Gain Clarity: Meditation's Role In Brain Health Transcript

(Transcripts are generated by AI and may contain errors)

Introduction to Dawson Church and meditation science

Welcome to this episode of the Reverse Alzheimer's Summit. I'm delighted to introduce you today to Dr. Dawson Church. His second bestseller, Mind to Matter, reviews the science behind the brain's remarkable ability to create material reality.

It was named the “Best Health Book” by the American Book Fest. He followed this with Bliss Brain, which analyzes the transcendent “flow” states found in meditation and peak performance and how those rapidly remodel the brain for happiness.

Church has been involved in over a hundred scientific studies published in peer-reviewed journals, many as the principal investigator. He's collaborated with researchers from prestigious institutions, including Harvard, California Pacific Medical Center, Emory, Columbia and Duke.

He's edited have several special issues for top-ranked journals such as Frontiers in Psychology. And we are so lucky to have him here today to share his understanding of how meditation influences the brain, particularly in the setting of Alzheimer's. Welcome.

It is so good to be here, and I know that we're going to have a wonderful time together as we share and connect. Thank you. It's such a delight, I. As you know, meditation and such a big part of my personal practice and for me, the most important medicine I dose myself with every day.

But I want to talk more generally to people. Today, I want to share the science. This is really where you shine. You've published so much. And so can you break down just in simple terms, but the science of how meditation affects the brain?

Yeah, meditation affects the brain in dramatic ways. And what happens when we meditate is that if we're meditating effectively now, again, there are a lot of ineffective ways of meditating.

How effective meditation changes the brain

Like the one I learned when I was 15 years old and I ran away from home, joined a commune, and got out of my fundamentalist Christian household and wanted to have a different experience of life, different aspects of spirituality and psychology.

I was so miserable at the time, I had to give myself away. And so we learned to meditate there, quote unquote. And the meditation master said, Meditation is simple.

Just sit here quietly, cross-legged on the meditation cushion and still your mind. Now you know what happened next, because your mind races. It's like someone says, Don't think of a pink elephant and you can think of nothing else.

And so our minds are not mentally still and our minds wander constantly because that's the way they evolved to be paying attention to the environment and make sure we were safe.

So they're hyper focused on whatever might be going wrong. And so that's what our minds do, and that's why meditation is so hard for most people. But if you learn in evidence based meditation method, there are quite a number of these.

And bliss brain really shines the light of of evidence, especially MRI studies of brain research into what's the factor. If you meditate effectively, it's going to activate certain parts of your brain.

And there are four parts of the brain, especially that effective meditation will activate. And I cover these in my book, Bliss Brain one by one. And I also have a recommendation for which ones you engage first.

So the first part of the brain that we find getting active, the first circuit we find active in meditation masters like monks and nuns who've been doing it 10,000, 20,000 hours.

We find that the first thing they do is they turn on a part of the brain called the emotion regulation circuit, and it runs from the prefrontal cortex.

So everyone knows that the prefrontal cortex is the thinking part of the brain, the executive brain. And most people know that the middle part of the brain, the limbic system, often called the emotional brain, central to memory and learning.

And there's little sliver of tissue that runs between the two of them called the ventromedial prefrontal cortex. And that's how they use master meditators like these monks and nuns.

They are using that forebrain, that prefrontal cortex, to regulate the emotional brain. So they have good emotional regulation. The second circuit, they turn on is attention that the superb ability, those that they're looking at a candle for 2 hours.

Now I can't do that. You can't either. But you get the picture, you just get better at attention after a while if you're using an evidence based meditation method.

And then the third circuit that we see turned on in these master meditators is they have an ability to to downregulate the circuit that handles self attention.

And most of us are pretty much self-centered, self-focused, most of the time. It's like I'm in mine, my money, my how do I look today? What are people say about me on social media?

What do I do with my time? How much money do I have in the bank? Blah blah blah blah blah. And this part of our minds, it keeps us wretchedly unhappy.

Our inner commentator are just blabbing away. You need to lose weight. You need to make more money. You need to get a better and improve your relationship.

Need to be better at your job. You know, just keep this part of our mind, keeps us miserable and very focused on the past and future, not in the present.

