

Dear Mindfulness Group Member:

Here is your week three summary. The third class in our series is Our Story Telling Mind to explain a fundamental part of our human nature.

We are awash in a constant torrent of thoughts and stories. This is simply what and minds do. Yet when we learn to extricate ourselves from the stories we are constantly creating, we transform thoughts of certainty into a world of liberating possibilities. Don't believe everything you think!

In class three, we discussed the bodies reaction to stress and how our worries are like Velcro while pleasant situations are like Teflon. We talked about noticing thoughts and observing to them without reacting to every thought we have. We introduced the formal practices of Mindfulness of Sound and Walking Meditation. And we introduced the technique STOP.

This week's mindfulness tip is to try the *labeling technique* when you notice your mind has a lot going on during any given practice. If you observe your attention repeatedly wanders away to rehearsing what will happen later in your busy day, simply label it silently and gently in your own mind, "Ah... this is planning mind." And then returning your attention to your breath. You may note any mental, physical or emotional phenomena in this manner be it grief, boredom, itchiness, achiness, daydreaming or just about anything. And keep coming back gently to your practice.

Continue with the homework. Practice at least 10 minutes of Mindfulness of Breathing or Mindfulness of Sounds each day. And continue to cultivate your informal practice for activities you are already doing, like brushing your teeth but doing so mindfully. Practice the STOP technique at moments when you're prone to reactivity to create more space to instead respond skillfully.

Keep it up! We look forward to seeing you in the next class.

Warmly,