The Ultimate Guide to Discovering
YOUR STYLE OF MEDITATION

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master your MIND - master your LIFE
The Ultimate Guide to Discovering
YOUR STYLE OF MEDITATION

There are over a hundred different types of meditation, and no technique is superior than the others. Find the one that best suits your unique needs and personality, and develop a fulfilling daily practice.
Welcome to the Tribe!

My name is Giovanni Dienstmann, and I’m a writer and contributor to the Wake Up World platform.

Our mission at Wake Up World is pretty simple: we offer information that we think will help people to live better, see through the lies, and break down the old ways of thinking and being that no longer serve our society.

We examine what we perceive to be the most important problems in our failing society today, we discuss potential solutions and alternatives that might help us to rebuild our society from this mess we find ourselves in, and offer commentary on our strange and wonderful lives in this living, energetic organism we call Earth, the Universe and the Multiverse.

If humanity is to survive more than a few decades, we each need to Wake Up, look within for the answers, and do our bit for the future—and Wake Up World is where our little bit begins.

There are two aspects to this journey:

**Self-Transformation.** Becoming the most conscious, kind, effective and awake version of yourself.

**Social Change.** Raise awareness, live consciously, and help create a society that is more balanced, kind, evolved, and aware.

An enlightened society is a society of enlightened individuals. So it all starts with self-transformation and personal growth. Meditation is one of the keys for that.

Almost everybody knows the value of meditation. In fact, there are 76 scientifically proven benefits to the practice ([source](#)). Yet very few of us make meditation a part of our daily life.

So the problem is not raising awareness about it, but helping you to build a daily habit, find the most powerful meditation technique for you, and learn how to apply the superpowers of meditation into your daily life.

I call these the **Three Pillars of Meditation** (*habit, technique, application*). This short guide will help you with one of those pillars: finding the ideal meditation technique for you.
What is Meditation?

Before we talk about choosing the best technique for you, let’s make sure we are on the same page as to what is meditation.

Meditation is a mental exercise that involves relaxation, focus, and awareness.

It is practiced either by (a) focusing attention on a single object, internal or external (focused attention meditation) or by (b) paying attention to whatever is predominant in your experience in the present moment, without allowing the attention to get stuck on any particular thing (open monitoring meditation).

Other characteristics of meditation:
- Meditation is an individual practice, even if done in groups (such as in a meditation retreat).
- Meditation is often done with eyes closed, but not always (Zazen and Trataka, for example, are open-eye styles of meditation)
- Meditation usually involves physical stillness. But there are also ways to do walking meditation, and to integrate mindfulness in whatever activity we are doing.

The word “meditate” actually means to think deeply about something. However, when Eastern contemplative practices were “imported” to Western culture, this is the term that was used to define them, for lack of a better word. Nowadays meditation has more the meaning of this exercise of focusing attention, rather than to reflect deeply.

Besides focus of attention, meditation also involves mental calmness and introspection (“looking within”). Meditation is, thus, somewhat different than other personal development or spiritual exercises, such as:

- Affirmation, self-hypnosis, or guided visualization—where the objective is more to imprint a specific message on the mind
- Pure relaxation—where the goal is only to release bodily tensions
- Prayer—where there is a conscious flow of thinking and feeling, directed towards a Deity
- Contemplation—where the thought processes is actively engaged in order to deepen the understanding of a subject or concept.
- Trance dancing—where the main goal is usually to produce visions, an altered state of consciousness, or communion with a spirit
- Breathing exercises like most types of qigong—where the focus is on producing a certain pattern of breathing to energize and purify the body.
The Many Styles of Meditation

When most people think of meditation techniques, what comes to mind is either watching the breath, or repeating a mantra. Those techniques are great, and they do work for some people – but not for everyone.

Maybe those practices even “work ok” for you, but until you experience the richness of meditative practice, you can’t know if there isn’t a more effective technique out there for you.

The good news is that meditation is an incredibly vast and flexible practice. There is a great variety of methods developed by different contemplative traditions over more than 3,000 years. They were developed not because the monks were bored, but because different people have different needs and temperaments.

Some techniques...
- may make you feel too passive; while others may energize you.
- make you feel more centered; while others make you feel more spaced-out and detached.
- are more suited to improve work performance; others may be better for exploring the spiritual dimension of meditation.
- are easier for people that are more visual by nature; while others go smoother for people that are predominantly auditory or kinaesthetic

So there is no “one size fits all” in meditation. Yet that is the way meditation is often taught. Most teachers and courses teach you only one or two techniques...

