

[Time Tested Tips On Meditation](#)

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Time Tested Tips On Meditation

After more than a century of practicing yoga, Swami Bua affirms that contemplative success is a result of consistent effort

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Even happy people often look for change in the ordinary routines of their lives. Although they are dutifully consumed in the daily challenges of earning a living, they admittedly fall prey to moments of introspection— even during the busiest of schedules— when they feel that deep, soulful urge to try something new. A few come to know of great powers lying latent within and fancy they might cultivate some of that potential themselves.

Typical advice for invoking these inherent powers stresses the need for sitting in still concentration and living in a calm state of mind while not dwelling on past or future. One practice commonly advised to

achieve this rare tranquility of mind and body is the daily repetition of mantras. But there are a great many other practices as well.

Western aspirants of the contemplative arts are not unfamiliar with a variety of meditation techniques now available on the market. There's Transcendental Meditation, Super Conscious Meditation, Sub Conscious Meditation, Raja Yoga Meditation, Bhakti Yoga Meditation, Karma Yoga Meditation, Initial Meditation, Intensive Meditation, Kundalini Meditation, Candlelight Meditation, Chakra Meditation, Yantra Meditation, Tantra

Meditation, Vajra Meditation. Even as I am writing this article, the list keeps growing with more and more innovative titles. Some of these meditation techniques even have "patent" labels and trademarks. This is unheard of in India. Such yoga "products" carry a price tag, depending on the extent of the spiritual empire built up around them and investments made into their advertisement.

In moments of inspiration,

would-be meditators dive into one or more of these practices with great enthusiasm. Many, however, give up almost immediately. Some conclude that such pursuits are just not for them. Others claim there is something wrong with their mantra or their method. Still others finally assert that meditation is just not a worthy activity.

But if questioned they
would all admit one thing:
It's not easy!

After sitting for some
time in the first
attempts at meditation,
young enthusiasts find
that their minds begin
to wander and they
become distracted.
Perhaps they fall sleep.

When this seems to become a pattern that may not improve, they begin worrying and wondering, "Is this working? Will it ever work? Am I making progress?" They start talking to friends who are trying to do the same thing. "Do you still meditate?" they ask. "Are you able to

concentrate?" They conclude that although they were given some sort of technique—perhaps they spent a significant amount of money for it—they needed something more.

Those that arrive at

this point might be surprised to learn that they have actually gotten off to a good start. They have realized that being still requires effort. This knowledge is a distinct gain. Most ordinary people would never have the

opportunity to
discover even this
much.

Hundreds of years
ago, one of India's
great Tamil saints
said, "It is easy to
tame the rogue

elephant. It is easy to tie the mouth of a bear. It is easy to mount the back of a lion. It is easy to charm poisonous snakes. It is easy to conquer the celestial and the noncelestial realms. It is easy to trek the

worlds invisible. It is
easy to command
the angelic
heavens. It is easy
to retain youth
eternally. It is easy
to enter the body of
others. It is easy to
walk on water and
sit in burning fire. It
is easy to attain all

of the siddhis (yoga powers). But to remain still is very, very difficult indeed."

To those earnest souls seeking the great stillness of

yoga, I would ask,
"What is the
purpose and goal
of meditation?"
Without purpose
and goal, there
can be no
meditation—
or
even
concentration.

Certainly, there is a deep soulful urge spurring us on, but that urge is usually so vague, so blurred in its outline, so difficult to confine within the four corners of a

definition, that even its existence cannot be easily acknowledged. It is no wonder the mind succeeds in escaping all attempts at its mastery by a method so

ill-defined.

The wise ones of
ancient times
can help us here.
They assert that
there is a one
great Master

Mind of which
our individual
minds are but a
part. If such is
the case, the
obvious purpose
of meditation is
to achieve the
goal of

discovering this
Master Mind.

This is, indeed,
the purpose and
goal of
meditation
generally
advocated by
those who know.

There is a
saying in my
native Tamil
language which
translates
roughly as
follows:
"Without

concentrated
practice,
nothing tangible
can be
achieved."
Meditation is a
long-term
practice.

Stillness of
mind in the
oneness of all is
its crowning
achievement.

We are less

inclined to
worry about
the
unsteadiness
of our
concentration
when we
realize that it

is the nature of
concentration
to be
unsteady. It
might even
seem at times
that we do not
possess a mind

at all, but
rather than a
mind
possesses us.
The mind, it
seems, has a
mind of its
own. Certain

experiences
just continue
simultaneously
without even
asking our
permission. A
slight stomach
ache. A small

itch on the
forehead or
near the
armpit. A burp.
Obviously, the
life processes
of the
body—like

breathing and
digestion—mu
st keep going.
Although this
can be
disconcerting
for a beginner,
the

experienced
meditator sits
unwavering.
After much
practice, he
finally begins
to master
concentration.

The mind in
its natural
state is
steady. This
natural state
is not so far
away. Look at

little babies
who with very
little effort
steady their
attention on
objects of
attraction for

long periods
of time.

Animals do
this, too. It is
natural.

However,
modern-day

man lives a
very
complicated
life. His
concentration
does not
become easily

fixed on any
one thing for
any length of
time. He is
just too busy.
Yet, there are
moments

when he is
completely
absorbed.
Perhaps a
business
problem
demands his

full
attention—
or
a family
tragedy, or a
crisis with a
friend. At
some point

everyone in
every stratum
of life
experiences a
steady mind
resulting from
focused

attention. This
focus of
attention is
the central
theme of the
Hindu
religious

discipline
called
sadhana.
Sadhana is
the road to
the discovery
of the Master

Mind.

Well-trained yogis

experience
meditation
as a state of
being. This
state of
being can
only rise up

of its own
accord and
in its own
timing. It is never
by force.
After we
have made

the effort of
focusing our
concentration
in the
consistent
practice of
sadhana,

the deep
stillness of
perfect
meditation
will be
difficult to
resist. No

one can
claim to
teach
meditation
and
certainly no
one should

sell it like a
commodity.

It is not
transferable
in this way.

It is each
individual's

s personal
state of
being
himself.