

IF YOU CANNOT STOP THINKING WHENEVER
YOU WANT THEN YOU ARE BEING...

THUNK!

HOW TO
THINK LESS
FOR SERENITY
AND SUCCESS



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AS SEEN ON DISCOVERY HEALTH

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Are You Being Thunk?

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IF YOU CANNOT STOP THINKING WHENEVER
YOU WANT, THEN YOU ARE BEING THUNK!

LET'S GET SOMETHING CLEAR FROM THE START. I'm not saying your mind is bad and you should never think again. Your mind is a remarkable tool that you can use to create marvellous things. However, what's become very apparent to me is that most people I meet don't know how to *not* think. And that certainly *is* a problem. Thinking too much is very stressful, leads to ill-health, inhibits creativity, postpones your peace, limits your love, and, perhaps most importantly, prevents you from knowing the unbounded brilliance of your real self.

You are not alone if you find it hard to not think!

Most people I meet from around the world at my clinics, courses and retreats find it near impossible to stop their minds from working overtime. They think all day long, and some of them even think their way through the night too. Unable to reduce the deluge of thoughts occurring, their unhealthy habit of thinking has become insistent, uncontrollable and intense.

*Mind mastery is attained when you can use your mind
instead of your mind using you.*

If you cannot switch off and stop thinking at will, then your relationship with your mind has become unbalanced and unproductive. Rather than you using your mind as the magnificent tool that it is, and then putting it down when you're done, your mind is quite literally *using* you! I would suggest that the result of this incessant thinking is that you aren't actually thinking any more, but instead, you are *being thunk!*

Thinking occurs when you cannot stop engaging in and reacting to the train of thoughts passing through your mind.

Being **THUNK** is one of the biggest problems on the planet today. It is a hidden cause of conflict, suffering and stress and is the main reason why you are not experiencing the peace and productivity that you are inherently capable of. If you are being **THUNK** then you are unwittingly giving the content of your thoughts the unwarranted power to negatively impact your moods, health, relationships, peace and prosperity. Worst of all, it is an utterly unnecessary problem because re-addressing your relationship with your mind is possible for everyone I have met.

People think all the time because they don't know of a better way to relate to their mind.

Before I learnt about the benefits of not thinking, I focused my personal-development efforts on changing my negative thoughts and emotions. Despite great efforts to improve the content of my mind, I found that I still got stressed and my moods continued to go up and down. Why? Because I had not solved the underlying cause of my problems: namely, my habit of thinking.

Thankfully, I've now discovered that cultivating a more consistent sense of contentment, inner peace and happiness is less about *changing your mind*, and much more about *changing your relationship with your mind*. By doing the latter, you are able to enjoy more inner peace and productivity, irrespective of what thoughts are happening in your mind. Imagine that!

You never have to be a victim of the content of your thoughts ever again.

Waking up to such a liberating possibility is one of the most important things you can ever do. As a result, this book is about showing you how to shift your focus from the *content* of your ever-changing mind to the permanently peaceful *context* of your mind. By helping you to let go of your temporary thoughts and emotions, my hope is that you will rediscover your real self – which is present, powerful and peaceful.

By learning to think less and resting in your real self, I want you to enjoy the most amazing life, free from mind-based problems and full of love, health, wealth and happiness.

To your freedom,

Sandy C. Newbigging

Who Would Have Thunk It?

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BEING PEACEFUL AND PRODUCTIVE
IS POSSIBLE!

THE TRUTH IS THE TRUTH - THERE'S ONLY ONE AND IT'S INEFFABLE.

The ways of describing it are myriad, though all have one thing in common: the power of metaphor. Metaphor is how we point to the way. When someone's metaphor resonates with you, even or especially if it's different from your own, it helps not only to stretch your mind but also to reinforce your own way by reminding you of what you already know, but might have forgotten in the rush.

When I met Sandy, I was instantly struck by his enthusiastic approach to spreading his word, and his courage in dedicating himself to forging a fresh path. I recognized myself in him, and was deeply touched by the quality of his soul.

