



The **Transformative** Power
of
MINDFULNESS

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Mindfulness Defined

- Mindfulness is the **purposeful** act of **paying attention** to an object in the **present** moment, in a **non-judgmental** way
- **Outward** versus **Inward** looking
- 4 main objects:
 1. Body
 2. Feelings
 3. Mind (Thoughts and Mental States)
 4. Dhamma (Reality)

Importance of Mindfulness in Spiritual Practice

| REQUISITES | 37 BODHIPAKKIYADHAMMA | |
|------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| 4 | 1. Four Right Efforts | |
| 4 | 2. Four Foundations of Mindfulness | Mindfulness |
| 4 | 3. Four Bases of <i>Psychic</i> Power | |
| 5 | 4. Five Spiritual Faculties | Mindfulness |
| 5 | 5. Five Spiritual Powers | Mindfulness |
| 7 | 6. Seven Factors of Enlightenment | Mindfulness |
| 8 | 7. Noble Eightfold Path | Mindfulness |
| 37 | 7 Groups | |

Maha Satipatthana Sutta (DN 22)

| FRAME OF REFERENCE | OBJECT OF MINDFULNESS |
|--------------------|--|
| Body | Breath / Postures / Daily Activities 32 Parts of the Body 4 Elements of the Body Decomposition of the Body |
| Feelings | Pain / Pleasant Neither Pain nor Pleasant |
| Mind | Passion / Aversion / Delusion Restricted / Scattered / Enlarged Surpassed / Concentrated / Released |
| Dhamma | 5 Hindrances / 5 Aggregates / 6 Sense Bases 7 Factors of Enlightenment 4 Noble Truths Noble Eightfold Path |

Anapasati Sutta (MN 118)

Mindfulness of In and Out Breathing

- **Mindfulness of in-&-out breathing**, when developed & pursued, is of great fruit, of great benefit.
- Mindfulness of in-&-out breathing, when developed & pursued, brings the **four frames of reference (four foundations of mindfulness)** to their culmination.
- The four frames of reference, when developed & pursued, bring the **seven factors for awakening** to their culmination.
- The seven factors for awakening, when developed & pursued, bring **clear knowing & release** to their culmination.

| Mindfulness of In and Out Breathing | 4 Frames of Reference | 7 Factors of Enlightenment |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| <p>Mindful he breaths in, Mindful he breaths out Breathing in long... Breathing in short... Breathe in sensitive to entire body... Breathe in calming bodily fabrications...</p> | BODY | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sati 2. Dhamma Vicaya 3. Viriya 4. Piti 5. Passaddhi 6. Samadhi 7. Upekkha |
| <p>Breathe in sensitive to rapture... Breathe in sensitive to pleasure... Breathe in sensitive to mental fabrications... Breathe in calming mental fabrications...</p> | FEELINGS | |
| <p>Breathe in sensitive to the mind... Breathe in satisfying the mind... Breathe in steadying the mind... Breathe in releasing the mind...</p> | MIND | |
| <p>Breathe in focusing on impermanence... Breathe in focusing on dispassion... Breathe in focusing on cessation... Breathe in focusing on relinquishment...</p> | DHAMMA | |