In fact, it is safe to say that there are as many meditation techniques as there are different types of sports and diets. Now imagine the problem if everyone is only taught either basketball or running... Or if everyone was given the same type of food, regardless of their tastes, blood type, and allergies...

While most meditation techniques share a great number of common benefits, there is still a big difference between practicing a technique that works for you and practicing a technique that is optimal for you. Just like there is a big difference between an “ok job” and your ideal job, or an “ok apartment” and your ideal apartment.

One particular technique may allow you to experience the peace, focus, and the other benefits of meditation much more easily than others. It may feel more natural and more enjoyable for you. But you won’t discover which technique that is unless you experience with a few of them, in a systematic way, with proper guidance and support.
Finding the Best Technique for You

The best way to really find out the best meditation technique for you is to try many of them, journal your experiences, and see which ones resonate with you the most.

Here I will give you some guiding principles on how to go about it.

(1) Clarify Your Goals

What is your main goal in practicing meditation?

Your goal could be a benefit, an experience or a transformation.

Many meditation teachers and groups will try to tell you what the goal of meditation should be. They may have a one-sided view about meditation, and have only practiced one or two techniques themselves—thus that’s all they teach. As a long-term practitioner and teacher, I have seen a lot of that.

But the truth is: meditation is a versatile practice. It is different things to different people. And that’s ok! What matters is what you seek from the practice.

Once you clarify this point, as you go about trying different meditations, take note of how they touched (or not) the benefits you are after.

Reflections


Imagine you had the perfect meditation session. In one word, how do you feel?
(2) What Are Your Dominant Senses?
Most meditation techniques work predominantly with one of the sense-modalities, or with the mind, heart or consciousness. You will likely find easier to meditate by using your preferred sense-modalities—which is where your attention is already flowing.

Here are some examples of techniques classified by the senses.

**Body:**
- Yoga Nidra
- Chakra Meditation / Kundalini Meditation
- Walking Meditation / Kinhin
- Neiguan
- Taichi

**Breath:**
- Mindfulness
- Samatha
- Pranayama
- Qiqong
- Spinal Breathing Kriya

**Sight:**
- Trataka
- Visualization
- Mandalas

**Sound:**
- Mantra Meditation
- Nada Yoga

**Mind:**
- Inner Silence
- Labeling
- Neti-Neti
- Self-Enquiry
- Zazen

**Heart:**
- Loving-Kindness
- Sufi Heartbeat Meditation
- Kirtan
- Christian Contemplative Prayer
Other meditation techniques are multi-channels, meaning they don’t focus on a single object. These meditations are more of the awareness-type, rather than concentration-type. Here are some examples:

- Mindfulness
- Inner Silence
- Vipassana
- Zazen

You can learn more about each of these meditations step by step in this article.

Here are some exercises to help you determine what type of sensory channel is predominant for you, and also if you are more of a body-based person, heart-based, or mind-based.

**Reflections**

*Do you often think in terms of images or feelings, or always in the form of words?*  
________________________________________________________________________

*What form of beauty impresses you the most? Beautiful forms or images, agreeable sounds and music, or graceful movements?*  
________________________________________________________________________

*If you close your eyes and try to visualize a purple apple, can you do it? What about remembering the sound of someone’s voice, or the touch or certain clothes on your skin?*  
________________________________________________________________________

*Do you navigate your life relying more on thoughts and analysis, or on feelings?*  
________________________________________________________________________

*Which of these makes you come more alive: sightseeing and movies, music and conversations, or physical activities?*  
________________________________________________________________________

*Reviewing your answers to the questions above, do you feel that you are more of a visual person, auditory person, or kinaesthetic (body) person?*  
________________________________________________________________________

*Are you more of a heart-person, or mind-person?*  
________________________________________________________________________
(3) Which Aspect Do You Want to Develop the Most?

As we saw in the beginning of this Guide, the practice of meditation involves awareness, relaxation and focus. These three skills are present, in one form or another, in basically all techniques.

Having said that, each style of meditation has a predominant skill it develops the most, and this is something you might want to consider when choosing your technique.

