

# Program Information 2016



**Search Inside Yourself, find the potential within.**

We use attention and mindfulness training to help people build emotional intelligence skills needed to sustain peak performance, collaborate successfully and be a compassionate, effective leader.

# CONTENTS



Letter from the CEO & co-founder.....	3
What We Do.....	4-5
What Makes SIY Special.....	6-7
Bring SIY to Your Organization.....	8-9
Our Clients.....	10
Our Reach.....	11
Our Impact.....	12
In the News.....	13-20
Contact Us.....	21

# LETTER FROM THE CEO & CO-FOUNDER

---

Dear Friends,

I'd like to thank you personally for taking the time to learn about Search Inside Yourself.

The **Search Inside Yourself** program is based on cutting-edge neuroscience research on mindfulness and emotional intelligence—a proven track record which includes the importance of self-awareness, the power of optimism and resilience, and the benefits of empathy and compassion. Our trainings cultivate engagement, authentic leadership and innate creativity. It provides a concrete path toward becoming fully ourselves.

This is our goal and this is my passion—to work with individuals and organizations to apply mindfulness-based emotional intelligence practices. With these skills, we can bring greater effectiveness, success, well-being, peace, and happiness to ourselves, our organizations, and the world.

The **Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute** is a small seed that represents the grand potential of a large, powerful, and beneficial movement. I invite you to work together with us to open hearts and minds, as we search inside ourselves.

Best regards,

**Marc Lesser**  
*CEO and co-founder*



Marc Lesser, CEO & co-founder

# WHAT WE DO

---

Bridging age-old practices of mindfulness and modern neuroscience, Search Inside Yourself helps people in organizations bring out the best in themselves. We use a combination of individual assessments, live training, coaching, and ongoing programs to help individuals develop emotional intelligence skills to thrive in our complex, fast-paced society.

## Origins of Search Inside Yourself

Search Inside Yourself was born at Google from one engineer's dream to change the world and has become a globally recognized program. In 2007, veteran Google engineer Chade-Meng Tan brought together leading experts in mindfulness, neuroscience and emotional intelligence to develop an in-house training for Google employees. This became Search Inside Yourself and quickly grew to be the most popular training program in the company. Even after being taught for years at Google, when a new program opens enrollment, it fills almost immediately and receives a long wait list.

In 2012, a separate not-for-profit, the Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute (SIYLI) was established to meet demand for the program from outside organizations. Google granted the IP and trademark rights to SIYLI which continues to work with Google, as well as other corporate, nonprofit and government organizations around the world to bring the Search Inside Yourself (SIY) program to as many people as possible. SIYLI's mission is to help create the conditions for world peace.

### *Why “Search Inside Yourself”?*

SIY founder Chade-Meng Tan named the program “Search Inside Yourself” as a play on Google’s search business, and as a playful way to encourage Google’s engineers to search within to develop emotional self-awareness, not just great code.



