

MINDFUL LEADERSHIP

NAVIGATING CHAOS TO CALM



**PREPARED EXCLUSIVELY FOR:
ALHI EXECUTIVE WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP RETREAT
BY DR. ROMIE MUSHTAQ, MD, ABIHM**



Mindful Leadership

NAVIGATING CHAOS TO CALM

By Dr. Romie Mushtaq, MD, ABIHM
www.DrRomie.com

I spent the first 14 years of my career as a traditionally trained neurologist. This meant I was at the mercy of a pager that would go off in the middle of the night. I was called almost nightly if there was a potentially life-threatening situation related to brain or mental health. Every time I walked through the doors of the emergency room, I remember thinking the same thing, "Whoa, girlfriend, this ain't nothing like the American TV shows. Shonda Rhimes, I don't know what you were thinking. This is not Grey's Anatomy." I hate to break it to all of you who love the American television dramas based in hospitals. There are no handsome men waiting to seduce you into the hospital supply closet. If you're a Grey's Anatomy fan, I am here to break your heart- I never met Dr. Avery Jackson, McDreamy or McSteamy. Ladies, there wasn't even Old McDonald on the farm.

Instead, I felt myself standing there in the middle of this absolute chaos and sensory overload. Alarms, people screaming, the odors. The only way that I knew I was desired in the middle of the night was hearing that signature call for help from me. "Who the hell is on call for neurology, and where the hell is he?" I cowered in the corner, raising my hand. "I'm here." "Well hurry up, we have a potential stroke patient in room seven.



He's ruled out with cardiac enzymes; you only have 30 minutes left in the window to treat for an acute stroke."

I rushed on over, trying to drown out all the chaos that was around me. This was the first time that I noticed that my meditation practice was helping me. As I tried to drown out the noise, I remembered to take a pause, breathe, and focus in on this one particular elderly gentleman. When I looked, I realized wait, look at the way his arterial blood gasses are fluctuating and the way his chest is moving. This isn't a stroke; they missed the diagnosis. This is a clot in his lungs. I quickly paused and breathed and called for the lung doctors and the nurses to send him off for an emergency scan.

I thought, "Wait a minute." You know the one things that these patients do as I leaned over was vomit.

Right as he was vomiting all over my hospital scrubs, we sent him off for an emergency X-ray, and two female nurses who I had never met before come rushing in to help clean up the vomit off of me. Before they could even finish, I hear that signature call being yelled again, "Where the hell is neurology?" I run out, "Room four. Border patrol agent down. He's not moving the left side of his body, consciousness is fluctuating, and you've got four minutes until the entire squad is standing here over our heads. Hurry."

I quickly rush off to room four, and I stop and think. It was that moment, that sensory overload, that that stress response just started to kick in. It's almost like you could see the change of expression on my face and my inability to lose focus, and that stress response kicks in.

As I tried to drown out the noise, I remembered to take a pause, breathe, and focus in on this one particular elderly gentleman.

What happens when I hear that stress response? It's like you can see it, a whole tribe of Indian aunties passing judgment on me. "Look, here you are in the emergency room in the middle of the night, and God has dropped down a handsome and noble man in front of you, and you are covered in vomit. You may as well give up right now, shave your head and go become a monk and go meditate."

I took a deep breath, and I paused, and I meditate, and I rush into the room, and I start to take a history from this border patrol agent who's having difficulty moving one side of his body and a little bit confused. I just thought, "Let me just quiet down the stress and the voices in my head that are making me doubt myself and my abilities." I start to take some deep breaths, and I hear his deep voice, "Excuse me, Doctor. That deep breathing you're doing, you sound like Darth Vader. Are you sitting here in the emergency room meditating?" Oh my god, I had been discovered.

That would be weird, right, to be sitting in the middle of the hospital in a meditation? I quickly took a breath and gathered myself, and I did what I was trained to do in those days as a doctor, I became unemotional and detached, and told him, "I need to order an urgent brain scan. I'll see you when we admit you to the floor."

So a few hours later after I'd cleaned myself up and had results of his brain scan study, I go to the border patrol agent's hospital room. In there is sitting his entire squad. I cowered, and he says, "Hey, wait for guys. Look, here's that doctor that meditates."

"Excuse me, Doctor. That deep breathing you're doing, you sound like Darth Vader. Are you sitting here in the emergency room meditating?" Oh my, I had been discovered.

I started to rush away, and he goes, "No, no, no, no, doc. It's okay, come back. We meditate too." "Oh?" Started to twirl my hair like, "Hey, guess what? I'm not covered in vomit anymore." They go on to tell me this story of how as border patrol agents on the US-Mexico border, they adopted the practice of meditation.

They told me that they were part of a squad that would often partner with the Drug Enforcement Agency and other police, both from the United States and Mexico, who were there to apprehend criminals. Their particular unit was there to rescue victims of human trafficking. But what would happen if they got a tip-off that there was potential criminal activity somewhere at the border? They would all suit up and put on their armor, and rush into the warehouse or the hotel room and bang on the door loudly. Knock, knock, knock. "Border Patrol, police, DEA, come out with your hands up. You're under arrest for the illegal possession of drugs, firearms and human trafficking victims." With all that chaos and stress, they would often be met with gunfire, and innocent people would be injured and critical evidence destroyed.

