

Light's Introduction

- Light Watkins has been practicing and teaching meditation for nearly 20 years
- His specialty is showing regular people how to turn meditation from a chore to a delight
- Light also delivers keynotes and leads sold-out retreats on meditation and happiness
- He just released his second book entitled *Bliss More: How to Succeed in Meditation Without Really Trying*
- He produces *The Shine*, which is a global pop-up inspirational variety show that highlights regular people who are using their talents and gifts to help people in meaningful ways.
- Every morning (for over two years now), Light sends out a daily dose of inspiration email to counterbalance some of the negativity we each face in our lives.

Light Watkins Short Biography

Former Gap fashion model Light Watkins first began attending yoga classes and meditation circles in between castings in New York City. Since 1998, Light has been active in the wellness space, first as a practitioner, and later as an apprentice to his Vedic Meditation teacher, and finally in 2007 as a meditation teacher himself. He now travels the world giving talks on happiness, mindfulness, inspiration, and meditation. Light's most recent book, *Bliss More: How to Succeed in Meditation Without Really Trying* (Random House) was released in 2018. He writes articles on meditation and happiness, leads sold-out meditation trainings and retreats, and produces *The Shine*—a global pop-up inspirational variety show with a mission to inspire. Light also sends out a popular daily inspirational email each morning called *The Daily Dose of Inspiration*.

Light Watkins Longer Biography

Light has been operating in the meditation space since 1998, first as a practitioner, then as an apprentice to his Vedic Meditation teacher, and finally as a teacher himself. He's currently based in Santa Monica, CA, but travels the world giving talks on happiness, mindfulness, inspiration, and meditation, as well as leading popular meditation trainings and retreats.

His passion is to teach people simple tools for increasing happiness. To date, Light has taught meditation to thousands through his live courses, books, and online trainings. He's taught at Apple, Soho House, Summit, and several tech start-ups around the U.S. His first book, [The Inner Gym](#) (L&G), is a 30-day "inner workout" for strengthening happiness, and his upcoming book, [Bliss More: How to Succeed in Meditation Without Really Trying](#) (Ballantine), is a straight-talk how-to book that teaches busy professionals how to enjoy meditation.

Light contributes to multiple wellness blogs and writes a popular daily email called [Light's Daily Dose of Inspiration](#). Light's [TEDx talk](#) has garnered hundreds of thousands of views, and he is the founder of [The Shine Movement](#), a global pop-up inspirational variety show on a mission to share the stories of regular people who are making a difference in the world.

Light's Story (in his own words)

I spent a long time dabbling in meditation, trying to teach myself from various data points I picked up in yoga classes, books and videos. And like most people who teach themselves, I wasn't ever able to get a consistent practice up and running.

I would meditate in different ways from day to day, depending on how I felt, and if there was ever any deviation in my normal schedule, I likely wouldn't meditate at all.

Some days I would sit straight, while others I would lie down.

Having stiff hips always made sitting with my legs crossed severely uncomfortable after a few minutes, so I would usually just give up or finish early.

When I heard my yoga teacher say there is no correct way to meditate, it brought a sense of frustration. "If meditation was so good for you, why was it so hard to do?" I would wonder.

It seemed as if monks were the only people able to meditate long enough and consistently enough to get any real benefit from it.

In 2003, I met someone who invited me to a talk on meditation with his meditation teacher. After years of frustration I figured I had nothing to lose by attending.

I had no way of knowing how much that night would change the course of my life.

I met the teacher and he introduced me to Vedic Meditation, a style of meditation that had existed for over 5,000 years, that was specifically designed for householders (non-monks).

I asked him to teach me the meditation, which was a process of learning that lasted for about four days. And almost over night, I noticed a drastic and positive difference in the quality of my meditations. The practice no longer felt hard to do.

There was no more sitting uncomfortably or trying to control my mind—that approach was discouraged by my teacher.

Instead, I was taught how to sit with comfortable back support, and let my mind roam free. To assist in the experience, I was assigned an individual mantra by my teacher and shown how to properly experience it to settle my own mind, without guidance, music, white noise machines, ear plugs, or anything digital or artificial.

Although I had never before used a mantra in this way, it worked like a charm.

Four or five minutes into my meditation, I went from thinking surface thoughts, to feeling like I was dreaming, to losing awareness completely. I would come out 20 minutes later feeling like the entire experience only lasted ten minutes, yet also feeling like I had just slept for three hours.

Speaking of sleep, my night-time sleep got ten times deeper. Other changes I noticed included getting sick less often and having tons more energy and stamina when I went to the gym. I began craving better quality foods as well as higher quality company.

This was the first time in my life where I felt a tangible difference in my state of being, from the inside out. And the only thing I was doing differently was my twice-daily meditation practice.

I no longer dreaded meditation like before, because it now felt amazing and the time often flew by. Then I realized why meditation has been around for thousands of years—because when you learn it from a master it feels really good to do, and more importantly, it enhances the quality of all of your other “doings.”

I also realized from my own direct experience that people who claim there is no right way to meditate have likely never meditated in this way before.

I was so hooked that I began volunteering to help my teacher as he trained other people to meditate. In fact, I encouraged all of my friends and my family to learn meditation with my teacher.

At that point, my teacher had personally taught over 15,000 people in the world to meditate. Yet, he never advertised. Mostly because all of the people he taught couldn't keep their mouth shut about how wonderful and beneficial his teaching was.

Many of my closest friends came to learn, and enjoyed their experiences. My Mom even flew out from Alabama to learn. She had just gotten a divorce after 32 years of marriage to my Dad, and for her, learning this technique during that very emotional time was a Godsend.

The more I practiced the technique, the easier it became, and the more convinced I was that this meditation was single-handedly responsible for boosting my happiness, productivity and creativity.

Then a few years later, I was invited to accompany my teacher and some of his other protégés to India, to be trained in the ancient ways of teaching others how to meditate.

This was the opportunity I had been waiting for since the first night I met him. I dropped everything and went to study with my teacher for many months.

After returning to Los Angeles, I began teaching a few people week to week out of my little one bedroom apartment in West Hollywood.

To my astonishment, everyone I taught was having the same experiences I enjoyed as a new meditator, which gave me the confidence and enthusiasm to continue teaching more people.

Then my friends on the East coast begged me to fly out there and teach them. I was so excited about finding my passion and sharing it with as many people as possible that I went without hesitation. Then more people kept hearing about me from their friends and wanted to learn.

Now, more than 10 years later, I've personally taught more than 2,000 people from all walks of life personally to meditate all over the world, and thousands more online.

I've never felt more fulfilled in my life, because I'm now able to help people access a place inside of themselves known in India as "Turiya," which is the Sanskrit term for the fourth state of consciousness—also known to be the source of happiness.

Several of my students have used their daily meditation practice to overcome PTSD, hypertension, sleep deprivation, anxiety, depression, and even cancer. I still have yet to teach someone who didn't feel by the end of the training that they could meditate in a self-sufficient way.

I still teach public and private meditation courses throughout the country, and retreats around the world. I've also written books on happiness and meditation, and I speak on those topics around the world. Finally, I'm the founder of an inspirational variety show called The Shine, and I write a daily inspirational email called The Daily Dose of Inspiration.