

**A hermeneutic exploration of mindfulness psychology**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores the theory and practice of mindfulness within the context of clinical psychology. Informed by philosophical hermeneutics, it seeks to understand (1) mindfulness, (2) how mindfulness works and (3) how mindfulness interfaces with cognitive and behavioural psychologies.

In recent years, use of mindfulness based psychological therapies has significantly increased within the field of clinical psychology and growing empirical evidence supports the efficacy of these interventions. However, the integration of non-dualistic philosophies and practices, i.e. mindfulness within dualistic clinical psychology, challenges this development.

I have developed a research methodology and methods that endeavour to accommodate theories, philosophies and practices emerging from seemingly opposing worldviews. The method, termed mindfulness hermeneutics, has been modified to accommodate the non-dualistic worldview and involves the ongoing practice of meditation. The thesis therefore draws understandings from relevant psychological literature, ancient and contemporary Eastern philosophies, expert clinicians' opinions and personal insights derived from the ongoing practice of meditation.

Elucidation of the structure and mechanism of mind suggests that the conditioned mind has three components with distinct functions. The automatic mind which is the most perceptible component of the conditioned mind consists of thoughts, attitudes, schemas, beliefs, emotions and memory. It functions automatically without conscious awareness. The subtle mind consists of ego which functions through constant desiring or intentionality. The observing mind, which comes into existence at the time of observation, comprises a quantum state of awareness and subtle ego. The main function of the observing mind is to execute awareness. This interpretation supports the claim that autonomous functioning of the conditioned mind and one's identification with the conditioned mind leads to suffering which, in turn, may lead to psychopathology.

Mindfulness practice is both a process and outcome. As a process, mindfulness is a meditation technique and, as an outcome, it achieves a state of awareness. The four key mechanisms of mindfulness, namely, regulation of attention, regulation of energy, witnessing and unconditional observation gradually transform the conditioned mind into pure awareness. I have argued that awareness of the mind's functioning and meta-conditioning ameliorates suffering and restores health.

Comparison between the Eastern philosophies and clinical psychology reveals that the conditioned mind, in the case of the Eastern philosophies, and cognitions and behaviours, in the case of clinical psychology, are acquired through learning (conditioning). However, while the Eastern philosophers understand that the mind is conditioned through insights developed from meditation; empirical theorists derive understandings of cognitions and behaviours through learning models. Eastern philosophers claim that meditation allows one to experience the mechanism lying behind thoughts and emotions i.e. awareness and energy, whereas clinical psychology has yet to adequately research awareness and energy. The thesis suggests ways in which clinical psychology could overcome this dichotomy and better integrate with mindfulness theory and practice.

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## **Key to transcriptions**

In presenting the research findings, the following abbreviations and conventions have been used:

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <i>Italics</i> | Identifies the interview data provided by the participating experts. Texts quoted from journals/books/online publications and Hindi and Sanskrit words are also italicised. |
| [     ]        | Indicates alterations made by the researcher to enhance clarity and grammatical flow.   |
| ...            | Denotes material deleted from the original text.  |

**Key Terms:**

*Ahamkara*: Eastern term for ego

*Atman*: Self

*Aum Mani Padme Hum*: A Tibetan mantra

*Aum*: An Ancient Hindu symbol/mantra

*Bhakti Yoga*: Meditation involving love and devotion

*Dhamma*: Suchness, knowledge

Dualism: Any view that postulates two kinds of things in some domain e.g. body-mind dualism

Dynamic meditation: An Osho meditation

*Hatha Yoga*: A type of forced yoga or meditation

Hermeneutics: The method of interpretation – first of text, and secondly of the social, historical and psychological world

*Jnana Yoga*: Meditation involving knowledge and understanding

*Kundalini*: Eastern notion of biological/psychological/spiritual energy

Meditation: An art of being aware

Mindfulness meditation: Meditation that induces mindfulness

Mindfulness practice: Practice of mindfulness meditation

Mindfulness therapy: Psychological therapy involving mindfulness meditation and philosophy/theory

*Neti-neti*: Neither this nor that

*Nirvana*: Eastern notion of enlightenment; attainment of the unconditioned mind

Non dualism: A state of consciousness in which there is no distinction between one's sense of self and his/her contents of awareness

Ontology: Being, metaphysics that concerns itself with what exists

*Samadhi*: Nirvana or enlightenment

*Sammasati*: Mindfulness

*Sutra*: Aphoristic statements

*Tathagata*: One of the names of Buddha

*The Dhammapada*: Compilation of Buddha's teachings

*Vajrachchedika Prajanaparamita Sutra*: Compilation of Buddha's teachings, translated as Diamond Sutra

*Vipassana*: A Buddhist meditation

**List of abbreviations**

ACT: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

CBT: Cognitive and Behaviour therapy

DBT: Dialectic Behaviour Therapy

EEG: Electroencephalography

fMRI: functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging

MBCT: Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy

MBSR: Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction programme

OCD: Obsessive compulsive disorder

TMS: Toronto Mindfulness Scale



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### **Attestation of Authorship**

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Balveer Sikh

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1. Phenomenon of interest**

In spite of obvious philosophical differences, clinical psychology combines mindfulness with cognitive and behavioural psychologies to enhance the efficacy of psychological therapies (Baer, 2003, 2006; Bishop et al., 2004; Lau & McMain, 2005; Linehan, 1993a; Lynch, Chapman, Rosenthal, Kuo, & Linehan, 2006; Shapiro, Carlson, Astin, & Freedman, 2006; J. D. Teasdale, Segal, & Williams, 1995). Empirical therapies such as Dialectic Behaviour Therapy (DBT) (Linehan, 1993a), the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction programme (MBSR) (Kabat-Zinn, 1982) and Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) (John D. Teasdale, 1999) incorporate mindfulness philosophies and practices in differing ways. There is growing empirical research validating the efficacy of these therapies (Baer, 2003).

Clinical psychology, which favours the practice of cognitive and behavioural psychologies, and mindfulness philosophies and practices originate from worldviews which oppose each other; a dualistic worldview underpins clinical psychology while mindfulness theories and practices are underpinned by a non-dualistic worldview (Wilber, 1997, 2000). Although researchers have found ways to incorporate mindfulness within the cognitive and behavioural paradigm and there is increasing support for these models, awareness, which is a key aspect of mindfulness, is not fully integrated into the field. Furthermore, the meaning of mindfulness and the mechanism through which it intervenes is yet to be fully understood (Lau & McMain, 2005).

Therefore, questions arise about what constitutes mindfulness and how theories and practices, which emerge from opposing worldviews, interface with each other. Thus, to better understand the meaning and mechanism of mindfulness and the nature of current developments within clinical psychology, a better understanding of (1) mindfulness, (2) how mindfulness practice works and (3) how mindfulness interfaces with empirical



theories, i.e. cognitive and behavioural psychologies, is required. These understandings will be gleaned from an exploration of (1) the current understandings of mindfulness, including definitions, empirical evidence, theories and practices within clinical psychology and (2) an exploration and interpretation of Eastern philosophies and practices.

## **2. Understanding mindfulness**

The term mindfulness is used as an umbrella term which encompasses phrases such as meditation, mindfulness therapies, mindfulness interventions, mindfulness based psychological interventions, mindfulness inclusive therapies, mindfulness theories, and mindfulness philosophies, which are often used interchangeably. In this way, the term mindfulness contains two distinct themes: (1) mindfulness theories and philosophies and (2) mindfulness practices, i.e. meditation and mindfulness meditation. Throughout this project, mindfulness will be used when referring to both theory/philosophy and practice domains, however, each use of the term will be contextualized.

Most definitions of mindfulness in psychological literature derive from Kabat-Zinn's (1994) definition "*paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally*" (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4). This definition of mindfulness, which was derived from the Buddhist philosophies, suggests that mindfulness is about regulation of attention to moment to moment reality without making judgments. This way of focussing attention is believed to generate several psychological mechanisms which treat psychopathology and improve health (Baer, 2003; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006; J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995). Several theories have been put forward to describe the mechanisms through which mindfulness works, including increased meta-cognitive awareness, exposure, relaxation, cognitive change, letting go, acceptance, compassion and better self management (Baer, 2003; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006; John D. Teasdale, 1999; J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995). A number of psychometric tools have been developed to measure the psychological mechanisms that arise out of mindfulness therapies (Lau et al., 2006).

### **3. Models of integration**

The integration of mindfulness into clinical psychology is based on the assumptions that (1) mindfulness shares conditioning principles with behavioural and cognitive psychologies and (2) it adds some value to behavioural and cognitive therapies (Lau & McMain, 2005). Mindfulness and cognitive and behavioural therapies have been combined in two ways: integrated and parallel (Lau & McMain, 2005). In an integrated way, such as the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction programme (MBSR) and Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), behavioural and cognitive psychologies and mindfulness are interwoven with one another, while in parallel theories, such as Dialectic Behaviour Therapy (DBT), behaviour and cognitive therapies and mindfulness work side by side.

Although integrated and parallel ways both share the cognitive vulnerability hypothesis (Lau & McMain, 2005), suggesting that negative and dysfunctional cognitions cause psychopathology, they differ in the way they bring a change in cognitions and behaviours; while integration based approaches emphasize increased awareness and acceptance of dysfunctional cognitions and behaviours, the parallel approach aims to change the dysfunctional thoughts and behaviours (Lau & McMain, 2005; Lynch et al., 2006).

### **4. Empirical evidence**

Mindfulness based treatment modalities were first developed to treat chronic and difficult to treat conditions such as the borderline personality disorder (Linehan, 1993a; Lynch et al., 2006), chronic depression (John D. Teasdale et al., 2002) and chronic pain (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003). However, growing empirical evidence suggests that mindfulness is efficacious in treating a range of disorders, including anxiety (Kim et al., 2009); (Beauchemin, Hutchins, & Patterson, 2008; Goldin, Ramel, & Gross, 2009; Sempke, Reid, & Miller, 2005), obsessive compulsive disorders (Hanstede, Gidron, & NyklÃ-cek, 2008), anorexia and bulimia, borderline personality disorder and suicidal ideations (Nee & Farman, 2005) and even psychosis (Abba, Chadwick, & Stevenson, 2008).

A controlled study conducted on 34 students with learning disabilities undertaken in the United States of America, reported that five weeks of mindfulness meditation practice decreased anxiety and enhanced social skills and academic performance (Beauchemin et al., 2008). Another controlled clinical study found that mindfulness based cognitive therapy reduced anxiety and depressive symptoms in people with panic and general anxiety disorders (Kim et al., 2009). Similarly, a mixed method study found that MBCT was effective in the treatment of active depression and anxiety (Finucane & Mercer, 2006). Palmer et al. (2003) suggest that DBT is efficacious in treating borderline personality and eating disorders. The Hunter DBT Project (2010) carried out in Australia, found that DBT reduced disability and improved quality of life in women with borderline personality disorder (Carter, Willcox, Lewin, Conrad, & Bendit, 2010).

Mindfulness has also been found to positively change brain and immune system functions (Chiesa, 2009; Davidson et al., 2003) and reduce depressive reactivity by altering neural pathways (Farb et al.). A pilot study conducted by (Robert-McComb, Tacon, Randolph, & Caldera, 2004), to measure the effect of an eight week mindfulness based stress reduction programme for women with heart disease, found indications of improvement in cortisol levels and physical functions. Preliminary studies have also demonstrated efficacy of mindfulness in the treatment of psychosis (Abba et al., 2008) and successful prevention of rehospitalisation in psychosis (Bach & Hayes, 2002). Abba et al. (2008) hypothesized that mindfulness develops self acceptance and metacognitive awareness, resulting in acceptance of psychosis and reduction in distress.

More recently, meta-analytical studies are beginning to emerge (Baer, 2003; Chiesa, 2009). Baer (2003) reported that mindfulness based interventions were effective in the treatment of chronic pain, anxiety, depression, fibromyalgia and psoriasis.

Chiesa (2009) reviewed 10 randomized controlled and cross-sectional studies with control studies to examine the effect of Zen meditation, a form of mindfulness meditation, on neurobiology by looking at electroencephalographic (EEG), neuroimaging, biological and clinical evidence. The EEG studies included in this review

found increased alpha and theta activity, which are generally related to relaxation, in many parts of the brain including the frontal lobe. A long term functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) study showed that the parts of the cerebral cortex related to the attention of long term meditation practitioners were thicker than the control group. These findings suggest that Zen meditation may also be helpful in preventing age-related physiological and cognitive decline. The studies included in this meta-analytical study suggest that such meditation may also be effective in the treatment of attention deficit disorder (Chiesa, 2009).

These studies, all undertaken in Western locations, provide important evidence for the efficacy of mindfulness in treating various psychological disorders. They are important for establishing mindfulness theories and practices within the field of clinical psychology (Shapiro et al., 2006). However, many of the studies are relatively small and can be challenged on the basis of methodological problems i.e. sample size, lack of a control group and/or adequate blinding. Furthermore, they provide limited understanding of the meaning and mechanisms through which mindfulness intervenes. Nevertheless, the empirical evidence has stimulated the interest of the scientific community in understanding mindfulness philosophies and practices (Shapiro et al., 2006).

## **5. Emerging theories of mindfulness**

In the Western world, mindfulness theory is being shaped by empirical research in the field. Researchers have drawn significant inferences about the possible mechanisms of mindfulness such as exposure, cognitive change, self management, relaxation, letting go, acceptance, metacognitive awareness and re-perceiving (Baer, 2003; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006; John D. Teasdale, 1999). As new findings emerge, these inferences will contribute to the further development of mindfulness theory and practice.

However, empirical researchers have yet to fully explore Eastern philosophies. One of the major barriers in an exploration of the Eastern philosophies is the non-dualistic worldview which claims that a true understanding of mindfulness can only be developed

through non-dualistic ontological experiences of the mindfulness state (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a).

Another obstacle to researching mindfulness philosophies arises from their affiliation with spiritual and religious systems. Historically, Western empiricism has evolved out of opposition to Western religion (Wilber, 1997, 2000). Due to this antagonism towards religion, some practitioners may discount mindfulness philosophies as religious and spiritual practices. Furthermore, the Eastern philosophies are ancient and use symbols and languages such as *Kundalini*, *Nirvana* and *Dhamma*, which are difficult to define and comprehend. As these concepts have gained religious and spiritual associations over significant periods of time, there is also reluctance within the Eastern tradition to redefine their theoretical framework. However, the contemporary Eastern philosophers and teachers such as Osho (1977a, 1988, 1989) and Krishnamurti (1993, 1994, 2002a) have provided modern interpretations of the ancient philosophies and practices and have enriched these interpretations with unique insights gained from their own enlightenment. Empirical researchers have yet to tap into these vast resources and thus to unlock the deeper understandings of mindfulness that could assist in the integration of mindfulness and psychology.

## **6. Interface between clinical psychology and mindfulness**

Although clinical psychology and Eastern philosophy share learning principles, they differ in the way they arrive at these principles. There are also other notable differences between clinical psychology and mindfulness. First, while clinical psychology does not separate awareness from behaviours and cognitions, mindfulness centers on the function of awareness independent of thoughts and behaviours (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a). Secondly, clinical psychology largely accepts automatic occurrence of thoughts and behaviours as normal (J. Beck, 1995; Young, 1999), whereas mindfulness philosophy considers the automatic functioning of the mind as one of the root causes of psychopathology (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989). Thirdly, clinical psychology is concerned with changing negative and dysfunctional cognitions as a treatment strategy (J. Beck, 1995; Young, 1999),

whereas mindfulness therapy insists on an increased awareness of the pathological cognitions as a treatment (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a).

My argument is that such differences require addressing so that an in-depth understanding and integration can be achieved. An exploration and explication of the Eastern notion of mind, which delineates the structure and mechanism of the conditioned and unconditioned mind, is therefore required. Clearer understandings of both the conditioned and unconditioned mind will shed light on the etiology and treatment of psychopathology.

## **7. Mindfulness from the Eastern perspective**

As discussed above, the Eastern philosophies and practices concerning mindfulness are ancient; they date back to ancient times (Aurobindo, 1996; Sarma, 2011). The empirical theorists attribute the term mindfulness to Buddhism. Yet long before Buddha, meditation was an integral part of the Indian philosophical system (prasad dasji, 2010; Sarma, 2011). It is clear, however, that Buddha's enlightenment brought new insights into the ancient Indian philosophical system. Buddha himself envisioned future contributions to his philosophy by other enlightened masters. This is illustrated in the following conversation with one of his disciples Subhuti, as recalled by another disciple Ananda:

*Subhuti asked: 'will there be any beings in the future period, in the last time, in the last epoch, in the last five hundred years, at the time of the collapse of the good doctrine who, when these words of the sutra are being taught, will understand their truth?'*

*The lord [Buddha] replied: do not speak thus, Subhuti! Yes, even then there will be beings who, when these words of the sutra are being taught, will understand their truth. For even at that time, Subhuti, there will be Bodhisattvas. And these Bodhisattvas, Subhuti, will not be such as honoured only one single Buddha, nor such as have planted their roots of merit under one single Buddha only. On the contrary Subhuti, those Bodhisattvas who, when these words of the sutra are being taught, will find even one single thought of serene faith, be such as have honoured many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas, such as have planted their roots of merit under many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas. Known they are, Subhuti, to the Tathagata through his Buddha-cognition.(Osho, 1977a)*

Replying to Subhuti's question, Buddha stated that his philosophy would not only be understood by future generations but also be enriched by the enlightened visions of future Buddhas.

Hence, to fully understand mindfulness philosophy and practice, an exploration of the ancient and modern Buddhist philosophies, ranging from Buddha to The Dalai Lama, is required. The ancient Buddhist texts comprise teachings of Buddha and other enlightened masters such as Sosan and Kakuan, whereas The Dalai Lama's talks, discussions and published literature, form the modern Buddhist texts. A combination of the ancient and contemporary Buddhist text is expected to yield deeper understandings of mindfulness philosophies and practices. The English translation of some of the ancient Buddhist texts is sourced from Osho's books/online library.

In this thesis I am arguing that it is necessary to go beyond Buddhist traditions and explicate from non-Buddhist traditions. Osho and Krishnamurti lived in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and both were concerned with the evolution of human awareness. They used contemporary language to describe Eastern philosophies and practices through non-dualistic principles thus avoiding religious, spiritual and symbolic pretence (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2010a). They both believed that unless humans moved away from conditioned beliefs to unconditioned awareness, there would be no end to human suffering.

However, each had very different styles of teaching. While Osho (1988) focused on formal meditation for achieving mindfulness, Krishnamurti (1993, 1994) advocated mindfulness in everyday activities. He held discussions with people from all walks of life, from ordinary people to scientists and philosophers, illuminating how understanding of reality is gained through pure awareness itself. Krishnamurti carefully uncovered layers of the conditioned mind, thoughts, beliefs and emotions, to demonstrate the pure awareness underneath the conditionings which enables all understanding. In doing so, he provided valuable insights into the structure and functioning of the mind (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994).

Although Osho was labelled “...the ‘sex guru’ and the ‘rich man’s guru’ since he extolled the pleasure of sensuality and material wealth”(Chryssides & Wilkins, 2006, p. 25), his extraordinary commentaries on religious, psychological and philosophical text (Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2010a) provide valuable insights into mind, meditation, awareness and enlightenment. The core of Osho’s teaching is meditation.

Both Krishnamurti and Osho represent non-religious Eastern traditions. In the Diamond Sutra, Buddha himself dissociates his teaching from any form of doctrine. He states:

*What do you think, Subhuti  
Is there any Dhamma which the Tathagata has fully known as  
“the utmost, right and perfect enlightenment”,  
Or is there any Dhamma which the Tathagata has demonstrated?  
Subhuti replied: no, not as I understand what the Lord has said.  
[Buddha further clarifies] And why?  
This Dhamma which the Tathagata  
has fully known or demonstrated  
it cannot be grasped,  
it cannot be talked about  
it is neither a Dhamma nor no Dhamma. (Osho, 1977a)*

In this conversation with Subhuti, Buddha stays away from a doctrine stating that there is no perfect truth that can be explained. He points out that true understanding, in this case the understanding of enlightenment, is through experiencing enlightenment, not in the philosophy of *Dhamma* or *no-Dhamma*. The Pali word *Dhamma*, which comes from the Sanskrit word *Dharma*, is hard to translate into English (Batchelor, 1997; Osho, 1977a), can be associated with many things including ‘suchness’ (as things are) and ‘the way of life.’

Hence, Buddhist teachings can be viewed from a non-religious or an agnostic view (Batchelor, 1997) which can also be applied to Osho’s (1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2010a) and Krishnamurti’s (1972, 1993, 1994, 2002) teachings.

Thus, understanding Eastern perspectives on mindfulness will require interpretation of philosophies and practices articulated by Osho and Krishnamurti.



## **8. Methodology and method**

Hermeneutics is argued to be the preferred research methodology for interpreting theories and philosophies (Crotty, 1998). Hermeneutic philosophies suggest that human beings always, in some ways, preunderstand the phenomenon they are seeking to understand (Gadamer, 1995). Thus, my preunderstandings are inherent in the inquiry itself.

My preunderstandings of mindfulness have evolved from: (1) reading psychological and philosophical literature (J. Beck, 1995; J. Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1987a, 1988; J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002; Wilber, 1997, 2000; Young, 1999), (2) my own practice of meditation, and (3) the clinical practice of psychology.

I formally learnt meditation in 1993 at the Osho International Commune, Pune, India. Since then I have been practicing meditation regularly and, since 2004, have formally meditated for approximately 4-5 hours a week.

The ongoing practice of meditation has helped me gain insights into the structure and mechanisms of mind and mindfulness practice. These insights have also had a profound effect on me as a person and on my clinical practice of psychology, and have, ultimately, lead to the conception and investigation of this research.

My preunderstandings involve the following key insights:

- (1) The mind is constantly occupied by thoughts which interpret the internal and external reality;
- (2) Thoughts work automatically;
- (3) I identify with my thoughts in such a way that I believe I am my thoughts and,
- (4) Awareness of the functioning of the mind is enough to understand and overcome some difficulties.

These insights into the functioning of my mind have also raised many existential questions such as what is awareness, what is mind, and how does the mind work? These insights are some of the questions that will be explored in this study.

The selection of a hermeneutic approach will further build and develop these preunderstandings. Answering the research questions - (1) What is mindfulness (2) How does mindfulness work, and (3) How mindfulness interfaces with cognitive and behavioural psychologies - requires exploration and interpretation of Western psychological theories as well as Eastern philosophies and practices. Thus, the hermeneutic approach must be able to interpret theories and philosophies emerging from both dualistic and non-dualistic worldviews. However, most Western philosophy underpinning hermeneutics is grounded in the dualistic worldview and are not suitable for interpreting the non-dualistic Eastern philosophies.

Heidegger's ontological hermeneutics (Heidegger, 1952) is closer than other forms of hermeneutics to non-dualistic worldviews. Heidegger presents a uniquely non-dualistic philosophy through the notions of Dasein and being (Zhang, 2006). He, like Buddhist philosophers, was interested in uncovering the experience or 'being' which lies hidden underneath thinking and language. However, Heidegger differs from the Buddhist philosophers in the way 'being' can be seceded from thinking and language (Zhang, 2006). While he attempts to find an authentic existence of 'being' by peeling back the layers of thinking and language, the Buddhist philosophers stipulate the need for ongoing practice of meditation to achieve this.

For this reason, I have drawn from Heideggerian (Heidegger, 1952), Gadamerian (Gadamer, 1995) and other related philosophy, to argue that interpretation of non-duality based phenomena requires a hermeneutic approach that is also informed by Eastern philosophy. Because Eastern philosophies require drawing understandings from ontological experience, my ongoing practice of meditation will contribute insights from the achievement of unconditioned awareness.

The method used in this thesis will involve interpretation of selected written texts, interview data from expert clinicians practicing mindfulness therapy and the integration

of the insights gleaned from my regular practice of meditation. The understandings developed through the interpretation will evolve organically to answer the above mentioned three research questions.

## **9. Structure of the thesis**

### ***Chapter 1: Introduction***

The first chapter introduced the purpose of the study, the research questions and rationale for the use of a hermeneutic approach combining methods that align with both Eastern and Western philosophy.

### ***Chapter 2: Literature Review***

This chapter critiques current literature in the fields of clinical psychology to: (1) explore current trends in clinical psychology; (2) comprehend current understandings of mindfulness in clinical psychology; (3) explore evidence for the efficacy of mindfulness; (4) uncover emerging theories of mindfulness, and (5) justify the line of inquiry.

### ***Chapter 3: Methodology and method***

This chapter justifies philosophical hermeneutics as the most appropriate methodology for this research. It considers theories and philosophies from both non-dualistic and dualistic worldviews and presents the key principles underpinning the selection of methods. It then outlines the methods used to conduct the research.

### ***Chapter 4: Findings 1: The structure and mechanism of mind***

This chapter explores the assumptions on which mindfulness is incorporated into the field of clinical psychology. It explicates understandings of the structure and mechanism of the mind. The chapter then compares these explicated understandings with those of cognitive and behavioural theory to present a beginning understanding of how mindfulness interfaces with clinical psychology.

### ***Chapter 5: Findings 2: The meaning and mechanism of mindfulness***

This chapter explores the writings of Osho, Krishnamurti and ancient and modern Buddhist philosophies for their understanding of mindfulness and how it works on the mind. This highlights the mechanisms involved in mindfulness. It also elucidates understanding of mindfulness states that result from sustained practice of mindfulness.

### ***Chapter 6: Findings 3: The interface between mindfulness and clinical psychology***

This chapter explores how explicated understandings of mind and mindfulness practice interface with clinical psychology. This highlights the similarities and differences between the two approaches. In doing so the chapter paves the way for the final discussion, recommendations and conclusion of the thesis.

### ***Chapter 7: Discussion, recommendations and conclusion***

This chapter synthesises understandings from the literature review and findings chapters to present a deeper understanding of mindfulness. This discussion paves the way for recommendations for practice and future research. It concludes by answering the research questions: what is mindfulness, how does it work and how does it interface with the practice of cognitive and behavioural psychologies.

## **10. Conclusion**

In summary, Chapter One has introduced mindfulness as the focus of this research and differentiated its contextual meanings. It has highlighted trends in clinical psychology relating to the term “mindfulness” and briefly introduced evidence supporting the efficacy of mindfulness in treating various psychological disorders. Justification for the selection of appropriate Eastern philosophies has been made.

The discussion centered on the present lack of congruence between clinical psychology and mindfulness as understood and practiced in accordance with non-dualistic world views. A case has been made for deeper understanding of the philosophies underpinning

mindfulness to better understand the meaning and the mechanism of mindfulness which, in turn, will assist with the integration and use of mindfulness therapies in clinical psychology.

## **Chapter 2: Literature review**

This chapter explores the literature relating to mindfulness for the purpose of contextualizing present understandings and identifying gaps in order to justify this inquiry. The texts will consist of empirical research studies, psychological theories and writings by Krishnamurti, Osho, Wilber and the ancient and modern Buddhist philosophers.

The chapter will contextualize the research by exploring: (1) history of the interface between East and West, (2) understanding mindfulness, (3) definitions of mindfulness, (4) mechanisms of mindfulness and (5) current models of integration. A summary will reveal current understandings of the meaning and mechanism of mindfulness theory and practice and how it currently integrates with clinical psychology. It will conclude by identifying gaps in the current knowledge of mindfulness theory and practice.

### **1. History of the interface between East and West**

There is a long history of interface between Eastern and Western philosophies, which can be traced back to 327 BC, when Alexander invaded India. This contact increased in the 16th century after Jesuit missionaries visited China (Clarke, 1994). More recently, prominent 20th century psychologists such as Carl Jung, Erich Fromm, and Karen Horney borrowed concepts from the Eastern philosophies to illuminate their theory and practice of psychology (Clarke, 1994). The inclusion of mindfulness practice within Western clinical psychology is, however, relatively new (Kabat-Zinn, 1982; Linehan, 1993a; J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995).

Historically, suspicion and scepticism have marred the dialogue between East and West (Clarke, 1994). The two worlds have accused each other of the flimsiness of their knowledge and each has claimed their own philosophies as superior.

The general perception is that the Western scientific community believes that the Eastern

mind is regressive and primitive while the Eastern philosophers think Western materialism represents illusion, repression and spiritual deprivation (Wilber, 1997). The fundamental difference between these two positions can be attributed to their differing worldviews and their influences in terms of methodologies and methods. In relation to understanding the human mind the East uncompromisingly adheres to a non-dualistic experiential understanding whereas Western psychology, especially clinical psychology, prefers a dualistic scientific worldview (Wilber, 1997).

The non-dualistic worldview proposes oneness of the universe which means that there is no creator outside the creation; creator and creation are one and the same (Osho, 2004). Osho (2004) states:

*The creator and the creation are not two things: the creator is the creation. In fact there is no division between the creator and the creation, it is a continuous process of creativity. On one pole the creativity looks like the creator; on another pole the creativity looks like the creation – but they are both the poles of the same phenomenon. (p. 96)*

The most distinguishing aspect of the non-dualistic worldview is the notion of ‘pure awareness’ or ‘unconditioned awareness,’ which is equally important for mindfulness (Krishnamurti, 1993; Osho, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997; Wilber, 1997). Referring to reality as consciousness, Wilber (1997) states that “*non-dual mode alone is capable of giving that “knowledge of reality”*” (p. 37).

The non-dualistic worldview further argues that this oneness is not just a theoretical construct but an ontological reality which is experienced through mindfulness and enlightenment, rather than thinking, philosophizing or scientific experimentation (Houshmand, Livingston, & Wallace, 1999; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997).

On the other hand, the Western dualistic worldview seems to have been shaped by the belief that God created the universe which intimates duality between the creator and the

creation (Wilber, 1997). Furthermore, the idea that God created humans in his own image allows humans to view the world as an object, which in turn creates a duality between humans and objects. Western duality is thought to have originated with the Greeks, advanced by Plato and Aristotle (4<sup>th</sup> century BC), and then followed by Descartes (19<sup>th</sup> century AD) and Comte (18<sup>th</sup> century AD) and (Russell, 1972).

The rise of empiricism reversed the sequence of duality from thinking to objective world to objective world and thinking; i.e. that scientific observations shape the thinking.

August Comte (18<sup>th</sup> C) applied this empirical dualism to social sciences (Crotty, 1998), paving the way for what became known as positivist philosophy. His goal was to use the accomplishments of science to improve the social, political and moral spheres of human existence (Baggini & Stangroom, 2004). On the other hand, Eastern philosophers since ancient times have persisted with non-dualistic philosophies and practices to ameliorate suffering and achieve happiness (Aurobindo, 1996; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a; Wilber, 2000).

However, there are a number of examples of endeavours to integrate these opposing worldviews. Jung derived his theory of collective unconscious from Eastern philosophies (Clarke, 1994). Wilber (1997, 2000) developed an integrated model of psychology by synthesizing the Eastern notion of awareness and Western psychology. Osho has also integrated aspects of psychodynamic psychologies (Freud, 1936) and psychoanalytical psychology (Jung, 1964) with Eastern philosophies to illuminate deeper understandings of the human mind (Osho, 1988, 1989).

In this way, in spite of differing worldviews, Western and Eastern philosophies and practices aim for the same goal i.e. better understanding the human mind and improving wellbeing. The real value of East-West dialogue may lie in the potential synthesis of both worldviews. Mall (2000) argues that the significance of dialogue between East and West lies in each becoming aware of their inadequacies and forming complementary opposites.



## **2. History of evolution of clinical psychology**

The mainstream practice of clinical psychology is underpinned by the scientist practitioner model (Lampropoulos & Spengler, 2002; Striker, 2002). In this model the practice of clinical psychology requires knowledge, assessment, intervention and evaluation. It is systematic and is in line with empirical evidence from the field (Barlow, 2008; Lampropoulos & Spengler, 2002; Striker, 2002). The scientist practitioner model supports the practice of cognitive and behavioural psychologies which are currently favoured in the New Zealand context (Kazantzis, 2006; Merrick & Dattilio, 2006).

Behaviour psychology is founded on two major learning principles: (1) classical conditioning which centers on learning through the conditioning between stimulus and response, and (2) operant conditioning which revolves around learning through the conditioning between response and reinforcement (Sue, Sue, & Sue, 2000), which are empirically demonstrated. The conditioning models suggest that once behaviours are learnt, they function automatically. In order to keep strict adherence to empiricism, behaviour psychology avoided aspects of the human mind which could not be studied through empirical methods, including cognitions and awareness. However, the success of cognitive therapies in the treatment of emotional disorders lead to the evolution of behaviour psychology, which introduced intervening mechanisms i.e. cognitions into the field (A. T. Beck, 1976).

Cognitive theories, known as the ‘second wave of behaviour psychology’ (Lau & McMain, 2005), are based on the assumption that behaviours result from the cognitive interpretations of triggering events, rather than the events themselves (A. T. Beck, 1976; J. Beck, 1995; Scott, Williams, & Beck, 1989; Young, 1999). These theories claim that cognitions cause psychopathology by negatively assessing or judging the triggering events (J. Beck, 1995). Based on the structure and function of cognition, J. Beck (1995) classifies cognitions into three categories: (1) core beliefs or schemas, (2) intermediate beliefs such as assumptions, attitudes and mental rules, and (3) automatic thoughts. Core-beliefs, the deeper lying cognitions, are formed early in life. These core-beliefs are

fundamental, global, rigid and over-generalizing, and are termed 'schemas' by Young (1999). People are not usually aware of their core beliefs because they develop through conditioning early on in life. The core beliefs trigger formation of a middle layer of intermediate beliefs such as attitudes, assumptions and mental rules which compensate the core beliefs. Just like core beliefs, the intermediate beliefs also, ordinarily, remain hidden from conscious awareness. Automatic thoughts, which constitute the most superficial layers of cognition, are driven by the underlying intermediate beliefs, core beliefs and schemas (A. T. Beck, 1976; Scott et al., 1989; Young, 1999). Implicit in cognitive theories is the concept that cognitions are conditioned in the same way as behaviours, and function automatically.

Research in Western nations has generated ample empirical evidence for the theory and practice of cognitive and behavioural psychologies. Several meta-analytic studies have found evidence for the efficacy of Cognitive and Behavioural Therapies (CBT) in the treatment of several psychological disorders such as generalized anxiety disorder (Hunton, Churchill, Teiseire, & de Lima, 2010; Manassis, Russell, & Newton; Wetherell), obsessive compulsive disorder (O'Kearney, Anstey, & von Sanden, 2006), social phobia (Gould, Buckminster, Pollack, Otto, & Massachusetts, 1997), acute traumatic stress and post-traumatic stress disorder (Ponniah & Hollon, 2009) and mood disorders (Hollon & Ponniah, 2010).

As cognitive and behavioural theories draw from conditioning models, conditioned and automatic working of cognition and behaviour is considered normal. Hence, these psychologies do not address awareness separate from cognition and behaviour. Awareness, which is considered to be the defining aspect of the human mind by Krishnamurti (1993, 1994), Osho, (1988, 1989) and Wilber (1997, 2000), does not have a place in cognitive and behavioural theories. This apparent gap in understanding seems to have triggered the 'third wave of evolution of behaviour psychology' i.e. the inclusion of mindfulness within the field (Lau & McMain, 2005).

### 3. Understanding mindfulness

The term mindfulness is a translation of the Pali word *sammasati* which is attributed to the early Buddhist period. Commonly interpreted as ‘right mindfulness,’ it is the seventh milestone of Buddha’s eightfold path. The eightfold path consists of: right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood and right effort, right mindfulness and right *Samadhi* or enlightenment (Osho, 1977c). In this way, mindfulness is an important notion within the Buddhist philosophies (Osho, 1977a, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002).

Many current understandings of mindfulness in clinical psychology are derived from Kabat-Zinn (1990, 1994), who borrowed from the Buddhist philosophies. Kabat-Zinn (1994) defines mindfulness as “*paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally*” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4). This definition suggests that mindfulness is about purposefully regulating attention to the present moment reality in a non-judgmental way.

However, Kabat-Zinn (2003) later defined mindfulness as: “*the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment*” (Kabat-Zinn, 2003, p. 146). Moving from the earlier definition of mindfulness, he suggests that mindfulness is an awareness that arises out of the act of purposefully and non-judgmentally regulating attention to the present moment reality. Thus, according to Kabat-Zinn (1990, 1994, 2003), mindfulness revolves around awareness and attention which has qualities of purposefulness, non-judgment and present moment reality.

