

Why Meditate ... and Why Now?

by Mark Thorton, Senior Consultant and Mobius Transformational Faculty

1 Why Meditate... and Why Now?

You may wonder whether meditation has any application in your world. Perhaps you think meditation is a practice only for people who have renounced the outside world and can afford to spend hours each day sitting silently.

But the truth of the matter is, we need meditation now more than ever. The practice of meditation can help you reduce the stress that all of us feel as a result of the hectic pace of modern life. With the techniques in this book, you can remain calm and centered no matter what challenges your workday presents, and you can practice these techniques without changing your already busy schedule.

And guess what? When you remain calm and centered, the world is a different place. When stressful situations arise, the skills learned in meditation allow you to let go of the anger, frustration, and obsessive thoughts that so often arise as a result of stress.

Yet stress is so much a part of daily life that we often don't even see its subtle and far-reaching effects. We don't see how it makes us feel disconnected from our hearts and robs our life of joy. The book you hold in your hands contains all the tools you need to transform that stress into calm.

STRESS IMPACTS THE BOTTOM LINE

Even companies are realizing the need to create calm:

- American Airlines claims that absenteeism costs the company one million dollars a day. (The Wall Street Journal)
- Industry loses approximately 550

million workdays annually due to absenteeism. (The New York Times)

- The majority of U.S. states have passed laws allowing employees to sue for having stressful conditions. (The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health)
- A recent health study found that people with prolonged work stress suffer an increase in blood pressure equivalent to aging fifteen years. (Cornell University)
- In one major financial institution, depression was responsible for nearly 11,000 lost workdays over a two-year period (more than high blood pressure and diabetes, combined). (The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health)
- 42 percent of office workers claim they work in an office where "yelling and verbal abuse happen frequently." (Survey, The Marlin Company)
- Nearly one in three adults experiences high stress every day. (The Overworked American: The Unexpected Decline of Leisure)
- The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health says "stressful working conditions are ... associated with increased absenteeism, tardiness, and intention by workers to quit their jobs—all of which have a negative effect on the bottom line."

As the pace and complexity of life expand exponentially, the need to experience the ocean of calm increases. No single technique is enough. The velocity and intensity of our lives require a range of different tools to help us remain focused and enlivened. While meditation will not solve the

cause of stress, it powerfully deals with the symptoms.

2 Journey to Your Heart

Meditation is a journey to the ocean of calm. Swimming in the ocean of calm you can deal with deadlines with ease, be less stressed on your commute, and do your job with less effort. It is a journey to your center, your core—the place that holds your essence, your deepest longings, your wildest dreams, what nourishes you most, and what you value most. Some people call it spirit, soul, true nature.

The analogy used by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the founder of Transcendental Meditation, is that you are like the ocean. At the moment you are standing on the shore looking out onto the ocean, you see only the surface activity of the ocean—the waves, the reflection of the sun—and you can hear the sound of the waves crashing on the shore. Meditation is a journey into the ocean and away from the surface into the deepest depths of you.

The journey within can be as daunting as a first-time trip to a foreign country. As on most journeys, you will need a map, a compass, a destination, tales about the obstacles you will face, some rules about safety, signposts to show you the way, advice on some of the delights you can expect and the wisdom of others who have made the same journey before you.

- The book is a map that outlines a number of paths.
- Your heart is the compass—only your heart will know what is right.
- The destination is your heart.

- The Eleven Thieves are the obstacles you can expect to meet on the path.
- The Eight Laws of Meditation are the rules.
- The Seven Meditation Paths are the signposts.
- The Seven Sages are the wisdom of others.

>Try This Now: Perfect Calm

Close your eyes and remember a time of perfect calm in your life. Feel the sensations, hear the sounds, and see the scene. Now declare “I radiate perfect calm to all I meet.”

Let me give you an example.

The heart

Meditation is simply a way to get to your heart. We can represent this in the diagram below. This diagram is a rough approximation at best, but a helpful guide. There are many other models of how we are structured.



