

NOT | WAITING FOR
SUPERMAN

5 Days to Change Your Mind



The 3rd Element

I have experienced the difficulty of managing stress in a teaching job .. and I can help you.

Because most teachers don't realise the *hidden reason* for much of the stress they feel.

Let me explain ...

Stress in teaching happens on a scale much greater than most other professions - as the stakeholders we have to please, are so different:

- On the one hand our students require engaging lessons, consistency and the emotional energy it takes to lead them.
- And on the other, school management insists on constant improvement against standards, a range of administration tasks in addition to our teaching .. and to help them achieve the goals of the school.

As a result, teachers often feel stuck in the middle .. struggling to work hard enough to satisfy the competing demands of the job.

But this alone *isn't* responsible for the stress you feel - and you have a huge opportunity to feel better when you understand this.

There is a third element to consider - the one in your head ..

Because your mind can be your own worst enemy.

It is compulsive - constantly filled with thoughts, emotions, urges, and perceptions of what you experience.

It comments on and judges everything you come into contact with - and plays on an endless loop in your head.



We are all caught up in '**mental noise**' in almost every moment we live .. there are VERY few times when our minds *ever* stop.

And what's worse is that much of what we think, is negative ..

- We lose ourselves reliving past events, we imagine things we should have said or done, and we put ourselves under pressure with thoughts of who we believe we should be.
- We worry about the future, the classes we have, the people who might judge us .. and the parents whose children we care for.
- We run scenarios in our heads, rehearsing for future events and preparing for disasters which never happen.
- We think about the times when we felt wronged - and the people who said or did something to make our past experience worse.

This unchecked thinking causes stress, anxiety, self-doubt, depression, and fear in your life.



But the really strange thing is that most teachers are unaware that this 'mental noise' is happening at all.

It's not your fault, we are conditioned to think this way.

As a result many people live their whole lives thinking the voice that they think with, is THEM! .. *It is not.*

This cycle of negative thinking results in unnecessary stress and makes your classroom job much harder than it already is.



If you don't believe that you are affected .. then try this:

Go through a whole day, and observe what the voice in your head is saying.

- When you stop working, where does your mind take you?
- When you're waiting for something - what are you thinking about?
- And when you think about a negative past event - what thoughts do you automatically have?

Spend a day listening to the stories you tell yourself.

The comments your mind makes about the people you work with.

The scenarios you imagine yourself in.

And the worries you have about things that might never happen.

Because it is very likely that you carry a burden much greater than just your job - and that your **unchecked thinking** makes you suffer much greater stress than you need to.



The Solution

How was your day observing your internal thoughts ?

- Did you get caught up dreading the future, or reflecting on a past injustice?
- Did you imagine a future situation and start practising what you will say?
- Did you catch your mind commenting and judging the people you came into contact with?
- And did you notice how active your mind is - and how little you quietly enjoy the present moment?

It's not your fault.

We have been conditioned to think this way - and to believe that doing so is normal.

We are often lost in thought and we take ourselves away from the present moment to suffer in our minds instead.

This has an impact on everything you do.

Because each morning you wake up with a finite amount of energy and time.

You have been burning through this in your mind - leaving you with less to cope with the demands of the job.

We never get this time back - and we waste energy which could be spent on other things.



So how do you stop this from happening ?

You can achieve this in a few minutes each morning with ..

Meditation.

Ok, your mind is doing it again - isn't it?

You now have a mental picture of someone in the lotus position with a stupid smile on their face?



Most people *misunderstand* what meditation is - and what it can do for you.

So I want you to park the thoughts you have about this, and read on with no preconceptions.

Because meditation isn't 'clearing the mind' or 'thinking nothing'. And it isn't something you need to do while your legs are tied up in an impossible position.

The purpose of meditation is to train your mind.

The practise of meditation gives you control over what you think - *when you aren't meditating*.



Regular practice means I catch myself thinking pointlessly - and let my thoughts disappear.

I am much more aware of what my mind is thinking in each moment, and I can let the thoughts go .. without getting caught up in them, stressed out, or associating myself with what I think.

This has reduced my stress, made me feel SO much better about myself - and made me more effective as a teacher, and as a father.

And meditation is the only technique that I know which does this.

It is the best way to quieten your thoughts, and leave you with the mental space you need to manage the day to day.

