

If you only have a minute: Rooted and Unwavering is all about connecting deeply with ourselves, others and our service in the world. How can restorative practices guide us in overcoming limiting beliefs and bring us to a peaceful place?

Live Life from the Inside Out

By Esther Groves and Hylke Faber

Early in his life, Don Johnson became curious about what lived within him other than his thoughts. “I realized through different experiences that I'm not my thoughts,” he recalls, “and that brought me into my monk, ashram, Yogi experience where I wanted to find a connection to my inner, higher self - to my spirit. I began to appreciate being centered, grounded, and more intentional about what I say and do.”

His practice allowed him to reach true connection where he felt more alive, thoughtful, and vibrant. And he lived happily ever after, right? Not so fast!

After ten years as a monk, Don, a leadership consultant and author of *Living a Conscious Life: How to Find Peace, Wholeness, and Freedom in a Chaotic World*, sought help from a therapist who convinced him he needed to seek balance. He learned about his many personal dimensions: spiritual, physical, emotional, and mental. All of the meditation he had immersed himself in was great for his spirituality, but he had neglected other aspects of his being.

Eventually, Don shifted to work in corporate America, where, at times, he was in over his head, and his inner practices and centeredness were swept aside by stress and pressure. When that happened, he didn't behave in ways that he liked, and he learned some hard lessons.

For example, Don recalls, “I was afraid of having a conversation with someone because of what might happen. But I knew I had to have that conversation to find out what was on the other side. Like the trapeze artist, I was holding on to the trapeze. I knew that to grab the other trapeze, I had to let the first one go. [I realized] I'll never know what's possible if I don't let it go.”

When I started paying attention to my negative self-talk, I realized that I was trapped in my own belief that I was not good enough. I could never do this. Then, someone suggested he tell himself, “Having this conversation will not be as hard as you think. In fact, it will be fun and easy.” He tried the technique, and it worked.

This one small practice totally changed his life and liberated him from something he knew wasn't serving him: limiting beliefs. To route out other limiting beliefs, he learned to ask himself, “What am I afraid of, and what do I believe about that?”

Don noticed that leaders with restorative practices can rebound quicker, recover faster, and find their way through difficult situations more easily because they understand that working in overdrive just leads to burnout. So, how does he suggest avoiding burnout?

“Be kind to yourself,” says Don. “There's no point in beating yourself up for feeling disconnected or flooded - it's just wasted energy.” He suggests discovering what practices you have in your toolkit that can center you and bring you back ‘home.’ Consider meditating, taking a walk, journaling, or singing

opera at the top of your lungs. “When you sing from your belly, you can't think at that moment. You're free.”

“Live your life from the inside out. Live with a sense of gratitude and joy for what you have. Maybe you don't have as much as somebody else, but we all know when we're grateful for what we have, it makes us feel wonderful. I try to practice that every day, just looking at the fact I'm alive. I've got many things to be thankful for, and with that, I'm at peace.”