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**MEMBERS AREA**

**'RC DAILY DOSE'**  
**Volume 27**

**Instructions :** The **RC Daily Dose** is a set of 20 excellent RC practice questions, with detailed solutions. Normally every day, one such set will be uploaded into the MEMBERS AREA. These are PDF files and can be saved on your computer. Enjoy!

**PASSAGE – 1**

In one sense, mindfulness refers to a clear, lucid quality of awareness of the everyday experiences of life. Much of ordinary life is spent in abstractions and fantasies about what might happen or abstractions and fantasies about what has happened. We seldom live in the present, the only fully real moment. If you are eating an ice cream cone and become more vividly, mindfully aware of just what that tastes like right now, instead of being lost in thoughts about past and future ice cream cones, leading on to thoughts far removed from ice cream cones, you are being more mindful.

In another sense, mindfulness refers to a clear quality of awareness as applied to deeper and more subtle processes of the mind. For example : As I attempt to be clearly and directly aware of my ongoing bodily sensations while practicing vipassana meditation, I might suddenly note that there is a covert belief or bias operating at the fringes of my awareness but exerting some control over that awareness. Perhaps it is a belief that certain kinds of body sensations are "better" or "more meditative" than another kind. This may lead to the insight that covert biases are generally operating in all of my life experiences. I have been mindful in the second sense of the word, seeing a more subtle level of mental functioning.

In a third sense, mindfulness refers to what we might call awareness of being aware, to full self-consciousness. I do not mean self-consciousness in the ordinary use of the term to mean feeling awkward and inhibited because of internal doubts, or because of superego processes, but rather self-consciousness in the sense of not being completely absorbed in or totally identified with the content of ongoing experience: some part of the mind, a "neutral observer" or "fair witness," remains aware, in a relatively objective way, of the nature of ongoing experience as related to immediate here and now existence. As I sit here typing, for example, I can be completely absorbed in what I am writing, such that only strong sensory stimuli can manage to attract my attention, or I can remember myself to use Gurdjieff's term: thus, a nonordinary part of myself is aware that most of me is absorbed in the writing task but I simultaneously know that I am sitting in a bouncing van on my way to the university, portable computer in my lap, hearing other conversations on the periphery of my awareness, having a body with many sensations in it, and so on. I am mindful in the sense of being clearly aware of what is happening while simultaneously being aware that I am aware of these things. I remember myself.

In a fourth sense, mindfulness can be described as a continuous and precise awareness of the process of being aware, such that a thought is recognized at the time as a thought, a perception as a perception, an emotion as an emotion, a fantasy as a fantasy, and so on, rather than mistaking a thought or emotion or fantasy for a perception. In practice the four senses of mindfulness mentioned above often overlap. Too, verbal definitions can only point at mindfulness, not adequately capture it. My focus in this article becomes the question : How can we maintain some or all aspects of mindfulness outside a retreat situation, in the complexity and turmoil of ordinary life?

I have been attempting to cultivate mindfulness, especially the self-remembering kind, for a number of years, with varying degrees of success. One of the most interesting observations I and others doing this practice have made about it is that it is not at all difficult to be mindful in most circumstances. A tiny effort, a small shift of attention is all it takes. What is difficult is to remember to make that effort!

Both Buddhism and the Gurdjieff work emphasize that our minds are ordinarily driven and controlled by the circumstances we find ourselves in, so that in practice we live mindlessly in samsara, or a kind of waking dream, instead of mindfully in the here and now. Buddhism frequently expresses this in terms of the influence of past karma determining our fate. Gurdjieff expresses it as the mechanicalness of ordinary life, that we are best understood as machines driven by outside forces. Such mindless experiencing and acting leads to maladaptive behavior, which in turn creates useless suffering and more mechanical karma. Modern psychological discoveries lend strong support to this position, although they do not operate within a mindfulness framework. While the long-term goal of both disciplines is to develop a continual mindfulness that is independent of outside circumstances, our focus here is on the development of mindfulness for those of us at the beginning of the path, where external circumstances are important in aiding or hindering our work. We begin with a consideration of some of the effects of working in a group.

1. Which of the following would best reflect the author's contention, as brought out in the passage ?

- (1) Mindfulness is awareness of being aware and refers to full self-consciousness.
- (2) It is not easy to be mindful in most circumstances.
- (3) Mental alertness is reinforced by mindfulness.
- (4) Concentration is strengthened by being mindful.

