

The Northern Line to High Reality via Bank

by Alan Weller

Key statements

Preface	The purpose of this book is to help the reader have a deeper understanding of the ‘realities’ of life.
	The ‘vehicle’ used for this understanding is mindfulness.
	This book and its links encourage the reader to have a fundamental understanding of the theory of mindfulness from the original teachings of the Buddha. This part of the scriptures is called the Abhidhamma,
	It is unique in the way mindfulness is developed.
	There is another way of understanding the world and a different way of studying the world.
	This other way was of great benefit for mental health of yourself and those around you.
Introduction	The Northern Line, is the busiest on the Underground
	Transport for London staff have placed a ‘Thought for the Day’ quote at the entrance to some of the stations.
	The quotes are used as a trigger to progress the reader to a ‘higher understanding of reality’.
	Not all physics is physics? There is another way of understanding the world.
	Science has a concept as its object of understanding. ‘Direct understanding’ has a reality as its object of understanding.
	Direct understanding of reality leads to detachment from the idea of self.
	In order to progress on this path to direct understanding we need to leave science completely behind but take one fundamental principle from it, namely that all phenomena in life are conditioned.
	We can prepare for this journey to understand reality by considering the following questions. Who do we listen to? Who should we not listen to? How long will it take? Where do we go? What should we do? What qualities do we need to have? What misconceptions are there?
	After 2500 years there are many misconceptions surrounding the development of direct understanding.
	The Buddha did not appoint any monk to be his successor, but the

	teachings are the successor.
	This does not mean we do not listen to Buddhist monks or Buddhist lay teachers but it is each person's responsibility to check out what is said with the original teachings, the Tipitaka.
	The teachings alone are too difficult and subtle for the majority of us. We need the 'good friend' who can help us understand them.
	Secular mindfulness (non-religious mindfulness) leaves out is the theory.
	The path to develop understanding must begin with detachment from the very beginning. This is difficult and subtle.
	The path is about understanding the present moment.
	This path to direct understanding of reality is long and difficult.
	The book is not arranged as a sequence of lessons but is like a giant jigsaw puzzle where each piece slowly completes the picture one by one.
	This is a hybrid book. There are external links to free resources, audio, video and text, relevant to each quote.
	There are 50 pictures of Tube Stations and one of Morden Depot. Each photograph is assigned a quote which has been used on the Northern Line. The quotes were not necessarily at the Tube Station assigned.
	There is a short reflection on each quote showing the relevance to the direct understanding of reality. There are references for Further Study resources at the bottom of each page.
	Words in blue represent absolute realities.
Photography	They are stripped of all colour except the Underground Sign. This represents the stripping out of concepts from reality.
	The stations are taken with different photo lenses. This is analogous to the different ways of studying reality I.e conceptually or with mindfulness.
	A picture is worth a thousand words. The study of reality by direct experience is more informative than a description of it.
	There is no tube station in the book, merely a picture. The shades and colour of the page condition the idea of a tube station. The process is the same even when we see a real tube station.
	The shutter on the camera is open for a very short length of time typically one-thirtieth of a second. In the same way, realities arise by a condition and fall away immediately in a split second. Nothing remains.

	The photos are taken at dusk or dawn when the tube stations tend to dominate their surroundings. Usually, this is a time of only 15 minutes or so. In the same way, the opportunity to listen and consider these teachings on reality is very rare and will soon disappear.
	If you study a picture of one tube say Brent Cross you may remember what the tube looks like at some later stage e.g when you see a tube map. This memory is beyond control it will happen at some time unknown. In the same way mindfulness, this study of reality is conditioned by the firm memory of the teachings. It is beyond control. Nobody can have it at will.
	You flip the page of photo books or art books very quickly. We are never content with the pleasant objects for any length of time we are always searching for new pleasant experiences. This is a kind of suffering.
Big Ideas of Direct Understanding	It is conditioned to arise by the intellectual understanding of the Buddha's teachings about realities. No self can cause it to arise. Sitting cannot cause it to arise. Intention cannot cause it to arise. Quietness cannot cause it to arise. Trying cannot cause it to arise.
	Mindfulness studies the realities of the world. Without mindfulness it cannot develop.
	Mindfulness "is the sole way that leads to the purification of beings, to the utter passing beyond sorrow and grief, to the destruction of woe and lamentation."
	In order for it to develop the object of understanding needs to be understood (a word in blue). This is a reality, not a concept
	Direct understanding leads to detachment from the idea of self.
	It is difficult and subtle to develop. It takes great patience to listen and consider over a long period of time.
	It needs courage to give up the attachment to the idea of self.
	There are many misconceptions. It is essential to understand the core of Abhidhamma, the theory in order for it develop.
	There must be detachment from the very beginning. Attachment moves us away from the present moment.
	The development of many wholesome qualities is required such as kindness, generosity and compassion.
MORDEN DEPOT	The driver of the train is Norm (the teachings).
	You need to board this train, no one can board it for you.

	The tracks represent the right understanding of the teachings.
MORDEN	The `Big Dream` is to understand the reality of present moment.
	Virtue is a helper for that `Big Dream`.
SOUTH WIMBLEDON	We are in a constant feeding of experiences through 6 doorways.
	This accumulates, little by little and we can become fat physically and mentally.
	We can reflect on this and cultivate going in the opposite direction.
COLLIERS WOOD	There is nothing better to do in life than understand what life is.
	This can be developed in everyday life.
	Understanding will not harm you and will over time make life easier.
	Give it a try.
TOOTING BROADWAY	Attachment rules our lives.
	Attachment is a condition for aversion.
	We go wrong due to attachment.
	The understanding of reality can overcome attachment.
TOOTING BEC	Mindfulness} can arise anytime in any place.
	Nobody can `try` and have it. It is conditioned to arise.
	It is conditioned by the right understanding of the teachings about realities.
BALHAM	There is NEVER any reason to abuse nurses or tube staff.
	Kindness is rooted in detachment.
	Direct understanding of reality is rooted in detachment.
	Wholesome qualities are an aid to the development of understanding reality.
CLAPHAM SOUTH	Falling in love is attachment to pleasant feeling.
	Feelings are not permanent. They are conditioned to arise and fall away very quickly.

