

# Preface

This book presents chapters on Langerian mindfulness and its implications. The book also serves as a festschrift for Professor Langer who has brought a new horizon of being, living, and thinking for the world thus presenting an opportunity for us to be able to experience our world, ourselves, and our relationships more positively. Langerian mindfulness challenges our mindlessly accepted “truths” and shows the profound benefits of living mindfully.

Dr. Ellen, J. Langer may be described as one of the most revolutionary psychologists of our era. She revolutionizes psychology through bringing focus on the most saliently distinguishable human gift, namely thinking. Through hundreds of papers, experiments and books, she argues that thinking is too often shut down. This internal mode of closure comes on the strength of priming and the general state of mindlessness. The external process behind this mindlessness comes through our institutions including our educational systems, governmental agencies, and politics.

Langerian mindfulness is creational, critical, and creative. It is creational in that it opens up new chapters and novel avenues of exploration in psychological science. It is critical as it revisits and occasionally revamps the dominant mainstream paradigm. It is creative as it provides how a shift in paradigm of mainstream psychology unlocks the exploration of epistemologies, creating possibilities which may have been marginalized or concealed due to our general mindlessness.

Langerian mindfulness starts off with the foundational problems of thinking but it moves forward with a revision of our predetermined knowledge about thinking. It calls for scrutinizing the discourse of certainty both in content and methodology.

Ellen Langer’s contributions may be best seen in the piece right after the preface by Philip Zimbardo.

In my own chapter “[Critical Mindfulness of Psychology’s Mindlessness](#),” I argue how mainstream psychology has been mainly infatuated with precision, objectivity, universality, refutability, and verifiability. This, in the long run, has led to recognition of a privileged voice for the observer in psychological research which has mindlessly marginalized the voice of the actor. I propound that the revision of the American psychology can be facilitated through the implementation

of a genuine mindfulness where the possession of truth is not going to be at the monopoly of a specific culture. This chapter calls for questioning the unquestionability of the perspective of the observer and indicates that Langerian critical and critical mindfulness goes beyond the epistemic engagement with the abstract-oriented concepts but an ontological involvement with the praxis of the process of knowledge construction. This chapter examines Langerian mindfulness in giving rise to the possibility of looking from the perspective of the actor and looking for shared dialogical components while reflexively examining the intersubjectivity of his or her position in directing the dynamics of the perspective.

In “[The Construct of Mindfulness Amidst and Along Conceptions of Rationality](#)”, Mihnea Moldoveanu excavates the epistemological and psychological aspects of rationality and mindfulness and demonstrates how an emphasis on an epistemological position may constrict the process of achieving mindfulness. He addresses the relationship between mindfulness and rationality and indicates how Langerian mindfulness may present a novel view of rationality through presenting a possible shift in the underlying epistemological components of psychology’s perspective.

In “[On The Way to Mindfulness: How a Focus on Outcomes \(Even Good Outcomes\) May Prevent Good Outcomes](#),” Maja Djikic elaborates how mindlessness may incarcerate us within an outcome-oriented perspective and deprives us of exploring the process in relationship to an outcome. She examines Langerian critical mindfulness in critiquing the merely outcome-oriented approaches and elaborates how critical mindfulness may provide us with a more comprehensive psychological relationship with the dynamics of a behavior. She argues how Langerian critical mindfulness may lead to more psychological and health benefits.

In “[Understanding Confidence: Its Roots and Roles in Performance](#)”, Rosabeth Moss Kanter, and Daniel P. Fox present a recondite analysis of confidence through an increase of critical and creative mindfulness. They discuss how a choice of behavior may result from an increased state of mindfulness. Their chapter demonstrates how a mindful-based confidence entails the role of character and looks into the implications of accountability, initiative, and collaboration for confidence enhancement.

