

## Investigation Planning for Week

Get out your planner and fill in the blanks on when you will do your mindful inquiries this week.

*Example: On Wednesday, I will investigate one self-judgmental thought after the evening dog walk, in my home office.*

On (day of week) \_\_\_\_\_ I will investigate one self-judgmental thought (time – preferably before or after a routine activity) \_\_\_\_\_  
(location) \_\_\_\_\_.

On (day of week) \_\_\_\_\_ I will investigate one self-judgmental thought (time) \_\_\_\_\_  
(location) \_\_\_\_\_.

On (day of week) \_\_\_\_\_ I will investigate one self-judgmental thought (time) \_\_\_\_\_  
(location) \_\_\_\_\_.

*Please put these activities in your planner, and then follow through. Do your celebratory move for finishing this assignment. Way to go, friend!*



**Boundless Love Project**  
Creating a Global Beloved  
Community Where All Life Thrives  
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# The BALADI Technique

Whenever one of your three falsehood alarms goes off (you identify a false thought, you feel an afflictive emotion, or you behave or want to behave unskillfully) use this technique to become mindful, regain your composure, and deepen your wisdom and love.

## 1. Breathe

Take a mindful pause for 10 breath-cycles or for as long as it takes to feel calm, peaceful, and grounded. This will help you become mindful. Be the knower, not the known. When mindful, you relate to what is arising with peace, objectivity, curiosity and interest.

## 2. Appreciate

Give thanks to access your inner love and resources. Every time you do BALADI, it's a small victory. Give thanks: for remembering to do the practice, for mindfulness, for the courage to stop your habit patterns and try something different, or for whatever else you can genuinely give thanks for in that moment.

## 3. Label

Mindfully notice what arose for you in the realms of thoughts, emotions/sensations, and behaviors/behavior impulses. Label them using the “(blank) is being known” format. We use this way of speaking to avoid identifying with the forms that we label. Common ways of speaking such as “I am angry,” encourages us to identify with our thoughts, feelings, and behavior impulses. In the blank, name the thoughts, emotions/sensations, and behaviors/behavior impulses that you notice. Gently notice the relationships and patterns between them.

## 4. Allow

What you resist, persists, so resist nothing. Check to make sure you have no judgment, hatred, fear, or resistance to whatever thoughts, feelings, or behavior impulses arise. If there is resistance, label it, and see if you can allow it to be there.

Remind yourself: This belongs; this is how it is right now. Ask yourself: Can I be OK with this? Can I allow the river of my thoughts, emotions, and impulses to flow freely without acting them out, or resisting them?

We want to allow everything to move, but not believe the thoughts, or identify with any of it.

## 5. Disidentify

Take the backwards step into pure awareness. Awareness has the ability to merge with, or identify with, the objects it is aware of. Check to make sure you identify as the awareness. You are the knower, not the forms being known. If identified, use the self-inquiry questions taught in this course to disidentify with the thoughts, emotions, behavior impulses, and any other forms you may be identifying with.

## 6. Investigate

Investigate what is arising. Kindly notice the patterns between falsehoods believed, and the emotions and behavior impulses that arise. If able, notice which kind of falsehood is arising and use the corresponding investigation questions to investigate the falsehood to better see its corresponding liberating insights.



# The Falsehood of Fixed View

When falsehoods are believed, they are the source of our mental and emotional suffering. Because of the my-thoughts-are-true bias of the brain, our thoughts are typically believed unless we are mindful enough to see thoughts as just thoughts.

Through mindful investigation, we can see how falsehoods cause us to suffer and act unskillfully. Inquiry also helps us see the lie in them, and lovingly respond to them with wisdom. The more we see how these falsehoods are untrue, unhelpful, and unkind, the less likely we are to believe them in the future, causing us to connect more and more with our inner love.

Fixed-views are a category of falsehoods, that could also be called “dogma.” Fixed views mistake a story, idea, belief, opinion, or thought of any kind – be it words or images – to be “the truth.” When we believe fixed-views, we have a harder time accepting change, and we may feel a desire to judge or attack those who think differently than us.

## Liberating Insights for Fixed-Views

1. *Use whichever slogan speaks to you most, or create one that speaks to you more:*

- There is no such thing as a true thought.
- The map is not the terrain.
- The finger pointing at the moon is not the moon.
- Don't believe your thoughts. Come to your senses.
- The suffering masses reject what they see and believe what they think. The wise reject what they think and believe what they see.
- What you believe, deceives.

2. *Use whichever slogan speaks to you most, or create one that speaks to you more:*

- I am not my thoughts.
- I am not the river of thoughts.
- I am the knower, not the known.

## Various Kinds of Fixed-Views

**All-or-Nothing Thinking:** Evaluating self, others, or situations using extreme, hyperbolic, black-and-white descriptions and mistaking those descriptions to be the truth.

