

A person is seen from behind, sitting in a meditative pose on a dark wooden floor. They are wearing a light-colored, short-sleeved shirt. In front of them is a large window with a dark frame and multiple panes. To the left of the window, there is a red curtain. Sunlight is streaming through the window, creating a warm, orange glow and casting shadows of the window panes onto the floor. The overall atmosphere is calm and contemplative.

Meditation is NOT what you think

By Glen Monks

Meditation is NOT what you think

Welcome Home



Meditation is the ability to rest in the home of your body without emotional or mental distraction.

“We all suffer in life, the secret is to smile regardless”



Meditation is NOT what you think

Brief Introduction



"Teach your mind to embrace the playfulness of self expression. We suffer more in our imagination than we do in reality"

After a lifetime of soul searching, I trained to become a mind-body therapist to help and support others. I mostly find peace nowadays, whenever I'm writing, so I thank you in advance, for the opportunity to share with you my two passions.

Having been invited to leave school earlier than most, perhaps explains my broad outlook on life and a somewhat unconventional approach. However, what I never picked up from the blackboard, I later discovered on my travels around the world. Here, my black and white vision became a pallet of colour, exploding with enthusiasm and creativity. The topics covered in this publication include personal and spiritual growth from teachers and lessons I met along the way. So, be prepared for an unexpected ride.

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“No one really owns anything, share but don’t steal”

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Readers Preparation

***“Our genes only express about 5% of our reality,
so stop blaming it on your genes”***

The title of this book somehow intrigued you and brought you to this turning point in life. It's a point that's different for everyone, usually triggered by a general lack of contentment. The challenge set before you, if you decide to accept, is to sharpen your awareness and align with your heart's purpose. By engaging in the activities that follow, you will learn how to become less responsive to the world and how to adjust things that aren't working in your favour. The rewards come not without challenge and require a burning desire to change one's current state of reality. The author takes no responsibility for your lack of due care towards developing a better you. If you have any existing physical or mental health conditions, the content is merely a guide and not a panacea.

Due to the complexity of the psycho-spiritual-human-experience, the practices that follow may not answer all the life questions you have struggled to fathom. What is certain is that no harm will come to you, so long as you practice lightly and ask for support where needed.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Introduction

“The unexamined life is not worth living”

The words you are about to read mainly surfaced as a result of meditative practice. Initially, the book started as a blog post, but the content just kept on coming. The hard work came later, to organise my ideas into flowing prose. I ask that you, the reader, be patient with any indigestible content or wordy explanations. To paraphrase the great Winston Churchill, ‘had I had more time it would have been shorter.’

With the world in its current state of panic, meditation could be the solution you need to avoid losing your marbles completely. You may be drawn to the idea of having a serene, Buddha- like nature, but have never mastered it. You may have been contemplating that teenage hobby but realised you just don't have the patience. Whatever your quest, we all could do with a little serenity right now. And, although I cannot promise you will transcend all your suffering and enter Nirvana, like the Buddha, with time on your hands what have you got to lose?



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Journey of Discovery

"If you want to soar like an eagle, don't try and fly with turkeys"

In this book, I will explain the what, how, why and where around the subject of meditation. The subject matter is such that many branches of discovery are possible. With this, I apologise in advance for any unmet expectations. Human development is a lifetime's work, and as meditation requires focus, I have done my best not to go down too many rabbit holes. What you will learn are simple techniques and guidance of what to expect and how to deal with what you find.

To the best of my ability, I will share a commentary that eases you to the water's edge, so to speak. The only thing for you to do after that is take a sip. The reading of this book is itself a form of meditation and, as with all learning, your knowledge and awareness will reach new levels. My only hope is that you find what you are looking for and it quenches your thirst for truth.



Meditation is NOT what you think

My introduction to meditation

***“Learn to listen like every word is a cry to be heard
and carries the fragment of a puzzle”***

Meditation is many things to many people. For some, a quiet walk down a riverbank feeds the soul. For others, a more profound, insightful experience brings appreciation. With this in mind, I can only share my own experiences and stumbling blocks as guidance and not instruction. Yours is to navigate your personal experience and, like I, potentially share your findings with those you love.

I vividly remember the first time I heard the word meditation, after a conversation with a guy I met in Sydney, Australia. He mentioned he was going home to meditate. It seemed odd that he would share this with me, but even stranger that he was going home to sit and do nothing. How on earth would I find the time? The concept intrigued me and began to fuel my interest. Then, one evening, I decided to try. I locked the door, to avoid the embarrassment of my flatmate walking in on me and prepared a comfortable couch nest. The task in hand seemed quite simple, to sit, alone, just me and my thoughts. How very weird!

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Intro cont...

Of course, like many, I believed the purpose of meditation was to empty my mind and have zero thoughts. Wrong! Initially, I felt rather silly and then realised it was not so easy to think of nothing. Over time, I began to wrestle my thoughts into submission but, like rubber balls, they came bouncing back. Back then, there were no apps, very few books, and we had no internet, so avenues of learning were limited. But, set the stubborn mind a challenge, and it will often rise to the occasion. I'm sure you know what I mean.

Wind forward 20 years. Eventually, after much necessary practice, tutors, and books, I can rationalise the time I have spent meditating. My findings conclude that meditation is not about doing anything but more so about 'undoing' something. It is this 'something' that we will uncover on our journey together. Why? Because it causes much of life's suffering and keeps distant from the shores of peace.

Through meditation, I have been able to manage health challenges which, who knows, may have otherwise gotten the better of me. You have my apologies in advance for any omissions or lack of depth on specific subjects. Man has meditated since he first sat beside an open fire, pondering the universe and his relationship with the Almighty. My commentary is merely the blink of an eye.

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Just meditate...

and everything will be fine – yeah, right!

There are numerous You-Tube celebrities and health gurus, prescribing the benefits of meditation, but few teaching the benefits and pitfalls. Alongside other life-enhancing practices, like improving sleep, we are told meditation boosts performance. But, if you're like me, you're easily overwhelmed by too much information.

It's perhaps this constant stream of, soon to be 5G, information that's perpetuating our need to meditate in the first place. How bizarre, we spend most of our spare time online, researching how to recover from spending most of our spare time online. No wonder we need lessons for optimising sleep.



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Getting Started

How hard can it be?

To sit, and do nothing, is not as easy as it sounds. Try it, and you will soon notice your mind and body begin to fidget. But why? Perhaps it's ingrained, to feel useless or idle when we're not performing. We are sold the idea, the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, of profiting by squeezing the life out of every moment. But health statistics globally now show the tragic truth. It's us that's getting squeezed.

To embark on a meditative practice takes a little pressure from the squeeze of life. Meditation reveals the physical and mental consequences of our daily actions and brings forth the importance of things that matter. Firstly, we must direct our awareness towards the things that block or challenge our behaviour to lighten our load. Aligning with consciousness is perhaps the only accomplishment we humans ever need to achieve. Because a person with nothing but peace of mind rarely needs much more from life.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Strong mindset or a healthy ego?

