MEDITATION MAGAZINE

AUTUMN 2018 ISSUE

FEATURING ART FROM **@BRIZBAZAAR**

Free **Meditation Tutorials** Inside!

NYC Events
Autumn List Inside

Exclusive Interviews
Ekaterina Ket
Adam Sobel
Carla Hammond
...and more!

meditationmag.com

@meditationmag

Recycle this magazine by gifting it to a friend!

Baked Baes

ORGANIC, PLANT-BASED EDIBLES

BAKEDBAES.COM

TEXT "MEDMAG" TO 929-232-7028
FOR 10% OFF YOUR FIRST ORDER

CONTENTS

04 EDITOR'S LETTER

07 COMMUNITY

How Lisa Started a #MeditationMovement

MEDITATION LESSONS

09 Lotus-Style Meditation Postures

24 Three Simple Meditation Techniques to Try at Home

VEGAN FOOD

13 Celebrity Chef Matthew Kenny on how Meditation & Veganism Changed his Career

21 Inside the Mind of the Cinnamon Snail Adam Sobel Interview + Recipe

ARTICLES & INTERVIEWS

10 Zen & The Art of Potato Chip Trucking

18 Ekaterina The Nomadic Sound Healer

28 Carla and The Amazing Technicolor Meditation Bus

30 Meditation Saved My Life, And it's Going to Save our World

ART BY @BRIZBAZAAR

05 Chakra Flower

16 Mantras

23 Cosmic Balance

MEDMAG FAM

EDITORIAL
Kevin Ellerton
Jovanna Benavente

LAYOUT & GRAPHICS
Mirian Rodriguez
Stephanie Sklyar
Abby Lessick
Alyssa Binda

PHOTOGRAPHY & PHOTO EDITING
Johnny Benavente

VIDEO EDITING
Zheng Wang
Olivia Thomson
Casey Jacobs
Ilina Kapoor

MARKETING & OUTREACH
Megan Wilson
Danielle Harrison

ART by @brizbazaar

FUNDING
David Yomtobian
All of our advertisers!

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Meditation isn't just a relaxation technique. It's something much deeper than that.

You know that feeling, when you're listening to music and you close your eyes, and suddenly you find yourself enveloped in a state of bliss?

Or that moment when you look up at the stars, and suddenly you're peering, in awe, into the depths of infinity?

How about the moment when you gaze into someone's eyes and feel your souls connect?

Or those times when you realize, in an instant, that you're a living being, on a planet, living a life, destined to die, with this one moment, this one brief lifetime, to truly experience being alive... and suddenly you feel this sense of abandon, this sense of freedom, this sense of exhilarating urgency to live life now?

These moments are so powerful -- so deeply, spiritually fulfilling -- because they're rooted in an intense appreciation of Existence in the present moment, here & now. Meditation is an ancient mystical practice that allows us to live more deeply, more powerfully, and experience more of these moments throughout our lives.

Meditation isn't just a relaxation technique; it's something much deeper than that. That's why I've dedicated my life to helping bring it into to our (crazy distracted millennial) generation. That's why I started this Meditation Magazine.

There are tons of meditation books & publications out there that cater toward middle-aged women. That's not a generalization, it's industry demographics. But I think young people, like me (and you too, probably), can benefit from meditation as well. Maybe even more than the older generation can.

Older people seem to get into meditation as a form of relaxation. They want to de-stress. They want to find some calm, some peace of mind. That's great and all, but meditation can be so, so much deeper than that.

It can be more like mushrooms than xanax, if you know what I mean. It can give you a new perspective on life, peering into infinity, finding yourself, discovering the meaning of life and Existence and nothingness and eternity.

It can give new depth to your relationships, help you connect with the beautiful spirits around you, find profound love and beauty in lovers and strangers alike.

Meditation is great for middle-aged women, but it can be even more powerful for young people like you and me, just getting started on this crazy epic journey called adulthood. **You can enjoy your life more, instead of wasting these beautiful years of youth and vigor in a social-media stupor.** You can experience, deeply and profoundly, those beautiful moments of love and adventure, those moments of awe and optimism and excitement and hope. You can ride through the ups and downs of your twenties and thirties with grace, with presence, enjoying the roller coaster instead of getting stressed out by it.

And maybe by the time you reach middle age, you won't need meditation to de-stress. Because you'll already have it in your heart, as something far more fundamental than just a relaxation technique. It's something that imbues your existence.

It's the thing that makes your life *magic*.

This is the inaugural issue of Meditation Magazine. I know it's not going to be perfect, but I hope at least that you will enjoy it, and that it will be helpful, in a meaningful way, to at least one person in this crazy and chaotic world.

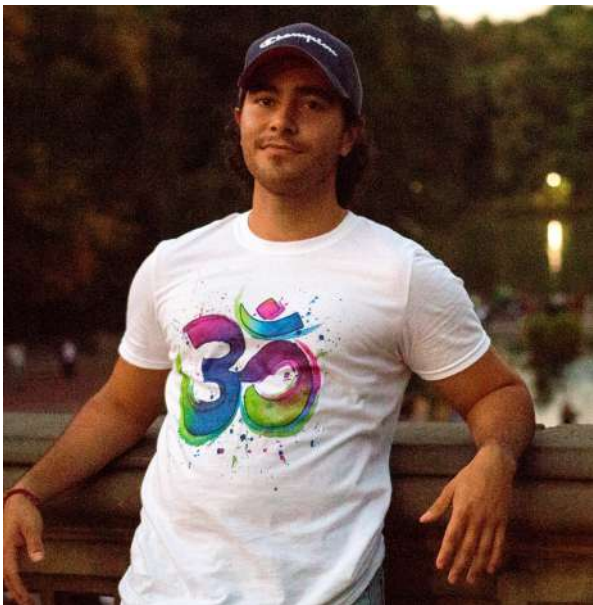
Om Lokah Samastah Sukhino Bhavantu.
May all beings, everywhere, be happy, rejoicing as one ❤️

I am at Peace • I am Calm • I express myself freely
I am confident • Think Less. Talk More • Frown Less. Smile More • Talk Less. Listen More
Fear Less. Love More • I am empowered • I can create the life I Desire
I can accomplish my dreams • Complain Less. Appreciate More • Worry Less. Sleep More • Quality Less. Accept More • Wealth Less. Do More
©BRIZBAZAAR

MEDMAG SWAG

Get **30% off @brizbazaar merch** with **coupon code: AUTUMN** at meditationmag.com/shop

Or **enter to win some free swag** at meditationmag.com/free-swag! This is not that big of a magazine, and people are lazy, so you might actually win.



HOW LISA STARTED A #MEDITATIONMOVEMENT

I was sure I wasn't cut out for meditation.

I was a twenty-something wife & Mama of two young kids, working a full-time corporate job, running marathons in my 'spare time.' Stillness was not on my priority list.

But despite doing all the "normal" things to live a healthy & happy life (exercise, nutrition, fulfilling relationships, etc), I still felt -- somehow -- less than happy, peaceful and content.

As fate would have it, I injured my hamstring during a marathon training cycle, and found myself, begrudgingly, in a yoga class. Despite my initial reservations about Yoga being too 'slow' for someone like me, I ended up loving it.

I vividly remember being asked by my Yoga teacher if I'd ever meditated before. I literally laughed out loud. I had an endless stream of 'to do' lists running through my head; the very idea of not thinking about anything was laughable. Much to my surprise, under the guidance of my Yoga teacher, that first meditation experience created enough space for about half a breath's worth of contact with the present moment. That small taste was enough to leave me wanting more.

And so I embarked upon a Google expedition, to find out more about this "meditation" thing. It didn't take long for me to discover a massive body of scientific evidence, clearly illustrating the amazing benefits of meditation. Better sleep, improved mental health, reduced stress, and so much more. Having satisfied my analytical brain, I decided to give meditation a go in earnest.

Over time, I began to see tremendous benefits in my life. The anxiety I'd experienced since childhood no longer felt like a prison. My relationships and athletic performance improved dramatically. It was a subtle unfolding, slowly over days and weeks and months, with poignant markers along the way.

One evening, I was reading bedtime stories with my youngest son (then only 2 years old). It was something I had done virtually every night of his life. But this time, something was different. Suddenly, I was struck with the awareness of really being there, in a way that felt vivid and new.

I was awash with the sensations of being truly present with my son in that moment. I felt the weight of his little body on my lap, the soft pressure of his head leaning into my chest. I heard the sound of his breath gently flowing in and out, his tiny voice saying, "A fish, Mumma – see?!" I watched as his pudgy little finger traced the outline of the illustrations on the page – all as though for the very first time.

It was a profound moment for me. I felt invigoratingly awake, and deeply grateful to be there in that moment. At the same time, I realized how often I had just "gone through the motions" of countless moments, just like this one, and missed their sweetness entirely, because my mind was spinning, a world away.

