Natural Standard

Question & Answer with Dr. Norman Rosenthal

Dr. Catherine Ulbricht, Founder and CEO of ***Natural Standard****, interviews world-renowned psychiatrist and author Dr. Norman Rosenthal. Dr. Rosenthal's research has pioneered the use of light therapy for seasonal affected disorder (SAD). His latest book* Transcendence: Healing and Transformation Through Transcendental Meditation *discusses the value of this technique for healing and transformation*

Catherine: Today we have the pleasure of having a discussion with Dr. Norman Rosenthal, who is a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Georgetown University Medical School, and has maintained a private practice in the Washington, DC metropolitan area for over 30 years. He conducted research at the National Institute of Mental Health as a Research Fellow Researcher and Senior Researcher for more than 20 years.

He has a book available called *Transcendence: Healing and Transformation Through Transcendental Meditation*, which offers a scientifically validated method for overcoming stress and healing trauma. And that's the reason why **Natural Standard** thought that speaking with him today would be of great interest to our audience. So we would like to get an overview from Dr. Rosenthal and then discuss TM or Transcendental Meditation from a conditions-based approach. We will dig deeper into some Q&A on addictions, education, anxiety, depression, and PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), cardiovascular health, etc. It is a real pleasure having you here with us for this webinar Dr. Rosenthal, welcome.

Norman: Thank you, good to be here.

Catherine: Do you want to start by giving us an overview of Transcendental Meditation to make sure we are on the same page?

Norman: Maybe a good place to start is just to say is that I have been interested in holistic approaches, especially evidence-based holistic approaches now for many, many years. When I was at the National Institute of Mental Health, I developed light therapy for seasonal affective disorder, which is of course a non-drug therapy. We did a lot of research to validate that. And in a previous book I've written about St. John's Wart, an herbal remedy. So I have that perspective and wouldn't normally get excited about something unless I was fully persuaded that it had tremendous healing capacity. And so it was with this conviction, based on my personal experience, based on my experience with my patients and the literature, including more than 340 peer reviewed articles that I determined that Transcendental Meditation was really worth a thorough re-visiting. Because people in the audience may not know, Transcendental Meditation came to the United States in the late 60's and early 70's. It was the subject of a huge fad. Lots of people were doing it because it

was the "in" thing. And then it became less public. But all along people have been researching the area and people have been doing it. And what's happened now is the research, especially in some areas has reached a point of maturity, and while in other areas there is tantalizing hints that it has more promise than we have thoroughly nailed down. So, that's really the background with which I bring to this book and with which I approach the topic.

Catherine: Terrific. Thank you. Well we are eager to learn more. I know that you've studied the information of TM for people with addiction to or abuse of drugs and alcohol. What evidence is there that TM can help people with addictions to drugs, alcohol and cigarette smoking?

Norman: Well I'm glad you just get in like that because that's an area where there is quite a lot of research. There are 18 studies. Now, whenever you look at literature, you always are going to get a mixed literature. But a meta-analysis of those 18 studies does show it strongly fits for alcohol abuse, cigarette abuse, well, with cigarettes I guess you are always talking about abuse, alcohol abuse, cigarette smoking and drug abuse, in varying populations, done by varying groups. And if you look at it as a whole, I, as a researcher, come away with a sense that there is really something going on here. Any specific study can be picked apart, of course. But if you take the sum total of studies, they are all pointing in the same direction, to a powerful, anti-addiction focus.

