

Disrupted But Not Destroyed

DISRUPTED BUT NOT DESTROYED

*Finding Your Center in a World That Won't
Stop Spinning*

Based on the teachings of
Phra Kru Palad Suwatthanaphothikhun
(Dr. Somchai Thanavuddho Bhikkhu)

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Original Thai edition: ผู้สูญเสียนี่ไม่เสียศูนย์ (Lost But Grounded)

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This adapted edition translates the original teachings for Western non-Buddhist spiritual seekers, adding perspective from data analytics, information systems, and the intersection of technology and contemplative wisdom.

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Translator's Preface

You're holding something unusual.

This book started its life as a Thai-language Dhamma book—a collection of teachings by a physician-turned-monk who's spent decades watching technology reshape the world while sitting in meditation halls across Thailand and Japan. The original title, ผู้สูญเสียบที่ไม่เสียศูนย์, translates roughly as “The One Who Has Lost, But Hasn't Lost Center.”

I love that framing. Because that's the real question for all of us right now, isn't it? In a world of relentless disruption—AI eating jobs, climate chaos rewriting the map, digital currencies rewiring money itself—how do you stay grounded? How do you not just survive, but actually thrive?

As a professor of data analytics and information systems, I live inside the disruption every day. I teach students how to build the very systems that are reshaping industries. But I've also spent years studying contemplative traditions—particularly the Dhammakaya meditation lineage—and I've come to a conclusion that might surprise my engineering colleagues:

The most powerful operating system isn't one you can code. It's the one running between your ears.

What you'll find in these pages is a translation of Phra Kru Palad Suwatthanaphothikhun's original teachings, but adapted for you—a Western reader who may or may not identify with any particular religion, but who senses that there's something deeper going on beneath the surface of our technological age. I've preserved the original insights while translating Buddhist concepts into the language of systems thinking, data patterns, and natural law.

Throughout the book, you'll find my “Field Notes”—additions from my own experience at the intersection of technology and inner development. Think of them as margin notes from someone who's lived in both worlds.

This isn't a religious text. It's a practical manual for keeping your center when everything around you is spinning.

Professor Yaa

Chill & Shine, 2026

PART ONE

The World at a Crossroads

“Among all living creatures on Earth, humans are the ones who impact the planet’s ecosystem the most. Our actions and consumption have pushed the world into the Anthropocene—the ‘Age of Human Disruption’—marking the beginning of changes that will reshape the planet for millions of years to come.”

— Phra Kru Palad Suwatthanaphothikhun

Chapter 1: A Golden Age or the Beginning of Darkness?

In the agricultural era, nature set the rhythm of human life. You planted rice according to the seasons. You depended on temperature and rainfall. Nature was in charge, and humans adapted.

Then came the Anthropocene.

The word means “new human era.” It arrived alongside the Industrial Revolution, and it marked a fundamental shift: instead of adapting to nature, humans began trying to conquer it. We started taking raw materials and transforming them—manufacturing, fabricating, building things that had never existed before.

And we left marks everywhere.

Plastics. Metals. Batteries. Concrete. Carbon particles. Pesticides. Radioactive isotopes. Millions of years from now, future beings will still be digging up the archaeological remains of what we built—our “technofossils.”

“Technofossils”: Our Legacy in Stone

If you could hop in a time machine and travel to the far future, then look back at our era, you’d find

fossils everywhere that humans created. Chief among them: plastic.

Today, microplastics have infiltrated soil, water, and the bodies of virtually every living thing on Earth. They're accumulating in the oceans, along with concrete and other technofossils that are nearly impossible to decompose—leaving traces on this planet for millions of years.

Then there's plutonium-239 and plutonium-240—radioactive metals that naturally exist deep underground. But in the 1940s, nations raced to test nuclear weapons. By the time they signed treaties to stop, these isotopes had already scattered across the globe. They'll take hundreds of thousands of years to fully decay.

