

# 7 Steps to Mindful Tracking

By George Leoniak

## **Introduction: Mindful Tracking**

These 7 steps boil down the skill of tracking to its most basic essence. Essentially, the essence of tracking goes beyond the notion of it even being a skill, and it has much to do with mindfulness and awareness in general. I call it Mindful Tracking, because at the heart of tracking is non-judgmental, open observation of what's happening in the present moment.

These steps which are intend to be taken one day at a time merge into one step that really becomes no step in each moment. I recommend being with each of these steps for a day. Let the steps soak in over the course of the next 7 days to see what they'er pointing towards, and then when you've completed 7 days go back throught them again for the following week until they

start to become automatic in all situations. During the first week of 5 supporting videos, I'll be going into more detail for each of the steps, and giving some additional exercises to utilize for each step. So, let's get started with the most important step on the next page. (note this page is left intentionally blank, for an important reason, so don't skip to the next step. Be with the blank page in your awareness for the day. It's actually saying a lot).

## **Step 1:**

## **Step 2: Become Aware of Something**

I don't want to start this program by filling your cup. Step 1 is exactly where we're going with mindful tracking. Pretty basic stuff right, well I don't want to leave you at step 1 just yet. Let's peel back the layers over the next few days and see what happens.

Today, I want you to take the time to become aware of something. You can do this throughout the day if you like, but really pay attention to the thing you selected. This can be something you see, hear, smell, touch, or taste. Many of these things will seem to be "outside" of you, but also spend some time paying attention to what's happening "inside" you. Take it one step further and also pay attention to the reactions you have about what your doing.

Just be with whatever you're observing. Simply become aware of it. Stretch yourself to find something that seemed to be outside of your awareness at the time. You could set aside a time and place to do this step, but also do it spontaneously. You might even find yourself spontaneously doing it without deciding to do it.

### **Step 3: What's There?**

During step 2 you may have found that what you became aware of was quickly followed up by the words used to describe it.

Trees in a forest, wheels on a car, dust on a piano, plane in the air, stranger on the bus, track in the mud, shirt on my back, grumble in my belly, or the thoughts in my head. That's what's there, right? This process of identifying and interpreting what we become aware of almost seems to go hand-in-hand, so much so, that the majority of the time we are unconscious of it happening.

Today, become aware of the link between what you observe and the ideas you have associated with it. Whatever you do, don't pretend to break the link by trying to not associate your ideas with what you see. In fact, I want you to go the opposite route.

I want you to observe something, note your ideas about it, and then find out what other people think about. Do this by asking someone, reading something, searching the web etc. See if you can learn something about it that you did not already know. Find some different perspectives and ask yourself; what's there now?

## **Step 4: Notice Changes**

What perspectives did you come across? Did you agree, disagree or remain neutral? Did you learn anything new? Did you notice any change in your perspective? As we engage with various perspectives we might be able to notice how malleable our own perspective is or isn't. In this process it's quite easy to lose sight of what we were observing in the first place, and begin to just see it through the perspective.

Today, let's notice the perspectives that come up while being aware of something, recognize them for what they are and just continue to observe. You might find that perspectives will come and go as you're observing, but the observation behind the perspectives did not come and go.

Be with observation for the day, and remember this observation can happen anywhere, we really do not need to set time aside to "do" it. But, for this step I want you to immerse yourself in what you're seeing, hearing, smelling etc. So, if you're looking at a sofa, notice the changes in the weave of the fabric, the colors that make the shape, look at it in relationship to what's around it, notice the shadows etc. etc. etc. Lose yourself in observation, notice the changes, and then take a nap on the sofa!

## **Step 5: What Is It Really?**

What are all those things that I've been asking you to become aware of? We've had ideas about them, searched for various perspectives, and observed them deeply. So, what are they really? What's behind the idea? That might be a hard one to answer, and "I don't know" is a perfectly acceptable answer. We can leave it at that for now, since we're not looking for that answer. Instead, we just want to push to the limit of what we think is there.

Let's turn that question inwards on ourselves, and ask what is this sense of self really? So far, much of what we've done has been primarily focused on the things around us, but that does not change anything when we turn the question inwardly. Remember the observation that we discussed yesterday? The observation that did not come or go, but seemed to be there as the various perspectives entered and exited that still point of observation.

This still point of observation is the same regardless of whether we perceive on the inside or outside. What is this observation then? Sit with that question today as you explore your inner and outer world, observe and see what comes up.

## **Step 6: See the Assumptions**

Do you have an answer to what that still point of observation is? Maybe you started off with some ideas about it. Could you settle on one idea that summed it up? If you had a hard time finding a definitive answer than you probably saw the limited nature of assumptions. Even if you looked up the latest research on what observation is, does it define that stillness? Is the assumption, even if it might be correct, the real thing or is it an approximation; the best guess?

We communicate through assumptions, we often view others and ourselves through assumptions, we engage in our world with assumptions, but that does not mean they're always correct. However, they can often become thought of as the way things are, and become fixed notions of what's there.

Throughout these steps I've been asking you to become aware of and observe things. The notion presented is "you" are doing it. Now, that's not entirely how I've wanted you to take it. The idea of yourself becoming more aware is just an assumption created by yourself about yourself. Let's be with that today and see what happens.



## **Step 7: Openness**

We left off yesterday pointing at how the self was directing the self to become more aware. There's a division created within itself. I've been asking you to create this division by asking you to become aware of something and look at your assumptions about it. Within that activity of becoming more aware there's a chance that the division can be revealed.

Were these steps prompting you to give up assumptions? No. Do I want you to continue to observe things and have assumptions? Yes. So, what now? If the division that was created by thought within thought is seen, and it's revealed as being responsible for creating the self that was trying to direct its thoughts, then what was once thought of as fact about oneself and other might now float in openness as nothing more than assumptions that are free to change.

Now I can't say this without it coming across as an assumption, but here it goes anyway; openness emerges in you, yet it was there the whole time, blocked by an assumption created by thought about itself. When that's seen all that can be said now is go back to step 1, and be with that! Maybe there's been a change.