Now, the approach that I've taken throughout the book is to look at some individual cases. Because people, especially when people are reading a book for the general public, they want to look at some intriguing individuals cases. And then, only once they can relate to the people involved, they want to know what the science says and why we should believe these individuals. So that's kind of an approach that I've taken throughout. And one of the individuals that I look at in the addiction section is a musician, a very famous electronic musician who goes under the name of Moby, very, very talented guy. And Moby, whose on the record as having a bad problem with alcohol abuse, says that TM has been crucial as part of his recovery plan. I said; "How does that work?" He said; "Well, you know I've always drank to decrease agitation, that's what I drank for. And TM does that for me, it reduces agitation." He said; "It lowers the flame on a pot of water." Well I said; "You are a creative musician, does it help your creativity?" He said it does, and this is how, he said; "Imagine that you are at a party or you are throwing a party, and you only want 25 guests there, but somehow 50 unwelcome guests have shown up as well. Now the room is too full and it's full of people you don't really want to have there." He said; "That's how my brain is before TM. And then I do my meditation and it's as though those 50 unwelcome guests go away, and I'm just left with the 25 that I want."

That's what I love about personal stories, because no matter how well-designed the study is, you are never going to get that kind of fine grained understanding. What does it really feel like to the person on the inside? And how is it that this principle, namely TM, is actually working.

Natural Standard

Catherine: I agree. Some of the therapies that we've studied at **Natural Standard**, in addition to meditation, are acupuncture, acupressure, reiki, and therapeutic massage. Just because there isn't a well design randomized controlled trial or meta-analysis on the science side supporting these therapies, hundreds or thousands of years of people have used these therapies and enjoyed health benefits. Observation of patient cases is also a very important form of evidence. The data is always evolving and there may be studies that come out in the future with NIH grant funding, for example, to help reinforce the effects that we might observe with a journal article.

Norman: I completely agree with you there.

Catherine: Terrific. So I understand that the Moby story was really helpful to help us feel and be in touch with what the experience of TM might be like. I understand an important aspect of TM is the state of transcendence, which is the title of your book. Can you describe what the state is like and do you think it would be helpful for people with other types of addiction? So in addition to, we discussed alcohol and cigarette smoking, what about things like overeating, if you might call that an addiction? Or, can you describe how it might be helpful in that type of situation?

Norman: It's really an interesting question, and first to answer the question on transcendence. I first got interested in TM five years ago. I'd done it in the 70's, but just as a medical student just dipping my toe in the water, so to speak, I wasn't serious about going for a proper swim. When I got back into it four or five years ago, I heard there was this fourth state of consciousness called transcendence, beyond the three usual states of waking, sleeping and dreaming. And it sounded like "woohoo" stuff to me, quite honestly, the fourth state of consciousness, who has ever heard of a fourth state of consciousness? However, I came to scoff and remained to pray, because when I actually got into the meditation myself, I realized that this particular meditation uses a sound or mantra, in which you think to yourself for 20 minutes, twice a day while you are sitting comfortably with your eyes closed. While you're thinking the sound or the mantra, the mind goes like a diving bell deep down into an ocean. It goes down within and you get to a place where you are alert, so even if a pin drops you would know it. But you are very, very calm. Normally, if you are alert you are hyper and if you are calm you are not alert. So, this is an unusual combination. It's nothing, actually; you are not thinking anything. You are not thinking, "what did I do last night? wWhat am I going to do this evening?" In fact, if you even try and think in that state, it's hard to even get a thought together. Actually, you really don't want to, because part of the beauty of this state is to have your mind empty of content, it's a very lovely feeling and it's very, very joyful. And the word that is often used is the word "bliss." And it occurs to me that the word "bliss," one doesn't normally use it in everyday language. You say; "I'm happy" or "I'm glad "or "I'm thrilled" or "I'm excited." But "I'm blissful;" you would look at somebody and think what's he been smoking? This is the word for the calm and untroubled joy. Here we've got this fourth state of consciousness, you are alert, you are calm, you don't have a sense of boundaries and time or space, there are no specific thoughts in your mind, and

there is a kind of blissful, joyful feeling. You access that experience twice a day. There's something about doing that that seems to really change not only ones physical well-being, but one's psychological state as well.

Catherine: It sounds like you can use this blissful feeling to replace feelings that you have, as in the Moby description of wanting to drink or feeling like you have a short fuse. It also may help if you are going to binge eat, for example. If you can achieve bliss, it can help negate that sort of negative urge. I can image this to be very helpful in people with all sorts of anxiety disorders and potentially save a lot money because it's something you can do at home or even in your office. You don't need special equipment or large insurance bills to cover the cost of TM. It can also help prevent sequela from prescription medications that people might take for certain health conditions.