**Chade-Meng Tan**, co-founder

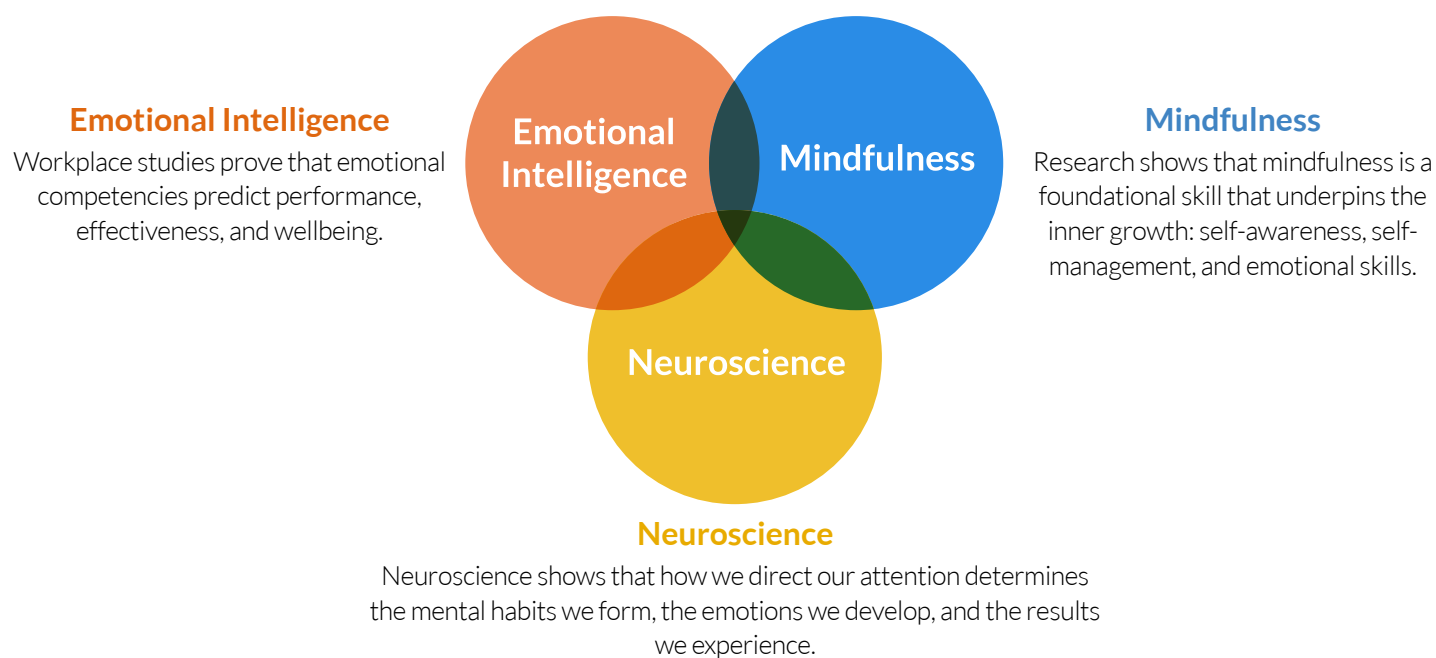


# Curriculum

Search Inside Yourself uses attention and mindfulness training to help people build the emotional intelligence skills needed for sustained peak performance, strong collaboration, and effective leadership.

The core SIY program is taught over two full days at your location, with four weeks of follow-up delivered virtually. We also offer keynotes, introductory programs, one-on-one coaching, as well as a Train-the-Trainer program.

## The SIYLI curriculum...



## Benefits

Organizations look to Search Inside Yourself to help their employees learn skills to:

- ▶ Improve communication and collaboration skills
- ▶ Develop outstanding leadership
- ▶ Increase creativity and innovation
- ▶ Reduce stress and experience greater overall well-being

## Teachers

We share a personal commitment to practice what we teach. Our teachers are an amazing group of 100 experts around the world who have backgrounds in mindfulness, neuroscience, or business—several have founded their own organizations or held prominent executive positions in leading companies. A full list of SIYLI's teachers is at [siyli.org/](https://siyli.org/).

# WHAT MAKES SIY SPECIAL

---

The Search Inside Yourself (SIY) Program takes a **science-based approach** that combines neuroscience, mindfulness and emotional intelligence. Through these three disciplines, SIY helps participants integrate the key building blocks for well-being, collaboration, and leadership.

The program is **highly interactive**. It is approximately one-third content and two-thirds experiential exercises, including one-on-one and group conversations, attention-training practices, listening exercises, and writing activities.

Each program is **tailored for the client's needs** and presented through a different lens depending on the audience, while maintaining the combination of neuroscience, mindfulness, and emotional intelligence that has made the program successful.

**In an SIY program, you can expect to learn:**

## Mindfulness

According to leader in the field of emotional intelligence, Daniel Goleman, the development of emotional intelligence relies on becoming more self-aware, which is can be trained through mindfulness. Mindfulness, being aware and open in the present, enables stability of mind and insight into how you are feeling, thinking and reacting. Mindfulness leads to better judgment and emotional balance, especially in difficult situations. SIY teaches the neuroscience behind mindfulness and how to cultivate it as the foundational skill that enables emotional awareness, a calm and clear mind, and interpersonal effectiveness.

## Self-Awareness

Challenging situations require us to have a keen sense of our own reactions and of the patterns of behavior and leadership that we bring to each conversation. SIY's self-awareness practice enhances your perception of your emotions, habits, and behavior patterns. In particular, you'll learn to how to gather useful "data" from unpleasant emotions that arise from setbacks, without becoming overwhelmed by them. Outcomes include:

- ▶ Become comfortable with your emotional range
- ▶ Be able to accurately assess yourself
- ▶ Develop self-confidence



**Search Inside Yourself was developed at Google and is based on the latest neuroscience research.**

# Self-Regulation

To navigate our opportunities and challenges, we need to confidently manage our reactions and response. Building on self-awareness, SIY teaches how to identify and work with emotional “triggers” and other difficult situations. In this session, you’ll experiment with a number of practices for working in emotionally charged situations.

- ▶ Learn to pause before reacting to your emotional triggers
- ▶ Develop inner strength and ability to productively deal with difficult situations
- ▶ Increase your resilience and ability to respond to setbacks

# Motivation

When your work and life are aligned with your values and emotional tendencies, you will be more engaged in what you do, and more successful in reaching your goals.

- ▶ Discover and hone the values that drive your actions
- ▶ Learn practices to dream big and increase motivation
- ▶ Practice emotional and cognitive resilience, trainable skills that enable you to persevere towards your goals

# Empathy

Effective leaders and teammates are those who can understand colleagues and build relationships and trust. Understanding the science and practice of empathy also supports diverse teams to be more inclusive of their diversity. SIY teaches habits to increase empathy and strengthen your ability to understand others’ feelings and perspectives.