They realized they needed to do something different, and so this border patrol's leader called in a martial arts master of Aikido. They didn't do this to learn the physical aspect of martial arts, but actually to learn the power of mindfulness and meditation. So they bring this in and learn the power of pause and meditation in their practice.

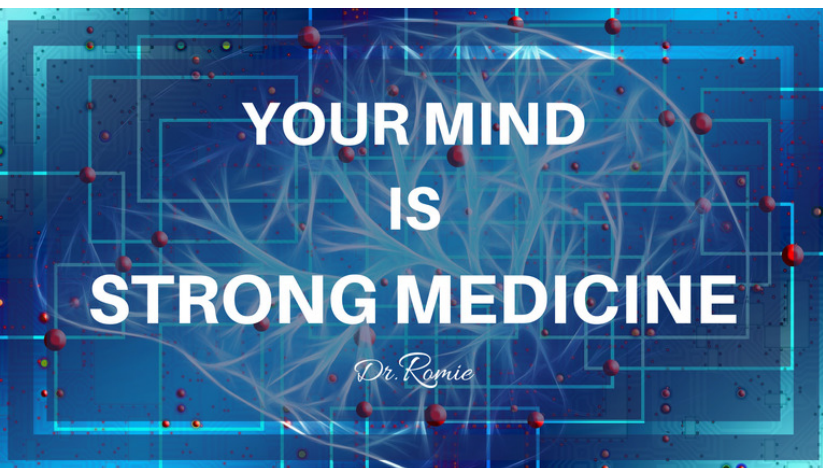
Now they shift, so that when they're out in the field, and multiple teams are gathering, they took a breath and paused. Then would put on their tactical gear and as the lead squadron, instead of rushing off with chaos and loud noise, they would calmly but strongly walk to the door and knock as if they were room service and said, knock, knock, knock, "Hello, we're with Border Patrol and DEA. You're under arrest; please come up with your hands up." In this calm manner, the alleged criminals would put their hands up, drop their weapons and walk out of the room.

After six months of this, they noticed that the incidences of negative outcomes dropped by over 80%. So how did meditation help a doctor in the emergency room and border patrol agents out in the field in the middle of critical situations? It's this idea that when you first control your mind, you control the situation. Let me repeat myself because when we stop to pause and breath, we control our minds. Then we're able to respond to a critical decision correctly.

Whether we're talking about bridging the gap between all the chaos that's going on in your personal life, or in your work life, could you take a moment and pause, breathe, and respond, and realize that when we control the mind, you control your situation. Some of you may be rolling your eyes and saying, "Dr. Romie, I'm like you working night and day. What personal life are you talking about?" I want to pause here and talk to you about why this relationship between my organization and corporate clients such as yourself.

As a neurologist specializing in integrative medicine and mindfulness, I want to help employers with tools that have been proven to work to impact the wellness of your employees. When given the tools that see each employee as a whole person, we all learn that when we control our mind, we control our situation in all areas of our life. This Whole Person Concept encompasses our work-life purpose, physical health, and personal relationships, ongoing happiness. As a result, we become successful professionals.

In my world, in the intersect of bringing together brain science and mindfulness, it's this idea that your mind is strong medicine. If we had to talk about using mindful leadership to navigate from that place of chaos to calm in your personal and in your professional lives, what would that look like? Number one, we're going to redefine what chaos looks like, and then I'm going to discuss mindful medicine to heal stress, and last, but not least, we're going to do an exercise together on cultivating calm, so let's define your chaos.



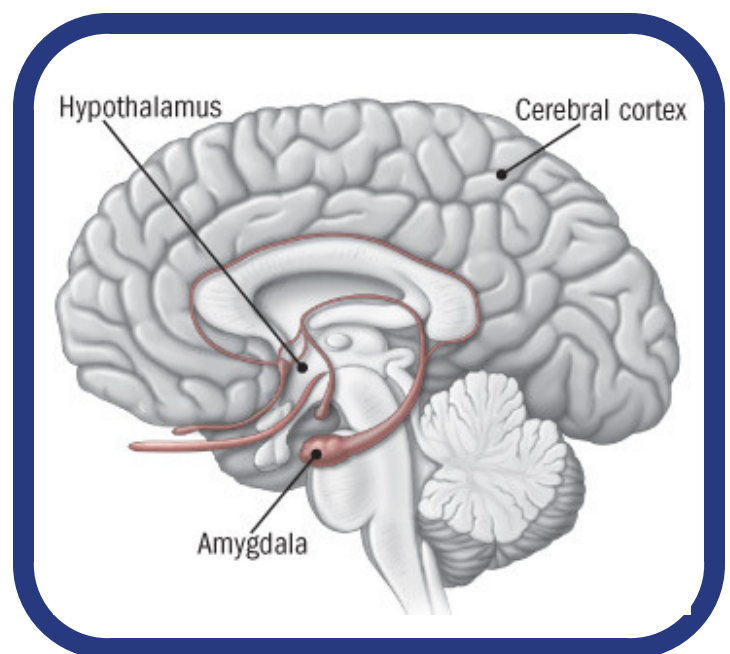
You don't need to be sitting in the middle of a life-threatening situation with a patient in the emergency room, or at the border rescuing victims of human trafficking. Chaos happens in our everyday life. For financial professionals, it's easy to tie your mood to how the financial markets are doing, right, and whether or not you're growing your client base. The truth of the matter is, stress has nothing to do with external circumstances. Stress can create a place where we feel like we're a prisoner with our minds.