“When you say, I’ve dropped my ego, that’s the ego talking”

You may believe that having a strong mindset is the key to meditation, but this statement is subjective. It all depends on what you regard as strong. The ego, (covered more in-depth soon), presents itself in many guises, in an attempt to dominate and control our beliefs. It does not like change and will kick up a fuss to hinder our progress where possible. However, it is said, somewhere in the spiritual vaults of time, that many roads lead to God. Instead of believing you need a strong mindset to meditate, the right intention is perhaps a better yardstick. When there is clear, purposeful intention, you are more likely to tame your ego and arrive at your chosen destination.

To begin developing the right intention, see my publication [Ashtanga 8 Steps to Bliss](#).



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Healthy Superego

"I is never strong, only 'we' can be strong"

What the great Sigmund Freud named the ego, will give you the biggest fight of your life. Through misinterpretation, the belief is that we must somehow kill the ego to attain peace. But such statements often come from a psycho-spiritual-ego perspective. Striving to catapult your ego into oblivion, can be detrimental to your mental health. Why? Because the ego's job is to protect your identity, everyone displays egoic behaviour to some degree or another. However, through various meditative practices, we can develop a much healthier relationship with our ego. In doing so, our effort is spent on conscious thoughts, actions and words. This approach produces what Freud called the Superego. When ego dominates, it's mostly for gratification or to protect our individual needs. Operating more consciously, the Superego serves the greater good without an agenda. However, desiring such humility can have its pitfalls. We have to be careful because the idea of developing a Superego is very desirable in itself. And as mentioned, desire feeds the unhealthy aspects of ego. With this in mind, the steps that follow will help you develop healthy ego awareness.



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Many rivers to cross

“The phantom of your beliefs was born from suffering”

Following the subject of ego, I remember a young German lad I met in Kerala, South India, on a retreat. The lad's stereotypical, German willpower was not bringing the results he demanded. Dr Vipin, an Ayurvedic Doctor on campus, asked me to share some ideas around meditation with him. The Dr had previously set me a meditation practice to support a detox process known as panchakarma (the five cleansing therapies). The German lad was determined his trip to India would banish his ego and yield spiritual realisation. His quest, to reach Nirvana, was testing the Doctor's patience. The Dr had told him that enlightenment may or may not happen during his trip, that his search may or may not be fruitful, but letting go of his desire was fundamental. The Doctor gave him the painstaking task of exploring the possibility of dropping the urge to change anything. I later came across the lad, early one morning, meditating on a rock, in the middle of a nearby river. His frown was one of desperate frustration. During our conversation, I mentioned something the Doctor had told me, 'there is no fast track to oneness'.



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A story to remember

“The moment you think you’ve got it, you’re doomed!”

One of my favourite spiritual fables is of a Sage, sitting in front of a river. He was chanting rather poorly and out of tune. On the other side of the river, two newly ordained Monks were walking by and heard the din the Sage was making. One of the Monks crossed the river via a rickety footbridge, in the hope of teaching the Sage how to develop more melody. The Sage kindly took the lesson but continued to holler most awfully. The Monk crossed back over the bridge and told his fellow Monk that it was no use, the Sage would never reach enlightenment. A good few yards down the path, the Sage realigned with the Monks, but this time there was no footbridge. He walked across the water and asked, ‘excuse me, how did the melody go again’. The moral of the story is this, there is perfection in every imperfection.



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Many paths - one destination

The meditation paths we will explore together are based on [Yoga](#) and [Tantra](#). Yoga means to join or bring together, and over a hundred other meanings that explain unity. The unified state of yoga is when our physical, mental and spiritual aspects align with a set of practices known as the wheel of yoga. Transcendence of the ego is said to follow with earnest practice. Tantra, on the other hand, is less formalised. It has no blueprint per se and often tests the psycho-emotional balance of the practitioner. Both disciplines include meditative practices in different forms. The former seeks to instil peace by following each spoke of the wheel. The latter is more provocative and reveals any unresolved conflict that keeps us outside of peace. The following practices will provide you with a taster of both paths. Some will provoke what is keeping you from peace, while others will help instil peace. Stay with me if things are getting a little deep. I will hold your hand and explain things along the way. When we have strong assumptions and opinions, we remain stuck, in contrast, the reality is full of colourful opportunities.



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In at the shallow end

“How we relate to ourselves is how we relate to others”

As mentioned earlier, our thoughts generally rise to a challenge. But neither thoughts nor emotions can be pushed aside without the probability of them coming back to bite us on the bum. We cannot develop a peaceful mind or emotional intelligence, the same way we might build biceps in the gym. Brute force doesn't work. Instead, you must learn to understand the nature of your mind, if you are to tame its tendencies. It is as though your mind were a wild animal, you have to train it to work on your behalf. Such nurturing requires patience and practice and must challenge the brain for it to develop. The challenging part is what puts many people off. Why? Because when we quieten the mind, emotions that we don't want to experience often surface. Here, we must acknowledge that thoughts carry with them a subtle form of energy. Emotions are how we feel mental energy; they manifest in the physical form. The difficulty comes when trying to harmonise the two. However, with practice, you'll soon be filtering through your thoughts to serve your body and highest good. Such a method is quite different from positive thinking which doesn't always deliver what it suggests. Next, we will drill down on why you avoid peace in the first place.

Meditation is NOT what you think

Why we avoid peace

The general tendency, to stop those unwanted emotions from surfacing, is to distract ourselves. There's a myriad of stimuli to occupy or sedate the mind to suppress unwanted feelings. This is perhaps why recreational and pharmaceutical drugs are on the increase. Oh, and of course, there's, working too much, over-eating, gambling, exercising to breaking point, porn, sex addiction and many others.

But, if I don't block-out or divert my negative emotions, what will I do with them?

Disturbing thoughts don't just go away! You can fight them, but rarely will you champion them, even more so when something unresolved needs your attention. Why? Because the energetic presence of unspent emotions requires tenderness. You owe it to your soul to release them. Through such action, you will begin to calibrate your feelings with the voice in your head and banish those disturbing thoughts for good.



Meditation is NOT what you think

It's all about flow

So, releasing unspent energy, that might otherwise become stored in the body, is crucial to your evolution. The wheel of yoga combines the movement of the body with composure of mind. Without such equilibrium, tension tends to build-up in the body. This tension increases the more we fight. Twitching, restlessness and stiffness are the language of the body and signify a form of emotional disability. Rarely do we see a person that can express themselves well appear so rigid. Firstly, the mindset must lean towards acceptance. Through the grace of acceptance, we learn to feel into our form and welcome the symbiotic flow between body and mind. Here you will realise that unhealthy thoughts, views and judgments have a profound impact on your physiology. If we are to prevent decay of the body, we must harmonise it with a healthy mind.