In this magnificent new book of his, through his innovative metaphor, alluding to the same truth and path I point to myself in all my work, he does so in a totally unique, original way. So that although I've written fourteen books on the same topic, which normally leaves me nonplussed by offerings in a similar vein, I have been highly inspired reading this one and feel privileged to be writing the foreword.

As he so eruditely observes, inner peace and the joy deriving thereof is brought about not so much by changing your thinking as some would have us believe, but by shifting the whole process of thinking itself, namely by entering the meditation state, whence pure awareness arises.

Pure awareness, uncluttered by thoughts of how well or badly you're doing in the game of local life, untroubled by the usual internal commentary and debate, facilitates the emptiness, hence receptivity espoused in the Taoist tradition I live by and teach myself. Being empty and in a peaceful state, they say, even gods and spirits are drawn to you bearing great gifts, let alone mere mortals.

In other words, seek peace and all else will be added. In **THUNK!** Sandy shows you how in the most splendidly eloquent way, and I've no doubt you'll enjoy and benefit from each and every word.

BAREFOOT DOCTOR,
Best-Selling Author



*“There is nothing either
good or bad,
but thinking makes it so.”*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

To Think or Not to Think?

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THAT IS THE LIFE-CHANGING
QUESTION!

LEARNING TO THINK LESS CAN REAP RAPID REWARDS. Instead of having to individually change all of your negative thoughts and emotions so that you can *eventually* enjoy some peace, you can *immediately* connect with a presence of peace that exists within you right now.

Take a moment to consider the implications of this remarkable possibility. You don't need to spend days, weeks or years trying to fix, change and improve the content of your mind so that *one day* you can enjoy a sense of serenity. Rather, enjoying your birthright can be as simple and immediate as tapping into an inner stillness that is *already* present.

Healing your relationship with your mind reconnects you with ever-increasing levels of peace, happiness, love, joy and contentment. It can once and for all free you from limited thinking and enable you to enjoy the abundance that life has to offer. What's more, you can rediscover the unbounded brilliance of what I call your real self – the still, silent, spacious, conscious awareness that exists beyond the confines of your mind.

From being your real self as you go about your day, you can experience life in its perfection, free from problems, while resting within an inner reservoir of perfect peace, for life.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. Let me begin by sharing a bit about how my life twisted and turned and went up and down in such a way that I got to a point where I was sick and tired of thinking so much...

Everything Was Going Great

I was achieving my goals, and was living what I thought was a successful life. But then, out of the blue reality hit me. Despite my life being exactly how I'd always wanted it to be, I realized I wasn't happy yet, I didn't feel successful, nor was I experiencing much peace of mind.

Reality Check

As the creator of a powerful form of therapy called the Mind Detox Method, working internationally with people at my clinics, courses and retreats, I was surprised to realize that irrespective of all the work I'd done to change my own mind, I continued to occasionally experience negative thoughts and emotions. What made matters worse was noticing that my therapy clients were having the same experience. Don't get me wrong, the Mind Detox Method is an incredibly effective way of healing physical conditions, clearing emotional baggage and improving a person's life. But despite this, I noticed that my clients and I were not experiencing permanent peace of mind yet.

My Rock Bottom Wake-Up Call

Feeling frustrated, I realized that I could no longer rely on my future to fulfil me. I knew continuing to work so hard to accomplish

bigger and better goals wasn't going to relieve my eternal itch that *there must be more to life than this*.

To make matters worse, my increasing frustration led to a rocky time in my relationship, which inevitably ended with my partner leaving, along with the beautiful child I'd been raising, the great house I was living in, the fancy car I was driving and the pile of money we'd jointly secured as projects fell away.

Rock bottom, needing peace, I started exploring alternative ways of thinking, being and living. It was around about that time that I met a group of meditation teachers who changed my life. I saw in their eyes a peace and joy that I had never seen before; and the more time I spent with them the more obvious it became to me that their inner peace was very consistent. Hungry to experience the same, I packed my bag again and headed off to meditate with them for a few months. I spent ten weeks on the island of Patmos in Greece, followed by a further fourteen weeks in the mountains of Mexico.

