

The Soft Road

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FROM DABBLING TO SOMETHING

A while ago I was in conversation with an influential designer and author based in Los Angeles. We were talking about meditation and she observed that almost everyone she knew dabbled in meditation, yet how to move from dabbling to *something*...something more, serious, sustained...was a real challenge.

As a teacher of meditation, I know this to be a universal challenge. Much is known and written about the benefits of meditation, and the reasons to practice are compelling, so it's easy to understand why so many "dabble". Yet relatively few people meditate and even fewer have a daily practice.

So how then do we move from dabbling to something? The answer is both simple and really, really hard. What's simple is that it is but a matter of choice and commitment. We choose to go deeper, to commit to establish a daily practice, and we, well, we just do it.

Yet simple does not mean easy. And many good intentions fail us along the way. Whether for a new meditator or someone finding their way back to practice, here's my guidance to ease the way:

Choose a technique that is established, of substance, practiced widely, with a lineage of practice that goes before you.

Learn from an active teacher. It's been said that no one truly learns to meditate from a book, an app, or online. These resources can be highly beneficial in getting us started and they are readily accessible, giving us opportunity to experiment and try different approaches. There will be exceptions, but for most of us who have an established daily practice, learning directly from a teacher, who instructs, guides, and supports us in our practice makes all the difference, especially in the early period.

Stick with your chosen technique and cease dabbling and mixing and matching. This is essential and much harder than it sounds in this age of shifting trends and latest sure-thing methods.

We are tribal and almost everyone has some attraction to the newest, highly publicised approach that people are following, liking, or pursuing, and we don't want to miss out. Yet if we are committed to moving from dabbling to something, there is a period where we need to be all-in, in order to establish a regular, daily, practice. And this requires that we tune out all other distraction, which in turn can raise questions from our "tribe", so be prepared.

Daily meditation, and in the case of Vedic meditation, twice daily practice, is a big step up. It requires that we re-order our priorities and our schedules. Not something we will do when we are dabbling. The very act of doing so, of taking

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the decision to commit, is empowering and uplifting, supporting us as our journey begins. Think of this like progressing from dipping our toes in the water to plunging in.

For meditation is a daily practice, the same practice, every day. Not the practice of some thing daily. Our physiology, nervous system, and our consciousness respond to the consistent repetition of the same practice. And it is this laying down of rhythm and repetition that supports us.

Meditation is not another activity; it is a practice. And we practice the practice! The more we do it, the easier it gets, and we find we have lost our appetite or even our habit for dabbling. Very quickly benefits come and that will keep us going. And keep us coming back if we lapse.

With daily practice, meditation brings us to this something that is different. It transforms us from within, raises our level of consciousness, and enriches our experience of life. Let this be our motivation.

Melanie Kirkbride is an exceptional coach and master teacher of Vedic meditation who works with people to empower them to unlock their potential and thrive. [Email us](#) to enquire about Melanie's services, and to receive her Teachings.