The truth of the matter is, stress is this idea of how do I perceive the external demands that are on me versus how do I cope with them? This is why I'm here today, to teach you the brain science, psychology, and using mindfulness to free yourself from the prison of stress. What is stress? You heard the example of me standing in the emergency room, or the Border Patrol agent standing out in the field. When stress was high, I either had negative voices in my head of judgment from my Indian aunties, right, or the Border Patrol agents where the stress levels would go high, and it would create negative outcomes in the field with people shooting back, and getting rid of critical evidence. The brain responds to stress like this. There is this area here known as the amygdala. I call it the airport traffic control center of your brain. When that is triggered by stress, it creates something known as the stress response, or the fight or flight response. You have increased stress hormones, like glucocorticoids. The cells in your brain change and all your stress hormone levels are on full alert, and what happens?

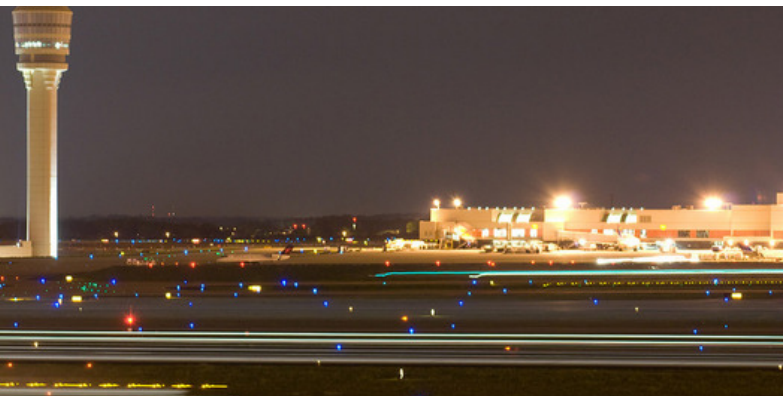
We become emotionally distressed, right? We eat poorly, and we start to lose sleep. Is there anybody in this room who can tell me that they crave spinach, or carrots, or apples when they're stressed, right? I know myself, is I am part of the chocolate is medicine tribe.

Does anybody else here love chocolate when they're stressed? Yes, even to this day, anybody knows that chocolate is my power food, but what happens to the brain when we are stressed, we crave these things. If it's not chocolate, it's salty foods, carbohydrates, fried foods, or the combination of cheese and carbs, like pizza, or samosa, right, or [inaudible 00:04:24]. What is it that we can do, but more importantly, as leaders, we know that our mind is the key to our currency and our success, and when the stress overtakes this airport traffic control center of our brain, what happens to the amygdala is that now, it shuts down. Like an airport with all the airplanes coming into runways. I know everybody in this audience has flown in from all over the world.

Does anybody know the busiest airport in the world? Going to give you a chance here to think about it and answer. Some of you may have flown through it. I did. Yes, it's the busiest airport is here in the United States, and it's Atlanta Hartsfield Jackson Airport.



On a clear day, in one hour, and approximately 125 flights land or take off during that period. What happens when there is a stress on the system, like bad weather, or a problem, right? The airport traffic control center shuts down all the runways. That's exactly what happens in our brain when we get stressed. Our airport traffic control center now shuts down emotional regulation, or ability to comprehend memory, and pay attention, and word finding, and our nutrition, and all of that goes to waste to keep critical things going.



This is the control known as the autonomic nervous system in our airport traffic control center, and the vaguest nerve is like the airport runways to all the different organs in our body, right?

How quickly does it shut down? Think about this. For those of you that know where Atlanta is in the United States if that airport traffic control tower is down and flights are suspended there, at Atlanta, how long do you think before flights are affected here on the west coast, in Los Angeles where we're sitting, right? In less than 10 minutes, and how about Hong Kong, or London, or Dubai?

Within 30 minutes. In our brain, it takes less than 30 seconds for the airport traffic control center in our brain to affect our stomach, affect our memory, affect our mood, and affect our blood pressure, right? This is the concept known as inflammation, and as a doctor, it's very interesting that we see both around the world

and here in the United States people rethinking, how does disease happen in our bodies? It's that inflammation is at the cause of so many of the critical diseases, like heart attacks, and Alzheimer's Diseases, and depression, and diabetes. How do you know if your airport traffic control center is working properly or not?

These are the three questions that I typically ask patients when they first come to the clinic to see me. When patients are stressed out, and they come to see us in the clinic, we do an entire panel of labs, looking at hormone levels, markers of inflammation, but it's these three questions I ask what the first things affected by your airport traffic control center are. Are you having difficulty falling asleep? Maybe you took a sleeping pill or alcohol to help you fall asleep, no problem, but then you wake up in the middle of the night, and you're wide awake. You're like; I may as well answer work emails or do the laundry right now because I'm not falling back asleep. That's problem number two, or here this is, problem number three, the most serious, is that you did whatever you needed to do to fall asleep, medicine, no medicine, and you stayed asleep. In fact, you're going to be like, Dr. Romie, I get eight to nine hours of sleep, but I still wake up feeling so tired. This is how we know that your airport traffic control center is off.

" I get eight to nine hours of sleep, but I still wake up feeling so tired." This is how we know that your airport traffic control center is off.

It's known in clinical terms, and the subject of the first book that I'm currently on is something I call "Busy Brain symptoms."