A Total Turnaround In Thinking

I discovered that the real cause of my persistent problems had never been my failings at 'thinking positively'. Instead, my habit of thinking was *in itself* the ultimate cause of my problems. When I was thinking I was missing the peace that's always present. And as I learnt to think less and be present, my life became much more enjoyable. Since being shown this enlightening truth, I've experienced levels of peace, happiness, love and contentment beyond what I ever thought possible. With this book I hope to help you do the same.

Freedom From Thinking Too Much

Ultimately, when it comes to you enjoying lifelong inner peace and prosperity it's how you relate to your mind that matters. If you have to stop your negative thoughts to be at peace or feel abundant, then

you will remain a victim of the random movement of your mind for ever. However, the moment you become aware of the still, silent context of your mind, you notice there is instantly more calm and fullness than there was a moment ago. What's more, resting aware of this still silence gives you the power to choose a life lived in a state of unconditional happiness and constant contentment. Amid an ocean of what can be best described as pure, deep and unbounded love.

Sound good? Well, the best news of all is that it is possible for you. Yes, that's right, YOU!!!

Irrespective of what's happened during your life and who you think you are today, what you consider to be your successes and failures, good attributes and bad bits, your good deeds and downright awful ones and your ups and downs. Whether you have the body, looks, love life, education, career, money, home, hobbies or life you think you should. I'm here to tell you one indisputable truth.

None of these things ultimately matter. Not one iota. Not when it comes to you having the same ability as anyone else to experience serenity and success now. Yes you read that right; there are no prerequisites, no rites of passage and nothing about you needs to change or improve for you to enjoy peace for life. You see, the truth is that whether you believe it or not, you are *already* an absolutely amazing, infinitely conscious, utterly gorgeous, perfectly peaceful, love-filled human being. This is *what you are*. Whether you like it or not! All these wonderful things come built in; your gift for being born. And it's your birthright to experience the *truth of what you are*.

You may not believe it. You may not feel it. It may not be your current experience. The truth is it doesn't stop it being true! Truth overrules beliefs and feelings. Truth is absolutely real and perma-

ment. Beliefs and feelings are only relatively real and temporary. And the truth is *you are* all these wonderful things I've described, and more.

On offer here is everything you could possibly hope for. You have the opportunity of resting in the heart of all that is good. Simply by no longer buying into illusionary thinking about what you're not, you can discover the pristine peace and unbounded beauty of *what you've been* the entire time.

Peace Is Your Most Natural Way To Be

Not being peaceful actually takes effort and causes the body stress. The mind is the master and the body is the servant; or, put another way, the body follows the mind. Leading scientists have found stress to be one of the main causes of physical illnesses and conditions and, conversely, the body heals more quickly and functions optimally when it is resting, or in other words, at peace.

You were not put on this planet to get sick.

You were born to live.

You were born to live a breathtakingly awe-inspiring life! You have the potential and opportunity to both feel fantastic and manifest a magnificent reality. Your most natural way of being is to experience perfect peace, limitless love, heaps of happiness and total completeness, without needing any specific reasons to do so. We are taught we need to *do* things to *be* all these great things. This simply is not true. The reality is quite the opposite. Simply resting back into what I refer to as your real self, you can get everything you could possibly want.

This isn't optimistic. It is simply your birthright.

Isn't it a relief to recognize truth? Your heart knows this to be true. It responds to these words. Let that inner knowing be your guide. Trust your heart. Question your head. Because what you are going to discover is that peace is available to you now; by learning to think less, be present, and explore what exists beyond the confines of your mind.

The Peace That's Always Present

Within your awareness, right now, is the ongoing existence of a still, silent space. A peace. However, it is possible to miss it because you've forgotten it's there.

Growing up, you were encouraged to put 100 per cent of your attention on the movement of your mind, your body and your life. You were rarely, if ever, educated in the enlightening truth that absolutely everything happens within a constant context of pure and perfect, still silent awareness. In other words, that your mind, your body and your world all exist within an infinite and ongoing presence of peace.