The circumference represents the physical body—the body you can see, feel, taste, hear, and smell. It represents the surface of your being, like the surface of the ocean. There is quite a dense, solid, and heavy quality to it.

Your heart is at the center of the circle and represents the deepest part of your being. Studying this diagram, you can begin to see how your body is similar to the surface of the ocean, and that your core lies deeper than this.

Said another way, your center remains still and calm—undisturbed

by the surface events, noises, and distractions of your life. In the same way the depths of the ocean remain calm and unaffected by surface storms.

In this way, meditation allows you to shift from chaos to calm, noise to silence, activity to stillness.

Let's deepen this experience. As you sink deeper inside yourself, you notice two other “bodies,” other than your physical body. These are your thinking body (or mind), which is your capacity to think, and your emotional body, which is your capacity to experience emotion.

YOUR PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL BODY



In this diagram, the mind is seen as “deeper” than the physical body, indicating that it belongs to the inner world. Once you leave the surface of the ocean, you journey into your inner world. For example, a thought is still a “thing.” It is distinct. It is as an object in that you can perceive it, but it has a different quality to it than the external world. It is not something you can pick up. Its quality is more subtle, more etheric. A thought is simply a subtle form of energy.

The same with emotions. You certainly know you have emotions, and they are “real” in that sense. However, because they belong to your inner world, they have a more subtle, less dense, less solid quality than an object in the physical world.

Meditation is your journey through the layers of mind and emotion. Your journey to the core, therefore, is a journey from dense to subtle, from solid to subtle, from the physical world where you need your five senses (sight, touch, taste, hear-

ing, and smell), to your core, which cannot be perceived by these five senses.

Imagine you are swimming in the ocean. Imagine lying on your back on the surface looking up at the sky. Imagine allowing yourself to sink—away from the surface, from the sunlight, from the gentle breeze, from the sound of the wind—and drift down. The first thing you would experience is the world of thoughts—often millions of thoughts racing inside your mind. As you continued to drift further inside, you would find what feelings and emotions were inside you—those of which you may not have been aware when you were lying on your back on the surface. This is the layer of emotions. Meditation is sinking deeper beneath both these layers into the still, silent place within you that is always calm.

Storms can rage on the surface, but your center is always calm.

The following diagram illustrates that meditation is the path to your heart.



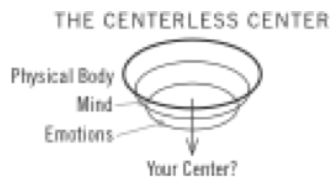
The endless journey and the centerless center

The more you journey to your center, the more you discover that your center is not a single destination. It is not one specific geographical place. The more you dive into the ocean, the more you discover that the edges of who you are, are less rigid than you thought. The deeper you go, the more you see that who you are is actually bigger than you thought. At your deepest, there is no difference between who you are and who others

are. The experience of being separate starts to disappear. The idea of “you” and “me” becomes blurred. From this space, the seeds of compassion arise. Any action that would be detrimental to another is experienced as being detrimental to the whole.

The diagram on the next page is the same diagram above seen from a different angle. The same three bodies (physical, mental, and emotional) are there, but the destination of “your center” has a question mark next to it. Like trying to find the center of the ocean, we find there is no such place. There is simply a vast and endless depth into which you dive further, a depth in which the journey becomes an end in itself. The journey becomes the destination. The true nature of your core is that it is vast and endless. No matter how many times you explore your heart, there is always more. It has no center because it’s too vast and extends into all things.

One of my teachers asked a holy Indian saint about his experience in journeying into his heart. This profound saint replied, “There is always more. Today at eighty years of age, and after journeying to my heart in every moment since I was twelve, I can honestly say that the journey is endless.” My teacher was amazed to hear such a response.



Hold on—what’s it like at the center? Why would we want to journey there in the first place?

As you journey to your center, eventually the qualities that exist there (wisdom, love, inspiration, creativity, intuition, calm) start to

flow out into the world. It’s as if the frequent journey into your heart creates pathways that allow the center to flow outward—effortlessly.