What happens when the stress responses trigger? How do you know? Not only do you have difficulty falling or staying asleep. You have abnormal food cravings. Maybe you're having difficulty losing that last five or 10 pounds. Your body is aching. You have joint pain, heartburn, gas, bloating whenever you eat, irritable bowel syndrome, or you have difficulty focusing. Anxiety, ADHD. These are all symptoms of inflammation that I call the busy brain symptoms, and there is an answer because the whole idea is that if we don't get ahold of how we're managing our stress, the stress could kill. Here in the United States, the Center for Disease Control says that 80% of all outpatient doctor's office visits are due to stress-related illnesses, and what's the number one cause of stress here in the United States, and likely these patterns are true around the world? It's our jobs, and I'm here not to tell you this just as a doctor, but also as a patient.

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As you heard on the main stage lecture, was that as I continued, as a neurologist, getting up in the middle of the night almost every night to work, and being sleep deprived, working 80 to 90 hour work weeks, I started to feel very physically sick and emotionally sick myself, right? It wasn't until I started to wake up in the middle of the night and have difficulty breathing, I realized something is wrong. I'm choking on my vomit or my saliva, and we went through years of workup when we finally figured out I have a rare medical diagnosis known as achalasia. It creates this inability to swallow, and by the time it was diagnosed, I had precancerous changes. I was so ashamed. I'm a doctor, and here I am, I can't manage my stress, and I got sick. As I was undergoing life-saving surgery, my worry wasn't, gosh, do I have cancer? It was sitting here thinking, how did I get to this place? Why didn't I learn to manage my stress better, and if I get to the other side, what would I do differently?

It turns out; I'm not alone. When you look at a global attitudes benefit survey done by Tower and Watson in 2014, they look at what happens when employees are highly stressed. They're more likely to utilize sick days, and productivity falls through the floor, so I'm not the only one. Whether you're not managing your stress, it's affecting your productivity, or how about your team members? More importantly, in the financial industry, and banking, we look at the importance of employee engagement. What we found in this same survey was employees who are highly stressed are 50% likely to be disengaged, whereas if your stress levels are low, you're excited to be working. That is the problem, so stressed out employees are using more sick days. They're absent. They're less productive, and they don't want to be at the job. There is a solution, and if you are listening to this story, and thinking, oh, my gosh, Dr. Romie.



"YOU ARE NOT ALONE AND YOU ARE NOT CRAZY "

Dr. Romie

That's me; I'm here to say this one thing. You are not alone, and you are not crazy. Let me repeat that. You are not alone, and you are not crazy, because there's nothing worse in the world to know that you can't manage your stress, and feeling like you're high, successful selves in the finance industry that you've done something wrong. I'm here to tell you, you are not alone, and you are not crazy.

Instead, I come today bringing the intersect of neurology, psychology, and mindfulness, to teach you how to understand that your mind is strong medicine. In fact, you are actually in control.

What does it mean to bring mindful medicine to heal stress, especially as it's related to the workplace? I start specifically with your role as a leader. If you're questioning, "What? What do you mean, Dr. Romie? I don't think I'm a leader," well, think about the different roles you play in your life.

Any time there are two or more people in a situation, there's an opportunity to lead, so whether you're leading in your business, leading your family, leading your spiritual community in your church, in your temple, in the synagogue, in the mosque, that is leadership. Bringing mindfulness into this leadership is that I'm cultivating this sense of present-centered awareness, that I am present with you as a leader.

Why is that important to heal stress in the workplace? We are trying to avoid working a chaotic situation where everything feels out of control. Instead, you show up when you pause, and you breathe, and you respond, saying, "I am present." This is not only about your present-centered awareness, but also your leadership of your team. As a mindful leader, you help your team members cultivate focus, clarity, creativity, and compassion, all while I think about how can I be of service to others. This is the quality of mindful leadership. How can be of service to others? So in alignment with who you are as MDRT members serving your community.



This may sound esoteric, but this is no longer even considered rare or a trend. Here in the United States, business literature has been talking about mindful leadership for almost a decade. Now, we see that mindfulness-based techniques are only for patients who arrive feeling stressed out, depressed, anxious and difficulty sleeping. Actually many leaders in the room such as yourselves who are saying, "I know I can perform better. I'm not quite at my peak."

I think of some of the clients that I've served, both in speaking and doing corporate workshops and individuals, is this idea of C-suite level executives coming to me saying, "How can you help me use the concepts of mindfulness and leadership to lead a team through a corporate merger, acquisition?" Professional athletes, basketball, golf players saying, "I want to come and improve my free-throw percentage range," or golfers saying, "I want to earn my golf tour card for the PGA." How many lawyers come saying they want to be at the top of their game when they're in court, in litigation? These are several of the profound examples of people who are already considered, like you, at the top of their industry saying, "I want to perform at my peak and stay there." That is how mindfulness helps.

Well, what has the neuropsychology literature shown us? That, when we're looking at meditation and how it affects our peak performance, that not only does that stress response turn off so that our airport traffic control center is fully open, but now we're engaging our centers of creativity, we're able to focus on tasks, be productive, and improve our performance. Who here in the room does not want to be that person, where we're productive and performing at our best?

