

Dr. Deepak Chopra planning his week. Note his famous red sneakers

By Melody Wren

Age: 67

Born: New Delhi, India

Education: St. Columba's School, Delhi; All India Institute of Medical Sciences

Occupation(s): Physician, author, spiritual healer, meditation expert, co-founder of Mediation Center, columnist

The son of an eminent cardiologist, Krishnan Chopra, Deepak at first spurned his father's career path, wanting instead to pursue a career as a journalist. Eventually, however, he became enthralled with the subject of medicine and enrolled at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in his native city.

Chopra envisioned a career in Western medicine and in 1970 moved to the United States, leaving his home

country with just \$25 in his pocket and the promise of a residency at a hospital in New Jersey. Following the residency, Chopra landed in Boston, where he quickly rose to chief of medicine at New England Memorial Hospital (now called the Boston Regional Medical Center).

After becoming disenchanted with Western medicine, Chopra turned to alternative medicine. In 1995 Chopra, already a prolific book author, founded the Chopra Center for Well Being in La Jolla, California.

Family: wife, Rita; children, daughter, Millika, age 42; and son, Gotham, 39

His eldest grandchild, Tara, was the inspiration for his latest children's book, *You With The Stars In Your Eyes* (Hay House)

Residence: California

Honors & Accomplishments (partial):

Dr. Chopra is the author of more than 65 books including numerous New York Times bestsellers. His medical training is in internal medicine and endocrinology. He is a Fellow of the American College of Physicians, a member of the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists, and an adjunct professor of Executive Programs at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. He's also a Distinguished Executive Scholar at Columbia Business School, Columbia University, and a Senior Scientist at the Gallup organization. For more than a decade, he has participated as a lecturer at the Update in Internal Medicine, an annual event sponsored by Harvard Medical School's Department of Continuing Education and the Department of Medicine, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

In March 2000, President Clinton said "My country has been enriched by the contributions of more than a million Indian Americans...which includes Dr. Deepak Chopra, the pioneer of alternative medicine."

Chopra was awarded the 2006 Ellis Island Medal of Honor by the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations.

He was the recipient in 2009 of the Oceana Award.

He received the 2010 Humanitarian Starlite Award and of the 2010 GOI Peace Award. In 2010, he also was awarded the Art of Life Honoree, Asian American Arts Alliance.

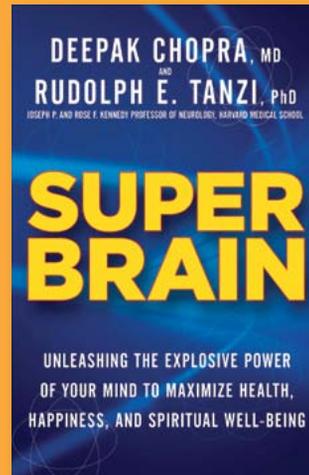
In the *Help Yourself* category, *Time magazine* lists Deepak Chopra as one of the 100 Heroes and Icons of the Century.

Even though I met Dr. Chopra in Toronto at the opening of his meditation and yoga center, I was able to see his entire family on their new YouTube Channel. Father, son and daughter (Deepak Chopra,

Gotham and Mallika) tell you about themselves and give you glimpses of what to expect on the channel. The introduction of Chopra in conversation with two granddaughters is delightful and inspired me to subscribe for free to the channel.
www.youtube/thechoprawell

I had the honor of interviewing Dr. Deepak Chopra as he opened his meditation and yoga center in Toronto in 2013. Speaking about his new book "*Super Brain*," the charming, enigmatic Chopra left me with life changing advice as well as a number of inspirational quotes.

(The emphasis of his book "*Super Brain*" is on the brain's uniqueness. The secret to improving your brain is to understand that uniqueness.)



Available www.deepakchopra.com/book/view/936

"The brain is the only organ that changes instantly according to how the mind relates to it. You can relate to your brain in positive or negative ways and depending on which one you choose, your brain cells, neural pathways and areas of high and low activity will be altered."

"In short, thinking your brain into better functioning is the most efficient way to improve it. (Other organs of the body also respond to positive and negative thinking but their response must come through the brain first. It functions as command central for the rest of the body.)

"The best way to relate to your brain is to inspire it. The worst way is to ignore it. Since the brain embraces every thought, word and deed, the list of things under each heading is long but very much worth attending to."