- ▶ Understand the neuroscience of empathy
- ▶ Develop the mental habits of kindness, goodwill and objectivity
- ▶ Learn to attune to the emotional undertone in relationships

# Leadership Skills

Emotional intelligence is an essential leadership skill. Learn to lead with compassion, even while making difficult decisions, and how to communicate with greater insight into the different layers of emotions, perspectives, and identity that drive relationships.

- ▶ Become skillful at influencing with compassion
- ▶ Gain confidence in creating a positive outcome in conversations where strong emotions are present
- ▶ Develop emotional courage to lead others

## ***Mindfulness:***

the ability to focus on the present moment with curiosity and openness. Mindfulness is a foundational skill that underpins emotional intelligence.

## ***Emotional Intelligence:***

the ability to recognize your own and other people’s emotions and use this information to guide wise thinking and behavior. Workplace studies show that emotional competencies predict performance, leadership effectiveness, and well-being.

Search Inside Yourself makes these deep and complex concepts highly practical and accessible, emphasizing application to the day-to-day challenges of work and life.

# BRING SIY TO YOUR ORGANIZATION

---

We help people in organizations bring out the best in themselves—enjoying greater productivity, effectiveness, and happiness—in all aspects of their work and life.

## Program Design

SIY programs can be tailored to fit your organization's culture and needs. Through interviews and an individual and organizational assessment process, we develop a mutual understanding of your organization's unique goals and objectives, and customize programs accordingly.

The core of Search Inside Yourself is a two-day in-person program with follow-up practices to support participants to make habit changes at work that lead to greater wellbeing and emotional intelligence. SIY programs are delivered in-person by one or two SIY-certified teachers.

The program is highly interactive and includes the following core components:

- ▶ Overview of the neuroscience of emotion, perception and behavior change.
- ▶ Attention training to enable greater emotional intelligence, including self-awareness, self-mastery, motivation and connection with self and others.
- ▶ Practices for developing healthy mental habits that accelerate well-being—including effective listening, generosity, empathy, communication and social skills.
- ▶ Mindfulness and reflection practices that support happiness, overall well-being and exceptional leadership.

## Audience

The Search Inside Yourself program can be customized to work for a variety of participants:

**Leaders and Managers:** SIY teaches senior leaders and managers how to get breakthrough results in a way that is inspiring, engaging and compassionate. Through enhanced self-awareness and empathy, leaders learn to communicate better, strengthen relationships, and lead with greater presence and impact

**Employees:** SIY started as an open-enrollment program for any Google employee. Due to its success, the program has been expended from reaching dozens of employees per year to now thousands. The program works well for any employee that wants to develop personally, increase their well-being, and be a better teammate.

**Teams:** When a team participates in an SIY program together, they create a common language around emotional intelligence, good communication and navigating challenges.

### ***Audience:***

Employees, teams, managers, senior leaders

### ***Group Size:***

20-80 people

### ***Delivery:***

Onsite at your company, with virtual coaching and program follow-up

### ***Teachers:***

1-2 SIY-certified teachers travel to your organization



# Program Options

SIYLI works with clients to figure out the best program options and can create custom solutions. For organizations that are looking for deep engagement and larger impact, we start with a needs assessment process to determine the best combination of programs and to customize them to fit your team's unique needs.

The suite of SIY solutions include:

- ▶ **Interviews and Assessments** to understand the issues that are impacting or limiting employees and the organization. Interviews and rigorous emotional intelligence assessment surveys determine focus areas for individuals as well as aggregated information for the organization.
- ▶ **Live Training** to teach the Search Inside Yourself program.
- ▶ **Practice Period** following the live-training that includes weekly exercises and guidance on mindfulness-based habits at work. The practice period is concluded with a capstone event to reconnect the training participants and answer questions.
- ▶ **Coaching** provides expert guidance to develop self-awareness, interpersonal skills, and leadership.
- ▶ **Peer-to-Peer Programs** create an on-going opportunity for colleagues to support each other to deepen their self-awareness and face challenges with emotional courage.

Additional options to bring SIY into an organization include:

- ▶ **A Standalone SIY Program** includes an interactive 2-day in-person training, followed by 4-weeks of recommended peer-to-peer practices to sustain and integrate learning and self-directed growth from the inside out.
- ▶ **Keynote Address and Half-Day Introductory Programs** are an introduction to mindfulness practices to develop perspective and presence as a leader.
- ▶ **Internal Train-the-Trainer programs** scale the delivery of the SIY program and support company-wide growth.



“It would be amazing to offer this to the whole company or newly formed teams. This really shifted my perspective in how I approach my relationships and myself. I plan to make some changes adjustments to my work and life based on what I learned.”