But where does all that energy go, you may ask? We hand it back to the body, and in doing so, connect to our deepest core. You will learn more about grounding your energy in the embodiment section. But first, a little bit about brain chemistry.



Meditation is NOT what you think

The laboratory of the brain

“Your mind is machine, don’t let the cogs run dry”

Through meditation, we learn to balance the cascading chemicals that our brains' produce. The deeper we practice, the better we can recognise the impact of our experiences of the past, present and future. Practice greatly improves the way we react to the world and others.

Understanding the brain and how meditation supports it, is the first step towards reaching the summit of peace. Our minds are like a laboratory, they assist in the production of chemicals, [neuropeptides](#) and hormones via neuron activity. Once triggered, these chemicals can either make us feel ecstatic or like crap. Our work, therefore, is to reorient our thinking patterns before they activate negative emotions. Such alchemy is known as [neuroplasticity](#). It may seem incomprehensible, but it's up to us, which chemicals we allow our laboratory to produce. Of course, this takes time and requires spacious awareness. Mindful meditation provides both. Before moving onto mindfulness, you must ask yourself this: what chemistry does my lab currently produce, is it mainly healthy or toxic?



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Mindfulness Meditation

“Mindfulness is simply none judgmental awareness”

Imagine your brain as a computer, you keep the operating system functioning and up to speed through positive input and avoiding viruses. What data do you put in?

Mindfulness shows us the fleeting nature of our thoughts, how they shift from one topic to another. When we focus on a single stream of data, we uncouple the prefrontal cortex, which creates the narrative about us and the things we experience. Through mindful practice, you will become more focused and less concerned by the distractions that often bombard your mind.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Mindfulness unravelled

***“When there is depression of mind –
seek to enhance your spirit and depression will lift”***

Like spaghetti, our thoughts often become entangled. If your mind were a bowl of spaghetti, the purpose of mindfulness would be to remove each piece until all that is left is a single strand. In other words, mindfulness trains us to drop any distractions that keep us from a single subject. But this is by no means easy.

Try it for yourself and you'll begin to notice how your mind wanders. However, this is the whole point of the exercise. Remember, I said you need to understand the tendencies of your mind before you can tame it. Here, you will notice the mind loves to drift, to different objects, subjects, ideas and assumptions. It does this to keep itself occupied. A good starting point to begin mindfulness is [walking meditation](#). This is perhaps the most straightforward and reliable practice you will ever come across and could be the most cathartic experience you'll ever have.



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The Flow State

Walking meditation is not to be underestimated when practised correctly; it balances many systems of the body. It provides a practical entry point to deeper meditative states, and you can do it almost anywhere, anytime and anyplace – sounds like a Martini advert. The first step is coming home to the body, and we do this by grounding our thoughts. To do this, we simply concentrate on the pace, motion and flow of walking. Here, you will notice how the movement happens through you, it's not you that coordinates the movement. Once you relax into this flow-state, you'll soon see how your mind begins to distract you. It will start to label things in your surroundings. For example: if you are walking in nature (which is my advice), you may notice a path up ahead. 'Oh, I remember that path from when I was a kid' a voice arises from within. Then the memories come flooding back, the fun you had, the friend you were with at the time and so on. I wonder what she's doing nowadays. She always wanted to be an artist. That reminds me, I must paint the kitchen. And so, the merry-go-round spins. Instead, as an alternative approach, we follow the path without distraction. We observe the stimulation, but we bring the mind back to the task in hand, merely feeling the earth beneath us. We are walking at a steady pace enjoying the free flow of movement, end of story!



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The Observer State

I have used the word 'observe' purposefully. Many esoteric teachings speak of 'the observer state' a state that is uncontrived and detached from the goings-on of daily living. In this state of detached composure, you are less likely to be sucked in by your emotions. The great Advaita sage, Ramesh Balsekar, puts it most eloquently in his concept of none doer-ship. He boldly claims the words of the Buddha, 'though art, not the speaker, though art, not the thinker, though art, not the doer'. A much-favoured Christian phrase tells it like this, 'we must be in the world but not of it'. Following this commentary, the only thing left to do is to try walking meditation for yourself and see how you go.



[Join my mind-body support page](#)

Meditation is NOT what you think

Sitting to Meditate

“There is no higher grace than intimacy”

Sitting meditation takes inner strength. Some of the strongest people I've ever met are those that have come to terms with their state of suffering, debilitating as it is. Perhaps the strongest is an elderly gentleman with fibromyalgia. He shared, at an open meeting, that for the past 15 years he has sat awake at night, making peace with his aches and pains.

It may seem pointless, to some, but sitting and doing nothing is perhaps the greatest challenge you will ever undertake. Why? Because the ego wants to remain in charge, it will do anything to captain your ship. Sitting quietly doing nothing, causes the unconscious mind to relax and therefore release its contents. This is how a sudden surge of anxiety can unexpectedly rear its ugly head. It's also why I don't recommend deep relaxation and meditation for beginners, or those that have experienced trauma. Here, breath-work, which we will cover soon, and walking meditation combined are most beneficial.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Sitting cont...

The seated meditation technique is pretty much the same as walking meditation, just without moving. Instead, we sit poised and alert. The best analogy I've ever come across was from Pakchok Rinpoche, a Buddhist master I once had the pleasure of meeting. Behind his unassuming smile, sits integrity, diligence and profound wisdom of Tibetan Buddhism. He describes, in his book 'Radical Happiness', that during meditation, our minds should become like a lion. Still, strong and unwavering. Acting only from a sense of need and afraid of nothing. For us to sit still, and observe the thoughts that arise, is far more challenging than when walking. To lessen the challenge, in the beginning, you may choose to focus upon an object of pleasure. It may be a photo or a statue of a spiritual icon, perhaps a simple flower or the flame of a candle. As you align your intention, to absorb only the beauty and significance of the object, your mind should begin to settle. However, even after many attempts, you may find the mind's tendency is to wander from task. And when you catch yourself, which you will, thinking about something other than the object, gift yourself with gratitude and refocus. Each time you find yourself wandering, bring your attention back, and then give yourself a star on the wisdom chart.

My final word on sitting meditation is this, be patient, anything that seems easy to grasp is soon dropped and forgotten. Next, we will cover the difference between eyes open or eyes closed.

Meditation is NOT what you think

Open or closed eyes?

In the movie Dark Knight, Batman does his best work at night-time because this is when the Joker comes out to play. We too have an inbuilt joker that responds to darkness. It's subtle, but it's there. When we close our eyes, the brain instinctively employs other senses to ensure our safety. On the turning of the day, our circadian clock aids the releasing of natural chemicals to prepare us for sleep. Firstly, around dusk, a safety check is employed. Is it safe to hibernate for the night, or is there any danger lurking from predators? If you are sensitive or your nervous system is upregulated, you may notice subtle anxiety around dusk.