Other researchers have also linked mindfulness to awareness (Lynch et al., 2006). Lynch et al. (2006) conceptualize and define mindfulness as “*primarily related to the quality of awareness that an individual contributes to the present experience....can be thought of as keeping one’s consciousness alive in the present reality*” (Lynch et al., 2006, p. 463). This suggests that mindfulness is a particular quality of awareness which arises when consciousness or attention is kept to the moment to moment occurring reality.

However, a more systematic attempt at articulating mindfulness was carried out by (Bishop et al., 2004). These researchers operationally defined mindfulness in terms of specific behaviours, experiential manifestations and implicated psychological processes. They proposed a two-component model of mindfulness:

*The first component involves the self-regulation of attention so that it is maintained on immediate experience, thereby allowing for increased recognition of mental events in the present moment. The second component involves adopting a particular orientation toward one's experiences in the present moment, an orientation that is characterized by curiosity, openness and acceptance.* (Bishop et al., 2004, p. 9)

The hallmark of this definition is that it focuses on the mental processes i.e. regulation of attention and orientation of this attention to curiosity, openness and acceptance but omits awareness which, according to the Eastern philosophers and some Western theorists, is a crucial element of mindfulness (Houshmand et al., 1999; Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a). Given that this theory is proposed by eleven leading theorists, the omission of awareness from the definition, which is considered as the critical component of the third wave of evolution of behaviour psychology (Lau & McMain, 2005), indicates a reluctance to deal with non-conceptual and ontological human factors within the field.

Current definitions of mindfulness involve two important aspects of the mind i.e. attention and awareness, which are further explicated below.

### **3.1 Attention**

Ordinarily attention orients one to stimuli, be they external or internal, to form perceptions and responses. Attention can occur automatically as well as being purposefully used as a cognitive faculty (Fernandez-Duque & Johnson, 1999). Automatic attention is related to conditioning (J. Beck, 1995), whereas, the purposeful regulation of attention is more related to unconditioned awareness, i.e. awareness without particular judgment and/or knowledge (Bishop et al., 2004; Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003; Lau & McMain, 2005; John D. Teasdale et al., 2002). There are three main features of mindful

attention i.e. purposeful attention, present moment attention and non-judgmental attention.

### **3.1.a. Purposeful attention**

Purposeful attention means regulating attending purposefully to the moment to moment occurring stimulus/stimuli rather than reacting automatically (Bishop et al., 2004; Kabat-Zinn, 1994) . The value of purposeful attention should be seen in the backdrop of the mind's automatic way of functioning; when attention is purposefully or intentionally regulated during meditation, one is prevented from automatically responding to automatically occurring stimuli. Thus, purposefully regulated attention enhances awareness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003) to the present moment and thus increases one's capacity to remain present in their internal and external environments (Bishop et al., 2004).

### **3.1.b. Present moment attention**

Mindfulness meditation requires that purposeful attention should be maintained in the present moment reality (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). This suggests that attention automatically wanders into the past and the future rather than staying in the present. Osho (1988) and Krishnamurti (1993, 1994) explain that the automatically occurring mental events, such as thinking and fantasising, make attention wander into the past and future. However, when attention is maintained in the present moment reality, the internal and external events are perceived as they are rather than as interpreted or judged (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002). Bishop et al. (2004) suggest that this present moment attention results in increased attention to immediate experiences and recognition of mental events. This means that if one is more attentive of the present moment reality there will be an increased experience of ontological reality and decreased triggering of past trauma and future anxieties.

### **3.1.c. Non-judgmental attention**

The third component of mindfulness, non-judgmental attention, requires that attention be kept without judgment (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Inherent in this concept is that ordinary

attention involves some form of judgment (thinking) (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994). During mindfulness practice however, when attention is kept in the moment to moment reality, the orientation of attention changes from judgments to curiosity, openness and acceptance which prevents the automatic stimulus-response cycle i.e. analysing and judgments (Bishop et al., 2004).

### **3.2. Awareness**

Awareness is a commonly used term but it is difficult to fully describe. Furthermore, present literature on awareness within clinical psychology is limited. Kabat-Zinn (2003) has suggested that when attention is purposefully and non-judgmentally regulated in the present moment reality, it results in awareness which seems to be more congruent with the Eastern philosophies (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a). According to Osho (1988) and Krishnamurti (1993), meditation is a state of pure awareness in which it has intelligence capable of its own understanding. However, the current definitions of mindfulness, which swing between attention and awareness, seem to be leaning towards attention and its psychological correlates (Bishop et al., 2004), thus mindfulness meditation requires further exploration.

### **4. Mechanisms of mindfulness**

Empirical research has yielded a number of theories of the possible mechanisms through which mindfulness intervenes (Baer, 2003; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006; John D. Teasdale, 1999). Baer (2003) carried out meta-analytical research of 20 studies, which either had a control group or provided pre and post mindfulness meditation intervention comparisons. She only included acceptance/awareness based mindfulness approaches such as MBCT and MBSR, excluding DBT and Acceptance based Cognitive Therapy (ACT) because none of the studies reported independent data on mindfulness. Baer deduced that mindfulness was effective in the treatment of various psychological disorders and physical conditions, i.e. anxiety, depression, relapse prevention in

depression, binge eating and chronic pain and other medical conditions such as fibromyalgia and psoriasis, and improves wellbeing.

Baer and other researchers have therefore proposed the following mechanisms: (1) reperceiving, (2) exposure, (3) cognitive change, (4) self management, (5) relaxation, (6) acceptance, (7) values clarification, (8) letting go, (9) increased mindfulness/awareness and (10) meta-cognitive awareness (Baer, 2003; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006; John D. Teasdale, 1999; J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995).

#### **4.1. Reperceiving**

Shapiro et al. (2006) have offered a theory of the possible mechanisms of mindfulness, in which they describe “*axioms...as the essential building blocks of mindfulness*” (p. 374). They identify three axioms, namely, intention, attention and attitude (IAA) in mindfulness practice. The first axiom refers to the intention one brings to the practice of mindfulness, which “*shifts along a continuum from self-regulation, to self-exploration, and finally to self-liberation*” (Shapiro et al., 2006, pp. 375-376) which is associated with compassion, insight and awareness. The second axiom i.e. attention, is observing things as they arise in the moment to moment occurring reality. Citing Gestalt therapy founder, Fitz Perl, Shapiro et al. (2006) propose that attention in and of itself is curative. The third axiom of mindfulness is about the attitude that one brings to attention. Citing Japanese characters representing mindfulness, which contain both mind and heart, the authors believe that an attention should accompany an attitude of heart quality, openness, acceptance and compassion.

Shapiro et al. (2006) suggest that during mindfulness practice these axioms work together creating “*reperceiving*” (p. 377), which can be described as a mode of processing the moment to moment occurring reality in a less automatic and judgmental and more open, curious and compassionate way. They conclude that mindfulness leads to a “*significant shift in perspective, which we have termed as reperceiving*” (p. 377). This reperceiving is a meta-cognitive state, which overarches four additional mindfulness mechanisms of

change such as self regulation, value clarification, cognitive and emotional flexibility and exposure. Further clarifying the concept, the authors state that reperceiving of cognitions is not like detachment, apathy, numbness or dissociation. On the contrary, the reperceiving process “*engenders deep knowing and intimacy with whatever arises moment by moment*” which leads to “*a deep, penetrative non-conceptual seeing into the nature of mind and world*” (Shapiro et al., 2006, p. 389).

The authors argue that through the meta-cognitive process of reperceiving one is able to de-identify from their experiences and view their experiences with greater clarity and objectivity. They go on to suggest that reperceiving is a naturally occurring developmental process and mindfulness only accelerates the process. As this process of reperceiving continues and shifts how one views his/her internal experiences, one comes to believe that he/she is not what they are perceiving i.e. I am not my thoughts. They state “*in this way, there is a profound shift in one’s relationship to thoughts and emotions, the result being greater clarity, perspective, objectivity and ultimately equanimity*” (Shapiro et al., 2006, p. 379).

Adding to reperceiving and the decentralising self perception theory, Shapiro et al. (2006) argue that the reperceiving process is like ‘cognitive diffusion’, a term derived from (S. C. Hayes, Stosahl, & Wilson, 1999), which means changing one’s relationship with thoughts rather than thoughts themselves. As a result mindful awareness, the aggregate of thoughts which was once seen as a complete and stable self, starts to appear impermanent and fleeting, and the identity starts to shift from contents of awareness, i.e. cognitions, to the awareness itself; from ‘self as content’ to ‘self as context’, context being awareness (Shapiro et al., 2006).

However, Shapiro et al. (2006) further suggest that ‘bare awareness’ is insufficient in terms of achieving change, which suggests that the ‘meta-mechanism’ of reperceiving is something other than pure awareness. This differs from the Eastern philosophies which suggest that awareness is intelligent enough to understand and make changes



(Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1972, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2009b, 2010a; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a).

## 4.2. Exposure

The theory of exposure is derived from behaviour psychology which suggests that abnormal behaviours can be desensitized by exposing the person to the negatively conditioned stimulus/stimuli (Barlow, 2008; Sue et al., 2000). Empirical studies have evidenced the efficacy of exposure techniques in the treatment of the anxiety spectrum of disorders (Berry, Rosenfield, & Smits, 2009; Nortje, Posthumus, & Moller, 2008). The efficacy of mindfulness in the treatment of the anxiety spectrum of disorders has also been demonstrated by many empirical studies; anxiety with panic attacks (Kim et al., 2009), social anxiety disorder (Goldin et al., 2009), anxiety in students with learning disabilities (Beauchemin et al., 2008), anxiety in children (Semple et al., 2005) and obsessive compulsive disorder (Hanstede et al., 2008).

Baer (2003) suggests that mindfulness practice gradually exposes one to negatively conditioned stimuli without associated anxiety when the person purposefully and non-judgmentally regulates attention to the present moment reality. This process of gradual exposure of negatively conditioned stimuli leads to desensitization of these stimuli resulting in the extinction of emotional responses and avoidance (Baer, 2003). She explains that in chronic pain conditions, *“the ability to observe pain sensation non-judgementally is believed to reduce the distress associated with pain”* resulting in better coping and management of the condition (Baer, 2003, p. 128).

Shapiro et al. (2006) have similarly argued that the mindfulness process allows emotionally loaded experiences to appear without emotional reactivity or avoidance into the awareness which would not be possible if reactivity was maintained as usual. Thus, through the mechanism of exposure, mindfulness practice prevents the emotional

reactivity to negative emotion provoking stimuli and desensitizes them in the process. These theorists hypothesize that mindfulness practice gradually teaches that traumatic and fearful cognitions are not as harmful and threatening as one may have come to believe, an understanding which leads to the extinction of avoidance behaviours (Shapiro et al., 2006). However, the focus of empirical theorists on the extinction of negative cognitions is only half the picture. Mindfulness practice involves learning to observe painful as well as pleasurable events equally.

Exposure theory has also received support from DBT theorists. Lynch et al. (2006) have also suggested that behavioural exposure and learning new responses is one of the mechanisms of mindfulness. They hypothesize that mindfulness provides a context in which exposure of conditioned stimuli and learning of new responses takes place, a concept similar to re-perceiving (Shapiro et al., 2006).

#### **4.3. Cognitive changes**

Several studies included in Baer's meta-analytical study have suggested that mindfulness changes people's cognition (Baer, 2003). One of the most noticeable changes found through the studies included in this meta-analysis is the change in one's relationship with his or her cognition. Mindfulness helps people acquire this insight that thoughts are just events occurring in mind rather than reflection of their truth or reality (Baer, 2003). DBT theorists have also endorsed cognitive change theory by arguing that mindfulness inducts cognitive changes by changing literal beliefs in mental rules through attention control (Lynch et al., 2006).

Further, Bear (2003) believes that the mechanism of change resulting from mindfulness practice is different from the mechanism of cognitive and behavioural therapy. Comparing cognitive and behavioural therapies with acceptance based mindfulness therapies, she states that cognitive change in mindfulness occurs as a result of viewing thoughts as temporary events occurring in the mind rather than the true reflection on

reality and rather than a systematic analysis and modification of cognitions, as is the case with cognitive psychology. The other important distinction that Baer (2003) makes is that whilst cognitive and behavioural approaches have a clear goal of modifying dysfunctional cognition, mindfulness does not aim for a particular goal, other than maintaining an attitude of openness, acceptance and compassion (Shapiro et al., 2006).

Thus, unlike cognitive and behavioural psychologies, mindfulness does not seek to change negative cognition. Cognitive changes, however, occur when one comes to understand cognition as events occurring in the mind, rather than true reality, and thus one does not identify with them. Cognitive change may result from some mechanisms such as re-perceiving (Shapiro et al., 2006) or meta-cognitive awareness (John D. Teasdale, 1999; J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995) or, as suggested by the Eastern philosophies, from unconditioned awareness (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993).

#### **4.4. Self management**

Several studies have suggested that mindfulness interventions improve self management (Chiesa, 2010; Stepp, Epler, Jahng, & Trull, 2008). A study by Nee and Farman (2005) on female prison inmates with borderline personality disorder measured the effects of Dialectic Behaviour Therapy (DBT). They reported significant overall improvement which included the improvement in affect regulation and downturn in suicidal behaviours in these inmates. The researchers also noticed improvement in self esteem, coping and survival skills and impulse control. Other DBT theorists also lend support to the mechanism of self management which improves emotional regulation. Lynch et al. (2006) suggest that mindfulness provides context for emotional regulation, experience of negative emotions and acquisition of new emotional responses, a process similar to cognitive change mechanism. They argue that “*mindfulness may reverse emotion linked response tendencies*” (Lynch et al., 2006, p. 465). Some theorists also claim that mindfulness protects against self discrepancy and alters self concept and self regulation (C. Crane et al., 2008), while others suggest mindfulness increases cultivation of inner connection, self awareness, acceptance and compassion (Proulx, 2008). Self observation has also been argued to increase the use of coping skills, early non-judgemental

detection of depressogenic cognitions and emotions, recognition of consequences, improved recognition of cues and an increased ability to observe urges without yielding to them, increased interpersonal effectiveness, emotional regulation and distress tolerance (Stepp et al., 2008).

The researchers also conclude that improved self management is the result of increases in self observation which in turn promote increased use of coping skills (Baer, 2003; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006). Different theories have been put forward to explain self regulation. One group of theorists hypothesize that the purposeful attention of moment to moment reality with an open attitude enhances self observation (Shapiro et al., 2006). These theorists hypothesize that intentional attention improves the feedback loop by intentionally connecting with the internal and external experiences, which may previously be avoided. This process helps regulate the self more efficiently and leads to a greater order, putting things in perspective and improvement in health generally. They suggest that with practise this process gradually becomes deeper and deeper, creating greater order and health. Shapiro et al. (2006) also believe that the process of reperiencing improves self management by decreasing automatic reactive patterns. They suggest that by staying with the experiences moment by moment, automatic avoidance and reactions are slowly replaced by understanding that these experiences are transient and will eventually pass.

In this way, the mechanism of self regulation involves several sub-mechanisms such as increased self esteem, increased coping and survival skills and impulse control, improved emotional regulation, decreased self discrepancy, altered self concept and self regulation, increased cultivation of inner connection, increased self awareness, acceptance and compassion, increased self observation and increased interpersonal effectiveness. Once again the mechanism of self regulation and its sub-mechanisms are not intended outcomes of mindfulness practice, they rather occur on their own, possibly through awareness which arises by purposefully keeping attention to the present moment reality.

#### **4.5. Relaxation**

Empirical studies have suggested that mindfulness practice induces relaxation, which has perplexed researchers (Baer, 2003), because mindfulness practice should, in fact, trigger autonomic arousal when people come across automatically occurring negatively conditioned stimuli. Western theorists struggle to explain the relaxation mechanism of mindfulness; it is difficult to comprehend and communicate how mindfulness can produce relaxation rather than the habitual emotional reactivity which usually occurs when negative stimuli are encountered.

Considering that from an Eastern point of view, mindfulness practice ultimately results in a state of awareness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003), relaxation may be intrinsic to awareness. This could also mean that relaxation is a natural state of being which manifests itself when the automatic and habitual reactivity are suspended through mindfulness practice.

#### **4.6. Acceptance**

Acceptance is one of the core concepts of mindfulness meditation (Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Lynch et al., 2006). All mindfulness based therapies, including DBT, teach acceptance of internal events i.e. cognitions, feelings, and emotions, without changing or avoiding them. This acceptance is not meant to judge these events as true; it is simply an acknowledgement of the facts. Abba et al. (2008) have argued that acceptance works in psychosis by allowing voices, thoughts and images to come and go from awareness without a reaction and struggle.

Several theorists have put forward possible explanations for the mechanism of acceptance (Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006). They explain that, at one level, the acceptance mechanism seems to act as a ploy to avoid getting caught in ongoing automatic self-criticalness and judgments increasing the context in which change can take place (Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006). At another level, acceptance is not an intentional act of mindfulness, it may naturally result from awareness of internal and external environments and deeper understanding of them (Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006). This is in accordance with a non-dualistic worldview which also gives evidence of the mechanism

of relaxation by suggesting that when acceptance removes struggle with reality a state of relaxation arises naturally.

#### **4.7. Letting go**

Alongside acceptance, letting go is another cognitive aspect of mindfulness which is used to avoid getting caught in the automatic mind functioning. Evidence to support this theory derives from empirical research suggesting the effectiveness of mindfulness in the treatment of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) (Fairfax, 2008; Hanstede et al., 2008). Hanstede et al. (2008) hypothesised that the awareness inducted by mindfulness enabled participants to notice automatic anxiety provoking stimuli and to let go of them, thus stopping thought-action fusion (Hanstede et al., 2008).

In this way, the mechanism of letting go corresponds with the mechanisms of relaxation and acceptance. Together, these mechanisms are related to one's natural state of being, which is the state of awareness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Thus, the mechanisms of letting go, relaxation and acceptance may be the intrinsic characteristics of awareness.

#### **4.8. Values clarification**

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) considers values clarification one of the core mechanisms of mindfulness (Luoma, Hayes, & Walser, 2007). People are usually driven by their values. Because people usually function reactively and automatically, they are often not aware of what is important for them. This is where the values clarification mechanism becomes useful. Mindfulness allows people to stay with the experiences moment by moment and choose from a wider range of options available to them, a process which continues to go deeper and deeper, previously explained as re-perceiving (Shapiro et al., 2006). It could also mean that deepening of awareness, or increased awareness, is associated with the values that naturally help one function effectively and maintain wellness.

#### **4.9. Metacognitive awareness**

The concept of metacognition which describes processes behind cognitions was first introduced by (Flavell, 1979) in developmental psychology. Teasdale (1999) modified aspects of Flavell's theory introducing the concept of metacognitive insight and linking it to mindfulness practice. He postulated that mindfulness meditation supports the notion that thoughts are events occurring in mind rather than reflection of self or reality (John D. Teasdale, 1999). Teasdale argues that metacognitions are different from knowledge; mindfulness knowledge is knowing that thoughts are events happening in the mind, and mindfulness insight is experiencing thoughts as events.

A later study published by (John D. Teasdale et al., 2002) found evidence of reduced metacognitive awareness in residually depressed patients compared with a normal sample. However, when these people were treated with MBCT group therapy, relapse was prevented by increasing metacognitive awareness and changing the people's relationship with their thoughts.

A control group design study by Goldin et al., (2009) found Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression. After analyzing the data for intra subject, inter group and rumination control, the authors concluded that mindfulness meditation reduced rumination which resulted in decreased negative affect and cognitions. These findings are supported by (Kingston, Dooley, Bates, Lawlor, & Malone, 2007). Another study found that mindfulness skills such as living in the moment and an attitude of acceptance were effective in the treatment and relapse prevention of depression (Mason & Hargreaves, 2001). Goldin et al. (2009) hypothesize that reduced ruminations resulted from change in the participant's relationship with their cognitions; observing internal events as passing events rather than true reality, a decentered view of self.

Other researchers have also proposed that a non-judgemental decentered view of one's thoughts may stop ruminations; people may notice depressogenic cognitions and move on to the present moment reality avoiding rumination (Baer, 2003; Kingston et al., 2007).

These researchers suggest that meta-cognitive awareness is a state of mind prior to when a judgment or thinking takes place. Thus, meta-cognitive awareness resembles the Eastern notion of awareness being capable of understanding.

#### **4.9. Increased mindfulness and awareness**

Buddhist philosophy claims that meditation will induce mindfulness, a state of awareness (Osho, 1977a; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002). Several Western theorists also support this vision (Baer, 2003; Batchelor, 1997; Davis, Lau, & Cairns, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006; J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995). It has been suggested that mindfulness creates a context in which other mechanisms such as cognitive change, self management and value clarification occur. It has also been suggested that mindfulness causes extinction, relaxation and several other cognitive, behavioural and self management changes (Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006).

Empirical studies have also lent support to this theory; (Carmody & Baer, 2008) found that mindfulness meditation increased mindfulness and wellbeing and decreased stress related problems. (Nicastro, Jermann, Bondolfi, & McQuillan, 2010) similarly found that mindfulness increased participants' abilities to describe immediate environments and increased their ability to act with awareness.

These theorists and researchers recognise that mindfulness practice increases mindfulness or awareness, which is in line with the Eastern philosophies (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1998, 1989). This suggests that clinical psychology is gradually moving from rigid dualistic empiricism to an empiricism that embraces non-dualistic notions. The use of notions and concepts such as meta-cognitive awareness (John D. Teasdale, 1999; John D. Teasdale et al., 2002) and mindfulness and awareness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003),



provide evidence of the move towards acceptance of non-dualism. However crucial Eastern notions involving ontology of awareness are yet to be fully understood.

## **5. Measuring mindfulness**

Empirical literature is increasingly supporting the efficacy of mindfulness therapy and understanding the meaning and mechanism of mindfulness (Baer, 2003; Chiesa, 2009). The effects of mindfulness are being measured through neurological imaging (Chiesa, 2010) and psychometric measurements (Davis et al., 2009; Lau et al., 2006; Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2002). Lau et al. (2006) developed a psychometric scale, called the Toronto Mindfulness Scale (TMS) which measures two key mechanisms of mindfulness, namely, curiosity and decentring. Preliminary results show the good internal consistency of the tool. The data suggests that TMS is a reliable and valid measure of mindfulness and may be a useful tool in measuring psychometric properties associated with mindfulness and predicting treatment outcomes.

The development of such measurement tools is in line with evidence based practice. However, psychometric tools which are based in dualistic thinking may not be fully able to measure awareness and thus could compromise the development of mindfulness therapies. Given the non-dualistic nature of mindfulness, ‘practice based evidence’, which uses real time evidence i.e. client experiences and feedback, may be more appropriate for the clinical practice of psychology (Duncan, Miller, & Sparks, 2000). Tools such as these will require further research and development to achieve congruence with the emerging theories of mindfulness.

## **6. Mindfulness from an Eastern perspective**

The notion of mindfulness is grounded in the non-dualistic worldview which propounds that reality can only be understood through unconditional awareness (Aurobindo, 1996). The origin of non-dualistic philosophies goes back to the ancient scriptures of the *Vedas* and *Upanishads* (Aurobindo, 1996). Meditative insights, rather than intellectual pursuits, of the *Rishis* from various schools of Indian philosophies such as *Samkhya*, *Yoga*, *Adveta*

and *Tantra* (Meijer, 2011; Muller, 1899; Radhakrishnan & Moore, 1957) further advanced the non-dualistic understanding.

The Samkhya school of philosophy states that the universe is made of two things, namely, nature and consciousness; nature is active but not conscious, and awareness is conscious but is not active. The philosophy assumes that in humans they both come together in oneness so a person becomes both active and aware (Meijer, 2011).

Samkhya's position on the special status of human beings is viewed as dualistic by Adveta philosophers who propose their own non-dualistic philosophy (Sprung, 1968). Adi Shankracharya, a great 9<sup>th</sup> century Adveta sage, states that the origin and essence of everything in this universe is Brahman or pure consciousness (Chopra, 2004).

Although the Samkhya and Adveta have many similarities and differences, both emphasize that the ultimate reality of everything is pure awareness (Chopra, 2004; Meijer, 2011; Sprung, 1968). They both argue that, in the system of the universe the problem arises when mind (ego) falsely believes it is the source of knowledge and superimposes itself on pure consciousness, causing ignorance and suffering (Meijer, 2011).

Yoga, which was propagated by Patanjali in his work *Yoga-sutra*, is considered as the practice side of the Samkhya philosophy (Dasgupta, 1924). Yoga practice and philosophy postulates that Ahamkara or ego obscures the reality by assuming the righteousness of itself (Patanjali, 2010). Yoga prescribes various types of methods to train body and mind for overcoming ego and attaining mindfulness and ultimately *Samadhi* (Chopra, 2004; Dasgupta, 1924).

Tantra, another school of Indian philosophy like Yoga, Samkhya and Adveta, is grounded in the idea that everything originates from pure awareness or *Shiva* (Dasgupta, 1924; Gyatso, 2005). *Shakti* or energy, which is the active part of *Shiva*, takes different forms, including matter and mind. When mind (*Shakti*) starts to falsely dominate the awareness or Shiva via ego, one lives in illusion and ignorance. Thus the ultimate aim of Tantra, like yoga, is to achieve the state of pure awareness enlightenment through meditation (Dasgupta, 1924; Gyatso, 2005)

The non-dualistic worldview has continued to develop through to modern times. Indian sages and mystics such as Guru Nanak (Singh, 1984) Maharshi Ramana (Natarajan, 2006), Aurobindo (1996) and Osho (1988, 1989, 2006, 2010) have based their philosophies on non-duality in which mindfulness become the central tenet. Osho's commentaries on various Indian scriptures have not only illuminated understanding inherent in the scriptures but also provided new insights into human mind, meditation, mindfulness and enlightenment. Krishnamurti (1993. 1994), who completely disregards philosophy, also bases his system of understanding on non-duality via understanding mind through pure awareness of mindfulness.

Buddha through his enlightenment developed his own system of non-dualistic philosophy. He stated that in order to understand the reality, one should first understand the nature and functioning of mind through meditation and enlightenment (Gyatso, 2011).

Buddha's teachings, for example *Anapana-sati Sutta* and *Satipathana Sutta* (Analayo, 2003; Bodhi, 1995; Bodhi & Nanmoli, 2005; Majjhima-nikāya, 1967; Nhat Hanh, 1976; Woodward, 1967), describe how right mindfulness of body and mind can be achieved through keeping non-judgmental attention of moment to moment occurring breathing and cognition. Teachings such as *Vajrachhedika Prajanaparamita* (Conze, 1974; Soeng, 2000; P. Williams, 2009) describe the nature of right mindfulness and enlightenment. These teachings also describe the deeper aspects of mindfulness illuminating subtle states of unconditioned awareness. When meditation is practiced in the right way, it leads to spontaneously occurring, non-dualistic or unconditional awareness (Nhat Hanh, 1976).

In this way, the meaning of mindfulness can be interpreted across a long and somewhat paradoxical continuum, from the discipline of training attention to observing the present moment reality without judgment at one end and at the other, unconditional or pure awareness which exists and functions spontaneously on its own.

Buddha's core teachings were further developed and enriched by enlightened disciples via many schools of Buddhism such as *Theravada*, *Mahayana* and *Vajrayana*. Each of these schools is complex and multifaceted (Landaw, Bodian, & Buhnemann, 2011).

## 6.1 Theravada Buddhism

Theravada is the oldest school of Buddhism, whose branches now survive in Sri Lanka and South East Asia. It bases its practice and doctrine on the Pali Canon and its commentaries, considered to be Buddha's original teaching. Theravada revolves around Buddha's teaching of the four noble truths about suffering and the eightfold path of overcoming the suffering. His noble truths state that life is suffering, desire is the root cause of suffering, suffering can end and one needs to practice the eight fold path to end the suffering. The eightfold path consists of right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right enlightenment (Bodhi, 2012). The ultimate aim of Theravada is to attain enlightenment, which is mostly the domain of individual devoted monks and nuns.

## 6.2 Mahayana Buddhism

Mahayana broke away from Theravada Buddhism in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. It bases its doctrine on *Prajnaparamita Suttas* (Nhat Hanh, 2009). Mahayana philosophy suggests that one must not only aim for one's own enlightenment but also for enlightenment for all sentient beings. The Mahayana practice revolves around the philosophy and practice of 'perfection of wisdom' and *Shunyata* or emptiness of mind to ultimately achieve enlightenment. The perfection of wisdom is achieved by discriminating between 'things as existing in their own right' and 'things as perceived through the conditioned mind'. *Shunyata* or emptiness of mind refers to the state of mind which is empty of conditioning and full of pure awareness, leading to 'perfect wisdom' (Nhat Hanh, 2009; P. Williams, 2009).

## 6.3 Vajrayana Buddhism

The origin of *Vajrayana*, which is a unique amalgamation of *Tantra* and Buddhism, is believed to be in the philosophy of Saraha, disciple of Srikirti who was disciple of Buddha's son Rahulabhadra (Guenther, 1973). Part of *Vajrayana*, Tibetan Buddhism was brought to Tibet by Indian Tantric masters Padmasambhava and Tilopa and further developed by Naropa, Milerapa and Atisha (Dowman, 1985). Tilopa's teachings known

as Songs of *mahamudra*, describes the inner nature of mind as a pure and unconditioned state of awareness. However, conditioned mind via automatically occurring thoughts and one's identification with them becomes a hindrance to realizing *mahamudra* or the state of pure awareness. Tilopa suggests that by remaining loose, natural, detached from conditioned mind, one can find the state of *mahamudra* or pure awareness and thus understand the reality as it unfolds in its own right (Dowman, 1985).

Atisha's seven points of mind training further enriched Tibetan Buddhism. It describes seven ways to cultivate states of mindfulness, compassion and love to ultimately achieve enlightenment. These include: (1) reality i.e. reality of mind already exists; (2) the conditioned mind is the barrier to understanding the reality; (3) mindfulness is the door to understanding; (4) understanding the conditioned nature of mind; then (5) letting go of mindfulness; (6) settling back in the basic nature of mind i.e. awareness, and (7) living life as it presents itself in moment to moment awareness (Wallace, 2004).

The Dalai Lama further illuminated the ancient Tantric Buddhist teachings. His work is more important in the context of east-west dialogue due to his continued dialogue with the western philosophers and scientists in which he assimilates the ancient mindfulness philosophies and practices surrounding energy and awareness with psychology and science (The Dalai Lama, 1991, 1907, 2000, 2000a).

Therefore, in spite of their numerous differences, all Hindu and Buddhist philosophies are based on a non-dualistic worldview which proposes that reality can only be experienced through unconditioned awareness. These philosophies also agree that the conditioned mind becomes a hindrance by obscuring pure awareness and thus reality. They therefore prescribe some kind of meditation to overcome the conditioned mind or ego to realize right mindfulness or a pure state of awareness.

## **7. Models of integration**

The integration of mindfulness within the field of clinical psychology is based on the assumptions that it (1) shares conditioning principles of learning with cognitive and behavioural psychologies and (2) introduces awareness to the field (Lau & McMain,

2005). Based on these assumptions, clinical psychology has adopted mindfulness in two ways (Lau & McMain, 2005), termed here as parallel and integrated models. In a parallel model behavioural therapies and mindfulness work side by side, while in an integrated model mindfulness and cognitive therapies are interwoven. Using a parallel model, Linehan (1993) developed Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) in which mindfulness complements behaviour therapy to treat borderline personality disorder. In an integrated model, such as the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction programme (MBSR) and Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), mindfulness philosophies and practices are integrated with behaviour and cognitive psychologies. The integrated models combine cognitive theories with mindfulness notions and practices such as cognitive fusion, acceptance, awareness and meditation to formulate and treat psychopathology (Kabat-Zinn, 1982; Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Luoma et al., 2007; John D. Teasdale, 1999).

Dialectic Behaviour Therapy (DBT) is primarily a change based approach; the emphasis is on changing dysfunctional behaviours and cognitions. In this approach, new truths are sought through a synthesis of two opposing truths. DBT synthesizes acceptance based mindfulness and change based behaviour therapy in a dialectic way to change dysfunctional thinking and behaviours (Dimeff & Koerner, 2007; Linehan, 1993a; Lynch et al., 2006). Linehan (1993) argued that the change based behavioural approach alone was not effective in the treatment of the borderline personality; people with borderline personality disorders showed an increased resistance to change. She incorporated mindfulness meditation and concepts such as acceptance, letting go and oneness with experience into behaviour therapy to overcome the resistance (Linehan, 1993a).

DBT treatment consists of individual therapy and a skills group programme which aims to teach the participants a wide range of skills including mindfulness skills. Mindfulness skills are taught through mindfulness meditation which consists of sitting in an upright but relaxed position with eyes either closed or fixed at a point on the floor and paying moment to moment attention to the feeling and physical sensations related to the breathing. When automatic thoughts and judgments occur during the meditation, the

participants are asked to pay attention to them, let go of them and return the attention to the breathing. DBT teaches mindfulness and acceptance to reduce resistance that originates from avoidance and reactions, the hallmarks of borderline personality disorders. This acceptance is then used as a platform for applying change based methods such as behaviour chain analysis, validation and emotional regulation (Linehan, 1993a).

DBT incorporates Zen Buddhist notions of 'letting go of attachment' and 'becoming one with the experience' without making any effort to change. However it encourages use of mindfulness skills to change distressful situations/behaviours. In this way mindfulness, in DBT, is a goal oriented practice, for example the goal of finding a wise mind from a synthesis of the logical mind and the emotional mind (Lynch et al., 2006).

DBT has incorporated mindfulness skills such as observing, describing, participating in the present moment and experiencing in a non-judgmental and one mind manner. The ultimate goal of DBT is to help patients learn attention control, wise integration of the rational and emotional mind, and to experience a sense of unity within themselves, with others and with the world (Linehan, 1993b).

DBT, by bringing behaviour psychology and mindfulness philosophies and practices together in a complementary way, maximizes the efficacy of the treatment. However, DBT does not fully address the non-dualistic aspects of mindfulness and awareness. As a result, there is limited scope for mindfulness notions and practices, especially for awareness, which negatively affects its development.

The Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction programme (MBSR) developed by Kabat-Zinn claims to incorporate both mindfulness theory and practices. Kabat-Zinn had noticed that when pain is observed without judgment, the distress associated with the pain reduced (Baer, 2003; Gardner-Nix & Costin-Hall, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 1982). From this

observation, Kabat-Zinn (1982, 1990, 1994) developed the theory that if pain is watched carefully without reacting, catastrophic reaction and suffering are diminished.

MBSR is a manualized group programme which was introduced in a behavioural health care setting to treat a wide range of chronic pain and stress related disorders (Kabat-Zinn, 1982; J. Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Kabat-Zinn et al., 1992). The programme is run as an 8 to 10 week course for a fairly large group of participants who meet weekly for two to two and half hours with an all day session usually conducted on the sixth occasion. The programme consists of the practice of mindfulness meditation, discussion of stress and coping, and homework. Mindfulness meditation consists of a body scan, sitting meditation, *Hatha yoga* exercises and mindfulness of ordinary daily activities such as eating, walking and standing (Gardner-Nix & Costin-Hall, 2009; J. Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Stahl & Goldstein, 2010). The meditation techniques consist of paying attention moment by moment and non-judgmental attention to the activities, thoughts, sensations and feelings. When the mind wanders away, the person is encouraged to pay attention to the wandering mind and to focus on breathing or walking, depending upon the technique. The aim is to notice the cognitions, sensations and feelings as temporary events rather than a reflection on reality, and to let go of these cognitions without judgment. The participants are then asked to practice meditation, which is initially aided by audio tapes, at home for 45 minutes, six days a week.

In this way, MBSR introduced mindfulness philosophy and practice in a health setting. As MBSR does not deal with psychological theories, it has been able to retain non-dualistic aspects of mindfulness. Thus, MBSR has adapted Buddhist meditation practices as they are practiced within the Eastern traditions.

Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), which draws heavily from the MBSR model, is primarily developed for relapse prevention in chronic depression (John D. Teasdale, 1999); (Segal et al., 2002). The development was based on the assumption that



attention control training could prevent relapse by preventing ruminative thinking (J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995). MBCT is also an eight week manualized group programme. The following therapy goals are achieved through the programme: (1) understanding how the ordinary mind functions; (2) overcoming barriers by paying mindful attention to automatically wandering mind; (3) developing awareness of the body in motion, identifying habitual ways and discovering new ways of functioning; (4) staying present by regulating attention to the moment to moment occurring thoughts without judging or avoiding them; (5) accepting and allowing automatic thoughts and feelings; (6) understanding thoughts are events rather than the true reality of oneself; (7) understanding vulnerabilities and applying awareness in overcoming them, and (8) learning to use mindfulness skills to deal with future problems (C. Crane et al., 2008).

