

Supporting your practice with Technology

By sangha member Jay Jackson

Today's mobile technology allows us to enhance our practice at home, on our commute, during our lunch hour, pretty much anytime anywhere. While nothing will replace the Triple Gem of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, guided meditations, dharma talks, podcasts and YouTube videos are at our fingertips.

Podcasts are digital audio files made available on the internet or mobile devices. Most of us can subscribe to podcasts in the iOS or android app stores. When you subscribe you can choose to get notified when a new one is posted. While doing research for this article I was very surprised by how many meditation podcasts are available. There is even one named ***Crappy to Happy***. So this list is not exhaustive by any means. My personal favorite is ***10% Happier*** with Dan Harris. Dan's meditation teacher is Joseph Goldstein and he follows a secular approach to the Theravadan tradition of Buddhism. Ruth King was a recent guest. While his podcast is meditation themed, he interviews people from all disciplines and backgrounds. Some other podcasts include ***Ajahn Amaro Podcast, Tricycle Talks, Buddhist Geeks, and Wisdom Podcast***.

There are **meditation apps** as well that you download to your mobile device. Most of these have a rudimentary functionality for free. To access deeper content you have to pay but are usually inexpensive. ***10% Happier*** is a popular meditation app. If you're new to meditation this app has some great introductory courses that teach mindfulness meditation. There are courses by Joseph Goldstein and Sharon Salzberg just to name a couple. It also has a free timer to use during your meditation. A subscription to this app includes coaching from meditation teachers. You post a question and they answer. ***Insight Timer*** is another app. I use this one as my meditation timer. The timer and some basic content are free, but you must pay to take advantage of their courses. ***Headspace*** and ***Calm*** are two additional apps.

One of the greatest resources available to us on our phone, tablets and computers is ***Dharma Seed*** at dharmaseed.org. ***Dharma Seed*** is an incredible collection of Dharma talks from many of the teachers we all know and are available for free. Perhaps you have questions about a subject mentioned by one of our Dharma leaders. Search under that topic in ***Dharma Seed*** and you'll see a list of talks available on that topic. You can search by teacher, topic or a collection of talks based on a theme. Listen to these on your commute, while walking the dog, at the gym, on your flight or on a Bluetooth speaker while you get dressed for work.

Plus, we can't leave out, ***Access to Insight*** at accesstoinsight.org. This site includes collections of readings on Theravada Buddhism. You can search in a variety of ways by sutta, subject, author and more. Another amazing resource.

These are some of the resources available to us 24/7. Start your own Google search and see what comes up. It is truly possible to immerse yourself in the Dharma. Any one or a combination of these resources can really support your practice. Audio quality varies and some user interfaces leave something to be desired but there's something for everyone. So have fun and take advantage of these resources.