

Chapter 16

Meditation—Part 2

Meditation is so essential that I decided to include a second chapter about it in *The Offer*! This chapter discusses my use of meditation to further overcome the anger at my ex-wife, Aricka, that I described in the last chapter.

Writing *The Offer* has been a cathartic experience for me. To describe my past accurately, I have had to admit some uncomfortable truths about myself. I confess that I do not have perfect understanding of all my personal dysfunctions, neuroses, and cognitive biases. Nevertheless, the process of writing accurately about my life experiences forces me to examine my shortcomings more closely. That is frequently an emotionally difficult task.

While the truths about myself that I write about in *The Offer* are sometimes personally embarrassing, I have described them here with the goal of wanting to help people become wealthy. The reason why I think *The Offer* is so worthwhile, and why I have shared so much about my personal experience is because I know my experiences are not unusual. While my details are specific to me, things that happened to me in my

marriage and divorce are things that happen to everyone. Everyone grows up with unrealistic views of romantic relationships, and everyone at some level can understand the incredible pain of separation from someone that you love (or once loved in a different way). Everyone will experience trauma at some point in their life.

Toward the end of the last chapter, it sounded like I completely overcame those angry intrusive thoughts toward Aricka, right? Do you think that is true? Sadly, it is not.

While I wrote *The Offer*, I adopted a second meditation practice to combat my continuing angry thoughts toward Aricka. In addition to the fifteen minutes I spend with my meditation practice in the morning (employing my mantra word, “still”), I have adopted a separate fifteen-minute loving-kindness meditation practice for my afternoons. I try to establish regularity in this practice by starting as close to noon or after lunch as possible every day.

I direct my practice toward myself first, and then toward Aricka and her second husband of nearly two years, Charles, simultaneously. I direct the practice at myself first because I must have loving-kindness for myself. Without loving myself, I will be cobbled in how

I can love others. If I cannot perceive myself as the universe perceives me, then I am perceiving myself and my abilities inaccurately. I want to live in reality. I do not want to be bound by my cognitive biases and self-limiting beliefs. I want to live in the fullness of love that I know the universe has for me. I want to live in the fullness of love that I know the universe has for everyone, including Aricka.

I want to love others like Jesus loved me. Love is incredibly hard sometimes, and in fact when Jesus tried it, the religious authorities and government officials crucified him because he represented such an existential threat to their power structures. I believe that love can be a tremendously destabilizing force for the self-limiting power structures created when we engage in anger.

The loving-kindness that I direct toward myself in this meditation is articulated by these traditional prayers and mantras:

May I be filled with loving-kindness.

May I be safe from inner and outer harm.

May I be well in my body and in my mind.

May I be at peace and be happy.

These are not magic words, and they could change over time. Essentially, I am asking for blessings for myself that everyone wants from the universe. Love, health, well-being, safety from harm, and peace are the essential components of these blessings.

The next step is directing these thoughts toward the world:

May all people be filled with loving-kindness.

May all people be safe from inner and outer harm.

May all people be well in their body and in their mind.

May all people be at peace and be happy.

Finally, in my meditation, I narrow the scope to those people toward whom I experience the most anger, Charles and Aricka:

May Charles and Aricka be filled with loving-kindness.

May Charles and Aricka be safe from inner and outer harm.

May Charles and Aricka be well in their body and in their mind.

May Charles and Aricka be at peace and be happy.

During the short time I have engaged in this practice, I nearly always take the next step and direct these messages toward our children. This is the case

because I love our children, of course. This has relevance for Charles and Aricka, though, because they are both loving parents. (Charles is a widower and has children from his prior marriage.) I know that Aricka delights in her children like most mothers. She derives deep joy and life satisfaction from her relationship with them. For her to be at peace and to be happy is to have peaceful and happy children who have peaceful and happy relationships with her. I know that Charles feels the same way about his children.

When I recite these mantras, sometimes I visualize how Charles and Aricka are spending time together with our children, laughing, enjoying a shared experience, or simply sitting together reading books or watching a movie. I see images in my mind of them at peace and at ease and completely content. That is what I want.

