



# Leaders, Executive Coaches, Authors, Educators, Parents, and Students Endorsing *Managing Thought*

“Self-help books, most of us know, are a dime a dozen. This is a self-help book that makes the rest of them obsolete. Mary Lore, through a multitude of pointed vignettes and just plain old common sense puts the quandary of human existence into a fresh, colorful, and detailed perspective. After my forty years of professional experience in this field, this is the best yet. In short, it is life changing. Most refreshingly, as you read it, you know that the author practices it in her everyday life. Her book is the definitive ‘First in Class’ on this subject and will go down as a true classic for many years to come!”

**Dr. Harry S. Dennis, I**

Chairman and CEO, The Executive Committee

Dedicated to increasing the effectiveness and  
enhancing the lives of chief executives

“*Managing Thought* will dramatically improve how you think and do. I wish I had read it when I was twenty-five. It’s an easy-to-read, yet deeply insightful, interpretation that shows how to manage your thoughts to be more successful. Just the short, effective paragraph on ‘Putting it into Practice’ will convince you that this is a must-read!”

**Kraig Kramer**

CEO, speaker, executive coach, and author of *CEO Too*

“In life, each of us is required by the dynamic reality of daily events to face ourselves or not. We all have the choice to be actively in the game of life or, by default, to stay on the sideline. This book can initiate the process of personal work and consistent focused self-development. My forty years of working with graduate students and CEOs confirms the importance of daily routine in individuals moving toward being brave personally, giving themselves permission to know themselves, and moving beyond the ‘other-directed’ orientation of critical self-critique. An inner-directed path will allow the growth of a more developed personhood. Mary’s book can give its readers the path toward centered self-confidence.”

**W. Lynn Tanner, Ph.D.**

President and CEO, TEC Canada

Canada’s preeminent organization for the development of CEOs

“Bottom-line improvement comes through people, and I want people on my team who can think for themselves, visualize outcomes, and be proactive in seeking positive results. Mary Lore shares a very creative approach to analyzing and measuring our thought process. It validates the importance of being in control to effect positive outcomes in our lives. *Managing Thought* is a must read if you want to develop a personal flight plan that has positive outcomes, takes you to new heights, avoids significant turbulence, and puts you in control.”

**Howard Putnam**  
Former CEO, Southwest Airlines  
Author of *The Winds of Turbulence*

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“*Managing Thought* gets right to the bottom line on why individuals and organizations behave the way they do. *Managing Thought* provides the tools that empower us to learn how to change our behavior and improve our effectiveness and overall health at work and home. I’m a better person, leader, friend, father, and husband for having read this book.”

**William Neale, M.Ed.**  
Cofounder, Denison Consulting  
Developer of diagnostic tools designed to bring  
culture and leadership to the bottom line

“*Managing Thought* is to this century what *How to Win Friends & Influence People* and *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* were to the last century. Thought management is a key asset for today’s leaders.”

**Barbara G. Stanbridge**  
Change Management Expert  
President National Association of Women Business Owners (2000-2002)

“*Managing Thought* is one of the best self-help books I have ever read. It is thought-provoking and easy to understand, and the exercises are simple yet very effective. Through *Managing Thought*, I now see how my limiting beliefs have held me back and put me in a very small box as to the possibilities in my life. By taking the time to really work on uncovering what they are and examining them in detail, I am able to take myself out of that very small box and help my clients to do the same.”

**Bob Carrothers**  
Executive coach, Vistage International  
The world’s leading chief executive organization

“*Managing Thought* is as timeless as Dale Carnegie’s work. This book goes way beyond business executives. It is a powerful book for anyone, in any number of personal and professional relationships. Through *Managing Thought*, I have taken control of my life with powerful, high-service, and high-purpose thoughts. I learned I have the power to choose my thoughts and overpower my weak, negative ones.”

