

Welcome to **Kickstart Your Home Meditation Practice!**

The purpose of this guide is to help you establish your own meditation practice. It will provide a basic background understanding of meditation, show you a straight-forward routine, and share hints, tips and common pitfalls in the practice. It is not meant to turn you into a monk (and is largely religion-free, for that matter) or make you enlightened. It does, however, absolutely require that you take action in order to see what all the buzz is about. Meditation is all about the actual experience of doing it, and that is a step only you can take.

The guide is divided into four main sections: Theory and Science, On The Cushion, The Practice, and Tips for a Successful Practice. If you are super eager to just go ahead and get started meditating, you can feel free to skip the theory section for now and come back to it later. My hope is that it will help energize you for the practice and describe just why it is we're so intent on sitting quietly on a cushion.

I want to make it clear that I am not creating my own style of meditation, or teaching something that is "Max Calabro's Meditation Techniques." Everything in this guide I have learned from other teachers of various traditions, primarily Zen, Vipassana, and Yogic. There are other styles of meditation that I know almost nothing about (Transcendental, Mantra, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction), and I am not claiming to be an expert at any technique. Meditation is a personal thing, both for you and for me, and you'll discover your own preferences as you practice more.

Why am I sharing all this? I am a meditation practitioner, a yoga teacher, a writer, and a scientist. I am a firm advocate of personal development, and I have found meditation and mindfulness to be instrumental in that process. I am passionate about sharing ideas that have been valuable to me, and I truly hope this guide can help you find your own path to personal growth.

The fundamental idea behind this guide is that having a simple, secular meditation practice is easily attainable and extremely beneficial for anyone. There are monks and practitioners who have dedicated their lives to specific traditions and practices, and this guide is not that. It is a place to start, a way to remove some of the mystery which may be acting as a barrier to you beginning a practice of your own.

The guide concludes with a list of resources which will help you deepen your own understanding and practice. Many of the recommended books are written by "the real thing": monks, expert practitioners, and renowned scientists who have been meditating and doing research on the brain for years and years. I highly recommend all of them. But if you are looking to dive into the practice itself, starting today, then this guide is for you.