

# Meet Damian Vaughn of the Vaughn Center

Written by Arizona Foothills Magazine

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Having trouble finding a feasible goal for weight loss? Well, the Vaughn Center's "Year of Engagement" program aims at helping you tap into what your heart really wants and identifying what your mind and body need to get there. The program, which combines physical and mental exercises, is a series of four workshops spread out over the course of a year. The idea is that participants will be able to bypass any kind of obstacles they are experiencing and actualize whatever their goals may be, ranging anywhere from personal growth, stronger relationships, better health, to a more flourishing career. No longer should you have to "settle" after completing this program. Get to know Damian Vaughn.



Arizona Foothills Magazine: **Who does this program work best for?**

The program works best for anyone who wishes to break any normal patterns of counterproductive thinking and behavior and wants to become vitally engaged in their bodies, in their minds, and in their actions from moment to moment. The "Year of Engagement" is about learning how to really flourish and thrive.

Perhaps the greatest challenge we all face in these times of change and uncertainty is how to manage the stress and anxiety associated with getting everything done and living the life we intend. We're either lacking inspiring challenges or faced with more pressure than we can handle.

In either case, we need to figure out how to bring balance into our lives so that we can flourish. How do we do that? First, we have to get centered and engaged in the present.

This program works for every single one of us who wants to reconnect with that "essence" of who they are and become vitally engaged in each and every domain of their lives (in body, mind, career, relationships, community, personal development).

It's finding your "zone" and learning to live in it every day.

So, if you enjoy moving your body and want to learn how to align your mind with your body through both dynamic movement and stillness....this is for you!

**AFM: What are some factors that would inhibit successful completion of this program?**

Like anything else, not committing yourself fully to the possibility of growth. Without a full investment of your heart and mind, successful completion will be inhibited.

**AFM: Who is the program taught by?**

The program is taught by Amen Iseghohi and Damian Vaughn.

**AFM: What kinds of exercises, physical and mental, can one expect in each phase of the program?**

Amen's movement element is a master's finesse. It's the "back to basics" body movement principles of Amenzone Primal Training coupled with empowering practices of meditation and mindfulness like nothing else ever before. Imagine taking a gentle Yoga class with a strong emphasis on the meditative aspect. This retreat series is about bringing that clarity, silence, and openness into really dynamic action. It's meditation in action. Like the peak experiences cherished in sports, Amen and I guide you to find your "zone" by combining inner calm with dynamic movement.

Often times in an early meditation practice, people struggle to translate the peace of mind they cultivate while seated into the dynamic movement and interactions of daily life. This series of retreats will bridge that gap and teach you to become "one" with everything you do however simple or complex.

Each phase builds upon the last and you take developmental steps of understanding, growth, and achievement with an awesome celebration at

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the end!

**AFM: Our goals are constantly changing, do you believe people need to do this program each time a new goal is established?**

In a years time, goals will inevitably change. Some will be accomplished and checked off the list, some will lose their luster, and others will not be in the cards for us at the moment. Throughout the series we learn the art of setting intentions so that goals become more and more refined over time. Mastering this art is about removing all the clutter and noise so that we can see what it is that we really, really want.

Yes, It's a great idea to repeat this program each year. Each new year brings new goals and you can leverage the program to live the life you intend. Together, with new and old friends, you weave these practices, intentions, goals, and movement into your day to day life. Each phase is a retreat from the "every day" so that you can continue to push the boundaries of what's possible.

**AFM: How athletic does one need to be to do "Year of Engagement"?**

This isn't a competition. So, you don't need to be "super fit" or "super athletic." This is an environment engineered to elevate your life (in body and mind) from wherever you are. The program is designed to close the gap from wherever you are to where you want to be.

**AFM: There are large time gaps in between each phase of the program- what are members expected to do in this time?**

During the time gaps, you test out the goods.

By putting what you learn in the retreats to the test, you discover the subtle ways and nuances that best cultivate flow in your life. By the close of each phase, you'll have simple and effective practices to integrate into your every day life.

We'll have forums in which members can stay connected and communicate over the breaks. These forums will allow us to keep ourselves and each other accountable and informed about successes and experiences. All of the experiences you accumulate during the breaks provide a great deal of content to discuss during the next phase. You share your experiences, ask questions, and every one gains from those contributions!

**AFM: After playing football, you co-founded a counter-top manufacturing company and later a commercial stone company. How and what inspired you to go back to your athletic roots and create this company?**

What I loved and missed about sports was the opportunity to lose myself in the action. Becoming so immersed in action, your sense of time transforms, you become one with what you do, and you dissolve the boundaries of who you "think" you are by getting a glimpse of something greater.

The essence of a meditative or mindfulness practice is to get centered in that state of being as often as possible. In sports and in business, I found that the vast majority of people navigate and negotiate with life from a place of stress and fear. So, we fight against circumstances, we fight against competitors, we fight against issues, and we fight against life.

I found that when you are in your "zone" - an optimal psychological state – there is nothing to fight against.

You are performing, behaving, living optimally. You and "it" are one.

The result is flourishing and an upward spiral of positive development.

Currently, I'm a PhD candidate in Positive Developmental Psychology and Neuroscience at Claremont Graduate University under Dr. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (author of Flow – the Psychology of Optimal Experience and pioneer of Positive Psychology). I'm fascinated by what factors are involved in flow experiences. So, I focus my research in this area.

**AFM: When you implement new programs, where do you get the ideas for them and how do you test them for effectiveness?**

The ideas are rooted in basic research from the psychological and neurosciences as well as many of the meditation traditions of the east.

Relating specifically to the benefits of meditation training, we have 50 years of research from universities like Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Penn, MIT, Wisconsin-Madison, UCLA, CGU, Stanford and beyond showing how it improves brain function, cognitive function, eliminates stress, as well as how we relate to others.

So, the programs are designed to apply the research into our every day lives.

This program was brought about to offer a unique environment where you can come alive with movement and learn to always find that stillness inside. It's a life changing experience with amazing human beings.

I hope to see you there!

Read more [here](#) about the Year of Engagement.

Visit the website [here](#).

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