**Arthur Horowitz**  
President and CEO, Jewish Renaissance Media  
The leading gatherer and disseminator of information  
for and about the American Jewish community

“For years, great leaders have realized ‘the power of positive thinking.’ Even pessimistic people

prefer to follow positive, optimistic leaders. This book takes this concept to a completely new level and teaches us how to actually manage our thoughts to be creative, inspired, and impactful in all that we do. The concepts are practical and real and are equally beneficial at home or in the workplace. Lore's book reinforced that I actually have a choice and can control my thoughts versus being controlled by them—I find that to be incredibly powerful!”

**Gordon Krater, CPA**

Managing Partner, Plante & Moran, PLLC  
One of *Fortune's* “100 Best Companies to Work For”  
for ten consecutive years

“Every outcome in the universe is preceded by an initiating thought. Mary J. Lore's latest book, *Managing Thought*, reminds us and provides the tools to be intentional and aware of our thoughts as they create our reality, to consciously create each moment, and to seek balance in a world that forces us to specialize. Read this book, do what she suggests, and discover more of who you really are. Let your journey begin!”

**Ole Carlsson**

Author of *Beneath the Armor* and  
*Clarity: Creating a Life That Really Matters . . . to You*

“In today's 24/7 global world, executives and entrepreneurs are challenged in all aspects of their professional and personal lives. Today's business education is about teaching future leaders how to manage these challenges. *Managing Thought* provides important and valuable insights as well as robust and realistic prescriptive techniques that will help train business students to overcome those challenges while reinvigorating their passions and cultivating their all-important sense of self.”

**Kim Schatz**

Dean, College of Business  
University of Michigan-Dearborn

“Lore's book reinforced my belief that life is a combination of one's heart, mind, and soul, and when these three are combined and made available to us, along with a grounded understanding of our beliefs, we have the possibility of living life to the fullest.”

**Richard Carlson**

Vice Chairman of the Board, Vistage International  
The world's leading chief executive organization

“Anything you want in life such as health, a fulfilling career, or happiness begins with a single thought, yet how to manage your thoughts toward your objectives remains elusive to most people. Likewise, while no life is free from troubles, your mind can be trouble-free when you practice self-awareness, self-mastery, and being on purpose. In *Managing Thought*, Mary Lore has done a wonderful job presenting an accessible, step-by-step process for cultivating and reshaping your mind

to finally actualize the life you want. A highly recommended book for anyone looking to achieve the life's potential.”

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**Dr. Maoshing Ni, Ph.D., D.O.M.**

Cofounder, Tao of Wellness & Yo San University  
Author, *Secrets of Longevity & Secrets of Self-Healing*

“The guidance of Mary Lore’s book, *Managing Thought* turns possibility and learning into daily action. It provides teaching and parenting tools for ourselves, our children, and our world’s future.”

**Bette D. Moore**

Founder/director, Cedar Crest Academy & Early Childhood Center

“*Managing Thought* has a very interesting and eye-opening way of looking at life. I especially liked the idea of seven key focus points and the thought process that goes into each one. It was a good experience for me personally to take this short course on *Managing Thought*.”

**Lucia Lopez**

High school student

“Through *Managing Thought*, I felt like I had the answers to so many issues that would arise in my life. I started to look at things differently at home and also in my classroom. I found I could communicate my needs better with my family and my students. Life is getting better because I have learned and continue to learn to manage my thoughts.”

**Packy Conway**

Mom and high school teacher

Additional comments and success stories from clients and readers can be found online at [www.managingthought.com](http://www.managingthought.com).



# Managing Thought

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**Think Differently.**

**Think Powerfully.**

**Achieve New Levels of Success.**

**MARY J. LORE**



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# Dedication

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*To all of you who are changing the world by changing yourselves*

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*We are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts we remake the world.*

—The Buddha

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# INTRODUCTION

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Since 2002, I have shared the *Managing Thought* process with hundreds of groups throughout North America as a service to Vistage International, also known as TEC, the preeminent international organization that supports the personal and professional development of CEOs and key executives. Participants in these workshops have invited me to share *Managing Thought* with groups of couples, parents, teens, teachers, students, professionals, non-professionals, executives, nonexecutives, and salaried and hourly workers. These participants have written and phoned to tell me how *Managing Thought* profoundly impacted their lives and their relationships with colleagues, direct reports, bosses, customers, friends, spouses, family members, and, most important, themselves.

