

3BOOKS - Light Watkins

Neil: Are you in Mexico City?

Light: I am in Mexico City.

Neil: I don't hear the Tamali guy going by.

Light: I know, you've been here before then, huh?

Neil: No, I heard you talking about how loud it is all, all the time though

Light: Oh, yeah. It is really, I normally give that disclaimer when I start these conversations. Like, I may have to stop occasionally. Um, and it probably will. It's, it's really unusual to go more than 30, 45 minutes without hearing somebody selling something through a bullhorn. So in music, so we'll see. We'll see how it goes. Fingers are, Cause I

Neil: Cause I don't think, I don't think I've seen you since March 7th, 2017. We were in Williamsburg in Brooklyn at the Shine Movement.

Light: Yep. That was a beautiful day, man.

Neil: It was a beautiful day. What, what, what is the Shine movement?

Light: So, the Shine was a inspirational variety show that I started in June of 2014, and it was incubated. It was an incubation for maybe a year or two before that. It was one of those ideas, man, that you have and you're like, Oh, you know, somebody should do, uh, an event where it's not centered around alcohol and it's, uh, you know, it's got like a TED Talk component and there's like live music and there's maybe some comedy and may and oh, oh, you know, it'd be cool if there's meditation and uh, and then we could bring people together and we can have food and it would be this wonderful social event that would give you a natural high. And, and man, when is somebody gonna do that? And of course, nobody had done that. And then I thought to myself, Well, maybe I'm waiting for permission for somebody to tell me to do it. And why don't I just get myself permission to, to be the change I want to see, to create the event that I have always dreamt of going to. Because at that point I was, um, I was 40 years old. I just turned 40 years old.

Neil: and you were living in New York?

Light: 2014. I was living in LA.

Neil: OK

Light: And I stopped drinking when I was about 26. So, and I wasn't, I'm not like a, I never had a problem, so I wasn't a part of a recovery community or anything like that. Um, which, and those things, I'm glad they exist but I'm not really attracted to. I'm glad they exist but they have a certain tone. I'm not really attracted to. My friends who are in recovery tell me, there's a lot of cigarette smoke. There's a lot of like, long winded story telling

Neil: styrofoam cups to coffee.

Light: Yeah. A lot of coffee and I wanted to do something a little sexier than that, you know, with, with, with the LA crowd, the sexy girls and the sexy guys and the young people and the hip people. And, and so that's where it started was in Los Angeles. And then you and I connected at the Shine in New York because shortly after the Los Angeles one took off, people in New York got excited about it and I was traveling to New York for work, uh, teaching meditation workshops. And I decided to try to create it in New York. And so that happened. And then, yeah

Neil: and it ran monthly?

Light: Yeah, it was like a monthly event. Cause I was in New York about once a month, half the time in LA.

Neil: And how many years did it run for?

Light: Five years was a five year long thing.

Neil: So for people listening, my memory of this event was I went to a hotel, was just full of these exciting, interested, turned on people. Like you said, there's music, there's great, you know, vegan food. There's a talk, I was lucky to give one of them. You have wonder, you've had wonderful speakers, including mutual friends of ours like Rich Roll and uh, and so on. You led a meditation, there was, I think people like, you know, doing a drumming workshop. It was just such a beautiful night. Many people think of doing them like that. But to get it off the ground, running in New York and LA for five years on a monthly basis, it's incredible. What, what, when you look back on, on, on that event, the shine movement, what jumps out to you? What was, what was something you learned from that experience? What's something you might do differently? What

would you suggest to someone who was listening who's like interested in organizing or fomenting, some kind of inspirational community variety show like that?

Light: Well, you should have seen the first one. The first one was about 12 people . We were in this little rented dance studio in West LA, I rented it for \$50. And uh, and I did everything. I did the meditation, I did the talk, I did the, I made some homemade honey, lemon, ginger tea, uh, you know, so it was all, it was all very grassroots and passion driven. I had one volunteer who helped out and uh, and so it started from very humble beginnings. I think if you were to walk into that event that you and I collaborated on, you may think, Oh, there's no way I could do this cuz it's just too many moving parts. But it built very organically, very gradually. And you know, I don't know if you've taken like Landmark or MITT or something, but, you have to enroll people in your vision when you, that's what they teach you on these personal growth, uh, personal transformation courses. You have to enroll people in your vision and, and you have to be passionate about that thing that you're, that you're trying to do enough so that people, um, also feel like they're a part of it. So what did I learn? It, it was a great opportunity for me to, to be the kind of leader that I wanted to be cuz I, in my normal work when I'm hosting workshops, it's, it's very solo entrepreneur.

Neil: you mean the meditation workshops?

Light: Yeah. I've got a couple of little assistants and stuff like that. I made a decision from the very beginning that this was, the Shine movement was gonna be a hundred percent volunteer. We ended up charging people just to pay for the stuff, pay for the space, pay for the food, pay for, you know, the honorariums for the musicians and stuff like that. But other than that, as you know, you, you, you do, you know, you have these really hefty speaking fees you came and agreed to, to talk for free. And so you have to get everybody on board with that mission. Hey, this is just to give back. This is to inspire people in the way that we want to be. We want to be inspired. And my, my sort of, uh, operating quote was the Ralph Waldo Emerson quote. "Our chief want is someone to inspire us to be who we know we can be." So that was the basis. Uh, through which I invited people to come and participate. And I say I, but really it was a team of us who would pitch ideas, but it really started off with me trying to, you know, like I brought my salsa teacher in once who was a meditator. This is back in the early days, and he led a salsa workshop because I was excited about salsa. So I figured, hey, there's gotta be other people out there who, who would connect to this? I love standup comedy, right? I love standup comedy, so I thought let's bring some standup comedians in and have like a little standup set and some

improv and, you know, just whatever it was like, it was, it was a way just to experiment with, with, uh, on a large scale with what I personally like and, um, and to introduce other people to this in a fun, sober environment.

Neil: Wow. How so? Even the first 12 though, is it like you're sending a group email to like everybody, You know?