So you can end up missing the peace that is your birthright to enjoy. You feel what you focus on. So by putting your attention on things in your awareness that constantly move, are forever changing and, by their very nature, are in a constant state of flux, you end up feeling uneasy. Not only that, but because you end up missing a huge piece of yourself and reality, you can end up living with a sense that something is missing; that there must be more to life than what you are currently experiencing. Can you relate to this?

Closer Than Your Next Breath

The peace you seek is always present. It exists only now. However, because you've been taught to think about the past and future you can end up, in your mind, one step removed from the peace that's

present. The good news is that the peace you seek is right under your nose. Closer than your next breath. It is you. It is here. And irrespective of how long you may have been distracted from it, it only takes an instant to return home.

My primary message to you within this book is this:

Put your attention back on the still silent space that resides within your conscious awareness right now and you will instantly reconnect with the pristine peace that is always present.

The path of peace is through a silent doorway of stillness. By bringing your attention back to the stillness that exists, always now, you immediately rest in the unbounded beauty and peaceful presence that is your real self.

Today you embark on a journey of freedom from thinking too much, which has been known for a very long time as many things, including the Path of the Sages, the Path of Return, the Path of the Hero and the Path of Joy. It is all these things and more. What you are going to learn is simple, but please don't underestimate its importance and magnitude. Knowing your real self is the purpose for which you were born.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

THUNK! is about much less being infinitely more. It is intended to be a small book that gives you enough guidance to get what's on offer, but without going into too much detail so that you get lost in the content. Simplicity is key, so please avoid over-complicating things; if while you're reading, it ever feels difficult, then stop and take a timeout. The very act of trying to 'get it' can keep you stuck in the habit of thinking.

*Thinking less is much easier than you may think –
so keep it simple.*

THUNK! is about gently disengaging your grasp on the mind, rather than going to any great efforts to manipulate, change or fix it. It's about learning how to rest aware of the present moment occurring, and noticing what exists when you let go of thinking.

Being you has to be easy, natural and simple.

As you are rediscovering an aspect to you that *already* exists, at some level you know much of what you are going to read. The purpose of the following pages is to help you remember what you inherently know and encourage you to play with the games provided. Doing so will redirect your attention back to the here and now – where you will naturally find your real self to be. Despite it being easy, please take heed of the following tips for getting the most from this book.

TIP #1 Be Innocent

The chances are you've read other self-help books and this isn't your very first attempt at wanting to enjoy more peace of mind and happiness. Most people who use my methods have tried other approaches

and been let down. However, irrespective of what's happened in the past, you need to leave the past where it belongs – in the past!

I encourage you to trust the process, suspend judgement and jump in with as much childlike curiosity and innocence as you can muster. Your mind, body and universe respond quickest to you being one-pointed by taking action without tentativeness. Leave doubt at the door when using the methods outlined in this book and do your best to not let scepticism steal your success.

TIP #2 Be Willing to Change

Although, in reality, most people's comfort zones are pretty uncomfortable, thinking your way through your day can become a familiar habit. Be completely honest with yourself when considering these questions: *Are you willing to draw a line in the sand and step out into perhaps unfamiliar territory? Are you willing to do things differently? Are you willing to trust the process even if, at the start, some parts may seem pointless? And are you willing to do whatever it takes to build momentum towards new, healthier habits?*

If yes, then great! You are reading the right book.

TIP #3 Be Easy on Yourself

Reading a book like this can make you aware of how your thoughts, emotions and lifestyle may be negatively impacting on health, wealth and happiness. But what's very important to keep in mind is that although your mind, emotions and life *are* your responsibility, you have not intentionally *done it to yourself* and it is not your fault. The ultimate cause of your problems has been your habit of thinking, and you haven't necessarily had guidance or support to live in any other way. Blaming yourself or feeling guilty about how you've been does not help you heal – quite the opposite in fact. Be easy on yourself and gently make whatever positive changes you can.

TIP #4 Be Committed

Do you really want to experience life differently? Are you willing to persist until you get the results you want?