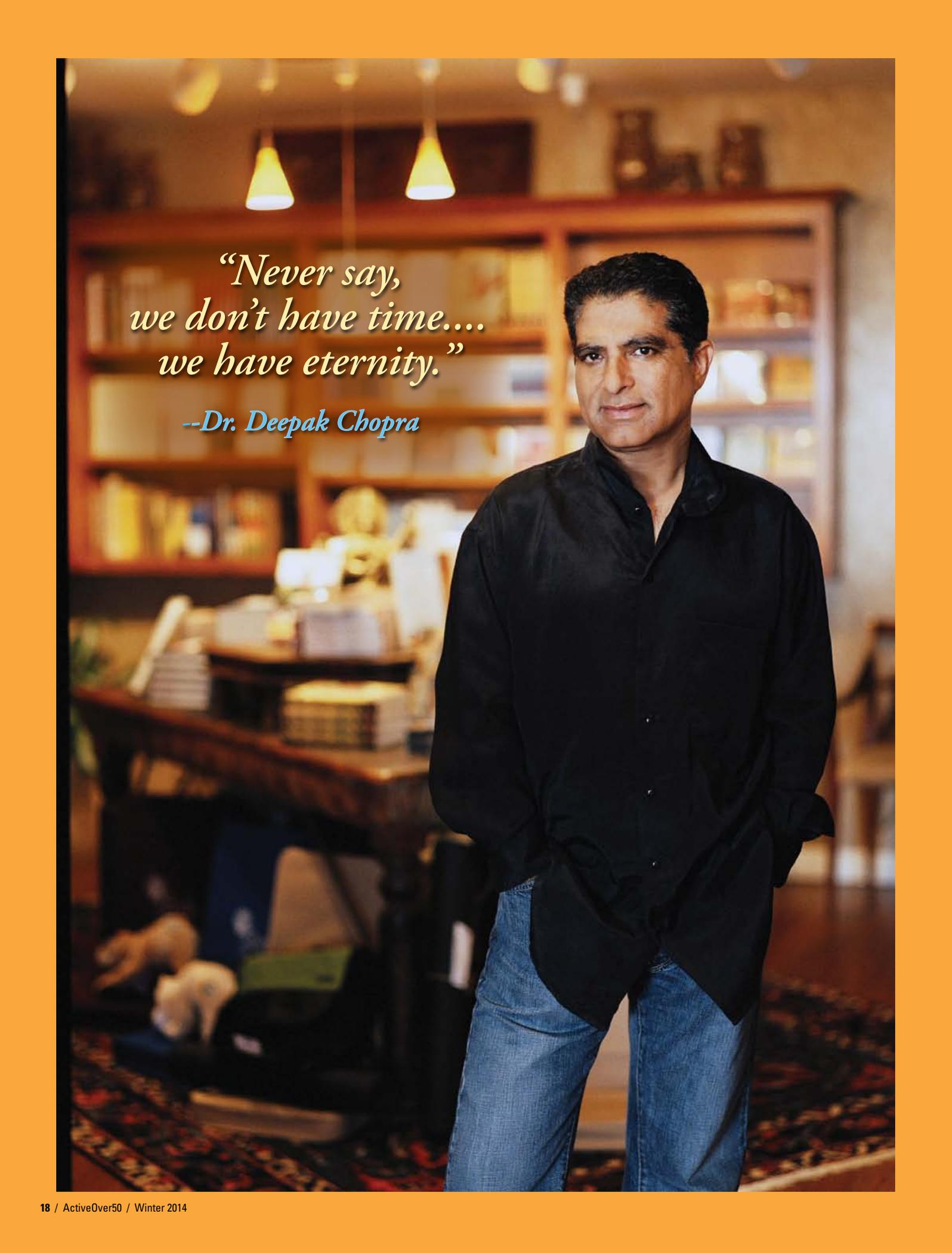
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"The first step in forming a better relationship with your brain is to realize that you have a relationship. Once you realize this, you can choose to pay attention to the relationship and nurture it. You're in on a secret that escapes countless people. Take advantage of it. A super brain is fuelled by healthy emotions like love, compassion, joy, empathy and equanimity. And by mastering its emotional side, the super brain makes more room for things like insight, intuition, creativity and imagination."

According to Chopra, reinventing the brain is closer than you think.

How to Inspire Your Brain

"Inspire your brain by taking care of stress. Avoid dulling routine. Do something creative every day. Read poetry, spiritual material or anything else that makes you feel uplifted. Take time to be in nature. Bond with another person who is heartwarming. Pay attention to being happy. Make sure you take time every day by yourself to relax, meditate and self-reflect.