CLEAR KNOWING & RELEASE

LIBERATION

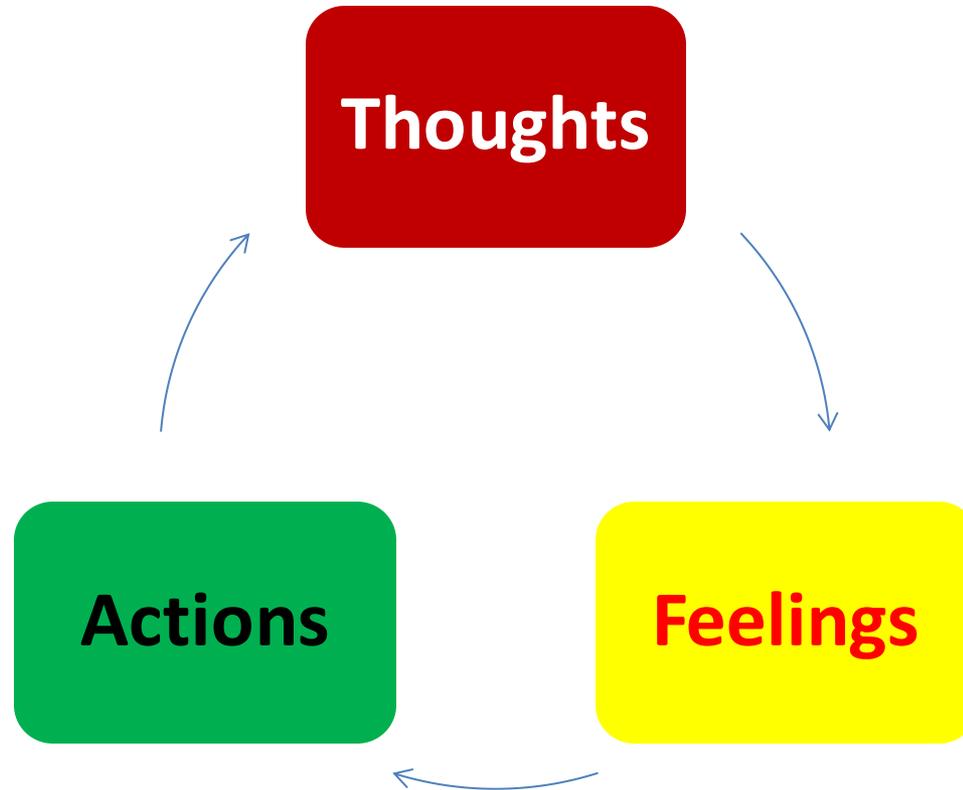
Samadhi

- **Momentary Concentration**
(khanika samadhi)
 - Daily activities
 - Better quality in meditation – changing objects
- **Access Concentration**
(upacara samadhi)
 - Vitaka & Vicara – fixed object
- **Absorption Concentration**
(appana samadhi)
 - The Jhanas

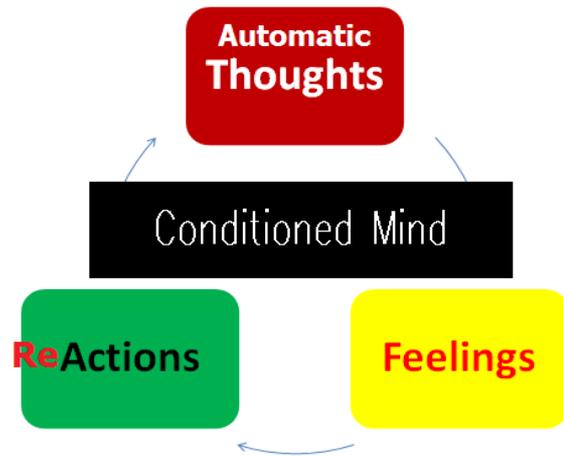
Mindfulness In Daily Life

- **Mundane mindfulness**
 - Useful in introspection (self reflection)
 - Understand what makes us tick
 - A powerful transformative tool

Mind is the Forerunner



Conditioned versus Awareness



The Power of Choice

- To some, a frightening responsibility
- Forfeiting this does not absolve you from your responsibility for your life
- Wiser to embrace it and take full responsibility for your life

The Power of Choice

Forfeit or Embrace?

FORFEIT

- Life is left to fate
- Not In driver's seat



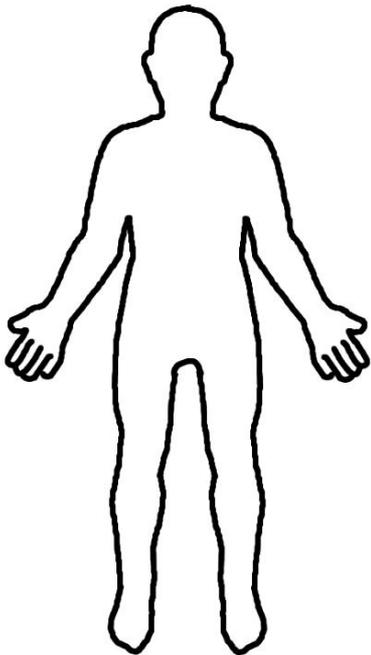
EMBRACE

- Destiny is in your hand
- In driver's seat



Mindfulness on...

