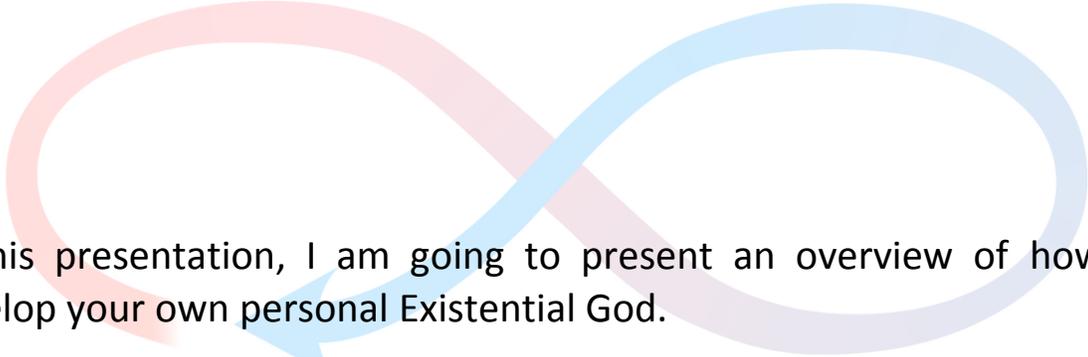




# Developing Your Personal Existential God

by

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In this presentation, I am going to present an overview of how to develop your own personal Existential God.

## The Perpetual Two Step Process

Developing your own person Existential God is really quite simple as it involves only two steps. However, it is a lifelong process.

The first step is simple meditation where you reflect on just what it is that you believe. During this step you set aside some time for yourself where you go off by yourself and think about what makes sense to you. The important point is to open your mind to all possibilities and separate out what you truly believe from what other people tell you must believe.

The second step is to discuss your beliefs with others. The reason this step is so important is because others will challenge your beliefs and you will need to defend what you believe. If you can defend your

beliefs to your satisfaction, then you truly believe in them. If you have trouble defending your beliefs, then you need to use your meditation sessions to better refine what it is you believe.

The reason this two-step process is called “perpetual” is because it never ends throughout your lifetime. The development of your personal Existential God will never be completed. As you discover new information and new arguments are presented to you, you are free to revise your beliefs based on the new information and arguments.

At some points in your life, you may come to realizations that change your entire set of beliefs. This is OK because, as humans, we are incapable of understanding the true nature of God. So, our belief in God is rather fuzzy, and throughout our lifetime, we continually try to refine our beliefs so that they become ever clearer to us.

### Step 1: Meditation

As was stated, the first step in developing your personal Existential God is meditation. The type of meditation that I am talking about is not the relaxation techniques you often hear about in connection with the word “meditation”. Relaxation techniques are used to reduce stress in our lives.

However, there is a similarity between the two types of meditation. That similarity is the emptying of your mind of the thoughts of everyday life. This makes traditional relaxation techniques actually a good starting point for developing your own personal Existential God.

In traditional meditation, the goal is to keep your mind off the stress-related thoughts of everyday life. This is accomplished by directing your mind through a set of procedures such as focusing on relaxing different muscles of your body. Usually, there is someone directing the meditation and your mind follows what the director is telling you to do.

Once you have learned how to clear your mind of thoughts using these traditional relaxation techniques, you are ready to start the type of meditation necessary to develop your personal Existential God. The type of meditation needed here is an undirected meditation. Sitting quietly by yourself in a room is one method of undirected meditation. However, my personal preference is walking meditation. I go outside and walk in a familiar area that is free from distractions – like a quiet neighborhood street.

The type of meditation needed to develop a personal Existential God differs from traditional meditation in that your goal is not to just clear your mind of thoughts. Rather, the goal is to allow new thoughts to enter your mind. As a result, it is important that you do this meditation by yourself. Walking with a friend, or listening to a meditation director, does not allow new thoughts to enter your mind.

This new type of meditation involves three steps. First, you clear mind of thoughts. Next, you allow new thoughts to enter your mind. Then, you think about these new thoughts.

### Opening Your Mind

If you truly believe that there is a God, then you need to let God place thoughts into your mind. As mentioned, you start by picking a place that is free from distractions. This allows you to clear your mind of the distractions of everyday life. Try not to focus on anything in particular.

Now, you cannot make yourself have new insights into your faith. It is something that just happens. You may try to prepare your mind by thinking about a particular aspect of your faith. However, there is no guarantee that the thoughts God places in your mind will necessarily relate to that aspect of your faith.

Once a thought enters your mind, dwell on that thought for a while to see where it takes you. If you find the line of reasoning is productive,

than go for it. If the new thought takes you nowhere, then clear it from your mind and once again open your mind to whatever thoughts God places there.

Finally, do not become discouraged if you find yourself getting nowhere. Emptying your mind of the issues of the day is not an easy thing to do at times. Also, recognizing productive new thoughts takes some experience. It is like some strange balancing act. You want to keep your mind free of thoughts. But at the same time, you want to recognize new thoughts and dwell on them.

