



Wim Hof Instructor, Health, Life & Success Coach, Professional Speaker, Author.

I have reached a very special place in my life, for the very first time, my Professional and Personal goals are fully aligned! For almost 50 years I did not believe this was even possible... Trust me, *IT IS!*

I now have one integrated, focused, meaningful and passionate mission in my professional life;

'to shift perspectives, so we can all live more authentic, healthful, mindful, meaningful and successful lives; free from the psychological, emotional and physical pain of our stories; and in doing so, become Happier, Healthier, Stronger and more Successful versions of ourselves'.

My journey to this point, while often a fun ride, was fraught with many difficult challenges and choices. I spent 25+ successful years in the Technology Industry, before my long standing personal struggles, and my ever-expanding list of health issues, finally motivated me to switch paths. Like so many others, many of the challenges I faced, stemmed from my past, in my case, a traumatic childhood.

The youngest of four children, I grew up in Dublin, Ireland, in a dysfunctional working-class family. Our life was filled with stress as my parents constantly argued; most arguments were initiated by my mother, whom we later learned, suffered from manic depression. She was obsessed with an unfounded belief that she was going to be hungry and destitute in her old age. The sad irony being, the worry killed her with heart failure before she reached her 'old age'.

The screaming was relentless, with many of the fights lasting for days. I remember huddling and crying in a cupboard under our stairs, vowing to do whatever it took not to have to worry about money when I grew up. I would try and tune out and imagine a very different life...it was always a very brief escape!

When my parents weren't going at each other, my mother focused her anger and deep-rooted unhappiness on her children. I remember regularly being punished as I was a 'bold kid'. I endured repeated hand beatings and regular whippings with our dog leashes; but even worse, was her relentless emotional abuse. She often threatened to leave and regularly stated she was going to commit suicide. I clearly remember her telling me, on many different occasions, that 'it's all your fault'. Consequently, I grew up learning that I should never depend on others for emotional needs. I also learned how to effectively remain emotionally closed... at all costs!

My childhood impacted every part of my adult life. On the positive side, it motivated me to **'success'**. I put myself through technical and business night school for seven years, as I had to work full time to support myself and pay for tuition. It also motivated me to become the best I could be at every job I did and to work hard and do whatever it took to **'succeed'** and get the next, even bigger, job!

By all accounts, I had a very **'successful'** career, taking leadership roles within F100 companies and launching several of my own successful business ventures. I was young, hungry, and traveled the world to further my **'success'**... what could go wrong!

On the negative side, it drove me to focus on building a future where I would not have to depend on others, certainly financially, but especially emotionally. Despite my outward appearance of happiness and success, I often struggled inside with anxiety and underlying depression, as well as panic attacks that started when I was a teenager.

Mal 'Ice Mal' Jones: 206-484-5029 (Cell): www.icemal.energy mal@icemal.energy

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Amazingly, and after several unsuccessful relationships, mostly due to my inability to fully open emotionally and commit, I managed to marry an amazing woman and have two wonderful children.

However, for many years, unknown to myself, I was on a deep and downward spiral inside my head! Along with anxiety and depression, I often struggled with my weight, even though I exercised regularly and was 'fit'. I also began developing chronic health issues. In my early 20's, what appeared to be a bad flu, quickly turned into an almost fatal blood infection that went into my heart. I spent 3+ months in hospital and was almost poisoned with the unprecedented volume of antibiotic and other drugs they administered to 'save my life'.

During my 30's and 40's I developed a hiatus hernia, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, chronic heartburn, chronic anxiety, Crohn's Disease, chronic back, neck, shoulder and knee pain and Atrial Fibrillation. To top it off, I was getting progressively more common colds, flu's and other acute illnesses. At my worst, I weighed just shy of 300lbs and was taking 18 different prescription pills a day, as well as self-injecting biologic drugs twice a month for Crohn's Disease. Along with prescription drugs, I began using more and more alcohol, red wine specifically, as my go to 'Pain Modulator'. I desperately wanted to feel better, I needed the daily pains to go away; I would have done anything to make that happen. I visited countless medical specialists, Western, Eastern and everything in between! NO PROGRESS!

I also went back to school to study anatomy, physiology and nutrition to better understand my body; I even invested and became a business partner in a specialized athletic facility / gym. All this, and more, to educate and motivate myself; but nothing I did seemed to help beyond short term. I was on a continuous 'one-step forward, two steps backward' cycle and was regressing both physically and emotionally with each passing month.

I began going deeper and deeper inside my head; any material wealth I had accumulated brought no true happiness and I began to question my self-identity. I even started to believe I was a bad person, a bad dad, a bad husband, a bad friend! My lows became lower, and as I approached fifty, I was a physical and emotional wreck and felt deeply unhappy in myself most of the time.

I was beginning to no longer see the wonderful things I had in my life, starting with my amazing wife and children, family, and closest friends. I even began to truly believe they would be better off without me in their lives. In addition, I was living a progressively tiring double life; to most people I was the 'Happy and Positive' Mal on the outside, but deep down I was filling with despair. Finally, I came to the realization, if I didn't get help, I may not make it to sixty!

People regularly ask, 'what was your rock bottom', however, I never had that one big 'rock bottom' moment; I like to say I had several 'large pebble bottom' moments, some which literally brought me to my knees with physical and emotional pain.

Then one day, in a very uncharacteristic move for me, I decided it was time to reach out for help. I told my wife that I was going to engage with the best people I could find to do what I had avoided for almost 50 years... talk openly about my past!