Carbon dioxide, methane from industrial agriculture, nitrous oxide from chemical manufacturing, chlorofluorocarbons eating holes in the ozone layer—the list of our planetary footprint is staggering.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

Here's a data point that stopped me cold when I first encountered it: the total mass of human-made objects on Earth now exceeds the total mass of all living things. We crossed that threshold around 2020. If you're a systems

thinker, that's the kind of metric that tells you the system is approaching a tipping point. In information systems, we call this 'technical debt'—the accumulated cost of short-term decisions that were never designed for long-term sustainability. The planet is carrying humanity's technical debt.

Responding to the Age of Human Disruption

As the impacts become undeniable, organizations worldwide are scrambling to respond. Governments have introduced carbon labels, green certifications, building standards, and plastic reduction mandates. Major corporations have pledged net-zero carbon emissions. Reforestation programs are expanding.

These are important steps. But the original teaching here makes a crucial point: they're all treating symptoms, not root causes.

The root cause? We've forgotten what we're actually here for.

Humans have been so focused on developing technology for comfort and convenience that we've lost sight of something fundamental. Once industry dominated our lives, the natural balance that existed for millennia began to crumble—agriculture with

chemical inputs, food production that ignores downstream effects, manufacturing without concern for waste. All of it traces back to something internal.

The Real Problem Starts Inside

If you ask a wealthy person what they have, they'll usually list possessions. Then ask what they're missing. The answer is almost always the same: happiness.

That's because genuine happiness comes from within. It's an inside job.

If we understood this—truly understood it—we'd run businesses for social benefit, not just extraction. We'd pursue innovation that elevates rather than depletes. We'd remember that on the day we die, not a single possession comes with us. Not the factory, not the house, not the bank account, not the credit score.

If we don't recognize this deeply enough, we chase wealth in vain, die with nothing to show for it spiritually, and leave behind a trail of environmental wreckage.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

I see this pattern in the tech industry constantly. Founders build companies that optimize for metrics—user engagement, revenue growth, market share—

without asking the deeper question: ‘What is this actually for?’ In my data analytics classes, I teach students that the most dangerous analysis is one that answers the wrong question perfectly. The same is true for civilization: we’re solving the wrong optimization problem. We’re maximizing material throughput when we should be optimizing for something closer to wellbeing.

The Two Paths

Albert Einstein, who unlocked the power of atomic energy with $E=mc^2$, understood this dilemma. The world stands at a fork in the road.

Path One: We continue on autopilot. We use nature solely to satisfy desires, accumulate more, consume more. Everything we’ve built eventually turns against us. The planet becomes uninhabitable.

Path Two: We wake up. We shift toward clean energy, plant forests, restore ecosystems. We build carbon credit systems that reward stewardship. We redesign our economies to work with nature rather than against it.

The good news? The momentum toward Path Two is building. Electric vehicles are replacing combustion engines faster than anyone predicted. Renewable energy is becoming cheaper than fossil fuels. Carbon

markets are creating financial incentives for environmental responsibility.

But technology alone won't save us. The original teaching is emphatic on this point:

"Humans must live together with other beings and with nature in a relationship of mutual dependence and care."

— The Buddha, as cited in the original text

In the age of human disruption, everyone is affected. We're all, in some sense, experiencing loss. But if we can find our center—if we can ground ourselves in something deeper than the chaos—we can become the kind of people who lose without losing everything. We can protect the world and our own wellbeing at the same time.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

In systems theory, we talk about 'resilience'—the ability of a system to absorb disturbance and still maintain its essential functions. What this teaching is describing is personal resilience rooted in inner clarity. It's the same principle, applied at the individual level. And here's what the data shows: resilient systems always have some form of 'governor'—a feedback mechanism that prevents

runaway behavior. For a society, that governor is wisdom. For an individual, it's the trained mind.

PART TWO

Human Skills Beyond the Machine

“In this era of rapid technological advancement, the job market must adapt. Machines, robots, and AI will take over many tasks. Workers must develop capabilities that machines cannot replicate.”