2. *As per the passage, all of the following are false, except that :*
  - (1) mindfulness is mistaking a thought for perception.
  - (2) all the four senses of mindfulness do not overlap and are distinct.
  - (3) mindfulness can be explained, though not experienced.
  - (4) a sense of taste best describes the state of being mindful.
3. *As per the passage, mindfulness :*
  - (1) relates to everyday experiences of life.
  - (2) is about seeing a more subtle level of mental functioning.
  - (3) recognises a thought as a thought, a fantasy as a fantasy.
  - (4) All of the above.
4. *As per the passage, the Buddhist viewpoint is that :*
  - (1) one does what the mind dictates.
  - (2) the condition of the mind is determined by one's past deeds that determine the fate.
  - (3) human actions reflect one's mental condition.
  - (4) All of the above.
5. *As per the passage, man :*
  - (1) spends most of his life seldomly in present, the only fully real moment.
  - (2) revels in the glory of the past.
  - (3) is worrisome about the future.
  - (4) indulges in useless pursuits.
6. *Which of the following is not true, according to the passage ?*
  - (1) Mindfulness refers to a clear quality of awareness, as applicable to deeper and more subtle processes of the mind.
  - (2) Mindfulness is not in mistaking a thought for a perception.
  - (3) Mindfulness also reflects a person's feeling of awkwardness and inhibitions because of internal doubts or superego processes.
  - (4) None of the above.
7. *According to the passage, Gurdjieff entertains the viewpoint that :*
  - (1) a person's mind is too complicated for human comprehension.
  - (2) it is easy to be mindful in most circumstances.
  - (3) man is a bundle of effects of deeds done in previous births.
  - (4) man is a machine driven by outside forces.
8. *A suitable title for the passage is :*

(1) Understanding Mindfulness.	(2) Mindfulness As Self Consciousness.
(3) Mindfulness Connotes Internal Doubts.	(4) Maladaptive Behaviour.
9. *The author has handled the passage :*

(1) intuitively.	(2) informatively.
(2) interrogatively.	(4) inadequately.
10. *The passage is an extract from :*
  - (1) a chapter in the book on Moral Science for High School students.
  - (2) the treatise on psychology.
  - (3) works comparing philosophies and perceptions of different thinkers.
  - (4) a thesis of a scholar working on the philosophical angle of the workings of the mind.

## PASSAGE – 2

There is a kind of solitaire card game, a slightly modified version of the very popular Klondike solitaire, that I played frequently as a child. While needing to keep busy through some stressful waiting periods recently, I discovered that it can be an excellent mindfulness training technique. The very idea of playing cards to cultivate mindfulness has some shock value in itself! I find Klondike solitaire an excellent mindfulness-training exercise at an intermediate level of difficulty, excellent for transferring mindfulness to ordinary life. Other forms of solitaire games would probably work as well.

The game itself requires that you pay attention to what cards are up and their numerical and color relations to each other. You must be alert to potential plays, because it is a disqualifying error to skip a possible play. You must occasionally make strategic decisions about which of two or more possible moves is better. You must deal the cards properly and play through the remainder of the deck (by threes) over and over again until you either win or are stuck with no further moves. The physical world around you

may provide distractions from the game, but you must not miss plays. Compared to classical vipassana meditation, considerable activity of physical motion, counting, and decision-making is added, thus moving closer to life.

To work on paying adequate attention to the game and playing to win, while maintaining mindfulness, is very rich, but not as overwhelming as ordinary social interaction. Observations of transient mental and emotional phenomena that apply in many areas of life is possible in this rich situation, as I will illustrate by describing a typical experiential sequence for me.

I am mindful that I am sitting at a table, seeing the room around me, hearing the sound the cards make as I shuffle them, feeling the coordinated hand motions necessary to shuffle them. I must count out the first seven cards to form my playing field. The count tends to develop an inertia and rhythm of its own. Can I remain mindful, or do I get pulled into the counting activity so much that I lose track of my immediate sensory impressions? Impatience to get the game set up manifests, urging me to deal faster. Can I remain mindful and keep an even pace? Or might I deal faster but still try to be mindful during the faster deal? Could I deliberately deal slower as a way of increasing my impatience, so I can better observe it? Can I remember to be aware of the tactile qualities of each card as I deal it, being mindful of the fact that I am aware of these qualities, that I am directing my attention to be mindful?