In her typical supportive, and deeply loving way, she responded, "Of course, we will get through this together." In doing so, I ultimately changed the trajectory of my life.

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I have been asked many times, how I found the 'strength' to act; let me start by stating that I don't believe it was an act of strength or courage, but one of necessity, fear and survival. That said, I think there were several driving factors; firstly, despite my deep internal pain, and any pain I may have caused my family and closest friends, I knew they loved me and wanted me whole. Secondly, despite the darkness in which I was trapped, I could see in the distance a light, and the possibility of what my life could be, if only I could shed my troubled past, tackle my physical challenges with my head held high, and start to truly live in the present. Finally, I absolutely believed I was at the point where I had no choice... I HAD to act!

I was extremely fortunate to be able to engage with the best people available; they provided the tools necessary for me to succeed; all I needed to do was dive in and take advantage of it all. I was also very lucky to have a very supportive wife, as well as a couple of very close friends, all of whom absolutely had my best interests at heart and who were there for me whenever I needed them.

When I first began 'opening up', I became almost paralyzed and spent a lot of time crying, something I had mostly avoided since I was a child. I could not think straight; I began to remember more of my childhood and feel pain and anger emerging from deep within me.

But over a relatively short period of time, something amazing happened; after many conversations and much meditation, mindfulness practice, and self-examination and reflection, I stopped crying, and I began to laugh and smile uncontrollably. I would even wake up in the middle of the night and just feel so happy inside, often childishly giddy!

I want to highlight a key turning point for me; when I allowed myself to talk about my past, acknowledge it, accept it, forgive and move on, I began to see the enormous positives in my life. I also started to experiment further with meditation, the Wim Hof Method, and other healthful practices; soon I began to feel significant changes deep inside.

This process and experience was transformational beyond words. I began to feel like a new person, I felt lighter, I felt free, I felt so much happier and I felt excited about the future; a feeling I had not had in many years.

Spurred on by my new outlook on life and the simple belief that each of us knows our bodies and minds better than anyone else; I started incorporating the health knowledge I'd gained while studying physiology, anatomy and nutrition; I began tapping into the incredible knowledge at the athletic facility I co-owned; and I reached out to engage with some incredible leaders and mentors in the health, happiness and mindfulness space;

At the same time, I started to study obsessively, spending many hours every day reading all I could find regarding the challenges I faced and the tools and programs available to help me lead a healthier and happier lifestyle. This education journey continues for me each day, I am fascinated and intrigued by the wealth of knowledge out there and I am always open to trying new things. There is a sea of information and tools out there, but I had to swim many oceans to find the helpful ones... I continue to swim daily!

The 3 key daily practices that have significantly impacted my Health, Happiness and Lifestyle are; Meditation, The Wim Hof Method and The Happy Body Movement Program.

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Fast forward to my life now. I take just 1 prescription medication a day, which I am currently phasing out; my blood pressure and cholesterol numbers have dropped significantly, my Crohn's is in remission, my anxiety is imperceptible and at a lifetime low, my chronic heartburn is gone, my weight is 240lbs and steadily on its way to my ideal 210lbs; and most importantly, my chronic pain has reduced significantly.

In addition, I have a deep sense of underlying Happiness and I am mindful in a way that I could never have imagined before and for which I cannot find the words to appropriately describe!

I now meditate and move my body daily; I eat a very nutritious organic diet; I no longer drink alcohol; I have adopted many other impactful changes, such as daily physical and mental exercises, purposeful reflection and meditation, research and reading and The Wim Hof Method (WHM), which incorporates a combination of focus, deep breathing and cold exposure; this method has reduced my pain levels dramatically and so I studied intensely with Wim & his team & was certified as an instructor in 2018.

I sleep better and rise earlier than ever... without an alarm clock! My life is now filled with plenty of physical activity and I am even participating in highly motivational charity events, challenging hikes, lake swims, polar plunges and long walks... and I have much bigger plans...I am only beginning!

I feel better than I have since my 20's. I optimize my life and get to do many of the things I could or would not do due to my physical and mental limitations. I enjoy great foods, the great outdoors, and most importantly, the quality time I get to spend with my family and friends. I now appreciate what is truly important in life and that is what I focus on, allowing the 'noise' to co-exist, but without interfering.

I want to be transparent, I still have some physical pain issues, but with a clear head, a positive attitude and a plan, I deal with them as they arise, and I continue to make positive progress with consistency of purpose in my habits and the adoption of new and innovative ideas and tools when I find them.

"I didn't set out to coach others; I just wanted to regain my health and find more meaning and happiness. But now that I've reclaimed my life, I want to help as many people as I can become truly Happier, Healthier, Stronger, and more Successful both personally & professionally... its easier than you think"

I have taken my learnings & transformation and now made it my daily work. I spend my professional time as a Wim Hof Instructor; a Health, Life & Success Coach, and a Professional Speaker and Author.

I would not be the person I am today if I had not reached out for help; we all struggle with our stories and handling our day to day lives; you have nothing to fear, there is no embarrassment, there is no judgment. I believe we all have it in us to fix ourselves, but sometimes we need to know where to look and how to get started. I help people identify the root of their challenges, probe to better understand what will make them truly happy, and then help guide them to make the changes that will lead them to that 'happiness'. I also point people in the direction of any further, specific professional support they may need. Working in partnership, I can, and I must, help others become Happier, Healthier & Stronger.

Mal 'Ice Mal' Jones...

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mal Jones". The signature is fluid and cursive.

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