The MBCT program consists of three key elements: (1) the cultivation of awareness through meditation; (2) development of attitudes such as non-striving, acceptance and genuine interest in experiences, and (3) linking knowledge with experiential understandings (C. Crane et al., 2008). Through mindfulness meditation, MBCT teaches to observe thoughts, feelings and sensations non-judgmentally which has been found to reduce rumination (Segal et al., 2002; J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995) and increase metacognitive awareness (John D. Teasdale et al., 2002).

Like MBSR, MBCT mindfulness uses non-dualistic mindfulness philosophies and practices in the treatment of psychopathology. However, because MBCT also draws from cognitive and behavioural psychologies, (R. Crane, 2009); (Lau & McMain, 2005), it retains dualistic aspects. Understanding of the interface between non-dualistic and dualistic aspects of MBCT is therefore required.

Similar development with the field of behaviour psychology has occurred through Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). Acceptance and commitment therapy, which according to the proponents of the theory is grounded in contextual functionalism

(Steven C. Hayes, 2008), incorporates awareness and acceptance to develop cognitive flexibility. ACT holds that psychopathology is caused by psychological inflexibility which is characterized by six processes: (1) cognitive fusion or fusion between oneself and one's thinking; (2) experiential avoidance; (3) fusion and avoidance pulling people out of the present moment into the past or future; (4) attachment to conceptualized self (what one has learnt about oneself) which occurs due to language; (5) lack of value clarity which occurs due to avoidance, and (6) inaction, impulsivity or avoidance persistence which are based on fusion, avoidance, the conceptual self and an inability to stay in the present moment (Luoma et al., 2007). ACT suggests six ways of creating cognitive flexibility and overcoming psychopathology: (1) acceptance rather than avoidance; (2) cognitive diffusion for undoing fusion; (3) being present rather than avoiding and or living in the conceptualized past/future; (4) self as a context or boundary-less locus rather than the conceptualized self ;(5) defining values in terms of workability, and (6) commitment to action which is developed according to values (Luoma et al., 2007). These objectives are achieved through therapy and experiential exercises (Steven C. Hayes, 2008; S.C. Hayes & Strosahl, 2004; Luoma et al., 2007).

ACT concepts of acceptance, cognitive diffusion, being present and self as a boundary-less locus are similar to mindfulness philosophies and practices. It does not, however, explicitly address mindfulness meditation and awareness. Nonetheless, because ACT draws from the Western philosophies, it provides a platform for comparing the Eastern philosophical notions with clinical psychology.

In summary, this review of the Western literature on mindfulness has yielded many valuable understandings of mindfulness. The discussion of historic trends between East-West dialogues highlights differences alongside the possibility that agreement on the differences could lead to new ways of understanding. Definitions of mindfulness revolve around the concepts of attention and awareness; while the empirical view favours attention because this is a more testable variable. The empirical theorists struggle to explain and measure the potential mechanisms involved in mindfulness because they are

unable to fully accommodate the concept of awareness. However Buddha's idea of mindfulness as awareness may assist development of understanding. Empirical evidence demonstrates the efficacy of mindfulness and emerging theories show some beginning synthesis between East and West. While some Western theories suggest that mindfulness works through exposure, cognitive change, self management, relaxation, acceptance, value clarification, and letting go, others emphasize that the mechanism of mindfulness includes an increase in mindfulness/awareness and meta-cognitive skills, which are notions similar to those in Eastern philosophies. These similar and overlapping mechanisms of mindfulness point to the complex and multidimensional nature of mindfulness.

The research evidence suggests that both models, i.e. parallel and integration of mindfulness within clinical psychology, are effective. However, the assumption that clinical psychology and mindfulness share learning principles is tentative and requires further explication. A more comprehensive understanding of mindfulness will emerge from synthesis of both worldviews. Serious compromise is likely to adversely affect the integration of mindfulness within clinical psychology.

I support the call by Shapiro (2009) that “*translating its (mindfulness) nonconceptual, nondual and paradoxical nature into a language that clinicians, scientists and scholars can understand and agree on*” (p. 555) is necessary for the further development of effective mindfulness practice. In order to interpret both Eastern philosophies and meditation practices and Western psychology, I have used a methodology and method that is congruent with both dualistic and non-dualistic philosophies. This will be articulated in the next chapter.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology and methods**

The literature review in the previous chapter has suggested that, within the field of clinical psychology, there is a growing trend of blending psychological interventions with mindfulness philosophies and practices to enhance the efficacy of these interventions (Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Lynch et al., 2006; John D. Teasdale, Segal, & Williams, 2003; J. M. G. Williams, Duggan, Crane, & Fennell, 2006). Evidence increasingly supports the efficacy of such hybrid interventions (Baer, 2003). However, the understanding of the meanings and mechanisms of mindfulness theories and practices is limited. The non-dualistic, non-conceptual and seemingly paradoxical Eastern notions which underpin mindfulness, continue to challenge both researchers and clinicians (Shapiro, 2009).

What seems to make this development even more complex is the fact that the development brings together interventions, practices, theories and philosophies which emerge from dualistic and non-dualistic perspectives (Wilber, 1997, 2000).

Developing a methodology for research, which involves theories and philosophies emerging from opposing worldviews, was a challenging task.

Historically, hermeneutics has been used for interpreting theories and philosophies (Crotty, 1998). However, because most forms of hermeneutics such as (1) Biblical hermeneutics (Crotty, 1998; Palmer, 1969), (2) hermeneutics in law (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002), (3) philosophical hermeneutics (Crotty, 1998; Palmer, 1969), and (4) historical hermeneutics (Gadamer, 1995) are underpinned by the dualistic philosophies and worldviews (Gross et al., 2009; Zhang, 2006), they are unsuitable in their current form for studying Eastern philosophies and practices. The hermeneutic approach I have developed draws from both dualistic and non-dualistic philosophies. The amalgamation of differing worldviews is based on the idea that the opposing traditions can co-exist and pave the way for a new way of understanding (Gross et al., 2009).

Hence, this chapter first describes different facets of hermeneutics and provides a rationale for using philosophies to inform hermeneutics. It then explores different Western and Eastern philosophies to explicate philosophical principles that can provide

an appropriate heuristic guide. To do so, it first explores Western philosophies explicating those which are most congruent and suitable for interpreting philosophies and practices based on the non-dualistic worldview. It then explores different Eastern philosophies and elucidates how these philosophies can also inform hermeneutics.

The chapter then describes the methods through which philosophical principles were enacted in interpretive process. The explication of methods illustrates the hermeneutic process i.e. my preunderstandings and interpretation of selected texts, interviews and mindfulness insights. The method also describes how different strands of hermeneutic interpretation evolved and fused together to address the research questions.

The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of rigour and consideration of relevant ethical issues.

## **1. Understanding Hermeneutics**

Understanding is essentially a human phenomenon. Every person seeks to understand and make meaning of his/her world in order to function and survive. Hermeneutic textual understanding, however, differs from everyday understanding. According to Crotty (1998), there are two principal differences: firstly, hermeneutics views text as strange and far off and thus requires sustained questioning for explicating the meanings inherent in the experiences, beliefs and values being communicated through the text. Secondly, the purpose of hermeneutics is pragmatic understanding rather than abstract theorizing.

The word hermeneutics is derived from the Greek verb *hermeneuein* which means “to interpret.” This ancient Greek verb is also translated as ‘saying,’ ‘explaining’ and ‘translating’ (Palmer, 1969). The term is related to Hermes, the messenger god of the Greeks. The task of Hermes was transmuting what was beyond human understanding into a form that humans could understand (Palmer, 1969). Hence, in order to deliver the Gods’ messages to humans, Hermes had to first interpret and understand before delivering the messages to humans (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002).

Examining the tasks that Hermes performed, it is clear that hermeneutics is more complex than mere interpretation. The different facets of hermeneutic abilities include the understanding of discourses and interpretation, linguistic competence and effective communication, (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002), all of which combine to achieve deeper understandings. Thus, there are two main reasons for hermeneutic exploration: (1) there is text needing to be explored and explicated and (2) the meaning or meanings relating to identified phenomenon/phenomena are obscure.

Clinical psychology, which mainly draws its theories through empirical methods (Kazantzis, 2006), does not usually use hermeneutics for theoretical development. However, because this research focuses primarily on the interpretation of the philosophical ideas underpinning the practice of mindfulness, philosophical hermeneutics provides an appropriate framework for interpreting meanings and intentions expressed in the psychological and philosophical texts. The aim of this thesis is to develop a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, thus achieving an understanding which is philosophically adequate both epistemologically and ontologically (Palmer, 1969).

Hermeneutic understanding goes further than the author of a text may intend. It allows explication of meanings which might be hidden in texts. It is possible, for example, that meanings not intended by the author are interpreted. During the process of textual interpretation a fusion occurs between the understandings of the author, which are present in the text, and the prior understandings that the reader brings to the text (Crotty, 1998). As a psychologist born and initially educated in India, now practicing in New Zealand, I bring background understandings of mindfulness both to the selection of texts for this study and to the interpretation and integration of theoretical and clinical insights.

## **2. Understanding: Western perspective**

Western hermeneutics, over time, has evolved from a more rigid dualistic stance to a less dualistic stance. The exploration of Western philosophies carried out here seeks to explicate philosophical principles which are compatible with non-dualistic mindfulness philosophies and practices. The interpretation is carried out through the following phases: (1) understanding, language and primordial speech, (2) pre-existing basis of understanding, (3) understanding as a category of life, (4) historicity of understanding, (5) understanding and phenomenology and (6) understanding and ontological hermeneutics (Crotty, 1998; Mueller-Vollmer, 2002; Palmer, 1969). Each phase explicates how Western philosophy/philosophies have shaped the hermeneutic way of understanding. These understandings then are compared with the non-dualistic worldview to highlight their compatibility or otherwise.

### **2.1. Understanding, language and primordial speech**

Schleiermacher (1768-1834) was the first philosopher to ground hermeneutics in a concept of understanding (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002). Hermeneutics, according to Schleiermacher, was not just the decoding of a given meaning or a way of clearing obstacles in the way of proper understanding (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002; Palmer, 1969). It was concerned with illuminating the conditions for the possibility of understanding and its modes of interpretation.

For Schleiermacher, understanding was similar to speaking (Crotty, 1998). Both activities derive from man's linguistic ability and his mastery of speech. Humans' linguistic competence enables them to understand the utterances of others and put themselves in their position. Thus speaking and understanding point to the primordial speech act of a speaker in whom the meaning of text is grounded, and understanding is like placing oneself within the author's framework in order to recreate understanding which was previously created (Gadamer, 1995). Schleiermacher believed that there was a kind of

empathy between the speaker and listener during the linguistic exchange and he extended this to the interpretation of art and text.

He also believed that understanding involved the coalescence of two different planes: firstly, understanding in terms of language, and, secondly, understanding in terms of the speaker's life process. These two sides of understanding correspond to two distinct modes of interpretation: grammatical and psychological (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002). The psychological interpretation is acknowledged as Schleiermacher's original contribution (Gadamer, 1995). Schleiermacher, in introducing the notion of psychological interpretation in hermeneutics, reduces the distance between subject and object. However, given his stance on the role of language, his philosophy may not be fully able to explicate experiential understandings of mindfulness practice.

## **2.2. Pre-existing basis of understanding**

Sharing Schleiermacher's views on the nature of language, Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767- 1835) conceptualized that speaking and understanding together create active linguistic competence which occurs both in the speaker and writer (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002). This puts an end to transportive means of language. Humboldt argued that every act of understanding is also an act of non-understanding because of the personal aura of the speaker. History is therefore only partially accessible to a historian; the historian initially perceives some scattered and isolated events but not the coherence between them. Humboldt suggested that the historian must supply the inner coherence and unite the individual events. He or she must interpret individual phenomena in the light of an overriding cohesive whole which itself is not directly observable; the historian must supply the idea of this whole, a concept that later developed into the notion of the hermeneutic circle.

Humboldt argues that parts and the whole are interrelated; therefore, the historian begins work with an intuition of the invisible coherence which unites the individual events (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002). In his opinion, historians' understandings and investigations merge with each other; the historian's investigative capabilities become assimilated with



the object under investigation. For Humboldt every act of comprehension presupposes the existence of an analogue between person and phenomenon (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002) which is the basis for the concept of the pre-existing basis of understanding. This concept of pre-understanding resembles Gadamer's (1995) view of understanding as a fusion of two horizons; the interpreter's previous understandings of a phenomenon fuse with his present understandings in an ongoing manner.

Humboldt's notion of the historian's investigative capabilities assimilating with the object further bridges the gap between the historian and the phenomenon. It suggests that mindfulness can be understood by blending in with it.

### **2.3. Understanding as a category of life**

Dilthey (1833-1911) transformed Schleiermacher's contention that understanding was primarily rooted in language and embraced understanding as a methodological concept with its roots or origin in the process of human life itself. Dilthey states that understanding is primarily a "category of life" (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002, p. 25).

Dilthey advocated that the human sciences should not borrow their methods from natural sciences because the latter do not account for an inner experience. He defined hermeneutics as 'an art and science of understanding and interpretation' (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002). Dilthey explained that human beings have to understand what is happening around them so that they may act/react accordingly (Crotty, 1998). Thus actual behaviour reflects lived understanding and a comprehension of the social and cultural environment. Dilthey claimed, furthermore, that complex or higher understanding derives from lower forms of understanding. Therefore, the understanding which human scientists derive is always a manifestation of human life, a life-expression (Palmer, 1969).

His philosophy further bridges the divide between subject and object, making it possible to assimilate with mindfulness and illuminate experiential understandings. Dilthey does

not, however, address the issue arising out of pre-existing understandings imposing themselves over understandings of mindfulness unfolding during the practice.

#### **2.4. Historicity of understanding**

Droysen (1808-1884) believed that hermeneutics was part of a comprehensive historical theory. He defined historical theory as understanding by means of investigation (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002) describing three distinct types of methods: (1) speculative methods (for example, philosophy and theology) for finding out or exploring; (2) scientific or physical methods for explaining, and (3) historical methods for understanding. Each of these methods was argued to represent reality from a different perspective.

Droysen stressed that a historical interpretation should be a pragmatic, conditional, psychological and ethical interpretation. He elaborated that interpretation must always tend towards explicitness; it must find expression in the historical accounts of the findings. Droysen's categorization of modes of understanding comes in the holistic way of seeing the world in which mindfulness philosophies and practice originate.

#### **2.5. Understanding and phenomenology**

Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) introduced the notion of a "life-world" and laid the ground for a phenomenology of human behaviour (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002). Logical investigation deals with three key factors: (1) logic or logical syntax of language, (2) ontological conditions of meaningful discourses and (3) intentional acts of consciousness. According to Husserl, these key factors enable words to express beyond themselves (Crotty, 1998). Through the concepts of the 'ontological life world' and the 'conditional act of consciousness,' he tried to establish a universal way of understanding the world in his work. Husserl envisioned that all acts are conditional upon consciousness and this ontological conditional act of consciousness can be described logically, almost mathematically. Hence he believed that a universal way of understanding could be found.

Husserl offers an outline of a theory of ‘meaning and understanding,’ which suggests that meaning and understanding develops from subjective phenomenological experiences which then form the basis for inter-subjective validity of meaning (Mueller-Vollmer, 2002).

Husserl is concerned with the description of intentional acts, called performances. These performances are actually phenomenological descriptions. For Husserl, hermeneutics is interpretation and explication of the implicit meaning of the phenomenological description. Husserl believed that this meaning should also be accessible to other subjects.

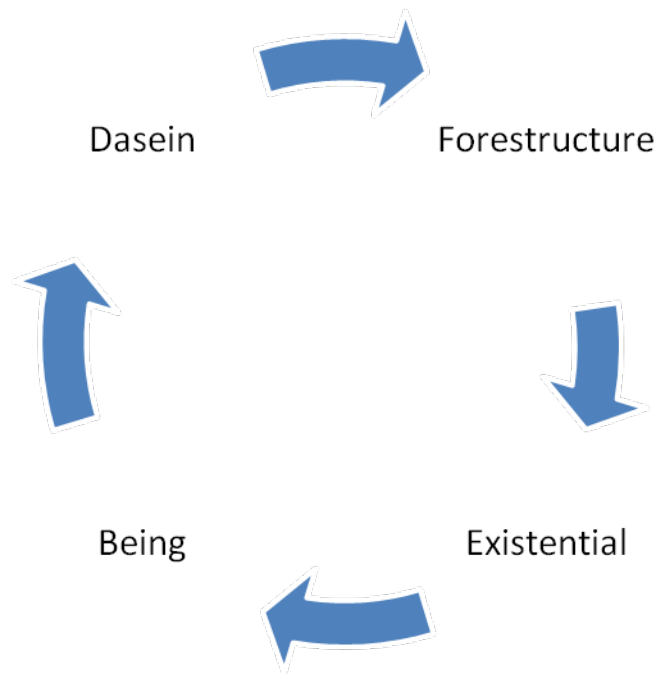
Husserl’s work provides two important but contradictory concepts: (1) ‘things themselves,’ or the phenomenological world of things, which open a way for engaging with mindfulness in experiential oneness, and (2) the concept of intentionality or conditional engagement with mindfulness. In this way, while on one hand he introduces a non-dualistic way of understanding, he takes it away by assuming that consciousness is always conditional.

## **2.6. Understanding and ontological hermeneutics**

Husserl’s concept of phenomenology became a platform for Heidegger’s (1889-1976) philosophy. However, Heidegger put an end to Husserl’s notion of the intentional act of consciousness in ‘being.’ In his landmark work, *Being and Time*, Heidegger investigated ‘being,’ as distinguished from any specific beings (entities), and, in doing so, provided a framework for ontological hermeneutics. He investigated the being-there of Dasein, which he termed as ‘hermeneutics of facticity’ (Zhang, 2006). Dasein (being there) refers to the being from whose perspective all of this is being described. Not a person, not consciousness, or mind activity, Dasein is inseparable from the world “being-in-the-world” [it is a unitary phenomenon] (Crotty, 1998).

The investigation of 'being' then drove Heidegger to inquire into the nature of authentic existence. The further unfolding of being remains a phenomenological process throughout one's life. Heidegger argues that a 'thing' is always wrapped in layers of concepts and knowledge, and in order to generate an authentic understanding of the 'thing in itself' these layers of knowledge and concepts have to be peeled off regressively so that the 'thing' itself can present itself (Zhang, 2006). For Heidegger, hermeneutics is about understanding the hidden meaning that unfolds in the moments of being.

Heidegger describes the process of phenomenological interpretation through the metaphor of the hermeneutic circle or circle of understanding (Heidegger, 1996), which is illustrated by figure 3.1. This circle of understanding is the expression of the existential forestructure of Dasein itself (Crotty, 1998).



*Figure 3.1. Hermeneutic circle (Crotty, 1998, p. 98)*

The hermeneutic circle moves from Dasein to forestructure to existential and then, to being. Describing Dasein, Heidegger states that in 'being' we begin with and from a pre-understanding of 'being' or Dasein. In this sense, Dasein is not actually a preunderstanding as such, it is a possibility of understanding (Heidegger, 1996). In this

way Dasein leads to all understandings and the biggest of this possibility is self understanding, wherein one finds his/her own being, a notion similar to the Eastern philosophies (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989).

Describing the concept of forestructure, Heidegger suggests that the task of hermeneutics is uncovering this rudimentary understanding and bringing out the explicit and thematic, which were at first implicit and un-thematic. Explication then leads to the articulation of existential structures of 'being' that make human existence and behaviour possible.

In his ontological hermeneutics, Heidegger tries to bring ontology and phenomenology together through hermeneutics. Hence he describes hermeneutics as the phenomenological explication of human existence itself (Palmer, 1969). In this understanding, being unfolds itself into an experience and at the same time goes on to grasp this self being. Thus understanding is inherent in this unfolding of being and Heidegger's circle of being is also a circle of understanding.

Gadamer (1900-2002) developed the notion of historicity of understanding from Heidegger's ontological philosophy. This shunned the categorization of modes of understanding and went beyond a mere historical account. Gadamer argued that human beings are always pre-cognitively aware of their cultural and historical situatedness (Spence, 2001). Moreover, to be engaged in a situation means being doubly influenced by tradition because we are simultaneously “ ‘*affected*’ by history and also brought into being [or] ‘*effected*’ by history” (Weinsheimer & Marshall, 1996, p. xv). Gadamer explains that historically effected consciousness enables human beings to simultaneously link with the tradition of the past, interpret the present and anticipate the future.

Furthermore, successful completion of the act of understanding requires not only consciousness of one's historical horizon but an appreciation or examination of its effect (Spence, 2001). This forms the basis for the notion of the fusion of horizons. In relation

to textual interpretation this recognises that understanding arises out of the fusion of two horizons; the first, past horizon, is inherent in the existing understanding of the interpreter enabling him or her to carry out the interpretation and the second is the horizon of understandings inherent in the text (Gadamer, 1989 in Crotty, 1998). Thus, the most rigorous form of hermeneutics requires an openness to historically effected consciousness or tradition. Gadamer further suggests that because these two poles - history of the tradition and the interpreter's subjective understanding - already exist, the interpreter needs to consciously engage with them in order to achieve fusion of the meanings.

However, the notion of this pre-understanding, acting as a horizon that merges with the horizon emerging from the phenomenon needing to be understood, suggests that new understandings are conditional upon pre-understanding, a notion which may come in the way of understandings arising out of unconditioned awareness (Krishnamurti, 1993). Gadamer's notion of the fusion of horizons and historicity of understanding seems to claim the possibility that there are some universal ways of understanding. This may not always be the case, especially where cross cultural understandings are involved (Mall, 2000). Mall (2000) argues that differing traditions may not fuse with each other and better understandings may arise out of both traditions elucidating meanings paradoxically.

However, openness of cultures may provide opportunity for a fluid state of potentially continuing understanding that Gadamer envisions. Although Gadamer's philosophy may not fully comprehend non-dualistic mindfulness, his notion of the fusion of horizons provides guidance in terms of understanding the circular and spiralling interpretive processes used in this study. His notion of prejudice as a prejudgement is also useful in terms of understanding the fusion between the researcher's preunderstandings and the understandings, which were previously hidden, arising from the hermeneutic engagement.

### 3. Understanding: an Eastern perspective

Like Western philosophies, the Eastern philosophies have their own hermeneutic tradition; that is to say that these philosophies are also concerned with explicating and elucidating important and hidden meanings (Gross et al., 2009). Because Eastern philosophies such as Buddhism are underpinned by a non-dualistic worldview, these philosophies view oneself, who is attempting to understand a phenomenon, ontologically, as part of the phenomenon, a view similar to Heidegger's notion of being. The non-dualistic worldview also proposes that a truth of ontological reality, in which oneself and the phenomenon under investigation are the parts of the same reality, emerges from the experience of an ontological oneness. For achieving such an existential experience, one needs to suspend all dualities, including the dualities created by one's thoughts and language.

Eastern philosophies advocate different ways of achieving this ontological oneness. They include: meditation (Osho, 1988; The Dalai Lama, 2002a), unconditional observation (Krishnamurti, 1994) and other practices such as *Hatha yoga*, *Jnana yoga*, *Bhakti yoga* (Aurobindo, 1996). These philosophies are similar in that they argue that once the dualities are overcome an authentic ontological understanding arises out of unconditioned awareness which already exists in its own right. In this way, for the Eastern philosophies, authentic understandings arise out of insights arising from unconditioned awareness or unconditional observations.

Thus meditation becomes a critical part of the mechanism of understanding. Buddhist philosophies involve meditation practice for achieving non-dualistic oneness (The Dalai Lama, 2002). Osho (1988, 1989) argues that it is almost impossible to overcome the conditioned mind without meditating. Buddhist philosophies and Osho suggest that some kind of meditation technique is required to achieve meditation. However, Krishnamurti (1994) believes that meditation can be achieved without the help of meditation techniques. For him, unconditional observation of everyday life activities is meditation. Nonetheless, the Eastern philosophies are in agreement that, as all beings exist in their

own right, a truth of the reality is a priority (Houshmand et al., 1999; Krishnamurti, 1994; Osho, 1988). The function of meditation is to remove misunderstandings which occur due to the automatic analysis by the conditioned mind. The Eastern philosophers believe that understanding of reality emerges on its own when misunderstandings are removed. This is what Heidegger refers to as layers of meaning or preconceptions that conceal primordial understanding.

To explicate how the Eastern philosophies and meditation practices can inform this hermeneutic methodology, I will now explore Buddhist, Krishnamurti and Osho's philosophies.

### **3.1. Buddhist understanding**

Buddha, through his experience of mindfulness and enlightenment, discovered that the conditioned mind obscures truth that unfolds in the moment to moment reality by automatic thinking (Osho, 1977a). He further discovered that through meditating, by purposefully regulating attention to the present moment reality non-judgmentally, the conditioned mind can be overcome through a practice of meditation, the mind becomes still and starts working like a mirror reflecting reality as it unfolds into awareness, rather than how it is interpreted through conditioning (Osho, 1979a, 1988; The Dalai Lama, 1997). Meditation, by gradually de-conditioning the mind, induces a state of mindfulness which Buddhists refer to as *sammasati* or right mindfulness in which unconditional understandings take place. This unconditional way of understanding, which is the cornerstone of Buddhist philosophy, emerges from awareness.

### **3.2. Osho and understanding**

Similarly, Osho (1998) states that conditioning impedes perception of reality. He argues further that it is impossible to achieve a clearer understanding through the conditioned mind. Osho believes that understanding is intrinsic to awareness, which means that awareness is able to transcend conditioning (learning) and is capable of understanding



things as they exist in their own right (Osho, 1988, 1989). When awareness exists in its original nature or 'pure awareness' it permeates the subject and object in a non-dualistic state from which clearest understandings of self and the environment arise (Osho, 2009a).

However, Osho also suggests that such unconditional understandings cannot occur until the entire mind is de-conditioned. He believes that such de-conditioning can only occur through regular practice of meditation (Osho, 1988). Like Buddhist philosophies, Osho suggests that meditation gradually increases awareness and progressively de-conditions the mind. Once the mind is completely de-conditioned, it functions independently of learning, providing clearer understandings of oneself and the environment [objects].

### **3.3. Krishnamurti and understanding**

Krishnamurti, agreeing with the Buddhist and Osho's philosophies, states that understanding is the intrinsic nature of awareness. He suggests that the main activity involved in understanding is actually removing the hindrances caused by the conditioning. Krishnamurti suggests that when attention is maintained in the moment to moment occurring reality, without the interference of thinking (thought), understandings arise on their own accord from awareness (Krishnamurti, 1993). He suggests meditation occurs when one unconditionally observes everyday life events, including one's own thoughts, feelings and activities (Krishnamurti, 2002). In a state of pure observation, the duality between subject (oneself) and object (things) disappears and both subject and object become part of awareness. This non-dualistic state of awareness, in itself, understands.

This way, even though Krishnamurti parts from all forms of formal meditation practices, his insistence on 'unconditional observation of everyday life events' is a type of meditation i.e. paying attention to the present moment reality non-judgmentally (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003). Thus meditation or mindfulness is an integral part of Krishnamurti's philosophy.

The Eastern philosophies are multifaceted and complex; it is not easy to reconcile them. Viewed from the surface these philosophies have many nuances and may appear to contradict each other. However, deep down these philosophies acknowledge one reality i.e. everything arises from pure awareness which can be experientially understood through unconditional awareness or mindfulness. Thus, viewed from a non-dualistic understanding of unconditioned awareness, the nuances and differences among different Eastern philosophies become reconcilable

The Eastern non-dualistic way of understanding has many similarities with Heidegger (Zhang, 2006). Comparing Heidegger and Buddhist philosophy, Zhang (2006) states

*...Heidegger's ontological hermeneutics certainly brings out a parallel to the Buddhist outlook of the world. A Buddhist view of the world as being co-originated and dependent, arising without a theo-metaphysical origin or inherent nature-Brahma or Atman- can be traced back to Sakyamuni's [Buddha] own enlightenment experience, in which he sees with his own enlightened eyes, the arising of the co-originating and mutually dependent matter/events [dharmas] that constitute his past lives without an originating point or a primary cause. (Zhang, 2006, p. 99)*

Both Heideggerian and Buddhist philosophies understand that the being of Dasein is already the case (Buddha saw that his past lives had no originating point). They also both believe that Dasein, which has no beginning, has no permanent Self either. However, Dasein has been shrouded in many layers of philosophies. They, then, strip this human Dasein (oneself) of a permanent Self or *Atman* and view it as a physical and psychological being manifesting temporarily (Zhang, 2006).

Heidegger's philosophy of being is also similar to Krishnamurti's philosophy of thought and pure awareness or pure observation (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994). Krishnamurti (1994) states "*Discovery (understanding) takes place not when mind is crowded with knowledge but when knowledge is absent; only then are there stillness and space, and in this state understanding or discovery comes into being*" (Krishnamurti, 1994, p. 13). Krishnamurti is arguing that understanding of being (being of oneself in relation to the environment) is shrouded by knowledge or thought. When experiences (unfolding being there) are

experienced in the stillness of being, without the crowding in of thoughts, understanding of oneself and reality become possible. I am suggesting therefore that Krishnamurti's concept of crowdedness is similar to Dasein being shrouded in philosophy and pure observation of Krishnamurti is stripping Dasein of philosophies.

Heidegger uses the term Dasein in relation to things and humans, because both only come into existence through being. The meaning of Dasein for humans and things is found in the moments of the ontological encounter (being) through awareness of the unfolding process of being, and thus overcomes duality between the observer (subject) and things (objects). This brings Heidegger's ontological philosophy closer to non-dualistic Eastern philosophies.

In summary, a review of Western philosophies shows that hermeneutics has evolved, in the minds of some Western philosophers, from the art of grammatical interpretation to an existential understanding of 'being' itself. In doing so, philosophies of understanding have evolved from a stance of subject (interpreter)-object (text) duality towards a non-dualistic position, gradually closing the gap between subject and object. Schleiermacher was the first to introduce an explication of psychological factors i.e. the author's intent alongside the linguistic interpretation to hermeneutics. Suggesting the existence of a pre-existing basis of understanding, Humboldt argued that alongside the linguistic and psychological interpretation, the interpreter also brings his or her own understanding to hermeneutics. Dilthey, expanding on Humboldt's notion of the pre-existing basis of understanding, suggested that understanding is a life process in which higher understandings develop from lower understandings. Droysen based hermeneutics on historical and psychological interpretations. Husserl also expanded on Humboldt's notion of hermeneutics as a life process into 'ontological life world,' which suggested that understanding involves an ontological process occurring in both the internal (psychological) and external worlds. Heidegger reoriented the march of hermeneutics towards more ontological and non-dualistic notions. He developed a non-dualistic philosophy of being in his own unique but rather complex way comparable possibly to the non-dualistic philosophies (Zhang, 2006). Gadamer developed aspects of

Heideggerian philosophy focussing on understanding rather than being i.e. historically affected consciousness and fusion of horizons being crucial to understanding, yet this does not necessarily embrace non-duality.

I have taken the position that Gadamer's notions of historicity, prejudice and fusion of horizon together with Heidegger's notion of being, may have some congruence with non-dualistic mindfulness. I have therefore selected these philosophical notions to guide the explication of meanings hidden in mindfulness texts.

Exploration of Eastern philosophy was used to further develop a methodology for explicating from mindfulness insights, an essential part of this project. The Eastern philosophies suggest that understanding is intrinsic to an awareness in which the subject (oneself) and object are united in non-dualistic oneness. Because the mind functions automatically a duality between conditioned knowing and reality as it exists in its own right is created, shrouding truth in layers of preconceived ideas. The role of an interpreter is to remove the hindrances to pure awareness caused by conditioning through the practice of meditation.

#### **4. Implications of the philosophies**

The explication of Western hermeneutic philosophies and Eastern philosophies has demonstrated that there are different ways of understanding. Even within the same worldview, different philosophies see truth differently, and thus there are multiple ways of understanding and interpreting. Given the non-dualistic origins of mindfulness practice/therapy, it is clear that Western philosophies, which are most closely aligned with non-dualism, are likely to provide the most appropriate guidance for this research. Yet it is uncertain whether Western philosophical ideas will illuminate full understanding of mindfulness therapy/practice. Hence, this thesis must draw from Eastern philosophies and practices, especially as they relate to the use of meditation as a means of contributing understandings.

Heidegger's existential philosophy of being and Gadamer's philosophical notion of fusion of horizons are the main contributors from the Western world. The notion of fusion of horizons recognizes the potential for multiple horizons of understanding to fuse with each other to generate new understandings. This fusion is recognized as an ongoing process throughout the research. Through the processes of reading, re-reading, writing and rewriting new understandings have evolved and merged with previous understandings of mindfulness.

Heidegger's notion of being supports the idea that the hermeneutic process occurs in the context of the researcher's life process, rather focusing on cognition alone. Thus 'being in the hermeneutic circle' is an ongoing process that extends beyond hermeneutic activities i.e. reading, analyzing, interpreting, writing and rewriting. The researcher must remain open to new and transformative experiences and understandings. Active engagement with and explication of the notions i.e. 'fusion of horizons' and 'being in the hermeneutic circle,' throughout the research, provides a way of coming to deeper understandings of the practice of mindfulness within clinical psychology.

The following Eastern philosophical principles have also guided the thesis: (1) understanding is intrinsic to awareness, and (2) a regular practice of meditation is required for overcoming the conditioning and allowing understandings to emerge in awareness. Thus the insights unfolding during meditation and through life experience have contributed to the emerging understandings.

In summary then, the following principles have provided a heuristic guide for this hermeneutic research in which the following were the means through which new understandings emerged in awareness: (1) fusion of horizons, (2) being in a hermeneutic circle, (3) understanding is intrinsic to awareness and (4) regular practice of meditation.

## **5. Methods: The process of enacting the selected philosophical principles**

Discussion thus far has focused on the philosophies underpinning the research approach. Because this research includes non-dualistic Eastern philosophies and meditation practices, the interpretive methods have extended beyond written texts to include analysis of the ongoing practice of meditation by the researcher so that experiential insights and understandings of mindfulness could be brought to the thesis. Throughout this hermeneutic project, I continued to practice meditation. The insights derived from meditation fused in an ongoing manner with the textual understandings, gleaned as I engaged with selected Eastern and Western philosophical works, created a synthesis of intra and inter-subjective understandings. The intra-subjective and inter-subjective understandings fused with each other to develop deeper and more comprehensive understandings of mindfulness. During the latter stages of the project I also sought to and integrated the understandings of several of my colleagues who have experience using mindfulness based therapies.

The praxis thus comprised an organic fusion of (1) my preunderstandings, (2) documented understandings of the selected texts, (3) participating expert clinician's understandings, and (4) my insights emerging from an ongoing practice of meditation. Evolving like an upwardly moving spiral, new insights became pre-existing horizons for the next, and so forth.

I have named this method 'mindfulness hermeneutics.' In this context, mindfulness hermeneutics, which is a synthesis of Western and Eastern philosophies and meditation practices, explicated understandings from both clinical psychology and selected Eastern philosophies. Its purpose is to develop new understandings of: (1) mindfulness, (2) how mindfulness works, and (3) how mindfulness interfaces with cognitive and behaviour psychologies.

### **5.1. Researcher's systematic understandings**

Developing systematic understandings of the texts required: (1) selection of appropriate texts and (2) understanding and interpretation of the texts. The written texts for this thesis are derived from the fields of Western psychology and Eastern philosophy. These were obtained from the published literature by theorists and researchers such as Kabat-Zinn (1990, 1994, 2003, 2005), Teasdale (1995, 1999, 2002, 2003), William et al., (2006), Baer (2003, 2006) and Wilber (1997, 2000). The Eastern philosophical literature came from The Dalai Lama (1991, 1997, 2002, 2002a), Krishnamurti (1967, 1972, 1978, 1980, 1993, 1994, 2002) and Osho's (1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2009b, 2010a) philosophies.

The Buddhist philosophies ranging from Buddha to The Dalai Lama represented the ancient and contemporary Buddhist view of mindfulness. This continuum of Buddhist philosophy provided orthodox and contemporary views of mindfulness. The texts pertaining to Buddhist philosophy were obtained from online publications and published hard copies. Translations of older Buddhist texts such as the Dhammapada, the Diamond Sutra and the Heart Sutra were also accessed from online websites.

