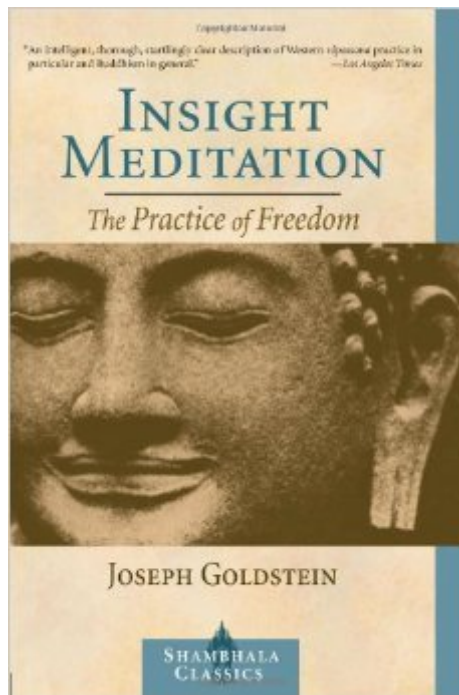


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# Insight Meditation: The Practice Of Freedom



## Synopsis

The fruit of some twenty years' experience leading Buddhist meditation retreats, this book touches on a wide range of topics raised repeatedly by meditators and includes favorite stories, key Buddhist teachings, and answers to most-asked questions.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is very good, but I think people should be aware of what they're buying before they buy it. This book discusses some Buddhist concepts that are behind Vipassana meditation, and discusses why people meditate, and what the short term and long term benefits to meditation are. What the book is short on, however, is the specifics of how to meditate, although it does discuss that in a short section. Instead of it focuses more on the why. It's still a very enlightening and spiritual book that I recommend reading, which is why I gave it 4 stars. However if what you are looking for specifically is a step-by-step instructional, you may want to get another book in addition to this one. EDIT: I wanted to edit my original review to add that I have since found a better book when it comes to actual instruction on Insight or Vipassana meditation: *Mindfulness in Plain English*. While I still recommend Goldstein's book when it comes to philosophically investigating the reasons behind meditation, *Mindfulness in Plain English* has more in terms of explicit step-by-step instructions for meditating, which I think would benefit someone totally new to the practice more.

I have a very busy life and need a way to relax. I thought meditation would be a good way to do it. After all, in all those kung-fu movies the star meditates before the big fight and seems to be pretty relaxed. The problem is, I didn't know how to meditate. What am I supposed to think about? Do I have to sit like a pretzel and starve myself? What does "ummmmmmmmm" mean? Will I end up looking like Buddha? So I found this book, "Insight Meditation, The Practice of Freedom". I sort of expected it to be just a bunch of mumbo-jumbo Confucius sayings and daiku poems that make no sense to anyone but the writer. "Lotus blossoms floating on a stream" doesn't tell me anything. But what I found when I read it is good, simple instruction on how to meditate and what it can do for you. Plus a few mumbo-jumbo sayings and daiku poems, but most of them make sense. It is all based on Buddhism, but anyone can use the techniques. I've been practicing them and can say that it really has made a difference for me; I haven't had the urge to buy an automatic weapon for weeks. I recommend this book for anyone looking for peace of mind. I personally will be reading Mr. Goldstein's other manuals for even more details. He's a great teacher.

"Insight Meditation" by Goldstein is an excellently-written, thorough, and informative book for the beginning-to-intermediate meditator. This is particularly true if s/he is concerned with furthering personal inner growth and deep wisdom as well as simply finding a tool for relaxation and comfort. It is founded on the tradition of using the breath as a support, and leads the prospective meditator through the often awkward "getting started" phases and well into the more stable phases of meditative deepening and insight (vipassana). Unlike many meditation books currently available, its language and presentation are simple and straightforward, and Goldstein avoids the use of unnecessary and sometimes confusing foreign (Sanskrit, Tibetan, etc) terminology. Nevertheless, "Insight Meditation" is lucid and comprehensive enough to guide the practitioner well along the path to awakening, it provides a sound foundation for the practice of meditation, and prepares the curious meditator for further exploration into such areas as Dzogchen, Vajrayana, etc. I have recommended and sometimes taught vipassana meditation to our therapists (Healing Touch), and along with Thich Nhat Hanh's "Miracle of Mindfulness" (a dear and beautiful little book) and Pema Chödrön's "Getting Unstuck" CD (an enjoyable intro to mindfulness (staying present) and shenpa (energetic conditioned reflex)), Goldstein's book is a suggested "must read" for us all. In fact "Insight Meditation" would be an excellent choice for a group book study on the fundamentals of meditation.

"Surrender does not mean passive resignation. Rather it means surrender to the Dharma, to the truth of the moment's experience." "Through meditation we open both to what is pleasant and to

what is unpleasant, with genuine acceptance and balance."How many pleasant feelings have we already enjoyed? Too many even to count. And yet we still feel that something is lacking, something is not complete. Without understanding how or why, we stay on the treadmill, endlessly looking for yet another pleasant experience. It is hardest to cure a disease when the medicine we take itself causes the disease."Practising mindfulness of the body is one of the easiest ways to stay present in life. This mode of awareness works so well that Buddha devoted many teachings to it. He said that mindfulness of the body leads to nirvana, to freedom, to the unconditioned. Use your body as a vehicle for awakening."As the above quotes show, Joseph Goldstein has a remarkable ability to put subtle Buddhist notions into plain language. "Insight Meditation" is an outstanding guidebook for anyone interested in improving the quality of their life using the ancient practice of Vipassana. Highly recommended!

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