Like a river, the qualities from your heart can flow powerfully from the inner to the outer world. Imagine what it would be like if your deepest longings, strongest intuitions, fiercest loves, most passionate desires, bottomless compassion, wildest dreams, highest truths, your core values flowed out into the world. When you meet people, compassion could be the quality you exude rather than self-interest. As the idea of separation starts to melt, narrow self-centeredness becomes less of an option. You get to be heart-centered rather than self-centered. As you sit on the subway, the qualities of your heart can be available to you. When you meet people for the first time, your heart can speak rather than your judgments. Your words can have the quality of depth, love, compassion, and wisdom all because of your connection to your essence or heart. Decisions at work can come from your core values, rather than grasping self-interest. The way you are at work, from your relationship with your boss to your relationship with clients, can come from a deeper sense of teamwork, service, and emotional intelligence.

What does this mean for the Super Busy? When you talk on your cell phone, you can feel the quality and energy of your heart. When you walk down the street on your way to work, you can feel the cur-

rent of your heart, like the currents, tides, and swell of the ocean. When you meet people, you can connect with their hearts. Perhaps inspiration moves you in new ways. Maybe creativity comes alive in you in ways that you couldn’t imagine. Can your relationships be colored by the texture, fibers, and fragrance of your heart? Could your relationships with your loved ones deepen the quality of love that you’ve always known was inside you? Can love finally flow freely, no longer blocked by the surface drama of your days? The still, quiet power of your heart gets to move about in the world, creating its blessings for all you meet. Maybe people sense something’s changed in you, although they may never know what that is. The scent and fragrance of your heart, its uniqueness, its rare quality, can flow out into the world.

This is my experience of the Tao—being in the flow, following The Way. It is the way of the heart, your heart, no longer a forgotten phrase, but a daily experience.

Then you transform:

Limited ----> Unlimited

Bound ----> Boundless

Ordinary ----> Extraordinary

Finite ----> Infinite

The more you journey inside, the more you access deeper parts of who you really are—unlimited, unbound, extraordinary, and infinite. Parts of you that have always been there.

“Knock and you find you have been inside all the time.”

RUMI

Be honest. On some level, you know this already. Most people intuitively sense this is true—that at their core they are love. At their essence, they are deeper and bigger than what

they experience in daily life. Most people have an experience that life is much more vast, deep, and profound than that which they allow themselves to experience. Living from your core is the answer.

All of this is entirely optional—your heart doesn't force anything. It patiently sits waiting for your visits to whisper its secrets, speak of its love for you, inspire you with compassion. The heart's longing is palpable. You are like a prince born into the basement of a palace. The palace is your heart. The keys to the door, and every door in the palace, are the keys of meditation. You suspect that on some level the basement isn't really all there is. Maybe you can hear sounds from the banquet hall, music from the orchestra that plays, or smell the magnificent feast that is waiting for you. In whatever way, you intuitively have a sense, no matter how strong or weak that sense is, that there is more to the darkness of the basement. You are royalty born in hiding—waiting for the right call to take over the throne.

Meditation masters live in the palace of the heart.

Once in your heart, you can talk and act from that place. Maybe this will look like your core values come out into the world. Maybe it means you say what you mean more often, or that you say things with deeper conviction. Or that you say less, and the little you say resonates and has the power to move mountains.

Maybe you find your heart is where the secret of life lies—the secret of your life. Maybe your heart, rather than your head, can be an oracle that sets your direction. Maybe you can actually start to feel the desire for all of your words to be from God. Maybe you find that people respond to you differently. Maybe you

attract different people into your life, people who sense a quality in you that comes simply from your ability to access your heart. Maybe it's all actually about being more in line with your heart's longing, whatever form that may take.

Maybe you've forgotten what it's like to feel your heart, and even the phrase "find your heart" sounds familiar but is not something you can use. Maybe the last two paragraphs sound as if they were written about someone else. If that's the case then you stand to benefit most from this book. I know. That was exactly the position in which I once found myself.

An important lesson

A teacher once gave me feedback: "You do not live from your heart. Do you think I am right?"