I realized that this was the first - and last! – time that this particular moment would ever exist. My eyes filled with tears as I squeezed him tight, kissed the top of his head, and silently promised myself that I would do my best to show up for these fleeting, priceless moments as often as I could.

Learning to experience my life in "real time" gave richness and meaning to my practice. As time went on, I became happier, more grateful, and kinder; not only to the people I interacted with on a daily basis, but also to myself.

Meditation was becoming an important part of my life, but I couldn't get past the physical discomfort. My years of running had led to issues from my ankles to my shoulders. The fact was, as helpful as meditation was for my mental/emotional state, it often put my body in pain. I tried cushions, benches, blocks, bolsters – nothing helped. Lying down sounded like a good option, I often ended up falling asleep instead of meditating. I continued to practice through the pain, but it was discouraging, and made it harder to stay consistent.

In 2016, I took a "leap of faith" and left my corporate job. Through my practice, I was creating space to explore my internal landscape for the first time. I had come to understand that I deeply wanted to contribute to the world in a way that mattered to me on a personal level.

Calling my boss to let him know that I'd be leaving was one of the most difficult things I've ever done. When he asked me what my next "career move" would be, I told him honestly that I didn't know. It sounded crazy even as I said it, but it felt like freedom. It felt like possibility.

Three weeks later I met my business partner, and the opportunity to dream up a whole new kind of meditation support product presented itself.

Through my desire to address not only my own meditation woes, but also provide a solution to other practitioners facing similar issues, the concept for **OmBase** was born.

I soon learned that designing a quality product required a lot of expertise, so I assembled an amazing team to ensure we did it right. We spent almost a year travelling across the US & Canada, talking to people about meditation, and asking them what they wanted and needed to support their practices.

One barrier that was consistently expressed was the misconception that meditation was not suitable for "ordinary" people, but was reserved instead for Yogis, Gurus, and Zen Masters.

Once we realized how widespread this misconception was, a lightbulb went off. We decided to come up with a creative way to dispel this myth. We wanted to definitively show that meditation was, in fact, a practice with the capacity to benefit everyone – no exceptions! This became a driving force behind OmBase as an organization.

After deep reflection, long brainstorming sessions, and many introspective moments spent on our respective OmBase prototypes, we developed the concept for what we began to call the **#MeditationMovement**.

The idea was to create a social media campaign designed to encourage those with experience meditating to post short, informal videos explaining how meditation had improved their lives.

We launched the campaign on August 1st, and -- slowly at first, but at an accelerating pace -- videos started coming in from all over the world. Before we knew it, we had submissions from all across North America, and South America, Asia, Europe, and even Australia as well. The stories people shared were uplifting, inspiring, and authentic.

One young woman from BC, Canada created a video shortly after using her meditation practice to ride the waves of a panic attack back to feeling peaceful. Another from New Jersey described how, through meditation, she had begun to live her life "on purpose" and had come to know herself more deeply than ever before. A 70 year old man from Mississippi expressed how meditation had led to more awareness, peace & clarity later in his life, and he'd only wished he had undertaken the practice sooner.

We were profoundly touched by all the videos we received. With each submission, a feeling of community formed between not only those who had created videos, but also those who were inspired by them.

As a team, we were humbled and honoured to have watched the spark of our intention fanned into flame. What had begun as a simple concept for sharing about meditation had become a living, breathing, multicultural & multilingual demonstration that meditation is, in fact, for everyone.

We now believe that the possibilities for the #MeditationMovement are as borderless as the community of meditators circling the globe that have already added their voices to the cause. As an organization, OmBase is committed to supporting it indefinitely.

EDITOR'S NOTE: To contact OmBase about joining or supporting the Meditation Movement: info@ombase.ca.

To learn more: www.ombase.ca, or Facebook, Instagram @ombasemeditationbenches

3

LOTUS-STYLE MEDITATION POSTURES

Mind and body are intimately connected.

Anyone who's ever seen an anxious person standing next to a confident person at a party can tell you that your mental state can affect your posture. What many people don't realize is that posture can affect your mental state as well. Want proof? Try hunching forward and making a sad face... then stand tall with a smile. See how the body affects the mind?

Thousands of years ago, when the practice of meditation was in its infancy, meditators began experimenting with various postures, to see what worked best for getting into deep states of meditation.

In Japan, Zen meditators experimented with sitting on their knees. In India, yogis were playing with "lotus-style," cross-legged postures.

The yogis discovered that the more difficult postures (harder to get into, harder to get out of) were also the most "stable," and best for getting into deep states of meditation. "Full-lotus" posture (#4, below) was considered the best, followed by half-lotus (#3), quarter-lotus (#2), and Burmese (#1).

Why are the hardest meditation postures the best? It's hard to say for sure. Maybe it has something to do with being more "committed" to the meditation. Maybe it has something to do with the positioning of the legs and spine. Whatever the reason, thousands of years of anecdotal evidence can't be wrong!

Feel free to try these postures out for yourself. Make sure to sit with your back straight and tall, shoulder-blades back and down, chest broad & open. It's OK for your legs to fall asleep, or for your muscles to stretch and ache, but if you feel sharp pain in your ankle or knee joints, hold off and try an easier posture.

1

2

4

Zen & The Art of Potato Chip Trucking

By Mark Van Buren, author of "A Fool's Guide to Actual Happiness"

I noticed something strange at the grocery store the other day.

The cardboard display for pistachios had pictures of...well... nuts (of course), but it also had an image of a woman, wearing all white, hands above her head in prayer. Her eyes were closed and she was sitting peacefully in meditation.

I haven't a clue as to what pistachios and meditation have to do with one another, nor how anyone could relax with their arms above their head while meditating, but to each her own.

Meditation has gone mainstream; so mainstream in fact, that companies are now using meditation and mindfulness as marketing tools to sell their products. Apparently, we as a society associate meditation with peaceful, healthy, happy, and other "feel-good" types of things. These images and advertisements then work subconsciously on the masses, creating some widespread airy-fairy beliefs about the actual practice of meditation. In fact, my tattoo artist, when hearing about my own intense personal practice, was jokingly disappointed that I don't float through my house, levitating blissfully from room to room. Far from it!

As a meditation instructor, I often have to deal with people's preconceived notions and misperceptions, not only about the practice itself, but also with what it means to truly embody meditation in the messiness of their daily lives. The advertisements and presentations may make it seem like another gimmicky, self-help way to permanent bliss, but the reality is much different. Actually, it's not much different than what you're already experiencing every single day.

So if embodying meditation is not what the advertisements promote - if it's not serenely sitting on a buckwheat cushion, deep in the mountains of the Himalayas - then what is it? Where does paying the mortgage come in? Traffic jams? Raising children? Working a job you dislike? Continually fixing up a home that keeps falling apart? Standing at the bedside of a family member in hospice? Relationship struggles? The list goes on...

What would a serious meditation practice look like for the average, modern person? To be honest, I'm not too sure, but I'd be happy to share with you what it looks like for me: a 33 year-old husband and father, who works full-time (mostly during ungodly hours), owns a yoga studio, and teaches meditation.

Let me invite you for a glimpse into a typical day of my embodied practice. But be warned! It's not going to be what you think!

For starters, my life is not rainbows and unicorns, and I sure as hell don't blissfully float around my house.

On the outside, my life may look like the complete opposite of what a meditation instructor should be like. But this is my life, and it's the only place I can practice. Where else could I be?

My full-time job is with a popular potato chip company. I drive trucks and deliver and pack-out potato chips to food stores. Very Zen!

Most days begin for me between 2:30-3:30am. Once my alarm goes off, I typically have a moment of angst. It's the middle of the night, most people are sleeping, yet my day is just beginning. I feel the heaviness in my stomach, listen compassionately to it for a breath or two, and remind myself of my practice: what is this moment asking for?

As I go through my morning routine, I try to be as present as possible, with as much of myself as I can muster at such an early hour.

During my drive to work I sometimes listen to audiobooks or dharma talks. Other times, I drive in silence or quietly repeat the Zen koan I'm currently meditating on. Apparently, I'm very contemplative at 3am! I often find myself deep in "not-knowing" on my short, 20-minute drive to work. But like all things in life, it doesn't last.

Upon arriving to the warehouse, I smile and greet the few coworkers whose routes have them up as early as me. Most respond, some don't. One of the many reminders I get throughout the day that most people don't give a shit about my kindness. My ego cringes every time anyone walks by my "good morning" with a stone cold silence. As much as it pisses me off, and as rude as I feel it is, it shows me with painful clarity the boundaries created when living from my small sense of self. I open my awareness as my insides close down and allow the triggered discomfort to pass. It always does.

