

Meditation Series Overview

- There will be six dharma sessions:
 1. **Meditation Basics - How We Will Meditate.**
 2. **Science of Meditation – Physical and Mental Effects.**
 3. **The Buddha's Teachings - The History of Meditation.**
 4. **Types of Meditation – The Many Ways to Meditate.**
 5. **Energy - Chakras, Meridians, Auras.**
 6. **Mindfulness – Directed and Guided Meditation.**
- Each session will be a mix of meditation teaching (dharma), calmness meditation (samadhi), and group (sangha) discussion.
- We will meditate each time!

About Your Sangha Leader

- I have been meditating since 2006.
- I meditate 3 or 4 times per week, usually lying down, for 10 to 30 minutes each time.
 - At one point I meditated daily for 30-60 minutes
- I have read number of books on meditation and I have attended several retreats
- I have taught 11 multi-session meditation classes
- I am not a guru or trained as a meditation teacher
- I do this as a volunteer, not as a business

Stephen Troutman

Session #1 Agenda

– Today's topic:

How to meditate

– Agenda

- Learn Samadhi meditation basics
- Meditate during this class session

Two Types of Meditation

1. Samadhi –

- Desired Result: “calmness”
- Approach: turn *away* from thoughts and the senses
- Focus on: breath or other object*

2. Vipassana –

- Desired Result: “mindfulness”
- Approach: turn *toward* thoughts and senses
- Focus on: the troubling thought or emotion

We will cover both in this series, but start with Samadhi

* there are alternatives to focusing on the breath

Our Meditation Practice

- We will meditate for 3 minutes.
 - But only after we complete the detailed instructions which follow.

How We Will Meditate (part 1a)

- Sit comfortably
 - On your sits bones
 - Feet flat on the ground
- Find a place for your hands
 - Anywhere comfortable
- Align your posture
 - Stack bones from hip to head
 - Keep back away from chair, if that is comfortable



How We Will Meditate (part 1b)

- Relax *all* of your muscles
 - Stacked bones posture enables this
 - Do not lean forward or back
 - Relax hands, face, tongue, etc.
- Eyes disengaged
 - closed or staring to a middle distance



How We Will Meditate (part 1c)

- Breath through your nose
- Use diaphragmatic breathing
 - Belly out with inhale
 - Belly in and up with exhale
- Observe your breath*
 - air in/out,
 - shallow/deep,
 - long/short,
 - belly out/in,
 - fast/slow, etc.



* Other things to focus on include; mantras, prayers, counting, candles, or other objects.

How We Will Meditate (part 1d)

- Focus on your breath*
 - Observe your breathing as it takes place
- Observe only the present moment
 - What is actually happening, right this instant!
 - Being aware of, and focused on, the here and now
 - Ignoring both the past and the future
- Do not judge or hold on to anything



* Other things to focus on include; mantras, prayers, counting, candles, or other objects.

This is a key tenant of Samadhi practice

How We Will Meditate (part 1e)

- When thoughts jump into your mind:
 1. Name them silently
 - (acknowledge they exist)
 2. Let them go
 - (release them from your thinking)
 3. Return focus to your breath
 - (replace the interruption in your mind by returning to observing your breathing)



* Other focus items include; mantras, prayers, counting, candles, or other objects

How We Will Meditate (part 1f)

- You must not:
 - Hold onto *any* thought (positive or negative)
 - Value or judge *any* thought
 - Judge your meditation *practice* or *yourself*

This is a key tenant of Samadhi practice

What You Might Experience

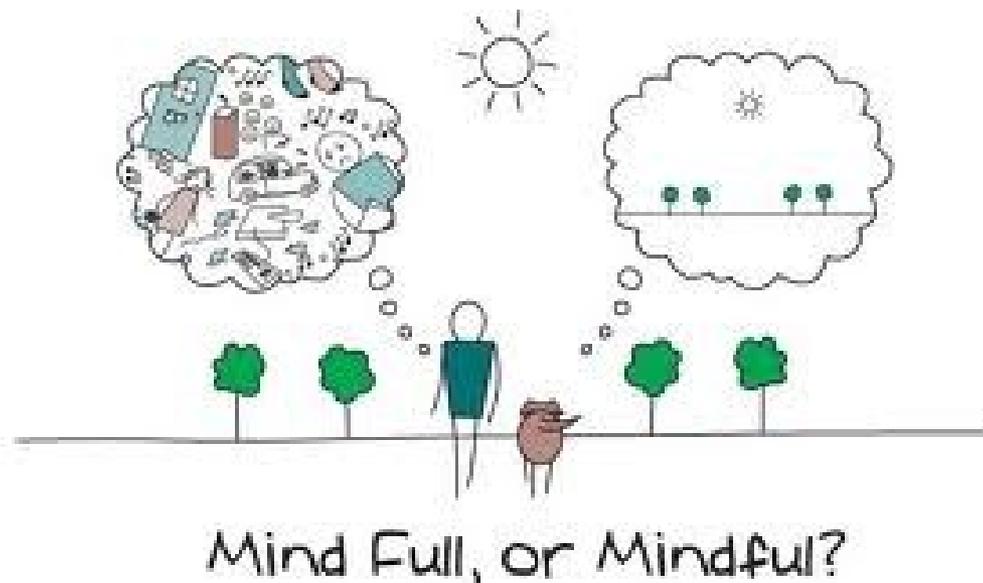
- You may feel:
 - Physical sensations
 - Twitching, muscle tightening or release
 - Dull headache, pressure in your scalp
 - Feel like you are getting big or are floating
 - Mental sensations
 - Seeing lights, visions, voices, memories, etc.
 - Feel very relaxed, or have vivid awareness, mental clarity, etc.
 - Various feelings of calmness, well being, sadness, wholeness, etc.
 - Or nothing
- **Whatever you feel, *it is normal.***
 - Treat whatever you experience as you would any other interruption

