year of witnessing countless individuals finding a sense of peace and closure in their life's and through these journeys a profound truth has emerged: closure is rarely something that is 'given' to us; it is almost always something we learn to cultivate within ourselves.

Here are some of the most insightful lessons about letting go that I've learned in 2025:



Closure Isn't an Answer, It's an Acceptance

We often mistake closure for needing a final answer or an apology. Fixating on external reasons keeps the key to our peace with others. This year, individuals found freedom by shifting from seeking the why to accepting the what. Instead of "If only they explained," the thought becomes: "I accept the ending is final, and I will focus on my own healing." True closure is accepting the ending, even if it's unfinished or unfair.

The Myth of the "Clean Break" :

Letting go is not a clean cut; it's a messy, iterative process. The most successful individuals allowed themselves to feel grief and sadness without letting it define them. They understood that holding a painful memory isn't the same as being stuck in the past. Closure allows us to honour what was lost and move forward with the wisdom gained, rather than trying to erase the memory entirely.

Setting Boundaries is the Ultimate Act of Closure:

Empowerment often comes from establishing clear, protective boundaries. When we can't change a difficult situation or person, we change our relationship to it. Boundary-setting acts as internal closure. It's a decisive statement: "I accept that I cannot control this situation, but I can control how it affects me." These acts of self-respect—like limiting contact or saying 'no'—provide a sense of completion and control.

How Counselling Can Help:

As 2025 closes, offer yourself the gift of internal closure. Look at the situations you've left behind and ask:

- Where am I still waiting for an external answer? Can I shift to accepting the fact of the ending?
- What boundaries do I need to establish to protect the peace I've found?
- Can I give myself permission to grieve without letting that feeling pull me back into the past?

May your reflections this December be gentle, insightful, and ultimately, a source of profound emotional freedom as you step into the new year.

The 'Shoulds' of the Season: Moving from Pressure to Presence

December arrives, bringing a blizzard of expectations rather than gentle cheer. As the year ends, we face two intense pressures: the demand to be perfectly "festive" and the relentless audit of being perfectly "productive." These emotional 'shoulds'—I should be happy, I should have achieved more—dictate how we are supposed to feel and act. It is these commands that steal our genuine joy and pull us away from the peace and connection we truly seek this time of year.

The first hurdle is the cultural pressure for constant joy. Media presents an unattainable image of Christmas perfection: effortless cheer, immaculate gatherings. If your reality involves grief, conflict, or exhaustion, this gap creates a profound sense of failure. The festive 'should' tells you: "You must be happy now." This pressure forces us to perform, masking our true feelings and leading to isolation. Allowing yourself to feel authentic emotions—be it quiet contentment or fatigue—is a vital act of self-care, as true connection stems from authenticity, not performance.

The second forceful 'should' concerns our annual achievements. As the year closes, we harshly audit the past eleven months, comparing ourselves to others and our ambitious January goals. This often leads to the conclusion that we "didn't do enough." But life is not a linear sprint. By focusing only on unfinished, grand goals, we overlook quiet, profound victories: the emotional resilience you showed, the healthy boundaries you set, or simply the fact that you navigated a complex year. True mental well-being comes from acknowledging and integrating the experience of the year, failures included, rather than demanding perfection.



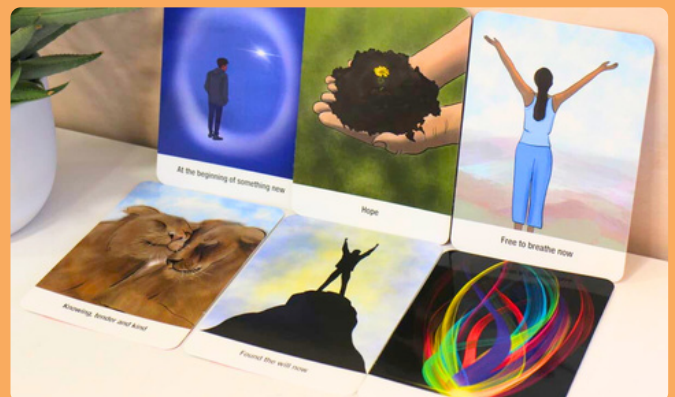
"If the weight of expectations feels overwhelming, reaching out for professional support is always an act of strength."

The antidote to debilitating 'shoulds' is embracing presence: the mindful practice of accepting the moment as it is, without judgment. This means dropping the internal measuring tape. You can foster this shift by acknowledging the 'Shoulds': name the thought, then choose to simply be. Next, lower the festive bar: give yourself permission to have an "imperfect" season; honour quiet time over mandatory parties. Finally, practice mindful reflection: look at 2025 as an observer, asking "What did I learn?" rather than "Where did I fail?" Letting go of rigid perfection opens up space for true peace.

"This December, step off the treadmill of 'shoulds.' Give yourself the radical gift of being exactly where you are and feeling exactly what you feel. This is the only way to genuinely experience the season."

Latest Blog

Noticing the Gold: How to Find the Wisdom in Your Hardest Moments



Why do we default to seeing struggle as failure? Our culture often champions ease and seamless success. When life throws us a curveball, our internal critic shouts that we should have been faster, smarter, or more prepared.