Once I finally get to a store, I run into the next challenge: the store receivers. They are like the cherubs and flaming sword at the gates of Paradise. They have one simple task: check in my product so I can bring it to the store. Rarely, is it that easy!

Many of the receivers mess with you simply because they can - another challenge for a meditator who chants, "May all beings be free from suffering" after every meditation! How about all beings except this one?!

Sometimes I am able to see through the eyes of Buddha, most times I just get upset. But as often as possible during these frustrating times, I try to return to: **just this**. I touch in directly with the raw energy of my unease, occasionally I'll send out a wish of loving-kindness, and I go on my merry way.

As the Buddha taught, life inevitably has situations or people we will not want to encounter. No problem, if we simply practice how we relate to it. The content of life, the "what," is always what it is at any given moment. It's just the reality of the Universe as it is. It's **how** we relate to that moment that will either lead us to suffering or peace.

Easier said than done. Luckily, we have our whole life to practice.

Anyway, the product gets into the store

(most of the time, at least!) and my day moves on. Packing out the chips is pretty Zen, to be honest. Take the bags out of the box, place them on the shelf. Simple enough.

For me, packing out is like moving meditation. I don't listen to music, or talk to anyone, but lose myself in the task at hand. If I'm not rushing, thinking of the rude people in the stores, or caught in my head, there is no suffering! Just the universe packing itself out! I am where I am, simply doing what I'm doing. Chop wood, carry water.

Eventually, my work day ends and I drive home to be a husband and father. Usually when I arrive home, my daughter is napping and my son is hanging out with my wife. If this is the case, I eat, shower, and do my formal seated meditation. I find 30 minutes is what works best for me. If my daughter's awake though, meditation is on the back burner.

Although I promote formal practice everyday, and I do my best to make it a reality for myself, sometimes it's just not possible. I used to get very angry when I couldn't sit or go on retreat because of life responsibilities. It seemed as though life would be getting in the way of my practice. This is the wrong view. Life is your practice. Your life is meditation!

I like to define meditation as practicing being present. Notice I didn't say practicing feeling good all the time, not having thoughts, or some other new age "what's-in-it-for me" definition. Sometimes you just can't sit. That's fine. Where are you now? Give yourself fully to that. As my teacher recently told me, "Your practice now is being a husband and father. Work with that. It's a very difficult practice!" So that's what I'm currently working on!

I wish I could say my day ended there, but typically it does not. I'm home for a few hours before I go back out to work privately with my mindful living training clients, teach yoga or meditation classes, run workshops, lectures, retreats, etc.

People ask me how I do it. How do I go from working at 3am to all the extra stuff I do? The answer is simple: I do one thing at a time.

This can be your practice as well. Be where you are. Do what you're doing. If your mind takes you away into a form of suffering or unease, notice that and come back. Practice being present in every moment.

Should you sit everyday in formal meditation as well? Absolutely! If you can do it! Even if that means bringing your hand to your heart and taking three breaths right when you wake up.

If right now your life doesn't allow for that, then just practice your actual life. Embody the qualities of meditation in every moment: be awake, cultivate mindfulness, let go of thoughts and judgments, make friends with what life presents you, and be willing to be right there with whatever you find. Life will change. So will your moods and states of mind.

Ask yourself, how can I meet this moment to be of benefit to all beings? Or, put another way: how can I meet this moment to create the least amount of harm? Try your best to live that! Don't worry about getting it right. Don't overthink it. Just do it. Let go into the Eternal Flow. Merge with it. Don't waste this precious life.

the spring
MEDITATION

HELPING PEOPLE BE BETTER AT LIFE

Join our mission to make New York a better city by learning a simple technique called Vedic Meditation.

Learn how to effortlessly release stress and increase happiness anywhere, without needing an app or a guide.

www.thespringmeditation.com

145 Sixth Avenue, Studio 6E
New York, NY 10013
info@thespringmeditation.com
(646) 397-8616

Facebook & Instagram: @thespringmeditation
Twitter: thespringmed

CELEBRITY CHEF MATTHEW KENNEY

ON HOW MEDITATION & VEGANISM CHANGED HIS CAREER

Hunting was my meditation space when I grew up on the coast of Maine.

My comfort zone was deep in the New England woods, walking as softly as possible through the crisp autumn leaves, feeling the curve of rounded rocks while crossing streams, having a simple lunch in the cool air while leaning against a birch tree.

Despite the fact that I was in this environment to sight -- and eventually kill -- a white tailed deer, what I remember most vividly was the experience of deeply connecting with nature in a way that's just not possible when staying at home, living in a city or walking down the street. The core of this world is deeply grounded.

It took many years of listening to my instincts, experienced teachers, and ultimately, true meditation, to understand my oneness with the universe.

As a small town boy accustomed to guns, with a seasonal 'meat and potatoes' diet (which was supplemented later with French culinary training), I should have been the last person standing to become a vegan. Still, I was lucky enough to have had keen observation skills, and the inevitable happened. I not only adopted a vegan lifestyle, but also a vegan profession. That was 16 years ago.

While I would like to think that I would have found the plant-based path regardless of circumstances, I credit failure for leading me there as soon as I was ready.

I had been through an extremely challenging period in my life, professionally and personally, and turned to yoga as my sanctuary. As a daily practitioner, I was always most inspired by teachers who expressed a true passion and direction, regardless of its popularity.

One teacher in particular -- a former Wall Street professional who seemed to find his true 'Dharma' through yoga -- opened my mind to the prospect of veganism. It was in the few minutes before and after his yoga class, when I was allowed the space to give thoughtful attention to the meaning of 'ahimsa' (non-violence), that it really enveloped me.

This was the first time in my 38 years that I had fully connected with my own path, and it was all due to the space created by meditation and yoga.

The realization was much more than the rationale behind living a vegan lifestyle. The deepest lesson was the meaningful connection that was available between my personal and professional paths.

I came to understand that I could apply my skills in the culinary world to share the same benefits I had learned through yoga, while also building a meaningful business. I came to understand the value of authenticity.

My company is based on this realization, and the belief that, if we truly listen to the universe and apply the lessons we learn every day, not only to our own lives, but to what we put out in the world, the benefits are endless.

In a New York minute, literally, I set my sights on building the most innovative plant-based company in the world. The rest is a story -- a business story about a chef working to shift the global food paradigm toward plant-based cuisine -- that is still being told.

TRY THIS RECIPE:

CHICKPEA CURRY. Grilled Flatbread. Limeleaf
Makes 6

2 tablespoons coconut oil
2 teaspoons vadouvan
½ teaspoon garam masala
1 inch knob ginger, minced
1 inch knob galangal, minced
½ medium onion, diced
1 lemongrass stalks, bruised with blunt side of knife
½ jalapeno, seeded, fine dice
½ pint cherry tomatoes
4 cups coconut milk
1 teaspoon salt
2 kaffir lime leaves
2 cups cooked chickpeas
2 tablespoons lime juice

Heat the coconut oil in a large pan and add the vadouvan and garam masala. Cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds.

Add the ginger, galangal and onions. Cook until softened, about 6 mins, then add the lemongrass and jalapeno, stirring to combine.

Cook for 1-2 mins, then pour in the tomatoes and simmer for 10 minutes. Add the coconut milk, salt, and lime leaves.

Bring to boil and reduce heat to a simmer. Then add the chickpeas and simmer over very low heat for 45 minutes, or until the sauce has thickened.

Add the lime juice and season with salt to taste.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE...

KAFFIR LIME LEAF CREAM

1 cup young coconut meat
¼ cup filtered water
2 kaffir lime leaves
¼ teaspoon salt

Add all ingredients to high speed blender and blend until fully smooth yogurt like consistency. Transfer to a sealed container and refrigerate.

FLATBREAD

Makes 4 12-inch flatbreads

3 cups 00 flour, plus more for dusting
¼ teaspoon instant yeast
1 teaspoon salt
1 ½ cups water

In a large bowl, mix the flour with the yeast and salt. Add the water and stir until blended (the dough will be very sticky.) Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let rest for 12 to 24 hours in a warm spot, about 70° Fahrenheit.

Place the dough on a lightly floured work surface and lightly sprinkle the top with flour. Knead lightly for 2 minutes and cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rest for 15 minutes.

Divide the dough into 4 pieces and shape each piece into a ball. Cover the dough balls with a lightly floured cotton towel. Let the dough rise for 2 hours. Stretch or toss the dough into the desired shape, about ½" thick. Grill the dough over very high heat, flipping halfway through to get grill marks on both sides, about 5 minutes total.

ASSEMBLY

Ladle about a cup and a half of chickpea curry into a small bowl. Dollop a tablespoon of kaffir lime leaf cream in the middle of curry. Garnish with micro cilantro, nasturtium, oxalis, lemon verbena, fennel blossom, red leaf sorrel and marigold flowers. Slice grilled flatbread in long thin triangles and serve on side.

