

MONKEY MIND SYMPTOMS

EXPANDED

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“Monkey Mind is the inner dialogue...
the running commentary in our head, a little
voice that provides judgments and critiques
about our every action...”

The concept of Monkey Mind comes from
Buddhism, which describes it as a self-criticizing
aspect of our mind that swings us from
doubt, to worry, and back to doubt.
Monkey Mind chatters the most loudly when
we threaten to change the status quo –
even if the status quo is something
we long to leave behind.”

– Maria Nemeth, PhD in *The Energy of Money*



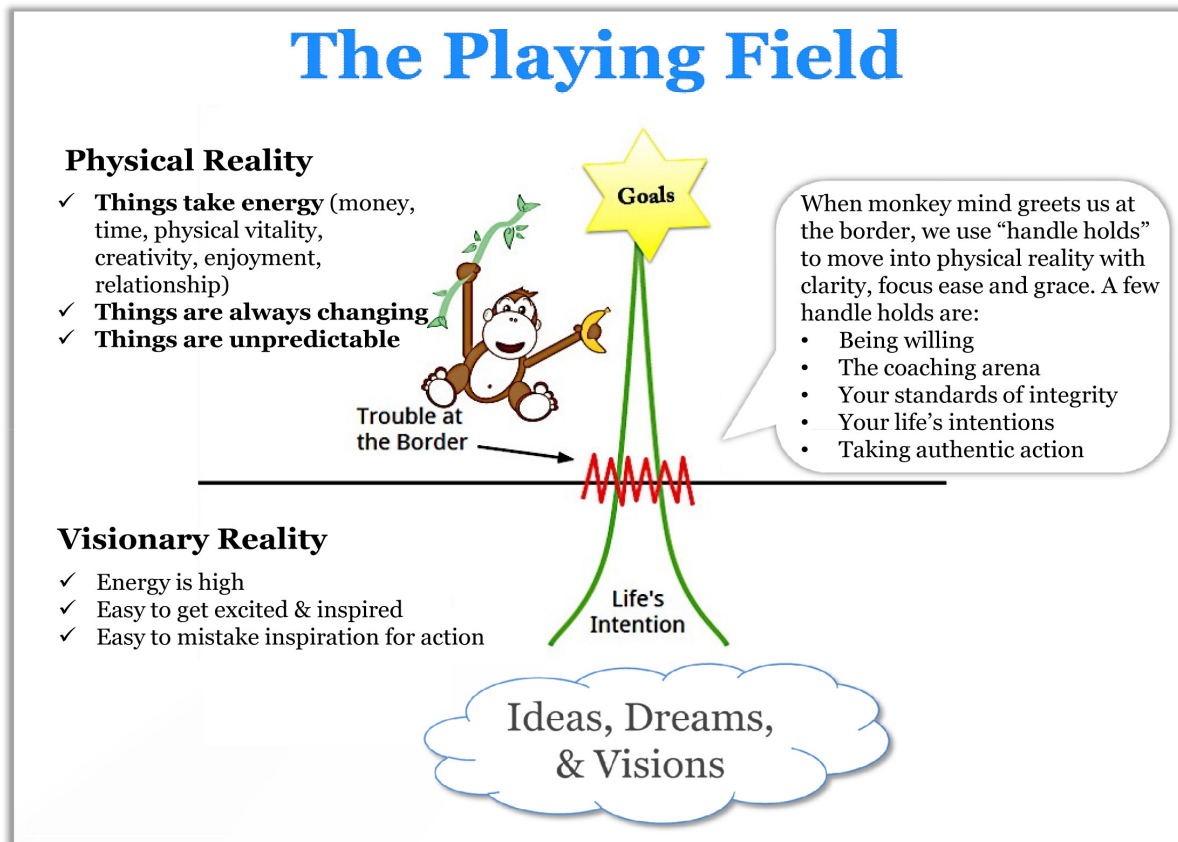
Monkey Mind starts to swing when we are up to something big, when we are focused on bringing a goal into physical reality, when we are demonstrating a heartfelt life's intention.

When seen in this way, we can shift our energy around monkey from something to bemoan, to something that can serve us. When we see monkey as the loyal opposition, as the opposing team, we start to see it as an opportunity to practice.

When we have a worthy opponent on the sports field, we are called to up our game. We get in better shape, we get support, we hire a masterful coach, we learn new tools and skills, and we practice, practice, practice.

In order to gain maximum benefit from Monkey Mind, we need to learn to identify it quickly. Maria observes, “It is easier to separate from Monkey Mind if you can look objectively at the guises it likes to wear.”

The following symptoms were discerned by Maria to help us to observe monkey as soon as it start to swing. Once we have developed that capacity, we are ready to reap the benefits, the opportunities, inherent in what those symptoms surface for us at the border.