# SAMPLE 2-DAY TRAINING SCHEDULE

The 2-day highly interactive program typically includes (blue notes the interactive exercises and practices):

## DAY 1

9:00	Introduction: Becoming more present
	Practice: attention
	How do you develop Emotional Intelligence?
	<b>MINDFULNESS: the science and benefits of being fully present</b>
	Practice: open awareness
	Journaling: self-reflection
	Exercise: mindful listening
	Applications for work and growth
12:30	<b>Mindful Lunch</b>
	<b>SELF-AWARENESS: Develop a high-resolution awareness of your thoughts, emotions, and habits</b>
	Practice: body scan
	Journaling: strengths and challenges
	Exercise: mindful conversation
	<b>SELF-MANAGEMENT: Skillfully manage your impulses and reactions</b>
	Practice: reframe and respond to challenges in the moment
	Exercise: mindful listening
5:00	End of Day 1

## DAY 2

9:00	Introduction
	<b>MOTIVATION: Align your values and work</b>
	Exercise: alignment with values
	Envisioning: visualize your goals
	Journaling: your ideal future
	Resilience: recover from setbacks
	<b>EMPATHY: Understand others' feelings and experiences</b>
	Exercise: "Just like me"
12:30	<b>Mindful Lunch</b>
	Practice: mindful walking
	Exercise: empathetic listening
	<b>LEADERSHIP: Lead with Compassion</b>
	Journaling: compassionate leadership
	Leadership skills: communicating with insight
	Exercise: difficult conversations
	Exercise: who I am as a leader
	Applications for work and growth
5:00	End of Day 2

# OUR CLIENTS

---

We've worked with organizations across many countries and industries, from technology, energy, and banking to non-profit biotech and medical, to insurance, gaming, telecommunications, and many more.



# OUR REACH

We have touched over 100 cities in the world with an average 4.6/5 satisfaction score.



“The most unique and introspective development skills I have ever seen. Thank you for this opportunity and investment in my development.”

“This is not fluffy. It is practical... it's supported by science, research, and with very relevant outcomes.”

# OUR IMPACT

---

“The SIYLI team was fantastic. Their knowledge and experiences surrounding the subject matter were extraordinary. They are seasoned practitioners who embody their teachings. In addition to all the other benefits, much of the program was geared toward improving the Emotional Intelligence of our associates, which I am confident can drive business and leadership success.

The Plantronics team’s response to the class was outstanding. I have had a great many people thank me for bringing the class to Plantronics. ‘A class like none other,’ ‘lifelong skills for both their business and personal lives,’ and ‘life changing’ were some of the comments I received.

I highly recommend this training for anyone looking to improve the way their team works together, enhance their innovative thinking and clarity, reduce stress, improve general well-being, manage difficult conversations and be generally more at peace.”

— **Barry Margerum**  
**Chief Strategy Officer**  
**Plantronics, Inc.**



Barry Margerum

*In a survey of over 300 SIY program participants:*

91%

reported that they had enhanced clarity of mind

89%

improved their ability to reduce stress

85%

had an increased ability to connect with others



## O.K., Google, Take a Deep Breath

By CAITLIN KELLY

Published: April 28, 2012



Mountain View, Calif.

MAYBE it's no surprise that a yellow-brick road winds through the Googleplex.

Step onto Google's campus here — with its indoor treehouse, volleyball court, apiaries, heated toilet seats and, yes, Oz-style road — and you might think you've just sailed over the rainbow.

But all the toys and perks belie the frenetic pace here, and many employees acknowledge that life at Google can be hard on fragile egos.

Sure, the amenities are seductive, says Blaise Pabon, an enterprise sales engineer, but "when you get to a place like this, it can tear you apart" if you don't find a way to handle the hard-driving culture.

Employees coming from fast-paced fields, already accustomed to demanding bosses and long hours, say Google pushes them to produce at a pace even faster than they could have imagined. Google's co-founder and chief executive, Larry Page, recently promised on the company Web site to maintain "a healthy disregard for the impossible."

Little wonder, then, that among the hundreds of free classes that Google offers to employees here, one of the most popular is called S.I.Y., for "Search Inside Yourself." It is the brainchild of Chade-Meng Tan, 41, a tall, thin, soft-spoken engineer who arrived at Google in 2000 as Employee No. 107.

Think of S.I.Y. as the Zen of Google. Mr. Tan dreamed up the course and refined it with the help of nine experts in the use of mindfulness at work. And in a time when Google

has come under new scrutiny from European and United States regulators over privacy and other issues, a class in mindfulness might be a very good thing.

The class has three steps: attention training, self-knowledge and self-mastery, and the creation of useful mental habits.

If it sounds a bit touchy-feely, consider this: More than 1,000 Google employees have taken the class, and there's a waiting list of 30 when it's offered, four times a year. The class accepts 60 people and runs seven weeks.

Richard Fernandez, director of executive development and a psychologist by training, says he sees a significant difference in his work behavior since taking the class. "I'm definitely much more resilient as a leader," he says. "I listen more carefully and with less reactivity in high-stakes meetings. I work with a lot of senior executives who can be very demanding, but that doesn't faze me anymore. It's almost an emotional and mental bank account. I've now got much more of a buffer there."