**Jumping to Conclusions:** Making a guess about what is going on before the facts are available, and mistaking your guess to be the truth.

**Labeling:** Defining self, others, or situations with one word and phrase and mistaking these labels to be the truth.

**Mind reading:** Guessing what other people think and mistaking that guess as truth.



# Investigating Thoughts

## Introduction

Most of us identify with our thinking brain. Because we identify with the brain, we tend to identify with, believe, or take to be important, all of the thoughts the brain thinks. Moreover, because we identify with the brain, it feels responsible for helping you stop your mental and emotional suffering. The brain generally thinks that it will help you live a better life through more and better thoughts.

Unfortunately, what the thinking brain can't understand is that our identifying with it, and believing its thoughts, is actually the source of most, and possibly all, of our mental and emotional suffering. The liberating truths are that we are not our thoughts, and there is no such thing as a true thought. When we start to appreciate these truths, we see the harm in believing our thoughts, they become less fascinating to us, and we become more interested in coming to our senses.

We literally come to our senses by anchoring part of our awareness on feeling the sensations we feel in the body, seeing what we see, hearing what we hear, tasting what we taste and smelling what we smell, in the present moment. By directing our energy towards sensing the world directly, our mind quiets, and we experience the joy, peace, and connection of meditation more and more in our daily life.

## Instructions

Below are questions to ask yourself to help you see these liberating insights. Meditate or take a mindful pause before asking yourself these questions. Have your answers be honest, sincere, and authentic. Circle the numbers of those questions that particularly speak to you or help you see the liberating insight. Memorize a few of the questions you find most helpful in proving the liberating insight. If you come up with other questions that help you with your investigation, use them as well.

## Questions to Help You See the Liberating Insight: "I am not my thoughts"

1. Do you have full control over your thoughts?
2. If you command your brain to only have wise, loving, and useful thoughts, will it obey?
3. By will alone, can you stop unwanted thoughts from arising?
4. If you tell your brain to stop thinking, will it obey?
5. If you don't control how your brain thinks, what does?
6. Does your biology influence the laws by which your brain works?
7. Do you have control over your biology and genetics?
8. Were you born with the thoughts in your brain? If not, where did they come from?
9. Does your environment determine what thoughts are in your brain?
10. Do you have full control over your environment?
11. Did you dictate to your parents or guardians what they taught you?

12. Do you dictate what other people around you say and do?
13. Did you dictate what you were taught in school?
14. Do you dictate to mass media what messages it shares with you?
15. If you were not born with ideas in your head, and you do not control your environment, then aren't your thoughts actually a collection of other people's thoughts?
16. Since biology and environment largely determine how and what the brain thinks, is it skillful to take your thoughts personally?
17. Since biology and environment largely determine how and what the brain thinks, is it skillful to uncritically identify with your thoughts and consider them to be "me or mine"?
18. Since biology and environment largely determine how and what the brain thinks, is it more skillful to identify with the thoughts that arise, or to see them as nature unfolding according to natural laws?
19. Are you the thoughts that arise, or are you the awareness and intelligence behind the thoughts?
20. Are you the thoughts that arise, or are you the awareness and intelligence behind the thoughts that can critically evaluate a thought as helpful or unhelpful, truthful or untruthful, kind or unkind?
21. It is the nature of thoughts to come and go. Where do they come from, and where do they go to?
22. What surrounds the thoughts while they are present?
23. Is the essential nature of the brain, the constantly changing thoughts that come and go, or the ever-present emptiness that holds these thoughts and allows them to be?

**Questions to help you see the liberating insight: "There is no such thing as a true thought."**

1. Is an emoji the same as a person's face?
2. Is a map the same as the terrain it describes?
3. Do symbols like emojis and maps simplify what they refer to?
4. Is a finger pointing at the moon the same as the moon?
5. Are words and images "the truth," or symbols?
6. Are the words I use the same as the things they refer to?
7. Are the images I think the same as the things they refer to?
8. Do words change and evolve over time like the forms they point to?
9. If I mistake the words and images I think to be "the truth," might this distort my understanding of reality?
10. If thoughts simplify and distort reality, can there be a "true" thought?
11. Given the answer to these questions, is it more skillful to believe the words and images we think, or to believe the wisdom behind the thoughts that can perceive the truth of reality directly through our senses?

# Intention Setting for Week 4

## Meditation, Gratitude, & Investigation

### Purpose

Starting new habits can take effort. This intention-setting practice helps remind you of your loving intentions that motivate you to do your mindfulness practices.

This week, let these loving intentions remind you to:

- Do BALA(DI) whenever you notice one of the three falsehood alarms ringing.
- Investigate self-judgments as needed, but at least three times this week.
- Be the ruler of your thoughts, not their subject.
- Give thanks 10 or more times per day.
- Meditate daily.

### Personalizing These Intentions

Read these intentions and, if you want, substitute the words in parenthesis with other words that more genuinely speak to your heart.