I thought about what he said. I knew the word "heart" and I knew the word "live," but honestly I didn't really understand the question. When I told my teacher this he replied, "It's probably a good indication that what I said is true." I still didn't understand what he meant.

"You are so used to living in your head you have totally forgotten what it's like to live from your heart. I may as well have asked you what it's like living on the moon! You may have read about the moon. You may know a lot about the moon. You may have even seen the moon at night. It's not the same as having the experience of living on the moon."

I turned red with embarrassment. Imagine having no idea of the experience of living from my heart at the age of thirty! I was speechless. If I was honest with myself, I had to admit that the teacher's words were true. I went blank as if my mind had been asked a question to which it had no answer.

He gently continued. "The solution is to find the keys to your heart. If you want to, of course."

"So what are the keys to my heart?" I asked, still slightly embarrassed.

"The keys to meditation, of course!"

The more you meditate, the more the qualities of your deepest being flow outward into the world—*so that other people feel the difference*. Have you ever met someone who has a certain kind of presence? Someone whose presence in the room is palpable? In my experience, many teachers with whom I have trained have had this ability that allows the innermost to radiate outwards. I remember listening once to Sogyal Rinpoche (author of *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*) when he suddenly stopped his presentation and bowed toward the entrance to the hall. In the doorway was an eighty-year-old Buddhist nun who spoke no English. She walked into the room and smiled. I have never experienced such a force of love flowing from another person. Without any words she radiated the energy of love. I remember my body shaking with tears at the beauty of her presence.

The Eight Laws of Meditation

In this chapter you will learn eight Laws of Meditation that will help you create, deepen, and dynamically improve your ability to move from calm to Super Calm.

LAW NUMBER ONE: RELAX!

In the meditation courses I run for companies, the first thing I tell executives to do is relax! The journey to your core can only happen when you relax. Most Super Busy people approach learning new tasks like a sprinter waiting for the starter's gun in a race—the body is

tense, muscles taut; there is a goal to achieve.

Meditation is the opposite of effort. Meditation is much more like slipping into a warm luxurious bubble bath—you can feel the warmth of the water, smell the fragrance of the soaps, hear the running water. As you slip into the bath the only question is “Mmmmmm ... how long can I enjoy this?”

The journey to the ocean of calm needs to be easy—otherwise, if we had to struggle, fight, and battle to get there we wouldn't be calm when we arrived.

If you find your body becoming tense and tight, remember this law. Take a deep breath and allow the tension in your body to release. In the techniques section of this book, the practices associated with the Path of the Open Body have useful tips to build the feeling of relaxation while learning new tasks.

The Power of Relaxed Alertness

A woman who went to yoga three times a week came to a meditation master and complained, “I don't get it. I've done yoga for years, and I'm trying really hard at meditating but it's not working.”

The master replied, “You need relaxed alertness rather than tense and contracted effort. You think you need to ‘work hard to learn.’”

Can you remember the time you first learned to giggle? Or the first time your body really shook with laughter? Remember those times. Now, allow a smile to appear, and then start the practice again.

The harder you try, the less you succeed because the First Golden Law of Meditation is “Relax.”

LAW NUMBER TWO:

A SENSE OF PLAYFULNESS

To really understand the first law, it is useful to approach your meditation practice with a playful attitude, which is the second law of meditation. Often we remember the things that were a pleasure to learn. Without playfulness we risk making our bodies tense and tight, which moves us in the opposite direction of the first law: Relax! Once you understand this law, the journey to your heart is quicker and easier.

Study a kitten playing with a ball of wool; see how focused and attentive he is. Alert and watchful, yet he knows it is just a game. He is not striving to be the best ball-playing cat on the block. He is not striving to win the Cat Olympics ball playing competition. His game has the quality of delight and innocence. He can easily be distracted by some other game and then return to playing with the ball of wool, not berating himself for having forgotten to practice. Let your practice have the quality of softness, playfulness, innocence, and delight; not rigidity and hardness.