— Phra Kru Palad Suwatthanaphothikhun

Chapter 2: The Ten Skills Robots Can't Steal

The original teaching identifies ten specific capabilities that separate humans from machines. But what makes this list remarkable isn't just the skills themselves—it's the underlying philosophy: your humanity is your competitive advantage.

Skill 1: Complex Problem-Solving

Most basic problems have already been solved. The toaster works. The car starts. Indoor plumbing flows. What remains—and what the future demands—is the ability to solve problems with multiple interdependent variables, where the solution isn't a straight line from A to B.

Consumer needs are growing more complex by the year. Products must satisfy an increasingly sophisticated web of requirements. This isn't the kind of problem a robot solves by following a flowchart.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

In my data analytics courses, I distinguish between 'tame problems' and 'wicked problems.' Tame problems have clear definitions and known solutions—these are exactly what AI excels at. Wicked problems are messy,

contextual, and change shape as you work on them. Climate change is a wicked problem. So is organizational culture. So is figuring out what your customers will want three years from now. The future belongs to people who can navigate wicked problems. And that requires something no algorithm has: wisdom.

Skill 2: Critical Thinking

We live in an era of information flood. Data pours in from every direction—news feeds, social media, reports, metrics, opinions masquerading as facts. The person who thrives isn't the one with the most information; it's the one who can extract signal from noise.

Critical thinking means seeing the essential pattern beneath the chaos. It means spotting which data points actually matter and connecting them in ways others miss. It's how you anticipate where the market is going, or see where the world is heading before it gets there.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

I tell my students: 'Data doesn't speak for itself. You have to interrogate it.' The same applies to everything you encounter in life. The person who accepts information at face value is operating like a poorly trained algorithm—garbage in, garbage out. The person who asks 'What's

the source? What's the incentive? What's being left out?' is running a much more sophisticated process. And here's what's interesting: meditation trains exactly this capacity. When you sit and observe your own thoughts without reacting, you're practicing the most fundamental form of critical thinking—the ability to observe without being swept away.

Skill 3: Creativity

Beyond analysis, the future demands creation. New innovations. New products. New solutions to problems nobody has framed yet. In a world of intense competition, doing what's already been done is a recipe for being replaced—by a machine that does it faster and cheaper.

The original teaching makes a striking observation here: creativity emerges from stillness. When you quiet the mind through meditation, creative insights surface naturally. Just by letting the mind become still—not thinking, not grasping—you create the conditions for ideas to arise that are deeper and clearer than anything your busy mind could manufacture.

Skill 4: People Management

Matching the right person to the right role. Understanding individual strengths, preferences, and

growth trajectories. Building teams where the whole exceeds the sum of its parts. This requires a kind of perception that no algorithm possesses: genuine understanding of human nature.

Skill 5: Teamwork and Cross-Cultural Collaboration

Every organization runs on collaboration. Understanding your role, performing it well, and supporting others without overstepping—these are fundamentally human skills. In our increasingly global workplace, add to that the ability to work across cultures, languages, and worldviews.

The teaching puts it simply: beyond being skilled at your work, you need to be a good environment for your colleagues. When everyone does this, work becomes joyful.

Skill 6: Emotional Intelligence

This is the big one. Emotional intelligence—EQ—is the ability to manage your own emotions without letting them leak out in ways that damage the people around you. It means maintaining an atmosphere where others want to work, create, and engage.

But the teaching goes further: EQ isn't just a workplace skill. It benefits everyone in your life, especially your family and the people closest to you. Organizations don't just want talented people; they want talented people who are also good people.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

In the AI era, EQ is the ultimate differentiator. ChatGPT can write your report. It can't sense that your team member is quietly burning out. Automated systems can route customer complaints. They can't genuinely empathize with frustration. What's fascinating is that contemplative traditions have been training EQ for thousands of years. The practice of observing emotions without reacting—watching anger arise without acting on it, feeling anxiety without feeding it—is the original emotional intelligence training program. Silicon Valley is just now discovering what meditators have known all along.