This book documents the principles of *Managing Thought* and provides a system to apply to any aspect of your thinking and being, such as your life, relationships, family, career, role at work, company, department, vacation, a project, process, opportunity, problem, goal, strategy, or even a telephone call.

This book is filled with information to help you increase your self-awareness and shape your thoughts to accomplish what you want in each moment and live the life you intend. You may find yourself wanting to implement everything immediately. You can relax, because you don't have to. You can choose to practice *just one thing* throughout the moments of your day, and experience a significant transformation in your work and life. Throughout the book, I point out each *just one thing* that you can choose to practice.

Before I embark on a learning experience, I find it helpful to make an assessment of where I am right now. Along the way, I measure, acknowledge, and celebrate the changes I have made and chart my next steps. For this reason, I have developed an assessment for you to measure how you are managing your thoughts right now. If you like, you can take the assessment before reading this book, after you have read this book, and periodically in the future as you continue to practice changing the way you think.

To take the free "How Do Your Thoughts Rule Your World?"<sup>®</sup> self-assessment, visit [www.managingthought.com](http://www.managingthought.com). It is simple and straightforward and takes about ten minutes. When you are finished, you can print a report and receive guidance on the best steps to take next.

I have written this book so that you can choose the approach to reading that best suits you. For example, you can read it in one or two sittings, then choose a specific topic to focus on. You can read a chapter a day, a week, or a month and play with what you have learned. You can read just a few pages each day. Do what is comfortable for you.

Although it may be tempting, try not to rush through the book. If you have time to mindfully read one page, then read one page and choose one thing to practice and personally experience.

Before you begin to read, take a moment to calm yourself and open yourself to your higher awareness. Take a few deep breaths, relax your neck, massage your scalp, rub your ears, smile, stretch, and loosen your clothing.

You may find yourself thinking all kinds of thoughts as you are reading the book. When your brain tells you, *I've heard that before*, and asks you to put the book down, say, *Thanks for sharing*, and keep reading. When your brain tells you, *Hey, this self-awareness stuff is uncomfortable*, and asks you to put the book down, again say, *Thanks for sharing*, and stick with it. For many of us, transformation is not comfortable. If your brain criticizes or judges you because you should have already known a

particular point or because you did know it and failed to practice it and thus wasted time or money or damaged a relationship, again say, *Thanks for sharing*, and keep reading. We are always wiser today than we were yesterday, so it naturally follows that we probably would have said or done something differently had we known then what we know now.

Remember, we learn quickly and achieve significant results when we're in a state of vision and purpose, wonder and possibility, thankfulness, joy, calm, and happiness. In these states, we are inspired and in touch with our creative power. This is not so when we are in a state of criticism, blame, judgment, or anger about ourselves or others.

When you turn on a light in a room, do you get upset that the room was dark before? When you are upset, not only do you miss out on the joy of learning, you cut yourself off from your creative power, your ability to inspire and be inspired, and your ability to access your higher awareness and learn effectively. If you find yourself tempted to criticize or judge yourself as you look at the mirror within, know that you have flipped the switch. Enjoy the light.

Please note that in *Managing Thought*, you do not become someone else. As you become self-aware and on purpose, you are rediscovering your true nature. It is as if you are peeling an onion—peeling away the layers of beliefs, expectations, and ways of thinking and being that you have built up over the years. You are getting back to who you really are, reopening your connection with your higher awareness. You are reconnecting with your strengths and what inspires you—what truly brings you happiness. You are reconnecting with your purpose and passion.

