

HOW OUR THINKING WORKS

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Most people would like to be able to stop thinking about thought that is undesirable or unnecessary but they find it hard to accomplish. Also most people would like to have wiser and more intelligent thought so they could live a better life. These are all good ideas but without a practical way to accomplish them they are not of much help to us.

There is a pivotal point in understanding thought that appears to be unimportant but turns out to be profoundly important. We have the misperception that thought and the feeling of thought can be separated. Realistically, it is impossible to separate feeling from thought. The feeling of the thought defines the meaning of the thought. The fact that no one can think love and feel hate in the same moment or vice versa is a constant example of the principle of thought that is true every time we think.

This single misunderstanding about thought creates unnecessary and unwanted thinking that diminishes the opportunity for wiser and more intelligent thought. It also creates barriers to dropping thought. When we artificially separate thought and feeling, it creates the possibility that the way we feel is being caused by a source other than our thinking in the moment. It is at this exact point that we part with logic. We misplace power outside ourselves and we become distracted by and reactive to imagined other reasons for the way we feel. We think about

this other source as if it is real and we focus on it. We forget that thought and the feeling of thought cannot be separated. We get distracted by this thinking. We then take our focus off the power of thought as the source of why we feel the way we feel. It is like thinking it would be ok to separate driving and being in control of the car. Driving without realizing that you are in control of the car would be a disaster. It would be like driving and getting distracted from watching the road because we were focused on something else. This would not be a wise way to drive and it is not a wise way to think.

When we do not separate our feelings from thought we have an opportunity to take advantage of our feeling feedback system to alert us about how our thinking works. We learn where our thinking takes us and what that feels like. We intelligently embrace some thinking and drop other thinking. This understanding *itself* empowers us to be self correcting advocates for ourselves rather than living in reaction to outside sources. Each time we understand it is always our thinking creating our feeling it eliminates other possibilities as distractions. We naturally and logically are enabled to drop unnecessary and unwanted thought. We then have more space in our minds for the newness of insight and wisdom.

It does not appear that understanding this basic simple principle about the inseparable nature of thought and feeling could really matter or make a difference. In fact it is life changing.

Keith Blevens, Ph.D. is a licensed clinical psychologist with degrees from Indiana University and Texas Technological University. He first met Sydney Banks in 1977. He has taught the Three Principles in businesses, neuropsychiatric hospitals, rape treatment, community mental health and private practice. He has been an adjunct faculty member at six universities and Director of a major university counseling center. He has served as a teacher, trainer and consultant to executives, businesses, organizations, psychologists, helping professionals, individuals, couples and families.

Valda Monroe is a Three Principles counselor, consultant and teacher. She first met Sydney Banks in 1977. She has been married to Keith Blevens for thirty-two years and they have been collaborating on Three Principle projects throughout that time. They have a daughter, Mattie, who is 23 years old.

Keith is currently working on a book that Sydney Banks asked him to write which includes an interview with the late Sydney Banks. Keith and Valda can be reached through their e-mail, keithblevens@gmail.com. Sydney Banks' Three Principles materials can be found at sydneybanks.org then click on Lone Pine Publishing.

Keith Blevens, Ph.D.

Keith began his professional career as a Clinical Psychologist having earned his undergraduate degree from Indiana University and his Ph.D. from the APA approved program at Texas Tech University. He has been a Licensed Clinical Psychologist since 1975. In those earlier years Keith served severe and chronic populations in Veterans Administration Hospitals and Rural Community Mental Health Centers. Keith's depth of caring set him on a search for a better way to help.

William James, considered the father of psychology, wrote in 1910 that a discovery of true psychological principles would be more important to the world than any discovery in history. In 1977 Keith was one of the first psychologists to meet with Sydney Banks and to hear for the first time the psychological principles James prophesized. Since that time Keith has been at the forefront of bringing this principled understanding of psychology to the world.

Keith was a founding member of the first faculty formed to teach the Three Principles to helping professionals. He was Clinical Director of the Minneapolis Institute of Mental Health, one of the earliest Principle-based clinics and then became the Director of Psychological Services at Baylor University. In 1994, he and his family moved to Washington where he joined the staff of Pransky and Associates. Keith now also works in private practice travelling around the US and world as a premiere teacher of this understanding to businesses, helping professionals, individuals, couples and families. He is currently working on a book which includes writing by Sydney Banks which *Syd* he gave to Keith shortly before he passed away. Keith has been married to Valda Monroe for 33 years and they collaborate on a wide variety of Principle-based projects. Their daughter Mattie is 24 years old and still loves to visit with her parents whenever she can.