



LEAP Online

Learning Excellence Achievement Pathway Online Tutorial

Mindfulness Powtoon

Mindfulness: We live in a fast paced, frantic, instant gratification era



The dog is in the present

The human mind is in lots of different places!

Our mind - our most valuable asset & but can be our biggest enemy.

Our mind enables us to be content, compassionate, creative, to be spontaneous and emotionally steady.

But do we look after it? Often, we spend more time looking outwards than looking inwhich can cause stress and negativity

Thoughts, Worries, fears, past memories and future fantasies all whisked up in a frenzy! Think of your thoughts in a washing machine, or shaken up snow globe or even a whirlwind.

Thinking! The biggest human addiction! We feed our minds by thinking - constantly feeding, nurturing, revisiting, analysing and repeating - almost every moment of every day.

What's the problem with thinking?! We become lost in thought - we become less present – we become less aware – we become less focussed on our experience.

So? Our conversations can become diluted or predetermined; our essays can become disjointed; or we simply reinforce the same old story line day in, day out.

But it's good to have an active mind right? It's natural – but not always beneficial. Over activity can cause stress; anxiety; a fearful mind. This is because the brain has tens of thousands thoughts per day, the majority of subconscious thought are negative!

Result - we constantly thinking and our thoughts have a negativity bias. Life is short – why spend it unhappy or stressed, why be lost in negative thought?

So what can we do about it? – Mindfulness. A scientifically proven technique that allows you to become less distracted; ten minutes per day will benefit our whole lifetime!

Through mindfulness meditation we can manage to calm our full minds; we can learn to settle our snow; sooth our minds rather than shake them up.

Mindfulness meditation allows us to restructure areas of our brain to enhance: focus & attention; emotional & social competencies.

So how do we to learn how to do it? We need to approach it in the right way.

Meditation is not about stopping thoughts, it is more like stepping back, relaxed and focussed. Focussed relaxation allows thoughts to come and go as we choose. At first it is easy to get distracted but with practice it becomes more natural.

So we walk round with spaced out empty heads? No! Mindfulness allows us to think, analyse, communicate, play, laugh, remember etc. But in a calming, balanced & meaningful way, free from stress, free from over doing things.

When we write an essay, we don't write it whilst we think about what food we are having that evening or what's on TV! We focus on each sentence as we write it and are aware of our breathing, posture and when it's time for a break.

Nagging persistent thoughts going round and round our heads lead to confusion and doubt. Mindfulness offers us the chance to step back and see that things aren't always as they seem. We don't have to be slaves to our thoughts!

Who are we? Our development is based on a mix of circumstances and conditioning so what we think is based upon who we think we are! What If I told you – you are not your thoughts? Crikey this is getting deep!

When was the last time you actually did nothing? No facebooking, whatsapping, emailing or consuming? Literally nothing - not even thinking ...? - My guess is this is virtually non-existent.

Through mindfulness you become the master of your own mind, the captain of your own ship. You stop living at the mercy of your untamed mind.

We do not know what we will encounter in life, we cannot change the outer world as we cannot prevent the world from spinning. BUT you can change the way in which YOU deal with it.

SO my challenge to you is: become circus tamer of your own mind; become present. Everything you do – do it mindfully, skilfully, ethically.

Achieve this by practising mindfulness meditation. Use your breath as an anchor and begin to see how you can let thoughts go.

After this video, click on the LEAP Online mindfulness activity to learn how to do it.

Practicing Mindfulness Meditation can be difficult. Increasing your awareness can be uncomfortable. If you need support, make use of the University's support service – Life Lounge: <http://www.bolton.ac.uk/StudentServices/Lifelounge/Home.aspx>.

For further information on mindfulness meditation, contact Joey Weber, j.weber@bolton.ac.uk.

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