In “[Irrational Attachment \(Why We Love What We Own\)](#),” Dan Ariely, Matt Trower, and Aline Grüneisen through Illustrations by Matt Trower focus on Langerian mindfulness, the foundation of behavioral economics, the endowment effect, and the decision-making process. They examine Langerian critical mindfulness and its implications within rational and irrational process of decision-making.

In “[Mindful Dissent](#),” Stuart Albert presents a case analysis in view of Langerian mindfulness and elucidates how an increase of critical and creative mindfulness would open us toward understanding that may have already been mindlessly blocked. He discussed the role of critical mindfulness in giving rise to the psychology of possibility and its implications for decision making especially with respect to crisis management.

In “[Psychohistory as a Means to Understanding Langer’s Contributions to Psychological Science](#),” Jack Demick argues how Langerian mindfulness and its

critical and creative implications may become a unifying framework for the field of psychological science. He presents the characteristic features of critical mindfulness as the significant foundational component for expanding the role of Langerian mindfulness in the psychological discourse.

In “[Mindfulness in Action: The Emergence of Distinctive Thought and Behavior](#),” Robin R. Vallacher, Matthew S. Jarman and Steven S. Parkin discuss Langerian critical mindfulness in facilitating the process of connectedness to the present moment and elaborate its implications for different thinking processes. They compare higher order and lower order perspectives in view of their leading strategies and examine their practical manifestations in experiential and phenomenological encounters. They illustrate the benefits of Langerian models in espousing creative and novel approaches in an experiential connectedness

In “[Priming the Mind to See Its Double: Mindfulness in a New Key](#),” Louise Sundararajan and I focus on Langerian mindfulness and relational mindfulness. We draw on physics notion of symmetry to explain relational mindfulness and also show that this framework is compatible with the Langerian formulation of mindfulness. We conclude with a study in which relational mindfulness was experimentally induced to test the hypotheses that (a) the capacity of the human mind to see its double beyond the social arena can be primed; and (b) attunement with a virtual mind can reap unique mental health benefits such as tranquility and a sense of well-being associated with affiliative fantasies.

In “[Langerian Mindfulness and Optimal Sport Performance](#),” Amy L. Baltzell & John M. McCarthy provide a theoretical foundation for Langerian mindfulness and sport performance while connecting Langerian mindfulness as a direct pathway to enhance performance to Csikszentmihalyi’s concept of flow (a fully engaged experience). They present examples from elite athletes applying Langerian mindfulness and discuss the benefits of critical mindfulness in performance enhancement.

In “[Health and Psychology of Possibility](#),” Deborah Phillips and Francesco Pagnini look into the clinical and health implications of Langerian mindfulness. They argue how understanding critical components of Langerian mindfulness would bring about significant health implications. Their chapter focuses on counterclockwise study and its demonstration for broadening the horizon of psychology of possibility.

In “[Ellen Langer, Philosophy, Autobiography, and a Healing Quest](#),” James Rhem delves into the role of Langerian critical mindfulness in revitalizing the role of philosophy for psychology. He argues how psychology’s departure from philosophy brought about an emphasis on monopolizing perspectives within mainstream psychology. He elucidates how critical mindfulness within Langerian models would contribute to the emergence of an authentic self and its creational capabilities.

In “[Possible Components of Mindfulness](#),” Michael Lamport Commons and Dristi Adhikari put mindfulness into a scientific context with a focus on five behavioral components related to critical mindfulness. They discuss the benefits of

critical mindfulness for real-life situations and indicate how an increase of critical mindfulness would lead to various levels of improvement in one's way of living.

Overall, this book presents a fresh perspective on critical mindfulness and its transformative role in developing a radical transformation of consciousness. The book intends to delineate how this understanding may generate significant implications in various realms of the field of psychology. It also hopes to highlight to the reader the practical benefits of critical mindfulness in creating a better world where one's well-being is mindfully created and celebrated.

Cambridge

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Critical Mindfulness

Exploring Langerian Models

Fatemi, S.M. (Ed.)

2016, XX, 212 p. 2 illus., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-30781-7