

A serene sunset over a lake with a boat in the foreground. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds. In the foreground, a wooden boat with a blue interior and a red hull is visible, floating on the calm water. The background shows a range of mountains under the twilight sky.

Awakening from the Prison of the Mind

Elizabeth M. Lykins

Awakening from the Prison of the Mind

~Elizabeth M. Lykins

“Awakening is about liberating yourself from the prison that is the world of the mind and daring to be here as all that you are.”

~ Leonard Jacobson

I think we can all agree: thoughts can be either wonderful or the stuff of our worst nightmares. For some of us, thoughts about past events can haunt us for decades, shaping and forming the way we see who we are, who we allow to get close to us, how much to guard and keep to ourselves, and whether or not we can trust another human being to love us.

If they only knew the truth, how could they love me? ... This can play on and on in the mind in an endless loop.

If I had only done or not done.... (fill in the blanks), then my life would have been happy.

This pattern of thinking adds layer upon layer of endless negative ideas about who we are and how we identify ourselves, in the data banks of our mind, adding layer upon layer of additional dysfunction.

I am a Victim of (fill in the blank)...

While plagued by past events, we can also imagine horrific, frightening scenarios about the future, when we are lost in thought.

If I don't get (fill in the blanks) my life will be ruined; I won't make enough money to pay my bills; my wife will leave me; no one will love me...

Thoughts can place us on an eternal hamster wheel of the damned. On and on they go, with constant, obsessive, and often nonsensical thoughts about our worth, arising from within our own mind. We can become our own worst enemy.

If one becomes completely removed from the reality of the present, unhealthy thoughts can lead to mental illness and the inability to function in society, effecting relationships,

jobs, friendships, and every interaction we have. Most of the ills in modern society are as a direct result of believing our misguided thinking, to be true.

When thoughts create dark feelings of either profound sadness or severe anxiety, people often seek help to end their pain and mental torture. In my professional life, people come to me either as a patient in urgent care or work with me in a personal coaching context, seeking to find a way out of their pain. Although their personal circumstances have differences, the pain they are experiencing is usually caused by their thoughts about the situation rather than the situation itself.

We are innocently conditioned to believe that our thoughts are who we are. This is a 100% misunderstanding of the role of thought.

While we have a human brain that generates thousands or more thoughts daily that allow us to function in the mortal world, they are formulated based on input of data from our surroundings, recall of memories that create associations, our education, our family customs, and our observations of social situations. Little by little, our thought patterns are formed and expanded with this data. The purpose of thought is to serve us and to secure our survival in the physical world. The purpose is NOT to dominate our life experience or alter our spiritual essence. It is when we believe that thoughts have that power, that our life experience becomes troubled, chaotic, and increasing painful.

Thoughts provoke automatic feelings that show up accompanied by physical symptoms. They either cause us to feel calm and happy or anxious and frightened. This happens automatically, based on the quality of the thoughts we are experiencing in the moment.

Thoughts are very powerful and very seductive, but they are NOT who we are.

Who we are is the formless spirit that is inhabiting our physical form for a little while. Our spiritual self has the ultimate power to discriminate what thoughts are helpful in the moment and which ones are not. Our spiritual essence has an innate ability to observe thoughts in the human mind, while choosing to accept them as valuable or not. (*Read that twice*)

Somewhere along the line in our social conditioning, we came to believe that we actually ARE our thoughts and that they determine the life we will have. If we are deceived into believing this, we are imprisoned in the world of our own thoughts.

Everyone has the ability to break free from the prison of their human mind. You are so much more than the random thoughts that show up in your computer-like, human brain!

Here are some clues to help you to know if your thoughts are beneficial or not:

When you are feeling unsettled and anxious, that is a sign that your current thoughts are not to be trusted. Do not make any significant decisions about your life while in that state of mind. Observe the thoughts, but do not follow them or pay much attention to them. They will pass on their own if you do not act on them or give them further attention.

When you feel at ease, calm, and peaceful, you can likely trust the thoughts that accompany the calm feeling. Embrace the calm feeling inside of you. Observe it. Allow it to wash over you.

Your thoughts will *always* be accompanied by a feeling. Observe the thought and the feeling it brings, in the space between thoughts.

As spiritual beings from the formless world, who are inhabiting a human body in the world of form, we are constantly straddling both worlds. Our understanding of who we are is complicated by human, social conditioning.

Think back upon your early youth. You had far grander thoughts and ideals when you were very young, before the world changed you and caused you to dream much smaller. Who you truly are at your very core, is the untainted spirit that showed up in the mortal world, filled with wonder and awe about everything. Holding onto your true sense of identity, will lead you to the happiness, peace of mind, and calm you are seeking in the world.

Everything you need is already inside of you, waiting patiently to show you the way.

Here is how I can support you, as you transform into the best version of yourself:

- [Get Chapter One of My Book: Reflections on Transcendence](#) is a mindfulness-based book of meditations and reflections, featuring the artwork of renowned expressionist artist, the late Steve Lyons. Open the book to any random page for nuggets of wisdom and moving images to promote reflection and insights. [Enjoy Chapter One for free.](#) Available for purchase on [Book Depository](#) & [Amazon](#).

- [Resources & Publications](#). Links to publications, resources, digital resources and more to support your transformation.
- [Magnificent Metamorphosis Magazine](#) is an affordable online digital magazine that features inspiring mindfulness-based articles that will support your transformation. Each issue contains insights and impactful mindfulness-based content by a variety of global thought leaders and topics.
- [Transformational Coaching & Mentoring](#) : If worry, anxious thoughts, prolonged sadness, or overwhelm are effecting your life and you are ready for change, schedule a call with me to see if we are a good fit. Message me directly, or [visit my website](#) to learn more.