*Managing Thought* represents thousands of years of wisdom from many roads—business, psychology, biology, chemistry, physics, neurology, metaphysics, and spiritual teachings. Every concept offered serves as an example, and although the experiences of others can be illuminating, they cannot replace your own experience. Although the experiences of others can tell you where a path leads, they do not release you from the duty of taking the path yourself and even changing the path. The more openly and freely you experiment with what is offered in this book, the more you gain as you enjoy the freedom to be you.

I invite you, now, to experience the joy of peeling away all the layers of your humanity and bringing to light your power, your beauty, your gifts, your talents and your purpose in living—your true nature, your authentic self.

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***Managing Thought is a journey. You are invited to take the journey.***

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# THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MANAGING THOUGHT AND THE MOMENT

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There is no such thing as the future. The future is an illusion. What we have is a *now*, followed by a *now*, followed by a series of *nows*.

We do not suddenly become bankrupt. We have a series of bankrupt *now* moments. We do not suddenly become a great leader, a great parent, or healthy. We do not suddenly accomplish a goal or fulfill a resolution. We have a series of great leaders, great parents, or healthy *now* moments. When we have experienced enough of these moments, goals are accomplished, bad habits are broken, and resolutions are fulfilled.

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***We achieve results by focusing on the moment.***

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It is the same with achieving a great attitude, thinking positively, being engaged, accessing creativity, practicing thankfulness, changing our beliefs, focusing on what we want, creating powerful intentions, fulfilling our purpose, and living our passion—all the things that we are told we must do to achieve success and fulfill our dreams. And it's the same with being happy, at peace, inspired, creative, and true to ourselves and making a difference. It doesn't happen suddenly. It happens as we build a critical mass of these *now* moments.

We achieve results by focusing on the moment. And the results we achieve—bad, good, or significant—depend on what we focus on in the moment.

Through my experience at work and in life over the last thirty years, I have found that what makes a great leader, a great organization or family, and a great human being are the very same principles. In other words, the keys to success in life and work are the same.

These keys are self-awareness, self-mastery, and being *on purpose*. I define being *on purpose* as focusing your thoughts and actions on what is truly significant to you. Without self-awareness, self-mastery, and being on purpose, we live each day as we did yesterday. And then a year goes by, two years, five years, and then ten, and we wonder what happened. We have the same frustrations and experiences over and over with different jobs, partners, customers, coworkers, employees, children, and spouses. Essentially, we continue to make the same mistakes.

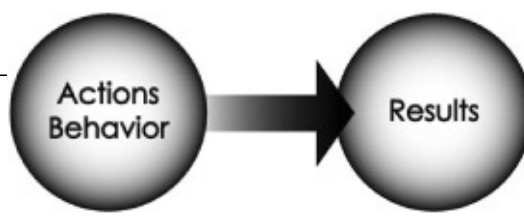
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***Without self-awareness, self-mastery, and being on purpose in the moment, we live each day as we did yesterday.***

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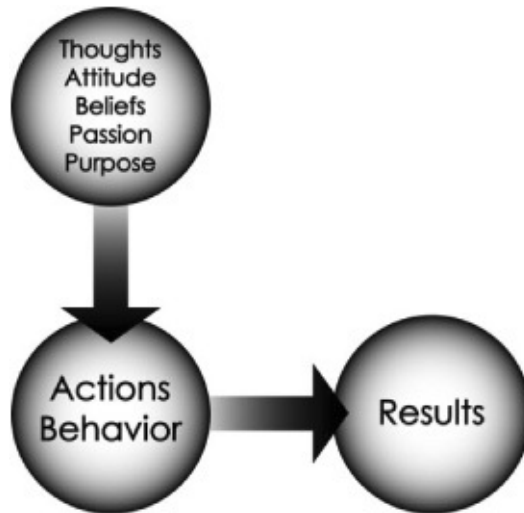
We read books, listen to speakers, and attend courses and seminars to help us learn the best practices, the latest management techniques, systems, processes, methods, and ways of thinking. In most cases, although we say we want to implement what we learned, we don't. We go back to the hustle and bustle of our work and life without making any changes. Sometimes we do implement a change, and it works for us—for a time. Then the going gets tough, and we revert to the familiarity of our previous behavior. Or perhaps we do gain some permanent improvement, yet it's minimal.