Light: I sent out, um, I had an email list probably of a thousand people at the time and I sent out an email telling everybody what I was doing. I was, I was thinking I'd get at least 50 or 60 people. It was free too. I wasn't charging anything. And uh, and I got about 12 people and only about three of those 12 people came from my email list, The other nine came from somebody who brought them, who they were like friends of this girl who, uh, who came with her. So it was a little discouraging in the very beginning. And, you know, it was, it could have been very easy to, to conclude that people aren't really into it. But, you know, as you know, I don't know a whole lot about your professional history, but I will soon cause you're gonna be on my podcast. But it's a consistency game. You know, you have to just be consistent with with whatever you're trying to build. And I understood that from building my meditation practice before that, from building my yoga practice. So you just have to show up week. And it was, at that point, it was every week. It was every like Thursday night or something and um,

Neil: the one I went to was like 300 people or something. And you inspired people, the vision, because I told some friends in New York that I was gonna be speaking at this and they wanted to come along and, uh, you know, it's word of mouth and, and it's inspiring to hear that though. You're running an inspirational show and you're just inviting friends to come and you get it off the ground. You make wonderful connections. I have very fond memories of that, of that night. And, um, I know what you mean about, you know, kind of consistency. I wrote, I wrote 1000 awesome things and my whole thing was posted every single night at 12:01 AM some days it was a one liner if I couldn't think of anything. Some days it was a long one if I'd had a lot of time. But just showing up every single day, you know, there's a reason the pitcher with the most wins, also has the most losses. And, you know, the, the guy with the most in completions of football's, the most incompletions, like it's just, How many times can you take a swing? And also, the more times you take a swing, the more, the more times the bad swings gets forgotten. Right. People remember the good ones. So yeah, I think there's a lot to consistency.

Light: You, you were my inspiration man in, in a, in a lot of ways because, um, I started writing a daily email that I sent out at 6:00 AM every morning called

the Daily Dose of Inspiration. And I started that in 2016. I didn't know about you at that time, but later on I found out about you and I found out about, I found out about the 1000 awesome things and that became the, um, one of my sort of inspirations for my most recent book, which is 108 daily doses of inspiration, which, which were sort of like the greatest hits of those five years. It's actually now six plus years of daily inspirational emails that I sent out, but that, that also ties to the shine. You asked me what was my, one of my biggest takeaways, so you may remember, there's the whole event sort of culminates around this thing that we call the Shine on challenge, which was the philanthropic component basically. Basically people would pay like \$25 for a ticket. Most of that money would go towards paying for the event space and the food, and then whatever was left over, we would actually gift to someone in the audience just randomly, and they would be tasked with using the \$400 in cash that we would hand them on stage to go out, take this money and make the world a better place in whatever way you are inspired to do so. And we heard so many amazing ideas. But when that first started, it started in the dance studio. The one that I was paying \$50 for, and my assistant, the person who was helping me said, You know, we should start collecting donations so you don't have to pay for the space outta your own pocket. So I thought, Okay, well let's, let's try it out. And we solicited donations at the next week's event. Probably got like \$40. It was, there was probably like 20 people there. We got like \$40. And I thought to myself, Well, that's not a lot of money for 20 people being there, right? I mean, some people didn't contribute at all. And I thought I could use this money to reimburse myself, or at the next event I could give it to somebody and tell them to go out and do something good with it, even though it's just \$40. And so we decided to do that. And after doing that, the next week's donations shot up to like \$170 or something. Like the same amount of people were there, but they just all got so inspired by the possibility of taking some of that money and using it for good. And that really is what launched it from an event with like a dozen people to an event with hundreds of of people. And I realized that it's really about making it a, you know, about helping people, about serving, about, about inspiring, and, and that, that was why I decided to kind of lock in on this daily inspirational email because, um, I, I, I recognize that as, as my mission here on earth is to leave, leave the planet better, more inspired than I found it.

Neil: I love the inspiration that flows through you Light, and it is, uh, it's been a pleasure kind of getting to know you over the years if I have it right. You're born in Alabama, right? Sometime, you know, I wanna say 20 to 30 years ago. You're working in New York as a, as a model, right? If I'm right. And you eventually kind of leave that industry to go to LA you become one of the first yoga teachers, a very popular yoga teacher in the early 2000s. At the end of one those yoga classes, you change your name to Light. You expect a huge response to that. Everybody shrugs as if you've said, I'm going downstairs for a cup of

coffee, so you, christen, a new name and you at that time, I think sometime in those early LA days, do you not pick up a book called How to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie. I got that book right here. Right now I'm holding it up. You know it's got this very famous teal border, The Big blue kind of cursory font. How to Win Friends and Influence People. Over 75 years in print. The First and still the best book of its kind. The only book you need to lead you to success by Dale Carnegie. The back says you can go after the job you want and get it. You can take the job you have and improve it. You can dig any situation and make it work for you. Dale Carnegie's rock solid time tested advice has carried countless people up the ladder of success in their business and personal lives. This book was published in 1936 by Simon and Schuster Dale Carnegie lived from 1888 to 1955, an American writer and lecturer and one of the OG creators of self-improvement salesmanship and courses in public speaking and interpersonal skills. This book is sold over 30 million copies and Dewey Decimal Heads can file it under 1 5 8.1 for self-improvement. So Light take us, keep going down the rabbit hole into your life in LA at the time, and tell us about your relationship with how to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie.

Light: You know, I, I, first of all, I just want to applaud your research there. That was pretty impressive. I don't think I've had anybody put piece together my life in the way that you just did. Um, so thank you for that. And yeah, you know, I, I, I was, as you were speaking, I was trying to remember how exactly I came across that book, but I definitely knew about it much, much earlier, um, just by the title. And I always thought the title was a bit corny, How to Win Friends and Influence People. Cause obviously you start to think to yourself, I'm a very social person. I don't really need friends. I don't need to be taught how to make friends. And it was one of those books that I, I picked up and, you know, I'm gonna create a store, a backstory now, but it could be true. I don't, I don't know for a fact, but there's this book store in Los Angeles called The Bodhi Tree. It was the old school spiritual bookstore, it's not around anymore. Um, but I used to spend an inordinate amount of time in the bodhi tree, just kind of walking.

Neil: How do you spell Bodhi?