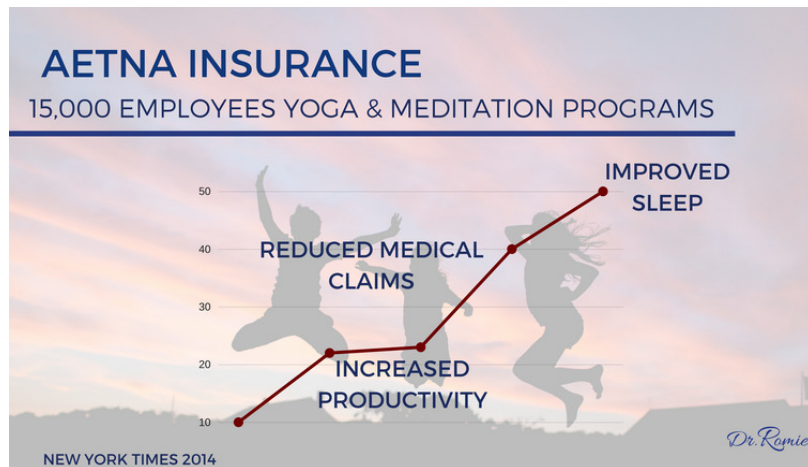
Companies have started to bring concepts of mindfulness and meditation into their companies. An example is Intel. They have a program known as Awake, and this was published literature back in 2014 showing that, when employees were put through a program where twice a week during lunch they were either offered a meditation or yoga class, that, on average, employees showed a 33 percent increase in reporting how well they felt in just eight short weeks. They had 20% reduction in their stress levels and 20% improvement in productivity. Eight weeks, meditation, yoga, and employees are saying they're feeling better, stress is reduced, and they're more productive and creative. Simple concept.

What about Aetna Insurance? They put 15,000 employees through yoga and meditation programs. Not only did they see that productivity and reduce ... Productivity improved, but they reduced medical claims and, more importantly, improved sleep. On an average, each employee had a reduction of \$3,000.00 in medical claims. This was reported in the New York Times, in their business section, in 2014.

Then, you're thinking, "Well, okay, if companies have done this and proven that it is strategic, as individuals, as leaders, and for their teams, how can I start with myself?" This whole idea is that to become a mindful leader, we must first cultivate calm in ourselves because you cannot get to know others until you first get to know yourself.

The first step in mindful leadership, it's not about who you're leading, it's about mastering the psychology of your mind, that you cannot get to know others until you first get to know yourself. This is mindfulness.

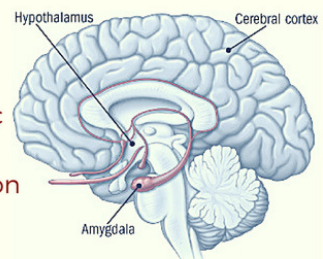
There's a lot of questions about what mindfulness means. It's not a religious term or spirituality. I know many of you are sitting here, like myself as a doctor, are highly analytical, like finance, and you're thinking, "What is mindfulness and what does it have to do with my performance and me?" Mindfulness, in psychological terms, is this idea that we train our brains to be present and pay attention in this current moment without judgment. Now, that may seem a little bit difficult. Say for your job is to analyze financial numbers, forecast trends, help your clients. My job is to analyze a medical patient and their medical diagnosis, but that's analysis. That's our rational thinking. That's our brain at peak performance. When we add emotions such as stress and negativity into it, that is judgment. Mindfulness is learning to train your brain to be present and pay attention without judgment.



What do mindfulness and meditation do? When we look at our airport traffic control center, we want to shut off that stress response, and the opposite of that is known as the relaxation response, coined by Dr. Herbert Benson at Harvard Medical School in the 1970s. He was one of the first researchers to look at effects of meditation on human health, human behavior, and the brain. What we found was that not only did meditation and controlled breathing techniques turn off the stress response, it helped to control your airport traffic control center in the brain, and that this system called the parasympathetic nervous system was stimulated. Well, what happens when that area of the brain is stimulated? The relaxation response kicks in, and your blood pressure drops. It helps muscle intention, improves your ability to focus and sleep. Your immune system is boosted and, all of a sudden, you're feeling well. This is all from 20 minutes of meditation a day. A clinical study is showing this.

THE RELAXATION RESPONSE

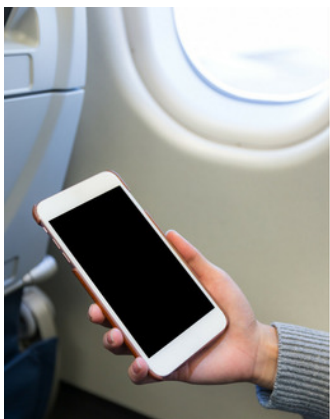
- Turning off the stress response
- Control center amygdala
- Stimulation of parasympathetic nervous system
- Controlled breathing, meditation & relaxation techniques



Dr. Romie

How can we bring this idea into a mindful prescription for ourselves as leaders? This is what it means to cultivate calm; I'm going to ask you to build upon what we talked about in the main stage lecture, on practicing digital detox, cultivating self-awareness, a key foundation in mindfulness. We're going to talk about the role of meditation, and then setting a positive intention. Are you ready to start?

We start with this idea, as a brain doctor, of protecting your sleep. Our sleep at night is set to help restore not only our mind and our memory but also our body. The body needs a chance to rest. When we're chronically stressed and sleep-deprived, and those inflammation markers are going up, we don't give the body and the brain a chance to heal. In Eastern spirituality, sleep is considered sacred. Why is that? There's this idea that, when we sleep, the spirit ascends to the heaven and so that, when we wake up, we need to be thankful because our spirit returned to our bodies and we're alive. They say, with that first breath, we should give gratitude for breath in our lives. If you've ever woken up and you are just lying there quietly, you'll often find that's the time when your most creative and innovative ideas or intuition are strongest. That is why sleep is sacred for the mind, the body, and the spirit.