How is it that while we want to change, we rarely do? Or when we do, it's a mediocre change, not transformation? It is because many of us are taught that our actions and our behavior drive results.



We learn that if we want to change results, we must change our actions. That's what management is all about—changing actions, behavior, processes, and systems. That is also what New Year's resolutions are all about—changing our actions to lose weight or achieve a goal. Thus indoctrinated, we focus on modifying action and behavior as a means of improvement.

The empowering discovery about *Managing Thought* is this: What goes on inside our heads is what drives results.



Our beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, intentions, passion, purpose—our thoughts—drive our actions. If we don't address our thoughts, meaningful change does not happen. Conversely, when we *do* begin to investigate our underlying beliefs and attitudes and become mindful of our thoughts, true transformation takes place. We can choose to be aware of our thoughts and what lies behind them because they drive our actions and our ability to devise creative ways to achieve significant results. I am not talking about developing rahrah motivational goals, mission statements, and resolutions. I am talking about developing self-awareness, being aware of our thoughts and feelings and making subtle yet powerful changes that result in ideas, desires, intentions, and ultimately actions that bring us peace and inspire us.

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***We choose to be aware of our thoughts.***

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We become inspired when we are in states of happiness, thankfulness, vision and purpose, and wonder and possibility. In these states, we are in tune with our higher awareness and in touch with our creativity. It is when we are inspired that we achieve significant results. It is when we are inspired that we transform.

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***It is when we are inspired that we transform.***

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*Great men are they who see . . . that thoughts rule the world.*

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

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## HOW DO YOUR THOUGHTS RULE YOUR WORLD?

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Everything we say, do, and physically manifest first begins in thought.

First we have an idea—a thought—followed by desire, another thought, followed by intent, another thought, followed by strategy, goals, and plans, more thoughts, until, finally, we act. We say something, do something, physically manifest something, or create something.

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***Everything we say, do, and create first begins in thought.***

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How do your thoughts rule your world? How do your thoughts rule your life, relationships, career, organization, and family? Are your thoughts producing positive results, or are they preventing you from growing fully into your potential? Do your thoughts inspire you, or are they plagued with self-doubt, fear, and worry? Are your thoughts causing you to feel happy and peaceful, or are they causing you to feel stressed and victimized? Do your thoughts result in a life of joy and perfect health, or do they result in a life of pain and suffering? Do your thoughts cause you to live your life the way you want to live it, or do your thoughts paralyze you, undermine your intentions, or sabotage your efforts? Do your thoughts serve you? Or are you helplessly at their mercy?

Most of us would not imagine that in one moment, we can actually change the course of our lives, our families, and our organizations through our thoughts.

When we are ruled by our thoughts, we are usually in reactive mode. We may find ourselves being offended by our customers or employers; snapping at our spouses; resenting competitors, friends, and coworkers; and generally walking around like emotional time bombs. This is because most of us have taught ourselves to rely on certain familiar thought processes. Jerry Wind and Colin Crook, in *The Power of Impossible Thinking: Transform the Business of Your Life and the Life of Your Business*, refer to these processes as “mental models,” which are shaped by a combination of genetics, education, and experience. Mental models are not necessarily bad, although they can be limiting. They tend to be reflex actions that are performed without thought. And because they are habitual, they don't lead to growth. They are the mind's version of being set in one's ways.

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***In one moment we can change the course of our lives.***

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When we manage our thoughts, we take a proactive approach instead of being led around by our habitual attitudes and self-limiting beliefs. We are able to use our thoughts to proactively affect those very stressful episodes that we formerly reacted to defensively. In doing so, whole new vistas of options emerge and we experience very different results. Instead of wasting our time, money, and energy on reactivity, we focus on what matters to us—the reality we want.