Light: B O D H I like, like Buddhist. Okay. Like the Buddhist Bodhi tree that he became enlightened under. Which is where they got the title. And I would just go from aisle to aisle and, you know, they'd have all these esoteric genres of books. Books on near death experiences, books on, uh, the afterlife, you know, books on spirituality, meditation, et cetera. And, uh, and I'm pretty sure I, I would've come across how to win friends in a place like that. So again, I'm not

positive, but, um, let's just go with that as a story. And I remember picking it up. and just being completely blown away by the opening chapter where Carnegie talks about, he describes this scene of this guy who was, who was, uh, in a shootout against the police in New York City, like back in the 1930s or whenever it was. And, and then the twist was you, you would think that this person, you know, was a bad person or knew he thought he was a bad person, but actually he wrote a letter to one of his relatives just describing how, how good of a person he was. And, um, and Carnegie uses that as an example to show how it doesn't matter what anybody does that you consider to be bad. No one thinks of themselves as a bad person. And I just remember that really. It was a, it was very profound realization for me. It's like, Wow, that is true. Like, I've never woken up and thought of myself as a bad person, even though I've done things that have been interpreted as maybe underhanded or what have you. But I could always explain it if, if someone took the time to get to know my circumstance, and that was, that was Carnegie's point. And so that really got my attention and I couldn't put it down from there. And I just, I, it's one of those books that I would go back and reread at least once a year because you just, you can never be reminded enough that criticism doesn't really work and that you want to be, you want to give more praise than you give criticism. And that's something literally, I think about every single day, like when I'm talking to my team now. I have the most critical eye for the things that I'm working on, much more than my team does, you know, And it's because it's, it's, I have ownership over it. And they, they don't, they care about it, but they're not staying up at night tossing and turning thinking about, you know, the, the details and the, the nuances of how I'm running my business. And it's very tempting to critique, um, people's work when it's not up to whatever you consider to be the standard. And I have to always, always remind myself that the bitter pill of criticism goes down a lot easier if you have, if you've given the sweet uh, pill of praise enough. And so if someone is getting offended or defensive, usually that's an indication. It's not an indication that your critique is not accurate. It's an indication that you haven't funded the relationship with enough genuine praise and appreciation and approbation and compliments.

Neil: Did you say approbation?

Light: Yeah.

Neil: I don't know what that word means.

Light: That's a word that Carnegie uses. He says be lavish. Lavish with your approbation, and your praise.

Neil: Yeah. Cause I got the principles written here. Don't criticize, condemn, or complain. That's the first one. Give honest and sincere appreciation. That's the second one. The third one I thought was interesting. Arouse in the other person an eager of want. I thought that was interesting cuz you're a meditation teacher. , and I think you came to meditation through transcendental meditation. Um, although at the time, I don't think you'd called it that for the idea of kind of, I think closing your eyes, you know, uh, sitting in a comfortable posture and just repeating the mantra to yourself. Is that, was that the way you got into meditation?

Light: I actually got into meditation in New York. Um, it was a very unstructured way of, I was just dabbling. I was just trying to, you know, going to different things, seeing what, what resonated, what didn't, most of it did not resonate. And then when I moved to Los Angeles, I was introduced to a man who would be, who had been a transcendental meditation teacher for like 30 years. And that's where I got the mantra and, and learned that style of meditation. But that's where I really consider myself to become a daily meditator, because before then I was a very reluctant meditator because I never really had any experiences that I felt, or deep or profound or blissful. And when I started me, uh, working with my teacher within, literally within days, I started having the most amazing, um, meditation experiences with the settled mind and the blissful, you know, feeling and all the things you would read about that a meditation practice can deliver. And I was actually having it, It wasn't my imagination before I thought, oh, maybe people are just imagining these things, energy moving around their body and whatnot. But I actually was having a tangible feeling of them. And that's, that's where I locked in on, on becoming a daily meditator.

Neil: I feel like I've tried meditating. Several times, including Pang and taking a transcendental meditation course here in Toronto. Um, and, and somehow, and I've, you know, I've tried Headspace, I've tried Calm, I've, I've paid for, you know, countless apps. I've read the research. I know, I know how good it is for you. And somehow for me, you, it's just never stuck more than once or twice even. You know, I, I, I, I just, What are, what are the biggest barriers people have to Meditation? What, why, you know, if it's so good for, you know, what, what's preventing more of us from, from, I mean, this is what you teach, so I'm kind of, I'm like kind of taking your course here, but what, what's preventing more of us from leaning in or, or figuring it out?

Light: It goes back. I, I think in my experience, it goes back to that Emerson quote right? "Our chief want is someone to inspire us to be who we know we can be." So I met a lot of quotes, teachers, meditation teachers, before I met my

actual teacher. And I just never resonated with, with them. I, I gave what they were teaching a try, but it just didn't resonate. And I think it's because, and I didn't know that, know it until I met my teachers because they hadn't embodied it. There's something about meeting someone who has embodied the principles of which they're teaching and makes you go, Oh my God, that's what I want. And if he happens to be teaching fly fishing, then I'd be talking about fly fishing right now. I would've taken his fly fishing course, but he just so happened to be teaching meditation, you know, And I take it back to like high school . I pretty much hated school. Like the class part. I loved the social aspect, but the class part, because I didn't have any good teachers, it's not because calculus isn't relevant or accounting isn't relevant or Spanish. Now I'm learning Spanish. But back in high school I wasn't interested in learning Spanish because I didn't have the teachers that made me, that in invoked that level of curiosity and interest. And so I just kind of, you know, I took the tests and went through all the motions, but I didn't really get into it. But I've since met teachers who teach all those things. And they just, they, they've been able to, uh, invoke that curiosity that's made me want to learn more about it. And my meditation teacher was, was that person for me. And that's what I feel like I am for a lot of other people. People who've, who maybe even tried the same style of meditation, but it just didn't, like you described, it, just didn't really stick with it. When you come in and study with me, then you usually, people leave that excited about meditation because I'm so excited about it. And I've had the experience of knocking my head against the wall, so I know what that feels like. And there's no dogma around my approach. I'm very much the, the meat and potatoes, you know, if it's, if it's, if you can't explain something simply, you don't understand it well enough, which is the Einstein quote. And that's what I've also, that's my sort of north star in my teaching is how do I break this down very, very simply? And you know how it is when you write a book about, something you have to organize your thoughts around it in such a way that you, you explain things more simply and using stories and whatnot. And that's what happened with my, the book before, the last book, which is Bliss More: How to Succeed in Meditation Without really Trying. I think that really helped me elevate my teaching to even higher levels and, and it helped people get more out of studying with, with me.

Neil: So if someone comes to study with you, uh, and I've seen your wonderful videos on, you know, Instagram and so on where you're encouraging people to practice it. What does that look like? Is it like a, a four week once a week one? Well, how do you structure that? I'm, I'm So for people listening that want to learn how to meditate or are interested in your course, tell us, tell us how you do that?