Mr. Tan says the course has received good reviews. "In anonymous surveys, on average, participants rated it around 4.75 out of 5," he says. "Awareness is spread almost entirely by word-of-mouth by alumni, and that alone already created more demand than we can currently serve."

Mr. Tan's first book, "Search Inside Yourself: The Unexpected Path to Achieving Success, Happiness (and World Peace)," is out this month, with a foreword by his friend and S.I.Y. collaborator Daniel Goleman, author of "Emotional Intelligence." In addition to its United States publication by HarperOne, the book is to be published in 17 markets worldwide, from South Korea to Brazil to Slovenia.

"As technology pushes us faster, we have to adapt to new ways of doing business in this new millennium," says Mark Tauber, senior vice president and publisher at HarperOne. "We believe that Meng's book lays the groundwork for a new national conversation about work and what work means to us."

But what is Mr. Tan's ultimate goal? A Buddhist for many years, he says without irony that he wants to create world peace. "I was always very different from the other kids," he says. "I have an I.Q. of 156. I didn't play sports. I thought big. I thought I could achieve great things. I don't want to sound megalomaniac, but my whole life is about doing something for the world, from as far back as I can remember."

Born and raised in Singapore, Mr. Tan describes his childhood

# The New York Times

continued...

as “very unhappy.”

“It was the geek thing,” he says. He taught himself how to write software code at the age of 12. And by 15, he had won his first national academic award. At 17, he was one of four members of the national software championship team.

“In Singapore, the way to distinguish yourself is to win competitions,” he says. But public attention and external rewards brought him no satisfaction. “It wasn’t making a difference,” he says. “I wasn’t any happier. There was a compulsion to be the best.”

He grew up watching American TV series like “The Cosby Show” and “Diff’rent Strokes,” studied computer engineering in Singapore and attended graduate school at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He was offered a job, he says, within five minutes of e-mailing his résumé after graduation.

The offer was from Google.

ABOUT 50 people file into an amphitheater filled with soft, comfortable seats in the bright primary colors of Google’s logo. Mr. Tan is at the podium with his fellow teacher, Marc Lesser, a former Zen monk who is the author of two books and a successful businessman. Mr. Lesser is one of several S.I.Y. instructors hired from outside and paid by Google.

This week’s class is about motivation.

For the next two hours, employees partner up and perform exercises to identify and share emotions. The teachers set a gentle, welcoming tone, so the class offers students a place to question why and how they behave. Here, simply wielding superior technical skills or ferocious intelligence won’t cut it.

Like Mr. Tan, many S.I.Y. students are highly educated immigrants from Asia. Some of their peers are already millionaires. This course challenges them to examine how their choices affect their work and relationships.

“We need an expert,” Mr. Tan says as the class begins. “That expert is you. This class is to help you discover what you already know.” To illustrate his point, he shows a slide of a pile of four smooth polished stones, balanced atop one another. “We’re looking for alignment, finding our deepest values, envisioning how they’ll take us to our destination and the resilience we need to achieve that.”

Mr. Tan knows how to seduce his ambitious audience. He refers to successful people who exemplify these values, from Michael Jordan to the best-selling authors Daniel Pink and Tony Hsieh, the C.E.O. of Zappos. “I’m the other good-looking Chinese guy,” he jokes.

One exercise asks everyone to name, and share with a partner, three core values. “It centers you,” one man says afterward. “You can go through life forgetting what they are.”

There’s lots of easy laughter. People prop up their feet on the backs of seats and lean in to whisper to their partners —

people from a variety of departments they otherwise might have never met. (Students are asked to pair up with a buddy for the duration of the course.)

In one seven-minute exercise, participants are asked to write, nonstop, how they envision their lives in five years. Mr. Tan ends it by tapping a Tibetan brass singing bowl.

They discuss what it means to succeed, and to fail. “Success and failure are emotional and physiological experiences,” Mr. Tan says. “We need to deal with them in a way that is present and calm.”

Then Mr. Lesser asks the entire room to shout in unison: “I failed!”

“We need to see failure in a kind, gentle and generous way,” he says. “Let’s see if we can explore these emotions without grasping.”

Talking about failure?

Sharing feelings?

Sitting quietly for long, unproductive minutes?

At Google?

“The notion of S.I.Y. is more radical or countercultural here at Google than anywhere else,” says Mr. Pabon, who took the class in 2009. “The pressure here is really quite intense. It’s a place filled with high achievers trained to find validation through external factors.”

Mr. Tan’s credibility with his students and with senior management — which moved him into human resources a few years ago — stems from a few factors. He’s cool in all the ways that people in Silicon Valley want to be cool. First, he’s an engineer, like Google’s co-founders, Mr. Page and Sergey Brin. And Mr. Tan also became rich — albeit not nearly as rich as the founders — after Google went public in 2004.

Given his fortune, his street cred inside Google and the growing popularity of the course, he’s a Google star.

“People love that entrepreneur/mystic thing,” Mr. Pabon says.

MR. TAN understands that Google employees demand data, not just emotional arguments or abstract theory.

