

**TUFTS UNIVERSITY**  
**Institute for Global Leadership**

**Achieving Flow: Learning to Meditate And Developing Your Full Human Potential**

**Fall 2021**

**SYLLABUS**

**Schedule:**

Class Discussions Sessions

**Instructors:**

Professor Edward L. De More

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**GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION**

This is a course in maximizing your potential. It will include: discussion of the biology and neuroscience of the brain, breath training to optimize your brain function and achieve Flow, an analysis of your skills and passions and identification of where they intersect, identifying what is the most important thing in your life-your guiding light, and creating a list of objectives to achieve your most important goal in life.

**Upon successful completion of this course you will have:**

- Knowledge and understanding of Meditation and Flow
- Developed your breathwork practice to achieve Flow
- Knowledge and understanding of basic brain biology/neuroscience and brain functions
- Developed your ability to research local and online resources to develop and deepen your practice
- Identified your skills, curiosities, passions, and aspirations and mapped each of these to identify where they intersect
- Identified the most important thing in your life-your guiding light
- Developed your life plan to optimize your human potential and live a fully and deeply engaged life

**Upon successful completion of this course you will also have begun to learn the importance of:**

- Exercise and a healthy diet
- Work aligned with your life purpose and is of value & service to others
- Intimate social relationships-family, friends, professional relationships
- A focused engagement with nature, art, reading, film, and music
- Importance of financial comfort through a simple lifestyle.

## **COURSE APPROACH:**

**The course uses a variety of means to learn the arts of practice.**

1. Readings and Videos
2. We Will Learn Through Interactive Dialogue so students will be expected to read and watch the videos prior to class, and come to class prepared with questions to lead the class discussions. This is a student-centered course and the success of the course depends on each student's participation.
3. Students will identify their Skills, Curiosities and Passions through discussion and written assignments
4. Students will apply life experiences and aspirations as they relate to being in Flow

## **FORMAT AND REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Class Will Begin and End with Flow Meditation
2. On-time attendance
3. Participation during each class
4. A weekly Reading and Video Assignments
5. A final presentation analyzing your introspective process, and outcome

## **COURSE MATERIALS:**

1. List of Readings and Videos
2. Brain and Flow Images

## **COURSE CALENDAR**

The course Calendar lists the topics, readings, and learning activities that comprises this course on a weekly basis. These activities support the overall objectives and are required to successful completion of this course.

### **Journal Reflections**

Students will keep a weekly journal of their practice and reflections which we will discuss in class.

### **Readings and Videos**

All course Readings and Videos are listed on the CANVAS Course page. The Readings and Videos should be read and students should prepare questions for leading that week's class discussion.

## **Class 1      Course Introduction**

**Purpose:** We have two objectives, introducing ourselves to each other and reviewing the course syllabus and approach. The introductions will enable the instructor to model and refine the course to best serve student needs and goals.

### **Assignments:**

- PDF: How to meditate - Establishing a Practice
- Article: How Breathing Calms Your Brain  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/daviddisalvo/2017/11/29/how-breathing-calms-your-brain-and-other-science-based-benefits-of-controlled-breathing>
- Article: This Is Your Brain on Meditation by Rebecca Gladding  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/use-your-mind-change-your-brain/201305/is-your-brain-meditation>
- Video: The Brain by National Geographic  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRFXSjpkKWA> (

## **Class 2      Meditation, Flow and Breathwork: Establishing a Practice**

**Purpose:** Recognize the practice of meditation as a path to realization of human potential. Understand the associated changes in the mind and brain that stems from a practice. Identify the benefits of embedding this technique into everyday life.

### **Assignments:**

- Article: 11 Activities and Exercises to Induce Flow State (+6 examples) by Elaine Houston  
<https://positivepsychology.com/flow-activities/>
- PDF: The Habit of Ferocity by Steven Kotler: Part 1 & 2
- PDF: What Are Brainwaves
- Video: The Brain by National Geographic
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRFXSjpkKWA>
- Video: Flow by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8h6IMYRoCZw>

### **Class 3      Flow, Beauty and Awe: Poetry, Visual Art, Music, Dance**

**Purpose:** Recognize that discipline and conscious choices allow artists to achieve great outcomes. You can witness the powerful effect of watching others perform/create and appreciate the results of hours of focused concentration that merge into effortless and beautiful works of art. The cultivation of an aesthetic attitude opens us to losing ourselves in artistic production and liberates us from conformity.