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***By managing thought, we consciously choose our futures.***

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This is what the *Managing Thought* process is all about. It liberates us from passive acceptance of our thoughts and frees us from our attachment or fusion to them. It empowers us to live our lives as we want to live them. In other words, by managing thought, we can consciously choose our futures because everything that we think is a matter of choice. There is no situation or person responsible or

to blame for what goes on inside our heads. The quality of our lives, our organizations, our families, and our careers is dramatically impacted by how we think and how we behave. And how we behave depends on how we think.

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### *How we behave depends on how we think.*

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When we are mindful of every thought we have and every action we take each day, we achieve significant results at work and in life. The following story shows that how we choose to think in any given moment affects our circumstances, our destiny, and our success.

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### **A Golf Lesson**

One of my clients was on the golf course with his business partner and the president of their major customer (representing 80 percent of their revenues). At some point in the middle of their round, the customer mentioned that in six months, he planned to take his business to a manufacturer in China. At this disclosure, my client's partner got very angry and played poorly for the rest of the round. His anger and frustration were not restricted to the course. When he got back to the office, he threw things around his workspace, yelled about how badly they were being treated, and predicted that they were going to be screwed by this customer. [In this industry, agreements are often made and contracts drawn with these very large original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), which then do not sign the contract. In this case, two million dollars of inventory owned by my client's customer was sitting on the shop floor, and there wasn't a signed contract to that effect.] He screamed to get the attorneys on the phone to draw up letters demanding the acknowledgment of ownership of that inventory and a signature on the contract.

My client, on the other hand, played well for the rest of the golf round. He immediately shaped his thought to remind himself how thankful he was that his customer valued the relationship so much that he provided six months' notice. He also reminded himself that his company had recently realized that the work they were hired to do for this customer was low-margin work and was not work at which they were world class. They didn't have the nerve to give up business from a customer that made up 80 percent of their revenue base to pursue higher margins and world-class customers. He realized that his customer's decision would force them to make this bold move, and he was excited about the opportunity. He also acknowledged his company's mission in dealing with its customers—be a partner. He thought that it needn't matter whether the customer was new, continuing, or on the way out the door—the intention is to be a partner with customers. So, he asked his customer, “How can we be of service to you? Have you ever transferred business to China before? How can we help?”

Over the next six months, my client worked with his customer to effect a smooth transition for which his company was paid handsomely. At the same time, he focused on securing customers for work for which the company could be world class and could secure a higher margin. At the end of the six months, he and his partner had new, higher-margin clients. Even more significant, the large client ultimately didn't transition all of its business to China. Instead, it kept the higher-margin business with my client, and my client's company ended up with its best year ever.

Would his partner's approach have achieved the same result? No! With the same circumstances, his very well might have embarked on a path of war and lost. He would have then announced, “See! I told you they were going to screw us!” His focus would have become self-fulfilling.

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***Thinking has become a disease. It is not so much that you use your mind wrongly— you usually don't use it at all. It uses you. That is the disease. You believe that you are your mind.***

**—Eckhart Tol**

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## WE ARE NOT OUR MINDS

Most of us believe that we don't have control over our thoughts. To demonstrate the fallacy of this belief, take a look at the following exercise.

### EXERCISE

Take a moment to think of an ice cream cone. Think of the type of cone, the kind of ice cream, the number of scoops, the toppings, if any.

Now stop thinking of the ice cream cone.

Instead, think of a puppy—the twinkle in the puppy's eyes, the wagging tail, the squeals of delight, the excitement, the playfulness.

Were you able to do it?

If so, you have just proven that you have control of your thoughts. You were able to stop what you were thinking to think about the ice cream cone. You were also able to stop thinking about the ice cream cone and begin thinking about the puppy.

Can you also see that you are not your thoughts, and you are not your mind? That you are in control of your mind? You chose to think about the ice cream cone. You chose to think about the puppy. You are the observer, the witness, the watcher, and the user of your mind and your thoughts.