*“Never say,
we don’t have time....
we have eternity.”*

--Dr. Deepak Chopra

Deal with negative emotions like anger and anxiety. Focus on activity that makes you feel fulfilled. Give of yourself. Follow a personal vision. Attach yourself to a cause that is bigger than you are. Take the risk to love and be loved."

Master Meditation

"The key to meditation is understanding it's not about focusing or staying on tract. It's about letting go. Meditation is about being. If you can sit quietly with no agenda, it's a good start. Every now and then, stop and ask yourself: Am I aware? What am I aware of? That will bring you to the place you want."

Dr. Chopra encourages everyone to meditate "once a day and if you do not have the time, meditate twice a day."

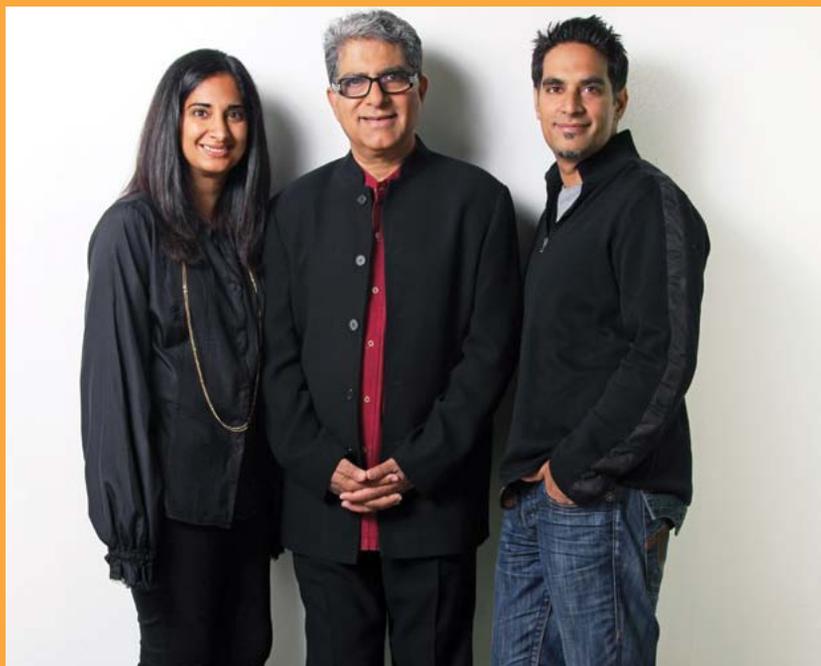
How to Ignore Your Brain

"Get set in your ways. Don't look beyond your opinions, likes and

*"Never say,
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dislikes. Isolate yourself from others. Take relationships for granted. Reconcile yourself to going downhill as you age. Look upon the past as the best time of your life. Forget about having ideals. Act on selfish impulses. Don't examine what makes you tick. Give in to anger and anxiety. Let life take care of itself. Go along to get along. Assume that you are automatically right. Avoid anything new or challenging. Put up with stress. Take no emotional risks. Distract yourself with mindless diversions like watching sports for hours on end."

"The difference between these two lists is pretty stark. In one case, you are approaching the brain as if it had great untapped potential. In the other, you assume that the brain runs on automatic pilot."



Daughter Millika, Dr. Deepak Chopra and son Gotham

Exercise for a Healthy Brain

"We're not exercising, not meditating, not getting enough sleep, not enjoying personal relationships and we're increasingly distracted. All this is having a negative impact on our brain health. For example, when you exercise, you grow more neurons, you grow more connections between those neurons and your body makes chemicals like endorphins which make you feel good. These anti-depressive chemicals even regulate the immune system. Without exercise, you lose all those extra brain benefits."

"It is undeniable that the brain is endlessly adaptable. It turns into whatever you expect it to be. So how you relate to your brain is never passive; you are always instructing it to function in a certain way. Thus the whole package of beliefs, expectations, likes and dislikes that you hold inside are creating change – or blocking it – at the level of brain circuitry."

"As I get older, I see the future diminishing. I realize there's never a point of arrival. Never. Having that realization throws you into the richness of being in the present moment and in that richness, there are infinite possibilities."

"Time sickness is a disease of today" and "the more time sickness you have, the more time awareness you need." He continued on: "Never say, we don't have time.... we have eternity."

"Needless to say, it's better to inspire your brain than to ignore it. Potential is a terrible thing to waste."

"Take it easy, we have eternity," he emphasized as he left the room, treading lightly in his trademark red sneakers.



About Melody Wren

Melody Wren is a freelance writer because she believes that work and fun should not be mutually exclusive.

For her adventure stories, visit www.melodywren.com.