Norman: Yes, that is a very good point, and no side effect is worth mentioning. You've asked me a very fascinating question about eating because I've been keeping records of my weight, daily records for years now; 3-4 years. And in the last year, I've just dropped 9 pounds without any change that I've been aware of. I haven't gone on any new diets at all. One thing that I attribute it to is not only TM in itself, but that the TM makes you want to do other healthy things. It organizes; "at least I'm doing this and it's so good for me, I need to do that as well." I was recently in London and giving a talk, saying what I've just said and a cousin of mine, a woman maybe 70 years old, heard it and she went into TM and she called me up and she said; "You know, this is helping me to do all these healthy things." I said; "Don't you remember I said that?" And she said; "Yeah, I remember you said that, but I thought it was just a publicity stunt on your part." So, it's not just a publicity stunt, it makes you want to be healthier.

Another interesting single case story, now I understand that individual evidence does not make a controlled study, but this is how it's on record as reported on YouTube, talking about how after he started meditating, he just gave up smoking. He just didn't feel like smoking anymore. And I've heard that story many, many times: quit smoking, take up exercise, go to the gym. You know when you are accessing a part of yourself that feels very, very good. You are giving yourself a message. You are saying that there is a part inside me that's very wonderful, and very joyful, and I really love that part, I want to look after it and cherish it, and take care of it. And I think that's the kind of thing that happens when you start to meditate regularly.

Catherine: Now, if you decide you want try this, how do you recommend that people introduce themselves? Do you need a special trainer? Or will reading your book help to guide people who want to take this up as a chronic practice?

Norman: Reading my book you will see what TM requires. It requires 20 minutes twice a day. Most people will not make that kind of time commitment, unless they are very persuaded that it is worth their while. My book is a "why to" book, it's not a "how to" book. It is, let me tell you the stories of people who have meditated, let me show you the data; let me tell you my own

story, and my patients stories, what it involves, and why it is worth your while. What I've really enjoyed is hearing people say; "You know, I read your book, I really enjoyed it. But more importantly I've made an appointment to talk with a TM teacher."

That gets the second part of your question. This is a discipline that is taught. It is taught in a one-on-one fashion; it's like piano lessons, yoga, karate. You know, a book can only take you so far, but you really need a mentor, or a teacher, or a guide. And that's what you need for TM. So where do you find that? At www.TM.org is one place, the other is to go to the Dave Lynch Foundation, and the third is to go to my website, which is www.normanrosenthal.com. All of these places will lead you to your nearby TM center where you will find a teacher who has gone through at least five months of training and probably has years of experience on top of that, who will customize the teaching so that it fits the student.

Catherine: Great, that's very informative, thank you. Those seem like all helpful avenues for adults to get involved in TM, what about children? Because some people might be surprised to learn that TM is already being taught to school children as part of the international Quiet Time program. Can you educate us on what that program does?

Norman: I'm so glad you asked that question. It has been introduced, usually at the middle school level. Below middle school the children are often too young to benefit. But at the middle school level, children have been taught in various places for years. Perhaps the most exciting new episode or chapter in this, and speaking of chapter I have a chapter on TM in schools in my book, but the new chapter in this story is the San Francisco school district. Because it began with a school called the Visitacion Valley School that was basically in a slum. Not only was it in a slum, but it was a dangerous slum. Most of the kids there had either known somebody who was shot, seen somebody shot, or else one of their friends or relatives had seen somebody shot. As a consequence, these kids were scared. They got to school and they were in turmoil. When a kid is in turmoil and gets to school and their brain is jangled, they are not in a good position to learn. In fact, they can't learn. What can they do? They either fight or cower in a corner. At least once a week an ambulance and the police were there to break up some fights. Fights were going on all the time, not only with the children but also with the teachers. It was at that time that Jim Dierke, who was the principal of the middle school, was offered the Quiet Time program, which he gratefully grabbed with both hands, because he was desperate to do something to turn this school around. Sure enough, that is exactly what the Quiet Time program has done. It has turned that school around. Attendance is up, grade point average is up, the whole school is different. Other schools have joined suit. The superintendent of the schools, who I saw just last week when we were doing an event in San Francisco, had said he has never in all of his years seen such a potent intervention.