Body



Emotions



Thoughts



Mindfulness on Emotions



Understanding Emotions

- We are experiencing lots of different emotions that we are not even aware of
- We have a habit of **suppressing / repressing** unpleasant emotions
- Ignorance (not knowing) is NOT bliss!
- Unresolved emotions will bounce back stronger and harder to deal with

Whatever You Resist Persists

Befriending Your Emotions

No need to fear your emotions

They are actually your best teachers

1. Acknowledge your emotions
2. Recognise and name them
3. Trace their causes (if you can)
4. Learn to manage them well

Managing Your Emotions

1. Encourage

- Be gentle with yourself
- Take baby steps; don't jump into deep end first
- Build on your success

2. Explore

- OK to make mistakes; learn from them
- Why do I feel this way? What triggers it?
- Is it true? So what?

3. Express, Transform, Let go

- Physical, vocal (verbal, crying), writing (mental)
- Transform, Replace, Shift
- Let go, Allowing

4. Evaluate

Emotional Catharsis

- The process of **releasing**, and thereby providing **relief** from, strong or repressed emotions
- Example: The lady with asthma
- GP practice: Many patients have unfounded fears about illnesses, esp C. Timely and appropriate advice and assurances can offer mental & physical comfort or relief

Primary & Secondary Emotions

PRIMARY EMOTIONS

- What you feel first
- Purest form (simple)
- Happy, Sad, Anger, Fear
[Glad, Sad, Mad, Bad]

SECONDARY EMOTIONS

- What you feel next
- Complex / Compound
- Due to **habit of thoughts**
 - Uncontrolled proliferation
 - Dramatisation
- Mostly subconscious

Proliferation of Fear

- Fear may be your primary emotion, but it is your proliferation of thoughts that magnifies it (add oil into fire)
- Example: The new car salesman
- A fearful patient
- How to manage it? The earlier you are aware of it, the easier it is to deal with it

The Waterfall of Emotions

A ----- B ----- C



Hope and Fear

Hope is expecting what is **desirable** to happen

Fear is expecting what is **undesirable** to happen

Learn to FOCUS



INSIGHT

Feed the desirable (wholesome)

Starve the undesirable (unwholesome)

Befriending Your Fears

- Fear is the function of the Self
- Transcending self, there is no fear
- Self needs **security** and **significance**
- Self **personalises** every experience
- Fear manifests in many forms
 - Seeking approval
 - Need to control
 - Belittling, Criticising, Judging
 - Restlessness
 - Generalised anxiety, depression

The Paradox of Self

- In worldly sense, a **healthy self** is required for good self esteem
- In spiritual sense, **selflessness** is the goal
- Selflessness is a higher virtue than Self.
Why?

Managing Fear

| | FEAR | TRUTHS |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Recognise and acknowledge Fear | Acknowledge sufferings |
| 2 | Identify cause of Fear | Identify cause of sufferings |
| 3 | Is there a fearless state? | Is there an absence of sufferings? |
| 4 | Map out path to this state | Path to the absence of sufferings |