Matthew Kenney is a celebrity chef & entrepreneur, who has opened dozens of vegan restaurants around the world since 2003. He has five vegan restaurant brands in NYC (so far), including Double Zero, XYST, Bar Verde, Plantmade, and Arata.

MEDITATION MAGAZINE PRESENTS...

FLASH-MOB MEDITATIONS IN WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK!

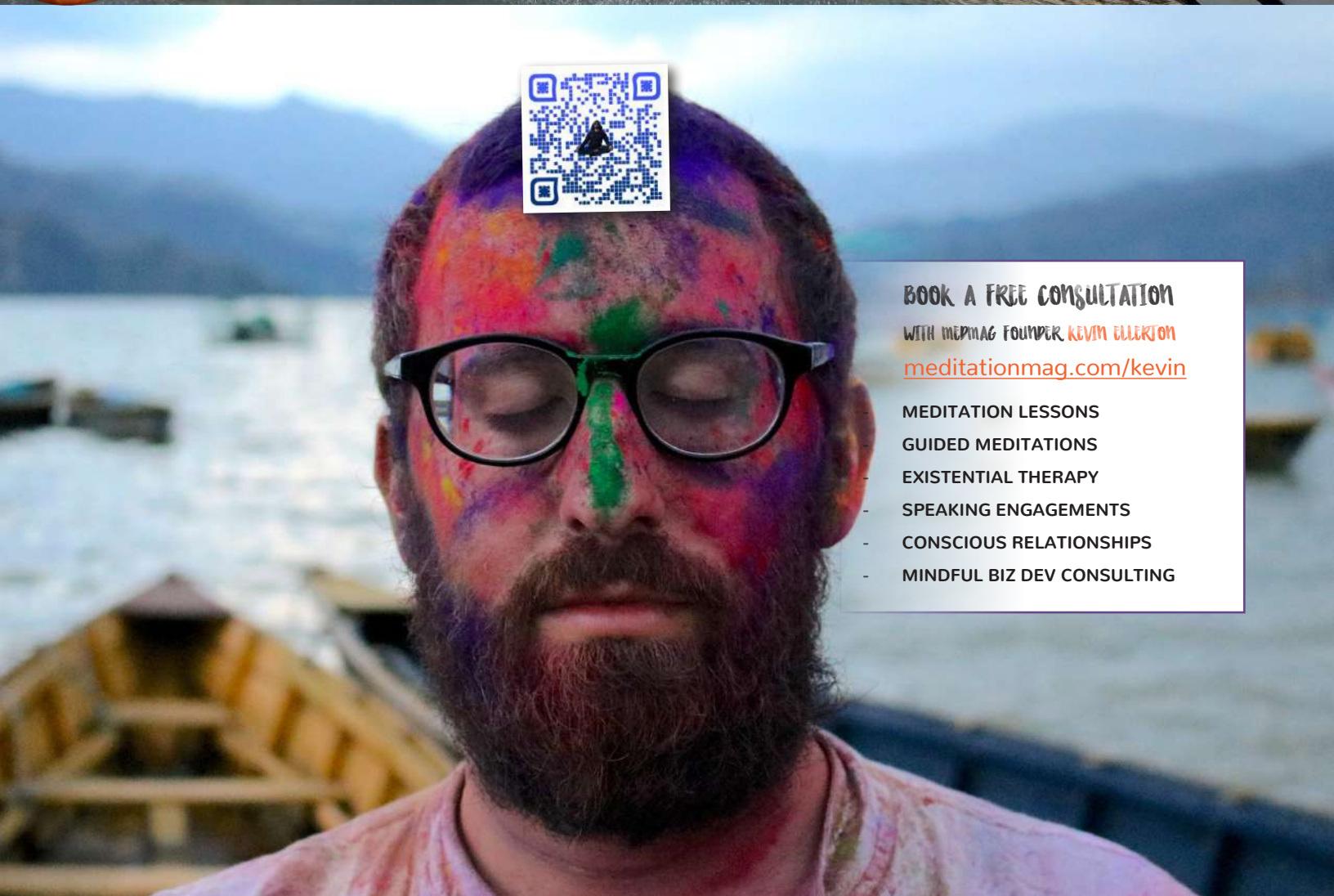
whaaaaaaaaaat

AROUND THE INNER RIM OF THE FOUNTAIN
SUNDAYS & WEDNESDAYS @ HIGH NOON

Grab your friends and your tiny butt cushions (hide them under your coat!) and come on down to Washington Square Park for flash-mob meditations every Sunday & Wednesday at noon!

Flash-mobs start on Sunday November 18th, and continue until the Universe implodes.

No need to RSVP (just show up!), but if you want to check the latest updates & let us know you're interested, go to meditationmag.com/flash-mob!



BOOK A FREE CONSULTATION

WITH MEDMAG FOUNDER KEVIN ELLERTON

meditationmag.com/kevin

- MEDITATION LESSONS
- GUIDED MEDITATIONS
- EXISTENTIAL THERAPY
- SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS
- CONSCIOUS RELATIONSHIPS
- MINDFUL BIZ DEV CONSULTING

Peace
just Breathe
Believe
Inhale
nam
ni
ma
om

Receive
be here now
Love
Exhale
aste
pad
me
hum
@BRIZBAZAAR

EKATERINA THE NOMADIC SOUND HEALER

We first met Ekaterina Ket in Ubud, Bali. Kevin was leading a meditation group at Hubud, the local coworking space, when Ekaterina sauntered into the circle with her Tibetan bowl. The joyful energy she brought into the group was infectious. She played the singing bowl, pressed it against peoples' backs, and even put it on their heads, as monkeys played and jumped between the branches overhead. We caught up with Ekaterina back here in NYC, on the roof of the Eugene, one of those crazy tall new buildings in Midtown West.

Meditation Magazine: Can you tell me a little bit about how you learned about the singing bowl, and why you do it?

Ekaterina Ket: Yeah! It's not a big secret. When people are working during the day, or simply walking in the street in huge cities, they experience beta wave [brain states]. Beta waves are when we feel a vibration about business. It's our left brain. But when we meditate, when we listen to singing bowls, or when we get excited, we catch alpha waves. Alpha waves is exactly this sound [hits bowl] which Tibetan bowls produce.

Sometimes, people have questions [in life]. And usually we listen just to our brain [when making decisions]. But it's so important to listen to your heart and your soul. And when we catch alpha waves, with Tibetan bowls or simple meditation without sound, it's possible to get [clarity and make better decisions based on what you really want in] your heart.

My teacher is originally from Nepal and he has been teaching people for 33 years. He's in a town named Kathmandu, in one of the most powerful places in the world -- it's named Stupa Boudhanath. My teacher is incredible. When I got lessons with him, one day he told me, "My beautiful students! Get a stick, and imagine you're playing [the singing bowls] for children." And we played for children. And the second day, he told us, "Feel this vibration, feel this town, and play for all the people." And we played for all people. And every day, every day was different. It was an incredible experience.

MM: What is the most important thing in life, to you?

EK: For me, most important is your experience. I tell people all the time: "When you finish education in your school and university, the most important school is the world. Get your backpack and travel around the world. Meet people. Get the very important lessons."

MM: So the most important thing in life is the experience, learning from the world?

EK: Yes, the best teacher is the world.

For me, when I travel, sometimes I think: "Which place in the world is nice for me? Where do I want to stay and spend my life, most of the time?" And after this experiment, I [realize]...

If you're happy inside, you will be happy everywhere. Doesn't matter if it's Bali, if it's New York, or Moscow, or Hawaii!

MM: What do you find is the most important benefit that you get from meditation? Why should people do it?

EK: Because people [when they meditate] more feel heart, and what your heart is telling you. And you have more connection with your brain and with your soul both. And after that, I think you make better decisions about relationships or about business... or about anything!