These factors are why sitting meditation with your eyes closed is more uncomfortable. Being aware of this alone may be enough to stop any unwanted tension.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Shamata Meditation

Neuroception is the awareness of our automatic response, it is awareness in action without thinking. This is both an internal and external process. Externally we engage with the world through sight, but actually, sight interpretation happens in our brains, as do the rest of our senses. Because of this phenomenon, we could argue that the world happens within us – but let's not get too deep. Our interpretation of things reflects our experiences and findings of the outside world. The world is different for everybody, in some way or another. For example, seeing a tree blossom in spring might mean one thing to one person and something else to another. For the old lady, whose garden homes the blossom tree, there is beauty and excitement for new beginnings. For the gentleman next door, who has to clean up the flower heads, there is woe. But what about the neighbour on the other side? Well, I will let your imagination wander, and you can make up that story for yourself.

The point is this; what we see, and feel is never the same as anyone else. Often, we judge, label and assume things that are not necessarily the truth. The practice of open-eye meditation helps us to disengage from the overworking mind. In the Buddhist tradition, this is called [Shamata](#) meditation. Here, what we see is an inanimate object made up of particles, which have no relevance to our natural state of being. Mastering this technique will help you regulate your emotions, and you are less likely to become triggered.

Meditation is NOT what you think

Feeding your Demons

Contrary to open eyes, closed eye meditation means that all outside stimulus is encased in the boundary of the body. Here, we interpret things from a different perspective. We use the body as our barometer. Are we being threatened, do we need to defend ourselves? Will we benefit from a particular scenario? Closed eye meditation teaches the mind to drop our perception and sharpen our intuition. As a result, we learn to feel our way through the world. The first obstacle for this practice is being comfortable with the darkness of solitude.

Something to be aware of during closed eye meditation, is that it causes the mind to wonder. If your nervous system is struggling with life, you may become more agitated during this practice. If this sounds familiar, bear in mind that your underlying nature is peace. In Buddhist meditation, this intrinsic nature is called your Buddha-nature. A state of non-suffering, integral to your soul. To unveil the soul requires letting go of any harmful and destructive mental patterns. Such shadows may have been trapped in the mind-body since birth, which itself is a traumatic experience. Initially, it may be easier for you to meditate with eyes open instead of facing your demons alone in the dark.

An excellent resource for confronting uncomfortable shadow aspects of your personality is the book [*Feeding your Demons*](#) by Tsultrim Allione.

Meditation is NOT what you think

The mind-body-breath-link

“On the back of the breath, love rides freely”

Homeostasis is the natural default setting for all humans. However, due to the stress of modern living, it's not uncommon for our stasis to go a little wonky! Any form of prolonged stress will have a detrimental impact on the functioning of the body. The main functionality we address in meditation is that of the lungs because consciousness travels through the breath. For the healing power of meditation, it's almost essential to perform some form of breath-work.

In his book, [*Heaven lies within us*](#) Theos Bernard shares his yoga experience with breathing exercises known as [*pranayama*](#). He later explains that without breath-work reaching a state of yoga, unifying the mind and body, is not possible.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Nasal breathing & the benefits

So, the best modality, for experiencing a mind-body connection, is breath awareness. Following the sound and texture of your breath is itself a form of meditation and highly effective for regulating your nervous system. However, caution is vital for those that experience chronic anxiety. Deep breath-work can exacerbate symptoms of anxiety, so go slowly. Hyperventilating is not a pleasant experience and happens when oxygen and carbon dioxide ratios become unbalanced in the blood. Here, the nervous system may stimulate a panic response which can perpetuate a vicious cycle. The antidote for such a scenario is to reduce breath velocity and breath slowly through the nose which increases [nitric oxide production](#).

In the early stages of practising nasal breath-work, there's no rush to develop your lung capacity; this will come with time. It's a case of feeling the body expand and not forcing anything with the will of the mind. The following steps are merely pointers, please practise with caution. Checking in with your heartbeat, skin temperature, and a general sense of balance will avoid any undesirable outcomes. So long as you aim for a rhythmic flow, that in no way causes you to strain, things will be just fine.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Breath-work steps

Step 1: Simply welcome air into your body, through your mouth and let it back out through your nostrils. Follow the path of your inhalation and see where it takes you, notice which parts of your body begin to expand. Then, on the exhale, note which parts contract.

Step 2: Inhale a full, relaxed and comfortable amount of air and count how many seconds it takes to fill your lungs. Next, exhale for the same amount of time as you took on the inhale. Keep practising until you have developed a smooth, steady pace that does not waver. In Sanskrit, this is called Sama Vritti (equal fluctuations).

Step 3: Continue doing the previous actions, but this time using the nose to inhale and exhale. Reflect on the difference between the mouth and nostril breathing. Continue with whichever feels the most comfortable for some time.

Step 4: Once breathing through your nose is as smooth and effortless as breathing through your mouth, you can begin to lengthen your exhalation. Exhale for a second or two longer than the amount of time it takes to inhale. Doing this improves detoxification and helps to balance the autonomic nervous system.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Breath-work cont...

Step 5: Slightly pause your breath after your inhale for a second or two. The breath must only be held in total comfort, with no challenge to the respiratory system or heart. After a few comfortable minutes of this technique, check in with your heart rate variability, mood and breathing patterns. Only persist if there is total comfort and you can resume a healthy pace after you practice. Continue to develop breath awareness by steadily lengthening the pause between each breath.

A general pointer is that you don't begin lengthening the pause of the breath until a minimum of six months of *Sama Vritti* – stages one to four. So, be warned, overworking inspiration may cause your body to rebel if you don't listen to it. Worse still, over dominance could cause permanent damage to your lungs. All you have to do is allow the breath to be your compass and let it guide you.



Meditation is NOT what you think

When to meditate?

The holy trinity for a deep connection to the source of all creation, is faith, love and purpose. I would add to this harmony. When we harmonise with the natural rhythms of life, something magical happens. When our internal circadian rhythm aligns with the cycles of the sun and moon, we feel part of the cosmos. This is why, meditating just before you go to bed and again upon awakening, has such a profound impact. Here, frequency is far more important than intensity, because the reward system of the brain likes familiarity. It's better to practice five minutes each day than haphazardly once a week.

Sitting in silence, during these windows of opportunity, observing nature's unwavering heartbeat, allows us to sink into a broader perspective. Here, you will tune in to a more profound sense of self and let go of what does not serve you. The perfect time, for such psycho-emotional detoxification, is known in Sanskrit as [Brahmamuhurtha](#), the hour of Brahma (The Creator). *Brahmamuhurtha* begins one hour before sunrise each day. This is perhaps why stressed people sometimes claim, they woke up at an 'ungodly hour', with thoughts spinning around their head. If this ever happens to you, a good lesson is to try and reframe your experience. This is a 'Godly hour' and the perfect time, to reflect, let go and plant new seeds for the future you wish to manifest.