**Awareness**

The skill of awareness (or mindfulness) is about observing the whole spectrum of your present moment experience, without clinging, rejecting, or judging anything. It is panoramic and broad.

Techniques that prime for this mode of attention are:

- Inner Silence (*Antar Mouna*)
- Vipassana
- Mindfulness
- Zazen as “just sitting” (*Shikantaza*)
- Zuowang

The more you develop awareness, the more you are able to zoom out from your thoughts and emotions, gain clarity, and see the big picture.

Practicing awareness frees your consciousness to be able to perceive things as they are, without getting attached to them, or rejecting them. It also gives us more self-knowledge.

Finally, developing awareness gives you the ability to pause more, and not be reactive. In a way, it’s the most essential skill. All forms of meditation have it.

**Focus**

The skill of focus (or concentration) is about strengthening your mind-power and will-power. It’s the ability to place your attention where you want it to be, ignoring distractions, and keep it there, moment after moment.

Most traditional meditation techniques fall into this category. Examples:

- Trataka
- Breathing meditations
- Visualization
- Self-Enquiry
- Nada Yoga
- Chakra meditation, especially Third Eye meditations
The more you develop the ability to focus, the greater is your personal power. Because attention is the food of our mind, and the food of our life—so learning to control it is a great power.

The more attention we give to a certain thought or feeling, the stronger it grows. If we stop paying attention to it, and instead pay attention to a more positive one, the old thought will eventually disappear, and the new one becomes our new reality.

This is the neuroplasticity of our brains. The ability to focus, gained through meditation, helps you actively change yourself, and your life, by allowing you to decide what you will pay attention to.

What you pay attention to will exist. It will grow. It will thrive.

What you remove attention from will cease to exist. It will wane and disappear.

**Relaxation**
The skill of relaxation is an essential preliminary component of all meditation practices. The techniques that emphasize this skill are, among others:

- Yoga Nidra
- Tai Chi standing meditation
- Pranayama (some forms)

Relaxation is not a superficial skill, as some may judge. It is deep, and works on many levels.

The first level is physical relaxation. This is letting go of physical tensions stored in your muscles. It is to calm the breathing, slow the heartbeat, pacify the nerves. You then feel at ease inside your own body.

The second level is emotional relaxation. Letting go of tensions in the form of emotional addictions, traumas, and places your energy might be stuck in.

The third level is mental relaxation. It is about widening your mind, taking yourself less seriously, being more open and flexible. It is the ability to release pattern of thoughts that no longer serve you.

**Reflection**
*After reading the descriptions above, which of the three Core Skills of meditation do you need to focus on most, at this time of your life?*
What Is Your Worldview?

Most styles of meditation can be practiced without you needing to believe in anything in particular. This means that it doesn’t conflict with whatever world view you may have.

On the other hand, some styles of meditation are more spiritual by nature; others are even more religious by nature (see distinction between spirituality and religion here). These are the styles that you want to avoid in case you are atheist/agnostic, or actively seek out, in case your meditation goals are more spiritual by nature.

Examples of meditation styles that are religious:
- Christian Meditation
- Jewish Meditation
- Hindu devotional meditation

Examples of meditation styles that are spiritual, but not necessarily religious. This means that you don’t need to adopt a specific religion to follow them, but need openness about the existence of the spiritual dimension of life:
- Sufi Meditation (some forms)
- Chakra Meditation
- Neidan (Taoist internal alchemy)

Reflections

Is it important for you that your meditation technique follows a specific spiritual philosophy? Or is it important that it follows none and be 100% secular?

Which wisdom tradition/spiritual lineage resonates with you the most?
Running Meditation Experiments

Well done on sticking with us thus far! You have learned a lot.

**Step 1: Clarity**
If you have gone through the suggested reflections, this is the step you have just completed. Which means that now you have clarity of:

- What are your goals regarding meditation
- What are your dominant senses, and if you are more of a body-person, head-person, or heart-person (none is better than the other)
- What meditation skill you need the most in your life right now (awareness, focus or relaxation)
- If you should seek or avoid the meditation practices that are more spiritual or religious by nature

**Step 2: Selection**
Having this understanding, you then review the next section of this Guide, “Overview of Meditation Traditions” (below), and come up with a list of meditation techniques for you to try.