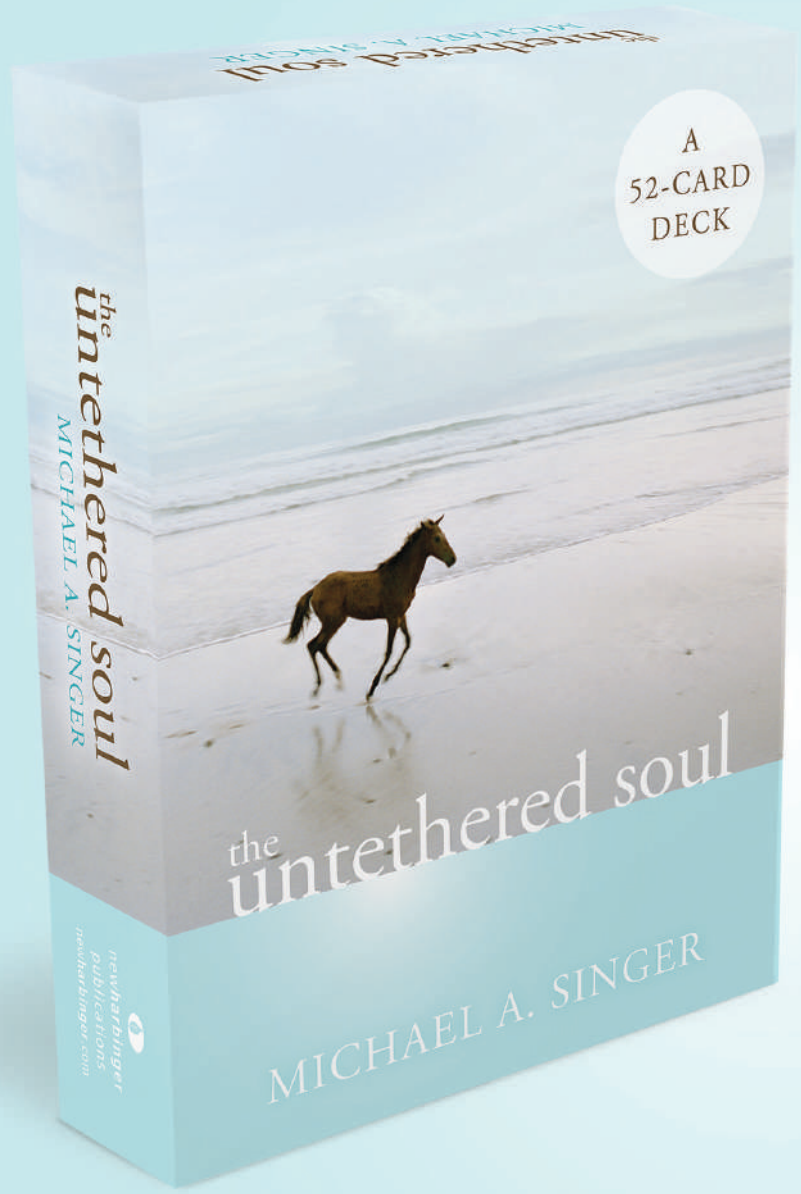
MM: What inspired you to come and practice and teach people meditation here in New York?

EK: Three months of the year I organize retreats with my Chinese partner Vivian in Bali. I get a lot of inspiration in Asia. After that, in the summer, I go back to Russia to see my parents, my sister, my friends.

And here in New York a lot of people have stress. 85% use antidepressants. I know this is a bad statistic, but I know a lot of people who work with medicine here, and people tell me it's very sad. I want to help people to make a nice quality of life without medicine, without drugs, without antidepressants, because we have a huge power inside of us and all people can do it. Definitely.

To watch the full interview, check out meditationmag.com/ekaterina or just scan this sparkly QR code!

The Untethered Soul: A 52-Card Deck *now available!*



MAKES A GREAT GIFT!

Soar beyond your boundaries—every single day

Drawing on the wisdom of the life-changing *New York Times* bestseller, *The Untethered Soul*, these extraordinary cards feature 52 profound and uplifting quotes that will inspire you to break through your limitations, cultivate lasting peace and tranquility, and discover who you *really* are.

newharbingerpublications

1-800-748-6273 | newharbinger.com

Inside the Mind of the Cinnamon Snail

Kevin: I'm here with Adam Sobel, the owner of the cinnamon snail, which is one of the coolest vegan restaurants in NYC. We're talking about the fact that when I sit for a long time in half lotus, my legs fall asleep, almost every time, within 15 minutes. But Adam says that he can do it for an hour without his legs falling asleep.

Adam: Yeah! Look at me! HoHO!

KE: ROTFL

AS: Yeah the trick is that you have to have mismatched socks. Otherwise it gets all messed up.

KE: My socks, they match. It's a big problem.

AS: That's all you need. I got these donut [socks] and I've got these ones today, I forget what they say, but it's something fun. It says something, something about madness, it's a...

KE: But for real, the yoga practice has helped you with being able to sit?

AS: No question, yeah. I mean, that's kind of a big purpose of the asana practice, so that you can develop a comfortable seated posture, so that you can then do pratyahara and dharana and dhyana and samadhi.

If you take that limb out of it — like many systems do take out the asana — then you have this new problem, that it's difficult to sit for a long time and actually access the other stages of meditative absorptions.

KE: Cool. So, why did you start the Cinnamon Snail? I'm guessing you had some altruistic motivations...

AS: My goal is really to get more of the mainstream culture gravitating toward nonviolence and compassion.

And I think it's a very fundamental thing for people to access that, from thinking about how they eat and how they treat animals and stuff. So my goal has always been to make vegan food very approachable to people who don't necessarily care about veganism or even care about animals just yet. And make it just not very preachy, and "here's like tremendously yummy food," and after a while people are like "wait, why are they going through the effort to, like, do this in this complicated way without animal stuff?" And then they figure it out on their own. To me, that plants a seed where they kind of realize the compassion on their own without me shoving it down their throat.

KE: Well, kind of... like, literally, but not metaphorically at least.

AS: Haha yes, yes.

KE: In my life I'm trying to figure out the best ways to be of service in the world. I do think that running vegan restaurants is one of the best ways to do that right now, because you are making an actual impact without even really having to be preachy. Which I think is cool, because if it's delicious enough, and it's convenient and cheap enough, then people will buy it. At least now. I think in the past it might not have been like that.

AS: No, it's really accelerating. People recognize that we have major issues in the world and we need to figure out what's next. People might not have figured out what they want to see in the world, but they recognize that what we've got going on isn't working, and we're being cruel to each other and to the planet and... people recognize those issues and are looking for what they can do to live more harmoniously. I think the whole culture's at a very receptive stage for that. It's becoming easier to get people to think about being more compassionate now that it ever was.

KE: Here's a funny question I didn't plan to ask today:

AS: Okay...

KE: Do you think that meat will ever go away completely and maybe even become illegal?

AS: Uuuuuuhhhhh...

I don't know. I'd love to see a future world where people are kind of in a more elevated state... but I think this is the Kali Yuga and people are kind of, mentally and materially, in a very contaminated state. I can't say it's definitely happening.

I certainly hope that eating meat never becomes illegal. I don't think that's a positive way to get people intentionally living more compassionately, by forcing them to not

participate. Any time you make something illegal there's always people who find their way around it. Like there's places throughout India, different holy cities, where meat eating is illegal and people find ways to do it. Same with alcohol and every different thing you can ban. That's not like really what our culture needs to awaken about how we're treating each other.

And I think it's kind of a poorly directed objective that people have, to force the rest of the world into being vegetarian, or force the rest of the world into complying with various ethical things. I don't think it's really worthwhile. I think I'd rather us focus on how we can get everybody to realize that we ought not to be eating meat.

KE: Does that kind of [non-forcing] perspective also inform your political views?

AS: I don't really have any political views other than that I don't really agree with the idea of politics. I think our species is intelligent enough that we shouldn't have to govern each other and force each other to do different types of things, but that's not the very popular opinion at this time.

I think it's kind of a waste of my time to direct myself politically. I think there's more effective ways at changing the way our species is living, and I'd rather focus my efforts on that, and spiritual life, than politics.

KE: I'm inclined to agree with you about that. I think that this most recent turn of events that has happened in politics has showed me that maybe it's not good for us all to be trying to force our will on other populations. We have some populations in the middle of the country, some populations on the coast, and we're trying to alternate forcing our will on each other. Seems like a bad idea.

AS: Yeah, there's lots of evidence in the scriptures of

times that there were these Rishi Kings, kings that were really elevated yogis, and lived like in extremely auspicious ways, and conducted their kingdoms in ways that approached when to take discipline and strength into certain matters in a very intelligent way. It wasn't just this endless partisan nonsense that goes on in today's society.

KE: It seems like a lot of your views are informed by eastern spiritual systems. So I wanted to know more about your path. You were saying that your path is centered around Bhakti. What path is that? Is it from a specific guru?

AS: Yeah, we practice some form that's part of gaudiya vaishnavism. Basically it's a sampradaya that goes back to Krishna, and it follows very strict disciplic succession. It's a devotional practice, but also involves chanting and a little bit of yoga asana, and a lot of reflection on the Shastras. I read quite a lot of scripture and that's part of my practice.

KE: Where'd you learn that?

AS: We've been studying for a while with this Gokul Chandra Das. He's a Finnish Yogi, he lives in Malaysia now, and he's really kind of blown my mind. We were practicing for like 16 or 17 years...

KE: Who's we?

AS: Me and my wife and my family. We're kind of collectively doing the same thing.

KE: You have kids?