Skill 7: Situational Assessment

Can you read the room—not just the meeting room, but the competitive landscape? Can you evaluate where your organization stands relative to its competitors and adjust course accordingly? This strategic awareness is something machines can assist with but never fully replicate.

Skill 8: Service Orientation

In every era, consumers want to be served well. Your product might be excellent, but if the service is poor, customers will leave for a competitor who treats them better. Great service is a deeply human capability rooted in empathy and attention.

Skill 9: Negotiation

The future of business is partnerships. Companies that were once competitors are becoming allies. This requires the art of negotiation—dividing responsibilities fairly, sharing profits equitably, and resolving conflicts in ways that leave both parties satisfied. Nobody wants to partner with someone who makes them feel like they're losing.

Skill 10: Cognitive Flexibility

The world changes constantly. The person who insists on doing things the way they've always been done will be left behind. Cognitive flexibility means welcoming change, adapting your mental models, and remaining open to new people, new ideas, and new ways of working.

These ten skills make your humanity shine. They're exactly what robots and AI cannot replace.

When you cultivate them, you remain valuable—not because you can compute faster, but because you can be more human.

Chapter 3: Skills for the World Ahead

The Pattern of Disruption

Human civilization has weathered several massive transitions. From nomadic hunter-gatherers to agricultural societies—a shift that took thousands of years. From agriculture to industry—hundreds of years. From industry to the information age—decades.

Now we're entering the AI era, and the pace is accelerating. Each transition displaced workers while creating new opportunities. The pattern is consistent: the winners are those who adapt quickly and learn new skills.

An estimated 800 million jobs worldwide have been displaced by automation. And AI is moving into white-collar territory—it's not just factory work anymore. Banks are closing branches as services move online. E-commerce giants are reshaping retail. Self-driving vehicles are beginning to replace human drivers.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

Here's what the historical data tells us about technological disruption: it always creates more jobs

than it destroys—but the new jobs require different skills than the old ones. The typesetters lost their jobs to computers, but the world gained web developers, UX designers, and social media managers. The question isn't whether new opportunities will emerge. They will. The question is whether you'll be positioned to seize them. And that requires one thing above all: a commitment to lifelong learning.

Three Survival Principles

1. Don't Cling to the Past

If you have a skill from yesterday and you're still relying on it tomorrow, you're in trouble. Never tell yourself you're too old to learn. Never procrastinate on developing new capabilities. Time moves faster than you think.

2. Don't Become a Slave to Technology

Manage your time wisely. Don't let technology consume you through junk news and addictive games. Instead, use it as a tool for learning, expanding your horizons, and conducting meaningful work. Plan your daily technology use for maximum benefit.

3. Cultivate Inner Stillness

This is the original teaching's secret weapon, and it deserves special attention. When you practice

meditation—letting the mind become quiet and still—you break free from the confusion and noise of daily life. Creative thinking emerges naturally from a calm mind. When it's time to think, you see deeper and more clearly than others.

Study the deeper principles of how reality works—what the contemplative traditions call ‘natural law.’ You’ll discover that these teachings are more complete than any secular philosophy. You’ll see the big picture and connect knowledge in systematic ways.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

I've observed this in my own work. My best research insights never come while I'm grinding at the keyboard. They come in stillness—during meditation, on a quiet walk, or in the liminal space between waking and sleep. Neuroscience backs this up: the ‘default mode network’ in the brain, which activates during rest and reflection, is where creative connections are forged. When you're constantly stimulated—scrolling, clicking, consuming—you never give that network a chance to do its work. Meditation isn't a retreat from productivity. It's the foundation of it.

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PART THREE

The Digital Sacred

Chapter 4: The Smartphone as Modern Deity

Rewind just thirty years. The internet wasn't widespread. Smartphones didn't exist. If you tried to describe today's digital world to someone from that era, they wouldn't believe you.

Today, a generation has grown up with smartphones and tablets as natural extensions of their bodies. Shopping, banking, communicating—all done from a pocket-sized screen. Life at your fingertips.