*List of techniques for me to try:*
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**Step 3: Experimentation**
The best way to figure out which is the most powerful meditation for you is to experiment many of the ones that feel promising. You can do this by yourself, or with the help of a good book, meditation course, or knowledgeable teacher.

Don’t let anyone tell you which meditation you “must do”—only you can truly know that. So explore the techniques and make your own decision.

I recommend you spend at least one week on each of the styles you selected on Step 2. During the week, meditate every day using that particular technique.

If you are an intermediate or advanced meditator, you may want to follow it on your own. Otherwise, a good guided meditation audio can be a very helpful tool.

It can be helpful, during this phase, to keep a meditation journal. At the end of each meditation, you can ask yourself:
• How long did I meditate?
• How did I feel before? How do I feel now?
  o In my body
  o In my mind
  o In my heart
• What flowed well in this meditation?
• What was difficult about this meditation?

Step 4: Shortlisting
Based on your experiments and journal notes of Step 3, now select two to four meditation techniques. Then you can go for another round of experimentation, but stay one to two months with each technique, and try to learn as much about it as possible.

Step 5: Consolidating
After you have gone through such a process (or your variation of it), then you are much better able to choose your technique. Once you do so, finally, it is better to stick to one main practice, so you can go deeper with it.

Or, if you are down to two techniques—and depending on how much time and motivation you have for the practice—you may use both of them as your daily practice. Either you can practice two different meditation sessions per day (one in the morning, one in the evening), or split your single meditation session into two parts (one for each technique).
Overview of Meditation Traditions

Here is a list, for your reference, of the most popular meditation techniques from the main traditions, with short descriptions. This is by no means a complete list—as mentioned, there are hundreds of techniques.

In the lists below, the practices under the traditions of Yoga, Vedanta, Buddhism and Taoism can be done in a secular way (even though some are spiritual by origin). The ones in Sufi and Christian mysticism, however, are spiritual or religious by nature.

(1) Yogic Practices
The Yoga tradition gifts us a wide variety of meditation practices, most of them concentration-based, that engage our sight, hearing, mind, heart and energy.

- **Mantra Meditation & TM.** Repetition of a word or phrase, silently or out loud.
- **Trataka.** Open-eye gazing meditation, usually on a candle flame, on dot fixed on the wall, or on an image.
- **Yoga Nidra.** Practiced lying down, it involves deep relaxation of all muscles, visualizations, and seeding a resolution/affirmation in the subconscious mind.
- **Chakras & Kundalini.** Focusing the mind on the energy centres of the body. May include visualizations and the repetition of mantras.
- **Nada Yoga.** Listening to the internal sounds of the body.
- **Mandalas Meditation.** Uses geometrical images as an object of concentration.
- **Pranayama.** Regulated breathing techniques that alter your state of body and mind.
- **Kirtan.** Singing of devotional songs while focusing the heart.
- **Antar Mouna (Inner Silence).** Observing the mind and senses, creating and disposing thoughts at will, and then arriving at inner silence beyond all thoughts.

(2) Vedantic Practices
Abstract meditations that have as their main goal contemplating who we truly are, and freeing ourselves from all illusions and attachments.

- **Self-Enquiry.** Finding your real identity beyond all concepts, through the question “Who am I?”.
- **Neti-neti.** Rejecting all identification and attachment, and remaining as pure consciousness.
- **Witnessing.** Focusing on the pure sense of “I am”, and the fact that you are the conscious observer of all thoughts and sensations.
(3) Buddhist and Zen Practices
Presents a broad spectrum of practices of concentration, observation, and pure awareness. Some of the most popular meditation techniques nowadays are of Buddhist origin.

- **Mindfulness & Vipassana.** Observing your present moment experience as it comes, without focusing on anything or attaching yourself to anything.
- **Samatha.** Concentration on the breathing, either through counting or through breathing sensations.
- **Loving-kindness.** Kindling and growing the feeling of love for oneself and others.
- **Kasina Meditation.** Gazing meditation similar to Trataka, using the elements and colours as objects.
- **Zazen.** Concentration on the breathing, or on *just sitting*. It’s the Zen version of Samatha.
- **Koan.** Breaking through the conceptual mind using Zen riddles.
- **Labelling.** Placing a label on every thought, feeling, and perception that arises.
- **Walking Meditation.** Walking slowly and focusing on your breath or on the sensations on the feet.
- **Dzogchen.** A “do nothing” type of meditation where attention neither focuses nor observes.

