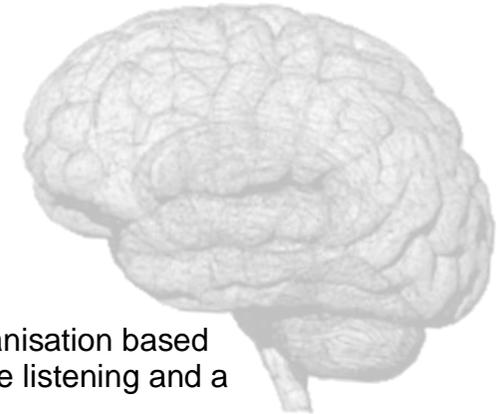




## OPEN MIND MEDITATION (OMM) Principles & Practice)



### Guiding Principles of The Open Mind Institute

The Open Mind Institute is a mental wellbeing and cognitive enhancement training/ coaching organisation based in Brisbane, Australia. It was founded on the principle that having an open mind encourages active listening and a willingness to be open to new views and ways of doing things that are different from our own.

Having an open mind allows us to transcend our usual/ conditioned responses to challenging situations. It's from this platform that we can harness some of the evidence-based tools we teach at The Open Mind Institute, like critical thinking, emotional/ social intelligence, mindfulness, metacognition & ACT/ CBT<sup>1</sup>. We can cultivate having an open mind by practicing Open Mind Meditation.

### Open Mind Meditation (OMM)

We now know that meditation has been scientifically proven to increase grey matter volume in the brain (improving brain longevity, memory & cognitive performance) and strengthens the prefrontal cortex (responsible for focus, decision making & the regulation of social behaviour). Accordingly, ***it has never been more important to get people meditating.***

The primary obstacles to meditation that people maintain include:

- 1) *I'm too time poor, or*
- 2) *I can't keep thoughts still.*



<sup>1</sup> Acceptance Commitment Therapy & Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.



## OPEN MIND MEDITATION ((OMM) Principles & Practice)

### The OMM Practice

OMM was designed to overcome the obstacles to meditation by teaching the most accessible and credible/ evidence-based techniques (x7 in total, see below), in combination with The Open Mind Institute's mindfulness methodology, to give effect to the proven benefits that meditation offers, such as:

1. Vipassana
2. Sahaja
3. Shamatha
4. Mindfulness
5. Zen
6. Qigong
7. Transcendental

- Positive stress management
- Reduces anxiety
- Manages depression
- Improves immunity
- Facilitates positive mental wellbeing & overall performance.

After exposure and familiarity with the abovementioned practices, students are encouraged and shown how to create their own meditation routine, deriving from the practice techniques that resonated with them and that they enjoyed the most.

A number of mindfulness-based techniques and evidence-based process tools, like; *Creating the Default-Self* and *Mental CPR (Conscious, Positive, Recall)*, are then provided in order to upkeep and make their meditation practice a routine event or habit.





## OPEN MIND MEDITATION ((OMM) Principles & Practice)

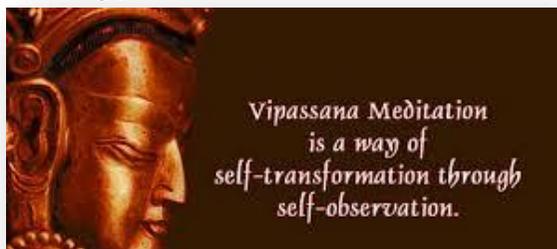
### The Established Meditation Practices included in OMM –

#### Vipassana (insight meditation)

Vipassana means to see things as they really are. This ancient Buddhist practice brings about a sense of mind–body balance by cultivating self-awareness, self-control and greater clarity of thought.

*Evidence:* The practice of Vipassana meditation can help mitigate psychological and psychosomatic distress<sup>2</sup> and changes connectivity in the brain that preserves longevity and memory.<sup>3</sup>

*Practice:* Breath work designed to sharpen attention, control mind wandering and bring precision to awareness is used.

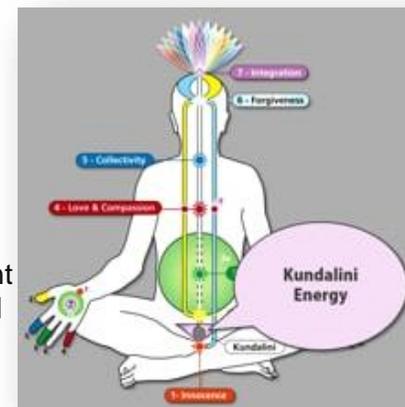


#### Sahaja (mental silence)

‘Sahaja’ in Sankrit refers to an innate spontaneous presence born within & aims to awaken the kundalini creating thoughtless awareness, or mental silence.

*Evidence:* Significant improvement in quality of life, anxiety and blood pressure,<sup>4</sup> increases grey matter volume in the brains and reduces stress in healthy adults.<sup>6</sup>

*Practice:* Physical & breathing techniques are integrated to bring about self-realisation & an understanding of the *subtle system*, made up of *nadis* or channels (chakras) that activate the kundalini.