Meditation is NOT what you think

Primal brain activity

Contrary to the natural rhythms of life, sometimes we can feel out of sync with the world. When this happens, we tend to cling onto things and become emotionally reactive. Such irrational behaviour stimulates the primitive part of our brain. The great Sigmund Freud called this survival aspect of the mind, the Id.

The likelihood of the Id giving way, when you are highly stressed, is very unlikely. Therefore, during heated moments, meditation is rarely an option. That said, through meditation, and other conscious practices revealed in this book, your tolerance levels will become more robust. We may not be able to defuse all situations in life, but with the clarity of awareness, we can make better decisions. So, be careful what you feed your mind.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Micro Meditations

Or patterns that bind you?

A great way to combat the stress of daily life is to create enough space for the mind to recognise any problem areas. Micro meditations, throughout the day, are a great way to do this.

In his book, [*Emotional survival for law enforcement officers*](#), resilience coach, Dr Gill Martin, states the advantages of controlling at least one activity each day. He explains how a Holocaust survivor regularly shared a piece of stale bread with another prisoner; this he could manage. You may not be able to change your spouse's reaction to your muddy boots on the kitchen floor, but you can control your breath for a few minutes. Micro meditations need not last for more than a few minutes, it's really up to you. You can practice on a bus, in the park or on the toilet seat – I wouldn't advise driving though. To reflect upon your current reality, can improve the course of your day. However, resolving what's going on may take a different toll. The first hurdle is breaking those habit-forming thinking patterns. Micro-meditations do precisely that.



Meditation is NOT what you think

“Let everything be as it is” Adyashanti

The renowned spiritual teacher, Adyashanti, has a message, which cuts out any spiritual jargon. He simply guides us to notice the background on which life happens. He suggests that daily life happens on a canvas of silence, which, if we listen, will speak to us. Here, we can imagine our stream of consciousness connecting with the universe, rather than being dominated by the noise of the world.

Of course, letting everything be as it is, does not come without a challenge. The stress of modern living can become so debilitating that no amount of willpower or positive thinking can fix things. Here, the stress centre of the brain, the [amygdala](#), goes into overdrive. Thoughts become like steel balls rattling around in a pinball machine. In extreme cases, bodily functions shut down to fuel the search for a solution. When trauma sits beneath this, we have a vicious cocktail. Going back to the previous analogy, of the mind being like a bowl of spaghetti, we could say that trauma is the meatballs that make a Bolognese. Yes, trauma really does ‘Bolognese’ things up!

The impact of trauma is being considered more in the therapy world and quite rightly so. Anyone dealing with the physiological consequences of trauma needs some form of guidance. Yet, we are all traumatised in some way or another. To better understand your own trauma, you must realise that it comes in many guises. If any of this sounds familiar, keep on reading, you’ll soon be buffering your pain with peace.

Meditation is NOT what you think

Trauma with a little t or a big T?

Trauma is relative to the individual, and no traumatic experience is too small to have a lasting impact. One person may have been affected as a child when they got lost on a shopping trip. For another, it may have been the death of a loved one before their time (big T). The impact can be just as damaging. Also, a build-up of life stressors can result in a traumatic response (little t). There is no one size fits all, and it's all down to our individual make up.

The ego is a necessary evil, but when things go out of whack, we soon know about it. Traumatic experiences are like miniature deaths, they force the ego into submission.

Of course, every ego must die, as does everyone. Our best work, therefore, is to accept each death with dignity. Through meditation, we cultivate this kind of acceptance. We learn to align our ego with peace in preparation for the inevitable. But before we can do this, we must make peace with ourselves.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Solitude vs Isolation

I'm sure you can recall some form of loss that shook your foundation and caused you to question things. How will I cope? What if this or that happens? All feelings of connectedness dissolve down the plughole. There is much work being done, in the mental health arena, to support those with a loss of connection. It seems talking about our issues helps us to put things into perspective. But what when inner turmoil cuts deeper than words? Isolation is an intense bodily experience, fuelled by feelings of abandonment and desperation. It's much more than being lonely or bored. If you've ever felt isolated, you will know what I mean. Where to go and whom to turn to, reveal neither answer nor relief. It's like nobody understands the intense lack of connection one feels.

To stretch your mind and believe that happiness is built on deficit can be almost impossible when you feel isolated. But the truth is, the pain it carries bears the seed for contentment. How can this be? Without experiencing a lack of something, we cannot celebrate having anything. Knowing this can nudge feelings of isolation, towards the healthier state of solitude. Easing into the idea of being in solitude, is more nurturing, independent, and less desperate. Isolation is born from desire, which is at the root of all suffering. This intense feeling is related to the external world and feels like we are lacking in something. Solitude, however, is where we develop inner strength and enliven our soul. This type of introspection has the power to bring our neural-network back into balance. Through embodied meditation, you will learn how to embrace solitude by feeling into your body.

Meditation is NOT what you think

Feeling into emotional pain

***“The weight of guilt wears heavy
to lie to those close to us drives guilt beneath the skin”***

The mind-body connection is much more apparent when there is physical pain because the mind cannot seem to settle. When physical pain overrides our ability to perform daily tasks, we know about it. The emotional pain of grief, abandonment and shame, to name a few, can be debilitating. These emotions may not pierce or bruise your skin, but they hurt just as much. The body's capacity to store pain can last for decades. It's all a matter of time, and when we are strong enough to release it. The travesty is that much-unresolved trauma goes to the grave. The work of [Dr Garbor Marte](#) explains how trauma is fuelling much of society's addictions. It matters not what the addiction is, we humans will do anything to avoid facing emotional anguish. Although meditation is not the antidote to addiction, it can safely and positively alter our brain chemistry for the better.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Nervous system and HRV

***“People who are lonely visit their doctor
4 to 6 times more than anyone else”***

For many, deep-seated emotions present a wall that mindfulness cannot dismantle. To break through this wall, first, we must know how it was built. The adult brain creates strategies to either thrive or survive, depending on how it was programmed. While growing up, the stimuli we encounter shapes our view of the world. By the time we become adults, our operating system, the brain, in this case, is set to serve us. Your mind generally gravitates to familiar stimuli that you experienced during childhood. If there was love and harmony, you are more likely to receive and give out love. If you were raised in a stressful environment, you are more likely to attract the same. [ACEs](#), known as 'adverse childhood events' are markers that must be taken into consideration when dealing with mental health. When a virus, in the form of childhood conflict or trauma, contaminates the operating system, it must be debugged. Otherwise, the system may run slow, which results in depression. Contrary to this, an overdriven system, in a desperate search for answers, results in anxiety.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Limbic system regulation

“In war, the victory strategist seeks only to do battle after the mind is won”

Sun Tzu

Psychological trauma affects the limbic system and can take some correcting. Developing safe, secure attachments as adults significantly impacts the mental scars of trauma, but this takes time. Seldom do we come across deep secure attachments in our everyday life. However, a shift in human consciousness, through practices such as embodied meditation, is starting to awaken many. If you are amongst the sixty per cent of the population that have experienced some form of trauma yet have found a secure attachment you are fortunate. If not, you are amongst the rest of us that could benefit from this type of meditation. The first step is to approach the stressors that caused your discomfort. By understanding the stress pathology of your life, you can free - up its emotional charge.

