



A Leader's Guide to *donothing*™

If you're here, it's likely that you're already a successful business leader interested in the benefits of a meditation practice. After more than a decade of my own daily meditation practice and biannual silent meditation retreats, I've experienced firsthand the emotional, cognitive, and physical benefits of a meditation practice.

As a business leader, my meditation practice has propelled my leadership to new heights: I'm humbled to be surrounded by an authentic, talented team at the company I co-founded, image-One, which has been recognized as an exceptional business by Forbes, Crain's Detroit Business, and Great Game of Business, just to name a few. I'm a stronger, calmer, and more effective leader than ever before.

How could taking this challenge evolve your leadership? What will it mean for your leadership to *donothing*™? Take some time to envision yourself as a mindful leader. Below are the simple steps to get started and the fast facts + research.

"Between stimulus and response lies a space. In that space lie our freedom and power to choose a response. In our response lies our growth and our happiness."
- Viktor Frankl

Getting Started

SET A GOAL: Like most things in life, you begin with the end in mind. What do you want your practice to look like in 3 months, 6 months, and 12 months? Let's say it's to meditate at least 20 minutes per day. Set the goal and do it for 21 straight days; the amount of time proven to create a habit. Even if that means starting with 5 minutes a day and building up, the most important thing is to stick with it.

CREATE A ROUTINE: The key to creating a true habit is tying your meditation practice to a familiar schedule and environment. For a true habit, no willpower is needed – once it's a habit, it doesn't take any extra effort. Research has proven that for habit formation to be effective, it requires repetition and contextual cues, such as the same time of day and the same environment. Set a consistent time and place for your meditation practice each day and stick to it.

HOW TO SIT: It's a funny question, but crucial to maintaining your daily meditation practice. I prefer to sit lotus-style (legs crossed) on a cushion, but the most important thing is to find a pose that is comfortable to you. This could be sitting upright in a chair, kneeling on a bench, or lying down (if you must lie down, be sure this doesn't become a time to "nap"). When you find a comfortable position, support yourself as much as you can and maintain awareness of your posture. Not too rigid, not too soft.

HOW TO MEDITATE: The basic idea of mindfulness meditation is as simple as taking the time to intentionally do nothing. Mindfulness meditation builds awareness of the present moment by focusing the attention on the breath. Close your eyes or turn your gaze downward, shift your attention lightly to the breath, notice its natural pattern, and follow it through your nose and down your midsection. Repeat this last step for the duration of your practice.

Inevitably, sitting quietly prompts all sorts of thoughts. This does not mean you've failed at meditating! Instead, simply notice that your mind is wandering, acknowledge the thought that arose, and return to the breath.

UNDERSTANDING SILENT RETREATS: Here's my challenge to you and all leaders that want to deeply refine their awareness and presence. Enhance and accelerate your practice with a silent leadership retreat. A meditation retreat gives you the foundation to deeply understand your meditation practice and how it fits into your life, making a successful daily meditation practice much more attainable.

A silent meditation retreat is not as intimidating as it sounds. The *donothing™* leadership retreat will be teacher-led, with meditation instruction, guided meditation sessions, wisdom talks, hiking, connecting, and more. It is an investment in yourself to cultivate a deeper mindfulness practice that will transform your life and your leadership.

Fast Facts + Research

Meditation increases your ability to focus:

Whether it is a problem at work or a conversation with a loved one, you'll become adept at focusing in a meaningful way. In fact, a study conducted by the Information School of Washington found that meditation training increases the ability to concentrate on a task and improves memory. Study participants also reported lower levels of stress and less distractions.

Meditation is a shared practice among high achievers:

In his best-selling book, *Tools of Titans: The Tactics, Routines, and Habits of Billionaires, Icons, and World-Class Performers*, Tim Ferriss interviews more than 200 executives, leaders, and world-class performers. He found that more than 80 percent practiced some form of mindfulness or meditation. Among some of the most successful people in the world, Ferriss uncovered the "Most Consistent Pattern Of All," connecting world-class athletes with billionaire investors: meditation.

Meditation helps to build the muscle in your brain that regulates emotions:

By nature, leaders have to take a lot of risks to become successful, and the fear of failure often holds us back. Mindfulness increases the gray matter in the brain involved in emotional regulation and memory. With a regular meditation practice, you'll learn to become more comfortable with vulnerability, helping you to finally take that next big step for your business.

"You should sit in meditation for 20 minutes a day.
Unless you're too busy, then you should sit for an hour."
-An old Zen saying



do**nothing**TM
The most rewarding leadership challenge you will ever take.