Catherine: That's amazing. It sounds like it's ripe for a movie script or mini-documentary to get the word out and help other inner-city schools that could take advantage of such a successful program. Are there any controlled studies on the effects of TM in school children?

Natural Standard

Norman: That is a great question. Unfortunately, it very hard to control, because what it would mean is you would have to take some classes and give them the TM and other classes and not give them the TM. Or maybe one school and give it TM and another school and not give it TM. It's been very hard to do. However, there's a kind of control at Visitacion Valley because the juniors got the program and the seniors didn't get program, they could do it that way, across years. And what they would find is when the spring come and there are a few days left school, that's when the suspensions go up normally because the kids are getting wild and they just want to get out of school and they are acting up. Normally it goes up. In the junior class that got the Quiet Time program, it actually went down. But in the senior class, it went up which is the normal tendency. You've got this kind of "not perfect" control, but in the school, you know they have historical controls. Very few children ever get into a good high school from that slum school, that's totally changed. Now, many of these students are getting into good high schools. So, the control is not a perfect control, but if you compare it to a number of different ways, you have to conclude that something very unusual is happening there.

Catherine: We are charting the trends over time. It is epidemiological data in a way, observing from a far even. It's not known to have side effects or adverse effects even if it was a placebo, so to speak. That is certainly better than something that might have caused an addiction or have negative effects or be very costly. It sounds like you've discovered a socio-economic benefit to using TM over other therapies. For example, if the state was going to pay for all of these troubled children to have a one-on-one psychiatrist visit it would be very expensive. With TM, you are helping a very large group of people very successfully. We will be eagerly waiting for more data.

Norman: The superintendent said that previously a lot of these schools were feeding the prison pipeline. Because these kids were playing hooky, they were running into trouble. They were problems waiting to happen. He said; "There is just no better investment." He said; "Yes, of course food is critical and shelter is critical." But, he said; "After that, a good education, what is worth more than that? And how can a child get a good education if their mind isn't in a place where they are able to learn." So, he was just beside himself at this development.

Of course, it takes a long time for people to be persuaded that something actually works. I remember even with light therapy, it took many years. I remember one researcher; there were 20 studies or so all showing that light therapy was helping with season affective disorder. She took each and every study and found some little flaw in every study, as there will be in every study, a little flaw here and there, nothing will be perfect, very few studies are perfect. She said because there is no perfect study, you can't say that this thing works. What I say is if there is a lot of evidence all pointing in the same direction, even if it's not perfect, that is the likely way that it's going to be, and that's how it is.

Catherine: It's interesting also to note that what **Natural Standard** does is analyze and critique clinical trials, not with an aim of being negative, but with a hopeful eye of continuing to improve

studies and the basis that we found our clinical decisions on, both fellow healthcare providers and consumers. I think it's interesting to note that drug studies, which are FDA approved, and therapies that have been on the market for a long time, often don't get a grade of "A" for study quality, either.

Norman: That's true.

Catherine: It's nice to know there are natural alternatives. Especially for parents who often are looking for therapeutic interventions to treat or prevent with something that isn't a drug and doesn't have the potential risk associated with it. I know a really hot topic in this area is ADHD. Parents are desperately looking for a therapy to help their children that isn't known to be toxic and that doesn't break the bank. Is there any evidence that TM might help children with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD)?