DIGITAL DETOX

1. AIRPLANE MODE: Turn your phone and brain to airplane mode
2. WALK AWAY: from your desk or area of stimulation
3. COMFORT: comfortable seated position


Dr. Romie


I am asking you, for 30 minutes before bedtime, could you turn your phone and all your digital devices to airplane mode, walk away from all the stimulation, put the electronic devices in another room. If you need to do this in the middle of the day, take all of your electronic devices or walk away from your desk, and then find a comfortable, seated position. I ask you to do this for just 30 minutes before bedtime.


The second thing is, for those of you that said, "I can't fall asleep because my airport traffic control center in the brain is running a marathon," I want you to do something I call performing a brain dump. You take good, old-fashioned pen and paper and you create a list of everything that's in your mind, your to-do list, your emotions, the stories. Whatever it may be, write it all down. Why is that important? Because, when our eyes are seeing the paper, and our hands are touching the pen and paper, it's triggering our airport traffic control center to say, "Hey, calm down. You don't have to worry about that thing or remember it anymore." It stops that marathon of thoughts from running in our mind.

Once we've completed the digital detox and the brain dump, what is that next step? In the core of mindfulness is this idea that meditation is medicine for the mind. Are you ready to try? How about we start with a controlled breathing exercise for three minutes. I'm going to ask those of you that have pen and paper or your phones in your lap to go ahead and put those down. In fact, let's all do something together that may feel a little painful. Could you take your telephone and put it on the ground below you or underneath your seat? Don't worry; we're not leaving our phones here for the next group of people. What we're doing is practicing digital detox. This whole idea that, if I could teach you in three minutes how to use this breath break, the same one you heard me say I was using in the emergency room or the border patrol agents using in dangerous situations to control your brain, it's that simple.

Meditation Exercise

 Start with 3 minute breath break

 Waterfall meditation: welcome the rush of thoughts & emotions

 Thought Bubble: put your thoughts into a bubble blow it away

 Repeat mantra when distracted



SCRIPT FOR MEDITATION WE PRACTICED TOGETHER:

Go ahead and find a comfortable position in your seat. If you want, you can close your eyes. If not, find a point on the floor to focus your gaze. I want you to take a nice deep breath in through your nose, hold the breath, open your mouth, and exhale deeply. Good. Inhale, two, three, hold the breath. Exhale, two, three, four. Nicely done. I'll mind the time. We're going to do this for three minutes, inhaling to the count of three, two, three, hold the breath, and exhale, two, three, four. You'll hear my voice bringing you back.

Now, what happens when the thoughts start to invade our minds? Continue keeping your eyes closed and in that comfortable position. If your mind is filling with thoughts and ideas, that's okay. Be present with the flow and the thoughts. This is known as the waterfall moment in meditation. I want you to continue focusing on your breath. Now, as you breathe, bring your awareness to your head and your body and now your feet. Take nice deep inhale in. As you exhale, imagine sending the breath out through the bottom of your feet.

Now, what happens with all these thoughts? Do they feel like they're a waterfall overflowing and you can't sit here and meditate? That's okay. That's normal. I'm going to ask you to create a thought bubble. Is there one particular idea or story or something that's stuck in your mind, a to-do list? I want you to imagine that there is a large, clear bubble right in front of your head. Every time a thought, an image, a picture, a story, or emotion comes to you, imagine taking that out of your brain and filling it into the bubble one at a time. There's no judgment. For every thought, emotion, idea that you put in that bubble, it just rises away. Excellent.

Take a nice deep breath in and exhale out. With every time that thought or image comes to you, put it in the bubble. As you fill the bubble, imagine that it's slowly rising above your head. This concept of detaching from our thoughts, filling the bubble. As you do that, let's imagine all of the bubbles in this room are rising above our head and going through the ceiling and in the sky, all of our thoughts going along with it.

Then, we come to silent meditation. In this place, if you find your mind getting distracted, I want you to inhale, focusing on the word "calm," and, as you exhale, focusing on the word "peace." I'll mind the time, and you'll hear me ask you to set an intention when we're done.

As we close out this meditation, I want you to bring your awareness back into this room with this group of powerful leaders, and I want you to set an intention for the rest of your day. Do you want to be successful? Do you want to be calm? Are you strong? Then, say it. As you breathe in, "I am," and, as you exhale, exhaling the word. I am strong, and I am calm.


Whenever you're ready, you can open up your eyes and bring your awareness back into the room. You can wiggle your toes in your shoes, wiggle your fingers, and take a look around. Yes, welcome back. Congratulations to those of you that have just finished your first meditation. It's an honor to lead you.

Then, I leave you with this idea. Could you give yourself 30 minutes to come to a place of a strong mind? That takes 30 minutes before bedtime to turn off all your devices, do the brain dump, meditate, and set a positive intention. If you would like an e-book guiding you through all these steps and free guided meditation, you can text the word "STRESS" to 72000. Please be mindful that your text messaging rates and international rates, for those of you that are from abroad, apply. Text the word "STRESS" to 72000. We will send you a free e-book and a guided meditation. Wonderful.