If you currently experience emotional pain, it may be due to unresolved issues around rejection, abandonment, humiliation, betrayal or injustice. Sometimes stored in the body since childhood, these emotions can be embedded in our neural network. Before these issues can be released, you must accept this on a conscious level. You must be open to the fact that these emotions have governed you and be ready to make a change.

Meditation is NOT what you think

The Vagus Nerve

“Keep your vagus nerve happy and everything will be just fine”

I could not complete a book about meditation and not mention the vagus nerve. Your brain uses this nerve to activate the parasympathetic nervous system. This branch of nerves covers the rest, digest, detox, recovery, and healing aspects of your body. The vagus nerve is not the only one controlling stress, but it's by far the most important. Its affects reach from the 10th cranial nerve, in the neck, right down through your major organs to the pelvic bowl. When we harmonise the vagus nerve our body responds favourably.

However, if we become out of balance, a process called the Cell Danger Response can happen. This is a mechanism the body uses to heal itself after a threat or injury. Here, in response to danger, the cells shift from their normal functioning (of producing energy) to a freeze state. When the body becomes under severe threat, from infection or trauma, the vagus nerve activates this freeze response. We can liken this to a form of hibernation, similar to when an animal plays dead to protect itself from danger.



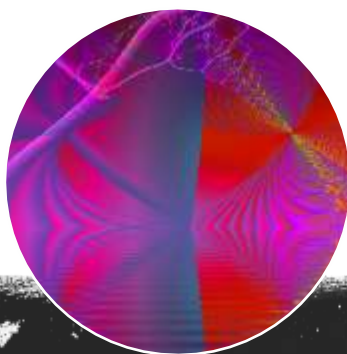
Meditation is NOT what you think

Activating The Vagus Nerve

“Om shanti, shanti, shanti, I Am peace, peace, peace”

There are numerous tricks, tips and techniques to activate the vagus nerve and re-ignite its functionality. The secret is to practice often and vary your methods, here are a few to try:

- Sound meditation – [Mantra](#) chant the sacred sound OM where possible or even sing your favourite song in the bath.
- Gargle with warm water, better still, gargle with coconut oil and take out the bacteria in your mouth at the same time – don't swallow just spit.
- Balanced breathing – *Sama Vritti* – covered in this book.
- Splashing your face with cold water stimulates the vagus nerve.
- Eating healthy, detoxification and fasting – see my book [Mind Body Matters](#).
- Meditation – find a method and stick to it at regular intervals
- Stimulate the gag reflex – gagging improves vagal tone.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Embodied Yoga

“Listen to your body, for it speaks a profound truth”

We cannot separate the mind from the body. If you've ever felt your gut instinct, you'll know this. Embodiment is the practical study of the unified body-mind.

Thanks to a shift in human consciousness and fresh approaches, Embodied Yoga is gaining popularity. The practise challenges us in new harmonious ways that put old-school methods to bed. [Embodiment](#) requires that we become as disinterested in the mind as possible and hand our senses over to the body. This is a shift that requires us to connect to our primal instincts. Here, we drop our conscious awareness through the central nervous channel and park it on the pelvic floor. The pelvic area is a bowl of nerves and ganglia, often referred to as the second brain. In eastern esoteric practices, this healing centre is called the [Muladhara Chakra](#). When we attune to this, we nurture ourselves and others.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Shifting embodied emotions

“No man is more unhappy than he who never faces adversity.

For he is not permitted to prove himself” - Seneca

Earlier, we covered breath awareness; now you can use this healing method again. Your breath can massage areas of your body that other practices cannot reach. With practice, you'll soon develop an intimate relationship with your body and tender to its needs. Through embodied-breath-meditation, we get to notice subtle changes in our physical and mental energy. We get to rewrite our experience. When you do this, you will see a greater appreciation for the nature of things. This is the goal of the work. An embodied practise will give you the tools to make your way back home. As you sink into your body, you will find self-acceptance of who and how you are. Through conscious effort and practice your negative emotions will lessen, and you will begin to appreciate life on a whole new level.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Basic steps to get you started

On an in-breath, acknowledge any tension in your body, as best you can. Connect with this feeling, through breath-awareness, and surrender your mind to it. Simply allow your muscles, organs and skin to dissolve as you release and let go of all self judgment. Next, as you exhale, let go of any remnants of tension the same way as you did on the inhale. The next step is to imagine particles of released tension dropping through your body and collecting at the base of your pelvic area. With composure and focus on the pelvic floor (*Muladhara Chakara*), your work is to direct your breathing from this centre. As you cultivate sensitivity and awareness in this area, you will learn that there's no end to the amount of love you can feel from within.

The canary in the coal mine, however, is when we go back to the chaos of daily living. I'm not suggesting that embodied meditation means you won't become triggered. But over time, you will notice that your practice pays good returns on your investment. Initially, it may seem that you have more thoughts, being more aware can do this. So long as you remain embodied, your thoughts will dissipate. Over time, you will feel the universal life force that connects us all, surging through your veins.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Be kind to yourself

“Gift yourself love and watch the great impact it has on others”

Processing embedded emotions can be lethal, especially if you have experienced trauma, so find someone to guide you. I lost a dear friend in 2019 who could no longer manage his mental suffering. It may seem unlikely that the pain of mental anguish could be so high that one could take their own life. But, from direct experience, I can confirm that such pain exists. How can this be, when the thirst for life is so great? A dysregulated psycho-emotional state severely impacts brain chemistry. A set of electromagnetic signals, which form the limbic system, then begin to tamper with the hormones. This can have a dramatic impact on cellular functioning and immunity. Together, these factors play havoc on [neurotransmitters](#) such as serotonin and dopamine which control our mood. And so, the vicious cycle turns.

Managing and moving out of this state requires daily maintenance and the steps covered throughout this book.

For further information research [psycho-neuro-immunology](#). There is also a list of resources and links on my website www.glenmonks.com

Meditation is NOT what you think

Free Flow Meditation

“When we find our ‘why’, we unlock our true potential”

Free flow meditation makes the mind work unconventionally. This form of enquiry will help you to find answers that lay hidden in your subconscious. Through creativity, we safely nudge the mind towards alternative strategies that better serve us. Firstly, to get the mind flowing, we must meet the present moment. You can do this by asking the question: what’s going on for me right now? Connecting into your current state of reality will help to smoke out any negativity. If necessary, you can write a list of contaminated thoughts that you feel may be holding you back. Seeing our ‘niggles’ appear on paper is far better than the overwhelm of holding onto them.