Through this process I have understood much more what Jesus meant when he told us to love our enemies. This is such a radical concept. Charles and Aricka certainly are not my enemies but sometimes because emotions run so high and because my anger is so intense it feels like they are. Jesus' command to love our enemies is easy to obey with respect to Charles and

Aricka because we have so many common interests (our children) and because we once actually were friends at church (even though conflicts have taken a severe toll on our relationships). Despite the conflicts and anger that I feel toward them, I could never say that Charles and Aricka are my enemies. I genuinely want them to be friends again, and that is why I adopted this second meditation practice. I want to completely rid myself of all anger that I continue to carry toward them, and I want to engage in a regular focused practice that is intended to bless myself and them. Do you carry irrational anger toward anyone? Do you carry rational anger toward anyone?

Whenever I have an angry intrusive thought during the day, I speak my loving-kindness mantra.

I include this second chapter on meditation in The Offer first, because meditation is so important, but second, because I wanted to describe to you how I was seeking to release anger toward the person in my life with whom I have had the greatest conflict, my ex-wife. Can you relate?

It is unsurprising that we have conflict. We once were in love, committed our entire lives and futures to each other, but then later rejected those earlier

commitments in exchange for a divorce. The road from marriage to divorce frequently is paved with conflict. This is not unusual or surprising.

What I want to be surprised about in my experience with divorce are the results of the meditation practice I describe in this chapter. In some ways, I do not know how I can ever be friends with Aricka and Charles again. We have some radically different beliefs, particularly about the advisability and safety of the use of cannabis and psychedelics. It may surprise you that in 2020 this is a point of conflict between us because of how society's views toward cannabis and psychedelics have shifted so dramatically.

Nevertheless, many people continue to be concerned about legal issues surrounding cannabis and psychedelics. They remain illegal to possess in many jurisdictions, but in the United States we truly are witnessing the dying throes of the War on Drugs. Independent of the legal issues, very conservative Christians believe that ingesting cannabis and psychedelics are the same thing as sorcery and in one specific sense they are correct. If I am attempting to commune with demons or spirits, that is the definition of sorcery, a practice condemned by Christians. I would

like to write another book about the relationship between Christianity and psychedelics. I highly recommend a book on this topic that already has been written, *The Immortality Key* by Brian C. Muraresku (who also happens to be an attorney). Brian describes the “continuity hypothesis” that links the ancient Greek Dionysian Mystery rights from the Temple of Eleusis (which certainly involved the ritual use of natural psychedelics) to the early adoption and practice of Christianity immediately after the time of Jesus.

Conflicts over beliefs about anything, including cannabis and psychedelics, never become so evident or seem more important when they relate to our religion or politics. Conflict also arises strongly when we disagree about how to communicate our beliefs to our kids and how we train them in right behavior and morals. This is the case because caring parents usually have strongly held beliefs about what is best for their children. All parents have responsibilities for communicating morals and training behavior in their children. Communicating beliefs and training our kids about “drugs” has been a major point of contention between Aricka and me.

Nevertheless, I believe that I can train my heart to expand in the direction of Charles and Aricka. Why

am I doing this? Remember how my meditation starts. I must love myself before anyone else. I am taking this focused action to release my anger because every ounce of my energy spent toward feeding anger is wasted. There exists the concept of effectiveness, which is simply the most efficient direction of energy toward a goal. If you continue to carry anger in your heart, if you continue to direct energy toward feeding anger like I do too frequently, that anger is going to be a detractor from your ability to accumulate wealth. You will be devoting time to an unproductive activity. You will be ineffective. Please join me in giving up the hobby of anger. I am taking specific steps to release mine and I would strongly encourage you to do the same. In fact, if you accept The Offer and you hear what I think about your answers to the questions of The Task, I will direct you to this chapter if you tell me about continuing anger in your life. Know that you are not a victim to anger, and you can take specific steps to overcome it. You also are not alone. Everyone experiences anger.

To conclude this second chapter on meditation, I would emphasize that there are many types of meditation. I have described two different types of mantra meditation practices in The Offer (in the last

chapter and in this one). I encourage you to find the type that you personally can connect with the best and the kind that you think that you can practice the most regularly. It is only through a regular and consistent practice that you will get the results from meditation that I describe here.