That part of the brain is the self-centered part of the brain. It sits right over here behind your forehead. It's called the mystery frontal cortex. And that's that's what we see in these master meditators.

That part goes dark. And then the fourth circuit that they activate is it's called the compassion circuit. And it's centered in the a part of the brain, a big lobe called the insula.

And the insula handles gratitude and happiness and all and peacefulness and compassion. And what we see in most meditators is is brightly lit up. They aren't self-focused.

They're other focused. They are infinity focused. And so these parts of the brain are kicking on and they get better at doing this. So you do it. You do an effective meditation, a few times.

So now you've done it three or four or five times, and you do it more easily. Do it seven or eight or ten or 15 or 50 times. And you're doing more and more easily the brain habituate to working this way.

And after a while it changes the brain and end saying this with one case history of a TV personality. A guy or two has a show called Catalyst in Australia.

Its name is Graham Phillips. I talk about it in my book This Brain, and he was really interested in the potential of meditation to change the brain. So he hired his TV crew to go into an Advanced Neuroimaging Lab at Monash University and he with his crew, they filmed him being examined minutely.

Every part of his brain was scanned. The neuroscientists measured the volume of each part of his brain, and then he began after that examination to learn mindfulness meditation, a really effective evidence based form of meditation.

He founded couple of weeks. He was a much more patient human being. He started being nicer to other people around him that look good. Compassion kicks in and no longer as self-centered as you were before.

He went back to Monash in eight weeks to the same lab with his camera crew. They filmed him. They recorded him as the researchers examined the volume of all the different parts of his brain again and some parts of his brain had grown in just eight weeks.

Brain growth, cognition, and memory effects

They'd grown by two, three or 4%. So now these parts, these key parts of his brain are getting bigger. His emotional regulation circuit called the dentate gyrus.

His dentate gyrus grew by 22.8% in those eight weeks. That part of the brain that regulates emotion grew by about a fifth, 22.8% in only two months. And that's the potential of meditation to not just change the function of your brain, but to change the structure of your brain, to regulate negative emotion.

And you start to become a happier person. Not just happy. Here you were talking about training attention and then also about growing certain parts of your brain.

And we can be specific about which parts like the parts that are going to support positive mood. But what about cognition? So can we be smarter because of this?

Can we be quicker? Can we avoid Alzheimer's potentially by using meditation? I did a study, so being being trained, meditated 15 badly and being terrible meditator my whole life of being a pretty free meditator because what upsets me is you get discouraged, you sit there and your mind fills up with thoughts.

You can't push them away and you feel like a total failure. You do that ten times. You've now practiced feeling like a failure. Ten times you're 100 times you previously made it like a failure a hundred times.

And so that's the part of those people. So when I was 45 years old, I was in a real crisis in my life and I had a lot of things going well, a lot of things going badly, and I made the commitment to meditate every single day.

I worked with a life coach at the time, and I realized that she said, You meditate. And I said, No, I haven't meditated regularly for years. It's hard.

So I realized I needed to meditate. If you had to meditate every single day, then. And then I began to look at the research on different meditation methods, and I realized there are some things that are evidence based.

So they had to use evidence based pieces of this. And I found that certain things are well researched in, in, in literature and things like Breathwork really are effective.

So I used breathwork. I knew that heart coherence was important. I built coherence with this. So I developed a meditation method called eco meditation.

Eco meditation, and I just threw it up on the web as a free website around 2009, and people began to use it and report fantastic results. So eventually, Ira, I ran several studies of eco meditation and then I eventually did a huge ambitious study using MRI's.

And so we had a control group doing mindful breathing, the second group doing eco meditation. And we, we had them do it for one month, for 20 minutes a day.

And when the results came back after a month, they were absolutely stunning. The meditators brains, those who done eco meditation, showed they had the same pattern of brain function as those Tibetan monks with 10000 hours, 30 days after only a month.

Their anatomy, their anatomy, their brain had changed that mid prefrontal cortex that drives us crazy with a jabbering critic and a critic. It was just dark.

And it is God basically is the piece of brain tissue is still there. It is wasn't turned on. And the part of the brain that was highly active was the insula.