Light: So there are a few different ways to, to connect with me. Well, the easiest one, the quickest one would be to just maybe download my audio book for Bliss More, and that will take you through step by step. Not having a meditation practice or having a meditation practice that you don't enjoy into understanding the mechanics of meditation enough to be able to meditate on your own with some enjoyment. Okay, Next to that, I have a community called the Happiness Insiders, which I started during the pandemic. And this is a community of people who are dedicated to their inner, the quotes, inner work, which includes practices like meditation, gratitude exercises, et cetera. My first book was called The Inner Gym, A 30 Day Workout for Strengthening Happiness. And the premise of that book is that happiness is like a muscle that you have to cultivate, just like you have to cultivate your physical muscles. In order to do a pull up, you need more than just understanding of what it takes to do a pull up. You need to actually cultivate the mu, the, the strength to be able to pull yourself up. And I say happiness is not a choice. As much as it is like that, a muscle that you have to cultivate. And once you cultivate it, you can experience, you know, loss, grief, all these things. And your ability to bounce back is gonna be a lot stronger because you've cultivated it through your daily inner work. So that's the basis of this happiness insiders community. And within that community, I have a seven day meditation kickstart, which also teaches people the mechanics. And then I have a 108 day meditation challenge, which helps you form the habit and try to meditate.

Neil: for 108 day straight.

Light: Correct.

Neil: Wow.

Neil: how long do you recommend people meditate for when they're just starting out?

Light: Well, in that 108 challenge uh, 10, 10 minute a day recommendation, which is on the low end of things.

Neil: And you, you recommend meditating in the, At my, am I picturing right? You're sitting in a comfortable position, your eyes are closed, you're in uncomfortable clothes, and you are, What's happening in your mind?

Light: You are allowing your mind to do what your mind already naturally does, which is to think right, and, um, you, which means you're not focusing on anything, which is one of the major instructions. When you go to a meditation

class, focus on the white light, focus on your breath, focus on this sound or whatever. Focus on this thought. You're not focusing, you're not letting go of anything. You don't have to let go of certain thoughts in favor of other thoughts. You don't have to witness your thoughts like clouds. You don't have to notice the sensation between your nose and your lip, right? All of those are ways of activating the mind. And what you ultimately want is you want to, you want to de excite the mind, and the irony is the way you de excite the mind. Is by allowing the mind to do what it does, which is to roam around and wander and get lost and get distracted and, and, and have seemingly random thoughts. And if you can master your ability to do that without, without realizing it, you will find your mind becoming increasingly more and more settled. And, um, and that's the experience everybody wants to have.

Neil: I feel like that is what I am trying to do when I'm trying to fall asleep?

Light: Yeah. I mean, and here's the thing with, you know, trying to fall asleep, sleeping is a natural function of the body. You, you, you, we shouldn't need more than just lying horizontal to fall asleep. But because we live in this society where we're always stimulated and we're coming across all these, you know, hundreds of thousands of people physically and, and digitally on a daily basis. It can cause the body to become more, uh, stressed than it would've been, say, five or 10,000 years ago. And so that's why a lot of people are finding it harder and harder to fall asleep naturally, right? And so meditation is one of those, uh, tools that are able to really effectively subsidize the sleep quality. And that's one of the first benefits that the people that I work with usually have, is once they start meditating. And this is my experience too, within days, they don't have to try to sleep as much. They're able to just slip off in, into sleep and like that. Once you get the technique down with the meditation, you're able to just slip off into that settled mind. So trying to sleep will actually, and I know this is not what you meant, but trying to sometimes keep you from sleeping.

Neil: No, I, it is what I, it is what I meant. Cause I don't sleep well and, uh, I'm, I'm asking, I I, I wish I, but when I am successful, it's cuz I notice I'm de exciting my mind. Yeah. I, I, I have a few techniques. One is I try to, I try to breathe like I'm already asleep and then if that doesn't work, I try to go through a detailed activity like my honeymoon for example. Or, you know, uh, a walk, a specific walk in Toronto I've done before I, I got, and that doesn't work. And I'm like, okay, just let my thoughts like bounce around, de excite my mind. And if I, so I go, I'm doing all these things, but they're all efforts. You know, I shouldn't be doing anything of effort. As you're pointing out.] I guess the problem I have is the deci your mind and not making your mind focus. I think. . I have a hard, I have a hard time doing that. I, I, my mind always wants to point

at something. And so when I'm sitting in a chair with my eyes closed and just not paying attention, well my mind like goes towards like, you know, the, uh, a specific business thing I have coming up or the speech I'm nervous about, or the book launch this, that, and I just drill away on that. And so to get out of that habit is challenging for me. I don't know how to de excite my mind.

Light: So the trick is to not try to control where it goes. And if it's thinking about the book launch or some work thing, just to indulge in that, that's the trick. Go the other way with it, instead of judging it and thinking, Oh, this is inappropriate. look at it as this is exactly what's supposed to be happening and this is awesome. How wonderful , Right,

Neil: And you ou call that, you would call that meditating?

Light: Yeah, a hundred percent. That's where it has to start. It has to start there. If you start, you know, there's this quote, I can't remember who said it, but “there's no such thing as a, as a well adjusted slave,” And so, you know, the mind is kind of like that. If you try to make the mind your slave, which is not possible, then it's not gonna ever feel well adjusted . But if you just let it go wherever it's going, you'll find that it will actually become quieter on its own. You don't have to do anything. And that's what's so beautiful about having that sort of intention behind your, your technique. And like, it's more than just, you know, this little five minute conversation. I spend hours with people, you know, watching them giving, showing them exactly what's happening in the mind and all the different possibilities so that they can understand how to troubleshoot their own experiences. And then by the end of it, when they get to the other side of it, they're able to do this in a way that feels quite delightful. And meditation is awesome.

Neil: Yeah. And I, I've hit that, I've hit that peak occasionally. Like, I remember once when Leslie and I first got Calm, you know, um, we, we, we got like a, a, a headphones, splitter cause we wanted to have one membership, you know, and we'd lay on our floor the first night we got it and we did like a 10 minute head space meditation. And I remember at the end of 10 minutes I said, How are you feeling Les? She's like, I just feel more stressed and anxious. And I, she said, How are you feeling? I said, I feel like I'm in outer space. Like, I felt like I was somewhere else. I felt like I, mm-hmm. went. Yeah, I felt like I could feel like heat in my face and in my body and in my chest, and I felt like I was floating in the stars. And she was like, Wow, I think you did it right, . And I was like, I don't know what happened, but it, it's been hard for me to try to recreate that experience, you know? So I know it's possible. And when you hit it, wow, like

you can, you can really almost transmute your whole identity and feel like you are, you know, not living inside yourself, which is really, really beautiful.