(4) Taoist Practices
Using your body, breath and visualizations to empty yourself and find harmony with the Tao.

- **Emptiness meditation.** Letting all thoughts go and “forgetting about everything”. The original name is *zuowang*.
- **Qigong.** Breathing exercises with slow, synchronized movement.
- **Taichi.** Slow meditative movement.
- **Neiguan.** Inner visualization of the body.

(5) Sufi Practices
Spiritual types of meditation that have as the main goal communion with God by calling His name, focusing on the spiritual heart, and whirling.

- **Zikr.** The contemplation of God (Allah) through the repetition of his sacred name, as in mantra meditation. Also called *muraqabah*.
- **Heart Meditation.** Focusing on the heart and listening to the heart beat, or repeating mantras and thinking of God.
- **Bond of Love Meditation.** Focusing on one’s spiritual master.
- **Sufi Whirling/Dance.** Using music and body movement to achieve ecstatic states of union with the Beloved.
(6) Christian Practices
Contemplative practices of the Christian mystics to increase the presence of God in one’s life.
  • **Contemplative Prayer & Jesus Prayer.** Silent repetition of sacred words and sentences, with focus and devotion.
  • **Lectio Divina.** Contemplative reading of the Bible.
  • **Presence of God.** Focusing the mind, heart and soul in the presence of God. It is usually preceded by prayer.

(7) Practices from Other Traditions
The meditations from the traditions of Jainism, Confucianism, Greek Philosophy, Shamanism, Jewish Kabbalah and Sikhism were not included in this list due to them not being much popular outside of their core tradition.

There you have it!

Please don’t get overwhelmed by all this variety and technical names. Consider this as a “map” for you to refer to when you want to check what types of meditation exist, and what traditions they belong to.

It is beyond the scope of this Guide to teach you each of these techniques. That takes a whole book, and guided meditation audios. From this point onward you can Google about the different types of meditation, or a particular meditation you feel attracted to. Or you can check out my book, *Practical Meditation*, which covers many of these.
Meditation Tips

Here are some meditation guidelines that are applicable to basically all styles of meditation. Please don’t look at these as “hard rules”, but principles that, if followed, will enhance your meditation experience, and the benefits you get from your practice.

Here are some general guidelines on the practice:

- **Posture**: you can meditate seated on a cushion or on a chair. The essential thing about posture is that the spine is absolutely erect, from the lower back to the neck, and ideally not leaning on anything. The rest is less important.
- **Time**: it can be whatever suits your schedule better. But meditating first thing in the morning is highly recommended, so you make sure it gets done, and the impact on your day is stronger.
- **Place**: all you need is a place where you will not be interrupted. Ideally, this place would be quiet, clean and tidy, in order to greater a better influence on the mind.
- **Length**: you can start with as little as 5 minutes, and increase 1 or 2 minutes per week, until you arrive 20min sessions and beyond.

Here are six other tips to make sure your practice is optimal. They are not mandatory, but they make your meditation go easier:

- Your **body** should not be exhausted. So it’s not a good idea to practice right after exercise.
- Your **mind** should be awake. So it’s not good to do it when you are sleepy or tired.
- Your **belly** should not be full. Give it 30~40 minutes after light meals, and 2~3 hours after heavy meals.
- Put your **phone** on airplane mode or sleep mode, during your practice, so you are not interrupted.
- Do a minute or two of **breathing exercises** before meditation, if you know any. This will make it much easier to relax and calm the mind.
- If you are meditating at home, wear **clothes** that are comfortable and loose. Remove accessories.
The Meditation Posture

Your body influences your mind. If you slouch down on a couch and look down, you will feel a certain way. If you stand up, tall and wide, and look ahead—you’ll feel another way.

Body language is powerful not only in communicating with other people, but also in telling your nervous system how you want to be feeling right now. And that is why there are specific recommendations for the meditation posture, to make sure you are in the optimal state for the practice.

These meditation postures are not part of a ritual. They are not a cultural symbol. Rather, they are the result of centuries of experiments as to how different positions affect our mind.

In whatever meditation posture you sit, these are the important elements:

- **Firmness** — so you feel grounded and safe;
- **Straightness** — so your mind doesn’t go into sleep or daydreaming;
- **Comfort** — so you are able to sit still for long, with less distractions;
- **Relaxation** — you need to relax all muscles not engaged in keeping the posture up, especially the muscles of the shoulders, arms, and face.