Forget your phone at home and you feel like you've lost a limb. Some people treat their smartphones with more reverence than they treat their own family members. The original teaching puts it provocatively: digital technology has become a kind of sacred object outside of religion.

The teaching's author, who trained as a physician before ordaining as a monk, remembers the evolution firsthand: from pagers clipped to belts, to brick-sized mobile phones, to the smartphones that now contain our entire lives. The speed of this transformation is breathtaking.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

There's a concept in information systems called 'technological determinism'—the idea that technology shapes society, rather than the other way around. I think the truth is more nuanced: technology amplifies whatever is already in us. A clear mind uses a smartphone as a tool for learning and connection. A distracted mind uses the same device to scroll away hours in a dopamine loop. The technology is neutral. The mind using it is everything.

Digital Disruption: The Old World Falls

Digital disruption—the process by which new technology renders old systems obsolete—is reshaping every industry. Video streaming killed the video rental store. Netflix rose while Blockbuster vanished. Amazon reshaped retail while Walmart scrambled to adapt.

The pattern repeats everywhere: any business that can't connect to a smartphone is in decline. Any business that thrives on mobile platforms is in ascent.

In the digital world, the one with the creative idea wins. The one who moves fast and thinks well wins. And we'll see this accelerate further.

So don't worry about losing your job—new jobs are emerging constantly. But you will thrive in this world only if you're willing to adapt, to keep learning, and to

maintain your center while everything shifts around you.

Chapter 5: Money in the Air

Understanding Cryptocurrency

In the traditional financial system, sending money internationally requires a bank as an intermediary. The bank verifies your identity, checks your balance, processes the transfer, and charges a fee. It's a centralized system built on institutional trust.

Cryptocurrency upends this entirely. Using a technology called blockchain, you can send money to anyone in the world without a bank, without fees, and without a central authority.

How? Every transaction is verified not by a single institution, but by every participant in the network. When you initiate a transfer, computers worldwide verify that your account has funds, that the transaction isn't duplicated, and that the cryptographic signatures match. Once verified, the transaction is bundled into a "block" and permanently recorded across every computer in the network.

This is the blockchain: an immutable, transparent ledger that no single entity can alter. Once a transaction is recorded, it's part of history. Not even the founders of Bitcoin can change it.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

I teach blockchain technology in my information systems courses, and I always make this point to students: the technical innovation of blockchain is interesting, but the philosophical innovation is profound. It's a trust system that doesn't require trusting any single party. Instead, it distributes trust across the entire network. This mirrors something the contemplative traditions have always taught: when you rely entirely on external authorities for truth, you're vulnerable. When you develop internal verification—the ability to see clearly for yourself—you become resilient. Blockchain decentralizes financial trust. Meditation decentralizes cognitive trust. Both make you less dependent on intermediaries.

Bitcoin's value has increased more than a million-fold from its origins. Creating a new cryptocurrency is technically simple—a skilled developer can do it in a day. The hard part isn't the technology; it's building trust and adoption.

The value of any currency—digital or otherwise—comes down to supply and demand. If people believe in it and use it, its value rises. If they don't, it falls. The lesson here extends far beyond finance: in the digital age, trust is the most valuable currency of all.

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PART FOUR

Nature's Hidden Economy

Chapter 6: The Bio-Based Economy

A thriving economy requires robust foundations. And one of the most important new directions in economic thinking is what's called the "bio-based economy"—an approach that develops economic value from biological resources.

This operates at three levels:

At the resource level, you take biological materials—plants, animals, microorganisms—and use them directly in production. At the bioprocessing level, you apply technology to transform biological materials into higher-value products—enzymes from fruit fermentation becoming soaps, shampoos, and cleaning products. At the product level, you use advanced biotechnology—genetic engineering, microbial cultivation—to create entirely new products.