Light: Yeah. That's where consistency, I think, really comes in handy. Like, you can hit it every now and again, but it's not that reliable. It's not, it's not that predictable. But if you do it, say for 108 days in a row, by the end of that, it will become more of a consistent, uh, outcome of that approach to the practice.

Neil: And do you recommend that people do it at a certain time of day?

Light: Um, I'd say usually asking people to do more than once a day is, is a lot if they haven't been through a comprehensive training. So if you've just read my book or if you've just, um, taken my online, uh, offering, I would say once a day would be plenty. Once a day for 10 minutes. That's the bare minimum. Yeah. And, um, I would say first thing in the morning, just not because the meditation works. The work meditation works beautifully and no matter what time of day you do it, but if you do it first thing in the morning, you work better when you're out in your, in your world, out in an activity, you know, dealing with your, all your kids and your family obligations and your work obligations and all of that. So I would say earlier is better. And then if you have the means and the time and you want to come and study with me in person, I do that a few times a year as well. I have like little tours that I do usually between LA, New York and London and maybe Atlanta or a couple other places like that. I haven't been in Toronto yet, though.

Neil: I meant to ask you, how did you pick Mexico City? Cuz you know, from what I understand about your lifestyle, you either metaphorically or literally live out of a backpack.

Light: I live out a backpack, literally. You literally live out, there's nothing metaphorical about it. It's a literal, literal interpretation. Yeah. I started, um, I was coming here in 2019 before the pandemic, and I just really liked the vibe. I, I was working on my most recent book and, um, and I needed a place to go and write and, and because I was home free, you know, aka I didn't have a house anywhere. I'd given up my apartment. I, I didn't have if, if I was in between workshops or whatever I was doing on the road, I didn't have any place to go back to. So I would just ask myself, Where do you wanna go? Where's a, where's a place you wanna explore and experience? And one, at one of those times, I chose Mexico City because I had a couple of friends here who had been talking very highly about it. And, uh, and I just came and I was, I was blown away by the culture and the, um, the sophistication of the city. Like, I, I don't know, I was, I don't know what I was expecting, maybe some sort of third world

situation, but, um, it ended up being really, really, it's like being in Europe without having to go all the way to Europe. So it's on central time.

Neil: Yeah. Well, I mean, even I said to Leslie, uh, you know, I said to my wife like, We should go to Mexico City, you know, Light's down there. We should go down there for like a holiday trip, and it's not an insult to her or anybody, but the first question is like, is it, is it safe? You know, because we grew up in a day and age where, you know, in the eighties and nineties when Mexico's in the papers, which I'm not saying you should read papers or follow the papers, but typically around the safety issue. And, uh, I, I said to her, My gosh, I've been hearing that this is the, the best place to go from a cultural experience and from a food experience and from a music experience. And I'm desperate to get, I've never been.

Light: Yeah. I think the bad, the reputation that Mexico has in general is from the border towns that Juarez is, and you know, places like that where you have a heavy cartel presence and I guess there's some pretty gnarly things happening, but it would be, you know, it's like I heard, saw some news report that somebody, there was a stabbing spree in Canada, but I would never think, Hey, it's going to Toronto safe. Am I going to get stabbed when I step off the plane?

Neil: I know, I know. And we, we we're here, we are talking about it from countries where, you know, There's, there's, uh, danger alerts on, on both, you know, most North American countries from the rest of the world, cuz there's, cuz of how much gun violence there is you know.

Light: No, it's been one of the safest places I've ever been to honestly. I, I've been in places in America where I've definitely been on Alert and I've never felt like that here in Mexico City.

Neil: And how, so I wanna, I wanna put a pin in that and, and keep expanding on, on this beautiful and, you know, wonderful lifestyle that you've created for yourself as we go into your second book, which is *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. So I think we're still LA I don't know if we're still at the Bodhi trade, but at some point you pick up the 1989 classic by Stephen R. Covey, published by Free Press now part of Simon Schuster. Holy cow. They got a great back list on all these self-help titles. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* is, uh, an approach to being effective in attaining goals by aligning oneself to what Stephen Covey calls true North Principles based on a character ethic that presents that he presents as universal and timeless. Covey lived from 1932 to 2012, was another American educator offer and businessman. The cover of the book has seven habits of highly affected people in a large white

seraph all caps font, and it has a red backdrop which says, Powerful lessons and personal change with 50 million copies sold across the bottom. This book is also in 1 5 8 .1 for self improvement in Dewey Decimal. So Light, tell us about your relationship with the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey.

Light: Well, I have a quick question. Did you already have that book or do you buy these books when you have guests on your podcast?

Well, actually

Neil: Well, actually these three books that you picked are all three books that I personally own, although My copy of your third book. My copy of your third book, I realized I lent to my cousin, so I texted him frantically today saying, Can you send me all the highlights and underlines I have for my book? Cause I don't have it here. And then Seven Habits is a book that Leslie owns, uh, in its original form, but also she has seven Highly Effective, have, uh, skills for teens, for teens, for, you know, like she has the college version. She loved that book for years. And How To Win Friends. I mean, that, that's a book that I've, I've read myself, um, a couple times and I even modeled the Introduction of the Happiness Equation around the introduction of this. I thought it was so captivating. So yeah, these 3 specifically I happen to own, but if I don't own the books, then I usually buy them. There's a number of independent and secondhand books stores near me in Toronto. So I go there first. If I can't find 'em there, I go to Indigo, which is the big Canadian online store. And if I can't find them there, then I default to the. Giant conglomerate and ship them to myself. I try to read the books before I talk to the person, and I find themes in the books to talk to them about. That's my goal. It's a bit more aspirational than actually happens because of course that means like three books every two weeks, uh, plus the books that the author has written usually. Um, so I can't really keep up with the own, I can't even keep up with my own podcast, but I, I try and I think it's a good problem to have. You know, I, I, I always, I like being in a situation where I'm always in like a reading deficit. It forces me to try to pick up books that I've usually not read and often not even heard of, you know, inevitably cuz people are suggesting stuff that have changed their life. But I'm like, What is that? You know?

Light: yeah, man. Uh, Seven Habits. I feel like it, it's a, it is a more of a modern day extension of How to win Friends. Right. And interestingly enough, the guy who introduced me to my meditation teacher back in 2003, if I'm remembering it correctly, he's the one who kind of planted the seed to read seven habits. But what I do remember very clearly is he would reference that book quite often

when we would, we were pretty close friends and we would hang out a lot. And so when I read the book, I, I was able to, uh, recall a lot of the, the things that he had said that reminded me of, like, he would talk about the, uh, four quadrant, four activities. Which are

Neil: urgent versus important.