LAW NUMBER THREE: GENTLENESS

Remember a time you saw a mother holding a newborn child. Remember the exquisite gentleness and tenderness with which she caressed the child? This is the same way you need to treat yourself, with great gentleness and care. Super Busy people have enough rules at which to fail, enough hardness on themselves without creating a new set of rules at which to fail. Understanding this law powerfully moves you through times of frustration when learning how to meditate. It doesn't mean you “don't give a damn” or should be careless.

>Try This Now: The Calm Commuter

Take a breath in. Close your eyes. Count to three. Exhale for a count of three. Ensure there is no pause between your in- and out-breath. This circular breathing increases the amount of energy you feel.

LAW NUMBER FOUR: THE OPEN BODY

Imagine your physical body is a hose that carries water. If the hose is kinked and blocked, then less water gets through. In the same way, your physical body carries energy. If your body is blocked and contracted then less energy can be carried. The diagram below shows that when the physical body is tight and unrelaxed, it is difficult to journey to the ocean of calm. Your attention gets caught on the surface, and cannot drop deeper. Your body needs to be relaxed and open.



Remember, I said we could go from:

Chaos ----> Calm
Noise ----> Silence
Activity ----> Stillness
Effort ----> Effortlessness

The first four laws allow us to relax, be playful, be gentle, and have an open body. We get to be effortless. Effort works in the opposite direction from getting to your core.

But how can you build calm, deepen it, and protect it?

>Try This Now: Scanning the Body

Focus on the following muscle groups: • Small muscles around your eyes • Muscles in your forehead • Your abdominal muscles

For the next hour, check these muscles to ensure they are calm and relaxed. The more you relax your physical body, the more calm you have. Relax these muscles—you may want to gently massage around your eyes and forehead. Check these areas every ten minutes for the next hour and ensure they are relaxed. This will enable you to work with less effort.

LAW NUMBER FIVE: BUILD CALM— USE YOUR ATTENTION

To create calm—focus on calm. One of the great Laws of Meditation is that where your attention goes, energy flows.

Let me give you some examples.

- If you place your attention on positive thoughts, you get positive-thought energy.
- If you place your attention on negative thoughts, you get negative-thought energy.
- If you place your attention on a picture of a deity, you get the energy of the deity.
- If you place your attention on your heart, you magnify your heart energy.
- If you place your attention on your frenetically racing mind, you get “frenetic-mind” energy.

This is something you already know. Great athletes know to keep their attention on positive images of success prior to a match, rather than on negative ones. In your own life, if you want to complete a project you narrow your focus onto that project. This magnifies the work to be done or “energy” of the project. The same is true for calm; the more focus you put on calm, the more calm flows.

Hindu saints place their attention on a mantra to magnify the energy or quality of the sound. For example, the sound “OM” represents a certain aspect of the universe of all things manifested. Buddhist monks may

put their attention on the space between their eyebrows, or third eye, to magnify the quality of energy that is there. The Christian saint repeats the word “Jesus” to magnify the quality of his deity. Why? Because what you notice you magnify.

Don’t just take my word for it. Try the following exercises.

>Try This Now: The Candle Flame

At home, light a candle and place it an arm’s distance from your eyes. For five minutes gently keep your eyes focused on the candle flame.

Notice what happens to the outside world when you keep your focus on the flame. Notice the awareness of the sensations in your body. Notice what happens to your concerns about the day.

The outside world and concerns about the day are still there, but not as stressful as before, as your attention magnifies the calm energy of the candle.

>Try This Now: The Belly Breath

Take a deep breath from your belly.

With the next breath keep your chest and shoulders still and breathe from your belly.

Now breathe so deeply you can feel the belt of your pants.

Now breathe again and hold the breath for two seconds. Repeat three times.

LAW NUMBER SIX: BUILD CALM— THE LAW OF REPETITION

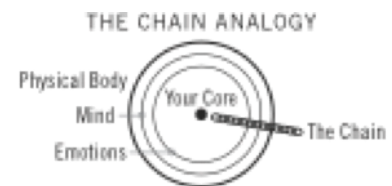
A top U.S. basketball player joined a leading NBA team, and the coach had him shoot baskets from three feet out, over and over again. The player complained that he already knew how to shoot from this distance and wanted more excitement and challenge. The coach replied, “You keep shooting from three feet out until it’s

habit, then I’ll get you to shoot four feet out until that’s habit. Eventually you’ll be able to shoot from any point on the court blindfolded.”

