

The Iceman

An Interview with Wim Hof, Founder, The Wim Hof Method



Wim Hof

EDITORS' NOTE Dutch extreme athlete Wim Hof got his nickname 'The Iceman' by breaking a number of records related to cold exposure including climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in shorts, running a half marathon above the Arctic Circle barefoot, and standing in a container while covered with ice cubes for more than 112 minutes. Using "cold, hard nature" as his teacher, his extensive training has enabled him to learn to control his breathing, heart rate, and blood circulation and to withstand extreme temperatures. Armed with his motto "what I am capable of, everybody can learn," he is convinced that everyone can tap into their inner potential without having to invest the same decades worth of study, travel and daring. He has made it his mission to share what he's learned with the rest of the world and developed the Wim

Hof Method: a combination of breathing, cold therapy, and commitment that offers a range of benefits. With the Wim Hof Method, he teaches people from all over the world, from celebrities to professional athletes, to people of all ages, to control their body and mind and achieve extraordinary things. To know more about the Wim Hof Method, go to www.wimhofmethod.com. A 35 percent discount code will be applied to Wim Hof's Fundamentals video course by entering MEDIA35 upon check-out on www.wimhofmethod.com/fundamentals.

Will you highlight how your breathing practice developed?

It started with a search for more than I knew, a soul search that led to practicing esoteric disciplines like yoga, spiritual practices

and so forth. Yet, when I met the icy water, it all changed into practicing in the cold. Breathing exercises I developed from going regularly into the cold naturally induces you to breathe deeply.

What does going into cold water do for you and how do you describe the experience?

Cold water immersion is training the cardiovascular system to perform at its best. It feels like I am creating a silver protective layer around me. The cold to me is an absolute noble force.

You have talked about your need to survive with your four little kids after your wife's suicide. Will you discuss this tragic moment in your personal life and how it has impacted the course of your life?

It was deep trauma processing, and the

need to find ways to do that effectively. I found that good practice in both cold and breathing plus exercise were excellent to work it all out. Energy wise, I got so much of it through these practices which fulfilled the need to provide physically and emotionally for my family.

Many of our readers are CEOs and business leaders. Some of them may be familiar with you, but many are not. For those who have never practiced meditation or experienced the power of it, what would you like for them to know?

This works! When being an executive with a directive mood, you should be able to perform cognitively while being under stress. This practice works best – try it at least once.

How are your breathing exercises and cold water experience related?

When going into the cold, you by reflex will start to breathe more deeply. Deep breathing triggers the body to be stronger, more adaptive, and alert.

How were you able to take your breathing practice in cold water and adapt it to be effective on land?

It showed very quickly that it made me stronger. As I became aware of that, I started practicing breathing exercises at home, and



it was amazing what it did for me. I had such strong, intense, deep sensations, which became my greatest motivation to do it already for 46 years.

You have said that you “found a spiritual partner in nature.” Will you elaborate on the special relationship you have with nature?





I call the cold my warm friend as it fires up my body when going into the cold as no other practice is able to do. It is a great ally and a great power, preventing disease, both mentally and physically. Cold is my teacher – my great teacher.

You have talked about the fact that you were almost not born and that your mother during your birth said the words, “Oh God, let this child live. I will make him a missionary.” How do those words in many ways describe how your life has played out?

I am a man on a mission and believe my mother invoked that. It is very fulfilling and exciting, while also challenging and full on.

How do you describe the difference in energy between somebody who practices 20 minutes a day of good breathing versus someone who doesn’t?

The difference has been studied and shows that people practicing this have much better mood control during stressful situations.

Healthcare is 20 percent of the U.S. economy. The U.S. spends the highest percentage of GDP on its healthcare, yet it has

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some of the worst healthcare outcomes in the world. What are the biggest things that the U.S. healthcare system gets wrong and what do you feel are the keys to building a more effective, sustainable healthcare system?

Simple practices like a cold shower a day plus breathing exercises will give people much more autonomy over their mind and body. The preventative power of this practice toward disease is enormous. We should not be so dependent on doctors, but rather nurse ourselves through the practice of natural, simple breathing and cold water exercise. It has great potential for anyone and it is simple.

It has been said by some that you have a superpower. Do you feel this is true and how do you describe what makes Wim Hof?

I am a driven man who believes in the good in humanity. I challenge myself in nature to find the good within myself and find great tools for humankind. If there is a superpower, it is that I share what I have found – anybody can do what I do. I just keep on and enjoy life to the fullest. ●