Light: Yeah. Yeah. And this whole idea of seeking to be understood, I'm sorry, seeking, seeking to understand versus seeking to be understood. And most of us, we try to be understood, but we discount the importance of seeking to understand. So first, seek to understand which means allow other people to feel seen and heard, and then that will open up their receptivity for you to be understood. And so, um, you know, those little, those little things were very powerful. Cause again, at the time I was working as a yoga teacher, so I was very much in the service industry and before they started calling it the wellness industry. And, um, and so I'm working with people all the time, and a lot of people go to things like yoga classes, especially back in those early days to be validated in some form or fashion. Right. So, so I had an oppor, I had daily opportunities to practice a lot of these principles that I was learning in these books. And, um, I remember one other concept from that book, cause I haven't read it in a while, but the idea of having a blueprint, like beginning with the end in mind is the way he phrased it.

Neil: yes, not just similar to setting a vision for the shine movement.

Light: yeah exactly. Exactly. And then, and then moving from there. So yeah, it was very, very powerful stuff. I feel like if I came across it now, having, you know, had all the experiences that I've had, maybe it wouldn't have the same type of effect. But at the time that was like my first time hearing a, a lot of these concepts and, and it was, it just was mind blowing.

Neil: Covey is maybe the most famous name in all of self-help. Um, you know, Steven Covey has created the Covey Leadership Institute, the institute, which a lot of people, a lot of corporations are familiar with and use there. His son that's also named Stephen Covey, who is also an author and is written about trust and is on the speaking circuit. Um, and I want to talk to you a little bit about names because you told Jonathan Fields on his, His Good Life Project, by the way, is a wonderful conversation we'll link to and I recommend everybody check that one out. Uh, how you created the name Light for yourself, right? And I think you're in your early thirties, nearly 20 years ago you're in LA and you said later on I found out that Western culture is the only culture that keeps their name. I'm interested in that and going a little bit deeper into the rabbit hole cuz my eight

year old changed his name three months ago. He just woke up one morning and said, I have a different name. And I don't typically say my kid's names on the air just to sort of give them their privacy as their children, but it's been three months down Light. We've changed the name at the school, we've changed the name and all, and we call 'em that at home. I'm like, Wow. Like, are we now, maybe we're just, you know, maybe we're living in an age. Kevin Kelly, who we've had on the show says in the future, everyone will change their name all the time. In fact, the names will just be in the blockchain. So it'll just be, it won't be out the wait line at the government office. And I've always kind of felt like naming your kid is a bit like, who, who are we to name them their life, you know? But of course, we have to put a placeholder in place till we figure out who they are and they decide who they are. So tell me a little bit more about the story of changing your name, but also around the idea of Western culture being the only one that keeps their Name I, I hadn't heard that before. I'm curious to learn more.

Light: Yeah, well, I think what, what's different about my story with the name thing is that I never sat set out to change my name , as you mentioned, I was in my thirties and I loved my, my birth name. Um, but I had just moved to Los Angeles and I was meeting all these people who had changed their names, and I was kind of like, I'm kind of known as the hypothetical question friend in my friend circle. So I'm always posing hypothetical questions, you know? Um, and one, one day I was having lunch with my buddy and I said, Hey, I, I met all these people with these really interesting names, Pineapplehead. Um, I had a yoga teacher named mother and I, I know he wasn't born mother, but it was a guy who was calling himself mother, which I thought was a very brave choice. This is back before people were just like changing their gender and all that too, you know? So, um, so we were having that conversation really from a place of, I, I wasn't making fun of them. I was really more so admiring their courage. And then I just said, Hey, what would you change your, say you had to change your name to some word, like pineapple or mother. What would you change it to

Neil: by the way, for people listening that's a real, you know, that was, I heard you say you had a friendly named Pineapplehead.

Light: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. That's a real person. And uh, and he said, Ocean. And I thought, Okay, that's cool. That's a cool name, Ocean. And he said, What would you change your name to? Now I'm al I'm also. known for not having a question to my own, having an answer to my own hypothetical question. And people get annoyed by that sometimes. That's why I really think, Yeah, the reason I'm asking is cuz I genuinely don't, I don't know. I'm trying to explore

this in real time. And uh, and he started getting a little bit like impatient with me cause I wasn't saying anything. And he started, he starts counting down, which I guess was his implicit way of getting me to say something. 5, 4, 3, 2. And I just blurted out Light. I had no idea where that came from. It wasn't premeditated. I wasn't sitting around thinking, Hmm, I wanna change my name. In fact, again, I had no desire to, I had no inclination to, It was a weird thing. I would, I would've considered myself someone who would never do something like that. And, but for some reason, I, I, I still can't really fully explain today the thought to change my name to Light. Just never, it never left. And um, and it concerned me because a few years prior to that, when I was still living in New York, I had made this pact with myself that I was going to relentlessly, Those are my words, relentlessly follow my heart. And I had had a few other directives from my heart, such as take this trip to Europe and, and just see what happens when I had graduated from college. And, um, become a model and see what happens and move to Los Angeles with no plan and see what happens and become a yoga teacher and see what happens and all these things that were sort of off the beaten path. Um, when you look at where I came from, which is a very sort of conventional life growing up in, in, in Alabama, middle class, that kind of thing. So I recognize that this, this whole name changed thing was coming from that same place. And then I'm thinking, Oh shit, that means I have to do it. I don't wanna do it, but I have to do it. And then I started to think about all the reasons why I didn't want to do it. And I literally took out a sheet of paper and a pencil, drew a line down the middle and started listing up the pros and cons. And all the cons came so easily. This is embarrassing. It's a hassle. Uh, it's gonna involve legal work, you know, it's gonna cost money. I'm gonna have to tell people, they're gonna ask me what my real name is, blah, blah, blah. And in the, in the pros column, there was only one item that I could think of, and that is, this is what your heart is telling you to do. So you have to do it. You said you were gonna do it, so you have to do it. So no matter how many cons I could easily come up with, I decided, okay, I have to do it. I gotta do it, I gotta do it. That's what I said I was gonna do, and I decided to do it to make the change on, uh, on my birthday. That was coming up two weeks from that, that internal conversation I was having with myself. And um, and I just so happened to be teaching a yoga class on the morning of my birthday. And the way I was gonna do it was I was just gonna announce that I have a new name and this is what it is, and you can call me that if you want or not. You know, it's up to you. So I was gonna make this big announcement at the end of the class. So I'm in the class teaching the class. It's the fastest yoga class I've ever taught in my entire life because I knew in the back of my mind what I was gonna do at the very end of it. And, uh, and it's full of people. There's like 50 people in this class. So I knew that if I told 50 people at one time, I was locked in, couldn't get out of it, versus telling one person here, two people there, you can still change your mind. Maybe you'll never see them again. These are people I saw every week. So it, it,

I couldn't go back on my word. So the end of the class comes around, I, I give the announcements and I say, By the way, from now on, I'm gonna start going by the name Light, and you can call me that or not, you know, and I'm expecting this kind of, I don't know what I was expecting. some kind of, uh, applause or I don't know, but anyway, a reaction.