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***I am the observer, the witness, the watcher, and the user of my mind and my thoughts.***

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Our brains are tools, just as a computer is a tool. They perform many functions: observing, sensing, storing, retrieving, and relaying information. We are not computers. We are not our brains. We are not the tools. We are the ones *using* the tools. In each moment, we are perfectly able to watch our thoughts, to look *at* our thoughts, not *from* our thoughts. We can catch a thought, look at it, and determine whether it is empowering and constructive. In each moment, we have the ability to choose what to do with the thought. Do we identify with or attach to the thought and let it rule our world? Do we let the thought go? Do we rephrase the thought? Or do we take the moment to say to our brains, *Thanks for sharing*, and choose thoughts that move us in a direction that serves our purpose?

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***Our brains are tools, just as a computer is a tool.***

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I have observed that many of us spend much of our lives fused with the reptilian portion of our brains, the oldest and most primitive brain structure, and consequently experience a great amount of pain and suffering.

Have you ever been alone at night and heard an unexpected noise? When you heard the noise, did you stop to listen intently? At that moment, and with amazing speed, your hypothalamus, which is

inside the limbic system of the brain, made a decision on your next course of action and provided you with three choices: fight, flight, or freeze. Without self-awareness, when we hear or see something that is different from what we expect, our brains act as if we are in physical danger and present us with fight, flight, or freeze thoughts. We may choose to argue, criticize, judge, complain, blame, act defensively or offensively, or become angry, anxious, or frustrated (fight). Or we may choose to avoid a situation by leaving, denying, or ignoring it, or we may worry, become overwhelmed, experience self-doubt, or feel regret (flight). Perhaps we experience shock and do nothing, or we procrastinate, suffer from depression, or act like victims (freeze). In fact, when the reptilian portion of the brain is activated, the limbic system takes over, and the part of our brain that plans, prioritizes, and evaluates information becomes incapable. When we are not mindful, we unknowingly remain in fight, flight, or freeze; lose sight of our purpose; waste significant time, energy, and money; and achieve less than desirable results. When we are in fight, flight, or freeze, we are completely cut off from our ability to access our higher awareness and creativity.

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***Before we react, we can pause to observe our thoughts and shape them.***

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When we manage our thought, we are capable of being aware that our brains are in fight, flight, or freeze and adding another choice. I refer to this choice as *light*. When something happens that is not a life-or-death matter or is not physically unsafe, we can take a moment to add light to the situation. Instead of fighting, fleeing, or freezing, we can practice taking a breath before we react, first exhaling deeply, then inhaling, and utilize that moment to consciously assess the situation. We can pause to observe our thoughts and shape them. This simple action causes our thinking to move from the hypothalamus to the frontal cortex of the brain, where we have a vast array of alternative courses of action. We achieve very different and significant results, as was demonstrated in the story “A Golf Lesson” in the previous chapter. The one man chose fight. The other chose light. Choosing to fight or focusing on light results in dramatically different circumstances.

Through managing our thought, through mindfulness in each moment, we move from the back of our brains to the front of our brains. In doing so, in that moment we reshape our circumstances, remain on purpose, and achieve significant results.

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***Through mindfulness in each moment, we reshape our circumstances.***

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I invite you to take the first step of self-awareness and begin to pay attention to your thoughts, noticing them as an observer, without blame or judgment—noticing that a thought is merely a thought. If you were to pick *just one thing* from this book to use, it could be to start watching your thoughts, looking *at* your thoughts, not *from* them, and see what happens. Notice if your thoughts are of fight, flight, or freeze. Notice whether you are buying into your thoughts. See what choices you are making as a result of relying on your thoughts and see if these choices serve your purpose. Practice noticing the patterns of your thoughts. Without blame or judgment, as an unbiased observer, practice choosing how you might think or react differently the next time a similar situation arises.

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***Start watching your thoughts. Notice the choices you are making by relying on your thoughts.***

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## **A Lesson in Fear**

Lily’s company had a customer that accounted for over 80 percent of her business. Her team heard



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