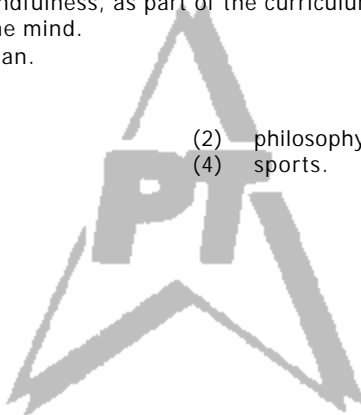
I finish dealing and see that I have no aces to go up top and all black cards up; nothing can play on anything else. A flash of disappointment wells up! Can I stay mindful of this emotion, perhaps taste its flavor precisely? I start going through the remaining deck by threes, and red cards that play on the black cards on the playing row start turning up. I get excited, mindfulness starts slipping as my attention gets constellated into the good feeling that I am on a winning streak! The touch of the cards, the sound they make as I play them, and my peripheral field of vision all start to narrow and become lost. Oops, stay mindful with that feeling. A little attention and again I feel the cards in my hands, hear their sounds, see the table I am sitting at while still feeling the excitement over the idea of a winning streak, see my attraction to the excitement, remain mindful that I am experiencing these things.

But after the initial run nothing plays for a while. My thoughts tell me that I am going to be stuck; I will lose this hand. The disappointed feeling starts sucking my attention in, but I see the feeling and manage to maintain mindfulness. Yes, the disappointing feeling is associated with a desire to hurry, be less aware, get it over with if I am going to lose anyway. I lose mindfulness for a minute again and come back just in time to see that a run of plays has again excited me. I am going to win! Lose mindfulness for half a minute in the attachment/absorption in the idea of winning, then manage to get mindfulness back. I remember, doesn't Buddhism say something about the transience of feelings? Each was eternal when I lost mindfulness and was absorbed in it, yet I see they come and go like the wind as the play of the cards changes.

If I am making this sound exciting, it can indeed be when you are mindful enough to see this rapid play of emotion! This solitaire play situation is parallel to much human interaction. You are engaged in "games," structured interactions with rules. The initial "deals" of the games excite or depress you, your spirits rise and fall with the momentary course of the interaction, and mindfulness and absorption come and go. The "emotional stakes" are generally much higher when you are playing with another human, though, instead of in this artificial situation with a deck of cards. A more advanced form of this exercise would involve actual two-person card games, so the human interaction component is added.

11. *All of the following are true, according to the passage, except that :*
- (1) Klondike solitaire is an excellent mindfulness training exercise.
  - (2) the solitaire play situation is parallel to human interaction.
  - (3) Klondike solitaire involves considerable activity of physical motion, counting and decision making.
  - (4) None of the above.
12. *As per the passage, Klondike solitaire :*
- (1) is a game meant for passing time.
  - (2) is a game in which one becomes shrewd and clever.
  - (3) is a game excellent for transferring mindfulness to ordinary life.
  - (4) a time consuming activity.
13. *As per the passage, which of the following is not true ?*
- (1) Ordinary social interaction is more richer than paying adequate attention to Klodike solitaire and playing to win.
  - (2) 'Emotional' stakes are higher when playing with another human being than with a deck of cards.
  - (3) The solitaire play situation is not parallel to human interaction.
  - (4) The initial outcome of the solitaire game excites or depresses a person.
14. *The game of Klondike solitaire, as per the passage, approximates best to life because :*
- (1) decision making is added.
  - (2) of the state of excitement and depression.
  - (3) mindfulness and absorption come and go.
  - (4) All of the above.

15. *All of the following are false, with respect to the passage, except that :*
- (1) there is no strategy or a forethought involved in the game of Klondike solitaire.
  - (2) the game cannot be a simulation of the happenings of life.
  - (3) the idea of playing cards to cultivate mindfulness is radical.
  - (4) the game of Klondike solitaire can promote gambling.
16. *The passage suggests the Klondike solitaire game to overcome :*
- (1) nervousness and lack of confidence.
  - (2) moments and situations of some stressful waiting.
  - (3) rivalry and generate geniality.
  - (4) lack of foresight and vision.
17. *A suitable title for the passage is :*
- (1) Mindfulness Is Different From The Game Of Klondike Solitaire.
  - (2) "Emotional stakes" In The Deck Of Cards.
  - (3) Mindfulness As Different From Life.
  - (4) Cards Are Like Thoughts.
18. *The author, to explain the ideas in the passage, has used the mode of :*
- (1) description.
  - (2) eulogy.
  - (3) analogy.
  - (4) conjecture.
19. *The passage is an extract from :*
- (1) a column in the newspaper regarding tips to win the card game.
  - (2) an article on training exercise of mindfulness, as part of the curriculum of a workshop organised on mindfulness.
  - (3) a write up about the instability of the mind.
  - (4) an analysis of social behaviour of man.
20. *The passage relates to the field of :*
- (1) biology.
  - (2) philosophy.
  - (3) psychology.
  - (4) sports.