AS: Yeah, we have two kids :-) My older daughter's like 17 now and she's taken a couple yoga teacher trainings and is certified to teach sanskrit and she's homeschooled and stuff. Yeah, she's been to India numerous times with us and she's actually, in a couple weeks, helping assist in a teacher training with our teacher.

KE: You mentioned Krishna earlier. Do you see Krishna as a deity, or do you see it as the Universe, or a concept...?

AS: Yeah, this is a kind of important matter I think. The path that I'm involved with looks at it as part of acintya-bhedabheda-tattva. There's this idea of Dvaita philosophy (dualism), which is kind of what all these Abrahamic religions fall into, where there's some strict sense of dualism, where we're eternally separate from God, and that's that. There's no real relationship there, there's no way of being involved in any kind of practical service, and there's no level of realization where you merge in any way. It's strict dualism.

And then there's what's become very popular in the West now, with yoga that's made it here, which is like Advaita Vedanta. It's kind of a monistic concept; that we're all one and we're one with the supreme. And maybe on some level people might have this realization of Brahman, this kind of formless, boundless notion of the Supreme, that God is everywhere and is everything... and that where — at some point through sadhana — the atman, the self, merges with Brahman.

That's become very popular, and it's very popular also because it's kind of comfortable for the ego. People are satisfied with the idea that there's not some supreme authority that's higher than them. And it's also very diplomatic and democratic. It sounds good on a bumper sticker that "we're all one." And it's great. And it's true, on some level; the same way that Dvaita (dualist) philosophy is true on some level.

We are one with God, but we are also separate from God. And that's what acintya-bhedabheda-tattva is the realization of — that **we're inconceivably and simultaneously one with and different from the Supreme.**

The Supreme is the source of everything, and in that way we're like an emanation of the Supreme. But that doesn't make us the same as the Supreme.

... 🤯

KE: I think that's a good place to end the interview.

AS: Yay! Alright, let's go get some snacks!

Adam's Raw Lemon-Blueberry "Cheesecake"

There's something really wonderful about relying on the natural richness of nuts to form a thick, creamy cheesecake. This one, in a lightly spiced pecan crust, gets its cheesecakelike tang from the lemon zest and juice and is topped with an easy-to-make blueberry sauce.
Makes one 9-inch cheesecake

For the pecan crust:
1½ teaspoons olive oil, for greasing the pan
½ cup pitted dates, soaked for 10 minutes in water and drained
2 tablespoons coconut oil
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon, plus extra for garnish if desired
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
¼ teaspoon sea salt
1 1/3 cups pecan pieces

For the filling:
2½ cups cashews soaked in water for 1hr
½ cup coconut oil
2/3 cup pure maple syrup
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
Grated zest and juice of 2 lemons
1½ teaspoons umeboshi plum vinegar

For the blueberry sauce:
1½ cups frozen blueberres
2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
Grated zest and juice of 1 lemon, plus extra grated zest for garnish
1 cup fresh blueberries, plus extra for garnish

STEPS:

1 Make the crust: Lightly grease a 9-inch pie pan with the olive oil.

2 Process the drained dates, coconut oil, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt in a food processor for 60 seconds, until fairly smooth. Add the pecan pieces and process for about 90 seconds, until a coarse dough is formed. (Don't over process, or you will end up with the consistency of a nut butter.) With wet hands, press the dough into the oiled pie pan, forming a thin, even crust
.
3 Make the filling: Drain the soaked cashews, and rinse them under cold water. Place the cashews and the coconut oil, maple syrup, vanilla, lemon zest and juice, and vinegar into a high-speed blender. Blend on high speed for 90 seconds, until completely smooth. (You may need to stop the blender a couple of times while blending, to incorporate any bits of cashew clinging to the sides of the pitcher.) Scrape the cheesecake filling into the crust, and smooth it down with a warm, wet offset spatula. Chill the cheesecake for 24 hours before serving; the center of the cheesecake should feel firm to the touch.

4 Make the blueberry sauce: Place the frozen blueberries, maple syrup, lemon zest, and lemon juice into a high-speed blender, and allow the blueberries to thaw for 30 minutes. Once the berries have thawed, blend on high speed for 45 seconds to form a smooth, thin sauce. Add the fresh berries to the blender, and pulse once or twice to evenly distribute them. Store the sauce in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

5 When ready to serve, plate each slice of cheesecake with 2 tablespoons of the blueberry sauce and garnish with a sprinkle of cinnamon (if using), a few blueberries, and fresh lemon zest.

Watch the full interview at meditationmag.com/adam-sobel

COSMIC BALANCE

ART BY @BRIZBAZAAR

Chances are you've seen a yin-yang before; maybe tattooed on a hippie's butt, or in a trippy instagram post that had something to do with "balance." But people don't realize how deep this ancient symbol actually is.

The yin-yang, or "taijitu," was originally drawn by Song Dynasty Taoist philosopher Zhou Dunyi to depict the metaphysics of Existence. Is the Universe One infinite whole? Or is it made up of many parts? The taijitu declares: it's both at once!

The outer circle represents the Oneness of Existence, while the inner circles represent the duality of yin and yang, dark and light, nothingness and Existence.

The black & white circles on opposing backgrounds demonstrate that these "opposites" are not at odds with one another, but exist harmoniously, and are in fact necessary for each other's existence. Light cannot exist without dark, and dark can't exist without light.

Try staring into the universe of this trippy yin-yang for a while. Ooooooooommmmmmmmm.

THREE SIMPLE MEDITATIONS – DO TRY THIS AT HOME

AN EXCERPT FROM "HOW TO MEDITATE – QUICKSTART GUIDE" ON MEDITATIONMAG.COM

BREATHING MEDITATION

BACKGROUND: Breathing Meditation, also known as "Mindfulness of Breathing" or "Anapanasati" (ana = inhale, pana = exhale, sati = awareness), is one of the most ancient forms of meditation that is still practiced today. It was taught by the Buddha himself (one of history's greatest psychotherapists), 2500 years ago. Anapanasati is a complete practice -- it can take you all the way from beginner level to full enlightenment. Simple, yet extremely powerful.

FOCUS: The sensations of breathing, as you inhale and exhale.

THE BASIC TECHNIQUE:

Just observe the breath, as it flows in and out of the body.

Inhale... and exhale.

Don't try to force the breathing, or change it any way. Just observe it.

1. Observe the inhale.
2. Observe the feeling of fullness at the end of the inhale.
3. Observe the exhale.
4. Observe the feeling of emptiness at the end of the exhale.
5. Repeat

Try not to interfere with the natural flow.

DO-NOTHING MEDITATION (aka "JUST SITTING")

BACKGROUND: There is an ancient technique native to Japanese Soto Zen called "Shikantaza." Literally translated, Shikantaza means "nothing but (shikan) precisely (ta) sitting (za)."

FOCUS: Just sitting.

TECHNIQUE:

You just sit. That's it. You don't do anything else.

You don't try to meditate.
You don't try to focus on your breathing.
You don't try to focus on your body.

You don't try to do ANYTHING.

You just... sit.

BODY-SCAN MEDITATION

BACKGROUND: Body-Scan is a very popular Burmese style of meditation. Vipassana -- one of the largest meditation organizations on Earth -- uses a specific type of body-scan meditation in its free (donation-based) ten-day retreats, all around the world.

FOCUS: The sensations of the body.

TECHNIQUE:

Bring your attention to the tips of your toes, and then proceed to scan your attention, slowly, through your entire body, until you reach the top of your head. Then you scan back down again, slowly scanning your body with your mind, until you reach the tips of your toes.

Try to feel all the sensations in each specific body part as you move your attention over it.

Feel the sensations on the skin, but also feel the sensations that are deep within the body. When you scan your chest, for example, you can feel not only the skin's sensations, but also the beating heart, and the inflating/deflating lungs. When you scan over your stomach, you can feel it rising and falling with the breath. You may also feel the gurgles of your digestive system.

Don't leave anything out. Scan the entire body. Make sure you don't miss anything.

Allow yourself to relax into the meditation, but don't worry if you feel tension in parts of your body. Just scan them with curiosity and equanimity. Use this opportunity to learn about your body, and the ways in which it holds tension.

Eventually, if you do this for long enough, you can start to become aware of your entire body at once. You can even feel the very subtle energies moving throughout your body, tingling sensations, vibrations... every cell becomes infused with the energy of your consciousness.

TIP: Try this meditation in both the sitting and lying down positions!

Download the full PDF!
How to Meditate
QuickStart Guide

FIND YOUR SEAT

Fully Adjustable Meditation Bench & Yoga Prop

www.ombase.ca

#createspace

SEEKING MEDITATION ACTIVISTS!

Meditation Magazine is seeking meditation activists & volunteers to help us bring more consciousness to NYC (and then, the world! muahahahaha).