#### **Assignments:**

- Video: Find your Creative Flow State by Jason Silva  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXwLsba2TOY>
- Video: Rivers and Tides: Andy Goldsworthy Working with Time by Cinedigm - Land Artist  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AT3lveJmjY8&t=18s>  
Video: Misty Copeland Defies Physics in a Stunning Dance Performances  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWJ5\\_HiKhNg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWJ5_HiKhNg)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTdeXwZY\\_sl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTdeXwZY_sl)
- Video: We wear the mask by Maya Angelou – The Poet’s Inspiration  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_HLol9InMlc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_HLol9InMlc)

### **Class 4      Compassionate and Ethical Relationships in a Diverse World**

**Purpose:** Understand the relationship between breathwork and empathy development. Realize the importance of expanding your universe to accept and value differences. Acknowledge the brain modifications derived from a long-term practice of compassion and empathy.

#### **Assignments:**

- EBook: The Art of Loving by Erich Fromm  
<https://archive.org/details/TheArtOfLoving/page/n1/mode/2up>
- Video: Congressman John Lewis  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BID2qsfiBrg>
- Article: Loving Intelligence and Empathy by Congressman John Lewis  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/30/opinion/john-lewis-civil-rights-america.html>
- Article: Cultural diversity: Emotional Intelligence, Mindfulness & Neuroplasticity  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fU\\_gHGjPewI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fU_gHGjPewI)
- Article and video: The Neuroscience Of Racism: Science and Stories by Catriona Nguyen-Robertson  
<https://rsv.org.au/the-neuroscience-of-racism/>
- Article: How to Fight Racism Through Inner Work by Jill Suttie  
[https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how\\_to\\_fight\\_racism\\_through\\_inner\\_work](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_fight_racism_through_inner_work)

## **Class 5      Your Personal Exploration of Your Skills, Curiosities, Passion, and Aspiration**

**Purpose:** Expand your capacity to conduct introspective examinations. Align the visualization of your purposes with your outcomes through breathwork. Consider the usefulness of checking your goals periodically in your life. Appreciate the neurochemical alterations that grow out of an achiever's mind.

### **Assignments:**

- PDF: The Habit of Ferocity by Steven Kotler: Part 3 & 4
- PDF: The Way Of Liberation by Adyashanti

## **Class 6      Optimizing Well-Being**

**Purpose:** Comprehend how well-being changes the brain. Extend mindful meditation benefits into care and respect for your body. Boost your human potential by cultivating discipline and a sense of honor to your physical being.

### **Assignments:**

- PDF: Zen and The Art of Happiness by Chris Prentiss  
[https://web.iitd.ac.in/~prbijwe/Book\\_Abstracts/C3\\_N13\\_ZEN%20and%20the%20Art%20of%20Happiness%20by%20Chris%20Prentiss.pdf](https://web.iitd.ac.in/~prbijwe/Book_Abstracts/C3_N13_ZEN%20and%20the%20Art%20of%20Happiness%20by%20Chris%20Prentiss.pdf)
- Article: What Does It Mean To Be Self-Actualized in the 21st century? By Scott Barry  
<https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/beautiful-minds/what-does-it-mean-to-be-self-actualized-in-the-21st-century/>
- Article: Delight As A Daily Practice by Maria Popova  
<https://www.brainpickings.org/2019/11/20/laylas-happiness-mariahadessa-ekere-tallie/>  
Article: How To Love Thich Nhat Hanh  
<https://www.brainpickings.org/2015/03/31/how-to-love-thich-nhat-hanh/>

## **Class 7      Your Life Plan to Optimize Your Human Potential & Live A Fully and Deeply Engaged Life**

**Purpose:** Be aware of the power of vulnerability and let your inner self get empowered by drafting and presenting your Life Plan.

### **Assignments:**

- Student Presentations