## Detailed Solutions

1. **Ans.(1).** The third paragraph in the opening line states and upholds option (1). Self-conscious is an index of mindfulness. Options (2), (3) and (4) find no mention and can be sidelined.
2. **Ans.(3).** Options (1), (2) and (4) find no place in the passage and are false. Option (3) is true as the fourth paragraph states it. Hence option (3) is the one sought.
3. **Ans.(4).** Each of the options (1), (2) and (3) find their place in the passage. The first, second and the fourth paragraphs all state and uphold them. Hence all of them are sought, however, option (4), their combination, is the best one.
4. **Ans.(2).** Options (1) and (3) find no place in the passage. The last paragraph states and upholds option (2). One's past deeds are responsible for the person's mental condition. Option (2) is thus the one sought.
5. **Ans.(1).** Option (1) is stated in the opening paragraph of the passage. It is true that man seldom lives in the present, the only fully real moment. Options (2), (3) and (4) are not what the passage states and can be ignored.
6. **Ans.(3).** Options (1) and (2) are not the desired ones, as they are true and found in the second and the fourth paragraphs respectively. Option (3) is false, for the passage, in the third paragraph, states the opposite of what is stated in this option. Option (3), thus, is the sought one.
7. **Ans.(4).** None of the options (1), (2) and (3) is true as the passage does not state or uphold them. The last paragraph states and upholds option (4), which is the one sought.
8. **Ans.(1).** Clearly option (1) is the suitable title for the passage. The passage is about mindfulness and the different ways of understanding it. Options (2), (3) and (4) are not reflected in the passage and are not suitable titles.
9. **Ans.(2).** The passage is informative, as different ways of comprehending mindfulness are indicated. Each and every angle has been dealt with, in detail. Option (2) is thus the sought one. The remaining options are not in place.
10. **Ans.(4).** Options (1) and (2) are unsuitable sources of extraction of the passage. Option (3) is not the best source of extraction, although it is a good source, and pales out before option (4), which is the best one.
11. **Ans.(4).** Each of the options (1), (2) and (3) finds its place in the passage. The first paragraph, the last paragraph and the second paragraph state and uphold them. Hence none of them is false, making option (4), the apt one.
12. **Ans.(3).** Options (1), (2), and (4) do not find a place in the passage. Option (3) is the correct one, for the first paragraph states and upholds it. Option (3) is the appropriate one.
13. **Ans.(3).** Options (1), (2) and (4) are in place. The third and the last paragraph state and uphold them. Option (3) is refuted as the opening line in the last paragraph states the opposite of it. The option sought is therefore (3).
14. **Ans.(4).** Each of the options (1), (2), and (3) finds a mention in the passage. The second and the last paragraphs make a mention of them. Hence all of them are reasons for the game of Klondike solitaire approximating life closely. However, option (4), a combination of options (1), (2) and (3), is the perfect pick.
15. **Ans.(3).** The search is for that option which is correct. Options (1), (2) and (4) are not correct. They are not stated in the passage, direct or implicit. Option (3) is in place, for the opening paragraph states and sustains it. Option (3) is the one sought.
16. **Ans.(2).** Each of the options (1), (3) and (4) are untrue as no mention of them is made in the passage. Option (2) is in place as the second line of the opening paragraph suggests. Hence option (2) is the one sought.
17. **Ans.(2).** The passage has described Klondike solitaire as a game of cards, whose playing is compared to facing situations in real life. 'Emotional' currents like excitement and depression, rise and fall of spirits, which are the outcome of the win or loss of the game have real life simulations. Option (2) beautifully represents this and passes off as the most suitable title for the passage. The remaining options are unsuitable titles.
18. **Ans.(3).** Clearly, it is option (3). The technique of analogy is used to explain mindfulness. Engrossment in mindfulness is likened to that of playing Klondike solitaire. The remaining options are incorrect, as the author has not used them.
19. **Ans.(2).** Clearly option (2) is the source from where the passage could have been extracted. The remaining options are not correct and can be rejected.
20. **Ans.(3).** The passage is about psychology. Mindfulness and its regulation form the theme of the passage. Option (3) best denotes this and is appropriate. The remaining options are not correct.

## Answer Keys

11.(4)	12.(3)	13.(3)	14.(4)	15.(3)	16.(2)	17.(2)	18.(3)	19.(2)	20.(3)
1.(1)	2.(3)	3.(4)	4.(2)	5.(1)	6.(3)	7.(4)	8.(1)	9.(2)	10.(4)