Again, joy, compassion, gratitude. All that part of the brain was lit up like a Christmas tree. It was a miracle to look at these our eyes and say, wow, you doesn't take $10,000, does not take taking thousand year long period of study.

You complete identical structure changes in the brain in a month. But the cool thing about cognition was that the left prefrontal cortex basically was running so efficiently that it was consuming far less oxygen and nutrients than before.

And that's what this is a paradox. When your brain is working well, it's like a well-tuned car engine. It uses less nutrients. There was a study recently of a guy who is a prodigy.

He is a mechanic. He has no, no, no university degree. He knows over a hundred languages, over 30 of them fluently and over 70 languages he has unfamiliarity with.

So this guy's a language prodigy. So they put him in an MRI. They did a whole bunch of tests on him thinking we're going to see the language center of his brain is going to be huge.

And and it's just going to be like revved up like a race car. Just the opposite. It was small and quiet. It's just functioning hyper efficiently. And that's exactly what we found in that study, that that 30 day study of eco meditation, that the thinking brain, the left dorsolateral cortex right over here behind your forehead, on the left hand side, that part that does all of these these these computations about the past, the future and what's going to happen next and how do I set my goals in life.

That part of the brain was running so smoothly that it had it was like well tuned engine. So yeah, it affects cognition as well. So do we see any changes in the hippocampus?

We kind of think of this as the memory center of the brain. When we look on a fMRI, does it stay the same? Does it become less active? More active? Good news and bad news.

The bad news is I did a whole 20 year project studying PTSD, mostly in veterans. Initially it was it was Vietnam veterans and it was Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.

And so we have a big nonprofit. We'd give free treatment to veterans. And I've done a number of clinical trials and what happens to the hippocampus in people with PTSD like veterans.

So they're having these shattering experiences during war, the same people around them dying, they're seeing all kinds of horrendous sights, sounds, the the just the just the smell of smells that veterans brought back from Afghanistan and Iraq.

Very hot cut brings decomposing bodies after a few days. Not something you want to be. Think about these incredibly traumatized human beings that we worked with.

And what we find with them is the memory and learning center really starts to degrade, the hippocampus starts to become less efficient. And in those with long term PTSD, like Vietnam veterans spent 50 more years since the Vietnam War.

Those are the long term PTSD that the hippocampus literally starts to atrophy. They aren't learning. They aren't picking up new skills. They aren't developed into self-development, the frozen in that terrible moment that they experienced in Vietnam.

And they have not been able to extricate themselves from those loops of trauma that affects the hippocampus, that the opposite end of the spectrum is Gray and Phillips, the dentate gyrus that that part of his brain that grew 22.8% in eight weeks, that's at the base of the hippocampus.

And that's to do with emotional regulation. It has tentacles going on all over the brain to help regulate negative emotion. That's the part that grows.

So it grows in people who are doing well. It then does not grow in people who are doing well and even begins to shrink. The hippocampus begins to shrink of people who are traumatized.

So you may think your thoughts are just ephemeral and invisible. They're directly modeling, remodeling your brain, everything all day, every single moment.

Extremely impactful. And this is consistent. You know, I love hearing this from you because it speaks to it fits in the model that we use, this idea that the brain uses quite a bit of energy.

And yet when we're defending against toxins or infections or negative thinking, negative patterns or trauma, then we're using a lot of resource that isn't freed up to create those new connections, those new neurons, those new synapses that are going to allow us to have that greater cognition.

But also what I hear you saying is when we're stuck in that mode of trauma or fighting or defending, then we don't run efficiently. We don't we don't burn fuel efficiently in the brain.

And yet when we're meditating, we we kind of shift more into that pattern. And this is that rest digest and heal state you'll often hear or that parasympathetic state, is that right?

That's right. Absolutely.

Energy efficiency, gamma waves, and neurochemistry

It's an either or your brain and your brain is getting a certain supply of energy every every moment. And a very interesting thing, the brain consumes 20% of the body's energy in those only 2% of the body's mass.

That's a pretty well known fact. But the interesting thing is that consumes 20% of the body's energy all the time. Now, that was a real puzzle because we thought and neuroscience seem logical.

