

Introduction to Mindfulness
Gilda's Club Chicago
Stephanie Gutz
Class 3 notes (9/26/20)

We've explored mindfulness of the body/breath and emotions. Today we added mindfulness of thoughts as the object of our attention. We also tried some formal loving kindness practice (self-compassion practice).

Points:

- **The mind generates 'a waterfall' of thoughts.** The mind 'secretes' thoughts just like the mouth secretes saliva. We can't control the mind's production of thoughts--but we can change our relationship to thinking. Thoughts happen. They are not personal. You are not your thoughts.
- **Unless our attention is trained, we may be 'lost in thought' much of the time.**

We may perceive life/experiences through a distorted lens --through our concept of things, not things as they really are.

Thoughts are powerful but not necessarily true--but they can do harm to us when we are believing untrue thoughts.

Thoughts are an attempt to make a 'map' of the world.
We can ask: "Is this a useful map." Is this true?

Thoughts are 'useful' servants and terrible "masters." Don't believe everything you think. You are not your thoughts.

- How to be practice mindfulness of thoughts? As we practice with all experiences in mindfulness: **kind attention, friendly curiosity.** (see attitudes that support mindfulness in past notes).

Naming thoughts (and other experiences) can be useful--can help us stay in the practice of observing the thought (as opposed to being 'swept away' by thoughts.)

As with emotions, notice how a thought/belief registers in the body (with a friendly curiosity).

The selective attention exercise we did today:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJG698U2Mvo>

Poem

Dear You

By Kaveri Patel

<https://www.wisdominwaves.com/about.html>

Dear You,

You who always have
So many things to do
So many places to be
Your mind spinning like
Fan blades at high speed
Each moment always a blur
Because you're never still.

I know you're tired.
I also know it's not your fault.
The constant brain-buzz is like
A swarm of bees threatening
To sting if you close your eyes.
You've forgotten something again.
You need to prepare for that or else.
You should have done that differently.

What if you closed your eyes?
Would the world fall
Apart without you?
Or would your mind
Become the open sky
Flock of thoughts
Flying across the sunrise
As you just watched and smiled.

Maya Angelou

“This is a wonderful day. I’ve never seen this one before.”

Book

Leaves Falling Gently: Living Fully with Serious Illness and Life-Limiting Illness with Mindfulness, Compassion and Connectedness,
Susan Bauer Wu

Self-compassion

www.self-compassion.org

Site has a self-compassion quiz, self-compassion practices etc.

Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself,
Kristin Neff

<https://chrisgermer.com> more self-compassion information/resources