People who have changed their relationship with their mind have made it their number one priority, for as long as it has taken. I didn't do it in a day and I continue to practise the techniques shared within this book. Instead of looking for a magic pill to magically fix everything, I encourage you to make the most of your journey by being gently persistent.

TIP #5 Finish the Book!

You bought this book because you want to stop thinking so much. It can help you get what you want, but you must commit to reading the entire book. Thinking is a lifelong habit, so it is wise to equip yourself with the right intellectual know-how to make the shift. To stop halfway would be to be within a hair's breadth of enjoying the most wonderful life, but then turn away at the last moment. Read to the very end of the book and set the intention to consistently and actively apply the exercises shared. I want you to discover the inner peace that is always present.

If you are ready for a new way of relating to your mind, can follow instructions and remain open-minded throughout, then I have complete confidence in you. Within this book is ancient wisdom with a modern twist for enjoying the unbounded benefits that can come from partaking in the liberating adventure of freeing yourself from thinking too much.



*“Unless you become like children,
you will never enter
the Kingdom of Heaven.*

*Whoever humbles himself like a child
is the greatest.”*

MATTHEW 18 : 3-4

Letting Go of What You Know

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UN-LEARNING TO BE INNOCENT AGAIN

INNOCENCE IS BLISS! When I asked my spiritual teacher to guide me towards freedom from thinking too much, he responded with the most important question I'd ever been asked. He compassionately challenged me: "Are you willing to let go of everything you think you know in order to be free?" In that moment he helped me to see that all the knowledge I'd gathered from countless books and courses had not brought me peace. On the contrary – in some ways I was more stressed and confused than ever!

Before being asked this question, I had assumed that the answer to my heart's yearning for peace was going to be found by finding *the lost secret* that had somehow eluded me my entire life; an enlightening piece of information that, when I read or heard it, would, as if by magic, make everything make sense and catapult me into nirvana. So I'd been searching high and low, reading ancient and modern texts from far and wide and asking every clever person who would listen, waiting and hoping that one day the missing piece of my peace-of-mind puzzle would finally fall into place. But that 'aha' moment had never come and my quiet frustration had only grown into an inner ache that I carried with me everywhere

I went. So when I was invited to let go of everything I thought I knew, I was ripe to revel in such a delightful possibility. Could it be true that all of my concepts and ideas *about* how peace can be experienced were the very thing standing in my way to experiencing it now?

What if, perhaps ironically, letting go of what I knew by returning to innocence, I could finally experience first-hand the peace-filled liberation that I'd been learning *about* for so long?

Be Like Children

Ever looked into the eyes of a baby? It's lovely, isn't it? One of the reasons why you enjoy it so much is that you recognize something. Something you've known but perhaps forgotten. What you see is undiluted consciousness aware of the present moment. The baby's mind is empty. It has no beliefs. It isn't judging. It isn't thinking to itself, "Jeez, she needs to get her roots redone!" or, "Wow, he's put on a few kilos". Nope, nothing like that. It's not thinking. Instead, it is just observing.

Innocent, with absolutely zero expectations, it is fully experiencing whatever it is aware of right now. Fully connected to unbounded awareness, it holds nothing and is completely open to whatever happens next. And because the baby hasn't yet learnt beliefs about how life *should* look, it is able to be open and fully experience the fullness of each moment.

Learning To Be Innocent Again

For you to get what's on offer here, you need to see beyond your conditioned mind by being completely innocent with me now. Leave any opinions, ideas and past experiences at the door. There is no place for them in this entirely new moment.

Explore what it is like to bring nothing into this moment with you. Start to innocently observe what's happening now as if you don't know what's going to happen next. Because in reality you don't know what's going to happen. You just *think* you do. And thinking stops you from directly experiencing what is *actually* happening in reality. Thinking acts as a veil that stands between what you think you are and the true wonders of what you really are and what life is.

There is a world of difference between knowing about peace and actually experiencing peace.

Play with having no preconceived ideas about how peace of mind is achieved. Knowledge knows *about* what you want, but where you're headed is the *direct experience* of what you want. Get the difference? Would you prefer to know about your favorite food or do you want to taste it? Do you want to know about the present moment or do you want to *be* present? Do you want to know about peace or do you want to experience it?