Neil: A reaction of some kind

Light: Yeah. There was no reaction at all. People just kind of looked at me like I had said I was gonna go downstairs and have a coffee . It was like, okay. I mean, cuz this is LA so everybody changes their name at one point. And, and then there was this one woman who was in the class who, she had been in my class about two or three other times. I met her at a restaurant with, she was with her son Tristan at the time when I met her, he was five years old and she had asked me, you know, What do you do for a living? I said, I teach yoga. She goes, I'll come to your yoga class. And I thought, Yeah, right. You know, people say that, but they never quite come. Well, she actually came and so that was like the third or fourth time she had been there and she was in the back corner of the room. And I locked eyes on her because she was giving me the reaction that I was. That I was looking for. She looked like she'd just seen a ghost. So we walked towards each other and we started having a conversation and she starts telling me about her son, the five year old son that she has. Tristan. She said this morning, kind of like what your son did, said My, my son had a, had a dream. And he said, Mommy, I wanna change my name. And she said, Okay honey, what would you like to change your name to? He said, Light, I want you to start calling me Light. So her son that morning decided to change his name to the name that I took on in my head two weeks prior to that day and vow to, to make the big announcement on that day. And I just thought, man, the universe couldn't be more uh, obvious if it hit me on the head of the frying pan. And I took that as a confirmation that I, I did what I was supposed to do, and I never looked back after that.

Neil: Wow. That's beautiful. It's interesting. I, I've never thought of my name. I've always thought of that as such a fixed part of my identity, but hearing your story and seeing my son, you know, it, it's, it's making it another one of these, as, as you've mentioned, gender, another one of these identifiers that, you know, we, as we move so quickly into the future, feels like it's rattled loose again. And, um, we live in an age where we get to choose who we are and what we do and where we live, and how we live so carefully and specifically. And for some of us, I'll put myself in this camp. Sometimes that feels very, uh, asphyxiating. It feels like over overwhelming to have to make all these, this all, all these extra decisions and. Be so intentional and choiceful, but all these aspects of our lives.

On the other hand, it's so liberating and you've really, sounds like you've really navigated that with, with thoughtfulness and, and it's turned out wonderful. And, and by the way, like as someone who's known you now for five years here and there, it's like, well, I couldn't think of a better, You've seem like, like you are Light Watkins. That's just who you are. It's represented through your work, through your art, through your books, through your meditation practice, through your emails. Like you are Light to a lot of people. Um, so thank you for sharing that with us.

Light: Yeah. And then to answer your second, the second part of your question about Westerners keeping the same name, you know, when you, I've studied a lot of vedic culture and none of these guys have the name. They were born with all these swami and guru, this and you know, brahmin that they're all known by their titles or the names that they were assigned based on their experiences well beyond the birth name that they originally got. And you find that in a lot of, of, um, indigenous cultures is that people are either assigned new names or ascribed new names based on their life stage, based on their physician in the tribe or based on, you know, some experience that they've had or they take on this new name. You go to Burning Man, you get a new name, you get your quiet name. Um, you know, even like things like the Royal family, which is still Western culture, but you know, they're not, a lot of these people who may not be called George or, or Elizabeth, they may be called Jane or,

Neil: Duchess of Sussex and stuff

Light: Yeah. They have to take on, even like the popes, they have to take on these new titles and these new names. So once I start to see how prevalent it is, it's like, oh, okay, well this is just a thing. This is what happens. But you're right, nowadays, you get to choose pretty much everything you want about you. Including, um, how you, how you, what your pronouns are and, and, um, how you wanna be identified sexually, and which is, I think, I think that's pretty interesting and, and, and, and quite liberating. Um, but you're right, I think it can also put pressure on people to think, Well, maybe I should be something different because my life is a little bit more challenging right now. Maybe if I change my identity it'll make things better. And I think that's kind of like moving cities, you know, I don't know if that's really the answer so much. I think you want it to come from a place of, of some sort of inner calling, you know, as opposed to looking at it as a bandaid solution to something that you're experience some pain point that you're experiencing in your life. I mean, that's just my own, you know, opinion about it. I'm not saying that's correct or incorrect, but, but I've always had pretty positive experiences when I let

something come from within me, from a place of expansion versus a place of, uh, trying to cover something up.

Neil: Ooh, I like that, from a place of expansion versus from a place of covering something. Let's hold onto that thought and that thread line as we introduce your third book, which is *The War of Art* by Stephen Pressfield. This book published in 2002 by Rugged Land Publishing features a pretty stark small white cover with just a little tiny orange flower coming out of a little square cube, *The War of Art*, written in a thick kind of impact type font across the top, and it says, Breakthrough the blocks and win your inner creative battles. Stephen Pressfield, 79 years old today, Born 1943 Portof Spain. Trinidad is the American author of historical fiction, nonfiction, and screenplay such as *The Legend of Bagger Vance*. This succinct, engaging, and practical guide helps people succeed in any creative sphere. What keeps so many of us from doing what we long to do? Why is there a naysayer within? How can we avoid the world loves of any creative endeavor? File this under 1 5 3.35 for creativity like tell us about your relationship with the *War of Art* by Stephen Pressfield.

Light: So I mentioned my earlier, my first book, *The Inner Gym, The 30 Day Workout for Strengthening Happiness*. Well, that was a self-published book and, and like the *Shine*, that was an idea that had been incubating for several years that I was dragging my feet with. And uh, and then about three years into it, after I had started laying out the book and just wasn't able to quite get past, you know, those initial stages of, of creating it, I ran into this guy that I had taught meditation to. He was a creative, he was an actor. I ran into him at Whole Foods in Venice, California. And, uh, we were catching up and, you know, he said, What are you working on? And I said, Well, I'm, I've been trying to do this book. I'm having a difficult time with it. It's, I'm tired of thinking about it. He says, You have to read *The War of Art* by Stephen Pressfield. He said, If you get it, it'll clear up the, the blockages and the resistance. And uh, and sure enough, I went to the store and I got the book and read it within a day. And it, it had the desired effect. I was able to, uh, finish that book within the next few months. And yeah, it just became my, my creativity bible. Not because it teaches you how to be creative, but it teaches you how the importance of navigating that resistance that everybody feels. Because I think one of the big misconceptions is that we're the only ones who are feeling that resistance.

