



Mastery

Freddie Zeringue

Mastery

Understanding the stages of mastery is a powerful tool that can empower us to take control of our personal and professional growth. Few people realize that we must all move through these stages to master any one thing in our lives. One of the young ladies I mentor once asked me how I could easily reinvent myself to fit different occupations and conditions. My response was that there are stages to mastery, and once you know them and become practiced at them, it becomes easier.

People often mention the 10,000-hour rule as the key to mastery in a field. However, similar to the five stages of grief, an individual can become stuck in a routine or stage and never achieve mastery. It is about more than time and the hours of practice. It's about moving through the stages of mastery. Mastery is not just the process of activity but an understanding of the process inside out. It's about knowing why you are doing it. A person with fundamental mastery skills in a field will always stand out, and the sense of achievement that comes from this can be truly inspiring.

Just as we can master elements and understanding in a field of study and skills, we can also master aspects of being in life—the body, the mind, or even specific functions of the mind and body. Take a master magician in sleight of hand. They have not only mastered the aspects of illusion but often the dexterity and complex functions of the hands to perform close-up magic. Their process is not just mastering the mind and body to create the tricks they perform but also the ability to distract and control the focus of the audience. This realization can enlighten us about the power of the mind in mastering different aspects of life, empowering us to take control of our personal journey.

The mind is the greatest aspect of ourselves we can master. All aspects of human interaction, from simple tasks to complex functions and constructs, emerge from the mind. As cognitive beings, everything in our lives begins in the mind at some point. Given this, the mind is the most important thing to master to live a happy, successful, and prosperous life. The urgency and significance of mastering the mind can inspire us to reach new heights in our personal and professional lives.

The idea of mastering the mind is essential for many reasons. First, we can begin with communications. Navigating life requires navigating complex communications with the world around us, especially significant others. Beyond that, the second reason would include career. The greater our mastery over our minds, the easier it will be to master our skill set and mental processes to develop a successful and prosperous career. Beyond that, most of us have to deal with 13 or 14 primary domains of operations at some level. Mastering the mind itself will give us an edge on mastery in specific domains of importance. This understanding can instill a sense of determination and focus in us, guiding us toward mastering various life domains.

The stages of mastery are:

1. Bull in a China Shop (No Distinction: Not aware a standard of operation exists)
2. Jerk (Distinction exists: Aware a standard exists but refuses to learn or abide by it)
3. Beginner (Learns and operates the standards with guidance)
4. Minimally Competent (Performs order of operations within standards with supervision)
5. Competent (Performs order of standards without supervision)
6. Virtuosity (Perform standards in any or various orders with consistent results)
7. Mastery (Can invent new orders of operation within the domain, creating new standards for achievement, making new distinctions)

From the above standpoint, these stages of mastery correspond to what can be identified as moods of learning. Recognizing these moods can make entering the stages of learning much more effortless. Ontologically, when a mood of learning is embraced, the ability to perform the corresponding stage becomes more fluid.

Moods of Learning:

1. Confusion -Beginner Mind (Something is going on here - I am not sure if I like it)
2. Perplexity -Beginner Mind (Something is going on - I think I might like it: Curiosity)
3. Wonder (Inspired Curiosity)
4. Awe (Reverence, Amazement, Desire to be one with)

Once someone understands the stages of mastery, they can accelerate their learning and the process of becoming competent and, in many cases, move into complete mastery over time. Like spiritual development, humility is the most challenging distinction to embrace in the cognitive process of learning. When we speak about humility, a word often misunderstood, we are referring to the mindset and state of being teachable. It is critical to mastery that the student becomes and remains teachable through the entire mastery process. Without the humility necessary for this, few can ever reach mastery.

In today's age of digital technology, few value the true nature of understanding, and most value information. Information does not equate to knowledge, which is a serious misgiving of our educational system. Knowledge is born through the accumulation and collection of data in a cohesive way to make sense of it linguistically for the mind to retain it. The accumulation of knowledge does not equate to knowing. This discourse was born in the information age and carried into the digital age and social media.

The process of learning moves through several stages before it reaches knowing versus knowledge. The first stage, of course, is information, followed by experience, which leads to realization. Realization is when we take the information and make it real in our lives through action. Prior to realization, it is only theory or supposition. Once we have realization, understanding develops. It is during the process of understanding unfolding that knowing occurs. However, we need to make something real in our lives through action to have understanding, and until then, we will only accumulate knowledge/information. Based on this model, knowing does

not equal knowledge until it meets reality in action within us. This is why there can be no substitute for experience.

In a world where AI is upon us and vastly influencing our everyday lives already, whether through information, marketing, or search engines, it is important to understand that mastery can only be had by human beings. The only real advantage to knowledge that we have over AI is knowledge in action to create knowing. For this reason, a person who ascertains mastery will always be needed and remain relevant. The actual actionable intelligence and understanding that goes with its application can be fed into a computer but never duplicated in anything other than a human being. For an individual, this is key to remaining relevant, whether you are mastering a trade, programming, or even spiritual development. Mastery is a paradigm that makes each of us as humans unique and irreplaceable.

When we, as human beings, begin to master the mechanism we call our mind, when we master our thoughts, we become the masters of our journey in life. Mastering our thoughts is a superpower very few people in the world have. It gives us extraordinary powers to see the world differently, offering possibilities around every corner we would have never seen otherwise. When mastering the mind and our thoughts, we move through the exact same actionable process of information becoming realization and realization becoming knowing. The combination of action with knowing over time and practice will yield mastery.

The only power humans have is choice. Choice is our most powerful force, giving us what we refer to as free will. It means we are free-thinking, individualized entities capable of making our own decisions in life based on consciousness. Our ability to master our thoughts brings forth greater choices and possibilities, resulting in greater free will and power in our lives. This is the gift of mind mastery. It is the place where who we thought we were begins to meet who we really are or, in other words, where we meet our higher selves or God-selves. For many, this is the purpose, meaning, and sacred journey of life.

About the Author

Freddie Zeringue is a writer and master breakthrough coach. He has worked in the spiritual and transformational fields for 38 years with an impressive list of clients at every level. Freddie has over 35,000 hours of coaching experience and 10,000 of training in ontological studies and hypnotherapy. He originated the concept of Flow Coaching in 1996 and published the book *The Art of Flow* in 2013. Learn more about him and his offers at FreddieZeringue.com.

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