Norman: There is, but if I might just loop around a little on this question. In the last 10 years I have run my own clinical trial business where I have actually done clinical research in anxiety, depression and other psychiatric conditions, mostly using drugs. I can tell you that not one single drug has crossed my desk that I'm anywhere near as excited about as I am in Transcendental Meditation. Not one drug has done all the things that this non-drug technique can do. The other thing that I will tell you is that if Transcendental Meditation could be put in a capsule and sold, it would be a billion dollar Blockbuster.

Catherine: Put in the water, would be great!

Norman: Now that's the one thing. Now the other thing I wanted to mention is that the subtitle of my book; *Transcendence is Healing and Transformation Through Transcendental Meditation*, I started it with healing, which really deals with the physical benefits of TM, and document how it can reduce the prevalence of stroke, heart attack and prolong life. Now, if I were hearing this over the radio, I would think; "This guy isn't for real. Reduce heart attack, strokes, prolong life? That's not possible." Okay, I would say, please read the evidence which is laid out, of controlled studies and randomized controlled studies in people at risk. So, it's compelling.

Now, from realizing that it can decrease cardiovascular disease, you've got to ask, "how does it do that?" Well, it does that by decreasing the response to stress, by cushioning the response to stress. All day long we are being stressed by multiple, multiple things. It's like I'm researching and my heart is beating faster and we really are in a jangle over all these little things that happen. We get cut off in traffic, we're rejected, we're disappointed, we're disrespected, all the "dis" words. And so we have these surges in our autonomic nervous system, in our fight or flight response system. That's why the TM reduces that, reduces the blood pressure, but it also does a lot of beneficial things for us psychologically.

Now, let me get back to your specific question about ADHD. ADHD, of course it's a problem with the attention, focus, effectiveness, etc. But it is aggravated by stress. People

with ADHD are even more stressed then regular people. Because, if you can imagine, everybody scrabbles to get their children to school, to get schoolbooks packed in the morning, or to write down all homework assignments at the end of the day. But if you've got ADHD you are either more stressed because you know you are going to probably miss some book or probably miss some assignment, and then you are going to get into trouble. So you are so stressed that the stress actually makes your focus and concentration worse. What the TM does is it reduces your stress. You say; "okay, maybe it's going to take me a few minutes longer than the next person, but I can do it. I can do it one by one and give myself a little bit more time, and then I'll have mom or dad check or I'll just review it with the teacher and everything is going to be okay." So, even if you are less organized than the next person, just by calming yourself down, which the TM does, you can improve your functioning. There is one pilot study that shows this. There are multiple examples of children with ADHD benefiting from meditating and the clarity and the calmness that comes with it.

Catherine: Wonderful, thank you very much for all that helpful information. You talked about cardiovascular health a little bit and we would love to learn in more detail about those studies. We understand the stress relationship, but what does science say about how TM helps these processes?

Norman: There is, for example, a meta-analysis done on 146 studies with what they call "trait anxiety." Now, an anxiety can be considered a state or a trait. State anxiety: "I'm anxious today because my exam is coming up later and I'm worried about how I'm going to do. " That's the anxiety of the moment. But some people are anxious prelingually, day after day, and that is trait anxiety: "I am just an anxious kind of person, I'm always anxious." So in this meta-analysis TM has a fantastically beneficial effect on trait anxiety and it is superior to many other stress management techniques. There is solid data in that direction. I should say there is one study done on post-traumatic stress disorder, which is an anxiety related condition that was done on Vietnam veterans. TM outperformed the conventional psychotherapy after days. We have a recently published pilot study on Iraqi and Afghan veterans, or shall I say veterans of the Afghan war, they were not Afghans themselves, they were American citizens. But they came back from the war with terrible post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms with flashbacks, nightmares, hypervigilence; a full catastrophe. TM was very helpful. It reduced their symptoms by 50% over two months and in some cases, really was transformational. So, that's why I say healing, but it does prevent heart attacks and strokes, and also transform who we are.

Catherine: PTSD is also a condition that has co-conditions or co-morbidities associated with it, such as cardiovascular conditions. People with PTSD also often struggle with addictions; drug addictions and alcohol addictions, to try to mask some of the symptoms they are having from the PTSD. You have proof that TM can help with those addictions as well, so you are really targeting a condition from a multi-dimensional approach.