Eric Chang, 44, who took the course twice because he was too busy the first time with work demands to attend all the classes, says: “I would go to S.I.Y. with a healthy engineer’s mentality. My attitude was always, ‘Prove it!’ right up until the end. ‘We need to see a controlled experiment! We need to see proof!’ “

Mr. Tan likes to refer to the example of Matthieu Ricard, a Buddhist monk once described by a British newspaper as the happiest person in the world. At first, that rang hollow to Mr. Chang. “Matthieu’s a monk; I don’t want to be a monk,” he says. “But Meng was able to make that bridge for me. He presented S.I.Y. the way we all present to one another: here’s my premise, here’s my control, here’s my experiment.”

Mr. Chang came to the course at a moment of personal and professional crisis. A software engineer at Google since 2004, he had seen colleagues burn out and quit — or work, as he did, with stress-related back pain.

# The New York Times

continued...

"I'm from Taiwan," he says. "Half of Silicon Valley is born elsewhere. It's the immigrant mind-set to thrive on stress, go to the best schools, work hard. No one realized that way of working was really unsustainable."

Then, when his mother lay dying in Toronto, his punishing schedule never allowed enough time to visit her. "Our growth was explosive, with constant demands to keep scaling the system," he recalls. Exhausted by his ever-expanding workload, he says he began exploding easily and often at his wife and young son.

"I knew I had to get help," he says. "The question was when and where."

His wife says something had to give. "I couldn't really tell him what I was thinking anymore," she says, "because I didn't want to push his buttons."

Since taking S.I.Y., Mr. Chang and his wife agree that he's changed a great deal — becoming calmer, more patient, better able to listen. Perhaps most helpful, in a culture of 80-hour workweeks, was the camaraderie of the course's buddy system. "You definitely need a community of support," he says. "The energy in the classroom was important, too, thanks to the level of participation."

One tool the course teaches is S.B.N.R.R. — nicknamed the Siberian North Railroad but really short for Stop, Breathe, Notice, Reflect and Respond.

"Business is a machine made out of people," says Bill Duane, an engineer in rockabilly spectacles who works in site reliability, helping to ensure that Gmail works smoothly. "If you have people, you have problems. You can have friction between them or smoothness."

Mr. Duane took S.I.Y. four years ago and considers it as sort of an organizational WD-40, a necessary lubricant between driven, ambitious employees and Google's demanding corporate culture. Helping employees handle stress and defuse emotion helps everyone work more effectively, he says.

Bob Sidebotham, 58, an engineer currently taking the course, agrees. "I work in a group that wasn't very communicative, and half of them work in Germany," he says. "What I appreciate about the class is not just learning to meditate but using it in real life. It's more about small attitudinal changes."

Johanna Sistek, a trademark lawyer, says the emotional skills she refined in the class help her focus on her many tasks, despite a fire hose of professional demands. Like most of her colleagues, she still faces "instant deadlines" but says they no longer freak her out.

"I think the benefit of something like S.I.Y. for anybody in any workplace is that any time you have people working together there is going to be dysfunction, people who do not

communicate well," she says. "Someone is always going to be a favorite — or not — and you can't be unhappy about it all the time."

For Karen May, vice president for leadership and talent, S.I.Y. is a useful tool on several levels. "We have great people," she says. "Now how do we keep them? Teaching employees with terrific technical abilities also means helping them to develop presentation skills and communication skills, helping them to understand their impact on other people, their ability to collaborate across groups and cultivate a mentality from which great motivation can spring."

When the executive chef Olivia Wu, now 59, arrived here after surviving decades in the deadline-driven and collaborative fields of newspaper journalism and the food industry, she still found the company's normal pace of doing business overwhelming. "The pace! The volume! This is the most intense place I've ever worked," she says.

Even her job-interview assignment — to fix food for 20 people in three hours from a counter filled with ingredients — was spine-stiffening. After taking S.I.Y., Ms. Wu finds her job overseeing 30 cafes throughout the Mountain View campuses — "controlled chaos," she says — somewhat less stressful.

Can S.I.Y. translate to other companies and corporate cultures? One of its tenets is mindful e-mailing. Mr. Tan says it's too easy to focus on the message we're sending, and not on its recipients and the possible impact on them. When recipients don't know the intent behind the e-mail — as is often the case — they tend to assume the worst, like anger or frustration on the sender's part. "We frequently get offended or frightened by e-mails that were never intended to offend or frighten," Mr. Tan writes in his book. "If we are emotionally unskillful, then we react with offense or fear, and then all hell breaks loose."

Peter Allen, a former Google employee, gave a green light to the first S.I.Y. class when he led Google U., the unit devoted to internal education, from 2007 to 2009, and Mr. Tan's boss. Mr. Allen felt that a course focused on mindfulness was important and gave Mr. Tan the time and the budget to develop it.

Mr. Allen says: "I sent 1,000 e-mails a month all the time. In a culture where e-mail is so important, this makes a big difference. We all need the ability to connect. I think Meng will make a huge difference."

