

Finding Our Freedom

Understanding how we can lose ourselves in our thoughts and emotions, and exploring how we can release ourselves, living more freely every day



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It's easy for us to get lost in our thoughts

Do you ever find that you can get to the end of the day, and you haven't sat still or been present?

In today's world we can easily get in the groove of living quickly, carried along with our distractions and concerns. Our mind can be pre-occupied, and we can often spend our time living within our head.

For our own growth, it is important for us to recognise that we are not our thoughts. We can see this by being able to notice our thoughts.

"To attain true inner freedom, you must be able to objectively watch your problems instead of being lost in them."

Michael A Singer, 2007, page 16

Rather, our mind – or our psyche – is a useful 'computer', a handy part of us, but it is not who we are. We are the conscious awareness, or the observer, noticing our thoughts.

Often, we can give ourselves – or our psyche – the impossible task of sorting out our internal concerns by rearranging things

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in the external world. It is little wonder that our minds can be busy, trying to sort things out and protect ourselves from the natural unfolding of life. If we want to live a more peaceful life, it is important to stop asking our mind to do this.

"Your life is not your own, it can belong to your 'roommate' – your psyche. This is your life to reclaim."

Cathy Brown, 2023

We can reclaim our life for ourselves by becoming still and be the observer of our thoughts, distancing ourselves from them.

We can often feel hurt by what happens to us

In addition to our thoughts, each day we may notice that we experience different emotions. Some of them may be positive, like happiness, joy, fulfilment, whilst some may have more a negative impact upon us, leaving us feel hurt, rejected, even wounded in some way.

When we feel disturbed by something that is said or done, we can experience pain, and often, without us realising, we may absorb the pain and store it inside. This stored hurt can block

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our personal energy flow that brings us vitality and joy, leaving us feeling exhausted.

So, why do we do this? In the past, our focus was on physically protecting ourselves. Now that most of us are living without a physical threat to our life, our protective energies have adapted towards defending our psychological view of ourselves. This means that we can develop a hyper-sensitivity to our self-concept or ego.

"When we receive any slight signal that someone is challenging our view of ourselves, we can close up to protect ourselves."

Cathy Brown, 2023

However, if we close up and protect ourselves perfectly, we will never grow.

We have the chance to grow every day

Almost every day we may receive a 'disturbance' which challenges our view of self, whether it be a large signal or something more subtle. Rather than be a problem, this is an opportunity for growth.

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By observing this disturbance – whether it be a comment or action – and feeling the associated negative emotion, rather than absorbing the pain, we can breathe out, and release.

“Let the disturbance pass through you like the wind.”

Michael A Singer, 2007 page 104

By letting go of any disturbances, we can gradually release the old hurts, freeing our energy and vitality. This helps us to heal psychologically, build our resourcefulness and strengthen our ability to make effective decisions.

Allowing our life to unfold

So, this can lead us to consider, how is it best to be to live a free and fulfilling life?

Life unfolds around us; whilst we can influence some things, many things we can't change. If something has happened that we don't like, then we need to release and let go. If we resist what has happened, then we are likely to waste a lot of our vital energy clinging on to the disappointment of something that has already happened. This can lead to stress and burn out.

“The most important thing in life is your inner energy.”

Michael A Singer, 2007 page 47

For our wellbeing, it is important not to make our happiness conditional to other people's behaviour. We can choose our state of being. We can choose to be happy, believing that we can deal with whatever comes

up. We are psychologically strong.

By being present, noticing our thoughts and releasing our disturbances, life will become more peaceful for us. This can be an easier place from which to respond and live the life that we hope for.

How can we live more freely?

There are some habits that we can practice to help us to live more freely:

Observing our thoughts

Notice our thoughts like they are passing cars, or clouds floating by. By doing this, we can calm our state of being and feel more grounded

“When our thoughts start racing, we don't need to go with them.”

Michael A Singer, 2007, page 63

If we find that our 'roommate' starts to race and dramatise, we don't need to follow them. We can come back to our breath and start noticing our thoughts again

Noticing when our heart tightens

This is often one of the first signs we receive that something is happening that we aren't happy with

So rather than absorb the disturbance: relax, breath out and release. This will help the disturbance flow over us, rather than us internalise it

Breathing into our pain

Often, we can hold old psychological wounds within us formed from past trauma. Rather

than taking steps to avoid nudging this wound, we can release this

By facing and breathing into the pain, through meditative practice, we can free ourselves. The other side of pain is freedom

Building our awareness through meditation

A regular meditative practice can help us to notice our thoughts, emotions and breathing, supporting us to live more freely

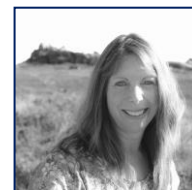
Top tip



If you'd like to deepen your understanding of this area I would totally recommend:

The Untethered Soul by Michael A Singer
ISBN: 157224537

Using the Insight Timer free meditation app, and drawing upon Sarah Blondin's work. She is an inspiring and incredible meditator



About the writer

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Cathy Brown is a Chartered Occupational Psychologist, consultant and writer. She runs Evolve Consulting Services Limited which works with individuals, teams and businesses to manage transition and change.

She works as a transition coach and a career counsellor with individuals and teams. She is also a guest lecturer at Henley Business School and University of Derby. In addition, Cathy is a founding trustee of the Evolve Transition Trust, which supports disadvantaged people through life transitions.