We're based in the West Village so if you're nearby, give us a shout!

contact
kevin@meditationmag.com

SUPPORT OUR WORK

We're doing our best to make the world a better place, through meditation, compassion, and activism.

To help support our work:
meditationmag.com/donate

or contact
kevin@meditationmag.com

PARTNER WITH US

MedMag is open to partnerships in the vegan/green/meditation/utopian community. We love to collaborate on meditation events, share office space & other win-win solutions.

Send us your partnership ideas!
kevin@meditationmag.com

HEART CENTERED VENTURES

If you run a mindful/vegan/green business or organization, we want to help you grow & expand!

We can help with funding, biz dev, web & app dev, retail/office spaces, HR, marketing, and more.

More info @ meditationmag.com/heart-centered-ventures

BE HERE NOW
– RAM DASS

AUTUMN MINDFULNESS CHALLENGE:

Deeply appreciate the beauty of autumn, and the emotional transitions in the changing of the seasons.

Feel the sensations that come with the thoughts of approaching winter.

Pick up a beautifully colored leaf and use it as a bookmark.

Feel the cool wind on your skin; smell the autumn air.

Eat an entire pumpkin. Drink a pumpkin spice latte. Savor the flavors.

Enjoy the absurd experience of arguing with your loved ones about veganism over thanksgiving dinner.

Feel the chill of the first really cold day; exhale your icy breath in the air and smile at the thought of scarves, snowflakes, and seasonal depression.

Tag #mindfulautumn in your social media posts.

AUTUMN MEDITATION CHALLENGE:

8am-9am and 8pm-9pm

Meditate during these times, and know that there are many other MedMages(?) who are meditating with you, amplifying conscious vibes throughout the city, making NYC a more peaceful, loving, conscious place.

At least for a couple of hours each day.

CARLA & THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR MEDITATION BUS

We found the Be Time Bus on instagram (of course), and were fascinated by the concept. A mobile meditation studio... in a bus... that looks like a spaceship inside? We knew immediately that we had to check it out. We were excited and grateful to have had the opportunity to sit and chat with Carla Hammond, the bus's founder & CEO, in what we now refer to as "the meditation spaceship bus," in October.

Meditation Magazine: This is a pretty amazing and unique space! How did you come up with this idea?

Carla Hammond: I've been meditating for quite some time, and I have — now almost five year old(!) — twins. I meditated at home, and when they arrived, it got a little... hectic. And I found myself really wishing for space, where I could go at least once a week or something to do my thing. I started looking [for a meditation space]. And I thought "I'm in New York!"

[But] this was five years ago before any formal meditation studios were yet existing [in New York], so what I did find was either way out of my area, and like a weird schedule. So I noticed that there was space in the market for something like this. It kind of crept up on me, and I obsessed about the idea for a while. I wasn't sure if people were ready to pay solely to go meditate, or pay for a class. And because the brick and mortar spaces were so expensive, I thought, well, OK, maybe it's a little risky, let's keep that on hold.

And then I saw the food truck movement! And there was this non-profit bus parked a couple blocks away from my house one day and I'm like "Wait a second! What if we make it mobile? And we can get to more people, more places..." and it kind of snowballed from there.

MM: What kind of meditations do you do in the Be Time Bus?

CH: We broke it up into five different thematic focuses; we wanted to try to incorporate some of the bigger categories of techniques for meditation. We have some mantra repetition (that we call "be intention"), some mindfulness (that we call "here"), creative visualization... so that people have the possibility of exploring different techniques if they're just learning, and also try to incorporate whatever works into their practice.

MM: Religious gurus tend to say you should stick to one meditative tradition, but people from more secular paths tend to say "yeah, try everything!" What do you think about that? Do you think that there's value in picking one and going with it, or do you prefer to stay more broad in your own practice?

CH: I personally prefer to stay more broad. I guess it hasn't even been so much a matter of preference as it's been an organic progression. It's been more like a wave of what I've had experience to try out and what has come up in my life, so I've explored different traditions, different techniques. I find that, looking back on it now — and there's still so much to explore of course — there is some richness in being able to have different types of skill sets or techniques to use and incorporate into your daily life. I find myself pulling from some [techniques] while I'm experiencing some things in my life, and pulling from others while I'm experiencing other things. So I think it just brings a lot of wealth. Sometimes I kind of admire the people who are very steadfast on their one path, and I think I had a moment where I really wanted that, but it hasn't happened for me in that way, and now I'm enjoying that aspect of it too.

MM: Which ones are your go-to meditation practices?

CH: Right now I'm very much in a mindfulness set of practice, and I also like to do creative visualization. So I think a combination of those two.

MM: So, the mindfulness is more of the day-to-day being aware of what your'e doing as you're doing it? Is that right?

CH: Yeah, but also, while I'm sitting, or lying down — sometimes I practice lying down — just being aware of my breath. I find myself going back to the basics and keeping it very simple, and that's working for me right now.

MM: What's the creative visualization like?

CH: I feel like it's kind of a personal journey I like to take... I evolve different colors, it varies...

MM: So you close your eyes and you kind of go on your own journey in your visual mind?

CH: Yeah! And sometimes bringing in visuals of gratitude, things that I'm grateful for — or things that I'd like to manifest.

MM: Do you decide where you want to go, or do you just let whatever come in there?

CH: I kind of feel like I sit with an intention, and then I just let it happen.

MM: How did you start meditating in the first place?

CH: I had my first experience meditating when I was 15. My mom coerced me into going to this weekend retreat, and I had no idea what I was getting myself into. And it was a wild experience but I remember really panicking for a moment, since I was 15 and I was like "this is not my perfect weekend plan."

From left: Carla Hammond, Prerna Bhatia, Kevin Ellerton, Jovanna Benavente

But then when we were invited to actually sit in meditation, it was the first time I ever had done anything like that, and it kind of just really resonated with me. I had a really magical experience and it was very clear that it was a very powerful practice, and so it's just kind of been a companion that stayed in my life. I wish I could say I've been meditating since I was 15 — I haven't — but it's been kind of like a constant presence, which I find myself going back to, and going back to.

MM: Where was that? You have an accent that's not from New York. Where was this experience that you had?

CH: This was in Mexico City. I'm half British and half Mexican — my dad's British, mom's Mexican — I could say broadly, childhood in England, I was born there, and then teenage years in Mexico.

MM: So how did the meditation affect you as a teenager? Did it affect you right away, change the way you looked at the world?

CH: Yeah, it definitely had an effect right away. It kind of opened a door for me to explore myself in a way that I consciously had never done before. And also I was very perfectionist and had all these ideas and expectations and judgements about myself that were really all self-imposed. So I was going through a hard time, because I felt like that was so much to manage. So when I found this space, it was bliss because I didn't really have to do anything other than just focus on my breath, and be. So it was really liberating actually.

MM: Did you feel like that affected your relationships with the people around you, your parents and your friends?

CH: Definitely! It was a slow process because I didn't continue to meditate daily as of that day, but yeah, it's definitely had a great impact, first of all on myself... and I think that always tends to kind of expand beyond yourself. So yes, I would say that it has definitely had a very positive impact. Especially on family relationships.

MM: Where do you see this meditation bus going? What's your plan for the future?

CH: We definitely want to continue to expand the invitation for people to explore themselves in meditation, have the experience, bring the practice in their everyday lives. I believe very strongly that it's a very cool and necessary addition to our everyday wellness routine, so I want to invite people to hopefully see it that way and give it a try.

Beyond the bus — there's of course room for more busses, I feel like there's room for these kinds of mobile studios in most major cities — and we've just launched our retro-fits and popups, so now we've been asked to kind of bring a bit of this experience into hotels and conventions and corporate [settings]. So that's another way we're going about scaling this.

After our chat with Carla, we sat for a beautiful, relaxing, 6-minute guided meditation with Be Time meditation teacher Prerna Bhatia (@prernayoga).

To watch the full interview
(and the guided meditation too!)
go to meditationmag.com/betimebus...
or just scan this handy QR code with your phone!

To experience the Be Time Bus for yourself, check out betimepractice.com. Meditation Magazine readers get 25% off their first Be Time Bus meditations with coupon code MEDMAGTIME 😍

YOUR AD HERE

Our mission, here at MeditationMag, is to co-create a better, kinder, happier world. We use our platform to promote like-minded individuals, companies, and organizations working toward the same goal.

Conscious advertising helps make the world a better place by allowing socially responsible entities to grow & expand. At the same time, these ads help our readers find awesome products & services (that will actually be of benefit to them) in their neighborhoods.

We see this kind of heart-centered advertising as a way that we can help connect & strengthen the conscious community here in NYC. Also, it pays (some of) our bills... which helps us to continue our mission, hopefully for a long time to come.