How to begin with Meditation ..

The first step is to stop seeing your thoughts as 'you'.

Instead start observing them, as you do the sights, sounds and smells you experience every day. See them pass like clouds in the sky - and let them leave as they arrived.



Meditation is the practise of training your mind to do this .. **Mindfulness** is transferring that skill to the rest of your day when you are not meditating.

When you do both, you free yourself from the internal conflict of your mind - and live a much easier life.

So how should you meditate ?

I am no 'master' - I just experimented long enough to see the benefits .. but I will explain what I do.

I get up and ready for work .. and about an hour after waking - I take 5-10 minutes to practise meditation.

At 8am when I am at work - I do so again for a short time. And then again in the afternoon after work.

To meditate you should be sat upright, eyes closed .. breathing normally - and repeating a word slowly in your head.

The mentor that showed me this, suggested the word "Lahm" (pronounced Laaaaaaaarm), and I say this in my head with each out-breath, while I meditate.

I often find on the in-breath, that my mind wanders and I start thinking something ..

... then on the out-breath I release that thought - feeling it come out of my head with the air from my lungs.

Your sole purpose in meditation is to observe your thoughts.

When you realise your mind has taken off somewhere and is thinking about something - let the thought go, and bring yourself back to the word "Lahm" - and the present moment.



When you first do this, you will be surprised at how much you think.

Our minds are wild beasts, don't get frustrated with yours!

Observe each thought - and let it leave, by returning to the word "Lahm".

Remain neutral, and patient as you do this - don't judge the thoughts you have - they are not you.

The purpose of meditation is to train yourself to become aware of the non-stop activity of your mind, and to notice it - without getting caught up in it.

You do this by noticing your thought .. and then letting it leave.

When I first did this, I didn't know what to expect.

I travelled to work afterwards and I was immediately more aware of my thoughts as I did so. I was able to let them go before I got caught up in them, and felt much better about myself.

I became aware that my mind stressed me out in many ways .. fearing a future which never happened, and stressing about a past which was gone.

This left me free to live my life, be a dad, and do my job - without these complications.

When you try this, you become aware of the obstacle which your mind can be to your own happiness.



Over time I have gained greater benefits as I put the days when I meditate together.

And if I miss my meditation a few days in a row - I know it!

My mind once again begins to take over my thoughts, clouding my judgement and increasing my stress levels at work and home.

I strongly encourage you to try your own meditation experiment



5 Days to Change Your Mind

The rest of this eBook has been designed to guide you through 5 days of your own meditation experiment.

I want to help you to realise the benefits of mediation, and reduce the stress you feel.

And I want to get you over the 'bumps' I felt when trying to embed this practice in my own life.

Because sitting and observing your thoughts is more difficult than I thought it would be.

The image of a person in orange robes meditating quietly under a tree makes people think it comes easy.

I have found that it doesn't!

And I want to help you to recognise the factors that might have stopped me doing this - and driven me into the arms of antidepressants and anti-psychotic drugs.

(I really was that bad)

This micro eBook guides you through 5 days of mediation practice, giving you a focus for each one, and recommends ways to embed meditation in your life – so you get the maximum benefit.

It is a product of my own meditation experiment. It is what I wish I knew when I started out. I hope it helps you.

By all means read this all at once to get a flavour of the week ahead. Then at the beginning of each day - read the advice for the day, and let this guide your practice.

eMail me anytime with any questions you have ..

Altogether now "Laaaaaaaaaaaaahm" ;-)

James



Day 1: Establish your Meditation Practice



The first time you meditate it might feel strange - but trust yourself.

You are about to find how active your mind really is.

Remember that the purpose of meditation is to become conscious of your thoughts, and to observe them - not get caught up in them.

Observe them - and let them go.

The result of regular meditation practice is mindfulness in your everyday - and the ability to live without getting caught up in your thoughts.

When you achieve this, life becomes much less complicated, and you have more control over what you feel and what you do.

This will happen with *regular meditation practice*, so plan a time and place to do this every day.

1. Decide on a Place to Meditate

The place you choose should be somewhere you can sit up with a straight back - and think in silence.

The quiet will help you remain focused on observing your thoughts.

I find it easiest to meditate before my day begins, but after I have properly woken up - the objective is to be alert when you meditate, not tired or relaxed.