However, almost all personal growth, insight, and genuine emotional intelligence are forged in the fire of challenge. Think of your emotional self like metal: it's the pressure and heat that refine it, transforming raw material into something durable and sharp.

Reframing is the act of shifting the lens through which you view a past event. It's moving from, "I failed to keep that job," to, "That experience taught me exactly what[READ MORE](#)

Opening the Door to Counselling

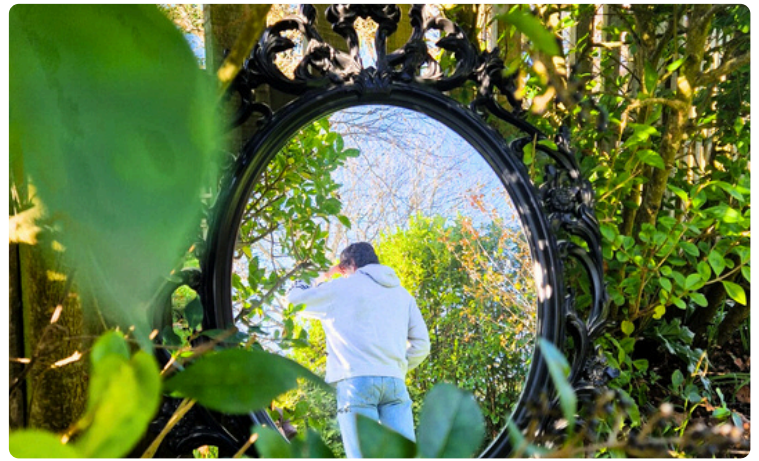
Effective counselling is structured self-discovery, not just talking. The Therapeutic Review is key to this. Think of it as an emotional year-end audit, intentionally using reflection (looking back) to guide future growth (moving forward).

The Everyday Value of Reflection:

Intentional reflection is vital for growth everywhere, from sports to business. Without reviewing, we risk repeating painful patterns. The Review process, in or out of therapy, helps us expose unconscious reactions (e.g., withdrawing under stress) to transform them into conscious choices. It also helps us highlight strengths, such as your resilience in showing up weekly, deliberately acknowledging these traits so they become a reliable future resource. Furthermore, reviewing progress validates subtle shifts (e.g., speaking assertively last week when you couldn't six months ago), solidifying momentum and marking how far you've truly come.

The Blueprint for Change: Moving Forward:

After reflection, the Review creates your Personal Blueprint for Change, ensuring insights are actively integrated into your life. This involves setting intentional goals, where we move from vague desires ("be happier") to manageable steps ("set one boundary per week"). It also means integrating wisdom: if suppressing anger was the pattern, the blueprint defines a small action, like mindfully checking in with emotions twice daily. Finally, the Review defines the focus, ensuring the next phase of



counselling or life is tailored—moving from boundaries to self-compassion, for example—keeping the work focused and intentional.

Your Co-Pilot in the Counselling Journey:

Ultimately, the Therapeutic Review shows that counselling is a collaborative partnership. Your counsellor is a co-pilot, helping you navigate your inner world. Embracing the Review transforms you from a passive participant to the active author of your own change. You build a strong foundation for a resilient, fulfilled future.

Building Your Blueprint

The "5-Minute Debrief" Journal: At the end of a day, dedicate five minutes to writing down two things: What worked well? (What strength did you use?) and What triggered an old pattern? (What did you learn?).

Translate Insight into Actionable Rules: Don't let profound insights just remain feelings. If you realise your wisdom is "I need more space," your Blueprint Action becomes a concrete rule: "I will decline all invitations for Monday evenings."

The Weekly Focus Card: Choose one key action from your blueprint (e.g., setting a boundary, practicing self-compassion) and write it on a small note card. Keep this card visible. This serves as a constant, immediate reminder of the one single, most important behavioural change you are prioritising this week.

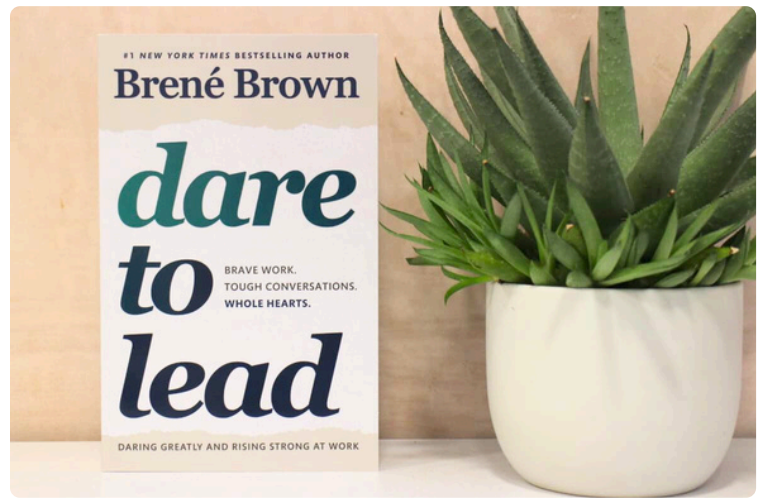


Our Recommendation

Dare to Lead by Brené Brown

We often think of leadership as something reserved for the boardroom or politics, but Brené Brown's *Dare to Lead* dismantles this notion, reframing leadership as a collection of four trainable skills: rumbling with vulnerability, living into our values, braving trust, and learning to rise. This book is an invaluable resource for anyone engaging in personal growth, making it a highly recommended read for those on a counselling journey.

