

Thunk! How to Think Less for Serenity and Success

Sandy C. Newbigging

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Sandy Newbigging built a small empire with his mindfulness training methodology, the “mind detox method,” complete with lavish spa retreat options in Turkey and Australia for his students. In *Thunk!*, his latest offering, he teaches readers to end unhealthy, negative brain messages by switching off the part of the organ that focuses on those thoughts. Readers are shown how to let go of past trauma and find peace.

For Newbigging, being “think” is akin to being held prisoner by endless loops of negative content. He believes that deceptive brain messages have the potential to hurt us only when we think about them. The distinction takes some consideration, as does his helpful new model of content/context. In his view, even the negative content of our minds is always in a peaceful context, so he shows readers what it means to think in terms of that context.

While the book’s writing is simple, it is not glib. Here’s an example: “So if you want to experience real peace, I recommend you don’t waste a second intentionally thinking about past moments. You will not find peace there. Nor will you find peace in the future. The future might offer hope, but this present moment delivers you home to the peace, love, and joy that is your birthright to experience, explore, and enjoy.”

Newbigging suggests that having the curious mindset of a child is ideal for someone learning to meditate, which is an important part of his methodology. There is never a point at which he overburdens the reader with difficult-sounding philosophical concepts. Instead of using the term “epistemology,” for example, he would say, “in reality you don’t know what is going to happen. You just *think* you do. And thinking stops you from directly experiencing what is *actually* happening in reality.”

Ultimately, Newbigging’s writing style creates a sense of intimacy with his reader and imparts the ultimate accessibility of the peace everyone wants in life. He outlines several meditation methods and includes multiple exercises (“games”) to help readers understand the gravity of the concepts, lest anyone mistake the simplicity of meditation for the idea that it requires no effort philosophically or psychologically. In order for the book’s ideas to work, readers must truly believe that it is possible to achieve peace, that it waits to be claimed and experienced—and that it’s not just for everyone else.

CARRIE WALLACE (January 2, 2013)

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