All seem logical. The eighties and nineties actually when we sleep in the the the eyes are closed since organs aren't focused. And so I support is still using 20% of the body's energy just like when we're wide awake and doing stuff and it's it's the answer came in the 1990s.

The 1990s. And we discovered that it's using a stable, constant 20% of the body's energy but in different brain regions, which region is active is the mid prefrontal cortex, with its focus on the future threats of the future, bad things happen in the past.

Rumination, negative thinking. Is that the part that's active? Because that is the part that's active in people who are depressed, who are anxious, who are filled with negative emotion, or are these monks and nuns?

What you see is that part of the brain just goes dark. They're using that 20% of their bodies, energy supply, and they're lining up in these these regions of gratitude and all in joy.

And you do this for a while, Heather, and you get more and more into it. You get more and more habituated to running your brain that way. And we find things like in one set of studies, a seven fold increase in the brainwaves associated with positive emotion and insight.

So integration of emotion, integration of new learning, insight, joy, happiness, spontaneity, creativity. And that part that that brainwave, that predominant brainwave is gamma gamma is a fast brainwave, starts at around 25 times a second that those neurons are firing goes all the way up to hundreds of times a second.

So Gamma is incredibly important in people who are creative. And what we find in these monks and nuns is they're having massive surges of GABA. The average person is going to generate a little bit of gamma and maybe for one or 2 seconds because monks and nuns, they start to meditate and their brains are flooded with gamma and they're sustaining gamma for 15 minutes.

They're hitting levels of joy. So, you know, the Sanskrit word, Ananda, means bliss. It doesn't mean a smiley face. It means you are absolutely blown out of this universe and in ecstasy.

So you see these monks and nuns and they're sitting there, they look blissful, and they're connecting with something greater than oneself. They're connecting with what I call non-local mind, the one with non-local non-local consciousness.

They've left the realm of local consciousness where you're embedded in Imy mind my job, my body, myself, my blah, blah, blah, stop. They have left that realm, their absolute ecstasy.

And what we measure in their brains is levels of gamma that the average human being can only dream about, levels of ecstasy. So it can we. DOUBLECLICK You're saying. GAMMA The brainwave.

Gamma Yeah. And then did you also say GABA The neurotransmitter GABA. That's also accompanied by that neurotransmitters? GABA is one of those, but the main neurotransmitter is Ananda mind.

It was actually called that's called the bliss molecule and their brains are flooded with that. And in my book, This Brain, I talk about seven neurochemicals that we find in the brains of people doing these bad meditations, the things like a NAND mind but also don't mean your main motivational hormone.

Get up and go pursue your goal. That's dopamine and it's linked to the brain's reward centers. It's really triggered by cocaine and heroin and other thing.

Chocolate can trigger a dope mean rush. So you get a lot of doping in the brains of meditators. Doing this dope mean can go up by 65%. So now we're getting this huge rush of a motivation of energy for good things in our lives. Serotonin.

Serotonin is our satisfaction molecule that rises ananda mind. The brains of these monks and nuns are flooded with this ecstatic bliss molecule. So it is affecting our bodies at the molecular level as well as the brain regions that are active.

So many people listening will think, Oh, but I'm not a monk. And then and that's not practical in my life. Marama What we suggest we do give it a very easy, practical, accessible way as 12 minutes a day of kirtan kriya.

And so I'm curious what you recommend someone at home who's maybe starting to struggle with a little bit of cognitive decline, or maybe they're in this stressful situation of caring for a loved one who is suffering with more severe cognitive decline.

What would you recommend they'd do as a practice? And maybe if they're just getting started, if this is new, what's

a good entry point? Yeah. So that current increase study.

But the 12.1 is really powerful and I include it in my book This Brain, because it showed that a very small dose of an effective meditation like good and kriya can be effective.

You don't need an hour, you don't need to be a monk, you'll be 10000 hours. And then in the other and study of eco meditation I mentioned that was at 22.

But I think a meditation track they were they were listening to. And so it doesn't take a lot of time to start to remodel your brain. And so start small, start with something.