<sup>2</sup> Vipassana meditation: A naturalistic, preliminary observation in Muscat, *J Sci Res Med Sci*. 2001 Oct; 3(2): 87–92: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3174711/>

<sup>3</sup> Mindfulness Meditation Is Related to Long-Lasting Changes in Hippocampal Functional Topology during Resting State: A Magnetoencephalography Study, *PMC*, US National Library of Medicine National Institute of Health 2018, A. Lardone & Ors.: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6312586/>

<sup>4</sup> Effect of Sahaja Yoga Meditation on Quality of Life, Anxiety, and Blood Pressure Control, *Journal of alternative and complementary medicine (New York, N.Y.)* 18(6):589-96 2012: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229073613\\_Effect\\_of\\_Sahaja\\_Yoga\\_Meditation\\_on\\_Quality\\_of\\_Life\\_Anxiety\\_and\\_Blood\\_Pressure\\_Control](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229073613_Effect_of_Sahaja_Yoga_Meditation_on_Quality_of_Life_Anxiety_and_Blood_Pressure_Control)

<sup>5</sup> Increased Grey Matter Associated with Long-Term Sahaja Yoga Meditation: A Voxel-Based Morphometry Study, *PLoS One*. 2016; 11(3): e0150757: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4777419/>

<sup>6</sup> A Randomized, Controlled Trial of Meditation for Work Stress, Anxiety and Depressed Mood in Full-Time Workers, *Hindawi Journal of Evidence-Based Complementary & Alternative Medicine*, Article ID 960583, 2011: <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/ecam/2011/960583/>



## OPEN MIND MEDITATION ((OMM) Principles & Practice)

### Shamatha (calming meditation)

'Shamatha' is a Buddhist term that means *tranquility of the mind* and involves a variety of mind-calming traditional techniques.

**Evidence:** Shamatha improves attention control, perception, mindfulness and self-care/ compassion.<sup>7</sup>

**Practice:** Shamatha cultivates a steady awareness using various supports or anchors to achieve this.

### Mindfulness Meditation

Mindfulness meditation is a mental training practice that brings thoughts, sensations and emotions into the present moment.

**Evidence:** Mindfulness meditation is found to successfully treat stress, anxiety, depression and chronic pain among other conditions.<sup>8</sup>

**Practice:** focusing on the breath, bringing attention to the present without drifting into concerns about the past or future.<sup>9</sup>



<sup>7</sup> Effects of a 9-Day Shamatha Buddhist Meditation Retreat on Attention, Mindfulness and Self-Compassion in Participants with a Broad Range of Meditation Experience, DOI 10.1007/s12671-015-0385-8, 2015, Elisa H. Kozasa & Ors.: <https://www.self-compassion.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Kozasa.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> The Effect of Mindfulness-Based Therapy on Anxiety and Depression: A Meta-Analytic Review, PMC, US National Library of Medicine National Institute of Health, Stefan G. Hofmann & Ors., J Consult Clin Psychol. 2010 Apr; 78(2): <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2848393/>

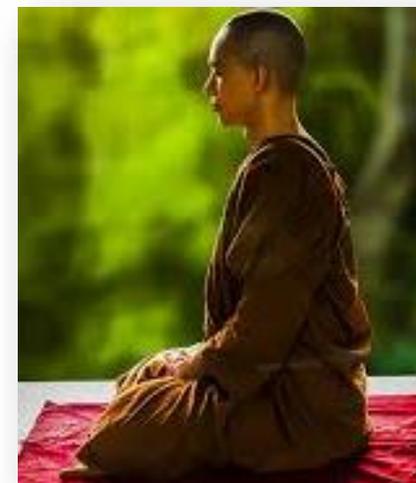
<sup>9</sup> Mindfulness meditation may ease anxiety, mental stress, Harvard Medical School, Julie Corliss, 2014: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/mindfulness-meditation-may-ease-anxiety-mental-stress-201401086967>

### Zazen (Zen Meditation)

Zazen means *seated meditation* in Japanese and encourages awareness on impulses and techniques to regulate responses to external stimuli.

**Evidence:** Zazen improves the immune system, lowers blood pressure, reduces anxiety, stress & assists restorative sleep.<sup>10</sup>

**Practice:** Commonly practiced seated in *lotus* position, remaining in the present moment, observing thoughts come and go while focusing on breath.