2. Do Your First Meditation Session

1. Start your session by breathing in and out a few times - and feel the air traveling into and out of your lungs. Ground yourself in the present, and breath normally.

2. Start to say “Lahm” in your head (pronounced ‘laaaaaaaaaaaaaarrm’)

Find a rhythm which suits you. I find it feels natural if I time this with my breath .. but there is no right way, just do what feels good for you.

3. At some point you will notice your attention has wandered. When you do, don’t judge yourself - just let the thought go, and return to “Lahm”

3 minutes mediation is enough to make a difference - but try to repeat this during the day at whatever moment you can. I like locking my classroom door and using a quiet moment at break or lunch.

These small moments of training will make you a better master of your mind in the day to day.

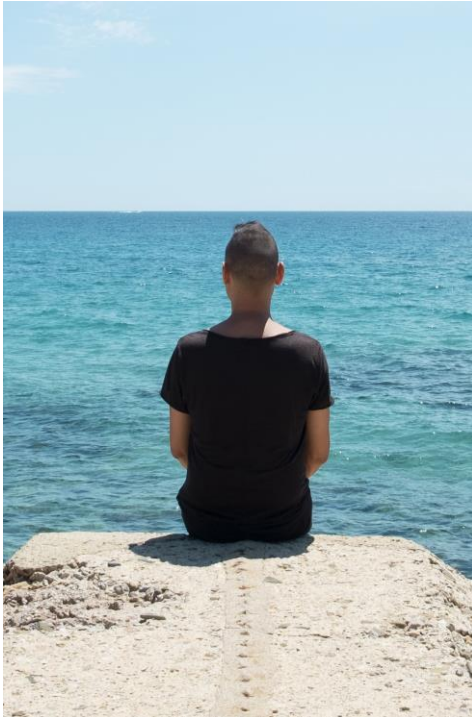
Go to bed in the evening knowing you have put yourself first, and that through daily practise you will regain a large measure of control over your life.

Change happens because we change what we do.

Thank you for doing this for yourself.



Day2: Repeat Your Practice



I wonder if you became more aware of your thoughts *when not meditating*, yesterday?

Take a moment to reflect on how you feel now.

Are you more aware of what your mind is thinking - are you becoming more mindful?

Don't worry if a big change doesn't happen straight away .. what you are doing is becoming more aware of how you feel - and what you think.

There is no right way to feel - there is only your way, which is always right.

There is no need to judge your ability to do this, just let it be what it is.

Mediation requires practise. Like a muscle you are training, your mind will respond with consistent exercise.

Keep the same routine as yesterday .. the same place, and time.

Try and fit 3 sessions in today. One or two before work. Another at lunchtime - or after school.

3 minutes is enough .. set a timer on your phone.

When you feel your mind wander .. maybe it starts imagining something, or thinking of what you have to do today - return to "Lahm" and breathe out the thought ..

If it takes a while to notice you are thinking something - don't be surprised.

Your mind has had 'a free rein' all your life.



Day3: Be Consciously Mindful



Meditate in your chosen place, at your chosen time for 3-5 minutes .. use the same techniques to notice and then release the thoughts you have while you do so.

Today, start to take this practice into your everyday life when you are not meditating.

Start to be 'mindful'.

As you go about your day today, I want you to observe what you think as you do so.

Remember as you do this that the voice you hear is not you.

It needs no judgement, it requires no attention .. thoughts will appear, and then disappear - without consequence.

Your mind isn't comfortable in the present moment, and it will pull you into thinking about the past or the future instead.

Thinking about the past often makes us feel regret, a lack of self confidence, depression or guilt. Thinking about the future often makes us feel fear, stress, anxiety, and worry.

When you practise meditation and mindfulness you learn to distance yourself from these thoughts - and not get caught up in them emotionally.

This reduces stress and has a massively beneficial impact on your life.

Noticing when these thoughts are happening in your head, and letting them go as they arrive - leaves you free to deal with life in the present moment.

It frees you to work, to love, to be - without wasting energy and time.

Thank yourself again for doing this .. it is an act of love.



Day4: Don't Misunderstand 'Hard' Days



Keep to your routine .. mediating at the same places – and the same times.

Practise observing what you think, and releasing your mind of these thoughts.

Let them come and go like clouds in the sky.

And transfer this practice to your every day - be mindful and observe the thoughts you have when you are not meditating.

