

Mindfulness

in Everyday Life: The Way to Happiness and Meaning

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Welcome to the Webinar, Mindfulness in Everyday Life

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Poll #1

Do you have any knowledge of Buddhism?

- None
- A little
- Quite a bit
- I am a practicing Buddhist

Human Suffering

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Major Life Changes
- Existential Angst

THE FOUR NOBLE
TRUTHS...

First Noble Truth

- Suffering/Stress is inherent in life

This truth is inescapable because the cycle of life for everyone is:

- Birth
- Old Age
- Sickness
- Death

Second Noble Truth

- Suffering/Stress has a cause:
Resisting the law of impermanence
through attachment
 1. Desire
 2. Grasping
 3. Clinging

Third Noble Truth

- There is a WAY OUT of the Suffering/Stress

Fourth Noble Truth

- Reduce suffering/stress by learning to live in the here-and-now of the present moment
- Avoiding obsessing over the PAST (ruminative thinking)
- Avoid projecting fear into the FUTURE (ruminative thinking)

Lived Experience

Phenomena and reception +
response = lived experience

(Wallis, Winter 2008, p. 79)

Poll #2

What is your experience with mindfulness meditation?

- No exposure
- I've heard of it but don't know much about it
- I meditate once in a while
- I meditate most days
- I've had a practice for years

What is Mindfulness?

- Paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally. Kabat-Zinn, 1994
- (1) Awareness, (2) of present experience, (3) with acceptance. Germer et al., 2005

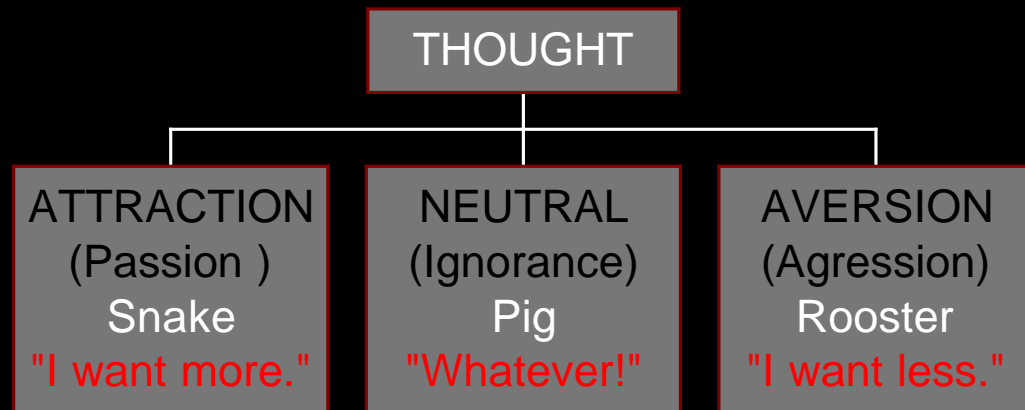
Mindfulness Meditation Practice

Mindfulness Meditation:

- is a technique or intervention that helps alleviate stress
- is a way to change our conditioned response patterns
- provides the opportunity to see clearly how the mind actually works (desire, grasping, clinging; dwelling in past and future)
- trains the mind to observe phenomena without being swept away by thought or emotion
- affects our lived experience by heightening mental control and emotional regulation
- leads to greater happiness

“Monkey Mind”

RELATIONSHIP TO THOUGHTS



Mind/Body Implications of Mindfulness Meditation

DECREASE in:

- Cortisol (stress hormone)
 - ◆ Fight or flight response
- Anxiety, Depression, Chronic Pain, Mood Imbalance, PTSD, Attention Problems, Substance Abuse
- Heart disease, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, chronic pain, and some cancers

Research and clinical studies show that a regular mindfulness meditation practice can decrease such health concerns

Mind/Body Implications of Mindfulness Meditation

INCREASE in:

- immune response
- the body's ability to produce hormones like endorphins, melatonin, and DHEA, associated with improved immune response and feelings of pleasure
- pre-frontal cortex activation (cognitive skills, higher level reasoning and integration, emotional intelligence)
- here-and-now awareness, appreciation, gratitude, meaning, relationship satisfaction, heightened sensory experience, contentment, happiness, and a greater sense of peace and joy

Approach to Mindfulness Meditation

ALAN WATTS (1996):

