Mindfulness is a science-backed mental performance technique that helps maximize performance in a variety of ways. At its core, mindfulness is based on the notion of being fully aware and immersed in the present moment. This both requires and helps create a heightened sense of self-awareness and situational awareness. Used by everyone from professional athletes to musicians and corporate professionals, mindfulness is an invaluable tool for tactical athletes who face mental and physical stress daily.

Developing mindfulness takes deliberate practice. It enhances the ability to manage negative emotions, remain focused in stressful situations, and maintain high levels of situational awareness for effective decision-making in high-stakes circumstances. Follow the directions below to practice mindfulness and maximize your performance on and off the job.

FOCUS ON THE IMAGE

**Step 1:** Choose a time when you have 5 uninterrupted minutes in your day. This may be when you first wake up or right before bed.

**Step 2:** Shut off or silence your phone and remove other distractions from your view.

**Step 3:** Focus on the image above (or choose your own image to use). Pay attention to the image. Do this deliberately. Notice the small details in the picture. If your eyes or thoughts wander away from the image, simply bring your focus back to the image.

**Step 4:** As you become more comfortable with the exercise and notice yourself feeling less distracted, add to the amount of time you practice. This will allow you to continue to progress and improve your mental performance.