Japan and South Korea lead the world in exporting specialized microorganisms—different strains that treat everything from digestive issues to skin conditions to metabolic health. The original teaching shares a remarkable story: Japanese scientists once collected soil from Thai mangrove forests, amazed that the rich organic matter produced no foul odor despite the decomposing material. They discovered

thousands of microbial species living in symbiosis, eventually developing pharmaceutical products from those microorganisms.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

The bio-based economy is essentially biomimicry applied to economics. Instead of the industrial model—extract, manufacture, discard—it follows nature's model: grow, use, regenerate. In data analytics, we'd call this a 'circular data model' versus a 'linear data pipeline.' The linear model has an endpoint (waste). The circular model feeds outputs back as inputs. It's a more elegant architecture, and it's more sustainable by design. The same principle applies to your career: build skills that compound and regenerate, not skills that deplete and become obsolete.

The Deeper Search

The bio-based economy represents a deeper level of inquiry—going beneath the surface of living things to discover hidden knowledge. Human DNA alone contains 3 billion codes packed into a nucleus too small to see with the naked eye. No computer program in existence has that level of complexity.

We're entering an era where we can sequence genomes, edit genes, and potentially customize biological outcomes. But the teaching wisely adds: with

great power comes the need for great care. Long-term safety must always guide short-term capability.

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PART FIVE

When Nature Rebalances

Chapter 7: Nature's Feedback Loop

Today's weather patterns have become violently unpredictable. Heat waves pushing past 50°C kill hundreds. Cold snaps plunging to -40°C do the same. Summer brings winter weather; winter brings unseasonable warmth. Storms are more frequent, more intense, and more destructive.

The cause? Us.

The original teaching uses a vivid metaphor: the Earth is like a person running a fever. When you're healthy, drinking cold water is no problem—your body adjusts. But when you're sick, even small changes can trigger severe reactions. The planet has been pushed beyond its ability to self-regulate.

Centuries ago, with a few hundred million people using minimal resources, nature could absorb our impact and maintain balance. Today, with over 8 billion people and industrial technology consuming resources at an exponential rate, we've exceeded the planet's capacity to compensate.

The Inner Cause

The classical Buddhist texts identify an intriguing pattern: in eras when human minds are dominated by hatred and greed, the natural world responds with fire and flood. Whether you take this literally or metaphorically, the causal chain is clear: internal states of mind drive external behaviors, and those behaviors accumulate into planetary consequences.

Greed drives overconsumption. Impatience drives shortcuts (pesticides instead of careful cultivation). Short-term thinking drives environmental neglect. The external crisis is a reflection of an internal crisis.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

In systems dynamics, we call this a 'reinforcing feedback loop.' Stressed minds make short-term decisions. Short-term decisions damage the environment. A damaged environment creates more stress. More stress leads to more short-term decisions. The loop accelerates until something breaks. The only way to interrupt a reinforcing loop is to introduce a 'balancing feedback'—a counterforce. The contemplative traditions propose that mindfulness is that counterforce. When you train the mind to pause, observe, and respond rather than react, you break the cycle at its source.

A World Out of Balance

The teaching frames natural disasters not as punishment, but as rebalancing. The planet is signaling that we can't continue this way. If we listen—if we accept the signal and adapt—equilibrium is still possible. If we ignore it, the consequences escalate until they become irreversible.

The practical takeaway is beautifully simple: start with yourself. Plant trees wherever you can. Build environmental consciousness into your daily habits. When enough individuals shift, businesses follow—because serving environmentally conscious consumers becomes profitable.

The teaching closes this section with a lovely observation: the Buddha was born in a forest, attained enlightenment in a forest, delivered his first teaching in a forest, and passed away in a forest. The natural world isn't separate from the spiritual path. It's the ground on which the path unfolds.

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PART SIX

**Ancient Technologies of
Healing**

Chapter 8: The Science of Sound Healing

Sound isn't just communication. It's a therapeutic medium that affects our emotions, our neurochemistry, and even our physical health in measurable ways.

Singing Therapy

Singing therapy—the practice of vocalizing with rhythm and melody for healing purposes—has demonstrated remarkable clinical results:

For stuttering, rhythmic singing reduces the frequency of speech disruption by over 90%. That's not a marginal improvement—it's a transformation. The melodic pattern gives the brain an alternative pathway for speech production, bypassing the neural blockage that causes stuttering.