Krishnamurti and Osho's philosophies further illuminated understandings of mindfulness by providing contemporary, contrasting and complementary views. Krishnamurti was chosen because of his unique non-dualistic philosophy and his views of meditation. Unlike Buddhist philosophies, he emphasizes that an authentic non-dualistic understanding can be achieved without a formal practice of meditation. Krishnamurti's emphasis is on understanding through unconditional observation of everything that unfolds in moment to moment reality rather than to formal meditation and striving towards enlightenment (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002). Therefore, his teachings brought a slightly different view of mindfulness. Krishnamurti's texts consist of published books and electronic articles, which were accessed from his online library.

Osho is considered one of the most unorthodox philosophers and teachers from modern India. He has commented on and interpreted a myriad of Eastern and Western text related to philosophy and spirituality, including Buddhist philosophies. In doing so, Osho has provided a unique view on mindfulness philosophy and practice. He also worked closely with many Western psychologists, psychotherapists and other health practitioners, contributing and bridging gaps between Western psychologies and the Eastern philosophies and meditation practices. In this way, Osho has already paved a way towards an integration of Western psychologies and Eastern philosophies (Osho, 1988, 1989). Osho's philosophies not only provide a unique contemporary view of mindfulness philosophies and practices but also help in bridging the gaps between Western psychologies and the Eastern philosophies.

An evolution of understandings was developed through hermeneutic analysis and an interpretation of the selected texts. This required sustained reading and re-reading process moving from understanding as parts to wholes. Each reading started with a partial understanding, or preunderstanding of the phenomenon of mindfulness which merged with the text being read. The preliminary understanding of a text then became the new whole and the text a part of the reciprocal fusion of the whole and parts, continuing through the processes of reading, thinking, writing, re-reading and re-writing.

## **5.2. Participating expert clinicians**

Three health practitioners, regularly using mindfulness in clinical practice for several years were invited to participate in the study. Two were senior psychologists - pseudonyms; Nelson and Isaac – whom I knew to have an interest in and expertise concerning mindfulness. The third participant was a psychiatrist - pseudonym James - also known to the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of the Eastern philosophies.

Each of these experts was interviewed for approximately one hour. The purpose was to further develop an understanding of the emerging findings. A written schedule containing



approximately five open ended questions formed the basis for a hermeneutic dialogue. Questions sought understanding of the following: (1) participant's understandings of mindfulness, (2) participant's reflection on their clinical practice of mindfulness, (3) participant's account on how mindfulness may be efficacious in ameliorating suffering, and (4) participant's views on the interface of mindfulness therapy and clinical psychology.

I used clarifying questions such as 'what do you mean by ...?', 'can you tell me more about this?' and/or 'can you give an example?' I recorded and transcribed the interviews. The transcriptions also became texts for interpretation and inclusion in the developing argument.

An electronic copy of the interview data has been anonymised using pseudonyms and will be saved for six years with password protection on the author's computer.

### **5.3. Researcher's insights from ongoing practice of meditation**

Throughout the 36 months of the research, I practiced *Vipassana* meditation, a form of Buddhist meditation, along with other meditations such as Osho's *Kundalini* and Dynamic meditations. A description of these meditations will be given in Chapter Five. My process of understanding mindfulness involved three key steps: (1) hermeneutic reading of the literature, (2) a session of 30-40 minute of sitting meditation, and (3) a 40-60 minutes period of mindful walking. The hermeneutic reading, moving from part to whole and the whole to part, allowed deeper understanding of the text. It also involved a thinking dialogue with the explicated meanings which further deepen the understanding of the text.

Meditation, which followed the reading of the text, allowed for different memories or interpretations of the text, automatically occurring through thinking dialogue with the text, and other automatic thoughts/images/beliefs emerge in awareness without judgment. When these cognitions rise and fall in awareness without judgment, they are understood in an enhanced state of awareness from which new insights evolve out of pure awareness.

Thus the process of understanding through mindfulness is a simultaneously occurring bi-directional process which allows deeper understanding of both mindfulness and the structure and functioning of one's own mind.

In this way, through meditation and reading of texts, an organic evolution of understandings occurred through multiple and ongoing fusions – reading, writing, meditating, writing. Van Manen (1997) argues that writing is a hermeneutic method because “...writing is closely fused into the research activity and reflection itself” (p. 125). Describing this as a paradox, van Manen (1997) further states “*Writing separates us from what we know and yet it unites us more closely with what we know*” (Manen, 1997, p. 127). The process of writing and re-writing is similar to the hermeneutic process of reading and re-reading moving reciprocally between parts to the whole. Each written text acts as a horizon ready to fuse with evolving understandings developing through the re-writing process. Writing is praxis; it takes the researcher out of the lived experience, allowing him/her to give shape to thoughts which challenge the researcher into rewriting, helping the researcher to communicate understandings in more concrete ways. However, from a non-dualistic point of view; this still creates duality between the researcher and the written argument. For the Eastern philosophies, writing, like language, may not be the whole truth but it is an effective means to convey understandings (Zhang, 2006). Ultimately, this thesis is a written account of present understandings available for further interpretation.

#### **5.4. Explicated understanding of the phenomenon**

The explicated understanding of mindfulness has been presented as a written thesis or argument. As previously explained, this textual account is a synthesis of experiential and textual understanding of mindfulness, providing a rigorous and credible interpretation of mindfulness and its interface with cognitive and behavioural psychologies. Experiential understandings have also transformed me as a person and clinician. These influences are also presented along with the textual interpretations. The explicated findings are expected to encourage further development of mindfulness psychology.

### **5.5. Rigor in hermeneutics**

Rigor in scientific research seeks to ensure reliability and validity through precision in the method (Badger, 2000). Qualitative and interpretive approaches cannot be judged in the same way as quantitative designs, yet all research needs to be rigorous in order “*to boast best research practice*” (Maggs-Rapport, 2001, p. 381). Maggs-Rapport (2001) argues that rigor in qualitative research requires that ontology, epistemology, methodology and method are congruent with one another and clearly articulated.

Mindfulness is the phenomenon of interest in this thesis. Thus, philosophies and practices congruent with the ontological nature of mindfulness needed to inform the research process. Relevant philosophical ideas from Heidegger’s ontological hermeneutics and those of Gadamer have been utilized, but concerns that they may not be sufficient in terms of fully comprehending non-dualistic reality resulted in the decision to include suitable Eastern philosophy. This led to integrating meditation practices within the hermeneutic circle. The ongoing documentation of evolving understandings through writing, reflecting and rewriting provided the decision trail (Koch, 1994, 1998) for the thesis.

### **5.6. Ethical considerations**

The Auckland University of Technology (AUT) ethics regulations do not require formal ethical approval for research that involves human participants acting as experts, thus no formal approval was sought. The primary data sources in this thesis are the Western psychological literature and Eastern philosophical texts. As the interpretation developed with the integration of researcher based insights from the sustained practice of mindfulness meditation, consultation with expert clinicians in the field of mindfulness was sought. The three interviewees checked and challenged the emerging argument. Care was taken to uphold research integrity and ethical responsibility towards the expert clinicians and the texts.

Having discussed the methodology underpinning the research and articulated the methods used to collect and analyze data, maintain rigor and ensure ethical integrity, the next chapter will begin by presenting the research findings.

## **Chapter 4: Findings 1: The structure and mechanism of mind**

This chapter is the first in a series of three, which presents the findings of the project. It investigates the Eastern notion of mind, considered to be the background of mindfulness philosophies and practices (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a). The elucidated understandings describe the structure and mechanism of mind. The model presented draws from Western psychology, Eastern philosophies and meditation insights. Some concepts of quantum physics have been used to explicate subtle mechanisms of the mind.

The chapter describes how conditioning of awareness leads to the development of the conditioned mind. It then goes on to explicate the structures and mechanisms of the conditioned mind. In doing so, the chapter interprets the Eastern philosophies of the mind in a language more in tune with contemporary Western researchers and practitioners.

### **1. Mind**

The human mind is one of the most intriguing and complex phenomena of nature. Over the centuries, it has puzzled philosophers and scientists alike. Mind has also remained the central theme of the Eastern philosophies and practices for thousands of years (Aurobindo, 1996; prasad dasji, 2010; Sarma, 2011). For the Eastern philosophies, mind is a holistic notion which encapsulates definable faculties such as cognitions, emotions, behaviours, as well as intangible aspects such as energy and awareness; awareness being the critical ingredient (Houshmand et al., 1999; Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997), whereas clinical psychology only deals with observable aspects of mind.

In order to honour the notion of mind which gave rise to mindfulness philosophy and practices, it thus becomes important for clinical psychology to go beyond its subject matter to focus on energy and awareness; a challenging and complex task.

I am arguing that a synthesis of cognitive and behavioural theories with the eastern notion of mind through the practice of meditation may yield new understandings. Importantly,

this will ensure that the critical component of mindfulness philosophy, i.e. awareness, is not compromised from the outset.

Eastern philosophies describe awareness on a continuum ranging between awareness being completely conditioned, i.e. conditioned by thoughts, to totally unconditioned awareness i.e. pure awareness (Krishnamurti, 1993; Osho, 1998, 1989). On the conditioned end of the continuum, awareness is completely subservient to thought, while on the other end, awareness is totally unconditioned and works through the intelligence inherent in itself (Krishnamurti, 1993; Osho, 1977a, 1998, 1989). Osho (1989) describes different states of awareness, also known as bodies, and how they play distinct functions within the mind. Explaining dreams, Osho compares the Eastern notion of differing states of consciousness with Western psychology. He states “*We have seven bodies: the physical, the ethereal, the astral, the mental, the spiritual, the cosmic and the nirvanic...The physical body is known as the conscious, the etheric body as the unconscious, and the astral as the collective unconscious*” (Osho, 1989, p. 66). He is suggesting that the human mind consists of seven distinct states (bodies) and each body represents a particular state and function of awareness. The notion of body suggests that these different states of awareness are stable like the physical body. Osho compares these states of awareness with the Western concepts of consciousness, unconscious and collective unconscious which he perceived as dominant discourses within Western psychology (Osho, 1989). He (1989) further explains that the higher levels of consciousness, i.e. spiritual, cosmic and nirvanic consciousnesses, which are experienced through meditation, cannot be understood through Western methods.

Similarly, discussing with Western scientists, The Dalai Lama (1999) explains that the mind has different levels of awareness. He states

*Within the Buddhist tradition, we don't speak in terms of the brain but rather of subjective awareness, and also energies as these are experienced subjectively. Within that context, a distinction is made between grosser and subtle states of consciousness associated with grosser and subtler states of energy within the body.* (Houshmand et al., 1999, p. 105)

In these excerpts, The Dalai Lama describes different states of awareness and energy functioning in varying degrees within the mind. He suggests that, in addition to grosser

levels of consciousness (awareness) and energies, i.e. cognitions, emotions and feelings, consciousness and energies function at subtle levels as well. The Dalai Lama's description is similar to Osho's suggestion that there are different states of awareness. The Dalai Lama, however, goes further in envisioning that energy also can maintain itself in subtle states which correspond to the states of awareness, which also has support from Osho (1989) and Krishnamurti (1993). Hence, the notion that "awareness can maintain and exhibit itself in distinct states based on its conditioning" is extended to energy as well.

Eastern understandings of mind are built upon the notion that awareness and energy can maintain and exhibit themselves in different states. The Eastern philosophers seem to distinguish two different types of mind; the conditioned mind and the unconditioned mind (Osho, 1988, 1989; Krishnamurti, 1993; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a).

In the conditioned mind, which is more important for the explication of mindfulness, awareness and energy maintain three distinct states, namely, the automatic mind, the subtle mind and the observing mind. Each component of the conditioned mind serves a distinct function enabling the human mind to function. A critical part of this explication of mind is elucidated with the help of quantum theories as evident in a discussion between Krishnamurti and physicist Bohm (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993). This will be discussed shortly under the heading 'the observing mind.' The structure and mechanism of the unconditioned mind are drawn from the Eastern philosophies which seek to explain pathways to enlightenment (Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a).

Before further explicating the conditioned mind and the unconditioned mind, I will clarify the terms used for 'mind' within Eastern philosophy.

## 2. Different interpretations and uses of term ‘mind’

Within the Eastern philosophies, the term mind has been used in an array of definitions which can be confusing. Hence, a description of different terms used for describing mind is presented in table 4.1:

Source	Term	Meaning
Buddhist philosophies such as ancient Buddhism such as Theravada, and later outgrowths such as Mahayana and Zen	Mind	Buddhist philosophies use the term mind to describe different aspects of mind, including awareness, cognitions, emotions, behaviours, perceptions (Houshmand et al., 1999; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002).
	The conditioned mind	The conditioned mind refers to the component of mind, which is learnt through conditioning (Houshmand et al., 1999; The Dalai Lama, 1997).
	The unconditioned mind	The unconditioned mind refers to pure awareness or unconditioned awareness (Houshmand et al., 1999; The Dalai Lama, 1997).
	Pure mind	The term pure mind also refers to pure awareness or awareness
Krishnamurti	Mind	Krishnamurti also uses the term mind for both the conditioned mind and pure awareness (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994).  He also uses the term thought to describe the conditioned mind (Krishnamurti, 1994).
	Observation or pure observation	Krishnamurti uses the term observation or pure observation to describe the unconditioned mind or pure awareness (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994).
Osho	Mind	Osho uses the term mind exclusively for the conditioned mind (Osho, 1988, 2006, 2009a).
	Ego	Osho also uses the term ego as an emergent phenomenon, which arises out of autonomous functioning of the conditioned mind. He believes that ego is the master of mind (Osho, 1988).
	Awareness	Osho uses the term awareness for the unconditioned mind, mindfulness and consciousness (Osho, 1988, 1989).

*Table 4.1. Differing uses of the term ‘mind’ in Eastern philosophy*



### 3. The conditioned mind

The Eastern philosophies suggest that the ordinary mind is learnt through a conditioning of awareness and energy which functions automatically and constantly (Osho, 1977a, 1988). Components of the conditioned mind include (1) the automatic mind which is dominated by conditioned cognition, emotions, feeling etc., (2) the subtle mind which is dominated by ego and (3) the observing mind which is dominated by awareness (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2009b, 2010a; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002, 2002a).

The following table 4.2 outlines the structure and mechanism of mind in Eastern philosophy:

Component of the conditioned mind	Structure	Mechanism
The automatic mind	<p>The automatic mind is the outer-most layer of the conditioned mind.</p> <p>It consists of conditioned thoughts, attitudes, mental rules, assumptions, beliefs, schemas, emotions, and feelings (J. Beck, 1995; Young, 1999).</p> <p>Conditionings produces different belief and schema systems (J. Beck, 1995; Young, 1999).</p> <p>The mind is meta-conditioned to the cognition. As a result of this meta-conditioning, people identify themselves with their thoughts and they come to believe that they are their thoughts (Osho, 1988)</p>	<p>The automatic mind functions automatically and constantly (Krishnamurti, 1993; Osho, 1988).</p> <p>Constant functioning of the automatic mind produces impressions or imprints in the energy of the body giving birth to the subtle mind (Houshmand et al., 1999; Osho, 1988).</p> <p>The automatic mind is triggered into action by external and internal stimuli; internal triggers come from the automatic mind itself and the subtle mind (J. Beck, 1995; Houshmand et al., 1999; Osho, 1988; Young, 1999).</p> <p>With effort, the automatic mind functions can be regulated (J. Beck, 1995).</p>

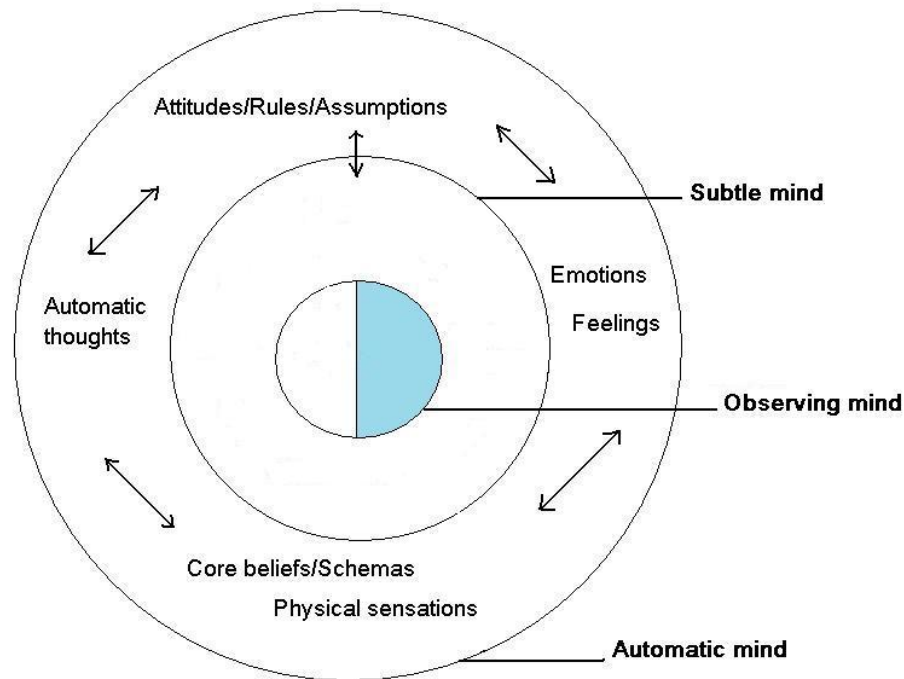
<p>The subtle mind</p>	<p>The subtle mind lies between the automatic mind and the observing mind (Houshmand et al., 1999; Osho, 1988, 1989).</p> <p>The subtle mind exists in energy form, hence the body.</p> <p>The subtle mind consists of ego and energy (Osho, 1988).</p> <p>Ego is an impression of the automatic mind and has intentionality. Like the automatic mind, ego also functions automatically (Houshmand et al., 1999; Krishnamurti, 1993; Osho, 1988).</p> <p>The subtle mind energy is the biological energy of the body, which constantly changes as a result of stimulation from within, the automatic mind and the observing mind (Osho, 1988, 1989).</p> <p>Like the automatic mind, the subtle mind is also meta-conditioned with oneself (Osho, 1988, 1989).</p>	<p>The subtle mind being an energy state is in a dynamic state (Osho, 1988, 1989).</p> <p>The subtle mind constantly mediates between the automatic mind and the observing mind (Osho, 1988).</p> <p>The subtle mind is triggered by the automatic mind, the observing mind and itself (Osho, 1988).</p> <p>The subtle mind triggers itself when there are changes in the energy field due to the physical, instinctual and ego functions (Osho, 1988).</p> <p>The intentionality of the subtle mind determines most of the functions of the conditioned mind (Osho, 1988, 1989).</p>
<p>The observing mind</p>	<p>The observing mind is the innermost part of the conditioned mind.</p> <p>The observing mind consists of subtle ego and awareness, which exist in a quantum state (Houshmand et al., 1999; Krishnamurti, 1993; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997).</p>	<p>The observing mind is responsible for observing events occurring in the internal and external reality. In this way, thoughts are also the objects of the observing mind (Houshmand et al., 1999; Krishnamurti, 1993; Osho, 1988).</p> <p>The subtle ego seems to function as an observer and, through quantum mechanics, turns pure awareness into conditioned observations (Osho, 1988, 1989).</p>

*Table 4.2. Structure and mechanism of different components of the conditioned mind*

### **3.1. The automatic mind**

Ordinarily, the automatic mind is the most obvious component of mind, hence it is often referred to as ‘the mind.’ The structure and mechanism of this component of the conditioned mind has been interpreted by synthesizing the notions from the Eastern philosophies (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama 1997, 2002a) and cognitive psychology (J. Beck, 1995; Young, 1999). The automatic mind consists of conditioned thoughts, attitudes, assumptions, mental rules, beliefs, schemas, emotions and feelings. Cognitive theories suggest, once conditioned, the cognitions maintain and operate themselves as fixed systems and sub-systems (J. Beck, 1995; Young, 1999). This also draws support from the Eastern philosophies (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988). As the name ‘automatic’ suggests, this component of the conditioned mind functions automatically (J. Beck, 1995; R. Crane, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988, 1989; Young, 1999). Because the automatic mind draws its existence from conditioning; it can only function and make sense of the events based upon its contents i.e. thoughts, assumptions, beliefs and memory (A. T. Beck, 1976; J. Beck, 1995; Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988; Young, 1999). It is constantly engaged in thinking and analysing, eclipsing all other components of mind (Krishnamurti, 1994; Osho, 1988). As a result, the automatic mind is “the fool’s gold” for most individuals and theorists, including clinical psychology; the term ‘fool’s gold’ is an analogy derived from a mineral called iron pyrite which is mistaken for gold due to its pale yellow colour. Thus, the entire subject matter of cognitive and behavioural psychology is derived from this interpretation of the conditioned mind.

The structure of the automatic mind is described through the following diagram:



*Diagram 4.1. The automatic mind*

The circles of the diagram represent the three components of the conditioned mind. The outer circle represents the automatic mind, while the middle circle represents the subtle mind and the central circle is the observing mind. The blue part of the central circle represents awareness. As the focus of this diagram is on the automatic mind, the outer circle, the automatic mind is described in more detail than the components of the conditioned mind.

In this way, the automatic mind has three important characteristics: (1) it functions automatically and constantly (2) it is autonomous, and (3) one identifies, termed as meta-conditioned, with the automatic mind, which ACT describes as cognitive fusion and attachment to the conceptualized self (Luoma et al., 2007).

### 3.1.a. Automatic functioning

There is no on-off switch in the mind. The automatic and constant functioning of the automatic mind is caused by constant interaction with; (1) the internal environment i.e. the automatic mind itself (2) the external environment, and (3) the subtle mind.

Highlighting the constant and automatic functioning of the conditioned mind, Krishnamurti (n.d.b) states

*The mind is the occupation. If the mind is not occupied, it ceases to exist; its very occupation is its existence. The occupation with insult and flattery, with God and drink, with virtue and passion, with work and expression, with storing up and giving, is all the same; it is still occupation, worry, restlessness... Occupation gives, to the mind a feeling of activity, of being alive. That is why the mind stores up, or renounces; it sustains itself with occupation. The mind must be busy with something. What it is busy with is of little importance; the important thing is that it be occupied, and the better occupations have social significance. To be occupied with something is the nature of the mind, and its activity springs from this. (Krishnamurti, n.d.b, pp. para3-4)*

Krishnamurti argues that the most important aspect of the conditioned mind is the constant nature of its functions. This suggests that the automatic mind works from conditioning rather than awareness, which implies that the automatic mind does not have awareness of itself.

The notion of the automatic and constant functioning of mind is also found in Osho's philosophy. He states:

*The first thing about the mind is that it is a constant chattering. Whether you are talking or not, it goes on doing some inner talk; whether you are awake or asleep the inner talk continues as an undercurrent. You may be doing some work but the inner talk continues; you are driving, or you are digging a hole in the garden, but the inner talk continues. (Osho, 1976a)*

Osho explains that the conditioned mind functions constantly irrespective of whether one is engaged in an activity or is sitting idle. He also suggests that the automatic mind continues to work even when one is sleeping. According to both Osho (1988) and Krishnamurti (n.d.b), the automatic mind functions constantly without awareness. This is significant because it triggers an exploration of understanding the mechanism through which the conditioned mind becomes aware.

Furthermore, Osho's notion of constant functioning is more than constant thinking. He seems to be suggesting that, even when both automatic and volitional thinking is stopped, the automatic functioning of mind continues. This suggests that there may be another mechanism that carries on working when thinking has stopped. This idea developed into the notion of the subtle mind.

The concept of the automatic mind is not entirely alien to clinical psychology. It is implicit in conditioning theories (J. Beck, 1995; Young, 1999), which have gained more importance in mindfulness based on cognitive theories (R. Crane, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Luoma et al., 2007). However, when constant functioning is added to automatic functioning, the automatic mind starts to take on an entirely new meaning and acquires greater significance than that given by cognitive theorists.

It is not difficult to observe the automatic functioning of the automatic mind. One can easily observe the automatically occurring thoughts if s/he pays attention to her/his mind non-judgmentally. During meditation practice, I see thoughts constantly appearing and disappearing from my awareness; often aimlessly and meaninglessly, jumping from one subject to another, from one memory to another, from one judgment to another, from one fantasy to another, from one worry to another. They go on endlessly. Any attempt to stop, criticize or judge these thoughts only evokes more thinking. The thoughts are related to each other; therefore each thought acts as a trigger for other thoughts. The ability of thoughts to act as responses as well as triggers seems to play a key role in keeping mind constantly occupied. I can only control the automatic mind when I consciously want to think and contemplate; otherwise thinking goes on by itself.

In this way the automatic mind function turns observations into thoughts and judgments changing reality as it emerges into awareness to which one is already conditioned (Krishnamurti, 1994; The Dalai Lama, 1997). Therefore, the automatic mind interprets reality according to conditioning, rather than reality (Osho, 1979b) and severely limits one's ability to understand reality, causing a myriad of psychological and social problems

(Krishnamurti, 1972; Osho, 1988). In this way, the automatic occurrence of conditioned fears, traumas, thoughts and beliefs are considered to be the cause of psychopathology both within Eastern philosophies and Western psychology, especially the third wave psychologies such as MBCT and ACT (J. Beck, 1995; Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Krishnamurti, 1994 {Crane, 2009 #111; Luoma et al., 2007; Osho, 1988; Young, 1999). Teasdale (1995, 2002), for example, has demonstrated that ruminations, which are automatic and persistent negative thoughts, cause emotional disorders.

### **3.1.b. The automatic mind is autonomous**

The notion of the autonomous nature of the automatic mind is a further extension of the notion of automatic functioning (Krishnamurti 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988). This suggests that the automatic mind not only operates automatically, it also has the ability to self operate and maintain, a notion congruent with third wave theories (C. Crane et al., 2008; Luoma et al., 2007; John D. Teasdale et al., 2002).

Describing how the conditioned mind functions, Krishnamurti (n.d.b) states:

*The past, the present and the future are tied together by the long string of memory; the whole bundle is memory, with little fragrance. Thought moves through the present to the future and back again; like a restless animal tied to a post, it moves within its own radius, narrow or wide, but it is never free of its own shadow.* (Chapter 65, para. 3)

He argues that thoughts are grounded in the memories (conditioning) and thus are unable to understand the reality as it unfolds in the moment to moment reality, hence his expression ‘with little fragrance.’ This means that the automatic mind works within the limitations of thought rather than awareness.

Osho (1988) and Krishnamurti (1993, 1994) further suggest that the conditioned mind becomes the master (autonomous) by dominating awareness. Krishnamurti and the physicist David Bohm have discussed the nature of the relationship between awareness and the conditioned mind (thought) on many occasions (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993). The following conversation explains their understandings of the process through which thought has come to dominate awareness:

*Krishnamurti... Thought, the intellect, that dominates the world. And therefore intelligence has very little place here. When one thing dominates, the other must be subservient... Bohm: ... If you went back to the animal, then this instinctive response towards pleasure and security would be right. But now when thought comes in, it can produce, it dazzles the instinct and produces all sorts of glamour, more pleasure, more security. And the instincts are not intelligent enough to deal with the complexity of thought, therefore thought went wrong, because it excited the instincts and the instincts demanded more... So thought really created a world of illusion, miasma, confusion, and put away intelligence... it has created immortality in Jesus, or this or that... (Krishnamurti, 1972)*

Krishnamurti and Bohm suggest that thought dominates awareness because thought can produce a more vivid and extraordinary picture of life. This implies that people may be ordinarily dissatisfied with the reality of their lives and desire something other than what reality provides. They both believe that thought (the conditioned mind) can promise greater gratification and pleasures for the instincts and a better future through day dreaming and fantasizing. As the conditioned mind functions automatically and constantly, it continuously promises greater pleasure and security for the future. Ultimately, when awareness cannot compete with the thought, it becomes subservient (Krishnamurti, 1972). Thus awareness starts to follow thoughts rather than leading them. This also implies that thought lacks awareness.

Krishnamurti suggests that a fear of death also plays an important role in facilitating the dominance of thought over awareness. He believes that fear of death is an existential reality for all human beings, the ultimate annihilation which people find difficult to accept. The religious discourses, for example, condition thought and offer immortality in the form of salvation or reincarnation. Thus, driven by the fear of annihilation, human beings gravitate towards thought. Awareness which occurs in the moment to moment reality, on the other hand, cannot offer such promises or certainty. Krishnamurti argues that the promise of immortality, even if it is an illusion, is very appealing to people. Hence thought (the conditioned mind) goes on producing philosophies, ideologies and religious beliefs creating the illusion of dazzling pleasures, immortality in soul, rebirth and God to overcome the fear of death. In this way, thought gains an unquestionable dominance over awareness (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993, 1994).



The autonomous nature of mind becomes evident through a sustained practice of mindfulness. Before beginning the regular practice of meditation and experiencing the automatic functioning of my mind, I believed that thoughts occurred through my own volition. However, the insights from meditation showed me that thinking occurs automatically without my willing them. Through regular and sustained practice of meditation, I have experienced thoughts occurring on their own, without apparent stimuli particularly in the deep meditative states when there are no noticeable stimuli.

### **3.1.c. Identification with thoughts**

One of the highly evolved and unique features of human beings that is shared by Eastern and Western philosophers, is their ability to self identify and self reflect (Houshmand et al., 1999; Osho, 1989). But what is self? I asked my seven year old son “what is it that gives you the feeling of being you” and gave him the following statements to choose from: (a) are you your leg, (b) are you your arm, (c) are you your head, (d) are you your body or (e) are you your mind. When he picked the last statement, I realized that meta-conditioning between oneself and one’s automatic mind starts very early and continues throughout life.

This question was not about finding an answer to the question ‘who am I?’ It relates to people’s perceptions of themselves. People may never have asked the ‘Who am I’ question, yet almost everyone in the world has an answer to this question. The answer to a question that has never been raised reveals the meta-conditioning between oneself and one’s conditioned mind.

The term meta-conditioning, which was coined in a conversation with clinical psychologist Ian Clayton from Hastings, New Zealand (personal communication, January 8, 2012), denotes to conditioning between the intangible oneself and the cognition which occurs as a result of a constant occurrence of thoughts in relation to oneself, which is similar to ACT concepts of cognitive fusion and the conceptualized self. Describing one’s identification with one’s conditioned mind, Osho (1972) states:

*... we have taken the mind as us, we are identified with it. ...Mind is something other than "me" [oneself]. But we go on being identified with the mind. How then can you come out of the past if you have become identified with the past? The one who has forgotten that he is a prisoner is the most imprisoned, because there is no possibility of his freedom then. But even that prisoner may become aware. An even greater prisoner is the one who has become one with the imprisonment, one with the prison, who has become identified. The walls of the prison are his body. The whole arrangement of the imprisonment is his mind. (Osho, 1972, p. 94)*

Osho suggests that one is identified (meta-conditioning) with the mind. This meta-conditioning is so complete that one starts to believe that one is one's conditioned mind. Furthermore, pointing out the strength of meta-conditioning between oneself and the conditioned mind, Osho explains that one is so much identified with the conditioned mind that they are completely imprisoned within it.

When the question 'why do people identify with the automatic mind and not the body or awareness?' is asked, the answer seems to lie in the mechanism of the conditioned mind. When the automatic mind produces thoughts continuously in reference to oneself, a meta-conditioning between oneself and the automatic mind takes place which results in one coming to believe one is one's mind. As this conditioning solidifies over time, one's identification becomes absolute and the need to understand oneself does not arise. Hence, Osho further states:

*...conditioning starts from the mother's womb or, at the most, the moment you are born. .... By the time he (one) is twenty-five and comes back from the university, he (or she) is so conditioned that he will not even be aware of (his or her) the conditioning. (Osho, 1979a)*

Like Western theorists i.e. J. Beck (1995) and Young (1999), Osho suggests that conditioning occurs from birth and continues throughout one's life. However, Osho also believes that another level of conditioning occurs between oneself and mind when one begins identifying with thoughts. This results in a fusion between the intangible self and the conditioned mind. On the one hand, one comes to believe that one is one's mind and, on the other hand, the mind becomes autonomous and functions independently.

Osho (1981) goes on to state: "*In the mind you live and encapsulate life, surrounded by all kinds of thoughts, theories, systems, philosophies, surrounded by the whole past of humanity, all kinds of superstitions – Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian, Buddhist, Jaina;*

*political, social, economic, religious*” (Chapter 1, p.6). Once mind is conditioned, it takes over one’s life. Describing the effect of systemic conditioning that people face through socialization and institutionalization, he suggests that once cognition is conditioned, awareness gets tied to it. The conditioning is so deep that one believes one is these cognitions and acts accordingly. In this way the automatic mind becomes the master. Osho (1980b) explains further: “...*mind consists of these two non-existential things: memories and imaginations, memories and desires, memories and hopes*” (Chapter 1, p.6). He argues that people live according to their conditioned beliefs rather than in an existential reality that unfolds in the present moment. Beliefs not only represent the past aided by the imagination, they can also create the future. Hence, one’s entire life is determined by the automatic mind.

Similarly, in the opening lines of The Dhammapada, one of the most sacred Buddhist scriptures, Buddha describes the nature of mind (the conditioned mind) as follows:

*We are what we think.  
All that we are arises with our thoughts  
With our thoughts we make the world.  
Speak or act with an impure mind  
and trouble will follow you  
as the wheel follows the ox that draws the cart.  
... speak or act with a pure mind  
and happiness will follow you  
as your shadow, unshakable.  
‘look how he abused me and beat me  
how he threw me down and robbed me’  
Live with such thoughts and you live in hate.  
...abandon such thoughts and live in peace. (Osho, 1979b)*

In these *sutras* [aphoristic statements] Buddha highlights several aspects of the conditioned mind. The first aspect of the conditioned mind has to do with one’s relationship with one’s mind. Buddha seems to suggest that there is meta-conditioning between the conditioning (the conditioned mind) and oneself, which makes one feel as if one is one’s mind. Other aspects of the *sutras* suggest that cognitions, emotions and behaviours are conditioned with each other and cognitions intervene between triggering events and behaviours. This view resembles cognitive theories (J. Beck, 1995; Young, 1999).

Implicit in the cognitive theories is the fact that identification with the automatic mind creates psychopathology when negative thoughts are triggered. For example when, triggered by a failure, one has this thought “I am useless” then one feels useless and depressed (J. Beck, 1995; Young, 1999). However, for the Eastern philosophies, the identification with thoughts, including functional thoughts, is pathological. For example, people’s beliefs about their group, society or religion are functional in the context of their environment. However, these beliefs when strictly adhered to in a different and challenging environment can cause interpersonal and social problems. Moreover, people are unaware that their identification with their conditioning is responsible for their problems.

### **3.2. The subtle mind**

The term ‘subtle mind’ is derived from Buddhist philosophies. As discussed earlier, these philosophies suggest that apart from gross forms of awareness i.e. thoughts and beliefs, mind has subtle forms of awareness which are not ordinarily recognised or experienced. However, these philosophies argue that advanced practitioners of meditation can experience these states of mind (Houshmand et al., 1999; The Dalai Lama, 2002). The notion of the subtle mind has been developed from a synthesis of Osho’s (1988, 1989) and The Dalai Lama’s (1991, 1997, 2002a) philosophies. There are two main parts of the subtle mind, namely, energy and ego. In the subtle mind energy functions through affective states and instinctual stimulation, while ego functions through intentionality. The middle circle in the following diagram 4.2 describes the subtle mind, while the blue part of the central circle represents awareness.