S.I.Y. principles are vital in any workplace where value is typically based on intellectual machismo, Mr. Allen adds. In a high-I.Q. environment, he says, I.Q. itself is not a differentiating factor, but "emotional intelligence, E.Q., is."

Or, as Mr. Pabon says: "The reason I think it will be broadly applicable is that everyone struggles. 'Am I the smartest person in the room? What if I'm not?' They're worried about losing their job. Everyone's got some fear of not being able to survive."



## Inside Google's Insanely Popular Emotional-Intelligence Course

How one of Google's original engineers became a self-help guru, and why thousands are on waiting lists for his course.

**VIVIAN GIANG 03.25.15 5:59 AM**



In 2006, Google engineer Chade-Meng Tan decided he no longer wanted to feel like a cog in the great machine, and set out to create a program that would train people to be more mindful in their lives. This wasn't some Kumbaya moment; Tan's ambitious course would train people to become more aware of their emotions, more compassionate toward others, more able to build sustainable relationships, and, ultimately, able to contribute to world peace. Or at least peace and harmony in the workplace.

Tan, who joined Google in 1999 as the company's employee No. 107, assembled a team that included a few consultants, a Stanford scientist, and Marc Lesser, a zen teacher with an MBA and entrepreneurial experience. The first "Search Inside Yourself" two-day course was taught to Googlers in 2007. It wasn't long after that the influential curriculum led to Tan's appointment as Google's Jolly Good Fellow. His position

requires him to "enlighten minds, open hearts, create world peace."

An estimated 1,500 Googlers are expected to go through the training this year, while thousands wait for future open seats. In 2012, Tan and his team decided to make the course available to organizations and communities outside of Google. So the Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute (SIYLI) was launched as a nonprofit, while Tan's book,

Search Inside Yourself, became endorsed by the Dalai Lama and former President Jimmy Carter.

"I generally describe Search Inside Yourself as a leadership program that uses the tools of mindfulness and emotional intelligence, and that it's based in science," says Lesser, who has become CEO of SIYLI. "The basic structure of the program uses the five components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills—or, as we call them, leadership skills."

Since the initial curriculum was developed specifically for Google's engineers, it needed to be taught in a completely straightforward, secular language, explains Lesser, because scientists and engineers are typically skeptics. The course focuses on what's happening in the brain when you're having certain thoughts and feelings, and encourages reflection rather

# FAST COMPANY

continued...

than reaction. You're able to master emotions and think calmly and clearly, become a better listener, and pause before acting.

Peter Bostelmann, a program engineer at the time for SAP, was inspired by Tan's ability to bring personal development work to the corporate world, and signed up for a course in December 2012. After his training, Bostelmann was convinced he needed to do the same thing for SAP that Tan did for Google.

"For me, mindfulness is a private matter, and this course helped to integrate it . . . to bring it all together and apply it to the business world"—such as what happens when you're having a difficult conversation with someone in real life, explains Bostelmann. "Specifically in the software industry, we're in this constant change of the paradigm of the industry. [The program allows people] to handle change in a more skillful way so that you can navigate yourself as a human being and an employee and a leader to understand what's going on in [yourself] and what's going on with [your] team."

Bostelmann began talking to executives about teaching the course to SAP employees, but many of them were unsure if the company was ready, especially since SAP has a more conservative culture compared to Google.

So, Bostelmann brought Tan in as a guest speaker, and was amazed by the responses he received. SAP's executives agreed to a pilot course in the summer of 2013, which turned out to be a full class. Today, 400 employees have completed the course in the U.S. and Germany, and 800 are on the waiting list. Last year, Bostelmann was appointed SAP's director of mindfulness.

He says SAP employees who have taken the

course report feeling less stress and higher productivity, even six months after taking the program. A colleague even told Bostelmann that the course has had a "deep impact on his marriage" because he's learned how to listen in a different way.

"It's not that we're all becoming only peaceful and happy; I think this is one of the misconceptions," says Bostelmann. "It's about becoming more aware and the capacity to recognize yourself, so if something happens, you become more aware. Whenever I am confronted, I am becoming more clear in what's happening and how I want to respond."

"I was just a regular program manager. As a consequence of the Search Inside Yourself course and me bringing this to SAP, I created my own role. I don't know anyone else who is a director of mindfulness," he says.

"Emotional intelligence" has been a buzz-phrase in the corporate world ever since Daniel Goleman made the term popular in the mid-1990s. While some remain skeptics to EQ as an indispensable ingredient, Lesser explains that the workplace is becoming more and more about how people are working together, and EQ skills are needed for successful collaborations.

"Emotional-intelligence skills support collaboration, more open communication, more transparency and less posturing, less ego, and more people working for the greater good and for the purpose of the organization succeeding," he tells Fast Company.

It's true that no one likes change, but if two days and a few weeks of a "practice period" is how Google turns all its doubters into do-gooders and loyal employees, self-awareness and mindfulness training might be something other companies should seriously think about.