“Let your feelings flow as wild as the wind”



Meditation is NOT what you think

Creative Questioning

Because the mind loves to fathom things out and fix them, it's good to set it a challenge. For example, ask yourself this question. Out of all the information in the universe, how much do I think I know? Ponder on this question for a while. How much do you think you know, a lot, not that much, or more than most? Here, your mind will go to work on answering the line of enquiry. Be impartial to what your thoughts present, it's not important how much you do or don't know. What is relevant is how your mind cannot ignore the challenge.

You can now ask the second part of the questioning process. Out of all this information, how much do I honestly know? This question often reveals that as smart as we would like to believe we are, we know very little on the grand scheme of things. If this is the case, maybe the solution to your troubles hides just outside of your field of reference. It may take something that you've never considered before to get you out of any black holes. Relaxing our effort and it being 'OK' to not have all the answers, often creates just enough space for the right solution to come along.



Meditation is NOT what you think

More Questions

Another simple but compelling question that makes the mind work for us, rather than against us is this: how would it be if my thoughts came more slowly? This works well before seated meditation practice. You will notice how the mind obeys your command and your thoughts slow down as a result of asking this. I learnt this technique from the late yogi, Makunda Styles. He was one of the finest and altruistic yoga teachers I ever met.

When it comes to altering thought velocity, the most powerful question I've ever come across is this one: what will the next thought be? Simple as it is, you will notice your thought stream finds it hard to comply with this. Instead of looking for an answer, your mind will be stunned to a halt, albeit for a short period. Try this exercise yourself, or better still test it with a friend, you'll both be surprised by the impact.

It's important to note here that meditation is not about stopping your thoughts. No, that's just the state of non-thinking. This state may help round up your thoughts, for a short while, but it's not the be-all and end-all. As I said previously, meditation is many things to many people.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Writing for Therapy

Aside from asking the mind to fathom things out, you can try my favourite form of enquiry, which is writing for therapy. This meditative exercise helps to objectify our beliefs and behaviours. Writing your thoughts down will inspire you to reflect upon them, instead of fuelling your neurosis. With the right approach, your emotions will soon become standalone entities that you'll be able to detach from.

When ruminating thoughts zoom up and down the motorway of our mind, there is little chance of finding serenity. Writing for therapy is like lifting a drawbridge on this motorway, causing the traffic to vanish into the abyss. It's like having a 'brain dump', it reduces the mental load. This technique is great for sifting through a head full of overwhelm or diverting any crazy ideas you have been procrastinating. When it comes to the tone of your questions, there are no rules, so long as your intention is pure. Don't forget, though, that your mind will often present things from a safety perspective. Unmet needs and desires tend to keep looping until we pay them the attention they require. The good thing is, with practice, it won't be long, before the motorway traffic slows down and you feel like you're driving Miss Daisy through the countryside.

Meditation is NOT what you think

A word on rumination

Negative thoughts and compulsions drive grooves into the default network of the brain. It's hard to see the truth when the neuro-highway lights up in this way. Until we learn how to reorient things, the tendency is to ruminate. This type of high voltage thinking can be exhausting. Thoughts of not being good enough, desperately wanting to change things and others will continue as long as you let them. A favourite mantra of mine is this: If the story doesn't end now, when will it!

But why do we ruminate? It's because our brains were built for anticipation. When hunting or battling with the elements of life, our primal instinct is to get the job done without harm. We produce dopamine as a precursor to achievement, we get a hit of dopamine whenever we complete something. You see, it's all about the chase. However, dopamine production becomes inhibited under high levels of [cortisol](#) which is our primary stress hormone. If your life stressors conflict with how you obtain dopamine, then you have a problem. For example, striving to reach a sales target or getting a promotion might produce massive hits of dopamine. But, if you begin to feel overwhelmed, due to the pressure of the increased responsibility, then dopamine production will go down. The problem is, where will you find your next hit? The downside of reaching the top of your game is this: it's a long way down. You don't have to ruminate over this, simply be aware that peace exists without the attainment goals. An alternative approach might be to follow the Lloyds Bank advertisement, **"be in life for the journey"**.

Meditation is NOT what you think

Conscious Questioning

The effort required for conscious questioning is the very opposite of meditation, in the sense that we encourage the mind to work and not relax. Rational thinking is paced, with deliberate gaps in between thoughts, but in this instance, we ramp up the speed. The purpose of this is to disrupt the conscious thinking process and to tap into our unconscious. The programs that run in your subconscious need exposing and this process does precisely that. Initially, you will write out your question in full. You will then scribble, as quickly as possible, as many answers that you can muster. Don't stop until you have exhausted the question in hand. Here, you will find revelations come thick and fast as your subconscious responds to the challenge. Eventually, the process will lose its traction, and your writing will come to an end. Now you can employ a different question on the same topic. For example, you may switch from: WHY do I need this person in my life? To, HOW is this person supporting me? There is no end to the number of question combinations, not until you have concluded your search for truth.

The process is simple, merely requiring a pen, a sheet of paper, and the willingness to learn something new about yourself.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Action Steps

Step 1: Identify a problem or negative thinking pattern you want to rid yourself of.

Step 2: Choose one of the 'six honest serving men' (see below) to assist you. They will help you to get to the root of your issue.

Step 3: Ask a thought-provoking question and keep writing until you run out of answers.

Step 4: Reflect on your findings. This technique will help you to clean up any uncertainties you have.

Step 5: Apply a '*just for today*' mindset. Let me explain, you may have come across the story of a sign behind a bar that reads, 'Free beer tomorrow'. Of course, tomorrow never comes. You can apply this same illusion with things you want to resolve in your life. '*Just for today*', I allow myself to feel the way I do, about the things I cannot change. Try it, what have you got to lose?

With regards to deep trauma, the steps above may not be as potent on their own. It may take a cocktail of techniques to work through any deep-seated issues you harbour. In some instances, professional intervention may be needed. One thing is for sure, shining the light of awareness, through creative questioning and writing is more productive than masking or avoidance. To transform our lives, we must reveal the shadows of our psyche.

Meditation is NOT what you think

Resources

This poem, by Rudyard Kipling, is a great resource.

Six honest serving-men

I keep six honest serving-men
 (They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why and When
 And How and Where and Who.
I send them over land and sea,
 I send them east and west;
And after they have worked for me,
 I give them all a rest.

“The key to finding a solution is asking the right questions”



Meditation is NOT what you think

Resources cont...

Some questioning ideas to consider.

In **what** ways is this situation helping me?

Why am I becoming upset by this situation?

How can I look at this situation another way?

Who would treat this situation differently?

Where am I getting this right, where am I getting it wrong?

When do I know it will be different?