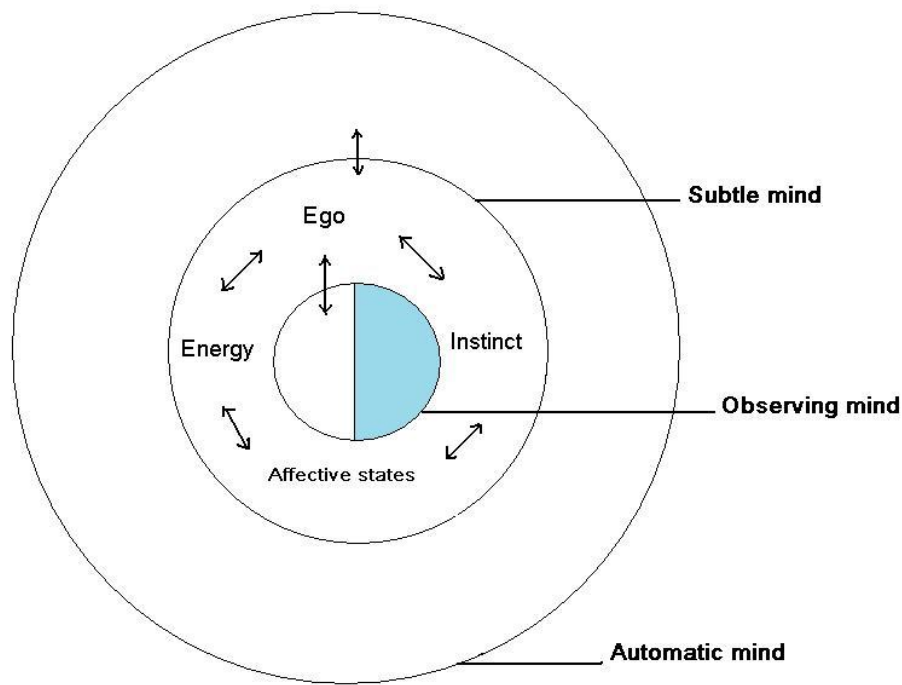


Diagram 4.2. The subtle mind

The Eastern philosophies propose that *Karma* or actions, which result from conditioning, leave an imprint in energy and awareness, giving birth to the subtle mind. The Dalai Lama (1991) explaining to a group of Western scientists states: “*The karmic imprints are placed on the very subtle stream of consciousness*” (para. 13). The notion of karmic imprints suggests one’s actions leave impressions in one’s very subtle stream of consciousness. The notion of “a very subtle stream of consciousness” implies that these impressions are not memories of actions; they are a subtle conditioning of awareness, not ordinarily experienced. As a non-dual phenomenon, subtle consciousness can also be considered as a subtle form of energy (Osho, 1989). The Dalai Lama argues that subtle forms of mind are in an energy state. He explains that the grosser mind (the conditioned mind), which is the most perceptible form of awareness, is based in the physical brain, and the subtle state of awareness lies outside the physical brain (Houshmand et al., 1999). This enables the subtle mind to be conceived as an impression of the automatic mind retained in the energy-awareness.

In discussions with Western philosophers and scientists on brain and consciousness, The Dalai Lama (1991) further explains the deeper and subtler aspects of mind: “...*They (karmic imprints) are placed on the consciousness that leaves the body, not the one that stays behind...*” (para. 13). The karmic imprints leave the body at death to find another ‘womb’ or life. Thus they are existential entities which have a certain level of intentionality.

Osho (1988, 1989) uses the term ego to describe the intentionality created by the subtle conditioning, again functioning autonomously. He further argues that, like meta-conditioning between oneself and the automatic mind, the constant and autonomous functioning of ego also creates meta-conditioning between oneself and ego (Osho, 1988). The identification with ego is much more profound than the identification with thoughts because ego always remains outside the conscious awareness (Osho, 1988, 1989).

Subtle states of mind can be experienced in deep states of mindfulness. During my personal practice of sustained meditation I notice, as the automatic thoughts disperse, that the space or pause between the consecutive thoughts expands. In addition to encouraging me to continue with meditation practice, this slows the automatic thinking, providing greater opportunity for understanding the deeper layers of my mind. Initially the pauses between the thoughts seemed empty to me. However closer observation reveals that within this emptiness is the subtle mind. There is a feeling of subtle movement within the pause; it feels as if something is moving within awareness. Furthermore, this movement is highly unstable. It only lasts as long as awareness stays in the present moment. If attention wavers slightly, the movement within the mind turns into subtle thoughts which are brief and fleeting, appearing and disappearing very quickly like bubbles in a fountain of water. If attention wavers further, these subtle thoughts go on to develop into automatic thoughts.

It seems as if the feeling of subtle movement within mind comes from the interplay between the subtle mind and the automatic mind form wherein the rapid formation and

disappearance of subtle thoughts occur. It seems that, at a deeper level, mind is mechanically and structurally different. Below the thin surface of automatic thinking lies a field of energy and awareness which is in a constantly changing state. This state is still conditioned to the automatic mind and is, somehow, able to turn into thoughts and emotions.

Functionally, the subtle mind does not always follow a stimulus-response mechanism. It can operate on its own, probably from its intentionality. For example, during the pauses between thoughts in deeper mindfulness states, when I meditate, I observe that vastly unrelated subtle thoughts quickly appear and disappear, giving the impression that the subtle mind is capable of functioning without apparent stimulation.

Congruent with the teachings of The Dalai Lama (1991, 1997, 2002a) and Osho (1988, 1989) my meditation insights reveal that the subtle mind is a stable structural component of the conditioned mind capable of functioning autonomously. As the subtle mind matures, it increasingly operates from its intentionality, which is better described as ego Osho (1988, 1989).

Because ego is the main driver of the subtle mind and plays an important role in autonomy of the automatic mind, exploration of its structure and mechanism is necessary.

### **3.2.a. Ego**

Osho seems to have derived the term ego from an ancient Hindu philosophical concept of *ahamkara* (*aham* is self and *kara* is to do), which translates as both ego and illusion (Aurobindo, 1996). However, the term ego was popularized in Western psychology by Freud in 20th century, who used it to describe a psychic apparatus in his structural model. For Freud, ego, along with id and super-ego, is a function of mind rather than a structural part of the brain. As part of consciousness, ego mediates between unconscious demands of id, unorganized instinctual drives, and reality as determined by superego, organized social ideals. Ego performs defensive, perceptual, intellectual, cognitive and executive functioning, representing the awareness functions of mind (Freud, 1936).

In contrast, Osho believes that ego is without conscious awareness. He suggests that ego emerges out of conditioning, meta-conditioning and automatic functioning of the conditioned mind and its functions are limited to these conditioning. Describing the development of ego, Osho (1988) states:

*First the child becomes aware of 'mine', then 'me', then of 'you', then of 'I'... this is the construction, the structure of your ego ... First the child becomes aware of mine...Possessiveness enters first...When you have something to claim as yours, suddenly through that claim arises the idea that now you are the center of possessions...me ... Once you are settled with the 'me', you can see clearly that you have a boundary, and those outside the boundary are 'you'...then as a reflection arises 'I'...the subtlest, the most crystallized form of the possessiveness.* (Osho, 1988, pp. 191-192)

Osho explains that, as a child starts learning, ego develops as a consequence of identification with the learning or meta-conditioning between the intangible oneself and the learning. At the beginning stage, ego manifests as 'mine' i.e. 'this is my mother' or 'this is my toy.' Once this meta-conditioning solidifies, as a consequence, ego manifests as 'me,' the owner of the possessions. In this way, me is a more solidified 'mine.' Ego as 'me' starts recognizing boundaries; first the boundary of oneself and then of others. The boundaries make ego structure more defined. Over time, as a consequence of layers and layers of meta-conditioning between oneself and one's learning, ego becomes I, which one cannot ordinarily identify and experience separate from oneself.

In this way, Osho argues that ego is neither conscious nor reality based (Osho, 1974, 1988, 1989). Ego, for Osho, derives its capabilities from meta-conditioning. Ego does not have cognition or emotions; yet ego has the essence of these cognitions and emotions. The essence of the cognition and emotions gives ego its intentionality and, ultimately, autonomy. This capability of autonomy and intentionality enables ego to take over the entire functioning of mind and becomes the master (Osho, 1988, 1989).

Krishnamurti does not use the term 'ego.' His concept of 'me' is similar to Osho's notion of ego. He states:

*...thought being insecure in itself, fragmented in itself, broken up in itself, has created the 'me' as something permanent, the 'me', which has become separate*



*from thought, and therefore thought recognizes it as something permanent. And this permanency is identified through attachment...* (Krishnamurti, 1993, p. 58)

Krishnamurti argues that thoughts are fragmented within themselves, a concept also inherent in the cognitive theories of J. Beck (1995) and Young (1999). He suggests that to overcome this fragmentation, thought creates 'me' as something permanent with which it can identify. 'Me', according to Krishnamurti (1993) is born out of thought (the conditioned mind) and becomes a separate identity capable of independent function. The concept of meta-conditioning between the intangible self or me and thought are inherent in the above statement. Krishnamurti also suggests that the meta-conditioning leads to a stable structural reality within the conditioned mind i.e. me, similar to Osho's notion of ego.

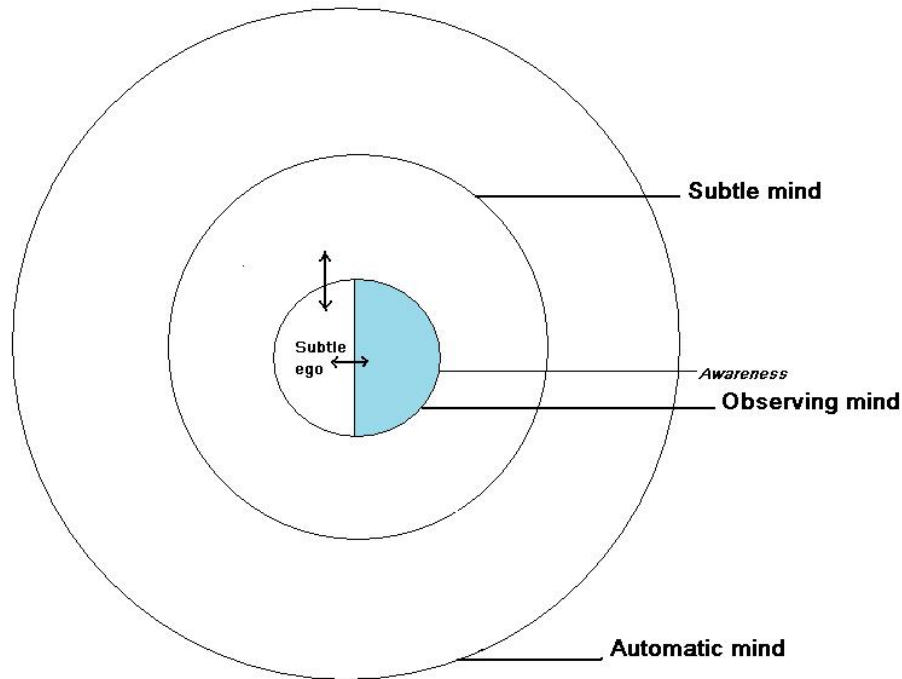
Hence, Osho and Krishnamurti agree that meta-conditioning between oneself and constant and automatic functioning of the automatic mind gives birth to ego which has intentionality. The ego provides stability and cohesiveness to rather fragmented thoughts possibly through intentionality. People identify themselves with their ego; hence, Osho (1988) and Krishnamurti (1993) suggest that domination of ego over awareness creates the illusion that ego is the master. They further believe that ego functions within the limits of conditioning and fails to understand the moment to moment unfolding reality, potentially resulting in suffering.

The notion that the ego and subtle mind are without awareness is a crucial finding. This triggered the exploration of mechanism by which the mind executes awareness.

### **3.3. The observing mind**

The concept of the observing mind is developed from a synthesis of the Eastern philosophies (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993, 1994; Osho 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama 1997, 2002a) and quantum physics (Moultrie, 2012; Stapp, 1995, 2006). The diagram below (4.3) represents the observing mind via the central circle, the outer circle being the automatic mind and the middle one the subtle mind. The observing mind has two main

components i.e. subtle ego and awareness both existing simultaneously in a quantum state.



*Diagram 4.3. The observing mind*

Explications of the automatic and subtle minds have suggested that these minds are not conscious and that their functioning is limited to conditioning (Krishnamurti, 1972; Osho, 1988; The Dalai Lama, 1997). Hence, it becomes obvious that there must be another dimension of mind which executes awareness functions. Understanding the observing mind therefore requires explication of the mechanism through which mind executes awareness or becomes aware of stimuli.

The Dalai Lama (2002a) hints at the possible structure of the observing mind. Quoting Buddha, he states “*In the mind, the mind is not to be found; the nature of the mind is clear light*” (The Dalai Lama, 2002a, p. 171). The ‘in the mind’, part of the statement suggests that the conditioned mind is not capable of awareness. The second part of the statement suggests that beyond the conditioned mind lies pure awareness, which has the

ability to make observations and understandings. The Dalai Lama further states: “*Defilements are superficial, the nature of the mind is clear light*” (The Dalai Lama, 2002a, p. 173). He suggests that the conditionings (cognition) are superficial but deep down the mind is clear light or pure awareness. To further differentiate between the conditioned mind and pure awareness, The Dalai Lama uses the analogy of water (pure awareness) and mud (conditioning), explaining that when the mud is dissolved in the pure water (awareness) all of the water looks muddy (the conditioned mind). However, when the mud settles, the water once again appears pure (awareness) (The Dalai Lama, 2002a).

Buddhist philosophies also use the term no-mind or emptiness to describe a state of the unconditioned mind (Cheng, 1981). The notion of no-mind or emptiness refers to absence of emotions and thoughts (Cheng, 1981). In a dialogue between Hyakujo, an eighth century Zen master and one of his disciples, no-mind is described as follows:

*There is no-mind beyond thoughts, speech and language. The monk [disciple] said: if there is no mind beyond words and speech, what is that mind in reality? Hyakujo said: Mind is without form and characteristics.... It is forever clear and still, and can perform its functions clearly and without hindrance. The patriarch [Hyakujo] said: It is only when the mind is seen to be unreal [unconditioned] that the dharma [basic nature] of all minds can be truly understood.* (Hyakujo, as cited in Osho, 1988a, Chapter 8, p. 1)

For Hyakujo, the basic nature of mind is pure awareness which has the ability to perceive and understand intelligently without assistance from thought, speech or language. This pure awareness is without the form and characteristics and lies behind cognitive abilities. He further suggests that until the unconditioned mind (pure awareness) is understood, the conditioned mind cannot be properly explored.

Sosan, Sang-Ts’an in Chinese, a Zen master, suggests that thinking makes it impossible to comprehend reality, including the reality of mind. He states “...*The more you talk and think about it, the further astray from the truth. Stop talking and thinking, and there is nothing you will not be able to know*” (Sosan, as cited in Osho, 1974, Chapter 3, p. 1). Sosan believes that cognitive abilities do not have awareness and thus are unable to understand the moment to moment unfolding reality. He suggests that when one goes

beyond conditioning into a formless and condition-less mind, becoming one with reality without opinions and judgment, understandings arise out of the intelligence of pure awareness, again suggesting that the automatic and the subtle mind do not have awareness functionality.

Similarly, non-Buddhist philosophers such as Krishnamurti and Osho have suggested that the conditioned mind does not have the faculty of awareness (Krishnamurti, 1993; Osho, 1988, 1989). Osho explaining the Buddhist notion of no-mind (pure awareness) states:

*The no-mind cannot arise out of the mind [the conditioned mind]. It is not a growth of the mind, it is not in continuity with the mind; it is discontinuous. It is as discontinuous as disease is with health. The health does not arise out of the disease, it arises out of the removal of the disease. ...Mind is the block for the no-mind ...The mind is dropped and suddenly you find the no-mind is there, has always been there. ...No-mind is vast, like the sky.....In that stopping of the mind you will have a taste of no-mind. ...Seeing this [the conditioned nature of mind or mindfulness], no-mind arrives. It is not that you bring it; it arrives on its own accord. (Osho, 1977a)*

Like the Buddhist philosophers, Osho believes that the mechanism of awareness is not in the automatic mind and the subtle mind. He suggests that when one meditates and sees that the conditioned mind is only a superficial layer of thoughts bubbling up in a sea of awareness one comes to realize the true nature of mind. Osho claims that having experienced both conditioned and unconditioned aspects of mind, one's mind shifts back to its basic nature i.e. pure awareness. He states that pure awareness only arises once meditation has penetrated through the conditioned mind and reached its unconditional state i.e. no-mind. Moreover, he suggests that it is by removing the hindrance of the conditioned mind that the unconditioned mind is recovered. At that point all meta-conditioning disappears and the conditioned mind ceases to work autonomously (Osho, 1988).

When mind is not constantly occupied by automatically and constantly occurring thoughts, one reaches a state of pure awareness. Osho (1988, 1989) argues that such awareness is superior to the conditioned mind in terms of intelligence and understandings. For Osho (1977a, 1988, 1989) awareness is the fundamental reality of

the universe and therefore is always in perfect harmony with the universe. He believes the brain does not produce awareness; it (the brain) rather acts as an apparatus in which awareness manifests as it does (Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989). The function of the brain in relation to awareness can be described using an analogy of a flute and music. Music is not manufactured by the flute; music emerges when air passes through it producing a certain volume and rhythm. The flute functions as an apparatus through which music takes place. Similarly, the brain has evolved to a state where awareness functions as mind. In this way, Osho also suggests that the automatic mind and the subtle mind are not aware, the actual function of awareness lies within awareness.

Similarly, Krishnamurti (1993) opines that mind has two possible ways of functioning: (1) function through thought (conditioning), or (2) function through the intelligence inherent in awareness. He accepts that thought has come to dominate awareness; however he believes that mind can function through the intelligence inherent in awareness. A discourse between Krishnamurti and Bohm throws light on the mechanism through which the conditioned mind and pure awareness interact. Krishnamurti (1972) states “...*Thought, matter, the mechanical, is energy. Intelligence (awareness) is also energy. Thought is confused, polluted, dividing itself, fragmenting itself. The moment it [energy-awareness] is a movement it goes off into this, into the field of thought...*” (7<sup>th</sup> Oct, para. 282). Both agree that thoughts are the material part of energy, while awareness is non-material. Within mind, energy, when remaining in its pure state, functions as awareness but when it moves with the conditioning it turns into thought. This means that the conditioned mind and pure awareness interface each other at an energy level, probably in a quantum state.

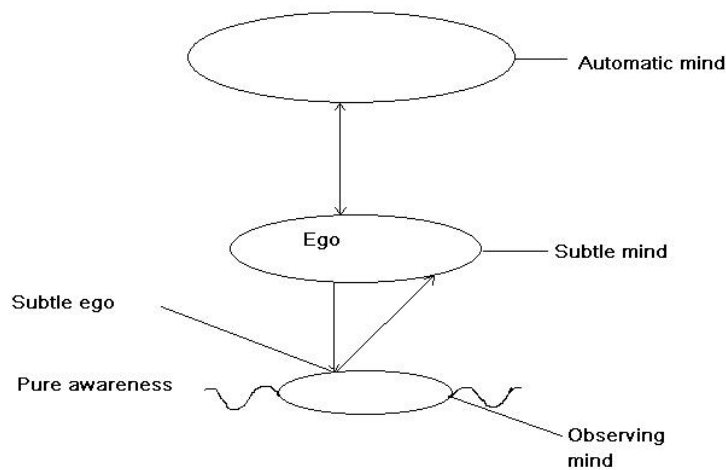
Krishnamurti (1967) further argues that awareness functions unconditionally. He states

*...One begins to discover that in the state of attention, complete attention, there is not the observer, with its old conditioning as the conscious as well as the unconscious. In that state of attention, the mind becomes extraordinarily quiet. The brain cells, though they may react, no longer function psychologically, within a pattern; they become extraordinarily quiet psychologically.* (27<sup>th</sup> April, para. 19)

Krishnamurti suggests that in the state of pure awareness, the observer (i.e. ego) is absent. Ego's role as an observer turns pure awareness into thought. This also means that at the level of energy, ego and awareness are present together as the observing mind. When energy stays in its pure state, it functions as awareness, however, when this state is observed by ego, it becomes a conditioned observation i.e. thought.

Understanding the mechanism through which pure awareness turns into the conditioned mind is assisted by basic concepts of quantum physics. According to quantum theory, at the most fundamental level, pure energy is a wave state which cannot be measured. Any attempt to measure this quantum state changes the reality i.e. quantum state of energy (Moultrie, 2012). Application of this theory suggests that mind in its quantum state is pure awareness and any observation of this state will cause change (Stapp, 1995, 2006), an interpretation which is congruent with the Eastern philosophies (Houshmand, 1999; Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1974, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a). Stapp (1995, 2006) also describes quantum mechanics in the brain in terms of consciousness and mind. He suggests that at the awareness level, the brain has endless possibilities of observations and responses which somehow turn into a particular perception/thought/response (Stapp, 1995, 2006). I am arguing that the unknown entity which collapses pure awareness into a conditioned thought is the effect of the automatically and constantly functioning ego, known as subtle ego.

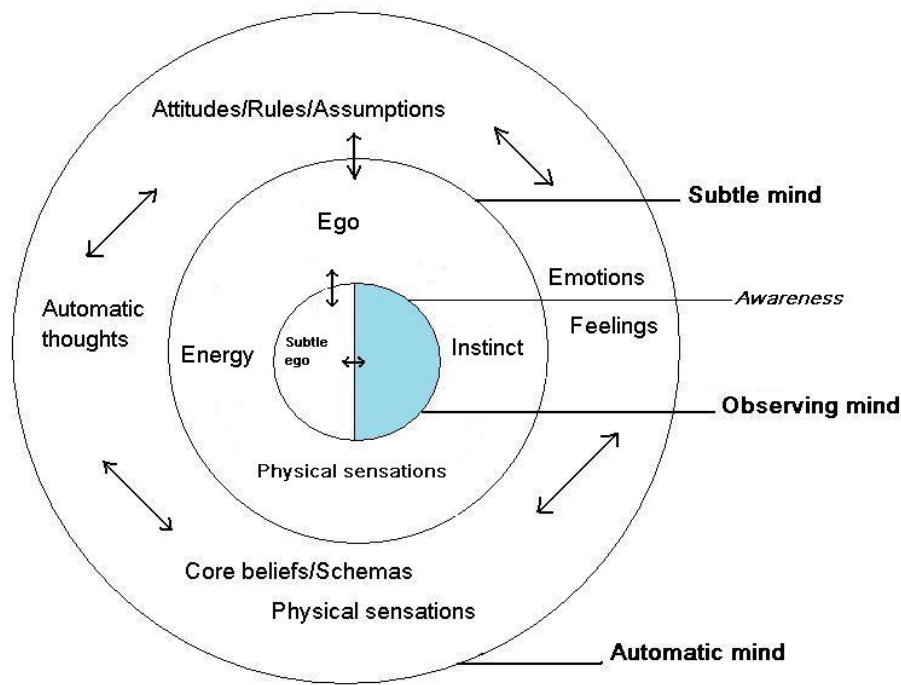
The observing mind is a quantum state in which pure awareness and subtle ego exist together like light which is both wave and particle, matter and non-matter, at the same time (Moultrie, 2012). Constantly functioning subtle ego seems to act as an observer which turns pure awareness into thought resulting in conditional understanding of the reality rather than pure awareness and understanding of the reality.



*Diagram 4.4.* The observing mind and quantum state of awareness

Diagram 4.4 suggests that pure awareness exists unconditionally like a wave in its own right. At the same time ego is working constantly in the conditioned mind, creating subtle ego. At the time of observation, awareness and subtle ego are activated simultaneously. The subtle ego breaks the quantum state of awareness, collapsing pure observations into conditional observations. This means that the observing mind only comes into existence at the time of observation/observations.

In this way, the conditioned mind has three components, which play distinct functions. The diagram below demonstrates the structure and the functioning of the conditioned mind as I have gleaned through textual interpretations, insights developed through personal and clinical practice of mindfulness and interviewing experts in the field thus far:



*Diagram 4.5. The conditioned mind*

The circles depicted in diagram 4.5 denote three components of the conditioned mind. The inner circle depicts the observing mind. The blue area of the observing mind represents awareness while the white part of the inner circle represents subtle ego. The observing mind comes into existence at the time of observation when awareness and ego functions are active simultaneously in a quantum state; awareness makes pure observations and subtle ego acts as an observer, turning awareness into conditioned observations.

The middle circle represents the subtle mind, which consists of energy and ego. Ego is an emergent entity which comes into existence as a result of meta-conditioning and constant and automatic functioning of the automatic mind. Any changes in the field of energy affect the entire subtle mind which can occur through the automatic mind, instincts, physical changes, ego itself and subtle ego.



The subtle mind is not confined to any particular part of the body i.e. the brain; it exists in energy throughout the body. However, because ego is more closely associated with thoughts, the functions of the subtle mind gravitate towards the brain. As the subtle mind lies between the observing mind and the automatic mind, it both sends and receives inputs from both and thus functions as a mediator.

The outer circle of the diagram represents the automatic mind. Like the subtle mind, the automatic mind also functions constantly and automatically in conjunction with the external environment, ego and itself i.e. thought, feelings, emotions. Because one of the main components of the automatic mind is cognitions, its functions are mainly perceived to occur in the brain.

These components of mind work together allowing the conditioned mind to function autonomously. The conditioned mind superimposes itself over a person's awareness and being, making one believe that he or she is his or her mind (R. Crane, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Krishnamurti, 1993; Luoma et al., 2007; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 2009a). The autonomy of the conditioned mind over an individual causes two fundamental problems: (1) an existential conflict between one's being which is caused by a constant struggle between one's need to be as one naturally is and the constant desiring by the conditioned mind, and (2) an inability to remain in the moment to moment unfolding reality and understanding it and constantly moving into the past and the future. This explication also highlights the background in which mindfulness practices were developed. It elucidates the depth and extent of the influence of the conditioned mind which is difficult to overcome. It is only through the sustained practice of meditation that the Eastern philosophers have found a way to overcome the conditioned mind (R. Crane, 2009; J. Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Luoma et al., 2007; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2009a; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002).

Having presented an interpretation of the structure and mechanism of the conditioned mind, I will now explore the mechanism and structure of the enlightened mind or the unconditioned mind which arises out of a sustained practice of mindfulness.

#### 4. The unconditioned mind

The Eastern philosophies suggest that the mind has the ability to function unconditionally through the intelligence inherent in awareness (Houshmand, 1999, Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1974, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a). Moreover, the enlightened mind emerges when the conditioned mind has been completely de-automatized through meditation (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a) and can permanently maintain a state of pure awareness (Osho, 1974, 1988, 1989). Once mind finds this enlightened state it stays in this way unconditionally (Krishnamurti, 1993; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997).

Buddha used the term *Nirvana*, meaning cessation of desires, to describe enlightenment (Osho, 1987a). Some philosophers use the concept of *neti-neti*, which can be translated as 'neither this nor that' to describe enlightenment (Osho, 1975). However, Osho has described seven characteristics of enlightenment or *Nirvana*:

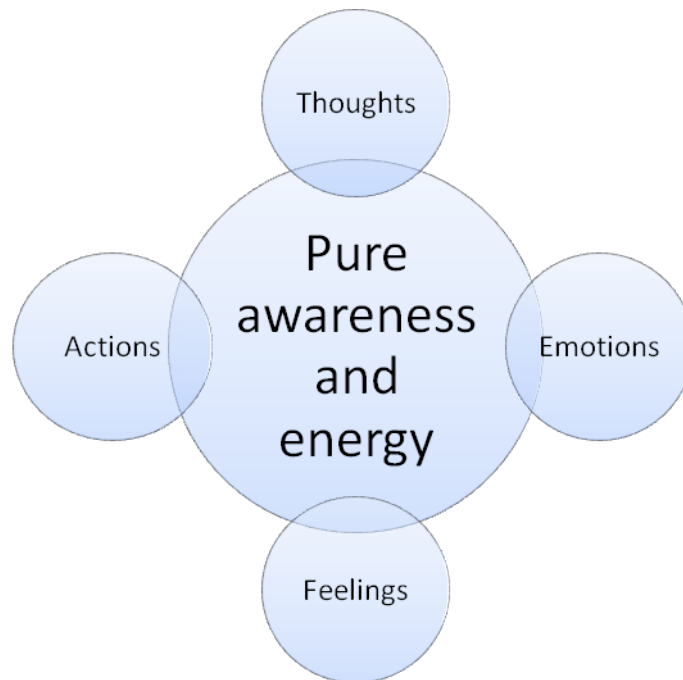
*First is: oneness, at-one-ment. Duality disappears. The division between known and the knower disappears. Fusion arises and confusion disappear....The second characteristic of Samadhi (enlightenment) is;... blissfulness, beatitude, ...misery is a by product of ego... when all egos (ego) has been dropped....there is no point in desires....The third...is illumination- a great inner transparency, light and clarity.... The fourth characteristic of Samadhi is; rest, relaxation....The fifth characteristic of Samadhi is: awareness: consciousness, seeing, knowing and witnessing....The sixth characteristic of Samadhi is: deathlessness, timelessness, eternity....The seventh characteristic is: infinity. Space disappears. (Osho, 1977d), Chapter 9, p. 6)*

These characteristics provide a greater insight into the nature of the enlightened mind. The description suggests that enlightenment is a feeling of oneness with everything as opposed to feeling one is one's mind. When mind is free from the meta-conditioning and ego is subjugated, conflict, confusion and desires cease to exist. In this feeling of oneness there is a state of inner clarity, relaxation, blissfulness and peace.

Osho suggests that the enlightened mind is achieved after a long practice of meditation; the effect of meditation on the conditioned mind will be fully explicated in the next

chapter. He states: “*And as it (meditation) deepens, as you become more and capable of no-mind, enlightenment come of its own accord*” (Osho, 1985). Osho explains that meditation de-conditions the mind. The de-conditioned state is called no-mind. However, no-mind is not completely non-dual because one has to maintain no-mind which causes duality between oneself and no-mind. Osho argues that when one continues to maintain a state of no-mind, enlightenment occurs on its own and absolute non-duality follows.

Structurally and mechanically the unconditioned mind is different from a conditioned mind. As a result of meditation meta-conditioning and ego are completely extinguished, and the conditioned mind stops functioning constantly and autonomously. This extinction also means that the subtle mind and the observing mind go through significant change. Structurally, the subtle mind is turned into a pure energy system and the observing mind becomes pure awareness. Hence they fuse with one another in non-dual energy-awareness. Figure 4.1 illustrates enlightened mind:



*Figure 4.1. The unconditioned mind*

The central circle of Figure 4.1, awareness and energy, comprises a clear light mind whose nature is luminosity and knowing (The Dalai Lama, 2002a). The four small circles which emerge out of the central circle, represent the thoughts, emotions, feelings and actions directly emerging from awareness as moment to moment spontaneous responses rather than automatically conditioned responses (Krishnamurti, 1972). The overlapping dimensions show that thoughts, emotions, feelings and actions can be directly executed through pure awareness.

Describing how the unconditioned mind (pure awareness) works, Krishnamurti suggests:

*Perception is action, not perception, interval, then action. In the interval there arises the idea. The mind, the brain, the whole human nervous and psychological structure, can be free of this burden of a million years of time so that you see something clearly and therefore that action is invariably immediate. That action will be rational, not irrational. That action can be explained logically, sanely.*  
(Krishnamurti, 1980)

He suggests that when mind stops functioning autonomously; the conditioned mind no longer directs the observation or interpretation of events. When the observations are no longer conditional upon the conditioning, the perceptions themselves are intelligent

because awareness is intelligent (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993), perceptions and understandings occur simultaneously during the moments of awareness. Krishnamurti further states “*Out of this choiceless awareness perhaps the door will open and you will know what that dimension is in which there is no conflict, no time*” (Krishnamurti, n.d.e). He suggests that when perception and understandings are one and the same, there is no conflict between one’s being and reality. In this way, the unconditioned mind or enlightenment completely removes key existential problems i.e. the conflict between being and becoming and an inability to stay in the present moment reality that the conditioned mind creates. Thus achieving enlightenment completely changes the way one experiences oneself and the world; it facilitates seeing things as they are without judgment and interpretation.

However, it remains difficult to comprehend the status of cognition because before and after enlightenment one uses the same cognition.

In summary, the Eastern philosophies suggest that there are two different types of mind: (1) the conditioned mind and (2) the unconditioned or enlightened mind. The conditioned mind, as the name suggests, is acquired through conditioning. As a result of conditioning, awareness becomes dependent upon the conditioning which comes to dominate the mind. There are three components of the conditioned mind, namely, the automatic mind, the subtle mind and the observing mind. The automatic mind consists of conditioned cognitions, emotions and feelings, which are triggered by both external and internal stimuli. Because the automatic mind functions constantly and automatically, one is meta-conditioned with the automatic mind resulting in the automatic mind becoming autonomous. As a result of meta-conditioning ego comes into existence forming another component of the conditioned mind i.e. the subtle mind. Ego is the main component of the subtle mind, which further strengthens meta-conditioning with the conditioned mind. Ego influences the observing mind which comes into existence when mind executes awareness in determining conditional perceptions and responses. According to the Eastern philosophers, suffering is caused mainly by meta-conditioning and automatic and conditioned functioning of mind which causes existential conflicts between being and

becoming and disables the mind from staying in the present moment reality. The enlightened mind, which comes into existence through sustained practice of mindfulness, functions unconditionally through the intelligence inherent in awareness.

This structural and functional conceptualization of the conditioned mind has brought together ancient and contemporary Eastern philosophies, Western psychology, quantum physics and mindfulness insights to present a more comprehensive understanding of mind. The model overcomes many of the theoretical difficulties encountered when describing the structure and mechanisms of mind. In doing so it highlights the major premises that have given rise to mindfulness practices: (1) the conditioned mind is developed from conditioning of awareness; (2) the conditioned mind takes over the functioning of the mind by dominating awareness; (3) the conditioned mind is unable to stay in the present moment and constantly moves into the past and future; (4) as the conditioned mind is conditional upon learning (past), it interprets the reality through conditioning and fails to understand the moment to moment occurring reality, and (5) pure awareness is intelligent enough to observe and understand the moment to moment occurring reality, a process which is spontaneous, relaxing and joyous.

Having presented the structure and functioning of the conditioned mind, the next chapter will explicate the meaning of mindfulness philosophies and practices to explain how they transform the conditioned mind, taking it back to its original state of pure awareness.

## **Chapter 5: Findings 2: The meaning and mechanism of mindfulness**

This is the second chapter in the series of three chapters (Chapters Four, Five and Six) which present the findings of this hermeneutic research. It explores selected Buddhist philosophies as well as the philosophies of Krishnamurti and Osho and draws on my insights developed through personal practice of meditation and clinical experiences to explicate the meaning and mechanism of mindfulness. The explication also draws on the understandings of expert practitioners who participated in this project.

To illuminate the deeper meanings of mindfulness, the discussion is divided into two parts: (1) mindfulness meditation or meditation technique or meditation and (2) mindfulness state of mind. Although artificial, this division allows deeper exploration of the constitution and mechanism of mindfulness practices, revealing their effects on the conditioned mind.

The chapter begins by explicating mindfulness meditations and the mechanism involved. It also elucidates the constituents, process and outcomes of meditation. A Zen story, called the Ten Bulls of Zen, has been used to begin this explication. The story elucidates major milestones in the journey of meditation passing through which the conditioned mind is transformed into an enlightened mind or pure awareness. My insights and those gleaned from the participating experts also contribute to the findings in this chapter.

### **1. Mindfulness practice**

The non-dualistic nature of Eastern philosophies and practices means they are intertwined and difficult to categorise (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988, 1989). However, the difficulties connecting mindfulness with a theory also creates potential for understanding in several different ways. Highlighting this paradox Nelson, one of the expert participants, states: *“Mindfulness can be something like ...one of those phenomena that you can point to but you try to catch it and words slips through your finger like water. But we can point at it from whole lot of angles.”* Mindfulness theories and practices can

appear contradictory to each other, because they understand the conditioned mind differently (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2009b; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a). For example, Osho (1988) and The Dalai Lama (1997, 2002a) believe a sustained practice of formal meditation is required for overcoming conditioning, whereas Krishnamurti (1993, 1994, 2002) states that the conditioned mind can be overcome by constant unconditional observation or mindfulness of its functioning in everyday living. Nelson also expresses concerns regarding use of formal meditation in achieving mindfulness by stating:

*I am little bit wary of teaching a technique. ...there is catch in teaching [meditation] ...., as its said in Zen it's an unnecessary encumbrance, it gets in the ways of more ...social ways of getting us all there, getting all of us engaged with the nature and the world,... getting better attuned.*

He suggests that meditation, as a technique, causes duality between reality as it exists on its own and the perception of reality through the specific act of meditation which precludes engagement with moment to moment unfolding reality.