Okay. And then normally I talk way too fast. Sorry. Just what am I right yet? I would say the slow so everyone gets it far. Be consistent, show up. Well meditation every day and the best meditation of them all is the one you can make a commitment to and do without fail.

That's what I did on that Tuesday morning when I was 45 years old. I said, I will wake up a half an hour early before my kids wake up and I will meditate every single day.

And that is that consistency that does it. We're all inspired. Sometimes we all feel like meditating. We all feel in tune and flow in harmony. Sometimes at other times we don't show up when you don't feel like it.

There's one of those Sufi analogy, and the Sufi story says The Gods descend from heaven every day with their arms full of baskets for the human beings.

They guide full baskets of blessings, baskets of all these wonderful things, baskets of love and joy, all these gifts for human beings that they guide and they return to heaven every night with their baskets of blessings still full, still full, because nobody showed up to claim them.

And that's what's happening for most of the world when it comes to meditation. You need to show up to clean your gift. You have to be present to win.

Practical meditation methods and daily consistency

You have to show up there and actually be there in that state of receptivity to those beings, to your higher self, to the universe. The universe desperately wants you to be full of love and joy and dancing through your life, and you just have to show up and accept those gifts.

If you aren't showing up, then the baskets as a gift. Just go back to hell every night and they're unclaimed. So find a practice you will do without fail to every single day.

Now when you do that, magic starts to happen because repetition will condition your brain. You do something effective. Don't just try any awful meditation.

Find one that's effective and evidence based and find one that's scientific. But do that every day your brain starts to remodel itself. I had one lady, I had people do a 30 day eco meditation challenge just to eat meditation for 30 days straight.

And I've had with I had probably taught a thousand people take the challenge up to this point. And one woman walked up to me at a live workshop and she said, Dawson, I decided to take your 30 day challenge and meditate every single day without fail, every day for 30 days.

I was like, Yes, is wonderful. And what what day are you on right now? She said, I'm on day 147, so now she's meditating for a half a year. What's going on?

Well, she's getting a lot of highly addictive neurochemicals in her brain, dopamine. She's getting as much dopamine

in her brain as a dope fiend. She's getting like they've got a lot of cocaine and heroin shot.

65% rise in dopamine in her brain when she meditates. That's highly addictive. Serotonin your feel good molecule acetone, also the love hormone. You're getting all these positive hormones, neurotransmitters and good meditation like that that is highly addictive.

Do it for 30 days. The likelihood is you will never stop after that. So I want to describe the cure time just so people have some concrete kind of sense of what, what, what are we talking about?

So the curtain fear is the star turn now my and you repeat that with using the the motions of your fingers, tapping your pointer finger with your thumb and then your middle finger with your thumb, your ring finger with your thumb and then your pinky finger with your thumb in sequence over and over and repeating the phrases to Naama.

And there's a vibration that goes through your body as you do that. Now, I usually point people to YouTube. There are lots and lots of recordings that last for 12 minutes that you can follow and use as a guide.

And so that and again, it's just 12 minutes, totally free, totally accessible. None of the downsides of a heroin addiction. And so I am is that a good description of the curtain create?

And then I definitely want everyone to know what the eco meditation looks like. Yeah. And what critically is doing is it is engaging a part of the brain that is on the sides of the brain, a lateral parts of the brain.

So when we are self occupied, when we are in that default mode network and I'm in mine and, and all of the ways people are when they're thinking negative thoughts, the centerline of the brain is active and I call it your mohawk, your inner mohawk, but a mohawk haircut all the way from here to here.

And there are a lot of MRI scans available. You can see where the default mode network and that part of the brain is active. What's going on when you do something actively and that can be anything.

So given clear uses those syllables, but anything that engages the what's called the task positive network of the brain will shift activity from the Mohawk to call the hat band this network of regions around the outside of the brain.

Think about where your hat would have been falls so you would deactivate activity here in the Mohawk. You activate the hat band. Anything that requires attention will do it.

Any kind of activity will do it. Counting breaths does that in the yoga symptoms of Patanjali. He talks about how just breathing and paying attention to breathing will do it.