The Path to Fearlessness

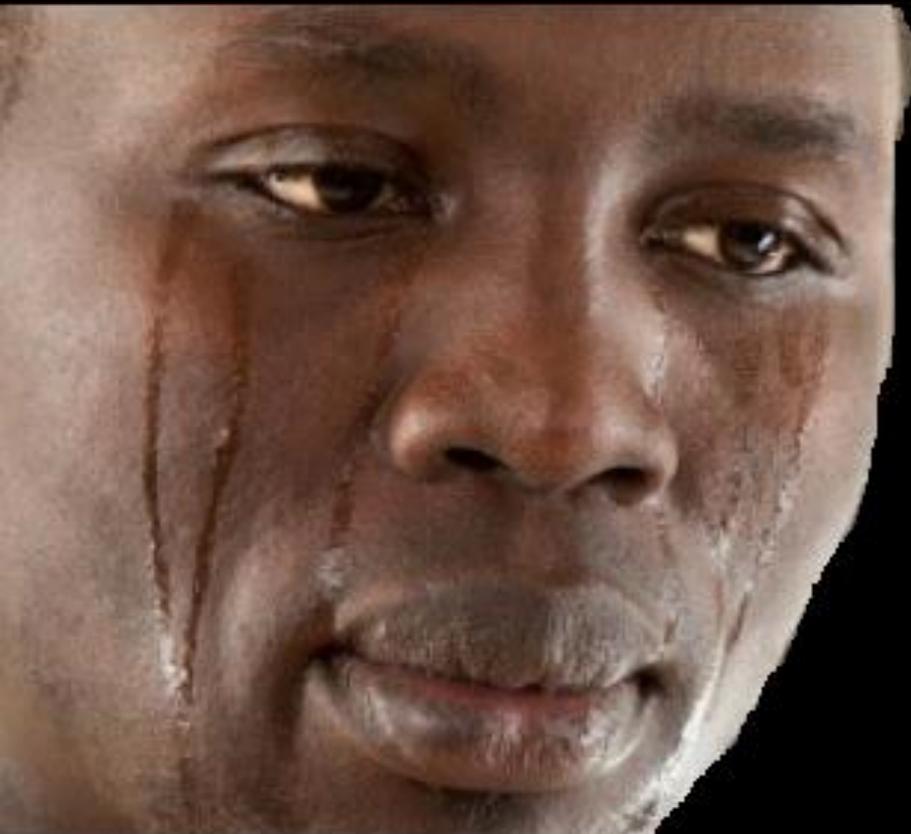
1. **Faith** in the path / treatment / cure
2. **Virtues** protect you from remorse and guilt
3. **Mental development**
 - Right Effort
 - The goal is to cultivate a general habit of positivity
 - The method is to feed the positive and starve the negative thoughts
 - Right Mindfulness
 - This skill is needed to recognize and identify our self talk / thoughts
 - Right Concentration
 - Focus on the positive

Dealing with Fearful Thoughts

1. Decide that you will **befriend** your fears
2. Identify **specifically**, what are you afraid of?
3. Self Talk
 - I. Mindfulness allows you to recognize and identify your self-thoughts / talks
 - II. Ask yourself:
 - A. Is it true?
 - B. What is the worst thing that can happen?
 - C. So what?
4. Role play the worst case scenario, and observe your own reactions to it
5. Learn techniques to alleviate your fearful reactions or anxieties
 - I. Relax by focusing on your breathing – relax tensed muscles and mind (PMR)
 - II. Visualise facing your fear and how you can positively respond to it
6. Face up to your fear



INSIGHT



**If you are in pain,
you are in error.**

- Michael Ryce

Mindfulness on THOUGHTS



The Conditioned Mind

- We are conditioned to see things in a certain way
- Example: Concept of beauty, success
- We are continuously being conditioned – at home, school, work, media, social
- We are conditioned when we accept things and beliefs without scrutinising their truths

Is a Conditioned Mind bad?

- It depends
- Running on autopilot may be useful, e.g. driving to work, simple routine tasks
- Some conditions may have outlived its usefulness, e.g. “don’t talk to strangers”
- Some are outright harmful, e.g. submit to being stuck in an abusive relationship