Interested in advertising with Meditation Magazine?
Email megan@meditationmag.com

WANT MEDITATION MAGAZINE ...IN YOUR MAILBOX?

meditationmag.com/subscribe

NYC MEDITATION EVENTS – AUTUMN 2018

December 1: Letting Go of Loneliness: A Half-Day Meditation Course
10:30am -1:30pm
Kadampa Meditation Center NYC
127 W 24th Street
Ground Floor
New York, NY 10011

2, 9 &16: Making Our Holidays Meaningful with Meditation: 3-Class Series
11:30am - 1pm
Vajradhara Meditation Center
444 Atlantic Ave
(Between Nevins and Bond St.)
Brooklyn, NY 11217

3: 30s and Under Social Meditation
7:15pm - 9:00pm
Shambhala Meditation Center
118 W 22nd Street
6th Floor
New York, NY 10011

4 & 5: How to Practice: The Way to a Meaningful Life
7:00pm - 9:00pm
Tibet House US
22 West 15th Street
New York, NY 10011

8: Munch and Meditation Vinyasa & Vegan Bites
12:30pm - 2:30pm
The Yoga Collective NYC
135 W 29th St
Room 603
New York, NY 10001

8: A Day-Long Meditation Retreat: The Profound Practice of Mahamudra/ Meditation
9am - 8pm
Vajradhara Meditation Center
444 Atlantic Ave
(Between Nevins and Bond St.)
Brooklyn, NY 11217

11: Advanced Buddhist Studies: The Core Practice Manuals of the Indian and Tibetan Traditions of Meditation
7pm - 9pm
Shambhala Meditation Center
118 W 22nd Street
6th Floor
New York, NY 10011

To list your event, go to meditationmag.com/events

16: How can Mindfulness, Breath, and Silence Support Clients and Therapists
10:30am - 12:30pm
Union Square
41 Union Square
New York, NY 10003

22: Transforming the Holidays: a Half-Day Meditation Course
10:30am - 1:30pm
Kadampa Meditation Center NYC
127 W 24th Street
Ground Floor
New York, NY 10011

For full list (with RSVP links):

meditationmag.com/events

Meditation Saved My Life, and It's Going to Save Our World

By Aaron Rose

I've been meditating since I was 18 years old. It was a gift that found me during a painful time in my life.

I'm a gay, transgender man, raised in a conservative Catholic home, with deep wounding around self expression, gender, and sexuality. Violence, anxiety, and rejection were quotidian experiences for me for the first two decades of my life. Despite my optimism and commitment to love, I felt cast out, adrift in a chaotic world that was out to get me.

Meditation showed up when I needed permission to stay present in my life, to give myself the unconditional positive regard I craved from everyone else. I was intrigued by the science behind it. I longed for peace, for myself and for the world. So, day by day, I began to sit for 10 or 15 minutes, just trying to focus on my breath.

For a long time, I thought meditation was just about quieting my mind and ignoring distractions. I tried so hard to silence my thoughts. Eventually I figured out that I was just there to give the thoughts a smile and a wave instead of pretending that they didn't exist.

Turns out meditation's not about tuning out -- it's about tuning in. To the hard feelings, to the childhood memories, to the social conditioning to doubt myself, to distrust my intuition, to disregard my feelings. I was there to witness it all. Only then could I choose what stories to let go of, and which ones to write anew.

Over the last decade, my practice has evolved, stopped and started, and evolved some more. But when I show up for it, it shows up for me. Today, my meditation starts and ends with a prayer to the wise and loving universe that we are all a part of:

"Where would you have me go, what would you have me do, what would you have me say, and to whom? Let me be a source of ease and comfort to those I encounter today."

And then I get quiet and listen. To my heart. To my breath. To my neighbor coughing through paper-thin walls. To my brain's insistence that this would be a great time to update my to do list. To unexpected and overwhelming memories of past pains and fears, of recent shames, and current doubts. I sit with it all, as best I can.

Sometimes I get my perfect 20+ minutes right upon waking. Other days I close my eyes while standing on the subway and take 3 minutes to tune in.

When I miss a day, I feel it. My brain becomes extra concerned with controlling everything

and starts to feel like an over-caffeinated robot. But meditation is no longer a task on my to-do list. It's a source of comfort to which I can always return.

Those of us who feel most traumatized and harmed by our world are perhaps the most likely to think that meditation is not for us. We're tired of doing things wrong. We carry way too much in our bodies and our hearts. We feel we're messing up if we just sit there with a full mind and an anxious body.

But meditation is not about being perfect and quiet and changing how you feel. It's about finally, truly, bringing a loving and gentle witness to that which the world has asked us to minimize for so long: the truth of our lives, the reality of our world, our whole damn story. That's the Revolution as far as I'm concerned.

Meditation has transformed my life, both personally and professionally. As a diversity & inclusion educator and conflict transformation expert, I see up close both humanity's harsh patterns of exclusion and violence, and our deep capacity to create a new world where we all can thrive. Meditation is an indispensable tool in this work: it's how I start and end every training, every coaching session.

Historical systems of oppression like racism and sexism have created conditioned responses within each of us. As a man, I contend with the old programming to see and treat women as less competent than me. As a trans person, I witness others grapple with old stories about the illegitimacy of my identity.

An intellectual understanding of our history and a desire to change is often not enough to shift these deep, learned patterns. We must attend not only to the brain, but to the body, heart, and soul. Research shows that trauma (aka fear-based reaction patterns) is coded into our DNA, and is passed from parent to child for up to 14 generations. Even with an outward commitment to equality, these conditioned responses still happen: the instinct to side with someone who looks like you, to doubt someone about their experience, to see someone as less than you. This unchecked collective implicit bias is why historically marginalized people still have far less access to everything from corporate leadership positions to natural resources.

Can meditation really solve our world's crisis of disconnection? I believe it can. Meditation creates greater space between stimulus and response. When it comes to old identity-based patterns, that increased awareness can mean the difference between a knee-jerk reaction to call the police on a black neighbor, and the ability to catch bias and make a different decision.

It can mean the difference between playing the old script of attack, and the conscious script of repair. Those few mindful seconds can mean the difference between destruction or connection, fear or love.

Meditation realigns us with universal intelligence, with the wisdom of our ancestors, with the love and compassion of our higher selves. Just like any other healing process, releasing our subconscious connection to institutionalized oppression is a daily practice. In a world that continues to reinforce a paradigm of identity-based hierarchy, we have the opportunity to remind our bodies and our hearts what the Truth really is: that we are all whole, all perfect, all equally deserving of love and respect. And our wellbeing, rather than being mutually exclusive, is actually intimately connected. None of us are truly free until all of us are. The practice is a daily return, to ourselves, to each other, and to love.

It all starts with one breath a day.
Inhale: yes, this is how it is right now.
Exhale: and I love myself through it all.

MEDITATIONMAG.COM

REBOOT YOUR BRAIN

daily reminders for a happy, healthy, awakened life

MEDITATE

- Be. Here. Now.
- Let your mind quiet down.
- **Wake up** into this moment.
- Watch your body as it breathes.

WONDER

- Why does anything exist at all?
- Feel **the Fabric of Reality** underlying everything.
- We are Existence experiencing itself.

WITNESS

- Awaken to the **pure, empty consciousness** in which all thoughts & sensations arise.
- Through your consciousness, you evoke the Universe.
- Through us, the Universe is awake. We're the mind of Existence itself.

LIVE YOUR LIFE

- Feel the aliveness in this body.
- **Appreciate this moment** of being alive, for one day, you will die.
- Remember death as you walk through life.
- Enjoy your life, and love everyone. We are all here for a limited time.

BE HAPPY

- Happiness comes from inside. So stop trying to get it from outside!
- The key to happiness is to be OK with unhappiness.
- Stop resisting. Go with the flow.
- Stop clinging. Relax. Let go.
- Practice *enjoying* difficult emotions, instead of distracting yourself from them.
- Love everyone, love everything, and love every moment.
- Don't expect life to be easy. Have fun with it. Do what you can to make yourself & others happy!
- Abide in presence, awe, and joy.
- **Take a moment now** to list all the things you're grateful for.

BE HEALTHY

- Take care of yourself.
- Exercise as much as you can.
- Live an **active lifestyle**.
- Keep your body moving!
- Prioritize your health.
- If you ever start feeling lethargic, lazy, or depressed, RUN!
- Get sweaty & out of breath.
- Exercise every morning to energize your day.

meditationmag.com/reboot

As of August 2018, there were
22,511 homeless children
living in NYC.*

Many of them are in need of
warm clothes for the winter.

If you have extra coats,
scarves, or other winter clothes,
you can make a big difference
in a child's life.

Visit **meditationmag.com/coat-drive**
to learn how you can help.

MEDITATIONMAG.COM/COAT-DRIVE

* Coalition For The Homeless, August 2018