As you do this, it's important to realise that it's normal for some days to feel harder than others.

So notice when your mind is super-active, and that on some days you find meditation difficult or frustrating.

Some days when I meditate, my mind is 'on

fire' and thinking of all sorts of things.

On days like these I used to finish my sessions thinking *"I'm not getting anywhere"* - or that *"I should be getting better at this"*.

That is a misunderstanding - and one I want to clear up for you.

These days aren't a failure - they are an opportunity.

Because on days like these you have more thoughts to release and let go - you are actually getting better 'mental exercise'!

And if you feel that it is difficult to let the thoughts leave and you get caught up in them ..

.. remember, that in each mediation session all you need is a few moments where you clear your mind of these thoughts successfully, to make progress.



Your goal is NOT to be able to meditate easily .. mediation is not meant to be relaxing .. and it can be frustrating.

You are swimming against decades of conditioning - and learning a lesson which we should have learned as children.

We aren't taught how to think .. or what to do with our thoughts.

This seems crazy once you know just how impactful our negative minds can be.

After mediation makes a difference in your life, you will want to teach those close to you.

I am currently waiting until my 4 year old daughter can understand the purpose of doing this .. and then I will help her with this knowledge.

I know I can save her from so much pain.



Day 5: Make Meditation a Daily Ritual in Your Life



Your challenge once these 5 days are complete, is to make this meditation a habit.

The more days you practise meditation, the more benefits you will feel.

It's similar to training your physical body in lots of senses - if you stop for a while, you will slip back into the negative thought patterns you experienced before.

In my own life it has helped to let the people around me know the positive impact this is having.

So start to be proud about meditating, and do it more openly.

While it is a private pursuit, it should be shared - and the benefits made obvious to those around you.

Doing this will help you maintain the practice, and realise the benefits over the long term.

When I find something wonderful in my life, I share it. It's the reason I wrote this training. And I feel emotional right now writing this (for all the right reasons!)

Because meditation saved me from a life taking pills my doctor would have prescribed me for the same condition.

It saved me from feeling like I wasn't a good person .. that I couldn't cope - and that I would always think negative things about myself and other people.

It has made me a better partner, and a better father. And it has given me the mental space that I need to manage a challenging job.



If you want a better instructor than I can be, visit this link:

<https://www.thetadprinciple.com/>

It is the course I bought for \$20 a year ago. I can honestly say it is the best purchase I have ever made.

This isn't an affiliate link - I don't recommend this to get paid.

I do this because after discovering something so life changing, I have tears in my eyes at the thought of sharing it with you.

With your permission, I would like to share another discovery - which is helping me live a happier, healthier life.

I now work part time at school, and part time creating courses which I sell online.

Once made, these sell 24/7 without any need for me to commit hours of my time to their maintenance.

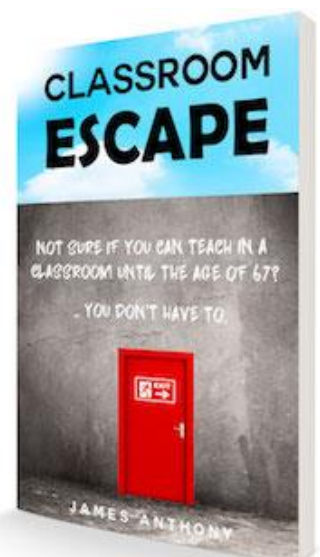
They will grow to replace my teaching salary altogether, if I decide I want to do retire early. And they provide an additional income which has paid for all sorts of things for myself and my family.

I discovered as I created these – that the skills I developed in the classroom are EXACTLY what I needed to make learning experiences that stand out and sell.

If you want to investigate doing this yourself, the link below is to sign up to receive a copy of my book 'Classroom Escape'.

This has been designed to show classroom teachers that there are other things they can do with their skills.

[Get your free copy here](#)



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My blog is where I publish help for classroom teachers wanting to live a more balanced life.

I send my email list a blog post to read regularly - and other things that will help classroom teachers like you to live happier lives.

You can unsubscribe from these mails at any time .. but I hope they help you.

Teaching online has been such a revelation for me. It is freeing me to slow down and enjoy being the person I really am - with the family I love.

Please feel free to reply to any of my emails.

I love to hear from people I have connected with.

James