For Parkinson's disease, singing exercises that emphasize deep vocalization and breath control from the diaphragm have shown measurable improvement in speech clarity and symptom management.

For aphasia—communication impairment from brain damage—familiar songs can help patients regain language function that seemed permanently lost.

For autism, singing therapy helps develop social skills, reduce aggressive behaviors, and improve self-regulation. Children with temper tantrums show markedly better emotional control after singing programs.

The mechanism? When we sing, the brain releases endorphins (natural painkillers) and oxytocin (the bonding and wellbeing hormone). These aren't supplements you buy—they're medicines your body manufactures in response to rhythmic, intentional vocalization.

Healing Through Chanting

For those in contemplative traditions, chanting represents an even deeper application of sound healing. The steady, rhythmic vocalization of sacred texts—with consistent vowel sounds and measured cadence—produces a particular quality of mental stillness.

When chanting is performed with a focused, meditative mind, the brain produces serotonin and dopamine, bringing the body's systems into balance. Nerve cells become refreshed. The practitioner feels clear, uplifted, and at peace.

The classical texts record that even the Buddha himself used the recitation of the Bojjhanga Sutta (the

Seven Factors of Awakening) as a healing practice—both receiving it when ill and having it recited for ailing disciples, who recovered.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

The neuroscience of chanting is fascinating. Studies using EEG and fMRI show that rhythmic vocalization synchronizes brainwave patterns across both hemispheres, producing a state of coherence associated with deep relaxation and heightened awareness simultaneously. It's the same state experienced by meditators achieve—but vocalization provides an additional 'anchor' for attention, making it accessible even to beginners. If you're not from a Buddhist background, you can experience this with any form of rhythmic, intentional vocalization: Gregorian chant, kirtan, even sustained humming. The mechanism is universal. The content matters less than the quality of attention you bring to it.

The important caveat: the content and quality of what you vocalize matters. Singing sad songs when you're sad amplifies the sadness. Chanting or singing that generates peace, gratitude, and uplift produces healing. Choose your sonic diet as carefully as your food diet.

Chapter 9: The Science of Water Healing

Before we were born, we grew in water—our mother’s amniotic fluid. Perhaps it’s no coincidence that water remains one of the most effective therapeutic environments available to us.

Hydrotherapy: How Water Works

Physical therapy traditionally happens on dry land. But for elderly patients, those recovering from injury, or anyone with joint pain, exercising in water offers dramatic advantages.

The physics are straightforward: water supports your body weight. Stand in water up to your knees and you lose 25% of your body weight. Up to your waist: 50% gone. Up to your chest: 85% of your weight is supported by the water. You’re exercising with only 15% of your normal load on your joints.

This means patients who can barely stand on land can walk, stretch, and strengthen muscles in water. The water’s viscosity provides natural resistance—enough to build strength, but gentle enough to prevent the sudden movements that cause injury on land.

And the benefits extend beyond musculoskeletal therapy. Standing chest-deep in water forces your lungs to work slightly harder against the water pressure, strengthening respiratory capacity. Blood flow to the heart increases by about 30%. Oxygen utilization triples—walking 10 meters in water equals 30 meters of exercise on land.

Warm water immersion at around 41°C for 10 minutes increases blood flow to the heart, improves endocrine function, and enhances kidney filtration. The nervous system relaxes. Pain decreases. Mood improves. Stress hormones drop.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

What strikes me about hydrotherapy is how it embodies a principle that applies far beyond physical rehabilitation: sometimes the best way to build strength is to reduce resistance first. In my teaching, I've found that students learn complex concepts faster when I reduce the cognitive 'weight' first—using analogies, visual models, or hands-on exercises before introducing formal theory. Meditation does something similar for the mind: it reduces the 'gravitational load' of mental noise, allowing clearer thinking to emerge. The water doesn't do the exercise for you. It creates conditions where you can exercise effectively. Stillness doesn't think for you. It creates conditions where you can think clearly.