A good line of questioning for a good old 'brain dump' is this: what do I need to learn, to let go of what is holding me back (name the emotion that is holding you back). Another question that works well is, " what is holding me back from having the result I would like? "

A point to remember when unearthing deep-seated emotions is this: the deepest jewels require lots of digging, and this is dirty work. So, don't be afraid to roll up your sleeves and get stuck in.



Meditation is NOT what you think

The Journey of the Soul

Meditation is sometimes confused with spirituality, which in itself is often misinterpreted as religion. I see the link between meditation and spirituality more of a journey than a dogma. Through mediation, we get to know ourselves better and connect with the source of all creation. We experience this same connection when we love someone. Perhaps this is why it hurts so much when our love becomes challenged. To see others as a representation of love, good, bad or indifferent, is the spiritual seeker's goal. With the same mindset, we can translocate meditation into our relationships.

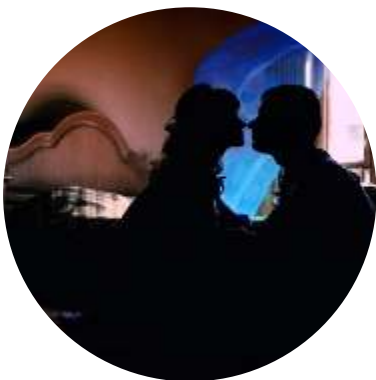
The reason modern relationships struggle is because our nervous systems are over-stimulated. We are so conditioned to process short bursts of information, delivered by laptops, tablets and iPhones, that there is little room for quality communication. The price of this 'always on' society is cost by a lack of self-love and disharmony with others. The [Sanskrit](#) word *manus* translates as 'the mind'. It is understood, in this 5,000-year-old wisdom, that we are 'hu-minds being'. But what are we trying to be? The state of 'being' is quite unlike the state of 'doing' which involves some form of activity. When we are in a state of 'being', there is less emphasis on 'doing'. A shift in this direction can be life-changing, after all, it's the doing that gets us into trouble. An excellent way to approach this is to realise that the things you 'do' are perpetrated by internal 'drivers'. Our drivers are what make us function.

Meditation is NOT what you think

The Journey of the Soul cont...

“To embrace our frustration is to avoid it turning to anger”

The internal drivers that control our minds swing between two polarities, survival and desire. When you strip back all your activities to their root, there will be one of these drivers at play. Getting to know what drives you will help you to calibrate your ego. Through introspection and reflection, you will get to know if your ego is seeking to attain something, being threatened, or managing the nature of things. This type of wisdom will significantly enhance your relationships. With this in mind, an excellent time to sharpen your awareness is when you are around those you love. The gaps, in between our conversations, provide the perfect opportunity for us to build compassion and empathy. It may not be easy, but unconditional love only exists when a conscious hu-mind-being operates with a healthy ego. This type of approach will help you turn your relationships into your soul's purpose.



Meditation is NOT what you think

Your Soul's Purpose

***“Find your Soul purpose and you will never
work another day in your life”***

If meditation had a destination, it would be to help you find your purpose. Cognitively we can grasp the idea of our life needing an outcome. But letting go of the resistance to what holds us back from achieving it, is not as smooth a ride. If you are lucky enough to spend your time doing what you enjoy with those you love, you still may be lacking purpose. It's been written, in various ways, that 'all roads lead home'. Through meditation, you will begin to sense this coming home. You will come to know what it is to surrender your ego to something greater than self. If life has a purpose, then this is it.

Uniting with something more significant than your own identity cannot be expressed through words, it's more of a felt sense. Words stimulate the activity of mind, which requires cognition. 'Arriving' at the shores of peace, is more so a state of witnessing. Here, the ego comes into direct contact with the force outside of itself. Call it, The Divine, God, Buddha, Nature or Spot, the nodding donkey, through direct experience there is no doubt of its magnitude. Through embodied meditation practice, something magical reveals a profound truth. We come to know ourselves by making peace with our internal resistance. We let go and let God.

Meditation is NOT what you think

Set your 'self' free

***“When life, relationship, work or family seem overwhelming,
Practice ‘dying’ and then reawaken to your significance”***

Meditation is serious business. It's not a fast track to oneness, nor will it solve all your problems. What it is, is an opportunity for you to get closer to a more profound sense and reason for your existence. With regards to egocentric behaviour, our work is not to fight the ego or fall slave to the Id, but more so to refine our Superego. To bring peace into each moment, for yourself and others, is possible. It requires emotional intelligence, compassion and empathy. Through practice, you will experience your mind and nervous system loosening up. This type of brain training does not come without a challenge. However, every hurdle you meet, with an open heart, will reward you greatly. You may have experienced deep anguish as felt pain in the body. But now you know how to reduce negative thoughts, worries and concerns, you can begin to set your 'self' free.



Meditation is NOT what you think

To close

The human condition is such that we feel under threat from many avenues. Stress, trauma and complex lives have become part of daily living. The state of the modern world has never needed meditation more than it has now. To resolve humanities search for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, we must learn to live in harmony with one another and with Mother Nature. Taking time to resolve our own inner conflict is the most effective way of doing this.

All that is required is a paced approach, the proper guidance and a sprinkling of humility. As with all path's worth treading, the road of least resistance is best. If it worked for the famous tortoise when defeating the hare, it could work for you. In other words, be patient, this is a lifetime's work without ending.

"It all works out in the end, and if it's not worked out it's not the end"

Additional statements I never got around to using:

In times of trouble, sometimes the smallest voice speaks the loudest.

Love lightly, and the world will love you back if you allow it.

We are all interconnected, what we do to others we do to ourselves.

Om Shanti
I am Peace



Meditation is NOT what you think

Further Resources

“Continuous transformation is the best of disciplines”

Suggested Reading

- Letting Go – David R. Hawkins MD PhD
- The Sedona Method – Dale Howskin
- Smile at Fear – Chogyam Trungpa
- Feeding your Demons – Tsultrim Allione
- The Power of Now – Eckhart Tolle
- Asana Pranayama Mudra – Bihar School
- Tantra (Supreme Understanding) – Osho
- Dance of the Lion and Unicorn – Mark Waller
- Bodywise – Joseph Heller
- The Seasonal Diet – John Douillard
- Heaven Lies within us – Theos Bernard
- Structural Yoga Therapy – Mukunda Styles
- The Only way to Live – Rameshi Balsekar
- The Divided Mind – John E. Sarno MD
- [Mind- body Matters](#) – Glen Monks
- Johnathan Livingston Seagull – Richard Bach



Join my mind-body group to ask any questions around yoga, meditation, functional medicine and a more natural approach to living. I am no expert but have a few life experiences that might make your journey a little less stressful.



- [Building Resilience](#)
- [Addiction 12 Steps](#)
- [Creating Space](#)
- [Embodiment Audio](#)
- [Happy Life Philosophy](#)



[Mind Body private group](#)



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