💖 **Courageous Vulnerability and Self-Work**
Brown, a research professor and storyteller, grounds her work in decades of data, asserting that vulnerability is not a weakness but "the most accurate measure of courage." For those focusing on mental health, this message is transformative. The book's tools—such as identifying shame triggers and learning to rumble (meaningfully discuss) difficult emotions—directly support the deep self-work undertaken in counselling. *Dare to Lead* provides a practical roadmap for building the emotional literacy and resilience needed to navigate life's inevitable setbacks, encouraging readers to drop the armour of perfectionism and self-protection that often hinders genuine connection and healing.



✨ **Living Into Your Values:** A key component of the book is the concept of defining and operationalising your core values. Brown challenges the reader to move beyond aspirational words and identify the two non-negotiable values that truly guide their behaviour. This exercise is profoundly relevant to mental health, as misalignment between our stated values and our actions is a significant source of internal stress and guilt. By clarifying what truly matters, the book helps readers make more intentional, authentic choices, reducing self-betwisting conflict and fostering a stronger sense of integrity and self-worth. For anyone seeking to align their life with their inner compass, *Dare to Lead* offers the necessary practical steps.

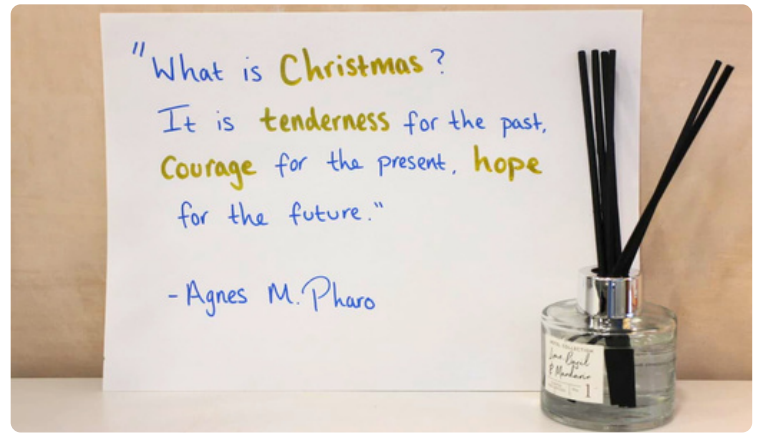
Key Insights:

Vulnerability is Courage: Shift the view of vulnerability from a weakness to the truest measure of courage. For therapeutic work, this means acknowledging and sharing difficult feelings is not risky, but essential for genuine self-discovery, connection, and building inner strength.

Clarity of Values is Clarity of Purpose: Define core values and ensure our actions align with them. Living in conflict with our true values creates significant internal stress and anxiety; aligning our choices with our values builds integrity and a strong foundation for mental well-being.

Thought-full

"What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future." – Agnes M. Pharo



A healthy mental well-being relies on three components. Tenderness for the past means practicing self-compassion and acceptance toward experiences, essential for healing past wounds without guilt. Courage in the present requires actively managing current reality, like setting boundaries and performing self-care, anchoring us in the now where change occurs. Finally, hope for the future is the vital belief in positive change, motivating us to sustain effort and growth despite difficulties.



Helpful Tool

The 'Stop, Start, Continue' Exercise for the New Year

Divide your habits into three categories on paper, focusing on well-being and energy management:

● STOP

Identify things that drain you, cause stress, or hinder well-being. Letting go creates space.

Ask: What thoughts or activities cause unnecessary guilt or sadness?

Example: Stop endless social media scrolling; Stop criticizing minor mistakes.

▶ START

Identify new, beneficial habits and practices that support the person you want to be.

Ask: What positive actions do you wish you did more often?

Example: Start a daily 15-minute walk; Start setting one clear boundary.

✓ CONTINUE

Protect and celebrate the things that are already working, bringing joy, or making you feel strong.

Ask: What makes you feel balanced or connected?

Example: Continue reading before bed; Continue weekly friend calls.

Urgent Help

If you are experiencing an immediate mental health crisis, feel unsafe, or require urgent help, please contact the following services for immediate assistance:

- **999** for emergency services.
- **NHS 111**: for urgent advice
- **The Samaritans**: Call 116 123 for free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **Shout 85258**: Text "SHOUT" to 85258 to connect with a trained volunteer for free, confidential crisis support via text, anytime.
- **Your GP**: Contact your GP during surgery hours for an urgent appointment or advice.

Your safety and well-being are the absolute priority. Please do not hesitate to reach out to these services if you need immediate help.

Contact Us

[Email Us](#)

[Call Us](#)

[WhatsApp Us](#)