For your intentions on when to give gratitude each day, check the box of those you lovingly intend to do. If you have other ideas of when to give thanks, write them in the blanks and check the box in front of them.

Then, when reading your intentions, only read those you checked.

### Keep Celebrating

It's important to celebrate the little things. Keep using your celebratory move throughout your day to celebrate all the wins and victories.

### Instructions

These instructions are:

- Do this activity as early in the day as possible, right after meditating.
- Read out loud using a kind, powerful voice.
- Have your posture be upright, strong, confident, and energetic. Keep your head held high.
- Read these intentions with meaning and feeling. Do your best to feel joy and kindness in your heart.
- If helpful, look at yourself in a mirror when you read them.
- Aim to memorize the script within one to three weeks of practice.
- Review the BALADI and Mindful Pause handouts whenever necessary to refresh yourself on those practices.



## Intention Setting – Week 4

*Read this script out loud. Instructions in italics, below, are to be followed and not read aloud.*

BALADI stands for:

Breathe

Appreciate

Label

Allow

Disidentify

Investigate

Today, whenever I notice a falsehood alarm in the realm of my thoughts, emotions, or behaviors, I will politely excuse myself, find a private area, and BALA – Breathe, Appreciate, Label, and Allow.

To **Breathe**, I will take a mindful pause for 10 breath-cycles or as long as it takes to feel mindful, centered, and grounded.

To **Appreciate**, I will give thanks: for mindfulness, for doing this practice, and for whatever else I am genuinely grateful for in the moment.

To **Label**, I will note the thoughts, sensations, and behavior impulses that arise using the “\_\_\_\_ is being known” format.

To **Allow**, I will check to see if there is any aversion coming up. If so, I will label it as well. Then ask myself: “Can I allow all of this without acting it out, or resisting it?”

After doing BALA, I will write down the thoughts that likely triggered the alarm(s) so I can transfer them into my journal. By the end of the Mindfulness Fundamentals course, I will have many good questions to investigate all kinds of falsehoods. But for now, I will just collect the falsehoods in my journal for later investigation.

*\* Take a one-breath-cycle mindful pause \**

### ***Befriending the Voice in My Head***

Thoughts are my subjects, not my masters. I rule my life, and thoughts serve me as helpful advisors. In my kingdom, if it’s not kind, it’s not true.

As it stands, many of my advisors, through no fault of their own, are unkind, unhelpful, and untruthful. Still, I know they love me, and they do their best to serve me.



As a benevolent ruler, I welcome their advice, listen to them patiently, and through kind investigation, compassionately point out where they are unkind, unhelpful, and untrue. When I lovingly correct them in this way, over time, they develop more and more into kind, helpful, and truthful advisors.

By using mindful investigation to “train” my advisors, my thoughts get better and better at working cooperatively and in harmony with the values of love, truth, and joyful service.

*\* Take a one-breath-cycle mindful pause \**

*For the next four statements, read each one out loud three times. After the third time, take a one-breath-cycle mindful pause and go on to the next statement.*

I could uncritically believe my thoughts, but I choose to investigate them so I can train my brain to be more (wise, kind, helpful, balanced, and skillful):

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*\* After the third reading, take a one-breath-cycle mindful pause. \**

I could skip my meditation practice, but I choose to meditate so I can live with more (mindfulness, love, wisdom, courage, and persistence):

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*\* After the third reading, take a one-breath-cycle mindful pause. \**

I could focus on what’s negative, but I choose to give thanks so I can live with more (joy, laughter, creativity, play, and abundance):

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*\* After the third reading, take a one-breath-cycle mindful pause. \**

I set a firm intention to give thanks  
(10) \_\_\_\_\_ or more times today.

*\* After the third reading, take a one-breath-cycle mindful pause. \**





*Just read this section out loud once.  
Only read those behaviors that you  
intend to do:*

Every day, I will give thanks (*Check  
all that you intend to do*):

- First thing when I wake up.
- When I do my BALA(DI) practice.
- When I read my gratitude partner's  
gratitudes.
- When I message my gratitude  
partners.
- When I see my gratitude slogans.
- Whenever my timer goes off. (*Set  
your phone or watch timer to go off  
every hour, half hour, or an interval of  
your choosing throughout the day to  
remind you to give thanks.*)
- Before meals.
- When being skillful.
- Before, after, or while spending  
time with family and friends.
- When smelling, tasting, hearing, or  
seeing something delightful.
- When starting a task.

- While doing a task.
- After finishing a task.
- When celebrating victories, be they  
small, medium, or large.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Before going to bed at night.
- Whenever else I remember to.

*You're done for today! Give thanks  
and celebrate with your celebratory  
move.*

*Now mark in your log that you  
completed this activity. Great job!  
Your effort and commitment to these  
practices makes me so happy. I hope it  
makes you happy too.*