Neil: Yeah

Light: Yeah and it's like, no, everybody's grappling with some form of resistance. And if you understand what it is and where it comes from, which is sort of like your lower self, then you don't have to take it personally and you can

just keep putting one foot in front of the other foot and, uh, until you get the project completed. So, so that was very helpful in, uh, in giving me language for completing my creative tasks and, um, and feeling like more of a professional about it as opposed to the amateur that stops and starts and stops and starts and then it just never quite finishes.

Neil: Right. Calling to mind the name of another Pressfield book called Turning Pro. There, there's like a thread line here through these books. I mean, they all are very similar in Dewey Decimal categories, right? Starting from How to Win Friends to Seven Habits to War of Art. They're self-help books, but they're inspiring in helping you kind of break through creative struggles and do things. I mean, from a distance you appear to be this massively hyper productive person, right? You've got daily emails, weekly emails. You've got a weekly podcast, which is a wonderful podcast, Light Walkins podcast, you know, we want people to kind of check out lists of that. And like you said, I'll be coming on there soon. Uh, you're also writing, you've written three books. You're doing meditation courses. I know you're a keynote speaker. Like how do you think about balancing rest into all of this and have you come up through these books or in your life with, with systems so it doesn't feel as overwhelming as it maybe seems from the outside. Like, you're, you're, you're like a one man show, you're doing lots of stuff. Now you mentioned a team, so I was like, okay, maybe he's got people doing all this work for him or something, I don't know. But how do you balance how much you're doing, uh, so you're not overwhelmed by it? And how do you think about rest? Cause I've heard you talk about rest before and I wanted to open that up.

Light: Yeah, man. Um, that's what's been so surprisingly beautiful about my meditation practice is that it helps to supplement the rest that you may or may not be getting while you're sleeping at night. And I sit down and do that twice a day for 20 minutes once in the morning upon awakening. And uh, and that's kind of like charging up your cell phone and then again, at the end of the day before the evening activities start for another 20 minutes. And as you know, with cell phones, you know, you deplete the battery during the workday and so you need to put it back on the charger. You know, after the work day and, and maybe to be able to use it for the evening. So that's how I kind of approach meditation. And I, I feel like that's my greatest productivity hack is meditation, daily meditation. And honestly, if I didn't look forward to it, if I didn't feel like it was providing the blissful experience that it was, uh, advertised, I probably wouldn't do it as often. And, but fortunately, I, I, you know, made that investment years, 20 years ago, and my teacher, and he was such an inspiring figure in my life that I, um, I, I learned everything I could from him and, and that translated into these daily beautiful, blissful experiences that allows me to be more productive. And that's what I tell people now about practices like

meditation is, it's not about the meditation, it's not about getting good at meditation, it's about using meditation to get good at life and to be able to do less and accomplish more. Right? Cause that's really our biggest asset. It's not time. A lot of people say time is our biggest asset. You can have all the time in the world, but if you don't know how to effectively use your time, then you can end up becoming a drug addict. You can end up becoming, you know, some other kind of addict or just self sabotage or overthinking or whatever, you know, cuz you have too much time on your hands. But if you learn how to prioritize, you know, what's the most important thing for me to be doing right now that is in alignment with my mission, purpose path, whatever. And it could be something as simple as making sure that my kids have enough to eat, or providing an experience for the group that I volunteer with or, you know, things like that versus scrolling through, you know, just aimlessly scrolling through social media or scrolling through television or, uh, investing my energy into dead end toxic relationships, like these kinds of things eat up so much time. People don't even realize it that how much, how much time they're wasting, and the days and the nights are just endlessly passing by. And I just, that's something my teacher used to always emphasize is the importance of expanding your perception so that you could prioritize your time much better. And I'm not perfect at it, but I'm a lot more intentional about how I spend my time than I think most people tend to be. And, uh, and so that's one of the reasons why I'm able to do as much as I'm doing and everything kind of overlaps. Like the idea of retiring is not appealing to me. Like, what would I do in retirement? Just sit around and do what? Uh, drink pina coladas or something like, I'm here to be used for that mission that I, that I articulated earlier, which is to leave the world more inspired. And so if I had more time, I would just figure out more ways to do that. And, and, and I'm a quality over quantity person. I'm not interested in scaling as much as I am and making sure that everything that I put out into the world is the highest quality possible. And I annoy the hell out of my, my team, my assistants because I, I keep reiterating how high the standard is and I say there's no day coming where we're gonna water down the standard just to make things convenient. We'll do it over as many times as we, as we need to. I don't care, as long as it has the standard, um, that I know we're all capable of adhering to. So, and at the same time, it needs to come out when it's supposed to come out. So we're gonna have to just double time it or triple time it until we get it right. And, and you're actually wasting time by mailing it in because you're gonna have to do it again and as many times as it takes. Right. Because, and that's, and I lead by example in that regard. I do it for myself. As many times as something takes the things that I have to do, um, that they can't do, I'll keep working on it. I used, I, I had committed to shooting a video a day in 2020, like an inspirational video. Cause I wanted to get more comfortable with talking on camera. And I'd already been writing an email a day, every morning, the daily dose of inspiration. So the video thing was a new thing on top of that

thing. And I would sometimes shoot that video and it was maybe a three minute video. On average, I would shoot it 30 times. I would shoot it 30 times until I felt like I got what I wanted to say out in the most efficient way. So I wasn't wasting people's time and rambling on. And, um, not everyone was that, you know, took that many takes, but it wasn't, it wasn't unusual for something to take 20, 30 takes, you know, eat up two hours outta my day, but I got a lot better speaking on camera as the result. So it was a worthy investment. Ah, committing

Neil: Ah, committing to a practice offering consistency from 12 people in a dance studio to hundreds of people in Brooklyn where we met five years ago. All up to today, where you are a celebrated author, a leading meditation expert, traveling around the world, teaching people to meditate. You are certainly Light leaving the world more inspired, including me and our listeners. Today, thank you so much for coming on the show and sharing your three books with all of us. I really appreciate it.

Light: Thank you, man. Thanks so much for having me. Thanks for doing the, that level of research that you've clearly done. That's very impressive and uh, it's much appreciated.