# Session 6 – Thoughts are not Facts

## Agenda

**Materials** – paper and pencils/pens

1. **3 Minute Breathing Space (Joe)**

full transcript p174 of book

Become aware of the present moment by adopting an upright and dignified posture. Close your eyes if you wish and if it’s convenient.

2 breaths

Ask yourself…… what am I experiencing right now….. what are my thoughts ….what feelings am I experiencing….., how does my body feel?........................................................ Acknowledge and notice your current experiences, whether they are wanted or not.

3 breaths

Having acknowledged what your experience is right here and right now, you have stepped out of automatic pilot…………………………… Now….. we can take our awareness and gently direct our focus to the breathing………………, the movements of the abdomen…………………., the flow of the breath, as it comes in, and as it goes out. ………………………….Spending just a little while giving our attention to our breath………………. using our breath as an anchor to become fully present here and now.

5 breaths

And now we can now expand our field of awareness. So as well as being aware of the breath we include a sense of the body as a whole, holding what we find in a gentle, more spacious awareness.

<http://franticworld.com/free-meditations-from-mindfulness/>

1. **Check in (Joe)**
2. **Review of Home Practice (Both)**
   1. Advanced Breathing Space with Difficult Event x 3 over week
   2. Sitting meditation for 20 minutes or 2 x 10 minutes daily if poss
   3. Basic Breathing Space regularly if able

Good noticing

How did you feel about that?

What do you want to do about that??

1. **Story of John (Rach)**

John was on his way to school

He was dreading the Maths lesson

He wondered if he’d be able to control the class today.

That wasn’t the caretaker’s job.

1. **Discussion about Interpreting (Both)**

How did your mental picture change as the story went on?

We are doing this all the time….fact + add on – trying to make sense of what’s going on.

Another example, take a married couple, one says to the other ‘Would you like soup or pizza for dinner?’ The other replies, ‘I don’t mind.’ Most of us won’t even question which partner is doing the asking, but it could be either according the facts presented. The response of ‘I don’t mind’ could be interpreted in a myriad of ways, from ‘he/she just doesn’t care/isn’t interested/won’t make decisions’ to ‘whatever’s easiest’.

1. **Moods and Thoughts exercise (Joe?)**

You’re feeling down because you’ve just had a quarrel with a colleague. shortly afterward, you see another colleague and he or she rushes off quickly, saying he or she couldn’t stop. What would you think?

You are feeling happy because you and a colleague have just been praised for good work. Shortly afterward, you see another colleague and he or she rushes off quickly, saying he or she couldn’t stop. What would you think?

The fact is that the colleague went off quickly, saying he or she couldn’t stop. Our interpretations reflect what we are bringing to the situation, not just in belief systems, but also in how we feel at the time.

‘When we lose ourselves in thought, thought sweeps up our mind and carries it away, and in a very short time we can be carried far indeed. We hop a train of association not knowing that we have hopped on, and certainly not knowing the destination. Somewhere down the line we may wake up and realise that we have been thinking, that we have been taken for a ride. And when we step down from the train it may be in a very different state of mind from where we jumped aboard.’ (Joseph Goldstein in Segal, Williams and Teasdale 2002)

1. **Discussion – standing behind the waterfall (both)**

One of the aims of our practice is to bring awareness to the difference between thoughts and facts. We observe thoughts, noting their content and emotional charge, ‘ah there’s that thought, I’m feeling this,’ and then bring our attention back to the breath, without getting caught up in the flow of thought or emotion.

Lack of stillness in mind – what is the interpretation? Failure? or Opportunity to practice stepping behind the waterfall. Fact or add on?

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1. **Extended Being with Feelings Meditation (Rach?)**
2. **Home Practice** 
   1. Extended Being with Feelings Meditation
   2. Sitting meditation for 20 minutes or 2 x 10 minutes daily if poss
   3. Think about the future mindfulness group
3. **Check out**