Norman: You are absolutely correct.

Catherine: It seems like you have a higher chance of success that way.

Norman: You are absolutely correct, yes indeed. I've certainly seen people drinking and drugging to try to rid themselves from their PTSD symptoms.

Catherine: Right. So, this is all good ammunition for healthcare providers to have in their back pocket here. How does TM relate to cognitive behavioral therapy or CBT, are they related?

Norman: That is really a great question, because let's take anger management, for example, people with anger problems, explosive people. Traditionally, I have always done cognitive behavioral therapy for these problems. Let's say someone gets cut off in traffic, and he starts fuming, cursing the other drivers, banging the steering wheel, and it riles him up for the next half hour and he knows his blood pressure is going through the roof. Now he comes into my office. Now I say; "Okay, you can see this man. He is coming, he is cutting you off. No, you are not going to ram into him. You are not going to have a damaged car, and you are not going to do anything that is going to make you later then you would be if you just let him get in. And just tell yourself, this man, maybe he has an emergency or maybe he is in a terrible hurry, much more of a hurry than you are. Or maybe he just has a problem, he's got a speeding problem, but don't let it be your problem. I want you to measure your anger when this happens and I want you to give yourself some of these thoughts, and see whether the anger comes down on a scale of 1 to 10." That's a cognitive therapy approach. Now, the person does TM and what happens is you just find you don't get as angry. The person cuts in and you say; "Hum, maybe it's his problem, but why should it be my problem?" In other words, it's coming not from the top down, but from the bottom up. It's like you've nourished yourself with something that steadies you out, so that you are much less likely to be reactive. I've certainly seen it myself. I'm much less likely to pop-off or be reactive since I've been meditating. Give myself those few extra moments.

There's a great little vignette about a kid who had ADHD but he was also in therapy. He meditated and his therapist said, "Now, what have you noticed since you've started to meditate?" And the kid said; "Well you know, it use to be if another kid bumped me in the hall, I would just hit him. Now if another kid bumps me, I say to myself; 'Should I hit him or not?' And that's those few seconds that it gives you, you know?" Now, you could have treated that kid with cognitive behavioral therapy. But this feels like a more organic, easier way to get to the problem.

Catherine: Something people can do in real time. I realize that you recommend having your separate sessions twice a day, but you use the bits and pieces of the practice all throughout the day. You don't have to go to an appointment somewhere, a center for CBT or to get something done to you or to meet with someone. You carry it with you throughout all of your activities.

Norman: That is the really interesting point that you are making because the TM that you do twice a day sustains you for the rest of the day. For example, if you take the blood pressure study, maybe somebody gets his blood pressure taken at three o'clock in the afternoon, but

they've meditated many hours before. But such is the nature of the meditation that it carries through the day.

Catherine: It's a long term benefit.

Norman: A long term benefit. You don't have to say, "alright, time to say my mantra because I'm getting mad." It doesn't work that way. You don't get that mad because your nervous system, your fight or flight response system, is being programmed on a regular basis.

Catherine: Have you seen the movie with Michael Douglas in it, I believe it's called *Falling Down*?

Norman: I have not.

Catherine: Sometime this week or this weekend you must rent that movie and watch it. It's called *Falling Down*, because it's about a businessman who starts his day and all the normal stresses, dealing with the family and then trying to get out of the door on time, waiting in line, big traffic jam, all these things keep happening. He goes to order a cheeseburger and on the screen of the fast food restaurant there's this big juicy burger with bacon and cheese and it looks delicious. He waits in line forever, finally gets it and it's a cold piece of cardboard. It is just this sort of, anything that can go wrong, goes wrong. Unfortunately, he does not have the exposure to TM and he freaks out. He does everything with a short fuse. Somebody bumps into him and he hits them, somebody does this and he shoots them. It's like a mockery of how silly it is to let all of these stresses build up and you can either take the high road or go the low road. It's meant to be this sort of a dark comedy, I'd say, and Michael Douglas is an excellent actor in it. I think you would really enjoy it.