You could have memorized an entire library of books about peace, but still not be *experiencing* peace. (Trust me, I tried!) Knowledge can only take you so far. There is always a point where you must be willing to let go of what you *think you know* in order to actually experience.

Trust that nothing in the past is worth thinking about and nothing in the future could possibly be any better than what you are experiencing right now. Be with me now as if you don't know anything of value to help you to experience this moment any better. Let go of expectations of how things should be. Let go of the notion that you know how life works. Free yourself from future expectations. They only dull your experience of the magnificent moment you're in.

Innocence is fresh. It is utterly open, holds nothing and is completely empty. If you are full of concepts and ideas about life then there is no space for you to experience truth. And the truth is that the kingdom of heaven, whatever your personal idea of what that is, is at hand. You arrived the day you were born, and you were born with peace, love and joy built in, but have been led to believe you have to wait until things are different before you can experience what is actually your birthright to enjoy right now. Letting go of what you think you know helps you to step beyond the concepts of the mind to directly experience the truth and peace that is already present.

Remember the innocent baby whose mind is empty of judgments, beliefs and expectation? Over the next few days you are going to explore and play with what it is like to be innocent again.

GAME #1

Fresh Eyes

Explore what it is like to be completely fresh and innocent with the people in your life. See them with fresh eyes. Let go of any preconceived ideas you may have about your partner, parent(s), family members and friends, colleagues and even strangers. Just be with them fully, giving them your 100 per cent attention, as if this is the first and last time you will get to be in their company. Don't try to manipulate your interactions to gain any specific outcome. Instead, be open to whatever naturally wants to occur. Pretend there is no past and you have no history with anyone. Pretend the people in your life are perfect exactly as they are. That they just want to be happy, experience peace and know they are loved. Your 'soul task' is to interact with other people with no expectations. Just be open and curious as to what might happen. Look with fresh eyes and notice how much better life becomes.

GAME #2

Making The Mundane Magical

Play with what it is like to be completely fresh and innocent with any mundane tasks that you do over the next few days: doing the dishes, the daily commute to work, having a shower, putting your make-up on, tying your tie etc. Pretend these activities are your favourite pastimes and give them your full attention. You are playing with forgetting that something is boring, a person is difficult or anything should happen in any particular way. You are letting go of the notion that you think you've figured out this thing called Life. Be innocent like a child, curious and open to whatever happens.

*“Only when you give up
your attraction to thinking
do you realize that it takes
a massive amount of energy and
effort to engage in thinking.”*

M K I

Beyond Conventional Thinking

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CHANGE HOW YOU RELATE
TO YOUR THOUGHTS

PEACE IS POSSIBLE WITHOUT HAVING TO STILL YOUR MIND. How many thoughts pass through your mind on a daily basis? Incredibly, it has been said that the average person has around 100,000 thoughts every day – or approximately one thought every second. That’s a lot of thoughts! Perhaps more worrying, though, is the number of these thoughts that are negative and are thus having a potentially harmful impact on your body, your mood and your life.

Having observed the content of my own mind during countless hours of meditation and listened to literally hundreds of other people’s minds when doing Mind Detox, I believe it would be very fair to suggest that at least half of the average person’s thinking is negative. Does that percentage sound reasonable to you? It certainly did to me, at least until I realized that 50 per cent worked out at a massive 50,000 negative thoughts a day! This obviously makes any attempts to think only positive thoughts a monumental task.

The Myth Of Positive Thinking

Now I'm a believer in, and promoter of, the benefits of being positive. However, the sheer quantity of thoughts makes any attempts to change your mind so that you *only* have 'positive thoughts' an almost impossible task. So if you've done your best to think positive, but not mastered it, be easy on yourself. Such a quest is made even trickier by the fact that most of your thoughts pass through your mind without you having any control over them whatsoever. So is it a lost cause? No!