There are also various ways of meditating which may create confusion because they appear very dissimilar to one another (Osho, 1988; The Dalai lama, 2002a). Furthermore, the actual process of meditation can differ for different people depending upon their skill and practice. For some practitioners, especially beginners, mindfulness practice is more of a chore while, for more seasoned practitioners, mindfulness occurs spontaneously without the practice of formal meditation (Osho, 1974, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2009b). Such differences were also recognized by another of the experts, James, who stated: “... *in the beginning I said meditation is mindfulness but I don't think it is. I think meditation can lead to meditative state.*”

To explore these paradoxes, mindfulness needs to be understood as both meditation or mindfulness technique and mindfulness as the state of mind which arises out of the practice of meditation. Kabat-Zinn (2005) suggests that meditation is scaffolding supporting development of the mindfulness state. This is based on the assumption that exploration of meditation techniques will better elucidate the mechanism involved in



meditations and explication of mindfulness state/states and their effects on the conditioned mind.

The division of mindfulness into mindfulness technique and mindfulness state is not compatible with eastern philosophies, as it causes duality. The division implies that the practice of meditation leads to something else i.e. a state of mindfulness. During my own practice of meditation, I was unable to differentiate between mindfulness as technique and mindfulness as state. However, a division between meditation as technique and the state of mindfulness may yield deeper understanding of mindfulness, as well as bring clarity around mindfulness process and outcome within the field of clinical psychology.

Before explicating mindfulness meditation and mindfulness state/states, I will address some of the misconceptions about meditation.

## **2. Misconceptions about meditation**

Meditation has been practiced in East and West for centuries in various ways (Aurobindo, 1996). But because it has such a long and rich history, nuances and misconceptions have developed. One such nuance is that meditation is associated with Eastern religions and spiritual practices. The developing argument of the thesis has refined the situation by taking an agnostic view of meditative practices which is evident throughout this project (Batchelor, 1997; Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2009a; Wilber, 1997, 2000). Other common misconceptions occur when meditation is associated with concentration and introspection (Osho, 1988).

The fallacy that meditation is about concentration and introspection seems to be based on the assumption that the problems associated with the conditioned mind can be rectified by (1) keeping mind empty through concentration and that (2) better self understanding can be achieved by thinking and analyzing oneself. However, according to Osho (1988), *“Concentration makes you one pointed at a very great cost: ninety nine percent of life is*

*discarded... Meditation is vast, so tremendously infinite... meditation is not concentration but relaxation*” (Osho, 1988, p. 199). Osho argues that concentration, in which mind chooses one thing over the others, precludes the moment to moment unfolding of measureless reality. Although by avoiding the reality and choosing to concentrate on one particular object, one may get temporary relief, it comes at a huge cost i.e. avoidance of life. Thus concentration is a conditioned awareness that can result in more problems than it solves. Similarly, Osho (1988) suggests that, contrary to the spirit of meditation, introspection becomes analyzing and judging. These understandings draw support from Eastern as well as Western theories and support the contrary notion that the qualities associated with mindful attention and awareness are those of openness, curiosity, relaxation, acceptance and non-judgment (Baer, 2003, 2006; Bishop et al., 2004; R. Crane, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002).

Further support for unconditioned awareness being crucial to meditation also comes from Osho’s interpretation of Buddha’s philosophy (Osho, 1977a). Stating that *Dhamma* (thinking or knowledge) and *no-Dhamma* (no-thinking or emptiness) are conditioned awareness, Osho argues that right mindfulness involves an unconditioned awareness of both thinking as well as no-thinking. When awareness is free from conditioning of both polarities, thinking and no-thinking, mindfulness is achieved (Krishnamurti 1993, 1994, 2002). This also suggests that mindfulness is achieved when attention is not committed to a particular objective.

Thus, it can be concluded that concentration and introspection are not meditation techniques that lead to the state of mindfulness.

### **3. Meditation**

The purpose of meditation in East and West is achieving *Sammāsati* or right mindfulness (Osho, 1977a, 1988). Hence, a right meditation technique, regardless of how it is performed, is the one that induces right mindfulness. The meanings of important Eastern terms relating to mindfulness are presented in the following table:

Term	Meaning
<i>Aum</i>	An ancient Hindu mantra or a sound used as a meditation technique (Osho, 1988)
<i>Bhakti Yoga</i>	A branch of Yoga that involves loving devotion, which is usually attended through prayers, chanting and devotional singing as meditation techniques (Aurobindo, 1996)
<i>Hatha yoga</i>	A branch of Yoga that involves body postures in meditation (Aurobindo, 1996)
<i>Hoo mantra</i>	Sufi mantra used as a meditation technique (Osho, 1988)
<i>Jnana yoga</i>	A form of Yoga which can be translated as knowledge, insight, wisdom (Aurobindo, 1996)
<i>Kundalini</i>	A symbol of a coiled snake to describe potential energy in a person (Osho, 1989)
<i>Aum Mani Padme Hum</i>	A Tibetan mantra used for meditation (Osho, 1988)
<i>Pranayama</i>	A combination of breathing exercises and attention regulation used as a meditation technique (Aurobindo, 1996)
<i>Sudarshan Kiryā</i>	A type of <i>pranayama</i> breathing which involves rhythmic breathing (Aurobindo, 1996)
Sufi	People who follow Sufism, a spiritual faith originating from the Middle East. Sufi use meditation methods such as dancing, whirling, singing and reciting <i>Hoo mantra</i> (Osho, 1977b).
<i>Ashtang yoga</i>	A branch of Yoga that involves body postures and movement in meditation (Aurobindo, 1996)

*Table 5.1.* Meaning of Eastern terminology relating to mindfulness

The meditation technique adopted by Western clinical psychology mainly involves non-judgmental and purposeful regulation of attention to the moment to moment unfolding reality i.e. external events or internal cognitive, emotional and physical activities with an aim of developing unconditioned awareness (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003). However, in the East, along with regulation of attention to the present moment reality non-judgmentally,

meditation also incorporates regulation of energy generated through different activities such as breathing, dancing or mantra recitation (Osho, 1988). These meditations can differ quite significantly and cause confusion, for those not fully aware of non-dualistic philosophy.

To enhance understanding of different meditation techniques and their mechanisms, I have interpreted them in relation to the model of mind explicated in Chapter Four. The meditations are therefore matched to different components of mind i.e. the automatic mind, the subtle mind and the observing mind and are interpreted according to their primary focus. Although a meditation technique can focus on a particular component of the conditioned mind, it ultimately affects the entire conditioned mind. For example *Vipassana*, a frequently used mindfulness meditation, mainly focuses on the automatic mind by regulating non-judgmental and purposeful attention to the automatically occurring cognition, emotions and feelings, ultimately de-conditioning the entire conditioned mind. Similarly, *Kundalini*-based meditations which seem to mainly focus on the subtle mind, also ultimately lead to mindfulness and enlightenment (Aurobindo, 1996; Osho, 1988). However, according to Osho (1989) meditation techniques cannot be designed for the observing mind because it does not contain tangible entities such as cognition on which to focus.

To understand the general/common mechanism involved in meditation, I will interpret *Vipassana* and Dynamic Meditation which is based on a synthesis between the Eastern and Western philosophies, theories and practices. I will then briefly explore energy or *Kundalini* based meditations to support the idea that meditation can be performed in various ways to achieve unconditioned awareness (Osho, 1988).

### **3.1. *Vipassana*: Attention based meditation**

*Vipassana*, an ancient Buddhist meditation, provides a basis for the meditations currently practiced within the field of clinical psychology (R. Crane, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 1994,

2003; Lau & McMain, 2005; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006). The term *Vipassana* is derived from Pali language which means ‘to see’ or watching (Osho, 1988). *Vipassana* meditation involves sitting upright in a comfortable but alert position on the ground or in a chair with eyes closed and attention focused at the nostrils. The upright sitting keeps the backbone straight inducing states of both alertness and relaxation. The main activity involved in *Vipassana* is regulating attention to the moment to moment occurring activities of breathing. This includes inhalation and exhalation, with two pauses between inhalation and exhalation, feeling the coolness at the nostrils during inhalation, the warmth during exhalation, rising and falling of the chest and/or abdomen and the sensation of breathing. The attention is not concentrated on the breathing; rather it (attention) is kept open, with an attitude of acceptance to other stimuli which may arise from within or the external environment. Whenever a stimulus or stimuli, such as an automatic thought or a noise from the environment is noticed, the focus of attention is gently paid to the stimulus without making any judgment. When attention is maintained on the triggering event in the absence of a judgment, the attention turns into awareness, returning to the present moment activity i.e. breathing (Osho, 1988; The Dalai Lama, 2002).

There are many variations of *Vipassana* meditation. In walking *Vipassana*, instead of the breathing, attention is regulated to the footsteps and the physical activities involved with walking (Osho, 1988). In this way, any event can become meditation if attention is purposefully and non-judgmentally regulated to the moment to moment to moment occurring activities of the event, including activities taking place within oneself. Isaac, an expert participant, explains that swimming is a form of meditation for him. He describes:

*This [meditation] also occurs in the context of swimming; ...in the way that I practice swimming, it's always important to me to always do the least violence to the water. When I swim the whole focus of my swimming stroke is very much like tai chi; it's achieving a perfect movement through the water, one that when you get maximum movement forward for minimum physical outlay. People who watch me swim comment very frequently that I have a very elegant and very smooth and very quiet style, and I don't splash because when I swim my focuses is on perfecting the movement of my hands through the water. I am aware of how my feet are moving; to somehow become aware that my feet are not pointing. Because*

*the nature of the human creature is mindlessness and I become aware that something is fallen out of kilter and then I become aware of it again.*

Isaac's description suggests that, when done mindfully, even an activity like swimming is a form of meditation that can produce higher levels of attunement. He also suggests that attention regulated to the activities of swimming results in an increased awareness through which he becomes aware of other things such as how the body is moving through the water, something which he may not notice otherwise. Isaac's description of meditation is supported by the view of Thich Nhat Hanh (1976), a Buddhist monk, that meditation can be achieved through everyday activities i.e. cooking, cleaning, doing dishes and washing by paying non-judgmental attention to the moment to moment occurring activities (Nhat Hanh, 1976).

Hence, the explication of *Vipassana* meditation suggests during meditation one is paradoxically both alert and relaxed; the alertness cultivates 'presence' to the moment to moment occurring reality and the relaxation brings openness and acceptance of the reality. The main activity is purposeful and non-judgmental regulation of attention to the moment to moment reality occurring both within and without. When attention is regulated in this way it induces awareness. The quality associated with awareness that arises out of meditation is that of openness, curiosity and knowing (Nhat Hanh, 1976; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a).

### **3.2. Modern meditation: a synthesis of cultures**

Osho (1988), working alongside Western psychologists and psychotherapists from 1970 to 1990, developed a meditation technique known as Dynamic Meditation. Osho merged the Eastern principles of meditation, i.e. regulation of energy and attention, with the Western concepts of unconscious, repression and catharsis (Freud, 1936).

Dynamic Meditation, which is performed in the morning with specifically designed music, consists of five stages each stage lasting ten minutes: (stage 1) chaotic and fast breathing; (stage 2) catharsis or emotional venting; (stage 3) jumping on the heels and loudly shouting *Hoo mantra*; (stage 4) standing still regulating attention to the present

moment internal and external reality i.e. energy, thoughts, feelings, and (stage 5) dancing and celebrating (Osho, 1988).

The aim of the first ten minutes of fast and chaotic breathing is to increase energy which is supposed to loosen habitual and conditioned ways of the conditioned mind, in turn preparing mind for the next stage of catharsis or venting out. Osho (1988) states that repression and fragmentation of consciousness, which is caused by institutionalization, requires addressing for effective meditation (Osho, 1988). Getting rid of repressed material to free consciousness is the focus of the second stage. The third stage of this technique involves jumping up and landing on the heels and shouting the Hoo-Hoo, *Hoo mantra*. The purpose of the activity is to further increase alertness and energy which is regulated in the fourth stage by standing still and paying attention to whatever is happening inside and outside oneself. The aim of the fourth stage is to bring energy and attention in non-dualistic unity to increase unconditioned awareness. The final stage involves rhythmic dancing and celebrating inducing harmony within.

In summary, the mechanisms of Dynamic Meditation induce mindfulness by (1) decreasing fragmentation of consciousness, (2) increasing energy and alertness, and (3) regulating attention to the present moment reality non-judgmentally. Like *Vipassana* meditation, Dynamic Meditation also aims to cultivate awareness, alertness and openness to the moment to moment occurring reality, particularly the moment to moment occurring reality of oneself.

It can be argued that Dynamic Meditation targets both the automatic mind and the subtle mind. Thus, it may be more effective meditation in people who are more repressed and have more fragmented awareness such as people suffering from post traumatic and dissociative disorders. However, the technique involves activities such as jumping, shouting and screaming which may not be acceptable and thus rejected by many people.

### 3.3. Energy based meditation

There is a myriad of meditation techniques exclusively focused on energy or the subtle mind. These meditations involve various types of physical activities such as breathing exercises or *pranayama*, yoga posturing and stretching, body movements, mantra recitations and dancing to generate and regulate energy (Osho, 1988). The mechanism involved in these meditations is two-fold: (1) generation and regulation of energy and (2) regulation of attention to the moment to moment occurring activities including the feeling generated by the energy (Osho, 1973, 1988).

It is not possible to describe every meditation technique in this thesis, however a brief description and evidence for some of the meditations is provided below. For this purpose, the meditations are grouped according to the activities involved: (1) yoga involving physical exercises; (2) yoga involving breathing exercises or *pranayama*, and (3) yoga based on recitation of mantra (Aurobindo, 1996; Brown & Gerbarg, 2009; Osho, 1973). Physical yoga such as *Hatha yoga* and *Ashtang yoga* involve body postures, stretching and rhythmic movements which are designed for activating and regulating the body energy and regulating attention to the body postures, stretches and movements and other feelings arising out of these activities/energy. The aim is to bring energy and attention (awareness) together to increase awareness (Aurobindo, 1996; Osho, 1973, 1988). The yoga posturing and movements are also part of mindfulness based cognitive therapy (R. Crane, 2009).

Meditation, through regulation of breathing or *pranayama*, is an ancient tradition which involves various types of breathing exercises. *Pranayama* breathing exercises range between very slow and long breaths, from 3 to 4 breaths per minute, to very fast and rapid breathing. The *pranayama* exercise sessions usually last up to 10-15 minutes. Apart from creating and regulating energy and attention, *pranayama* theory also holds that breathing plays a crucial part in determining the balance between the body and mind (Brown & Gerbarg, 2009; Osho, 1973, 1988). Osho explains: “*breathing and thinking are deeply related. Breathing is the bodily part of thinking and thinking is the psychological part of breathing*” (Osho, 1980a). Osho suggests that breathing acts as a bridge between



the body and mind. Hence one can regulate thinking by regulating breathing, which seems to be the basis of *pranayama*.

Western researchers, Brown and Gerbarg (2009) working on the theory that “...*there is a bi-directional relationship between the mind and the breath, such that one can affect the mind and consciousness through manipulation of breath*” (p. 55), found that *pranayama* was helpful in the treatment of depression, anxiety and post traumatic disorders. Bhatia, et al. (2011) have also found that *pranayama* exercises increased the cognitive ability of people with psychoses. The changes in energy were argued to have affected the conditioned mind (Brown & Gerbarg, 2009).

Mantra recitation is another ancient meditation technique which is also designed to activate and regulate energy, regulate attention and bring energy and awareness together in a non-dualistic unity (Osho, 1988). The mantras, which could be a single word such as *Aum* or a string of words without a specific meaning such as *Aum Mani Padme Hum*, are recited over and over while sitting in a comfortable yet alert position (Osho, 1988).

Energy based meditations are linked with *Kundalini*, which is symbolized by a coiled snake which represents actual and potential energy (Osho, 1989). The philosophy behind *Kundalini* is that the everyday functioning of mind requires energy levels similar to energy required for a resting snake. However, when energy is activated and regulated, the energy levels increase many-fold as symbolized by the snake standing on its tail. The Eastern philosophies maintain that the controlled increase of energy or rising of *Kundalini* unsettles the usual grip of the conditioned mind, a theory which is similar to the concepts underlying Dynamic Meditation. Osho (1988, 1989) argues that *Kundalini* is the usual biological energy which starts working in a harmonized rather than fragmented way through meditations.

Like attention based meditations, *Kundalini* based meditation also aims to achieve unconditioned awareness by focusing on the subtle mind. Like Dynamic Meditation they disrupt habitual and conditioned ways of functioning and form ways of working that are

more aware and spontaneous (Osho, 1989). Thus the state of awakened *Kundalini* is like the state of right mindfulness in which enlightenment takes place (Osho, 1988, 1989).

#### **4. The summary of the mechanisms of meditation**

The explication of different forms of meditation reveals that the primary mechanism and aim of meditation is the purposeful regulation of non-judgmental attention to the present moment reality to achieve unconditioned awareness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003; The Dalai Lama, 2002a). Some meditations add and encourage the primary mechanism i.e. regulation of attention through decreasing fragmentation of consciousness and increasing energy (Osho, 1988, 1989). In addition, there are attitudinal dimensions of meditation such as curiosity, openness, acceptance, compassion and self-understanding.

Yet, there are also other mechanisms such as ‘witnessing’ (Osho, 1988) and unconditional observation (Krishnamurti, 1994). To further illuminate understandings of the mechanisms of meditation, I will now explore regulation of attention, regulation of energy, witnessing and unconditional observation in order to further explicate the ways in which these operate and interface with one another.

##### **4.1. Regulation of attention**

Current theories of mindfulness within psychological literature have suggested that mindfulness revolves around two main mechanisms: (1) purposeful and non-judgmental regulation of attention in the present moment reality (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003), and (2) attitudes of curiosity, openness and acceptance rather than judgment (Bishop et al., 2004). It is recognised that these mechanisms influence mental activities such as increased recognition of mental events, decreased automatic and habitual reactions, increased acceptance and decreased struggle with the past (R. Crane, 2009; Luoma et al., 2007). Theorists have also suggested that the regulation of attention in the present moment reality with an attitude of openness, acceptance and curiosity increases unconditioned awareness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003).

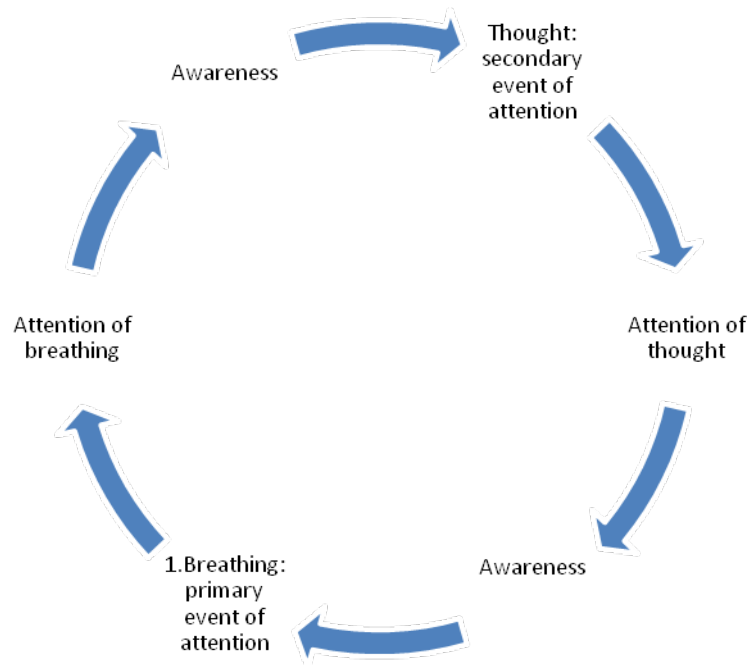
The question then arises as to what happens when attention is regulated in the present moment reality without judgment? The Eastern philosophers and some Western theorists believe that when non-judgmental attention is maintained in the absence of conditional action it becomes awareness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Osho, 1988; Shapiro et al., 2006).

James, an expert participant, explains from a practitioner's perspective:

*It seems to me that mindfulness is almost like a mode or a mode of processing information or the context of the experience in a very specific way. ...that it does not rely on the past or past conditioning; it (mindfulness) is what is happening here and now in experience. It is like being fully aware of it as it is happening.*

James suggests that regulation of attention creates a mode of processing information which is not influenced by one's conditioning. This is congruent with unconditioned awareness.

However, there is a subtle difference among the Western theorists and the Eastern philosophers regarding how one can regulate attention. Some Western theorists suggest that the primary activity involved in meditations is regulating attention to the activities associated with breathing and when a secondary event i.e. thought, feeling or external stimulus occurs, one should pay attention to the triggering event, let go of it and return the attention to the breathing (Baer, 2006). This type of regulation of attention implies choice, choosing to let go, whereas meditation within Eastern philosophy is about choiceless awareness (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988). On the other hand, the Eastern philosophers suggest that when attention is maintained non-judgmentally on an object it becomes unconditioned awareness. Because the nature of awareness is knowing and understanding (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a), awareness returns to the present moment reality i.e. breathing by itself. This mechanism is presented in the figure below:



*Figure 5.1. The mechanism of meditation*

This figure reveals that meditation begins with attention purposefully regulated on the moment to moment occurring breathing, primary event of attention, non-judgmentally. In the absence of any judgment, the attention of breathing turns into unconditioned awareness which, by nature, attends to a secondary event such as an automatic thought or a noise (The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a). When attention to the secondary event is maintained without judgment, it becomes unconditioned awareness and settles back to the primary event which provides ongoing stimulation. Thus meditation is like a cycle in which attention continually turns into awareness and awareness into attention.

I am arguing that mindfulness is awareness that arises from non-judgmental regulation of attention to the moment to moment occurring reality. This interpretation of the mechanism of mindfulness practice reduces the confusion created by Bishop et al. (2004), who excluded awareness from mindfulness practice. This will be further elucidated under the heading ‘mindfulness state’ on page 118.

## 4.2. Regulation of energy

The mechanism that I have outlined argues that, along with regulation of attention, meditations also involve activation and regulation of energy. The mechanism involved in these meditations is threefold: (1) activation of energy through the selected physical activity/activities; (2) regulation of the activated energy, and (3) regulation of attention to the activities and the feelings arising out of energy (Osho, 1988, 1989). Because a non-dual understanding of awareness and energy means that at the fundamental level they are one and the same (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993), augmenting regulation of attention and energy may be more efficacious in inducing unconditioned awareness.

There is evidence that energy based meditations are already being practiced as a part of mindfulness based treatments (R. Crane, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 1982). Dynamic Meditation enhances meditations via other mechanisms, namely, catharsis and activation of energy which also boost unconditioned awareness. I argue that energy based meditations can be used to increase the efficacy of mindfulness based therapies in the treatment of mood and trauma related disorders. The efficacy of the energy based meditations requires validating through empirical researchers and incorporating into the practice of clinical psychology.

## 4.3. Witnessing

Osho (1988) believes that one of the key mechanisms of a meditation is witnessing. He states *“The essential core, the spirit of meditation is to learn how to witness”* (p. 3). Differentiating witnessing from cognitive activities such as thinking, judgement and analysis, (Osho, 1980b) states: *“When you are witnessing, you are not thinking that you are witnessing. ...if thoughts are passing in front of your vision and you are witnessing them, and no idea arises in you...then it’s pure witnessing”* (Chapter, 5, p. 1). Osho relates witnessing to awareness of thinking which may occur either as a volitional act or automatically.

He further states:

*The important thing is that you are watchful, that you have not forgotten to watch, that you are watching...watching... watching. And slowly slowly, as the watcher*

*becomes more and more solid, stable, unwavering, a transformation happens. The thing that you are watching disappears. [Then] For the first time, the watcher itself becomes the watched, the observer itself becomes the observed. (Osho, 1988, p. 5)*

For Osho, the essential core of meditation is watchfulness or witnessing, which strengthens the unconditioned awareness to the point that radical transformation occurs. As a result, witnessing starts witnessing itself; awareness becomes aware of itself. Nelson's description of presence is similar to Osho's witnessing. He states "...it's [mindfulness is] staying aware and present in a responsive manner, responsive to your current situation". Nelson believes that mindfulness is being present in the present moment responsively. This suggests that receptiveness is inherent in presence. Thus witnessing is watching internal and external reality in the present moment reality non-judgmentally. Yet it is different from skills such as attention regulation which are more congruent with dualism because of the presence of mediators. Witnessing is a responsive presence of awareness and thus is a non-dualistic state. Osho, going further than the Western theorists, suggests that witnessing ultimately becomes witnessed, meaning that awareness becomes aware of itself.

This further elucidation strengthens the argument that mindfulness practice is not limited to attention and attitudes as suggested by Bishop et al. (2004). It is about awareness, as described by many Eastern philosophers and Western scientists/theorists (R. Crane, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Krishnamurti, 1993; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002).

#### **4.4. Unconditional observation**

Krishnamurti (1967, 1972, 1993, 1994, 2002) rejects all forms of formal meditation stating that formal meditations are aimed at achieving a future conditional act. He states:

*The whole tradition, both Buddhist, Hindu and Christian, ... all the religious and non-religious attitude is caught up in time, in evolution - I will be better, I will be good, I will eventually blossom in goodness. ...there is untruth in it. (Krishnamurti, 1978)*

Krishnamurti suggests that meditation techniques, like religions, theories and philosophies, are incremental learning processes which are expected to change in the

future. For him, the belief that through incremental learning one will come to understand the reality is fallacious. According to Krishnamurti, awareness functions only in the present moment reality, hence change can only occur in the moment to moment occurring reality. Thus he maintains that change requires moving away from incremental learning to careful and non-judgmental observation of the functioning of the conditioned mind in the moment to moment reality. He states:

*Meditation is not a means to an end; there is no end, no arrival; it is a movement in time and out of time. Every system, method, binds thought to time, but choiceless awareness of every thought and feeling, understanding of their motives, their mechanism, allowing them to blossom, is the beginning of meditation. When thought and feeling flourish and die, meditation is the movement beyond time. In this movement there is ecstasy; in complete emptiness there is love, and with love there is destruction and creation. (Krishnamurti, n.d.a)*

For Krishnamurti, timeless observation is the heart of meditation. The notion of timeless awareness, which is central to his philosophy, describes that awareness is not conditional upon past or future, good or bad and right or wrong. Timeless awareness occurs when one observes the moment to moment unfolding reality unconditionally. This way it is also choiceless awareness in which one is present with life as it unfolds.

He describes the process of choiceless and unconditional observation as follows:

*If you sit on a bank and watch the river go by, you see everything. But you, watching from the bank, and the movement of the river, are two different things; you are the observer and the movement of the river is the thing observed. But when you are in the water - not sitting on the bank - then you are part of that movement, there is no observer at all. In the same way, watch this violence and sorrow, not as an observer observing the thing, but with this cessation of space between the observer and the observed. It is part of the whole enquiry which is meditation of life. (Krishnamurti, 1967b)*

Unconditional observation involves object and subject without separation. The main qualities of the 'observation' are: (1) totality - subjects and object both are observed in the same way; (2) there are no judgments of any kind, and (3) it is a life process rather than an episodic exercise. The unconditional observation that Krishnamurti describes is a non-dualistic state in which object and subject exist in a state of awareness. Hence, for Krishnamurti, like Osho (1974, 1988, 1989) and The Dalai Lama (1997, 2002a) and Kabat-Zinn (2003) meditation is awareness.

There is not a lot of difference between attention based meditations and unconditional observations in that they both require regulating non-judgmental attention to the present moment reality. Yet, unlike meditations, unconditional observation is not an episodic activity, it is a life process in which unconditioned awareness is the guiding principle. However, some Eastern philosophers and Western theorists argue that given the autonomous nature of the conditioned mind, it is almost impossible to observe in the way Krishnamurti suggests. Thus they suggest that one needs to use meditation techniques (Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Osho, 1988; The Dalai Lama, 2002a) in order to develop the ability to observe unconditionally.

While most Eastern philosophers and some Western theorists suggest that formal meditation practice increases the ability to remain mindful over time (Osho, 1988; The Dalai Lama, 2002a);(Kabat-Zinn, 2003), Krishnamurti (1967, 1972, 1993, 1994) believes that mindfulness can be achieved without the help of formal meditation. There are other mental events that accompany meditation such as non-judgment, openness, curiosity, acceptance, alertness, relaxation and compassion. The current trends in Western psychology favour regulation of attention and the accompanying mental events i.e. non-judgment, openness, curiosity, relaxation, acceptance and compassion. However, because energy based meditations also involve regulation of attention, their mechanisms resemble those of mindfulness meditations. Given that energy plays an important role in mood related disorder (American Psychological Association, 2000), energy based meditations may play valuable roles in the treatment of these disorders. Meditations such as Dynamic Meditation target fragmentation of consciousness; it may be useful for treating people suffering from post traumatic and dissociative disorders. However, before adopting such meditations into the clinical practice of psychology, their efficacy must be established through empirical methods.

Having established an understanding of the mechanisms involved in meditations, I will now explore how these mechanisms affect the conditioned mind in creating unconditioned awareness or mindfulness.



## 5. The state of mindfulness

The purpose of meditation is to induce a state of mindfulness. The process of meditation changes overtime; at early stages of mindfulness practice, one may need to use the technique with discipline and effort but there comes a stage when mindfulness starts occurring effortlessly (Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989). Osho (1988) explains:

*Drop the method when you are deep in meditation. The moment comes, as awareness is getting purer and purer, when suddenly it is utterly pure: drop the method, abandon the method, forget all about the remedy, just settle and be.*  
(Osho, 1988, p. 16)

What Osho is suggesting is that meditation techniques (methods) are helpful in growing awareness; however awareness evolves to a point where its techniques are no longer required. He also claims that clinging to meditation techniques when one can naturally maintain mindfulness is antithetical to mindfulness. Citing Buddha, he argues when one attains a state of pure awareness or right mindfulness state, meditation techniques can be abandoned as one leaves the boat that one has used for crossing a river (Osho, 1988). This suggests that mindfulness involves a wide continuum of mindfulness practice ranging from a disciplined practice of meditation to spontaneously occurring unconditioned awareness.

The question then arises what is the state of mind at the different stages of the continuum towards mindfulness? Is the state of mindfulness temporary or permanent? These questions, which seek to understand how mindfulness works, will guide the following explication of the state of mindfulness.

Buddha used the term *sammasati* for mindfulness, which means ‘right mindfulness.’

Osho explains:

*Sammasati is a Pali (word) for the Sanskrit word, samyak smriti. ... And samyak smriti means balanced remembrance. In Pali it becomes sammasati. ... There are two kinds of remembrance, right and wrong. Right remembrance is concerned with your being, when you remember yourself. ... When you remember other things that is not right remembrance... But when it is translated as mindfulness, then the whole word has taken on a new meaning. There cannot be wrong mindfulness. All mindfulness is right.* (Osho, 1987b)

Discussing the meaning of the term mindfulness, Osho explains that the term mindfulness is derived from a Sanskrit word *sammasati*, meaning right remembrance or awareness, which is always concerned with oneself. People have greater remembrance of their external world than of themselves. For example, one looks at flowers and admires their beauty. However, flowers may also remind a person of an untoward past event and the person may ruminate on these memories to the point of destructive self criticism. The resulting emotions then trigger more negative cognitions. Osho calls this way of remembering ‘wrong remembrance.’ He suggests if one could pay attention to events and at the same time remain aware of the process one is going through, right remembrance or right mindfulness could be achieved. Thus, in right mindfulness, the mind is equally aware of both the object (object of mind) and the subject (mind itself) simultaneously.

It is very difficult for the mind to maintain a state of right mindfulness because the conditioned mind functions constantly and automatically. Osho (1989) explains: “*As mind exists, it is not meditative. The total mind must change before meditation can happen....The mind is always verbalizing*” (Osho, 1989, p. 12). He argues that the conditioned mind cannot stay in the present moment or right mindfulness state, because automatic thinking constantly carries one to the past or future. He suggests that the conditioned mind must go through a total transformation and change from functioning automatically to the present moment awareness for achieving right mindfulness state.

Krishnamurti also argues that a total transformation of mind is required for achieving right mindfulness. He states “*...the chief concern for a serious man is the total transformation of the human mind- total, not partial, a complete revolution of human psyche...*” (Krishnamurti, 1994, p. 46).

The ‘total transformation’ of mind that Krishnamurti and Osho advocate does not come from thinking; it comes from the awareness of thinking. Krishnamurti (1994) states “*Self-knowledge is not a process of continuity of thinking but the diminishing, the ending of thinking. ...Thinking can only come to an end when you know the total content of the*

*thinker...*” (Krishnamurti, 1994, p. 2). Total transformation of mind comes from discontinuing thinking by becoming aware of thinking itself.

In this way meditation is a process that transforms mind totally. However, this transformation does not occur overnight. Meditation, as previously mentioned, is a long journey, passing through many milestones, which transforms mind into a state of mindfulness (The Dalai Lama, 2002a). Osho (1988) states “*Meditation covers a very long pilgrimage. When I say “Meditation is witnessing” it is the beginning of meditation. And when I say “Meditation is the no-mind”, it is the completion of the pilgrimage*” (p. 238).

The journey to mindfulness is unique for each individual, those who have travelled the path of mindfulness and have passed through different experiences and milestones. In Buddhist philosophy, the journey of mindfulness is depicted in the Zen story of ten bulls; the bull being the symbol of energy which exemplifies mind. Originally a Taoist story further developed by 12<sup>th</sup> century Chinese Cha’an [Zen in Japanese] master Kakuan, is presented through 10 paintings describing the journey of mind from its common conditioned state to enlightenment (Osho, 1976b). The paintings depict the state of mind at different points along the meditation journey.

The story begins with the first painting depicting a man looking for a bull which is lost in the forest (i.e. world). He looks everywhere without trace of the bull. In the second picture, following the guidance of a master, the man picks up the foot prints of the bull, which are everywhere, and follows them. In the next painting he sees the tail of the bull hidden deep in the forest. The fourth painting depicts the man catching the bull and the fifth, taming of it. The sixth painting shows the man riding the bull home and the seventh reveals the man at home sitting blissfully. The eighth painting depicts an empty circle (unconditioned awareness). Everything has disappeared; no bull, no rope, no man, nothing. The ninth painting depicts the forest, revealing that enlightened mind is now able to reflect on the world as it exists. In the last painting, the man is on his way to market living an ordinary but enlightened life (Osho, 1976b; TheZenbull.com, 2011).

The story of ten bulls is summarized below in five headings, each describing the state of mind at a particular milestone along the journey of mindfulness. This story provides a skeletal structure for the explication of how mindfulness works. The table 5.2 provides a summary of the milestones along the journey of mindfulness:

Milestone	State of mind
1. Searching for the bull	Picture 5.1 describes the state of the conditioned mind before the journey of mindfulness has begun.  It then describes the beginning stage of mindfulness and the changes it brings.
2. Perceiving the bull	Picture 5.2 describes how meditations lead to understandings of the structure and mechanism of the conditioned mind.
3. Taming the bull	Picture 5.3 describes how the conditioned mind wants to maintain its grip over oneself.
4. Transcending the bull	Picture 5.4 describes how mindfulness finally overcomes the conditioned mind.
5. Back in the world	Picture 5.5 describes how, once the conditioned mind is overcome, one can live in the world in peace and harmony.

*Table 5.2. Milestones of mindfulness*

### 5.1. Searching for the bull



Picture 5.1. Searching for the bull (picture sourced from TheZenbull.com, 2011)

This picture depicts ordinary life which is totally overcome by the conditioned mind. By the time one is old enough to inquire into the reality of nature; the mind has already been conditioned through institutionalization. The conditioning of the mind is so profound that one cannot even question his or her conditioning (Osho, 1988).

Hence, mind becomes totally dependent upon the conditioning for functioning and knowing. Krishnamurti (1994) states “...*whatever you think has already shaped the mind; and a mind that is shaped by thought has ceased to be free...*” (Krishnamurti, 1994, p. 2). The conditioned mind is totally overcome by conditioning and is unable to function outside the scope of conditioning. Similarly, Osho (2010a) states “*The search is difficult because the truth is not only unknown, its unknowable...*” (Osho, 1976a, p. 12). The conditioned mind is limited in its scope by its conditioning. It cannot understand the reality because it exists independently. A major limitation of the conditioned mind is that there is no mechanism by which it can become aware of itself (Krishnamurti, 1991, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989). In this way thought, which is the main tool of understanding, paradoxically, prevents understanding.

