Building a Meditation Stages Monitor: A Journey from Idea to Interactive App

How I created a beautiful meditation app in 3 hours with React and AI collaboration

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The Spark of an Idea

It started with a simple thought: "What if I could visualize meditation stages in an interactive way?"

I wanted something that would help people understand the classical progression from **Dharana** (concentration) through **Dhyana** (meditation) to **Samadhi** (absorption) - the traditional stages described in yoga philosophy. But not in a boring, static way. I wanted it to be *playful, interactive, and beautiful*.

So I did what anyone would do in 2025: I asked Claude to help me build it.

From Generic Sliders to Spiritual Journey

The First Prototype

My initial request was straightforward: "Create an app with 3 vertical levers that show different text based on their values."

Within minutes, I had a working prototype with three colorful levers labeled "Power Level," "Efficiency," and "Stability." It looked like something from a spaceship control panel - slick, modern, but missing the soul I was looking for.

That's when the magic started.

Adding Meaning

I renamed the levers to reflect what really matters in meditation:

- 🔴 **Absorption** - How deeply can you focus?
- 🟢 **Peace** - How calm is your mind?
- 🔵 **Joy** - What's your inner state of bliss?

Suddenly, it wasn't just an app - it was a meditation companion.

The Three Stages of Meditation (and App Development)

Stage 1: Dharana - Focused Concentration

Just like meditation starts with concentration, my app needed a clear focus. I worked with Claude to refine the logic:

- When any lever drops below 50%, you're in **Dharana** - the stage of building concentration

- It's not failure; it's where everyone begins

- The app gently reminds you: "Beginning concentration and focus"

But here's my favorite part: If you set all levers to zero, the app playfully calls you out:

> 😴 "Dude, you are not meditating!"

It makes people smile, and that's important. Mindfulness shouldn't be solemn and serious all the time.

Stage 2: Dhyana - Sustained Meditation

When you get all three aspects above 50%, you enter **Dhyana** - sustained meditation. The app recognizes this achievement:

> ✨ "Dhyana - Sustained meditation and mindful awareness"

And if you manage to balance all three levers at similar levels? You get the special message:

> ⚖️ "Dhyana - Perfect Balance - Absorption, Peace, and Joy in harmony"

It's a reminder that meditation isn't about maxing out everything - sometimes it's about finding equilibrium.

Stage 3: Samadhi - Complete Absorption

The ultimate goal. When you push all three levers to 100%, the app celebrates with you:

> 🕉️ "Samadhi!!! - Complete absorption in divine consciousness"

Three exclamation marks, because if you've reached Samadhi, you deserve the enthusiasm!

Making It Mobile-First

Here's something most people don't think about: meditation apps need to work on phones.

We spend so much time on our devices - why not have a pocket meditation companion? I made sure every slider, every lever, every button was touch-friendly. The levers shrink gracefully on mobile, the text sizes adapt, and touch targets are big enough to actually use.

Design philosophy: If you can't use it while sitting cross-legged with your phone, it's not a meditation app.

The Social Element

Meditation is often solitary, but sharing the journey matters. I added two share buttons:

🔳 WhatsApp

Perfect for sharing with friends or meditation groups. One tap creates a pre-filled message: *"Check out this Meditation Stages Monitor! Try reaching Samadhi..."*

💼 LinkedIn

Because let's be honest - workplace wellness is huge right now. Professionals want to talk about mindfulness, stress management, and work-life balance. This gives them something tangible to share.

Fun fact: I initially added a Facebook button, but it didn't work well, so we removed it. Sometimes less is more.

The Power of AI-Assisted Development

Let me be transparent: I didn't write all this code from scratch. I collaborated with Claude, an AI assistant.

Here's what that looked like:

Me: "Make it mobile friendly"
Claude: *Updates code with responsive breakpoints, touch targets, and adaptive sizing*

Me: "Change the logic - anything below 50% should be Dharana"
Claude: *Adjusts the meditation stage logic instantly*

Me: "Add a funny message when everything is at zero"
Claude: *Implements the 'Dude, you are not meditating!' feature*

What I Learned About AI Collaboration

1. **Be specific** - Vague requests get vague results

2. **Iterate quickly** - Don't aim for perfection on the first try

3. **Give feedback** - The AI learns what you want through conversation

4. **Know your vision** - AI executes, but you're the creative director

Total development time: About 3 hours across 20 iterations.