Norman: I am definitely going to rent it, thank you for the suggestion.

Catherine: That brings us up to my next question, hearing all this I know I have a very stressful life myself. Anybody working out there in the business world, whether it's in academia, a hospital, or a fortune 500 company, has a lot of stress, do you have any experience with TM helping people out in the working world, the executives?

Norman: I'm so glad you've mentioned this, because although I'm a psychiatrist and I'm interested in people with all the conditions like we mentioned; addictions, anger management, ADHD, and anxiety, all which can benefit from TM. But I'm really glad that you've given me the opportunity to tell the listeners that TM can really help highly successful and creative people become even more so. In my book *Transcendence,* I have interviews with top level business people, top level celebrities like Martin Scorsese, David Lynch, Laura Dern, Russell Brand, people who really are top of their game, who have shown and described how TM has helped them, to what we call, self-actualize. Which really means, just be the best person you can be. Anyway, I'm glad you asked that question. It's an organizing principal, it is beneficial whether you have a DSM condition or not, you can benefit.

Catherine: You can help people achieve maximum potential, be more creative, like you said of Moby at the beginning of our call. Now, what physical changes in the brain and body might account for the beneficial effects of TM in helping people in business reach their highest potential or maintain if they are already at their top game, as you say?

Norman: One very interesting brain change is something called coherence. Coherence is the property of the brain in which different brain regions have the same wave lengths going at times related to each other. Let's put it this way, in order to do anything with the brain, whether it's to have a creative idea or to implement something or anything, the different regions of the brain have to work in step with each other. And so the more coherent they are in all ways the more competent and efficient you are. TM enhances brain coherence and has been associated with increased competency, for example, in business managers or in athletes. So yes, that is probably one way that it works.

The other thing is if your nervous system is calmer, if you go into a negotiation and you are all revved up and riled up, do you think you are going to be more or less effective as somebody who goes in calm, but alert, listens to the other person, responds when he has to respond - or she, and just more on top of their game. Again, like one of the businessmen I spoke to said; "TM helps me become like a ninja when people come at me. It's like they are coming at me in slow motion. And I feel like I have a lot of time to respond to them." That, I think, is a good description of how TM feels to a lot of these people.

Catherine: Definitely. I think you've done an excellent job of portraying what the experience might be like to some of us for whom this is new. Even though they're only hearing your voice and not seeing you in person, I'm finding throughout our conversation that I can visualize some of these examples of e being a ninja, as you say. And I think your approach is very well-balanced because you are obviously a creditable, well-educated person with initials after your name, showing that you're well studied. You understand the science. But, you have a very open mind to exploring new things with that investigator hat on. We need to progress and improve healthcare and you've found something and enlightened all of us. This is something that can help people of all ages with all sorts of medical conditions. People who are in the media and very high performers can benefit from TM as well.

I just wanted to complete our discussion with a quote from Dr. Oz, I've had the honour of being a guest on the Dr. Oz Show myself recently and found him to be very well rounded in his approach to healthcare as well. Dr. Oz says; "Dr Rosenthal's *Transcendence* book is a profoundly important book about a topic that you need to know more about. Moreover, it's been written by an internationally respected psychiatrist, a 20-year senior researcher at the National Institute of Mental Health." So that's a lot of creditability in your favor. And I hope that our conversation will turn a lot of people on to wanting to learn more about TM and investigating the compilations of the stories that you are providing to us in a user friendly manner, such as your book and your website that you mentioned earlier.

Natural Standard

Norman: Well just thank you so much for having me on your wonderful show. I'm honored and delighted and hope the some people have found some of what I've said interesting or helpful and maybe would be interested to read more about it in my book or check my website out. And it's all about spreading good information that can help people. I'm so happy to be here in order to do that.

Catherine: Likewise. Thank you again very much Dr. Rosenthal.