In terms of straightness, the essential point is to keep your spine and neck straight, and standing on their own (without leaning on anything).

To help with straightening the spine, position your pelvis on your meditation seat in such a way that it is slightly tilted back—this will help your back be straight more effortlessly.

To help with straightening the neck, gently stretch the top of your head towards the ceiling, as if it was being pulled by an invisible string.

This is the core of the meditation posture. Once you sit in a position like that, close your eyes and mouth, have the tongue gently touching the roof of the mouth (so you salivate less), and relax your body. Relax into the posture, enjoying its dignity and stability.

There are different recommended positions for meditation, these are the five main ones:
The most popular postures for Westerners are Burmese (simple cross-legged) and Seiza (kneeling on a stool or a cushion). I meditate on Burmese style.

Full lotus and half lotus are traditional postures, but require a lot of flexibility, and are usually not comfortable. If you are looking for other traditional meditation postures, that are less demanding than lotus, check out Siddhasana, Siddha Yoni Asana, Sukhasana, Swastikasana, Vajrasana. It’s beyond the scope of this e-book to expand on those; if you want to learn more, I recommend Swami Satyananda’s excellent book on asanas.

Regardless of the position of your legs, having the right height in relation to the floor is essential for the right position of the pelvis. What we want to achieve is that the hips are above the level of the knees, so your pelvis can roll forward, and the back can straighten naturally, without stress or pushing.

To learn more about how to find a good cushion or stool for you practice, check this guide.
The Five Superpowers of Meditation

As we’ve seen, meditation is simply a mental exercise of relaxation, focus, and awareness. It is something that everyone can learn and benefit from. It is not difficult to practice.

The meditation process is as simple as this:
1. Sit comfortably, with back and neck straight. Close your eyes (usually).
2. Take a few deep breaths, and relax your body.
3. Focus your attention on the object of your meditation (can be your breath, or many other things)
4. When your mind gets distracted, notice that, and focus it back on the object.
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 again and again, for the duration of your practice.

The process is simple, but not necessarily easy. And it doesn’t matter, because just going through the process of meditation, in itself, is beneficial.

Every time you sit to meditate, you are cultivating five “superpowers” in yourself. Here is where we start touching the third Pillar of the meditation, application. This is a more advanced topic, but I wanted to briefly include it in this Guide so that you see what is possible with meditation.

Superpower #1 — Pausing

What it is. Meditation gives you the ability to pause. This is that extra space between what life throws at you, and your response. Mindful pauses make a huge difference in how you feel at the end of the day.

You become less reactive, and can act more purposefully. This means less drama, less hasty decisions, and less regret. You also save your energy and feel more alive.

How we develop it. In meditation, we train pausing every time we notice that we’re distracted with thoughts, feelings or memories. We then pause, take a step back, and put our attention back on our meditation object.

How to integrate it. Breathing exercises are the most powerful way of creating pause in your daily life. This can be as simple as taking a moment to breathe deeply, cool down, and be present. Or it could be more advanced such as using the Square Breathing or Alternating Nostrils Breathing exercises.
Superpower #2 — Mastery of Attention

What it is. Meditation gives you the ability to zoom out and zoom in.

Zooming out is taking a step back, and seeing the whole picture. It’s useful so that you don’t get sucked into negative mental and emotional states. It frees you.

Zooming in is the ability to really focus your attention wherever you want it to be. This empowers you to be more productive, more present, more purposeful. With these qualities it’s much easier to achieve your goals in all areas of life.


How we develop it. In meditation you are exercising the muscle of attention every time you notice that you got distracted by thoughts, let them go, and then bring your attention back. This happens hundreds of times, and develops into a “superpower” you can use in your daily life.

How to integrate it. Have a solid foundation of a daily meditation practice, with the technique that is most optimal for you. The rest happens automatically.

Superpower #3 — Mastery of Mind

What it is. The ability to change yourself, your thoughts, emotions and habits. It is based on the neuroplasticity of our brain. It also uses affirmation and visualization.

The more attention we give to a certain thought or feeling, the stronger it grows. If we stop paying attention to it, and instead pay attention to a more positive one, the old thought will eventually disappear.