Thus, the conditioned mind limited by its scope struggles to understand the reality as it unfolds. This causes ignorance and suffering (Krishnamurti, 1991, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989). The Eastern philosophers argue that suffering only ends when mind comes to understand its conditioned nature (Krishnamurti, 1991, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989). Krishnamurti (1994) states “*Unless the mind understands itself, there is no freedom*” (Krishnamurti, 1994, p. 4). He argues that once mind understands its conditioned limitations it becomes free. This freedom for mind comes from unconditioned awareness, rather than more thoughts and beliefs about itself. This means that understanding and freedom are intrinsic to awareness. Similarly, Osho (2010a) states “*And the mind is dropped when...you say: I am going to inquire, I am going to search... you will come to discover the footprints [thoughts]...*” (Osho, 1976a, p. 13). Thus the very first step in the journey of mindfulness is to inquire into the nature of mind. Explicitly or implicitly, the mindfulness therapist sows the idea that the root of psychopathology is the very mechanism of thinking, not negative thinking as suggested by the cognitive theorists (R. Crane, 2009; Luoma et al., 2007). Mindfulness therapy starts by turning one’s focus from thinking to observing the process and content of thinking (Baer, 2003; Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003; Shapiro et al., 2006). Hence, mindfulness requires paying non-judgmental attention (non-thinking) to the process and contents of thinking, positive and negative thinking alike, rather than changing them (R. Crane, 2009; Luoma et al., 2007). This is where mindfulness differs from cognitive and behavioural theories in formulating and treating psychopathology.

The clients, who receive mindfulness based therapy, need to be helped to understand the mindfulness based formulation and treatment of their problems so that they understand that there is going to be a shift in the way they look at mind and life in general. Using the story of Baal Shem, Osho emphasises this shift in perception. He states:

*There is only one step, and that step is of direction, of dimension. Either we can be focused outside or we can close our eyes to the outside and let our whole consciousness be centered inwards- and you will know, you are awareness.*  
(Osho, 1988, p. 3)

In shifting focus from the outward world to the process of thinking that is occurring within, one finds that the source of understanding, which lies underneath the thinking, is awareness. In this way, a new way of understanding and interacting with oneself and the environment, which does not depend upon thinking, arises with mindfulness. Similarly, it is essential for mindfulness practitioners to recognize and understand this radically different way of formulating and treating psychopathology (R. Crane, 2009; Luoma et al., 2007).

Importantly, for the therapist and clients alike, such transformation cannot occur until they sit and observe, watch, witness or pay moment to moment unconditional attention to their thoughts (C. Crane et al., 2008; Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Shapiro et al., 2006).

Isaac, an expert participant, reiterates this from a practice perspective:

*In these formal practices [of meditation], they [meditation practitioners] are actually exercising particular part of brain to do with the attention, you know, they are getting an exercise, workout almost. So when you [the practitioners] go out in daily life...you are much more able, I suspect, realise [become aware] when you are not present.*

The Dalai Lama (2002a) also states “*Reading someone else’s blueprint of mental progress will not transform its realization to you. You have to develop them yourself*” (The Dalai Lama, 2002a, p. 21). He argues that reading the mindfulness literature alone will not help. To understand mindfulness one needs to practice meditation.

Describing the process of meditation, Osho (1988) states:

*The first step in awareness is to be very watchful of your body...then become aware of your thoughts... And when you become aware of your thoughts, you will be surprised what goes on inside you...you will see a mad mind [automatic mind] inside you. (Osho, 1988, p. 4)*

When one watches mind in this way, one comes to understand that the mind functions constantly and automatically (as a mad mind). Osho further states “*If thoughts are too close to you, you cannot watch, you become impressed and coloured by your thoughts... Watching destroys this oneness [meta-conditioning] and creates a*

*separation...*” (Osho, 1988, p. 239). He suggests that one is meta-conditioned with one’s cognition, which ACT describes through the notions of cognitive fusion and conceptualized self (Luoma et al., 2007). Watching one’s own mind helps de-meta-condition (de-identify) with one’s thoughts. Recognising thoughts as events occurring in the mind rather than interpreting them as representative of the true self is the beginning of mindfulness therapy for both the client and the therapist. Western theorists describe this as a decentered view of oneself (R. Crane, 2009; Luoma et al., 2007; Shapiro et al., 2006). Once thoughts are understood as conditioning, then the footprints of the bull suddenly appear everywhere. The footprints reveal perceptions and responses emerging from conditioning rather than being reality as such (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 2002a).

Knowing that thoughts are events occurring in the mind rather than one’s reality is a liberating experience. I understand, through ongoing meditative practice, that I am not my thoughts and I have felt a sense of liberation. Awareness of my conditioning has enabled me to be less judgmental and self critical than previously. I am more accepting of how I perceive and conduct myself. I am able to observe my negative thoughts without being overcome by them.

As a practicing psychologist, I have heard clients report ‘turning the corner’, after developing the insight that ‘I am not my mind.’ Statements such as: “I don’t have to battle myself” and “all my life I have been fighting my thoughts and it was very tiring”, exemplify this. Mindfulness meditation has been a life changing experience for some group participants.

This transformative process was particularly noticeable in one of my clients. When she was asked to observe thoughts as events occurring in the mind rather than reality, she felt uncomfortable with the idea that she was not her thoughts. The question that invaded her mind was that if she was not her thoughts then who was she? I encouraged and supported her to continue to practice mindfulness meditation in order to see what would transpire rather than conditioning a new belief. Several weeks later she reported that she was no



longer uneasy yet she wanted to know the answer. Many weeks later, although she did not have an answer for who she was, she felt liberated by not identifying with her thoughts.

By relating differently with the conditioned mind, one starts to de-condition oneself from the meta-conditioning between oneself and the thoughts. This decentered view of oneself seems to play a part in cognitive changes which have been observed through empirical studies on mindfulness (Baer, 2003).

The mindfulness way of perceiving and relating to the mind also seems to prevent avoidance and dissociations (Luoma et al., 2007), which are the key re-enforcers of anxiety-related disorders (Barlow, 2008). Researchers have found that the absence of the re-enforcement may result in a decrease in general anxiety disorder (Yong Woo et al., 2009), phobias (Goldin et al., 2009), post-traumatic stress disorders and psychosis (Abba et al., 2008). It may also assist in preventing depression (Davis et al., 2009).

Hence, at the first significant milestone in the mindfulness journey, one comes to understand that thoughts are events occurring in the mind and one is not one's mind (the conditioned mind). As a result, one has a decentered view of oneself and is more relaxed, open and accepting of life.

## 5.2. Perceiving the bull



Picture 5.2. Perceiving the bull (picture sourced from TheZenbull.com, 2011)

The second milestone in the journey of meditation arrives through a sustained practice of meditation. As one becomes skilled at mindfulness, automatic cognitions appear and disappear from awareness without the accompanying emotions, feelings, avoidance and dissociations, increasingly widening the gaps between consecutive thoughts. These gaps or pauses between consecutive thoughts are moments of awareness, both peaceful and intelligent. Answering a question related to the process taking place between watching (meditation) and the outcome of watching i.e. no-mind (right mindfulness), Osho states: *The more you watch, ....Soon they (automatic thoughts) start dying, disappearing. In these disappearing moments [pauses] you will have the first glimpse of no-mind [right mindfulness]... And more you start moving on the right path [sustained mindfulness practice] your blissful, your beautiful experiences are going to become more and more deep...* (Osho, 1988, p. 239)

Osho explains that as one becomes more aware and less identified with the thoughts, there is increased space between one thought and the next. This widened space provides greater awareness and, in turn greater understanding. For example, when one is able to stay present with an automatic thought without reacting to it for longer periods of time, one is more able to understand the origin and the function of the thought. This has been

labeled re-perceiving by Shapiro (2006). Once the practice of mindfulness is established, there is increased awareness of the deeper conditioning such as attitudes, beliefs and memories, and understanding of what one wants from life, also known as values clarification (Luoma et al., 2007; Shapiro et al., 2006). Moreover, even though one is watching deeper conditioning and memories, which could be emotionally disturbing, one feels peaceful and relaxed. Osho (1988) argues that the relaxation associated with meditation comes from openness to experience and reduction of the existential conflict between being and becoming.

It is also important to understand that increased mindfulness of thoughts and beliefs is not a deductive process; it is rather a fluid awareness. Describing the process of mindfulness understanding in a therapeutic context, James reiterates:

*... mind is automatic; I perceive the world in certain way but if I am mindful then the momentum of seeing in certain way is ignored; in mindfulness, because there is less rush, non-hurried state, it's almost like a welcome state, in which you are more and more aware. It is like spaciousness because with ordinary labelling or categorizing things have boundaries, like this [pointing to the vase on the table] is a flower, vase etc. In mindfulness, boundaries are less and things are more fluid. ...mindfulness allows automatic ways of seeing things slowly settle and as it happens I am aware of increasing spaciousness and this is what it is. And once there is spaciousness ...and accommodating way of perceiving things. It's almost about things being boundary-less and fluidity.*

James describes mindfulness as a state of awareness, awareness of internal and external environment in which there are no boundaries and categorization, something which usually occurs automatically through thinking. The state of awareness is experienced as fluid, spacious and an unhurried state of mind which provides the context to the experiences. Luoma et al., (2007) describes this as “*self as a context*” (p. 19). The fluid and boundary-less awareness that James talks about is not a state of confusion. It is a state of clarity and wonderment which is felt when one suddenly comes across an overwhelming beauty and happiness.

Similarly, The Dalai Lama states “*As you gradually internalize techniques for developing morality, concentration of mind, and wisdom, untamed states of mind [automatic thoughts] become less and less frequent...As you transform your mind, you will transform*

*your surroundings*” (The Dalai Lama, 2002a, p. 21). He suggests that as meditation deepens, automatic thoughts become increasingly less frequent and this transforms the mind. This transformation of mind then translates into action and interaction with the environment, which is less automatic and reactive and is ethically wise or more intelligent.

At this milestone, the mind is increasingly relaxed, accepting and aware, findings which have backing from empirical research (Baer, 2003; Lynch et al., 2006; Nicastro et al.). According to Baer (2003) a more relaxed, accepting and aware mind is more flexible and adaptive and this results in better self-management. One also has increasingly deeper understandings of the mind which allow even better decentering of self. Yet, at this stage in the journey, the conditioned mind is not fully understood; the deeper conditionings remain hidden from conscious awareness. Thus one needs to continue the practice of meditation.

### 5.3. Taming the bull



*Picture 5.3. Taming the bull (picture sourced from TheZenbull.com, 2011)*

Now the story takes a turn, and the bull or mind fights back to maintain its existence and retain control. This important challenge is related to the deeper conditionings of mind i.e.

deeper lying beliefs, schemas and ego. Osho (1988) explains that the fight back occurs as a result of ego wanting to retain its position as an autonomous functioning entity and, for cognitive theorists, this would be explained in terms of the schemas wanting to maintain themselves (Young, 1999).

As mindfulness decreases automatic thinking and weakens the control of the conditioned mind, ego feels threatened. Osho (2010a) states, “*All that the mind can do cannot be meditative - it is something beyond the mind, the mind is absolutely helpless there.*” (Osho, 1976a, p. 82). This suggests that as mindfulness practice strengthens, the conditioned mind becomes less automatic and loses ground to awareness. Osho explains further:

*It [mind] is a mechanism. If the master [awareness] has arrived, then the mechanism [mind] can be used. If the master is not there or is fast asleep, then the machine [mind] goes on working things, whatever it can do on its own. ....Then the mind is slowly convinced that it itself is the master and for thousands of years, it has remained your master. So when you try to be a witness, it fights, because it is a question of survival of the mind. It has completely forgotten that it is only a servant. You have been so long absent- it does not recognize you. Hence the struggle between witness [mindfulness] and thoughts.* (Osho, 1988, p. 243)

Osho seems to suggest that the constant functioning of the automatic mind enables the conditioned mind, ego in particular, to take control from awareness, and mindfulness works towards reversing this situation. As a result, the conditioned mind feels threatened and it fights back; ego tries to maintain control (Osho, 1988), or, according to empirical theorists, schemas resist change and thus maintain themselves (Lynch et al., 2006; Young, 1999).

The journey towards mindfulness has similarly unfolded for me. My fight with the conditioned mind has derailed my practice of meditation on several occasions. Ten years ago, when I immigrated to New Zealand, I thought I had found a perfect life and stopped meditating. Then, the experience of chronic neck pain, which lasted for a few months, brought me back to meditation. A few years later, I developed new doubts about meditation and enlightenment and began to think of enlightenment as a myth. However, this time, rather than stopping meditation practice, I embarked on this research knowing

that the project would help me practice meditation better. At the same time, the project would keep the ego busy with reading and the anticipation of gains from the research, my way of taming the bull.

At the 'taming the bull' milestone, the state of mind fluctuates between a calm and relaxed state of mindfulness and rebelling ego. The ego does not like uncertainty and thus creates doubts. Continuing the journey at this stage requires persistence and perseverance. This feels like a journey to the unknown; one has to go beyond the known (the conditioning) to experience the unknown (the awareness) (Osho, 1988, 1989). Help from someone who has completed the journey is significant at this stage. Without guidance, one has to steadfastly continue practicing meditation with an understanding that increased awareness can only be helpful. The journey towards mindfulness from this point onwards is not one of remedy, it is one of growth.

As the conditioned mind becomes more fluid and flexible, it is able to withstand this ambivalence. The ups and downs experienced at this stage do not cause psychopathology. Yet, discontinuation of meditation can mean that the mind reverts to old ways (Osho, 1988).

#### 5.4. Transcending the bull



Picture 5.4. Transcending the bull (picture sourced from TheZenbull.com, 2011)

After a long hard battle, the bull is subdued. The mind becomes flexible, accepting, relaxed and trusting. Ego finally starts to let go of the past, the known, and starts opening to the unknown. Gradually, the meta-conditioning between oneself and one's mind weakens. The mind becomes still and present. A state of unwavering mindfulness finally arrives.

The purity of mindfulness is described by Buddha when he explains the state of the mind of a Bodhisattva, or person who is living in pure mindfulness. He states:

*...In these Bodhisattvas no perception of self takes place, no perception of a being, no perception of a soul, no perception of a person. ....A Bodhisattva should not seize on a Dhamma or no-Dhamma. (Osho, 1977a)*

In this *sutra* Buddha explains that in the right mindfulness state of mind conditioning is completely de-sensitized and the automatic mind is totally subdued. The automatic mind can no longer function autonomously; no ideas about one's self or no-self arise. Right mindfulness requires achieving the total and undisturbed awareness. One is absolutely

free of any automatic thought, emotion, judgment, intention and identity and also no-thought, no-emotions, no-judgments, no-intentions and no-identity. Put another way, when mind is without either this or that or *neti-neti*, it has achieved a state of mindfulness. In the state of mindfulness one is neither identified with conditioning nor with emptiness. In right mindfulness mind is pure awareness. However, Buddha also suggests that this state of mindfulness cannot be fully described.

Similarly, Sosan, a Zen master, links mindfulness with a pure state of awareness.

Describing the state of mind during mindfulness, he states:

*When thought objects vanish,  
the thinking-subject vanishes.  
as when the mind vanishes, objects vanish.  
Things are object because of the subject;  
the mind is such because of things.  
Understand the relativity of these two  
and the basic reality: the unity of emptiness.  
In this Emptiness the two are indistinguishable  
and each contains in itself the whole world.* (Osho, 1974), Chapter 5, p. 1)

Sosan explains that mindfulness is a state of awareness in which conditioning ceases to exist. When awareness is without conditioning, the subject (self) and objects (the world) exist as one in a fluid state. This realization of oneness is the transcendence of both mind and self; after the transcendence, neither the mind nor the self exist. There is only a state of pure awareness which has its own intelligence and an ability of understanding.

The Dalai Lama echoes Sosan when he states:

*Because all phenomena appear to exist in their own right, all our ordinary perceptions are mistaken. Only when emptiness is directly realized during completely focused meditation there is no false appearance. At that time, the dualism of subject and object has vanished, as has the appearance of multiplicity; only emptiness appears.* (The Dalai Lama, 2002a, p. 148)

The Dalai Lama suggests that the conditioned mind fails to see things in their own right or as they exist. Thus all ordinary perceptions are false. However, in the mindfulness state, when mind is empty of conditionings, it sees things in their primordial state of existence.



Similarly, Osho also describing Buddha's notion of mindfulness suggests:

*By mindfulness he [Buddha] means: you should always remain alert, watchful. ... Not a single thing should be done in a sort of sleepy state of mind. You should not move like somnambulist, you should move with a sharp consciousness. (Osho, 1976)*

He states that the state of mindfulness is state of watchful and alert awareness. This alert state of mind does not analyse and judge but remains watchful and unconditionally observant.

Krishnamurti also agrees that awareness arises out of moment to moment non-judgmental unconditional observation (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002). Krishnamurti states:

*Awareness is not a commitment to something. Awareness is an observation, both outer and inner, in which direction has stopped. You are aware, but the thing of which you are aware is not being encouraged or nourished. Awareness is not concentration on something. It is not an action of the will choosing what it will be aware of, and analyzing it to bring about a certain result. (Krishnamurti, n.d.f, para. 175)*

Krishnamurti suggests that the awareness that arises out of regulation of attention is unconditional and is capable of understanding. The understanding is not based on any knowledge, it is intrinsic to awareness.

Thus, the final outcome of meditation techniques is the attainment of right mindfulness. In this state, mind behaves differently from the conditioned mind both structurally and functionally. In the mindfulness state the mind stops functioning automatically and continuously. As a result of the cessation of automatic functioning, the ego becomes extinct and the meta-conditioning between oneself and the conditioning is also extinguished. In right mindfulness the mind remains still and functions like a mirror, reflecting intelligently on the moment to moment reality (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a). This is the point at which enlightenment occurs of its own accord (Osho, 1974, 1977a, 1988, 1989).

### 5.5. Back in the world



*Picture 5.5. Back in the world (picture sourced from TheZenbull.com, 2011)*

The story of the bull does not end, however, with enlightenment. The 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> paintings depict that as a result of enlightenment all confusions and conflicts cease to exist and ‘enlightened one’ lives in peace and harmony with the environment. These two paintings are added by Kukuan, another Zen master, to the original eight Taoist paintings to demonstrate that the goal of mindfulness is not merely achieving enlightenment but to live a life of peace and harmony which enlightenment brings (Osho, 1976b). The Eastern masters also suggest that enlightenment is not a temporary phase of mind. Once enlightened occurs, mind stays in pure awareness for ever (Osho, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997).

The story of ‘the laughing China man’ sums up the journey of mind after enlightenment. When a scholar asked Hotei, a Zen master, “what is mind in enlightenment?” Hotei put the cloth sack, which he carried with him wherever he went, on the ground to show that enlightenment means putting away the conditioned mind. The scholar then asked “what is the state of mind in enlightenment?” Hotei picked up the sack and continued his journey laughing, thus demonstrating that after enlightenment the conditioned mind merely becomes a useful tool like the sack (Osho, 2010b).

Hence, mindfulness is both a practice of de-conditioning mind (awareness) and the outcome of the practice. As busy lifestyles invite routines and habitual functions at the beginning stages, mindfulness is a technique of regulating attention to the present moment reality unconditionally and non-judgmentally. From the practice of regulating attention, one learns the skill of generating unconditioned awareness which ultimately de-conditions the mind. Once the mind is de-conditioned, it transforms into pure awareness which is sufficiently intelligent to understand and function independently. If pure awareness or mindfulness state is maintained, awareness eventually becomes aware of itself and thus enlightened. In enlightened mind, there is clarity of understanding and in the clarity of understanding there is truth, beauty and joy (Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989). Enlightenment is not an end; it is a beginning of a new and more authentic way of understanding and living.

Explication of meditation technique, the mechanisms involved in the practice of meditation and the story of the bull have been used to explain how the mind transforms from an automatic system of functioning to pure awareness.

Having presented understanding of the Eastern notion of mind in which mindfulness is developed (Chapter Four) what mindfulness is and how it works (Chapter Five), I will explore in Chapter Six how mindfulness and cognitive and behavioural psychologies interface with one another.

## **Chapter 6: Findings 3: Interface between mindfulness and clinical psychology**

The previous two chapters have illuminated how mindfulness as a philosophy and practice is derived from the Eastern notion of mind. This notion revolves around two core concepts, (1) the development of the conditioned mind through the conditioning of awareness via institutionalization and (2) how mind can be switched back to the unconditioned awareness.

This chapter compares and contrasts these findings with cognitive and behavioural theories to reveal how mindfulness and clinical psychology interface with one another in relation to three key areas: (1) how the conditioned mind or thoughts and behaviours are conditioned, (2) etiology of psychopathology, and (3) treatment, particularly effects of mindfulness on different components of the conditioned mind, namely the automatic mind, the subtle mind and the observing mind.

### **1. The Eastern notion of mind and cognitive and behavioural theories**

Western clinical psychology and the Eastern philosophies agree that cognitions and behaviours are learned. However, they arrive at this conclusion differently. While cognitive and behavioural psychologies arrive at this understanding through conditioning models and dualistic methods, (Sue et al., 2000), Eastern philosophers experience the relationship between learning and awareness through meditation and non-dualistic understanding (Krishnamurti, 1972; Osho, 1988).

The different ways of understanding mechanisms of learning result in differing understandings of mind, the main difference being the role awareness plays in the conditioning process. Dualistic empirical methods retain their focus on measurable aspects of mind i.e. thoughts and behaviours, whereas mindfulness practices centre understanding on how different structures and mechanisms of mind develop as a consequence of conditioning of awareness and how awareness functions in conditioned as well as unconditioned states (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988, 1989). Thus one

of the key differences between the Eastern philosophies and cognitive and behavioural psychologies is their understanding of awareness.

Mindfulness practice enables one to see the deeper lying structures and mechanisms of the conditioned mind which cannot be otherwise measured through empirical means. It allows understanding of two key aspects of the conditioned mind which are usually hidden beneath thoughts and behaviours: (1) meta-conditioning between oneself and the conditioned mind i.e. thoughts and behaviours and (2) ego, the master of mind which arises out of conditioning and meta-conditioning (Osho, 1988). These two aspects of the conditioned mind are responsible for creating the automatic mind and the subtle mind. This has been explicated in Chapter Four. The concept of meta-conditioning between cognitions and oneself is implicit in cognitive psychology (J. Beck, 1995; Young, 1999) but is yet to be made explicit. Furthermore, cognitive and behavioural psychologies do not deal with the concept of ego, although it forms the central notion of psychodynamic psychology (Freud, 1936). Clinical psychology is not concerned with how awareness works. It does not focus on how conditioned and unconditioned observations occur, thus missing quantum structures of the conditioned mind i.e. the observing mind which was explicated in Chapter Four.

It is only recently that cognitive and behavioural psychologies have moved beyond the automatic mind, triggering the third evolutionary wave (Lau & McMain, 2005).

## **2. Etiology of psychopathology**

It is clear that mindfulness theories and clinical psychology differ in terms of their etiology. The Eastern philosophies maintain that automatic functioning of the conditioned mind and the meta-conditioning between oneself and the conditioned mind plays a significant role in causing psychopathology (Osho, 1988; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a); (Krishnamurti, 1994). Ignorance and suffering occur when dysfunctional cognitions function automatically and, preclude understanding of reality (Krishnamurti,

1993; Osho, 1988). The Eastern philosophies also argue that this automatic function restricts natural growth and evolution of awareness i.e. enlightenment (Osho, 1989). Cognitive and behaviour psychologies recognise the role of automatic functioning (triggering) of thoughts and behaviours in the development of psychopathology but they do not explicitly address this (J. Beck, 1995; Young, 1999).

### **3. Treatment**

Different conceptualisations result in different modes of treatment. Clinical psychology focuses on changing the contents of mind, while mindfulness focuses on changing the functioning of mind. Cognitive and behavioural psychologies focus on de-conditioning and changing faulty and dysfunctional cognitions and behaviours (J. Beck, 1995; Young, 1999) and mindfulness theories treat psychopathology by changing the autonomous and conditional working of the mind towards unconditioned awareness. Through the regulation of attention, (Kabat-Zinn, 2003), regulation of energy and attention (Osho, 1988, 1989), witnessing (Osho, 1988) and unconditional observation (Krishnamurti, 1994), mindfulness transforms and merges the components of the conditioned mind into pure awareness.

To further illuminate the effect of mindfulness as a therapeutic intervention, I will explore how mindfulness affects the automatic mind, the subtle mind and the observing mind, as explicated in Chapter Four.

#### **3.1. Effect of mindfulness on the automatic mind**

The automatic mind is the most easily observed part of the conditioned mind, thus the effect of mindfulness is more obvious. Mindfulness affects two important aspects of the automatic mind i.e. automatic functioning and meta-conditioning.

### **3.1.a. Mindfulness and automatic functioning**

One of the key effects of mindfulness on the conditioned mind is increasing awareness of its automatic functioning (Krishnamurti, 1994; Osho, 1988, 1989). When attention is regulated in the present moment reality, the automatic mind cannot jump from object to object resulting in increased periods of awareness per se. This in turn decreases ruminations, avoidance and dissociations, which are implicated in emotional disorders (J. Beck, 1995; Linehan, 1993a; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006; J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995; Young, 1999). When attention is kept on the present moment reality with openness and acceptance, the automatic stimulus-response reactions are disrupted. For example, a person who is prone to depression negatively thinks 'I am a failure.' He or she automatically responds to this thought with other negative thoughts, feelings, emotions or behaviours, which produce more automatic reactions. However, if the person is mindful (1) he or she is more likely to become aware of the thought and will have greater ability to choose how to respond, and then (2) the acceptance of the thoughts as events rather than facts will prevent automatic responses i.e. ruminations. Hence Western theories conclude that mindfulness stops automatic stimulus-response reactions, preventing depressive episodes (Baer, 2003, 2006; J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995).

Through personal practice of mindfulness I am more able to see the relationship between thoughts and events and can understand how my perceptions and interpretations of reality are driven by my conditioning. When I encounter anxiety provoking thought during meditation, I resist engaging in my usual avoidance behaviour i.e. thinking about something else. I keep my attention on the thought, observing and accepting it as an event occurring in my mind. When automatic responses are stopped through mindfulness, the thought does not last long; while some thoughts seem to disappear within seconds, others can return a few times before disappearing completely. Eventually mindfulness therapy can turn even disturbing thoughts, emotions, and anxiety into awareness (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994)).

Osho concludes “...*awareness is health and unawareness is disease; awareness is non-tension (without conflict) and non-awareness is tension (conflict)*” (Osho, 1989, pp. 111-112). The automatic functioning contributes to disease and mindfulness helps progress towards awareness.

### **3.1.b. Mindfulness and meta-conditioning**

According to the Eastern philosophies, meta-conditioning between oneself and the conditioned mind is one of the major causes of ignorance and suffering (Krishnamurti, 1994; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 2002a). As a result of meta-conditioning, the conditioned mind becomes the master (Osho, 1988) and hijacks awareness (Krishnamurti, 1972).

Mindfulness weakens and ultimately extinguishes meta-conditioning through a de-identification (extinction) process (Krishnamurti, 1994; Osho, 1977a). This de-identification is a transformative process which occurs through sustained practice of mindfulness. The process of de-identification with mind starts with an understanding that thoughts are events occurring in mind, an understanding which eventually grows into an understanding that one is not one's conditioned mind.

The insight that one is not one's thoughts (i.e. the conditioned mind) has implications for how one manages oneself. As a result of de-identification with thoughts and the conditioned mind, one starts to become more relaxed, more open and accepting, which in turn results in deeper changes in oneself (Krishnamurti, 1994; Osho, 1988, n.d.d).

### **3.2. Effect on the subtle mind**

The effect of mindfulness on the subtle mind only becomes evident in people who have proficient meditation skills (Osho, 1988, 1989). At deeper levels, mindfulness affects the ego and energy components of the subtle mind.



### **3.2.a. Effect on ego**

As previously explicated, ego evolves from automatic and constant functioning of the conditioned mind. When this automatic and constant functioning of the automatic mind is affected the changes also affect the ego. As the automatic mind becomes less automatic and less constant, the meta-conditioning between oneself and automatic thinking becomes weaker and the influence of ego is reduced. Decreased automatic functions also results in decreased intentionality of the ego. When ego is less intentional or desiring it is more open and receptive. Thus ego is more able to see reality as it arises in the moment to moment occurring reality. Hence, mindfulness weakens the intentionality or ‘desiring’ of ego, resulting in further reduced automatic functioning and weakened meta-conditioning and improved openness and acceptance (Osho, 1988).

### **3.2.b. Effect on energy**

As mindfulness practice slows automatic thoughts and behaviours, automatic changes in the energy field are reduced. The increased homeostasis in the body and mind (Osho, 1988, 1989) is experienced as relaxation. Changes in energy also affect ego, because both are part of the subtle mind. When energy is in a state of homeostasis, ego is less autonomous.

However, the effects of mindfulness on the subtle mind are obscure and difficult to observe. While the feeling of relaxation can be experienced by most mindfulness practitioners, the effects of mindfulness on ego are only experienced by advance meditators (Osho, 1988, 1989).

### **3.3. Effect on the observing mind**

The observing mind is a quantum state of overlapping subtle ego and pure awareness. As the automatic activities of the automatic and subtle minds are reduced, the chances of subtle ego breaking the quantum state of awareness are also reduced.

The Eastern philosophies suggest that ego and subtle ego must disappear before mind achieves a state of right mindfulness. Once this has been achieved, there is nothing to break the quantum state of the observing mind and it remains in a state of pure awareness.

Thus mindfulness practice ultimately leads to a pure state of awareness wherein there is no conditioning and one lives life guided by the intelligence of pure awareness.

#### **4. Mindfulness promotes health**

This explication of the effects of mindfulness meditation on mind suggests that mindfulness is not just a mechanism for treating disorders; it is intended to promote health and growth (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1974, 1976, 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a). Mindfulness is a positive therapy; a methodology for living life in peace and harmony. It helps the mind function spontaneously, creatively and ultimately to function intelligently free from the limitations placed by conditioning. The therapeutic benefits of mindfulness are part of the cleansing process which is necessary to de-condition the mind (Osho, 1988, 1989, 2009a).

Krishnamurti is arguing that before one reaches the ultimate state of pure awareness, he or she has to journey through the conditioned mind (Krishnamurti, 1967). In this journey, all that has been conditioned needs to be understood and overcome. Every thought, attitude, belief, emotion, feeling has to be witnessed and understood unconditionally. When such unconditioned awareness has been achieved mind becomes awareness, which has qualities such as intelligence, understanding, peace, beauty and love.

In summary, mindfulness theories and practice and cognitive and behavioural psychologies derive from two differing worldviews. Based on their differing understandings of mind, mindfulness theories and cognitive and behavioural psychologies have different views on the causes of psychopathology and treatment methods. While mindfulness sees automatic functioning of the conditioned mind and

identification with the conditioned mind as the main causes of psychopathology, cognitive and behavioural psychologies view faulty and dysfunctional cognitions and behaviours as main causes. Mindfulness holds that changing mind's function from automatic to mindfulness can heal the mind, whereas cognitive and behavioural psychologies focus on changing faulty and rigid cognitions.

The effects and mechanisms of mindfulness therapy can be understood by understanding mindfulness practice as a technique of cultivating awareness through regulating attention, attention and energy, witnessing and unconditional observation. The resulting awareness, described as the mindfulness state, transforms mind from being dominated by conditioning to unconditioned awareness. Increased awareness affects the conditioned mind by decreasing automatic functioning and meta-conditioning (Osho, 1988). Decreased automatic functioning is recognized by some Western theorists to prevent ruminations, avoidance and dissociation and to increase insightfulness, understanding, acceptance, relaxation and self management (Baer, 2003, 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006). When one is not identified with the conditioning, one's mind becomes more flexible. This flexibility produces broad ranging positive changes, including changes in how one views and manages oneself (Baer, 2003, 2006; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988). A decrease in the function of the automatic mind and weakened meta-conditioning gradually extinguishes ego. This results in (1) a further decrease in automatic functioning of the automatic mind, (2) a decreased intensity of emotional hurt and (3) a greater clarity in perceptions (Osho, 1988, 1989). Finally, the effect of mindfulness on the observing mind allows pure awareness to function independently, removing conflicts, illusions and ignorance and ultimately enabling enlightenment (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1974, 1977a, 1988, 1989).

Having articulated understandings of mindfulness theory and practice from Eastern and Western perspectives, discussion of these findings will occur in the final chapter along with recommendations for further research.

## **Chapter 7: Discussion, recommendations and conclusion**

Philosophical hermeneutics recognizes that there are endlessly possible ways of interpreting reality. The ‘mindfulness hermeneutic’ that I have used was heuristically guided by the philosophical principles of (1) fusion of horizons, (2) hermeneutic being, (3) understanding is intrinsic to awareness, and (4) a regular practice of meditation is necessary for developing experiential understanding of mindfulness to understand the research questions. These research questions were: (1) what is mindfulness? (2) How does mindfulness work? (3) How do mindfulness philosophy and practice interface with cognitive and behavioural psychologies?

This final chapter brings the explicated understandings together in a discussion that responds to each of the research questions. It starts with a discussion of the background in which mindfulness was incorporated within the field of clinical psychology i.e. cognitive and behavioural psychologies. This includes discussion of the Eastern notion of mind. The chapter goes on to discuss mindfulness practices answering the first research question i.e. what is mindfulness. Response to the second question i.e. how mindfulness works, is achieved through a discussion which compares and contrasts understandings derived in Chapters Two, Five & Six.

The chapter then discusses the interface of mindfulness philosophies and practices with cognitive and behavioural psychologies. This discussion highlights key obstacles standing in the way of a successful integration of mindfulness within an empirical paradigm and offers the solutions.

Finally, the chapter makes recommendations for future research and presents the conclusions of the thesis.

## **1. Mindfulness and Western clinical psychology**

The current developments within cognitive and behavioural psychologies, i.e. inclusion of mindfulness philosophies and practices within the field, can be characterized by two contrasting themes: (1) persistence on retaining empirical principles and (2) eagerness to utilize the therapeutic effects of awareness to find solutions to complex psychological problems (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003; Linehan, 1993; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006; Teasdale, 1995, 2002). This development, which is termed as the third evolution of behaviour psychology (Lau & McMain, 2005), is unlike the previous two developments; the first being the birth of behaviour psychology in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the second, the development of cognitive psychology in the 1970s (A. T. Beck, 1976; J. Beck, 1995). By introducing non-dualistic mindfulness philosophies and practices to the dualistic psychologies, this third wave of behavioural psychology has presented the formidable and complex challenges of fully understanding and integrating theories and practices based on opposing worldviews.

Currently, cognitive and behavioural theorists have developed two main models i.e. parallel model and integrated model, in which mindfulness philosophies and practices are adapted within the field (Lau & McMain, 2005). In the parallel model, Dialectic Behaviour Therapy (DBT), non-dualistic mindfulness theories and practices are placed side by side with dualistic cognitive and behavioural psychologies (Linehan, 1993a; Lynch et al., 2006). Whereas in integrated models such as Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) (R. Crane, 2009; John D. Teasdale, 1999), mindfulness and cognitive and behavioural psychologies are integrated with one another. Empirical evidence supports the efficacy of both models (Baer, 2003; Carter et al.; Davis et al., 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Linehan, 1993a; Lynch et al., 2006; John D. Teasdale et al., 2002; John D. Teasdale et al., 2003).

However, the emerging theories of mindfulness in clinical psychology do not fully capture the essence of non-dualistic Eastern philosophies i.e. awareness. Hence, researchers are being challenged to better understand and translate non-dualistic, non-conceptual and often paradoxical mindfulness philosophies and practices (Shapiro et al.,

2006). The development i.e. ‘third evolution of behaviour psychology’ is also complicated by the fact that it is difficult to fully understand non-dualistic philosophies and practices through dualistic methods (Gross et al., 2009); (Wilber, 1997, 2000).

This thesis sought to address these philosophical differences methodologically by bringing non-dualistic principles and practices (Zhang, 2006); (Gross et al., 2009) together with the least dualistic Western philosophical principles (Gadamer, 1995; Heidegger, 1952; Mueller-Vollmer, 2002) to explore mindfulness practice. I have drawn from contemporary and non-Buddhist philosophies such as Osho (1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2009b) and Krishnamurti (1972, 1993, 1994, 2002), to address problems relating to the semantics of the various mindfulness philosophies and practices. One of the crucial aspects of the mindfulness hermeneutics used in this project was ongoing practice of meditation. I drew from the insights derived from the practice of meditation to explicate the non-dualistic understanding of mindfulness philosophies and practices. This was supplemented by using concepts from quantum physics (Moultrie, 2012; Stapp, 1995, 2006) to help explain the critical notion, in Eastern philosophy, of how pure awareness turns into conditional observations.

I am therefore arguing that this project has begun to develop a methodology which may be suitable for interpreting and advancing understanding of dualistic clinical psychology and the non-dualistic philosophies underpinning mindfulness practice.