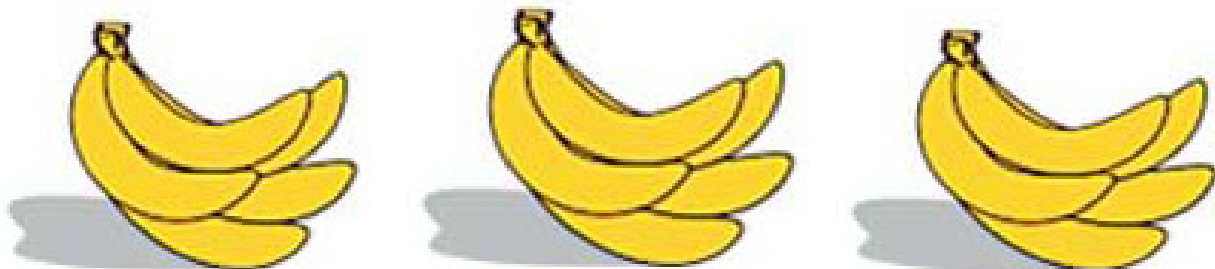
Remember, “Your Monkey Mind thoughts... having nothing to do with your true nature. It is only one aspect of your mind, and who you are is greater than anything it can throw at you.”

We are human beings with hero’s hearts and monkey minds, on an incredible journey.

When we become willing to see our Monkey Mind as that loyal opposition, as opposed to something that we need to defeat or eliminate, our journey becomes infinitely richer.

Last time we looked at...

1. Being vague
2. Scarcity thoughts
3. Talking of the past or future as if it is the present



Today we're exploring...

4. Defensive: “Whaddya mean by that?” One definition of defensive is to protect someone or something from attack. Another explains that someone on the defensive is concerned with justifying their actions or words. If you know that to defend is *to protect*, you have an idea what defensive means.

When a person is acting defensive, they're trying to protect or justify themselves. So notice that inherent in the symptom of defensive is the assumption that we're being attacked. Remembering that one of monkey's evolutionary objectives was to keep us safe, it makes sense that one of its symptoms would be defensive.

We get to ask ourselves - now that we no longer live in caves with saber tooth tigers on the prowl - what are we keeping ourselves safe from when we find ourselves being defensive, i.e. feeling attacked? Perhaps one of our beliefs is being questioned, or we're being asked to look at an action we've taken. Sometimes we've just been asked an innocent question, but have perceived it as an attack.

The opportunity when we find ourselves feeling and/or behaving defensively is to look at “What do I believe is being attacked?” or to ask ourselves the question, “Am I willing to be curious about that which offends me?” Powerful opportunities for self-inquiry, all thanks to our monkey mind.



5. Taking things personally: I’m going to reference the master on this one. According to Don Miguel Ruiz, author of *The Four Agreements*,

“Nothing others do is because of you. What others say and do is a projection of their own reality. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won't be the victim of needless suffering. When you make it a strong habit not to take anything personally, you avoid many upsets in your life. Your anger, jealousy, and envy will disappear, and even your sadness will simply disappear if you don't take things personally. If you can make this second agreement a habit, you will find that... there is a huge amount of freedom that comes to you when you take nothing personally.”

Bottom line, when we're taking something personally, we're making it all about us. What if it wasn't? How would I respond differently if I wasn't reacting upon the assumption that this was about me?

Put another way, when I take something personally, I've *made this mean* something about me (remembering that our brains are conclusion creating, evidence gathering, meaning making machines). What if I *make it mean* something else? Something that creates curiosity, and spaciousness, and helps me get back on my card? Or to demonstrate one of my life's intentions?

Try it next time you find yourself taking something personally, and thank monkey for helping you to see this situation/relationship in a different way.



Any questions or comments so far?

What are you noticing?

**Are any of these in your top three monkey
mind symptoms?**

6. Comparison: The most obvious example of the problem with comparison lies in the observation that when we're comparing, it's our insides to someone else's outsides. Social media is one of the biggest culprits/sources of this type of comparison. Our tendency is to post us at our best, and of course, our friends do the same. :-)

It's not that we're being deceitful, we just usually choose not to share our darker/sadder/angrier/nastier moments, our "shadow" so to speak. This can cause the type of comparison we alluded to earlier, i.e. we see and compare ourselves to everyone's outsides without knowing what's going on on the inside. Everyone sees each other at their best, and can feel inadequate in comparison.

Another form of comparison, that can cause as much or more suffering, is comparing ourselves to our past or future selves. "I used to be younger/thinner/stronger/more productive/had a better memory" or "When will I be wiser/stronger/more patient/more productive...". You get the idea.

Comparison is a notorious joy-sucker. The antidote is to thank monkey for sharing, and to be in the present moment... to remember who we are (our Standards of Integrity), what's important to us (our Life's Intentions) and what we want to do about it (our goals).

When we focus on this, and how we can contribute right now, comparison has no interest or power over us. We can acknowledge that we are all human beings on an incredible journey, with hero's hearts and monkey minds, here to make the difference only we can make. No comparison necessary.