	Attachment to feeling is like a trap or bait. It lures us to suffering, because pleasant feelings are impermanent.
CLAPHAM COMMON	We need to be truthful with the present moment.
	We should study the teachings in order to understand reality as it is.
	We should not study it with the idea of gaining something or acquiring honour or praise.
CLAPHAM NORTH	True love does select who to love.
	True love is accompanied by calm.
	Is conditioned.
	Cannot be kept.
STOCKWELL	Thinking cannot be controlled, it is conditioned to arise.
	A positive attitude is to understand the nature of thinking.
	When the nature of thinking is understood clearer, we will be less disturbed by our circumstances.
OVAL	We accumulate good and bad qualities each moment of life.
	By giving up bad thoughts and actions, good thoughts and actions will grow.
KENNINGTON	Science overlooks the direct understanding of touching and the touched.
	Overlooking the direct understanding of touching and the touched is unsafe.
ELEPHANT & CASTLE	The world consists of realities.
	Realities are here and now.
	This world can be understood now.
BOROUGH	It is very rare to be born a human being.
	It is very rare to have the opportunity to develop the direct understanding of reality.
	To understand life is most important.
LONDON BRIDGE	Thinking moves us away from the present moment.
	The more we understand the value of understanding the present

	moment, the less we will be occupied by the past or future.
BANK	The Abhidhamma ‘higher reality’ is difficult and looks like work.
	It is essential to understand the core of it in order to develop the understanding of realities.
MOORGATE	There are risks in developing understanding.
	There are risks in not developing understanding.
OLD STREET	The right understanding of the teachings is very rare.
	Those around you will not understand the importance of these teachings.
	The teachings are against the ‘stream of common thought’.
	You need to be wary of being a victim of others ignorance.
ANGEL	Higher reality → higher training → higher learning → lower attachment to self → lower lamentation.
KINGS CROSS	It is important to understand our natural interests in daily life.
	Many different types of realities need to be understood in order to bring about detachment from the idea of self.
EUSTON	Life is risky.
	You are in the ‘mouth of death’ and may die at any time.
	It is urgent to develop understanding.
MORNINGTON CRESCENT	We may find it very difficult to go forwards.
	We will always face difficulties if we go backwards.
	There is no choice but to go forwards if we want to have fewer difficulties.
CAMDEN TOWN	There is a lot of vague ‘psychobabble’ surrounding meditation and mindfulness.
	It is not a matter of ‘you doing’ anything but just understanding the teachings until that can condition right awareness.
KENTISH TOWN	We can progress at any moment with the right understanding of the difference between reality and concept.
TUFNELL PARK	The present moment is the most important moment.
ARCHWAY	We are not ‘going with the flow’ by being attached to the present moment.
HIGHGATE	There can be a high prize for studying difficult subjects.
	Detachment from the idea of self is worth more than a high salary.

EAST FINCHLEY	Unhappiness is mostly caused by our own thinking.
	Happiness is a type of suffering because it is never satiated.
FINCHLEY CENTRAL	We go wrong because of attachment.
	It is dangerous to accumulate attachment.
WEST FINCHLEY	Death can come at any time.
	The wise do not grieve.
WOODSIDE PARK	A reality e.g. sound arises by conditions and ceases immediately. It only arises once in life.
TOTTERIDGE AND WHETSTONE	We will live a happier life if we are less selfish.
HIGH BARNET	The road to enlightenment is difficult because of our many faults.
MILL HILL EAST	It is very easy to blame other people.
	We can do something about our own faults.
WATERLOO	You may lose the opportunity completely by postponing.
EMBANKMENT	It is ambitious and a good use of intelligence to understand realities as they are.
CHARING CROSS	The good friend is essential to help us understand the right path.
LEICESTER SQUARE	The development of mindfulness does not depend on belief.
TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD	We cannot change people who do not see wrong in their actions.
	Even the most hardened of criminals may change through their own understanding.
GOODGE STREET	Even the most hardened of criminals may change through their own understanding.
WARREN STREET	Do not miss out on a rare opportunity.
CHALK FARM	The development of understanding is a gradual, long training.
BELSIZE PARK	Great minds discuss ideas about realities.
	In the Abhidhamma (higher reality) we use words, but the realities which they represent are not words.

	We use words to understand realities.
HAMPSTEAD	The correct understanding of the teachings of the Buddha is rare, difficult and takes a long time.
	Most people are weighed down by the baggage of preconceptions, misconceptions and political correctness.
	You need to go it alone.
GOLDERS GREEN	Nothing can be avoided because each moment is conditioned.
BRENT CROSS	The outer circumstances do not hurt us, it is our reaction to them which hurts us.
HENDON CENTRAL	We need to check back with the original teachings to verify accuracy.
COLLINDALE	We are mostly occupied by pleasant, unimportant things.
	We will be sooner or later be overtaken by old age, sickness and death.
BURNT OAK	No matter you are building a ship, car, or rocket, the theory of stability needs to be understood and applied.
	Mindfulness in the West neglects the theory.
EDGEWARE	Act decisively now!