

THE ART OF MINDFULNESS AND BEING PRE-THOUGHTFUL

by Iqbal Singh

Mindfulness leads to a state of consciousness we can call being 'pre-thoughtful'. Pre-thoughtful means we are consciously constructing reality instead of being reactive to it. This state can lead to us having a greater control of our lives and in particular our emotional state. It is like having a knowledge of the TV guide and being able to plan what you want to watch, rather than having to flick channels and be frustrated trying to find a good program. Not knowing what is about to happen or how we are about to react is hurtful to our being. This process not only frustrates oneself, and negatively impacts on those around you.

The first step in being pre-thoughtful is Mindfulness. Mindfulness enables one to identify not only the signals coming into our brain from the environment, but also interpreting and de-constructing our brains response. For example, if one is feeling very happy about a particular experience, it is trying to understand what in our past experience has led to me experiencing the enjoyment of this activity. There can be many contributing factors, but one needs to be mindful of what these factors are in order to re-create the sense of enjoyment.

Happiness is an inner state of being and not a result of the environment in which we are placed or find ourselves in. Therefore we can create happiness by re-configuring our internal subconscious and conscious thought. Hence the term, pre-thoughtfulness.

Being pre-thoughtful is being mindful of what is happening around us and consciously choosing our emotional response to benefit our state of being. Some people will refer to this as 'futures' thinking. Our usual thinking is from reflecting on our past and what pre-thoughtfulness is about is thinking of an appropriate future response in terms of what is happening in the immediate future and how we want to feel in this future.

The art of mindfulness and being pre-thoughtful is not an easy one and requires discipline and concentration. It takes many, many years to bury our subconscious responses and learned behaviours that result in us having what we might perceive as 'natural' or 'automatic' responses to given situations. The truth is there is no such thing as an automatic response. We have 'conditioned responses' rather than 'automatic responses'. We have been conditioned to respond emotionally in certain ways because of our experiences in the past. We must first accept that we can change our thinking to influence our own well-being and that of others, before we can take steps to become pre-thoughtful.

Once we are able to accept the need for change, we can progress through the following steps to help us move further ahead in our life journey:

LEVEL 1 – 'AWARENESS'

Awareness of what you are doing in the moment. Rather than ambling through situations and days seemingly on autopilot, one needs to initially be more aware of what is happening to oneself and the environment around you. Taking notice of what people are doing, how they are interacting, what they are saying and how they appear to be feeling is all making you more 'aware'.

LEVEL 2 – 'MINDFULNESS'

Being conscious of your feelings in response to your environment and things happening around you at each moment.

LEVEL 3 – 'WORLDY CONSCIOUSNESS'

Understanding why you feel the way you do in given situations. Consciously re-constructing your world view in regards to situations you are in and being able to choose your emotional response.

LEVEL 4 – 'SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS'

Consciously and positively contributing to the emotional climate around you. Explore and gain different perspectives, discover different patterns and act

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