## Here's what Google's most popular course 'Search Inside Yourself' teaches employees

Drake Baer, Business Insider | August 9, 2014 7:00 AM ET

Every year, thousands of Googlers take one of a dozen company courses on mindfulness meditation, the increasingly prevalent practice of having a “balanced awareness” of what’s happening around you.

The most popular class — titled “Search Inside Yourself” — regularly has a wait list stretching six months.

“I know this sounds melodramatic,” a Google employee reported on an after-course examination, “but I really think this course changed my life.”

The class has been taught at Google since 2007 and can be taken as either a two-and-a-half-day intensive course or in 19 hours over seven weekly sessions.

It’s the brainchild of Chade Meng-Tan, a Singapore-born engineer who was hired as Google employee No. 107 back in 1999. Meng (as he’s known to his colleagues) has made significant contributions to the company, including ramping up its Chinese language compatibility.

Meng has also influenced Google’s culture. He’s famous in the company for hosting VIPs that grace the Googleplex; he reportedly has a wall of himself smiling with celebrities, including presidents Clinton, Carter, and Obama.

“I’m not interested in bringing Buddhism to Google,” Meng has said. “I am interested in helping people at Google find the key to happiness.”

That’s the scope of Meng’s ambition. His job

description reads: “Enlighten minds, open hearts, create world peace.”

Meng tried to launch meditation courses at Google before the Search Inside Yourself class, but couldn’t find the right positioning — until he aligned it with another movement in organizational psychology: emotional intelligence.

“The people I wanted to reach were those who might look at the course description and say, ‘This is all hippie bullshit,’” Meng has said.

By branding meditation as a workout for your emotional intelligence, Meng was able to angle Search Inside Yourself as a contemplative training program that would help people better relate to themselves and others, thus providing a differentiating set of skills in engineer-heavy cultures like Google.

“Everybody knows this EI thing is good for their career,” Meng told WIRED. “And every company knows that if their people have EI, they’re gonna make a shitload of money.”

The course — which got a shoutout in a New York Times column last week — is fast becoming an institution in and outside of the Googleplex. In 2012, Meng published a book based on the course, called “Search Inside Yourself: The Unexpected Path to Achieving Success, Happiness (and World Peace).” It’s gone on to be a bestseller, receive heaps of awards, and is being translated into 24 languages.

continued...

As a course, Search Inside Yourself is broken into three portions:

- Attention training: “At any time, whatever is happening to you — whether you’re under stress, you’re being shouted at, or anything else — you have the skill to bring the mind to a place that’s calm and clear. If you can do that, it lays the foundation for emotional intelligence,” Meng says
- Self-knowledge: “Once your mind is calm and clear, you can create a quality of self-knowledge or self-awareness that improves over time, and it evolves into self-mastery. You know about yourself enough that you can master your emotions,” Meng says.
- Creating mental habits: “For example, there is the mental habit of kindness, of looking at every human being you encounter and thinking to yourself, ‘I want this person to be happy.’ Once that becomes a habit, you don’t have to think about it; it just comes naturally,” Meng says.

According to a Google spokesperson, the class is effective because of the way it ties neuroscience to the first-person research that meditators have been doing for some 2,500 years.

While instructors change, there’s always two of them. One supplies the scientific research, and the other gives practical instructions. The science-oriented instructor focuses on what’s happening in your brain when you sit on a meditation cushion or walk through your life, explaining how swirling thoughts connect with the fight-or-flight hormonal impulses handed down from evolution. The practical training in mindfulness teaches the basics of meditation. The word “Buddhism” is never used

During the course, an instructor might ask you and another Googler to pair off and sit across from one another. She’ll then tell you that the person

sitting across from you is a person, has a mother and father, fears and hopes, and has experienced pain. It’s a workout in compassion — recognizing that your colleagues are human beings as opposed to cogs in a colorful corporate machine.

The results are powerful. Just look at a few of the testimonials of the Googlers who have decided to Search Inside Themselves, via Mindful.org:

One participant said, “I have completely changed in the way I react to stressors. I take the time to think through things and empathize with other people’s situations before jumping to conclusions. I love the new me!”

Some have found the quality of their marriages improved. Others reported overcoming personal crises with the help of Search Inside Yourself.

For example, one person told us, “I experienced personal tragedy — my brother’s death — during the course of Search Inside Yourself, and [the class] enabled me to manage my grief in a positive way.” One person simply said, “I now see myself and the world through a kinder, more understanding set of eyes.”

# CONTACT US


---

Questions:

✉ [info@siyli.org](mailto:info@siyli.org)

☎ 415-561-7851

💻 [www.siyli.org](http://www.siyli.org)



“I walked into the class a bit of a skeptic, but was knocked off my feet on the first day by how powerful meditation and mindfulness can be. Thank you for opening up a whole new world to me. This will likely have an even bigger impact on my life outside work!”