People often ask me, "Dr. Romie, do you still meditate every day or do you just talk about this?" My team will tell you that my entire schedule, no matter where I'm traveling in the world and speaking, starts every day with my prayer and meditation practice. Why do I meditate?

MINDFUL RX FOR LEADERS

1. Turn off your devices
2. Cultivate Self Awareness:
writing Exercises: "brain dump" & "heart dump"
3. Meditate
4. Set a positive intention



I meditate because eight years ago, they weren't sure that I was going to survive life-saving surgery and, if I did, I was probably going to end up with a lot more surgeries and potentially disabled. I knew I had to find a different way to live. My mind has become strong medicine because meditation and my mindfulness practice have not only helped me to stay healthy but to fulfill this mission that's larger than myself, helping individuals and companies here in the United States and around the world understand what it's like to create a strong mind for yourself in order to become stronger and happier teams at work.

Today, I challenge you to meditate. Why? Because, if you take that moment to pause, you realize that, when you control your mind, you can control any situation that comes in front of you.

By bringing together medicine and mindfulness, you now have shifted to the place where you realize that your mind is strong medicine.

MEDICINE MEETS MINDFULNESS FOR HEALTH & LEADERSHIP



"Your mind is strong medicine"




[@DrRomie](#)

INVITE DR. ROMIE TO SPEAK TO YOUR ORGANIZATION
EMAIL: INFO@DRROMIE.COM



BrainUp!

CONQUER STRESS
FOSTER CREATIVITY & INNOVATION
CREATE MINDFUL LEADERS

Dr. Romie.COM

FEATURED MEDIA
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THE
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POST

USA TODAY

SUCCESS

npr

CBS

TED

Dr. Romie

"We live and work in over-stressed and sleep deprived environments. My mindful programs are based in science, & will show you how to breathe, live & lead with a calm consciousness." - Dr. Romie

Corporations, Associations, And Groups Around The World invite Dr. Romie To Learn:

1. BRAIN UP! 3 STEPS TO CONQUER STRESS

Dr. Romie teaches her three-step program that will help audience members improve mental and physical health by creating a personalized prescription for whole health.

This program is based on the latest research in neuroscience, positive psychology, and mindfulness. This program discusses science and medical evidence behind how shifting your mindset and mindfulness techniques will help you cope with stress.

This program has been requested as a 60-minute keynote address, half-day workshop or full-day interactive leadership wellness program.

2. MINDFUL LEADERSHIP: NAVIGATING CHAOS TO CALM

During change or times of uncertainty in the marketplace, stress can impact both personal health and team morale. During this interactive lecture, Dr. Romie will help attendees learn how stress negatively impacts your individual health and health of the organization. Specific topics to be covered include defining mindfulness, interactive meditation practices for the audience, and discussing core principals mindful leadership. After hearing this program, participants will be able to improve emotional resilience, self-awareness, and relationships.

3. FEMALE LEADERSHIP SUCCESS RX: GIVE UP THE WORK-LIFE BALANCE MYTH

The successful mindset of the modern-day female leader is to recognize her own talent, wisdom, and skills while standing with a core of compassion. Dr. Romie's motivational keynote address for women's groups debunks the life-work balance myth, teaches women how to feel balanced in life in the present moment, and reminds us all on the power of having a Sister Squad.

4. PAUSE! MINDFUL HACKS FOR CREATIVITY & INNOVATION

The creative mind often shuts down in the face of multitasking, over-analysis, and stress. Dr. Romie trains employees, corporate executives, and technology gurus on how to leverage the power of brain science and mindfulness to tap into creativity and imagination. In this interactive lecture, Dr. Romie teaches you how to boost productivity and creativity.

"YOUR MIND IS STRONG MEDICINE"

Romila "Dr. Romie" Mushtaq, MD

Featured Expert On:



THE HUFFINGTON POST



About Dr. Romie Mushtaq, MD



Romila "Dr. Romie" Mushtaq, M.D., ABIHM, is a traditionally trained neurologist with additional board certification in integrative medicine. Dr. Romie brings together Western medicine and Eastern wisdom to help individuals and audiences learn to heal from stress-based illnesses, achieve peak performance, and harness the power of mindful leadership.

All of Dr. Romie's programs are based in neuroscience, positive psychology, and mindfulness.

EDUCATION:

Dr. Romie completed her medical training at the Medical University of South Carolina, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and the University of Michigan where she won numerous teaching and research awards. She previously served as faculty at the Medical College of Wisconsin. After surviving career burnout and undergoing life-saving surgery, she traveled the world learning meditation, yoga and mindfulness techniques. She then used this knowledge to train and seek additional board certification in Integrative Medicine.

CURRENT ROLES:

Dr. Romie is a highly sought-after professional speaker, teaching the medicine behind mindfulness to groups and corporations. Her unique style captivates audiences to understand their success-stress patterns, manage stress, and use the power of mindfulness for leadership, creativity, and innovation.

Dr. Romie is also a national media expert and contributor in national press such as Fortune, Forbes, Success Magazine, Fox Business, The Huffington Post, and NPR. Dr. Romie shared her story and wisdom during her TEDx Talk "The Powerful Secret of Your Breath."

When not speaking around the country, she works with clients at the Center for Natural and Integrative Medicine in Orlando, Florida.