Compare that to traditional development:

- Power BI version: 2-4 days (and it would look worse)

- Tableau version: 1-3 days (still limited)

- Pure hand-coding: 8-12 hours (for someone experienced)

The Technical Stack (For the Nerds)

Built with:

- **React** - For smooth, reactive UI

- **Tailwind CSS** - For beautiful, responsive styling

- **Pure JavaScript** - No complicated dependencies

- **Mobile-first design** - Because phones matter

Key features:

- Real-time state updates with React hooks

- Smooth CSS transitions and gradients

- Touch-optimized controls

- Responsive breakpoints for all devices

- Social sharing integration

Lines of code: About 250 (remarkably compact!)

Why This Project Matters

For Developers

It's a perfect example of how AI can accelerate development without sacrificing quality. The app is production-ready, mobile-optimized, and genuinely useful.

For Meditators

It makes abstract concepts tangible. You can *see* your meditation practice represented visually. It's not tracking breath counts or timer apps - it's about understanding the deeper stages.

For Everyone Else

It's proof that technology and mindfulness don't have to be opposites. We can build digital tools that encourage presence, awareness, and inner peace.

The Unexpected Lesson

Building this app taught me something about meditation itself: **progress isn't linear**.

I didn't get it right on the first try. The levers were called "Power Level" before they became "Absorption." The logic changed three times. The title went from "States" to "Stages" to fix a spelling issue.

Just like meditation practice.

You don't sit down and immediately reach Samadhi. You stumble through Dharana, catch glimpses of Dhyana, and slowly - iteration by iteration - you improve.

Try It Yourself

The beauty of this project is that it's shareable. Once deployed (which takes about 10 minutes on Vercel or Netlify), anyone can:

1. Adjust the three levers

2. Watch their meditation stage change in real-time

3. Try to reach Samadhi (good luck getting all three to 100%!)

4. Share their results with friends

Challenge: Try to achieve perfect balance. Get all three levers to similar values above 50%. It's harder than it looks - much like actual meditation.

What's Next?

I've been thinking about enhancements:

Possible features:

- 📊 **Session tracking** - Remember your meditation history

- 🎵 **Ambient sounds** - Background meditation music

- 🏆 **Achievements -** Badges for reaching different stages

- 📈 **Progress graphs -** Visualize improvement over time

- 👥 **Group sessions -** Meditate together remotely

But here's the thing: sometimes simple is better.

The current version does one thing beautifully - it helps people understand and explore meditation stages. Maybe that's enough.

Final Thoughts

Traditional wisdom meets modern technology. That's what this project represents.

The concepts of Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi are thousands of years old. The technology to build this app is months old. Yet somehow, they work together perfectly.

In our hyperconnected, always-on world, we need tools that remind us to slow down, focus, and find inner peace. But those tools should be beautiful, accessible, and - dare I say it - fun.

If this little meditation monitor helps even one person understand their practice better, or smile at the "Dude, you are not meditating!" message, then it's been worth building.

The Meta-Meditation

There's something meditative about the development process itself. Each iteration is like a breath:

Request → Response → Refine → Repeat

You stay present with the problem. You let go of perfectionism. You accept that version 1.0 won't be version 2.0, and that's okay.

Maybe the real meditation was the app we built along the way. 🧘

Resources & Links

Want to build your own version?

- Full documentation available

- Complete conversation history included

- Source code ready to deploy

- Deploy to Vercel, Netlify, or CodeSandbox in minutes

Tech comparison:

- React development: 2-3 hours

- Power BI equivalent: 2-4 days

- Tableau equivalent: 1-3 days

- Hand-coding from scratch: 8-12 hours

Meditation resources:

- Learn about Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi

- Classical yoga philosophy (Patanjali's Yoga Sutras)

- Modern mindfulness practices

Join the Journey

Questions? Thoughts? Built your own version?

I'd love to hear about your experience with meditation apps, AI-assisted development, or your attempts to reach digital Samadhi!

Share this post if you found it interesting, and remember:

> "The journey of a thousand iterations begins with a single prompt."
>
> *- Ancient AI proverb (okay, I made that up)*

Built with: ❤️, *React, Tailwind CSS, and Claude*
React App by Claude
Time to build: 3 hours
Time to reach actual Samadhi: Still working on it 🕉️

Tags

#ReactJS #Meditation #Mindfulness #AI #WebDevelopment #AIAssistedDevelopment #Wellness
#TechForGood #JavaScript #TailwindCSS #Claude #Anthropic #YogaPhilosophy #DigitalWellness

Have you tried building something with AI assistance? What was your experience? Drop a comment below!