A Very Appealing Solution Indeed

Rather than attempt the impractical task of changing the thousands of negative thoughts that may pass through your mind on a daily basis, I recommend that instead you do one thing: change your *relationship* with the thousands of thoughts. The goal: to experience an ongoing sense of serenity and success, irrespective of the kinds of thoughts that pass through your mind in any given moment.

Change Your Relationship With Your Mind

Most people I meet spend their days jumping from thought to thought and, as a direct consequence, experiencing a rollercoaster of emotions. Much of their stress is the direct result of them being completely focused on the *content* of their mind rather than the *context* in which the movement of their mind happens. They are focused on their thoughts, rather than the vast silent stillness in which their thoughts take place.

Imagine you are outside on a clear sunny day, looking up at the sky. Then, out of the blue, a bird flies across your field of vision. Without realizing, you take your attention away from the vast sky and follow the flight of the bird. The same happens in your aware-

ness every day. Thoughts are something you are aware of. Thoughts are movement in your mind, yet they all happen within the context of still, silent, spacious awareness. By learning to let your attention rest on the stillness, rather than on the constant movement, you can experience a peace far beyond what you ever thought possible.

Peace Of Mind With A Million Thoughts

Until you become the master of your mind, your mind is the master of you. You will find yourself feeling up and down like a yo-yo depending on the quality of thoughts passing through your mind. If your mind produces happy thoughts you feel happy. If sad thoughts pass through then you feel sad. If confident thoughts happen you stand tall, but if fearful thoughts flood in, you can want to run scared. Thoughts happen, but if you are 100 per cent engaged in the movement of your mind then you will react like a puppet on strings. The good news is that it doesn't have to be this way.

Your peace need not be dependent upon the quality of your thoughts.

Changing your relationship with your mind makes it possible for you to have negative thoughts without them affecting your peace in the slightest. Imagine that: your mind doesn't need to affect your peace any longer. On the contrary, by cultivating the ability to selectively choose which thoughts you engage in, you can use your mind to help you to create the success you want – instead of your mind negatively using you.

Your mind can become like a radio on in the background; you can tune in to the songs you enjoy (the thoughts that are useful to you), and tune out the bad news (the downward spiralling thoughts that lead to stress, suffering and separation). You can go through

your day resting in peace, free. Even better news: you already possess an important skill to be able to do what I'm suggesting.

Have you ever been out with a friend at a busy bar or restaurant where, despite the noise, you've been able to ignore the people talking right beside you by focusing your attention on your friend's voice? (Or maybe the stranger beside you was having a more interesting conversation than your friend and you ended up tuning out your friend to listen to the other person?!). In both of these scenarios you have directed your attention to where you wanted it. The same skill is required for enjoying peace with a mind full of thoughts.

Ultimately, when it comes to enjoying inner peace, it's how you relate to your mind that matters. The moment you become aware of and place your attention upon what I will refer in this book as your real self – the still, conscious awareness that is silently aware of whatever is happening right now – you will find that there is instantly more peace than there was a moment earlier. What's more, you will then have the power to cultivate a life lived in a state of pristine peace, boundless bliss and constant contentment, amid a sea of what can be best described as pure, deep and limitless love. Sound good?

Let's get started in helping you to change your relationship with your thoughts.

You Are Not Your Thoughts

Peace of mind is possible while having thoughts because you are not your thoughts. Remember, thousands of thoughts pass through your awareness every day. They are constantly coming and going; that's what thoughts do. Thoughts appear for only a moment and then disappear to be replaced with another thought and then another one.

You exist even when you are not having thoughts.

Yet, despite countless thoughts coming and going today, there has been an aspect to you that has been here the entire time. An aspect to you that is permanent. That's your real self. It is continually present, irrespective of the quality or quantity of thoughts that come and go. This undeniable fact means one very important truth: You have thoughts but you are not your thoughts.

LET'S PLAY A GAME

Counting Thoughts

But don't take my word for it. Stop reading, close your eyes and watch your mind; quietly observe the thoughts flowing through your mind. Then, whenever you become aware of a thought – which could be about this topic, something you need to do later, or anything else – simply give the thought a number: one, two, three and so on. Awareness of a sound occurring is a thought. Awareness of a physical sensation is a thought. Even the voice in your head saying you aren't having any thoughts is a thought! So make sure you count them all. How many thoughts can you count over the next two minutes?

