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Opening minds by closing eyes, or, the Meditating MBAs

Posted September 19, 2012 by Lisa Napoli | Comments (8) |

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A couple weeks ago I had the good fortune to spend the day out in beautiful Claremont, California, where I got to see a rock star professor in action, opening the minds of his pupils by closing their eyes.

[Jeremy Hunter](#) is frequently chosen as the most popular professor at the [Drucker School of Management](#), and after sitting through two of his classes, I could see why. He's not only charming and engaging, he not only shares his personal story—about the kidney disease that lead

to his need for a transplant—but he's telling people something they clearly are relieved, and perhaps eager, to hear: Slow down.

Now, it may seem counterintuitive that a bunch of people with an eye on the world of hard-core capitalism would want to take a class—given the price of tuition, too—where they're taught the inherent values of silence. Where they're given scientific evidence of the importance of life-work balance. Where they basically have to learn to sit still and be silent as a major part of their homework! But the daytime class was packed, and the executive MBA class wasn't shabbily sized, either, and in neither could you hear a pin drop—as Hunter explained how his medical issues led him to become immersed in meditation techniques, and how he's not naturally wired to sit still himself, how people who seem to have it all frequently confess how miserable they are being on the treadmill of earn/consume/earn/consume.



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Opening minds by closing eyes, ...

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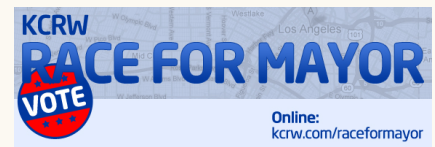
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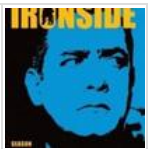
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[Jeremy Hunter](#) · 49 weeks ago

+1

It was a real pleasure to have Lisa visit our classes at the Drucker School!

I started teaching these courses over a decade ago because I realized how rare it was (and still is...) to train executives to manage themselves. Business schools are great at teaching the technical aspects of management but leave leaders ill-equipped to deal with the challenging realities of their working lives. The Drucker School is different. We teach a manager to manage themselves before they manage anything else.

The realities of working today mean that responsible people are more pressured to perform than ever. So, the first topic we address is learning to manage an overtaxed nervous system This is where a meditation practice plays an important role. For years, research has shown that cultivating high-quality attention (which is what meditation does) helps you with just about everything else.

Without learning to simply calm down, it becomes harder to do any of the more complex skills we learn in class, like how to manage emotional reactions, how to focus in a distracting workplace, how to collaborate more effectively, or deal with a difficult boss.

My students learn to develop new habits of mind, heart and action to create new possibilities for themselves, their teams, their organizations and very often their families and loved ones. By learning how to see and interact with the world in a more mindful way, they create solutions to issues they previously thought unsolvable and open up opportunities they hadn't before imagined.

Jeremy Hunter
Peter F. Drucker School of Management

[Reply](#)

1 reply · active 49 weeks ago

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[Doris Cope](#) · 49 weeks ago

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Hey Jeremy:

We will be moving to a new building in early December. You'd be proud to know meditation space is part of the new building. Who said the US Corps of Engineers is a staid ineffectual organization? It would be great to do a series in Seattle. It would be especially helpful during winter when it rains almost daily and depression rates can be so high. Would you consider sharing your current bibliography? Or would you recommend some current reading material? This year was tremendously stressful and believe me I

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[Meditation as the new yoga: A new magazine celebrates the joy of quiet | Which Way L.A.?](#)

[...] "A Mindful Nation." (And Professor Jeremy Hunter of Claremont Graduate University, who teaches meditation to MBAs, is among the authors in the debut issue of the magazine. So, too is writer Pico Iyer. Heck, [...])



KCRW reminds [Lisa Napoli](#) of the radio station where she volunteered in the Kingdom of Bhutan, Kuzoo FM, which is the basis of her book, Radio Shangri-La. Except there's no hole in the ceiling of the studio, and much better plumbing. At KCRW, Lisa roots out artists, authors and innovators in the vast sprawling metropolis of LA. She has worked at Marketplace, the NY Times, MSNBC and CNN, although she considers her biggest accomplishment learning to swim at the age of 37. A graduate of Hampshire College in Amherst, Mass, Lisa was raised in Flatbush, Brooklyn, NY.

Follow Lisa on Twitter: [@LisaNapoli](#)
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About Warren Olney's "Which Way, LA?"

Award-winning moderator Warren Olney leads lively, thoughtful and provocative discussion on the issues Southern Californians care about. Which Way. L.A.? draws from newsmakers around Los Angeles, the state, North America, and from around the world to present all sides of the issues.



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About "Which Way, LA?" - The Blog

This blog is KCRW's continuing exploration of what Los Angeles is made of, one story at a time.

Contributors

- > [Caitlin Shamburg](#) (382)



david · 21 weeks ago

0



Thank you for the Audio! It's greate to learn that Mindfulness is on its way out in the world. When I started 20 years ago we were kind of weird doing what we did. Luckily today it is much mor common and accepted, maybe because of thia 'scientific' approach.

Mindfulness Training

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buy college books · 20 weeks ago

-1



Education is backbone of nation without education a nation is involved in ignorance, only education can remove the darkness thus day by day has come out various type of education. Meditation, yoga practice etc are the part of education and effective to open our mind and remove our disease. I highly appreciate of the meditating MBAs program.

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Badboyslifestyle · 15 weeks ago

-1



man that is rough, great blog. Meditation is hard to do and it really does build willpower as well. Setting the time aside to meditate is a challenge to itself in this day and age. It really does transfer to all aspects of life.

Benefits of Meditation

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Trish · 13 weeks ago

-1



Meditation is now being taught at Harvard!

I teach meditation and also conduct hypnotherapy sessions at the end of my meditation courses to help keep my students meditating...

Learn How to Meditate

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eye secrets review · 5 weeks ago

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Now, it may seem counterintuitive that a bunch of people with an eye on the world of hard-core capitalism would want to take a class—given the price of tuition, too—where they're taught the inherent values of silence.

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