<sup>10</sup> Effects of a 7-Day Meditation Retreat on the Brain Function of Meditators and Non-Meditators During an Attention Task, Front Hum Neurosci. 2018; 12: 222. Published online 2018, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6004402/>  
Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy, and Zen Meditation for Depression, Anxiety, Pain, and Psychological Distress, Marchand, Journal of Psychiatric Practice, 2012, V.18/4: [https://journals.lww.com/practicalpsychiatry/Abstract/2012/07000/Mindfulness\\_Based\\_Stress\\_Reduction,.2.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/practicalpsychiatry/Abstract/2012/07000/Mindfulness_Based_Stress_Reduction,.2.aspx)



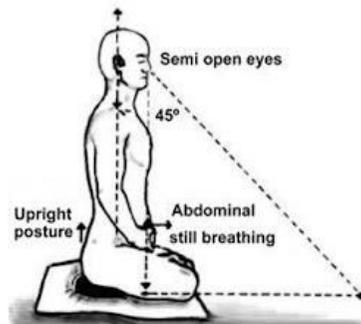
## OPEN MIND MEDITATION ((OMM) Principles & Practice)

### Qigong Meditation

Ancient Chinese healing technique that involves meditation, controlled breathing and movement exercises, Qigong is an umbrella term that incorporates various energy-based healing practices based on Taoist philosophy and principles of Chinese medical theory.

**Evidence:** Qigong lowers blood pressure, physical fitness and overall wellbeing.<sup>11</sup>

**Practice:** Qigong involves harnessing energy in the body by allowing energy pathways or *meridians* to be open and fluid. Sending this energy inward during meditation is thought to help the body heal and function; sending the energy outward can help to heal another person.



<sup>11</sup> Evidence-Based Health Benefits of Qigong, *Alternative and Complementary Therapies* 15(4):178-183, 2009:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/239315271\\_Evidence-Based\\_Health\\_Benefits\\_of\\_Qigong](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/239315271_Evidence-Based_Health_Benefits_of_Qigong)

<sup>12</sup> The Psychological Effects of Meditation: A Meta-Analysis, *American Psychological Association*, Peter Sedlmeier & Ors., *Psychological Bulletin*, 2012 *American Psychological Association* 2012, Vol. 138, No. 6, 1139–1171:

### Transcendental Meditation (TM)

TM is a specific form of mantra based meditation technique founded by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in the 1950's.

**Evidence:** Positive effect on reducing hypertension, anxiety and stress.<sup>12</sup>

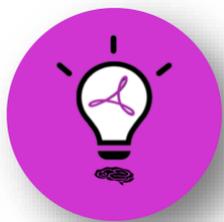
**Practice:** The TM method is straightforward in that it involves sitting comfortably for 20 minutes while closing your eyes and repeating a mantra (this is typically a Sankrit sound provided by a TM teacher). When you observe any distracting thought, simply return to the mantra.



<http://prsinstitute.org/downloads/related/spiritual-sciences/meditation/PsychologicalEffectsofMeditation.pdf>

Seven-year follow-up shows lasting cognitive gains from meditation, University of California, Davis, 2018, *Science Daily*:

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/04/180405093257.htm>

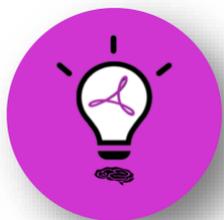


## OPEN MIND MEDITATION ((OMM) Principles & Practice)

### The Open Mind Meditation Challenge Timetable:

Week/ Day	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI
<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Day 1</b> Info. on Challenge & OMM Vipassana	<b>Day 2</b> Guided OMM Vipassana	<b>Day 3</b> Guided OMM Sahaja	<b>Day 4</b> Guided OMM Sahaja	<b>Day 5</b> Guided OMM
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Day 6</b> Guided OMM Shamatha	<b>Day 7</b> Guided OMM Shamatha	<b>Day 8</b> OMM Zen meditation	<b>Day 9</b> OMM Zen meditation	<b>Day 10</b> Guided OMM
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Day 11</b> Guided OMM Qigong	<b>Day 12</b> Guided OMM Qigong	<b>Day 13</b> Guided OMM TM	<b>Day 14</b> Guided OMM TM	<b>Day 15</b> Guided OMM
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Day 16</b> Mindfulness OMM	<b>Day 17</b> Mindfulness OMM	<b>Day 18</b> Creating my own routine	<b>Day 19</b> Creating my own routine	<b>Day 20</b> Guided OMM
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Day 21</b> Guided OMM & Call to Action.				

This timetable represents the twenty-one lessons that are necessary for students to create their own meditation routine. These lessons can be spread out over a weekly basis or as desired. Lessons after the twenty-one days utilise a combination of guided OMM practices, personalised routines and additional techniques deriving from the seven evidence-based practices.



## OPEN MIND MEDITATION ((OMM) Principles & Practice)

### Open Mind Metrics:

Using our mental wellbeing barometer testing, students are able to gauge whether their mental wellbeing and cognitive performance have improved after the initial twenty-one OMM lessons and will be inspired to continue with their daily practice in order to reap the long list of benefits that meditation has to offer.

Our favourite meditation quotes:

***“Unless you meditate, the mind cannot be controlled, and unless the mind is controlled, you cannot meditate.”***

~ Swami Brahmananda

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***“You should sit in meditation for at least 20 minutes a day. Unless you're too busy, then you should sit for an hour.”*** ~ Zen saying



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