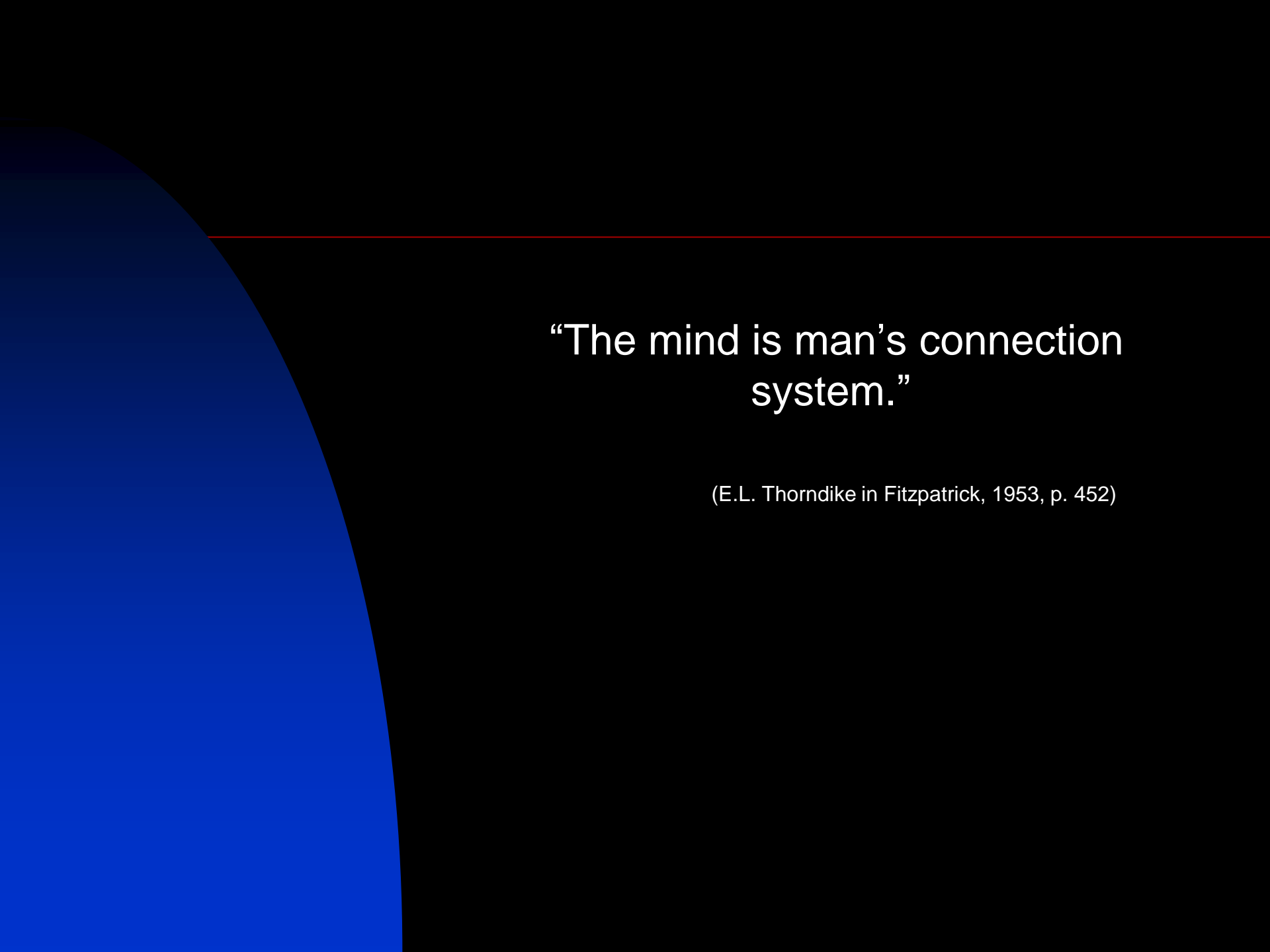
Meditation is...the art of suspending verbal and symbolic thinking for a time, somewhat as a courteous audience will stop talking when a concert is about to begin.

Simply sit down close your eyes, and listen to all sounds that may be going on--without trying to name or identify them. Listen as you would listen to music. (p. 92)

Enlightenment

OPTIMAL STRESS REDUCTION

- PRACTICE mindfulness meditation by focusing on the natural flow of the breath, returning awareness from thought back to out-breath, over and over again. This practice quiets the busyness of mind, which contributes to clarity and wisdom
- MINDFULNESS of the here-and-now, rather than being preoccupied or obsessed by past or future thinking
- NONJUDGMENTAL attention to unfolding moment
- ACCEPTANCE rather than rejection of present experience
- GRATITUDE and APPRECIATION lead to greater happiness



“The mind is man’s connection
system.”

(E.L. Thorndike in Fitzpatrick, 1953, p. 452)

Meditation Exercise

Watch on YouTube:
How to Meditate: Dr. Donna Rockwell
on Mindfulness Meditation

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=igpaPVWmCXk>

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