It’s a useful superpower to transform your thoughts. It allows your to change negative patterns (like anxiety and fear) into positive ones (calm and courage).

How we develop it. Meditation trains us to control our attention, so we can put our mind where we want it to be, and free it from everything else (distractions). With this we are able to stop feeding the bad wolf, and feed the good one.

How to integrate it. Create the foundation of mental mastery through daily meditation. Apply it in real life by carefully choosing where you put your attention.
Superpower #4 — Mastery of Emotions

**What it is.** Meditation gradually develops your ability to overcome negative emotions, and develop positive ones.

There is scientific evidence that meditation is helpful in:

a) Managing *negative* states, such as: anxiety, fear, depression, stress.

b) Cultivating *positive* states, such as: joy, compassion, peace, courage.

**How we develop it.** Through meditation practice we learn how to accept ourselves no matter what. To *accept*, without judgment or resistance, whatever emotions, thoughts and memories are showing up. To see them clearly, and learn from them.

This gives you *self-awareness*, leading to *self-compassion*. You become relaxed and *fearless*, since you are not running away from any experience. You are able to be at *peace* even in the midst of the most difficult emotions.

You also learn how to better *process and let go* of negative emotions, by focusing on the raw physical sensations without adding stories, and then releasing them.

Finally, you learn how to create positive emotional states without depending on external stimuli. Basically, you’re able to *feel good on-demand*.

**How to integrate it.** Learn meditation-based emotional management techniques.

Superpower #5 — Witnessing (advanced)

**What it is.** Observing your present-moment experience from a place of *neutrality*, *calmness*, and *distance*. Your awareness is wide, and your mind is calm and centered. From this comes a sense of peace, freedom, and of being unaffected.

**How we develop it.** Through meditation you get to the insight that you are *not* your thoughts. Not your emotions or memories. Not your past or your roles.

You realize that all these things come and go—but you, the witness, stay unmoved. Just like a *mirror* that can reflect all images, but doesn’t contain any image on itself. Or a *cinema* screen that can display images of fire, but never gets burned.

**How to integrate it.** Constantly *remember who you are*. You are larger than all your problems. You are the witness. Practice meeting life from this new space.
Meditation Articles on *Wake Up World*

Here is a selection of posts on WUW on the topic of meditation:

- Techniques for Practicing Mindfulness and Meditation
- Research Shows Just 7 Minutes of Meditation Can Reduce Racial Prejudice
- Chinese Taoist ‘Bone Breathing’ Technique Rejuvenates
- How Walking Mindfully Can Improve Your Health
- Quantum Consciousness — Body Scan Meditations for Clarity and Clearing
- Study Shows Cognitive Gains from Meditation Training Maintained Seven Years Later
- Why We Should Bring Meditation Into Schools

Calm and Free — Meditation for Anxiety Course

Do you want to learn how to overcome anxiety through the power of meditation and personal growth tools? Then check out the [Calm and Free](#) course.
About Me

My name is Giovanni Dienstmann. I’m an international author, meditation teacher, coach and speaker. As a practitioner, I have done over 9,000 hours of meditation, experimented with 80+ techniques, and trained with masters of several traditions.

I’m the creator of Live and Dare— the fifth most popular meditation blog on the planet—and author of the best-selling book Practical Meditation, which is available in six different languages and has popularly been called “The Meditation Bible”.

My work focuses on taking you from anxious and stressed to calm, centered and focused, through the power of meditation. Thousands of people have taken my programs, and experienced the benefits.

My approach involves “translating” and “updating” the teachings and practices of wisdom traditions so that they are easily digestible for the 21st-century person. Meditation is one of these tools—but there is much more.

My Journey

I have been actively seeking personal growth, self-mastery, and a deeper meaning in life since I was a teenager (I’m now in my mid 30’s). Even though I learned from many sources and systems, what I was seeking was always the same: empowered peace. Yes, I wanted to experience peace of mind. Because with that comes a sense of freedom, of not being disturbed by anything. With peace also comes confidence, emotional balance, and clarity.

Peace is the foundation of wellbeing and contentment in life.

But not the peace of the graveyard! Not a peace that is passive, or weak. I was searching for a peace that is empowered—full of energy, dynamism, and focus. Empowered Peace.

That is my personal anthem, and the transformation that I seek to facilitate for you.

To learn more about my work, visit LiveAndDare.com.