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# GUITAR MEDITATION

by Jeremy Fonte

Once you've sufficiently mastered a certain art form or activity, performing that task becomes automatic and, to some degree, effortless: in the case of playing guitar, I've found that the melody I imagine simply flows from my hands onto the frets of the guitar. The technical components of fretting a note, bending the strings, or playing a chord are envisioned and executed with little effort.

Any time an activity becomes automatic, there's the potential for an individual to enter a trance-like, meditative state of mind. This trance state is a powerful relief from the daily drudgeries of life, and is a release from the tedious monotony of many tasks one has to attend to throughout a given day. A form of mindfulness meditation is cultivated when one has mastery of an art form or other task. The benefits of mindfulness meditation are far reaching for generating an appreciation of the subtle nature of daily activities - an awareness of the bigger picture beyond the technicalities of a given task.

I've recorded about 250 songs over the years, and my style of writing songs is very automatic; I layer guitars, synths, and vocals as I write the song. I've never planned an entire song ahead of time; as the melodies and rhythms come to me, I play them a few times and record them. Undertaking the recording of multiple songs in a day can be quite the task, and can be draining; but any songwriter undoubtedly feels a great reward as they wrap up writing and recording a few new songs.

If you have mastered an art, sport, or other activity, and you find yourself "in the zone" while you run across the soccer field or shred on your electric guitar, take a moment to appreciate the empty clarity of your mind; this state is nearly identical to the state of mindfulness achieved through meditation. Watching the in-breath, noting the out-breath in an endless loop, until the mind achieves laser-like focus on the breathing rhythm of life - this very same peaceful existence exists in the performance of a mastered task.