### My Personal Meditation Technique

To help understand the process, let me go through my personal technique. I go out for my meditative walk almost every weekday over my lunch hour. There is a quiet neighborhood nearby that has almost no people and no traffic. My route is almost identical every day.

I start by emptying my mind of the morning work and family issues. I pick an area of my faith on which I want to meditate. This area may involve some recent reading I did on the subject, or it may be a discussion I had with someone. I review in my mind the key points of what I read or discussed. Then I try to clear all thoughts from my mind.

The revelations I get at this point fall into four general categories. The first category is no revelations at all. At least I got some fresh air and exercise.

The second category of revelations is a solution to an issue that was bothering me during the morning. Sometime, you just need to step away from an issue in order to see the solution.

The third category of revelations I receive deals with my personal life. It might be a decision to do something that needs to be done regarding my family or personal finances. So far, this walking meditation business seems pretty unproductive for developing a personal Existential God.

However, sometimes I get revelations of the fourth category. This category involves getting a new philosophical insight about my faith. These new philosophical thoughts can be very profound in nature.

As you can see, I do not always receive revelations regarding my faith every time I go out for a walk. My walking meditations, however, generally do provide something of value – even if it is only exercise. However, the occasional new insights regarding my faith do build on themselves. They compound themselves over time to create my personal Existential God.

Hopefully you can see that developing your own personal Existential God is not something you can put on your “to do” list for next week. Rather it is something that builds on itself over months and years as you develop this habit of daily meditations.

### Step 2: Discuss your Beliefs

The second major step for developing your personal Existential God is to discuss your beliefs with others. The key word, here, is “discuss”. You could also think of it as a debate. What it should not be is an argument over who is right and who is wrong.

The reason why it is important to discuss your faith with others is that others will challenge what you believe based on their own beliefs. These challenges are important because they force you to defend what you believe. If you can defend your beliefs, then you are well on your way to having your own personal Existential God.

However, it is OK if you cannot defend your beliefs in a discussion with others. All that it means is that you need to reflect a little bit more on just what it is that you do believe. If what the other person said in a discussion makes sense to you, then go ahead and incorporate that person’s ideas into your own set of beliefs.

This refinement of your beliefs occurs in the meditative sessions you have after the discussion. As part of your follow-on meditations, you review the points the other person made during the discussion to see what made sense to you and what did not.

A discussion is nothing more than a sharing of ideas. Hopefully, each person involved in the discussions comes away from it with some new insights that can be reflected upon and incorporated into both people's Existential God.

Because of the perpetual nature of these personal meditations and public discussions, your personal Existential God will continually be refined over your lifetime. If your philosophical beliefs ever become static, then you have become complacent about your faith rather than letting your faith grow with you.

#### Rules for Discussing Your Faith

As was said, a discussion of your faith with others should never degrade into an argument over who is right and who is wrong. No one knows the complete truth about God. So, here are some rules to follow when people are having a discussion about their respective Existential Gods.

First, respect the beliefs of each other. This is not a time for your ego to shine through. You both gain from the discussion if you enter the discussion with the view that neither of you knows the truth. You are both seeking what is true, and you are doing nothing more than exchanging ideas.

Second, watch your choice of words. Refrain from stating the words, or even implying that "I am right" or "you are wrong". This type of verbiage only puts the other person on the defensive and leads to a very unproductive discussion.

Third, never raise your voice to intimidate the other. Raising your voice only leads the other person to either raise their voice – in which case,

you have an argument. Or, the other person will stop talking and the discussion becomes fruitless.

The fourth rule is to go ahead and challenge each other's beliefs. You are actually doing each other a favor by challenging each other's beliefs. The primary purpose of the discussion is to see how well you can defend your beliefs. Your meditation sessions become a lot more productive if you recently had a discussion where you were forced to defend your beliefs.

Finally, challenging each other's beliefs does not mean there will be a winner and a loser in the discussion. Neither person should feel like they lost the discussion. All the participants should feel like winners because they either successfully defended themselves, or they gained new insights from the discussion that they can incorporate into their own personal Existential God.

### In Review

In review, the process for developing your own personal Existential God is a perpetual two-step process. The first step involves meditation to define your beliefs. The second step involves discussing your beliefs with others to see how well you really do believe what you think you believe.

Meditation must be personal and undirected where you clear your mind of the thoughts of your daily world and open your mind to revelations that come from God. It is in these meditative sessions that your personal Existential God emerges.

Discussing your beliefs with others serves two main purposes. The first purpose is to exchange your ideas with others. The second purpose is to be challenged by others to see how well you can defend your beliefs. There are no losers in these discussions. All parties in the discussion should come away having gained something from it.

Finally, developing your personal Existential God is a life-long process. Through repeated meditation sessions and public discussions, your personal Existential God develops and is continually refined over time. At no point should you declare that the creation of you personal Existential God is completed.

### For More Information

If you would like to learn more about Existential Gods in general, or about my personal Existential God, please visit

[www.ExistentialGod.org](http://www.ExistentialGod.org).



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