And he wants you to. And in the third set of yoga, it was to pay attention to the the inner breath where it enters your nostrils the very first place and time over and over and over again.

That's that's a task. It's a job. It's giving the task positive network something to do, which turns off the inner mobile kirtan kriya does the same thing, chanting the name of God.

There's a beautiful scene in the movie Gandhi very, very well. The very first scenes with Gandhi is assassin that is shot by an assassin and he dies chanting Rob, Rob, Rob.

That's the hat bad. That's the attention network. Anything. We'll do it. Karen. Priya will do it. Breathing will do it. Chanting the name of God will do it.

And under my ma said she was one of the great saints Indian saints of the early 20th century. And she was asked how did she, you know, like basically become a radiantly holy woman when she was a teenager. And she said that she had had no no drastic training whatsoever.

She said when you had the name of God, there is no room in your mind for anything else. It's just that simple.

Wow. And so the eco meditation, how you said 22 minutes, what does that look like?

What are those? How do you spend those 22 minutes? So I got into a year of meditation when I was looking at different kinds of practices, but we know if the acupressure tapping is really affected, calming people, we know mindfulness is really useful.

We know that self-hypnosis works. And there's a lot of studies on that. And we also know that things that activate that headband area are effective. So I thought one day I was struggling with meditation as I had been for 20, 30 years.

I thought, you know, imagine what I just layered all of these effective methods, one on top of the other, do them all in sequence. How long would it take me? What would happen?

And it took me 5 minutes to tap to do hard coherence. The quick coherence technique, Mark, not to do a self hypnosis, biofeedback, neurofeedback, mindfulness component.

And suddenly in 5 minutes I was there. Since then, many people have done those things and find themselves there in 5 minutes. We had one veteran. Had he been in the war in Iraq, and he wrote a beautiful long essay for us, which I had in my book, This Brain.

And he went. He mentioned how after the war he was just afflicted with negative thinking, intrusive thoughts, flashbacks, nightmares had not had a good night's sleep since coming back from Iraq had all of these symptoms of severe PTSD.

And after he got back, did all these things to try and improve and fix himself. It could be he just couldn't heal before he went to Japan and joined a monastery and spent time as a Zen monk learning Zen and even then struggled.

And then when he got back to the U. S., he was surfing the web one day, came across a yoga meditation and just followed the very simple instructor's eye website, and he suddenly found himself dropping in.

Because if you do these these simple things for 5 minutes, you just drop in involuntarily. They're all physiological. They're not mental and spiritual.

They're just things to do with your body that put your body in this deeply relaxed state series. These the simple practices. In 5 minutes, you're there.

Now, what do you do when when you're there berries. And so for people, for example, who are sick, we're having them focus on then going into their visualization and their imaginal realm and working on wellness for people who are struggling with money, we may have them work on a money intention for people who want to focus on gene expression and healthy gene expression.

We have to do that. So you do a lot of things after the 5 minutes and there are hundreds of eco meditations out there, all over the web done by me and other people with different focuses.

Meditation, religion, and mystical experience

But it always starts with these very, very simple practices tapping, biofeedback, neurofeedback, mindfulness, self hypnosis and hard coherence. And when you do those things, your body just drops into its natural state of relaxation.

You bypass the mind. You're in this wonderful place, you learn how to steal your mind, and you are then having this addictive experience of just how good it feels to be in this relaxed but calm state, which is highly motivating to go back there again tomorrow.

So that sounds fantastic and very efficient, which I am a queen of efficiency, if nothing else. Now, what about

people who feel like maybe a meditation practice doesn't jive with their religious practice?

Is there some way to pray or is there some way to sort of square that circle of inviting people into meditation or the benefits of meditation and aligning with, say, a Christian faith or a muslim faith or one of the other common religions?

That's a very good question. And what I recommend you do if you don't aren't familiar with the meditative tradition of your religion, is take a look for it because you'll find it in Christianity.

You'll find the masters of the Far East, you'll find the in the Greek Orthodox and Russian Orthodox and the General Orthodox Eastern Orthodox traditions.

You'll find a long tradition of contemplative and meditative practices. If you're a muslim, you'll find Sufism, which brings in these ecstatic states.

