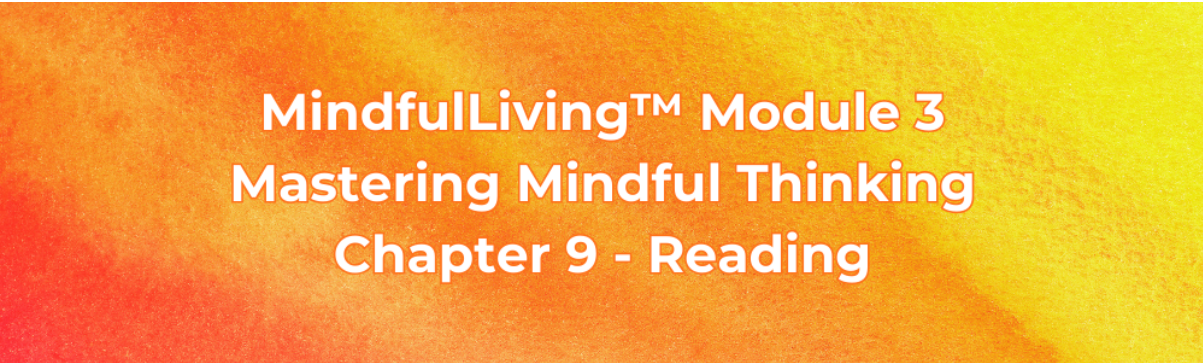




MindfulLiving™ Module 3

Mastering Mindful Thinking

Chapter 9 - Reading

Your Mind: Friend or Foe?

By Jack Kornfield

Adapted by Shery Clein MindfulLiving™ Coach

Who is your enemy? Your mind can be your greatest enemy when it is untamed. No one can harm you more than your mind when it is out of control. And who is your friend? When wisely trained, your mind can be your greatest ally, surpassing even the support of your closest loved ones. — Buddha

How can we cultivate mindfulness within the mind? Just as there is a river of bodily sensations flowing through our consciousness and a river of emotions passing through us, there is also a river of thoughts. If you try to sit silently for a minute, does your mind become quiet? You'll most likely experience a cascading stream of thoughts—a mental waterfall. Imagine a cartoon depicting a car driving across a desert with a sign that reads, "Your tedious thoughts for the next 200 miles."

One study suggests we have around 67,000 thoughts daily, though it might be closer to 37,000. Regardless of the number, this river of thoughts is beyond our control. These thoughts can be deceptive and often consist of repetitive themes, like watching the same infomercial repeatedly. Instead of being about significant issues, they might replay past relationships, work conversations, or old grievances. The mental parade continues endlessly without resolution, often feeling chaotic and overwhelming.

So, what can you do with these thoughts, particularly those filled with anxiety and fear? Through MindfulLiving™, you learn that many of your beliefs are merely products of your imagination. Thoughts can be misleading and are filled with praise, blame, hope, and fear. You might hear internalised voices of authority or self-criticism or the voices of the inner child or ambitious achiever. While some thoughts are wise and loving, many are like a bureaucracy that persists beyond its usefulness, sometimes becoming unpleasant or restrictive.

Marcus Aurelius said, "The soul becomes dyed with the colour of its thoughts." To manage this, practice not taking thoughts too seriously. Understand that thoughts are valuable servants but poor masters.

You can determine their usefulness by stepping back and observing your thoughts mindfully. While some thoughts are necessary for planning and problem-solving, you could eliminate a significant portion without impacting your effectiveness.

Begin by observing your thoughts with mindful awareness. Recognise their transient nature and understand that just because a thought arises doesn't mean you must believe or act upon it. Through conscious observation, you can free yourself from harmful thought patterns and experience liberation.

Once you recognise and release unhealthy thought patterns, you uncover a deeper level of freedom. My teacher, Sri Nisargadatta, said, "The mind creates the abyss, and the heart crosses it." You connect with a timeless presence beyond thought by resting in the present moment with mindfulness. This return to awareness beyond thoughts brings natural healing, revealing the limitless awareness behind all thoughts.

When you remember your true nature, you see with the heart. You appreciate the presence of loved ones, the beauty of blooming trees, and even mundane activities with a sense of awakening. This return to the Earth, even amidst difficulty, is profoundly influential.

Sri Nisargadatta believed the mind creates divisions of right and wrong, worry and fear, distancing us from this timeless presence. Only an awakened heart can bridge this gap. Even in hardship, an awakened heart remains rooted in love.

Jack Kornfield has taught meditation internationally since 1974 and is crucial in bringing mindfulness practice to the West. He holds a Ph.D. in clinical psychology and is a father, husband, and activist. His books, translated into 20 languages, have sold over a million copies.

Shery Klein, Personal Coach, thank you for your valuable participation. We appreciate your dedication and commitment. Our goal is to support you in navigating challenges and obstacles. Enjoy the process, relax, and have fun! Please reach out with any questions or for assistance.

Blessings. Stay Healthy & Safe ❤️ Love Shery.



MindfulLiving™

Mastering Mindful Thinking: Clarity in Every Moment

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