I will now summarise my explication of mind before addressing the research questions.

### **1.1. Model of mind**

The assumption that mindfulness shares learning principles with cognitive and behavioural psychologies provided the platform for the integration of two opposing worldviews (Lau & McMain, 2005). Explication of this assumption demonstrated that mindfulness and clinical psychology arrive at learning principles differently. Clinical psychology has derived learning principles from the conditioning models (Sue et al., 2000) whereas the Eastern understandings of learning are based on insights developed

through meditation (Krishnamurti, 1994; Osho, 1988; The Dalai Lama, 1997). These differing ways of understanding have resulted in differing understandings of mind; while clinical psychology remains focused on observable cognition and behaviours, mindfulness philosophies center on awareness.

In bringing together understandings from clinical psychology (Baer, 2003, 2006; A. T. Beck, 1976; J. Beck, 1995; Bishop et al., 2004; R. Crane, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 1982; Jon Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003, 2005; Lau & McMain, 2005; Linehan, 1993a; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro, 2009; Shapiro et al., 2006; John D. Teasdale, 1999; J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995); (Young, 1999), and the Eastern philosophies (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1974, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2010a; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a), I have been able to more fully explicate the structure and mechanism of mind. According to the model of mind explicated in Chapter Four, mind consists of three main components, the automatic mind (J. Beck, 1995; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1974, 1976a, 1977a, 1988; Young, 1999), the subtle mind (Aurobindo, 1996; Freud, 1936; Houshmand et al., 1999; Krishnamurti, 1993; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1991, 1997, 2002, 2002a) and the observing mind (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993, 1994; Moultrie, 2012; Osho, 1974, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2009b; Stapp, 1995, 2006), which serve distinct functions within the mind. These different components are created as a result of conditioning of awareness, autonomous and constant functioning and meta-conditioning (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1974, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2010a; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a). The model suggests that the mind is both localized and generalized: it is localized to the brain and at the same time is spread throughout the energy of the body (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1974, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2010a; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a).

### **1.1.a. The automatic mind**

The automatic mind consists of cognition i.e. thoughts, attitudes, rules, beliefs, schemas, which function automatically, dictating both perceptions and behaviours. This is supported by both the Eastern and Western theories and philosophies (Baer, 2003, 2006; J. Beck, 1995; C. Crane et al., 2009; Lau & McMain, 2005, Linehan, 1993, 1993; Lynch

et al., 2006; Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1974, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2010a; Shapiro et al., 2006; Teasdale, 1995, 1999; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002; Young, 1999). The automatic mind, which is the main concern for clinical psychology, provides a useful interface between clinical psychology and mindfulness philosophies (Baer, 2003, 2006; J. Beck, 1995; R. Crane, 2009; Lau & McMain, 2005; Linehan, 1993; Lynch et al., 2006; Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1974, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2010a; Shapiro et al., 2006; Teasdale, 1995, 1999; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a; Young, 1999). Two main concepts of the automatic mind i.e. conditioning and automatic functioning are commonly recognised by cognitive and behavioural psychologies and the Eastern philosophies. However, the notion of meta-conditioning, which was coined to describe one's identification with his or her cognition, is unique to the Eastern philosophies. Meta-conditioning, which is considered as one of the main causes of psychopathology by the Eastern philosophies, has some similarities with Western theories of cognitive fusion and attachment to the conceptualized self (Luoma et al., 2007).

### **1.1.b. The subtle mind**

The Buddhist term subtle mind (Houshmand et al., 1999; The Dalai Lama, 1997) was combined with Osho's (1988) concept of ego to describe the mechanism through which mind comes to dominate awareness. The subtle mind describes the impacts of conditioning and meta-conditioning on energy and awareness, suggesting that there are subtle forms of meta-cognition such as ego and intentionality which ordinarily remain outside conscious awareness (Houshmand, 1999; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a). The notion of ego, which differs from Freud's interpretation, describes how ego, which arises out of conditioning and meta-conditioning, becomes autonomous and hijacks the functioning of mind (Osho, 1988, 1989). Krishnamurti (1993) refers to this as 'thought dominating awareness.' The Eastern philosophies suggest that ego by constantly desiring and combining with the automatic mind enables the conditioned mind to function autonomously. The autonomous functioning of ego and the conditioned mind is also implicated in psychopathology (Osho, 1988). The Eastern philosophies explain that ego keeps the mind within the parameters of conditioning, failing to understand the



moment to moment unfolding reality (Osho, 1988, 1989). Because one is also identified or meta-conditioned with ego, people may erroneously hold themselves responsible for dysfunction which results in emotional difficulties (Osho, 1988). This notion of ego and its role in psychopathology is new to cognitive and behavioural theories. However, the notions of cognitive fusion and attachment to conceptualized self (Luoma et al., 2007) are beginning to demonstrate resemblance with Eastern understandings of ego.

### **1.1.c. The observing mind**

The notion of the observing mind developed from discussions between Krishnamurti and Bohm who suggested that both thought and awareness interface with energy (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993). The observing mind consists of two components, namely, awareness and subtle ego. Unlike the automatic mind and the subtle mind, which have stable structures, the observing mind comes into existence at the point of action where subtle ego and pure awareness interface each other in a quantum state (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993; Osho, 1988, 1989; Stapp, 1995, 2006). At the point of action i.e. perception, unconditional observation is formed through awareness which is turned into conditional observation by the subtle ego. This suggests that, if ego and subtle ego stop functioning automatically and constantly, observations will be formed through pure awareness (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1974, 1977a, 1988, 1989). This is where meditation becomes important; meditation by keeping attention in the present moment reality nonjudgmentally decreased the activities of the automatic mind and subtle mind, thus subtle ego, preventing subtle ego from breaking pure awareness and thereby encouraging unconditional observations (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Lau & McMain, 2005; Osho, 1974, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2010a; Shapiro et al., 2006; Teasdale, 1999, 2002; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a).

Understanding of the structure and mechanism of the observing mind is presently inaccessible to cognitive and behavioural theories. Because empirical methods are grounded in duality, they are unable to examine energy, awareness and the observing mind (Osho, 1989); (Wilber, 1997, 2000).

I am proposing that understanding the observing mind and bringing a focus on and awareness will benefit clinical psychology. Such a development will, I am arguing, actualize the ‘third wave of evolution of behavioural psychology’ and thus provide justification for the use of mindfulness therapy in the treatment of psychopathology.

## **1.2. Formulation of psychopathology: Eastern and Western ways**

The explicated understandings of the Eastern notion of mind have revealed how mindfulness theories formulate psychological problems. The explication suggests that there are two main ways in which mindfulness philosophies and cognitive and behavioural psychologies differ from each other:

(1) Both Eastern philosophies and clinical psychology view the automatic functioning of mind as problematic but the Eastern philosophies focus more on this factor than cognitive and behavioural psychologies. The mindfulness philosophies primarily see autonomous functioning of the conditioned mind as causing psychopathology (R. Crane, 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Luoma et al., 2007; Osho, 1988, 1989; Shapiro et al., 2006; John D. Teasdale et al., 2002; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002), whereas clinical psychology focuses mainly on inflexible and dysfunctional cognitions and behaviours (Batchelor, 1997; J. Beck, 1995; Linehan, 1993a; Young, 1999).

(2) The Eastern philosophies suggest that meta-conditioning, including ego, plays an important part in the development of psychopathology (Krishnamurti, 1993; 1994; Osho, 1988 #26; Osho, 1989; Shapiro et al., 2006; John D. Teasdale et al., 2002; The Dalai Lama, 1997). This does not currently get attention from cognitive and behavioural psychologies. However, the role of meta-conditioning in psychopathology has found some importance in the third wave psychological models (R. Crane, 2009; Luoma et al., 2007).

Both Eastern philosophies and Western psychology explain that when mind functions automatically, it unwittingly triggers ruminations, past traumas, fears and anxieties which in turn cause suffering (Baer, 2003; J. Beck, 1995, Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988; Teasdale, 1995, 1999; Young, 1999). Furthermore, such cognition, because it is grounded in memory, fails to understand the dysfunction and is

unable to respond to the moment to moment occurring reality, further increasing suffering (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994). In this way, mindfulness philosophies and cognitive and behavioural psychologies share agreement regarding the role of the automatic functioning. However, they differ on the role of one's identification or meta-conditioning with the conditioned mind in psychopathology and suffering (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Lau & McMain, 2005; Osho, 1974, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2010a; Shapiro et al., 2006; Teasdale, 1999, 2002; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a). I am arguing that the role of meta-conditioning in causing suffering, which is unique to the Eastern philosophies, can further compliment the formulation of problems for clinical psychology. This is already starting to take place in mindfulness and acceptance based models (R. Crane, 2009; J. Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Luoma et al., 2007; Shapiro et al., 2006; John D. Teasdale, 1999; John D. Teasdale et al., 2002).

Furthermore, the role of the subtle mind, especially ego, in psychopathology is also worth reconsidering. The Eastern philosophies suggest that as long as the deeper lying meta-conditioning ( ego), continues to support negative cognition it will be hard to change these cognitions (Osho, 1988). Thus unless the underlying intentionality of ego is altered, the superficial cognitions cannot be substantially changed. Understanding the role of deeper lying conditioning is beginning to emerge in 'third wave' psychological theories. The notion of values clarity in acceptance and commitment therapy in formulation and treatment of psychopathology is an example of accounting for deeper psychological structures (Luoma et al., 2007). It would therefore appear that the Eastern notion of ego and intentionality, which is based on meta-conditioning rather than psychodynamics, could compliment clinical psychology in formulation and treatment of psychological problems. I am therefore recommending that the role of ego as viewed by Eastern philosophies is further explored and incorporated in psychopathology by future researchers.

## **2. What is mindfulness?**

Mindfulness has been practiced in East and West for centuries. However, its therapeutic use within the fields of health science and clinical psychology is relatively new (J. Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Linehan, 1993a). Mindfulness philosophies and practices have been introduced to the fields of health and clinical psychology through the works of Kabat-Zinn (1982, 1994, 2003), Linehan (1993, 1993a) and Teasdale (1995). These authors have derived understandings of mindfulness primarily from the Buddhist philosophies (Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Linehan, 1993a).

However, ambiguity in the understanding of mindfulness practice persists; neither clinical psychology nor the Eastern philosophies succinctly illuminate the distinction between meditation as a technique (a duality) and mindfulness state (non-duality). The understandings of mindfulness practice within the field of clinical psychology vacillate between non-dualistic awareness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003) and dualistic regulation of attention (Bishop et al., 2004), which leads to possible exclusion of core aspects of mindfulness eg awareness. Similarly, the Eastern philosophies use the terms mindfulness and meditation for both mindfulness technique or scaffolding (Shapiro et al., 2006) and mindfulness state, causing confusion (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2009a; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002; Wilber, 1997, 2000).

This thesis, in separating meditation technique and mindfulness state, has brought greater clarity to the understanding of mindfulness. The thesis does not suggest that mindfulness as a technique and mindfulness as a state of mind are two dissimilar states, as they both manifest during the same activity i.e. meditation. Although artificial, the clearer distinction between mindfulness as a technique and mindfulness as a state of mind has led to clearer understandings of the two.

## **2.1. Meditation**

Meditation is founded on the premise that awareness, which has become subservient to the conditioning, requires to be de-conditioned so that the mind can function through the intelligence inherent in awareness (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama 2002a). The proposal that bare awareness has intelligence is challenging to empirical theorists, even to those who have embraced mindfulness (Shapiro et al., 2006). This may be one of the factors behind empirical theorists vacillating between relating mindfulness to awareness and attention regulation. However, the ability to use awareness in the treatment of psychopathology is central to the Eastern philosophies (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama 1997; 2002a), and is critical to ‘the third wave of evolution’ (Lau & McMain, 2005).

Meditations can involve several mechanisms i.e. regulation of attention (Bishop et al., 2004; Kabat-Zinn, 1994), regulation and attention and energy (Osho, 1988), witnessing (Osho, 1988) and unconditional observation (Krishnamurti, 1994, 2002). These mechanisms lead to the state of mindfulness or unconditioned awareness. Currently some empirical theorists have limited meditation to the mechanism of attention regulation and accompanying mental events (Bishop et al., 2004), while others favour awareness through regulating attention (Kabat-Zinn, 2003).

Kabat-Zinn (1994) defined mindfulness in terms of purposefully regulating attention to present moment reality non-judgmentally. This definition suggests that mindfulness is a skill of regulating attention in a particular way, maintaining duality between the subject and object. He later expanded this definition of mindfulness by introducing the concept of awareness, arguing that the mindfulness skill of purposefully regulating attention to present moment reality non-judgmentally resulted in awareness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Bishop et al., (2004), however, overlooked awareness by viewing mindfulness as a skill of regulating attention and the nature of attitude that one brings to the attention. Their definition of mindfulness (2004) enables measurement of mental processes occurring as a result of mindfulness i.e. attention, attitude, but does not include awareness, the ingredient considered indispensable by the Eastern philosophers (Houshmand et al.,

1999; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997). Hence, within the field of clinical psychology, current understanding of mindfulness wavers between mindfulness centring on regulation of attention and attitude (duality) and mindfulness centering on awareness (non-duality).

Furthermore, within the attention regulation paradigm, empirical theorists present mindfulness more as a dualistic activity - choosing and actively regulating attention from one object such as thought to another such as breathing (Bishop et al., 2004) than their Eastern counterparts who suggest maintaining non-judgmental attention to the present moment reality automatically leads to awareness (Krishnamurti, 2002; Osho, 1988). This subtle difference between the Eastern and Western concepts of meditation technique was illuminated through figure 5.1, which resulted in a more refined interpretation of meditation (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989, 2006, 2009b). This interpretation argues that awareness is an integral part of mindfulness and excluding it will result in serious compromise.

The mechanisms of witnessing (Osho, 1998) and unconditional observation (Krishnamurti, 1994) are similar to the mechanism of regulation of attention. However, both Osho and Krishnamurti claim that ‘witnessing’ and ‘unconditional observation’ are less like a technique (duality) and are closer to pure awareness (non-duality) (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988, 1989). Because the non-dualistic worldview maintains that awareness and pure energy are one and the same, energy plays a vital part in the structure and functioning of mind (Krishnamurti, 1993; Osho, 1989). Thus meditations involving regulation of energy are important in the practice of mindfulness (Osho, 1975, 1988, 1989). When clinical psychology recognizes the role of energy in mind and mindfulness, energy based meditations will become essential therapeutic mindfulness techniques. The beginnings of this are evident in the randomised control trials that have suggested the efficacy of *Kundalini* (energy) based meditations in the treatment of emotional disorders (Shannahoff-Khalsa et al., 1999). Hence, a broader interpretation of mindfulness practice will be developed by incorporating ‘witnessing’, ‘unconditional observation’ and energy regulation within the mindfulness paradigm.

## **2.2. Mindfulness state**

Understanding of the mindfulness state within empirical literature is limited. Some theorists link the mindfulness state with awareness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003) and meta-cognitive insight (John D. Teasdale, 1999), however they do not explicate the state of mind in this awareness primarily because dualistic methods do not allow full understanding of awareness (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993; Osho, 1977a, 1989; Wilber, 1997, 2000). On the other hand, the non-dualistic Eastern philosophies, which equate state of mindfulness with awareness, provide rich descriptions of mindfulness state (Houshmand et al., 1999; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 2006). The Eastern philosophers suggest that meditation allows awareness to function independently of conditioning. Moving from conditioning to awareness gradually occurs through sustained meditation practice. Thus, there are different states of mindfulness on the continuum of mindfulness change (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 2002).

I have used the Zen story of ‘ten bulls’, to explicate different states of mindfulness on a continuum ranging from mind being totally conditioned to totally unconditioned or pure awareness (Osho, 2010a). In the beginning, thinking occurs automatically and people identify with their thoughts so much that they believe that they are their conditioned mind; they cannot separate themselves from their thoughts. With the practice of meditation, mindfulness states start unfolding; the first major milestone is experiencing thoughts as events occurring in mind rather than the true reality. In this way, meditations become necessary for overcoming the automatic mind and seeing thoughts as events. At this stage where the conditioned mind functions constantly and automatically, the state of mindfulness and meditation (technique) appear similar i.e. purposefully regulating attention in the moment to moment reality non-judgmentally, which is interpreted by Bishop et al. (2004) in terms of a technique. As one continues to practice meditation a deeper mindfulness state manifests; by experiencing thoughts as events one starts to de-identify with them, which remove the illusion that one is one’s mind (Osho, 1977a,

1988). This has acknowledged therapeutic benefits (Baer, 2003; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006; John D. Teasdale et al., 2002).

The next milestone of mindfulness occurs when sustained meditation and resulting relaxation slows down the automatic thinking and the pauses between the consecutive thoughts widen. In these widened spaces the unconditioned mind or unconditioned awareness emerges (Osho, 1988) providing glimpses into the subtle aspects of the conditioned mind i.e. how subtle thoughts are formed out of the subtle mind. The definition by Kabat-Zinn (2003) which suggests that mindfulness is awareness which arises from meditation captures this state of mindfulness more accurately than the definition by Bishop et al. (2004).

The sustained practice of meditation transforms the mind in such a way that mindfulness occurs effortlessly. In other words, mind functions through pure awareness (Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993, 1994, 2002; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002, 2002a). This means that current definitions of mindfulness, including the definition by Kabat-Zinn (2003), remain inadequate in terms of fully describing the state of mindfulness. New definitions of mindfulness are therefore required to fully capture both mindfulness practices and mindfulness states. Such definitions need to accommodate the full spectrum of mindfulness practice ranging from the conditioned state of mind, complete duality, the completely unconditioned mind and complete non-duality or pure awareness (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a).

Mindfulness hermeneutics is not a deductive method. The future definition must therefore consider mindfulness both as process and an outcome relating to awareness. As a process, mindfulness needs to be viewed as awareness that arises out of (1) purposefully and non-judgmentally regulating attention in the present moment reality, (2) purposefully generating and regulating energy and attention through rhythmic exercises, (3) witnessing and (4) unconditional observations. As an outcome, mindfulness is a state of mind which



functions through the intelligence inherent in awareness and can occur simultaneously during the process or can occur spontaneously on its own.

The explication of mindfulness presented in this thesis has claimed that these states correspond, at least to some extent, to the theories and mechanisms of mindfulness derived by the empirical theorists. The mechanisms discussed below further illuminate mindfulness states and the mechanism of mindfulness.

### **3. Mechanism of mindfulness: how does mindfulness work?**

Empirical research from the Western world suggests that mindfulness is efficacious in treating a range of disorders such as the anxiety spectrum of disorders (Beauchemin et al., 2008; Goldin et al., 2009; Hanstede et al., 2008; Semple et al., 2005; Yong Woo et al., 2009), chronic depression (Davis et al., 2009; Finucane & Mercer, 2006; John D. Teasdale et al., 2002), borderline personality disorder (Carter et al.; Linehan, 1993a; Lynch et al., 2006), chronic pain (Kabat-Zinn, 2003), fibromyalgia and psoriasis (Baer, 2003) and psychosis (Abba et al., 2008; Bach & Hayes, 2002). It is especially efficacious in treating difficult to treat conditions such as borderline personality disorders (Linehan, 1993a; Lynch et al., 2006), recurrent depression (Davis et al., 2009) and chronic pain (Kabat-Zinn, 1982).

A range of theories has been put forward; researchers have concluded that mindfulness works through exposure, cognitive change, self management, relaxation, (Baer, 2003; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006), acceptance (Abba et al., 2008; J. Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006), re-perceiving and value clarification (Luoma et al., 2007); (Shapiro et al., 2006), letting go (Fairfax, 2008; Hanstede et al., 2008), increased self management (Chiesa, 2010; R. Crane, 2009; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006; Stepp et al., 2008), increased mindfulness/awareness (Baer, 2003; Batchelor, 1997; Davis et al., 2009; Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006; J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995), and meta-cognitive skills (Abba et al., 2008; John D. Teasdale et al., 2002).

In contrast, theories emerging from the explication of Eastern philosophies suggest that the mindfulness practice is about (1) de-conditioning awareness, (2) developing deeper understandings of the structure and mechanism of mind and (3) functioning through pure awareness, which, ultimately, is the ingredient of mindfulness (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989); (The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002). In this way, awareness, which is achieved through mindfulness, changes both the structure and mechanism of the conditioned mind transforming them into pure awareness (Krishnamurti, 2002; Osho, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997). This means that the changes are caused by the de-conditioning process, greater self-understanding and pure awareness.

A comparison between the Eastern philosophies and the Western theories of mindfulness reveals that there are many similarities between the two. The theories such as exposure, cognitive change, relaxation, acceptance, re-perceiving, value clarification and letting go describe the de-conditioning process and increased understanding of the structure and mechanism of mind, which increases self-management. The theories of increased mindfulness, awareness, and meta-cognitive skills are related to pure awareness.

However the important distinction between the two views is that the Eastern philosophies lean towards pure awareness and Western theories of mindfulness towards psychological mechanisms. Thus, according to the philosophies and worldviews that underpin mindfulness, ultimately, when all dualities are removed, pure awareness, which functions through its own intelligence, is the meta-mechanism behind all mechanism of mindfulness (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a), a theory which some empirical researchers find hard to accept (Shapiro et al., 2006).

However, it can be argued that on a duality-nonduality continuum, Eastern and Western theories of mechanisms of mindfulness are complementary. While the Western theories are more able to describe the effects of mindfulness on dualistic state of mind i.e. mental

events, the Eastern philosophies are more able to describe the non-dualistic awareness and its mechanisms.

This thesis has also elucidated the effects of mindfulness using a model of mind which argues that mindfulness transforms all three components of the conditioned mind i.e. the automatic mind, the subtle mind and the observing mind. The effects on the automatic mind are twofold: (1) changing automatic functioning to awareness (de-automatization) and (2) desensitizing meta-conditioning or identification with the conditioned mind (Krishnamurti, 1994; Osho, 1988), for which empirical researchers use the terms exposure, relaxation and cognitive change (Baer, 2003). Decreased automatic reactivity allows more space between the consecutive thoughts, increasing awareness that one is not one's mind (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993, 1994, 2002; Osho, 1988, 1989), known as re-perceiving, shift in perspective, meta-cognitive awareness, values clarification, acceptance and better self-management (Baer, 2003; Lynch et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2006; John D. Teasdale, 1999).

Mindfulness practice also changes the subtle mind; a less automatic mind results in homeostasis of energy and quieter ego. The harmonized energy produces feelings of joy and peace (Osho, 1988, 1989) and may result in increased relaxation (Baer, 2003). However, the effects of mindfulness on ego are less obvious and become observable only with sustained practice of meditation (Osho, 1988). Thus, a diminished ego seems to play a part in the mechanisms of letting go and acceptance (Baer, 2003).

The effect of mindfulness on the observing mind is related to ego and subtle ego. A quietened ego and subtle ego is less active, which decreases its influence on observations resulting in more episodes of pure awareness and fewer conditioned perceptions (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989). Thus the observation of reality is achieved as the reality unfolds rather than being influenced by conditioning. The increased awareness per se further increases relaxation, clarity in perceptions and responding (Baer, 2003).

In this way, mindfulness increases awareness which in turn increases understandings of different components of the conditioned mind including conditioning and meta-conditioning. When meta-conditioning or identification with the conditioned mind is recognized as illusion (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a), ego, thus subtle ego, is obliterated. As a result, all three components of the conditioned mind become one and function through the intelligence of awareness. This complete de-conditioning of mind is health and healthy (Krishnamurti, 1972, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1988, 1989).

#### **4. How does mindfulness interface with clinical psychology?**

Several comparisons highlighting similarities and differences between clinical psychology and the mindfulness philosophies and practices have been made in this thesis. The discussion, however, is set in the milieu of complexities arising out of the interface between seemingly opposing worldviews; non-dualistic mindfulness philosophies and practice and dualistic cognitive and behavioural psychologies (Lau & McMain, 2005; Shapiro et al., 2006). The experts participating in this research supported the view that mindfulness philosophies and cognitive and behavioural psychologies do not integrate well with each other.

Such views are backed by history; the Western psychologies have failed to successfully integrate with Eastern philosophies and practices (Clarke, 1994). Wilber (1997, 2000) attributes this failure on the differing worldviews i.e. duality and non-duality. Unless this changes significantly, current developments are likely to follow history rather than achieving comprehensive integration of mindfulness and clinical psychology. Duality based empirical methods will not enable Western psychology to study the key element i.e. awareness involved in ‘the third wave of evolution of behaviour psychology’ (Osho, 1988, 1989; Wilber, 1997, 2000).

Clinical psychology needs to broaden its current methodologies, moving from rigid scientific dualism towards a non-dualistic stance more suitable for studying the

experiential nature of human reality (Bishop et al., 2004; R. Crane, 2009; Gadamer, 1995; Heidegger, 1952; Houshmand et al., 1999; J. Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003, 2005; Krishnamurti, 1967a, 1972, 1993, 1994, 2002; Luoma et al., 2007; Lynch et al., 2006; Nhat Hanh, 1976; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; Shapiro et al., 2006; J. D. Teasdale et al., 1995; John D. Teasdale et al., 2003; Wilber, 1997); (The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002; Wilber, 2000). To do so, along with challenging the notion of secularity, two key concepts of scientific empiricism, namely, measurement and objectivity, require addressing.

#### **4.1. Measurement**

The concept of measurement is central to positivist methodologies and clinical psychology (Crotty, 1998). This concept has been already challenged by Western philosophers, including Heidegger on the grounds of the inefficacy of measurement in understanding human experience (Crotty, 1998; Gadamer, 1995; Heidegger, 1952; Mueller-Vollmer, 2002). There is also increasing evidence of challenge from within clinical psychology through practice based evidence theories emphasizing people's experiences over scientifically measured evidence (Duncan et al., 2000). Further challenge comes from quantum physics which suggests that it is not possible to measure a thing without changing it in some way (Moultrie, 2012). Quantum physicists have begun developing models of consciousness based on uncertainty principles (Stapp, 1995, 2006). The theories of quantum physics have been briefly mentioned in this thesis to assist understanding of the observing mind, particularly the link between pure awareness and the conditioned mind. Similarly, the Eastern philosophical notion of unconditioned awareness puts mindfulness beyond all measurements, including psychological and neuropsychological measurements (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 1989; The Dalai Lama, 1997, 2002a).

Other methodologies with the potential to facilitate the incorporation of mindfulness into clinical psychology include further adaptations from philosophical hermeneutics (Gadamer, 1995; Heidegger, 1952), mindfulness philosophies and practices (Kabat-Zinn,

1994, 2003), practice based outcomes (Duncan et al., 2000) and quantum physics (Moultrie, 2012; Stapp, 1995, 2006).

#### **4.2. Objectivity**

The notion of objectivity, which is an important aspect of clinical practice of Western psychology, is based on the positive philosophies which suggest that one should remain free from personal opinions, emotion and a priori commitments while uncovering reality or truth. These philosophies forbid subjective experience (Crotty, 1998) maintaining duality between the subject and object.

However, mindfulness philosophies, which offer their own understanding of subjectivity, provide the solution to the problems of 'subjectivity' without creating duality. According to Osho (1988, 1989) and Krishnamurti (1993, 1994), subjectivity is created when one identifies with the conditioned mind. But when one is in a state of mindfulness, one is not identified with the thoughts; mental thoughts are viewed as events rather than reality, which overcome subjectivity. (Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1988, 2006, 2009a; The Dalai Lama, 1997). In this state of mindfulness, understandings which arise from the intelligence of awareness are closer to reality because they exist in the moment to moment reality. In this way, mindfulness makes the dualistic subjectivity-objectivity notion redundant, paving the way for clinical psychology to further broaden its methodologies.

In the clinical practice of psychology, 'objectivity' through mindfulness can be achieved when both clinician and client practice meditation (Kabat-Zinn, 2003) and engage with each other in a mindful way. When clinicians are mindful, they become more aware of their own judgments and can overcome transference and counter-transference. This also helps them to be more 'present' with the client enabling better listening, more effective relationships and improved client outcomes. When clients are mindful, they can also better recognize and report mental events, process and outcomes (Baer, 2003, 2006).

Thus mindfulness can help both clinician and client in producing data which could assist in further development of ‘practice based evidence.’

#### **4.3. Secularism and clinical psychology**

The notion of secularism, which is inherently a dualistic notion between science and religion, emerges from science’s opposition to the religious paradigm (Hoyoake, 1871). In order to maintain its secular status, clinical psychology excludes concepts/theories/practices which have religious connotations. This aspect of the discussion seeks to clarify the status of mindfulness in regard to its affiliation with Buddhism and/or other Eastern religions. The explication of the Eastern philosophies has argued that mindfulness is a non-religious philosophy; non-dualistic mindfulness is an experience based philosophy and practice rather than a belief based religion (duality) (Batchelor, 1997; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Osho, 1977a, 1989; Wilber, 1997, 2000). Thus, mindfulness through making the duality of secularism-religion redundant provides a way of overcoming the divide between East and West. It could therefore assist clinical psychology to move from duality and opposition to religion, to non-dual awareness. In clinical practice, clinicians and clients could use their unconditional observations to better understand their values and experiences.

Hence, in combination, the differing methodologies of mindfulness, quantum physics and empirical methods have the potential to complement one another and enrich the field of clinical psychology. Clinical psychology, by overcoming the limitations of measurement, objectivity and secularism, could become more non-dualistic and therefore more understanding of awareness.

This thesis has also addressed some of the difficulties in fully understanding mindfulness by developing a methodology and method which are underpinned by the Eastern as well as Western philosophical principles and practices (Crotty, 1998; Gadamer, 1995; Gross et al., 2009; Krishnamurti, 1993, 1994; Mueller-Vollmer, 2002; Osho, 1988, 1989; Zhang,

2006). The research approach, termed mindfulness hermeneutics, was used to yield insights not previously possible through the use of the Eastern or Western methods alone.

I am arguing that the successful integration of awareness into clinical psychology requires expansion of current methodologies. If methodologies are adopted in the way suggested, mindfulness theories and practices can be used alongside existing methodology in clinical assessment, intervention and evaluation. The use of mindfulness as an intervention will require the regular practice of mindfulness by both clinician and client, a proposal supported by other theorists (Kabat-Zinn 2003).

Thus, ongoing practice of meditation will be mandatory for clinicians who choose to use mindfulness as therapy. However, before this practice is sanctioned by governing professional bodies, research evidence for the efficacy of a practitioner's own mindfulness practice will be required.

In summary, the successful and meaningful integration of mindfulness into clinical psychology is dependent upon integration of underpinning non-dualistic and dualistic methodologies and methods. I have argued that full integration of non-dualistic mindfulness philosophies and practice into clinical psychology requires expansion of methodology and a worldview that overcomes the limitations of measurement, objectivity and secularism. The successful integration of methodologies and methods will yield deeper understandings of the structure and functioning of mind and better assessment, intervention and evaluation tools. Deeper understandings of the structure and functioning of mind will revolutionize the formulations and treatments of psychopathology (suffering) by centring the formulations and treatments and evaluation on clinician and client's unconditioned awareness. The important contribution of this project has been the elucidation of the structure and mechanism of the conditioned mind. This has provided insight into conditioning and meta-conditioning, the causes of psychopathology and how mindfulness practice reverses conditioning and meta-conditioning to facilitate pure awareness.



I have argued that if mindfulness is separated from its underpinning philosophies and worldviews and simply added to dualistic psychological methods, it will undermine and destroy ‘the third wave of evolution.’

## **5. Limitations and recommendations for further research**

This project has explored a myriad of complex ideas, concepts, notions and philosophies originating from two opposing worldviews. Many of these notions have yet to be explored in depth. However, some of the understandings explicated in this thesis could function as a catalyst for expansion or refutation by future researchers. I particularly recommend further development of notions relevant to the structure and functioning of mind. The notion of subtle mind is a new concept for clinical psychology and will require further exploration and understandings of how ego maintains intentionality. There is also a need to explore questions such as: ‘How does ego maintain constant desire?’ ‘What is the relationship between desiring and values?’ ‘What is the relationship between ego and energy?’

The notion of observing mind will also require further explication. Future research may focus on the quantum mechanics of awareness working alongside quantum physicists. These researchers may be able to explicate the mechanism through which pure awareness turns into conditioned observations by asking questions such as ‘how are ego or subtle ego able to make observations?’

Finally, future researchers may focus on understanding ‘whether awareness can exist independent of a being?’ and ‘if awareness is capable of becoming aware of itself?’ Research of this nature will require a shift in the way human beings understand reality. The new genre of researchers may have to cultivate dedicated and sustained practice of mindfulness in the same way as scientists spend years in their laboratories.

## **6. Conclusion**

In conclusion, this thesis has been an evolutionary process which has transformed me as a person, practitioner and researcher. As a person, this journey has been an awakening and an attunement to a reality that has been dormant under the slumber of my conditioning. This has not made me any better or worse, good or bad or right or wrong. It has provided significant insight into a life in which many polarities merge and are accepted for what they are without struggle.

As a practitioner, apart from increased use of the knowledge, understandings and skills of mindfulness, I am more present with clients during therapeutic sessions. My relationships with clients are becoming more empathetic, compassionate and there is increased mutual respect in the relationship.

As a researcher, I have been able to illuminate new understandings in mindfulness theory and practice. These have been achieved through three ‘breakthrough’ endeavours: (1) beginning to develop a methodology and method which can satisfactorily examine philosophies, theories and practices emerging from both dualistic and non-dualistic worldviews; (2) explicating understandings of mind which lead to the development of meditation, and (3) moving beyond historical and philosophical bases of mindfulness.

This thesis modified philosophical hermeneutics to develop an approach which could more effectively explore dualistic as well as non-dualistic philosophies, theories and practices. This required underpinning the hermeneutic approach with philosophical principles drawn from both dualistic and non-dualistic philosophies. To further accommodate the non-dualistic worldviews, the ‘mindfulness hermeneutics’ method involved ongoing practice of meditation integrated with philosophical hermeneutics. In this way, mindfulness hermeneutics was able to explicate from meditative insights which enhanced the interpretation.

The explication of the understandings of mind responsible for the development of mindfulness practices further elucidated the etiology of psychopathology. In doing so, it explicated a model of the conditioned mind that further delineated its structures and mechanisms. A synthesis between the mindfulness theories and cognitive and behavioural theories demonstrated that the conditioned mind has three key components i.e. the automatic mind, the subtle mind and the observing mind, which function autonomously.

The automatic mind, which functions constantly and automatically within the limits of the conditioned cognition, emotions and feelings, results in psychopathology because of failure to understand moment to moment unfolding reality. Furthermore, people are identified or meta-conditioned with the automatically occurring cognitions which contribute to the development of psychopathology. The subtle mind which arises out of the automatic and constant functioning of the automatic mind is dominated by ego. Through the intentionality inherent in itself, ego boosts the autonomy of the conditioned mind, enabling it to dominate awareness and further contributing to the development of psychopathology. The observing mind which is dominated by subtle ego is responsible for executing awareness. However, the subtle ego, which acts as an observer, turns unconditional observations or awareness into conditional observations and also contributes to psychopathology. In this way, the conditioned mind dominates awareness which according to the Eastern philosophies is the main cause of psychopathology.

Mindfulness theory suggests that some forms of psychological illness can be ameliorated through the practice of meditation by clients and clinicians. Meditations can be performed through many techniques; however the mechanism involved in meditation techniques can be narrowed to: (1) purposeful regulation of attention in the present moment reality non-judgmentally; (2) purposeful generation and regulation of energy and regulation of attention to it; (3) witnessing, and (4) unconditional observation. The purpose of meditation is to develop unconditioned awareness.

The awareness which arises out of meditation is ultimately responsible for de-conditioning the mind which occurs over a period of time. The process of de-conditioning passes through many stages ultimately leading to the unconditioned mind. When mind functions through pure awareness, ignorance and suffering are ameliorated, inducing peace, joy and understanding.

Current developments within the field of clinical psychology are loosely engaged with mindfulness theory and practice. However, critical parts of mindfulness i.e. awareness, are yet to be fully understood and incorporated within the field of clinical psychology. The partial inclusion of mindfulness theory and practice within clinical psychology can be attributed to the limitation caused by the methodologies that underpin clinical psychology. This thesis has argued that methodological shortcomings can be overcome by redefining scientific principles by borrowing from quantum physics and the Eastern philosophies to provide deeper understanding of (1) the structure and mechanism of mind, (1) awareness, and (3) integration of mindfulness within clinical psychology, to provide more effective clinical interventions.

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