

HANDS AS THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS EXERCISE – Russ Harris, 2014 version

Imagine in front of you is everything that matters: the people, places, activities you love etc.

(give examples)

And all the **real life problems and challenges** you need to deal with. (give examples)

And all the tasks you have to do to make your life work. (give examples)

Now pretend your hands are your thoughts & feelings, and hold them like this. (like the pages of a book)

Now copy me - get caught up/hooked/fused in your thoughts/feelings. (lift hands up to your face until covering eyes)

Notice 3 things:

- 1) How much are you missing out on? How disconnected and disengaged are you from the people and things that matter? (give examples)
- 2) How difficult is it to keep your attention focused on the task you want to do well or the challenge you face or the problem you need to solve? (give examples)
- 3) How difficult is it to take action, to do the things that make your life work? (give examples)

Now slowly separate/unhook/detach/defuse from your thoughts & feelings (lift hands away from face, slowly lowering them to rest in your lap)

What's your view of the room like now? How much easier is it to engage and connect?

How much easier to keep your attention focused on the task you want to do well or the challenge you face or the problem you need to solve?

How much easier is it to take action?

Notice these things (i.e. hands) haven't disappeared. If you can use them, do so. Thoughts and feelings often give us important information we can make good use of. But if not, just let them sit there.