The Sufis are the mystics of Islam and are the mainstream, the mainstream versions, flavors of the religions do not generally emphasize the mystical experience, but actually the mystical experience is the commonality to all religions.

But it doesn't begin with, you know, the 108 prayer beads I'm holding up here in the statue of the Buddha. I mean, these things were there when the Buddha was around these there's these just artifacts, though.

They're meaningless. They all began in the mystical experience. Somebody said in a log, I think about, you know, maybe 500,000 years ago, some early hominid woman had sort of found he was settled and fed and warm.

And she sat there on the log looking up at the stars and accidentally engaged those four circuits of her brain, had ecstatic experience and was out there.

When you get mystics together, whether they are of whether they're Jewish, again, they'll be jobless, whether they are whether they are Muslims and they'll be Sufis, whether they are Christians again, they'll be Christian mystics.

When you get them to the mystics together and they start talking, they're all having the identical mystical experience and their brains all look the same way.

And their brainwave patterns all look exactly the same. We call that The Awakened Mind, and I had the exact brainwave pattern, which I share with you, and it was brain.

And so the mystical experience is where all, all the religions begin now. They then go places from there. Moses comes down from Mount Sinai. He has the Ten Commandments.

The children of Israel are in the wilderness, and then it gets concretized in a set of religious observances. Muhammad has his night journey and sees all of the layers of heaven comes back, and then it gets concretized in the culture and time period, historical era of his time.

And so that's how the religions form and say, look, wildly different Hinduism, you know hundreds of gods and Buddhism with it's no God and and Christianity monotheistic religions they look so different at their core, at their origin, they all come from the same place.

So I encourage you to look for that heart of your religion. And I also say that when we look at the research on the people who are going there to the mystical experience they are, they find love and compassion and they find Ananda Bliss and they find Vishoka, the star of its joy.

They find gratitude, they find love. They find all these amazing experiences at the core of their religion. That's what the religion is all about. It's really not about this at all.

And you can frankly, you can meditations. It says it all the way to sort. Of all the artifacts. Where we go, we start people that have our eyes. We know what's really going on. Just do this stuff.

And then you can believe whatever you like. Wow, how inspiring. Dawson it's always your laugh is infectious. Oh, you have to share the insights, the just the wisdom and the research.

All that you have to share is so inspiring. And I hope everyone will take away and the inspiration to practice, to sit down and practice. And I mean, the way you describe it, it just is there's so much good on the other end of that, right?

I just want it for everyone. I personally find it quite addictive. I hate missing my meditation. I make sure that nothing stands in the way of getting that each day and it makes a huge difference in my life.

I feel so different on the days that I do miss it. And so my my personal experience aligns so much what you're describing. And when it's sort of my space of love and compassion, I want everyone to have access to that.

And what I love about meditation and one of the reasons why I find it being the best medicine is it's completely free. You have direct access. You do not there's no gatekeeper here.

There is no reason not to engage. And just 12 minutes a day, everybody's got that as well. I think the world would be a different place if we all showed up the way that you're inviting us to. So thank you.

Thank you. Thank you for being here and for sharing just your unique insights and wisdom and perspective on this. Where can our listeners find out more about you?

The best place to go is my website, Dawson my name, dawsongift.com. dawsongift.com that gives you access to a free eco meditation track the free tapping mini manual and then our whole ecosystem of practitioner certified practitioners.

We have online courses, Frank Society, insomnia, depression, PTSD, many other issues and all of that is available through dawsongift.com. The free stuff is in dawsongift.com. but again post that you can work with a practitioner, you can learn many of these techniques, just apply them to self-help yourself.

And then the main thing is actually to practice them. That's what I encourage you to do. Take that 30 day pledge. Just say if you've been inspired today, I will do what Heather and Dawson recommend or only a short amount of time under a half hour.

But I'll do it every single day, make that commitment. And what's likely to happen is your life will be so much better after 30 days. You'll like us. You will never stop. You'll be hooked.

Up. Yeah. So fantastic. Thank you so, so much for being here. It's always a privilege and a delight to see you. It's great to see the smile on your face too, Heather. Thank you.