The teaching closes with a grounding reminder: your body is the foundation for everything you do in this life. Take care of it. Whether through hydrotherapy, meditation, exercise, or simply mindful living—honor the vessel that carries you through your days.

Closing: The Algorithm You Already Have

“If humans understood that happiness lives within the mind, we would run our businesses for social benefit, pursue innovation that elevates rather than depletes, and remember that on the day we die, not a single possession comes with us.”

— Phra Kru Palad Suwatthanaphothikhun

Throughout this book, we’ve traveled across a remarkably wide landscape—from climate science to cryptocurrency, from hydrotherapy to the hidden economy of microorganisms, from the skills robots can’t replicate to the ancient technology of sound healing.

But the thread running through every chapter is a single, powerful idea:

The world is disrupted. You don’t have to be.

Disruption is external. Groundedness is internal. And the internal always has the final say.

The original Thai teaching frames this through the lens of Buddhist practice: meditation quiets the mind,

merit builds inner strength, and understanding natural law provides the map. Whether or not you identify with that tradition, the underlying mechanics are universal.

PROFESSOR YAA'S FIELD NOTE

After years of studying both data systems and contemplative traditions, here's my synthesis: Every external system we build—every algorithm, every blockchain, every organizational structure—is ultimately an attempt to solve problems that originate in the mind. Information overload? That's a problem of attention. Market crashes? That's a problem of collective fear and greed. Environmental destruction? That's a problem of short-term thinking driven by craving. We keep building external solutions for internal problems. The contemplative traditions suggest we're approaching it backwards. Fix the operating system first—the mind—and the applications it runs will naturally produce better outcomes. I've seen this in my own life, in my students' lives, and in the lives of every serious practitioner I've met. The inner algorithm is real. And unlike your phone's software, it never needs an external update. It only needs to be uncovered.

So here's the invitation, as simply as I can state it:

Learn relentlessly. Technology will keep changing, and you need to change with it. Develop the ten human

skills that machines can't touch. Stay curious, stay humble, stay adaptable.

But beneath all that activity, cultivate stillness. Find a practice that quiets your mind—whether it's meditation, chanting, contemplative prayer, or simply sitting in silence. Make it daily. Make it non-negotiable.

Because the world will keep spinning. The disruption won't stop. New technologies will arrive. Old industries will fall. Storms will come—literal and metaphorical.

And through it all, you have a choice.

You can be disrupted and destroyed. Or you can be disrupted and remain whole.

The difference isn't in your circumstances. It's in your center.

Find it. Train it. Trust it.

About the Original Author

Phra Kru Palad Suwatthanaphothikhun (Dr. Somchai Thanavuddho Bhikkhu) was born in 1961 in Narathiwat, Thailand. He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine at Chulalongkorn University before ordaining as a Buddhist monk in 1985 at Wat Phra Dhammakaya. He went on to earn both a Master's and Doctoral degree in Buddhist Studies from the University of Tokyo.

He serves as Assistant Abbot of Wat Phra Dhammakaya and Abbot of Wat Phra Dhammakaya Tokyo. He is Chairman of the Thai Tipitaka Translation Project (in collaboration with Peking University) and Chairman of the Dhammachai Tipitaka Project. In 2014, he received the Royal Sema Dhammachak Award for Buddhist authorship.

His unique background as both a physician and a contemplative practitioner gives his teachings a distinctive blend of scientific literacy and spiritual depth.

About the Translator and Adapter

Professor Yaa teaches data analytics, data management, operations management, and AI in business. Through the Chill & Shine project (chillandshine.com), she translates Buddhist wisdom—particularly from the Dhammakaya meditation tradition—into practical frameworks for analytically-minded spiritual seekers.

Her work sits at the intersection of data analytics, information systems, and contemplative practice, exploring the thesis that inner clarity is the foundation for outer success, and that the mind is the most important operating system any of us will ever run.

She is the author of *Your Inner Algorithm: Buddhist Principles for Navigating AI and Beyond*, and the creator of *The Missing 60% Handbook* series.