

THOUGHTS ARE NOT FACTS

Our thoughts can have a large impact on how we feel and what we do. Often, we are on 'automatic' and in a habitual cycle of thoughts of which we are barely aware. Often, these habitual thought patterns are negative.

We can, however, get some perspective on these thoughts. To do this, we need to become aware of them first. Then, through practice and more practice, we can start accepting them, returning our attention to the breath and the present moment. This can put some distance between you and the thoughts and give you a different, and more moderate, perspective.

This gives us a tool for when the old, negative thought patterns invade our minds and eventually, we learn to realise that all thoughts are just thoughts or mental events. Thoughts are not facts. We are not our thoughts.

Thoughts and images can often give us a sign of what is going on deep in our minds. By practising mindfulness, you can come to identify those harmful thought patterns that cause you stress, worry and illness. Whenever you become aware of one of these patterns, e.g. 'I have been a terrible parent. Why can't I be more like Susan? Her family is perfect. I've made such a mess of things! Why was I so stupid? Why didn't I carry on studying so I can have a better job to better support my family? I'm useless.etc!'

Become aware of thoughts that may affect your mindfulness practice, such as "I won't get this right." or "It's not going to work.", "Why bother?" These thoughts are common - our minds are reluctant to give up the practices we know so well! These negative thoughts are part of the depressed mood states and these thoughts stop us from doing things to help ourselves. We are not thinking clearly enough to get out of it! What can you do? Practise mindfulness techniques.



“Where does a thought go when it's forgotten?”

— Sigmund Freud