EVOLUTION HOSPITALITY, CHIEF WELLNESS OFFICER

Dr. Romie Mushtaq has been appointed Chief Wellness Officer for Evolution Hospitality. Evolution Hospitality is a privately held hospitality company headquartered in Orange County, California. As Evolution Hospitality's Chief Wellness Officer, Dr. Romie is responsible for leading the organization to better wellness bringing together her authority in brain health, integrative medicine, and mindfulness. Her initiatives have included research on the effects of digital device use in hospitality employees and implementing a corporate-wide meditation program—both of which are groundbreaking in not only the hospitality industry, but in Corporate America.

info@drromie.com

(407)494-8086

For more information, testimonials, and videos:

www.DrRomie.com

Social Media Influencer

@DrRomie



MINDFUL LEADERSHIP

NAVIGATING FROM CHAOS TO CALM

1. CONNECT TO YOUR CALM PLACE DAILY

Do you know what it feels like to be in a calm state both physically and mentally? To lead during times of high stress, chaos, or change, our brains must be trained on how to reset to calm. Find an activity for at least 20 minutes daily that calms all of your senses.

What is an activity that helps you put you at ease with sound, aroma, taste, touch, or sight?

2. BE AWARE OF YOUR OWN ENERGY

Before you act, stop and self-reflect.

How does the situation make you feel? Is it appropriate to share these feelings? What emotions do you want to transmit through the room?

Stop. Breathe. Count to 10. Choose the mood, emotion, or energy level you want to transmit. Be aware of your words, your body language, and your level of eye contact.

3. TRAIN YOUR BRAIN WITH MEDITATION

Meditation transforms the structure and function of the brain. Meditation trains our brain in a calm state in times of heightened stress and emotion. In this state of calm consciousness our analytical skills and memory remain functioning in peak performance.

RUNNING YOUR LEADERSHIP STATS

SELF- AWARENESS

1. WHAT DID I ACCOMPLISH
TODAY?

2. WHAT ASPECT OF WORK
NEEDS
IMPROVEMENT/ATTENTION?

3. DID I EXPRESS GRATITUDE
TODAY?

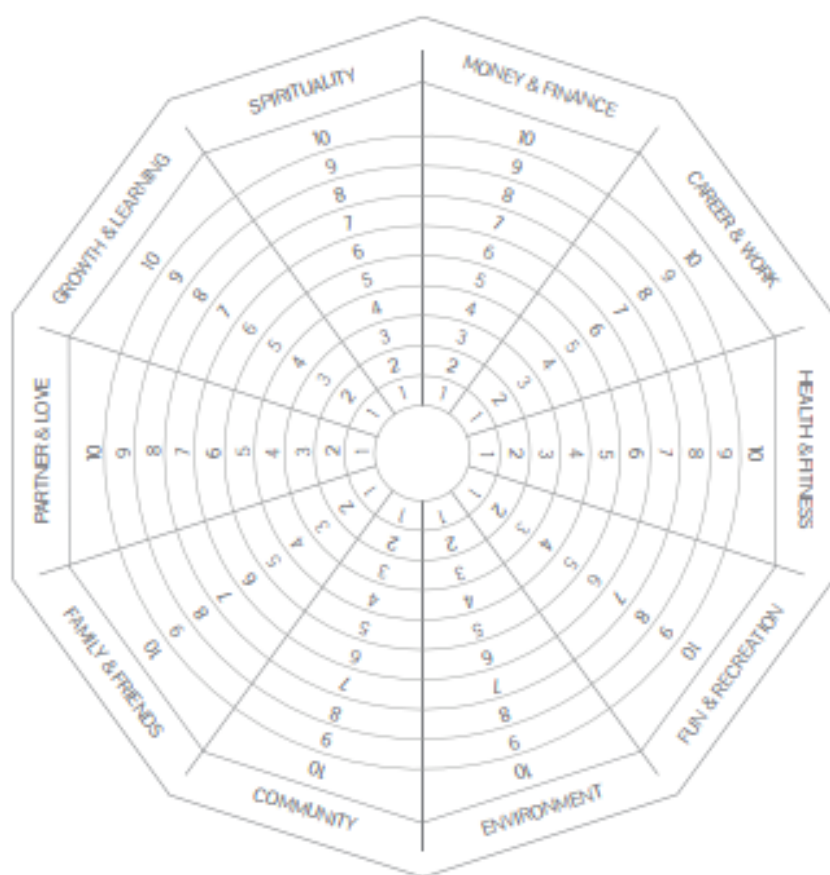
4. WHAT OR WHO INSPIRED
ME TODAY?

THE WHEEL OF LIFE

CHART YOUR LIFE BALANCE

This exercise can be used to clarify priorities for goal-setting. Allow yourself to plan so your current life becomes closer to your desired life by increasing balance between the different life domains.

- What is your satisfaction in each domain?
- 1 indicates that you are NOT satisfied at all
- 10 indicates that you are completely satisfied



*"Be present where
you are: be happy &
hungry for more"*

LIFE BALANCE

Life balance is not a destination, but a journey. When we are mindful of the present moment, we can assess how we feel about the various domains in our lives. If we are stuck in the past, we can get depressed. If we worry about the future it fuels anxiety.

Present Centered Awareness:

1. What domain draws your attention in this moment?
2. Why does this domain need attention?
3. What would it take to raise your satisfaction by one score in this domain?
4. What can you do to raise your satisfaction in this domain?