Meditation requires repeating basic, obvious, and simple steps over and over again.

LAW NUMBER SEVEN: MAINTAIN CALM— THE CHAIN ANALOGY

Meditation is like a chain that leads to your heart—each link in the chain represents a moment of doing the practice. For example, if the technique is placing your attention on your heart, then each link is placing your attention moment by moment on your heart.



LAW NUMBER EIGHT: FIND CALM EVERYWHERE—HIDDEN GEMS

Meditation is like digging for treasure and throwing away ordinary stones that contain priceless gems inside. Meditation is the revolution of creating the utterly profound from the utterly ordinary, obvious, and everyday. Executives often have a hard time believing that anything profound can come from altering something as simple as breath, or by repeating a certain word, or changing their focus. And yet, the height of enlightenment is experienced by harnessing the most ordinary capacities.

*“Embarrassment ...
at having overlooked
the obvious for so long”*

—THE THIRD PATRIARCH
OF ZEN, when asked what emotion
he felt upon becoming enlightened

The Serene Subway

Close your eyes. Imagine your spine is a tube of pure white light. Imagine the light glows brighter and more intense. The light represents healing and clarity.

Summary of the eight laws of meditation

The Eight Laws allow you to transform effort to effortlessness, to power through difficulties with ease, and to multiply the amount of calm in your life. Remember them before starting each meditation.

You Are Effortless	1 Relax
	2 Be Playful
	3 Be Gentle
	4 Open Body
You Build Calm	5 Use Attention to Focus on Calm
You Deepen Calm	6 Repetition
You Maintain Calm	7 The Chain Analogy
You Find Calm Everywhere	8 Hidden Gems

SUPER BUSY: THE UPSIDE

Here's the good news. Busy people use the same skills to create success that the Dalai Lama uses to meditate. That's why busy people are the perfect students to learn meditation. Let me give you some examples.

Successful people have the capacity to focus. One of the most important, if not the most important, skills that underpin the greatest meditation practices (vipassana, mantra, breath, concentration, and contemplation) is the ability to focus. When the Dalai Lama repeats a mantra, or places his attention on the space between his eyebrows (or third eye), or focuses on his heart, he uses the amazing power of focus.

In the same way, the Super Busy know all about narrowing their focus onto one topic; whether that person is a lawyer preparing for a case or a currency trader focusing on the Reuters screen, the outside world and all distracting issues are ignored. The currency trader blocks out all distractions and secondary priorities—the desire to phone his wife, start planning a family holiday, talk to his friends, read the paper, finish his tax return, talk to his staff. All of these worthy priorities are put aside. It's exactly the same skill the Dalai Lama uses.

The only difference is that they focus on different things—the lawyer on his case, the currency trader on the markets, the Dalai Lama on his mantra, third eye, and heart. All can keep their attention tightly focused regardless of distractions.

So powerful is the capacity to focus that if there is only one thing you learn from this book, let it be the awesome power of mastering your attention.

Successful people can do two things at once. Most of us can talk on the phone and check our email. We can “split” our attention. We can drive a car and mentally run through lists of tasks for today. Nearly all of us can walk down the street and be totally lost in stressful thoughts. We can be talking to someone, listening to that person's conversation, and be focusing on our own train of thoughts. This capacity to split our attention on two things at once can be used to profound ends.

The Dalai Lama and all great masters keep part of their attention on their center. For example, you can walk down the street and have part of your attention on the ocean of calm rather than stressful thoughts. You can talk on your cell and have part of

your attention on your heart, and so build up the quality of heart energy. You can check your PDA and have part of your attention on mastering your breathing as a way to still the mind.

Attention is lightning fast, automatic, and instant; it all depends on what you use it for.

Successful people overcome challenges. Successful people thrive and grow through challenge, making them perfect candidates for mastering meditation.