Stop Reading And Do It Now

Having done that, how many thoughts did you count: two, twenty-two, 202? It really doesn't matter how many. What matters is the fact that you could count even one thought. Why? Because this shows that you cannot *be* your thoughts. Instead, you are that which is aware of your thoughts. A thought is an object and you are the observer of the object. One is constant, whereas the other is constantly changing. Thoughts come and go. But *you* don't.

You are that which is aware of your thoughts, but you are not your thoughts! What a relief.

TOP TIP Thinking About VS Directly Experiencing

There is a huge difference between thinking about this game and actually doing it, now. If you do it immediately, then it will work for you – it has for 100 per cent of the people I've used it with! However, if you think about doing it, then you will end up in your head, one step removed from the direct experience of what it is I'm showing you.

The same goes for everything else I talk about in this book. It is very easy to unwittingly slip into your mind and start evaluating and judging what's being said, rather than going beyond the confines of your mind to directly experience what I'm saying. So if any of the games don't work for you, check in to see if, in that moment, you are actually doing them, or just thinking about doing them. There's a massive difference between thinking and experiencing and your peace is dependent upon you knowing the difference.

Stop Giving Away Power To Your Thoughts

No thought has the inherent power to negatively affect your mood or life success. The only way you can give thoughts power is by identifying with them through the unconscious act of thinking. To help you get your head around this, let me share an amazing analogy taught to me by my spiritual teacher.

Imagine you are outdoors with your best friend on a nice sunny day, sitting at the side of a busy road. You have been given the simple task of counting all the red cars that drive by. As you relax at the side of the road, a few cars come by – one blue, another black and then a red one, which you count. A little more time passes and

more cars drive by. You continue to sit safely at the side of the road, feeling quite serene and happy as you enjoy the scene.

Then, as a red car comes by, your friend jumps up, runs after it and, with a spectacular leap, manages to grab the car's rear bumper, at which point they start being dragged up the road. You can see very clearly that they are getting hurt and are confused as to why they are holding on so tight. So you shout after your friend – “Let go!” – to which they shout back that the red car is hurting them. You shout back “The car isn't hurting you; you are getting hurt because you are holding on to it. Let go! Let go!” The same is true for your thoughts.

Thoughts have no power to hurt you or hold you back from being a success in life. What hurts and limits you is holding onto them through the act of thinking. As you learn to change your relationship with your mind you can learn to let go of your thoughts, so that they lose their power to negatively impact on your life, for good.

TOP TIP The Voice In Your Head Is A Thought Too

You have a voice in your head that sounds like you. It comments on everything that happens, impacts on how you feel and even talks about the thoughts that are happening in your mind. When learning to relate to your mind in a more neutral manner, it helps massively to understand that it is not so much your thoughts that cause stress, but more the mental commentary *about* your thoughts.

Thoughts are neutral. It is your commentator that judges them as either positive or negative. So as you embark on thinking less, make sure you aim to be less governed by the voice in your head too. It is a thought like all the rest and by *seeing* the voice instead of *being* the voice, life becomes more serene.

Let's Make Sure We Are On The Same Page

There is an aspect to you that is permanent, but you also have thoughts that are temporary. The purpose of this chapter has been to introduce you to the possibility that you can change your relationship with your mind so that your thoughts can exist without them impacting on your peace and prosperity. This is possible because, as discussed earlier, you are not your thoughts. Instead, you are that which is aware of your thoughts – and that awareness is beyond the mind and already serene.

The sky doesn't care how many birds fly through it. Neither does it care if they are white doves or blackbirds. The same is true for your conscious awareness.

By becoming aware, you experience what your own awareness is like. Which is, yes you guessed it, peaceful. Much serenity and success comes from you learning how to put most of your attention on your conscious awareness, rather than being solely focused on what you are aware of. By making this shift in where you put your attention, you reconnect with the aspect of your real self that is permanently peaceful.