Lesh Scale

Lesh Number	Subjective correlates of state	EEG Brain-wave Monitor
0	Just beginning to relax. Subject may report difficulty in stilling the mind; the itchy state. Why am I doing this?	Intermittent Alpha and Beta.
1	You may find yourself filling your mind with everyday affairs, almost as an avoidance of meditation; (the fear of the mind, to let go from time to space). Subjects have reported feeling dizzy or having befogged consciousness or sensation like going under an anesthetic.	Reduced Beta, continuous Alpha.
2	Calmness and relaxation; childhood or other scenes from the past recalled as 'flashbacks'. Focus may not be very sustained.	Continuous Alpha, no Beta, intermittent Theta.
3	Well defined state. Pleasant bodily sensations of floating lightness, rocking, swaying (may actually move rhythmically). More sustained focus than prior level. Increased and clearer imagery.	Continuous Alpha, but with falling frequency, almost continuous Theta.
4	Extremely vivid awareness of your other bodily sensations; heartbeat, breathing, etc. Effortless awareness of this moment. Sometimes a sensation of 'being full of air' or of 'growing to great size' and/or an alternation between internal and external awareness.	Continuous Alpha, continuous Theta falling in frequency (toward 3 Hz range)
5	Very lucid state of consciousness. Deeply satisfying, intense alertness, calmness and detachment. Feeling of alerted state lacking in previous levels. Extreme relaxation. May have peak, "ah-ha", experience.	Continuous Theta, Alpha frequency only at very low end (near 8 Hz).
6	Intuitive insight into old problems. Feeling of higher spiritual awareness. Sensation of surrounding light. Sense of greater universal knowledge. Experience bliss, peace, and enjoy just being.	Very little electrical brain activity except occasional Delta.
7	Feeling of union with the universe. Utter peacefulness. Loss of self.	Occasional Delta

Our First Meditation

- We will meditate for 3 minutes
 - 1 gong will sound every 1 minute
 - 3 gongs will signal the end of the meditation



How to Meditate - Summarized

- Align your posture and sit comfortably relaxed
- Breathe through your nose
- Use diaphragmatic breathing (Belly out with inhale / belly in with exhale)
- Observe only the present moment (Not the past, not the future)
- Focus on your breathing*
 - Observe your breathing: air in/out, shallow/deep, long/short, belly out/in, etc.
- When thoughts jump into your mind:
 1. Name them silently (acknowledge they exist)
 2. Let them go (release them from your thinking)
 3. Return your focus to your breath
- This means:
 - Do not hold onto *any* thought (positive or negative)
 - Do not value or judge any thought
 - Do not judge your meditation practice or yourself

* Note: You can focus on other things such as mantras, prayer, counting, candles, other objects, etc.

Reading List

These two books are highly regarded and cover the basics of meditation practice

- Mindfulness in Plain English – highly regarded, basics about meditation
 - Author: Bhante Henepola Gunaratana
 - Wisdom Publications 2002
- Zen Mind, Beginners Mind -
 - Author: Shunryu Suzuki
 - Weatherhill (Shambhala) 1970, 9th edition 2005

There is also plenty of free information available via the internet

- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/meditation/in-depth/meditation/art-20045858>
- Mix and match search words on any web search engine:
 - meditation, stress, relief, mindful, samadhi, vipassana, complementary or alternative medicine, Buddhism

Interested in mantra meditation?

- *Natural Stress Relief* – *self study* Mantra meditation
<http://www.natural-stress-relief.com/>
 - This is similar to Transcendental Meditation (TM)
 - One time fee around \$45 the last time I looked