Meditation masters are masters because they overcome the obstacles and challenges in meditation in spite of distracting thoughts, or feelings of frustration. Meditation masters recognize that these obstacles will not master them. Great meditators are those who stick to the practice regardless of the challenges and hurdles they face.

“There is no enlightenment outside of daily life.”
THICH NHAT HANH

Successful people master subtlety. At peak performance, superior athletes understand the critical importance of subtlety. Let me give you an example. The Swedish Winter Olympic team returned home with zero medals from the 1998 Winter Olympics. They calculated that if they had improved their performances by 5 percent they would have won the majority of the medals. Small changes make big results.

Meditation masters are obsessed with subtle movements. They focus their attention on subtle shifts in their breath to see how present they are. They are obsessed with small shifts in body posture as an indicator of how present they are.

Zen story

After one year in a monastery, a Zen monk complained, "All I have learned about is breathing." After five years in the monastery, the monk complained, "All I have learned is breathing." When he reached enlightenment the elderly monk smiled and said, "Finally, I have learned about breathing."

Successful people know about training. In business, knowledge is power. To maintain their edge, successful people are keen to improve their skills via courses, executive coaches, and learning from role models. The Dalai Lama and all spiritual masters realize that, just like learning to play tennis, golf, or any sport, the quickest way to improve is through training. Training is a key part of all major spiritual disciplines.

You have all it takes to succeed

The most profound meditators share a similar skill set to the Super Busy.

Ability to focus. One of the crucial skills is harnessing and controlling your power of focus.

Can do two things at once. This means you can have part of your attention on your heart while doing mundane activities like walking down the street, commuting, and talking with others.

Can overcome obstacles. Great

meditators, like successful business people, have great perseverance to complete their tasks regardless of distractions.

Can master subtlety. Attention to

the small details differentiates masters from apprentices.

Know the value of training. Just as when learning a sport, finding great teachers/coaches is important. ■



Mark Thornton is the former Chief Operating Officer for JPMorgan Private Bank in London. Since 2004, Thornton has dedicated his life to creating the world's first management consultancy that does one thing: teach Leadership and ethical reflective practices to elite business schools and corporate leaders. The result is MBA, EMBA and Executive Education graduates with less stress, increased productivity, improved health and stronger ethical foundation.

Thornton's clients include elite global business schools, among them Wharton Business School and the Leadership Development Program for 1st and 2nd year MBA students, McGill International Executive Institute for Executive Education and New York University; as well as corporate organizations such as JPMorgan, Deloitte Touche, Morgan Stanley, The New York Times; and thought leaders from TIAA-CREF, Rio Tinto Alcan.

Thornton has presented keynote speeches to the Hedge Fund Traders Conference at the Time Warner center in New York, The American Bar Association, The Exchange Traded Funds 2nd Global Annual Awards, Global Capital Acquisition Annual Meeting, The Bar Association of Buenos Aires, The University de Saviour in Argentina, and many others. He has clients from the UK, Australia and Latin America.

He has appeared on national TV shows including Fox Business News, ABC TV, CNBC, MTV as well as more than 60 national and regional radio shows: ABC Radio, Air America, Sirius, XFM, The Joey Reynolds Show, Martha Stewart Living Radio, The Good Life show with Jesse Dylan, WBZ 1030 AM, The Ed Walsh Show on WOR 710AM, KOW 850 AM "After Midnight with Rick Barker," ABC affiliate KBUR 1490AM, CBS affiliate KSMA 1240AM, The Jordon Rich Show WBZ 1030AM, The Fox FM 99.7, WQCD 101.9FM and more than 50 other regional stations. His articles have appeared in CEO Magazine, The Chicago Daily Herald, The New York Times, Yoga Journal, Body & Soul Magazine, Diet & Nutrition Magazine and Perfil, Argentina's equivalent of The Economist.



While we were putting the finishing touches on the Mindfulness section of this newsletter the New York Times ran an article on a closely related topic. Check it out as you can:

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/06/jobs/teaching-meditation-techniques-to-organizations.html?_r=1&