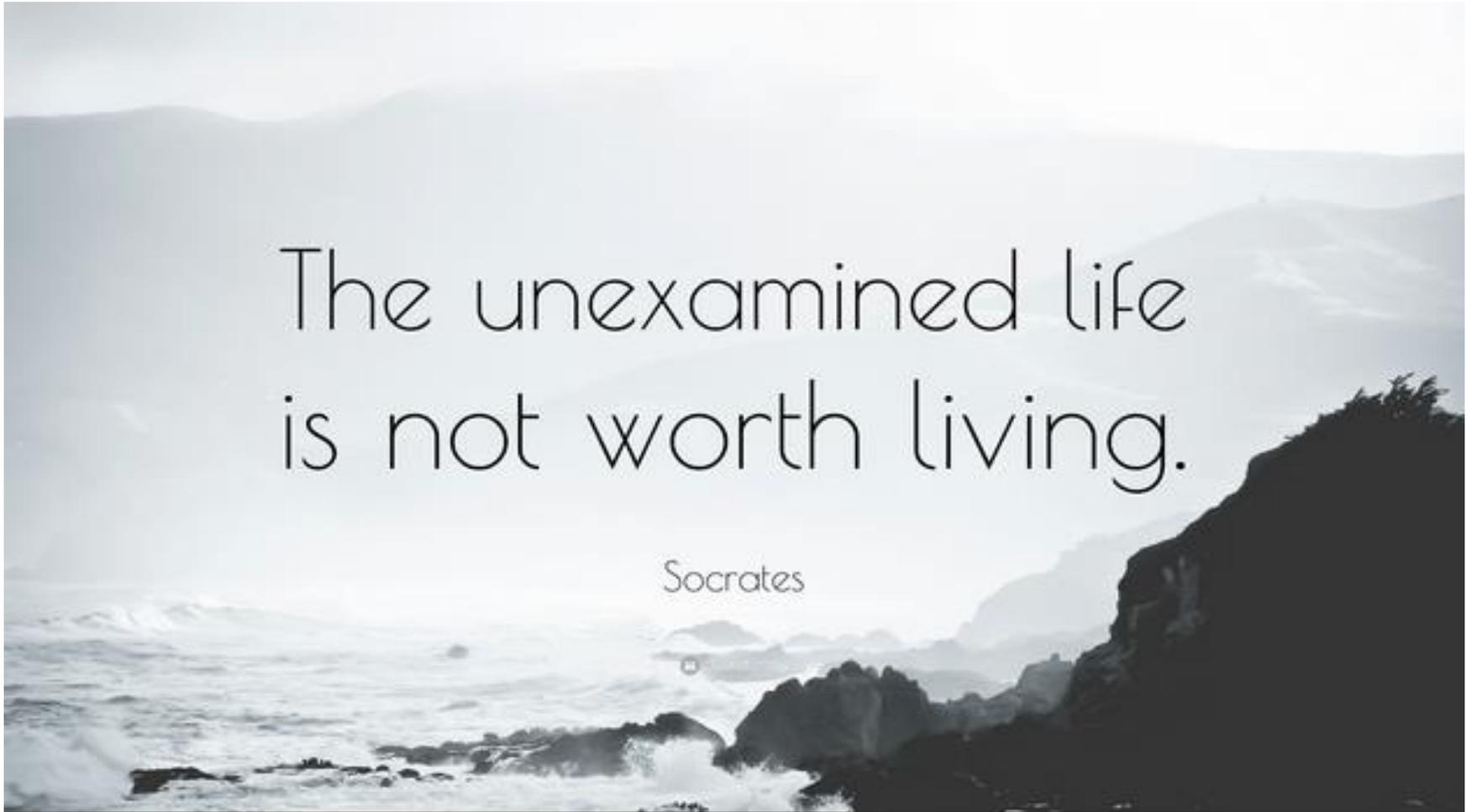
Notes on Conditioned Mind

1. A Conditioned Mind is a **sleeping** mind
2. A Conditioned Mind lives in the **past**
3. A Conditioned Mind has **tunnel vision**
4. A Conditioned Mind is a **limiting mind**
5. A Conditioned Mind is **habitual** → We called this “mental habit”

Quote

The unexamined life
is not worth living.

Socrates



Examples of Mental Habits

| POSITIVE | NEGATIVE |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Inward Focused | Outward Focused |
| Mindfulness | Mindlessness |
| Gratitude | Ingratitude |
| Acceptance | Resistance |
| Letting Go | Clinging (Grasping) |
| Non-Personalisation | Personalising, Dramatising |
| Forgiving | Vengeful |
| Equanimous | Restless |
| | Belittling, Criticising, Judging |
| | Denials |
| | Seeking Approval |

