

THE SERENITY METHOD

A simple practice for stress-free
productivity and goal achievement



HOWARD RAMBIN



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One of my primary goals in life is serenity, or as some like to put it, peace of mind.

I view such a mental state as key to lasting happiness.

I have come to understand that frustration (one of the most toxic emotions we have) comes from having things not go the way WE think they SHOULD.

When you run a company, it's easy to fall into a trap of being constantly frustrated because it NEVER runs the way we think it should.

Serenity comes down to two words: **control** and **acceptance**.

It can take years of maturing through failures and pain to realize that we are not in control of very much.

- We can't control people. Not our buyers, or our vendors, or even our staff (though we might try!) And we certainly can't control our family!
- We can't control the business environment, the economy, or the government.
- We can't control events. We have no control over traffic, late airplanes, or a global pandemic.

The Serenity Method

When we want to control the uncontrollable, we experience frustration and disappointment, which left unattended, can easily progress to anger, or even rage.

Instead, we need to let go and let things evolve as they will.

To gain peace of mind, we need to relinquish control and learn to accept things as they are.

Unfortunately, I learned most of this very late in life, but the serenity that comes from these newly formed attitudes is truly wonderful.

In this little book, I will endeavor to shave some years off your learning curve by showing you how to achieve serenity and how to use it to both enhance your performance and increase your happiness in life.

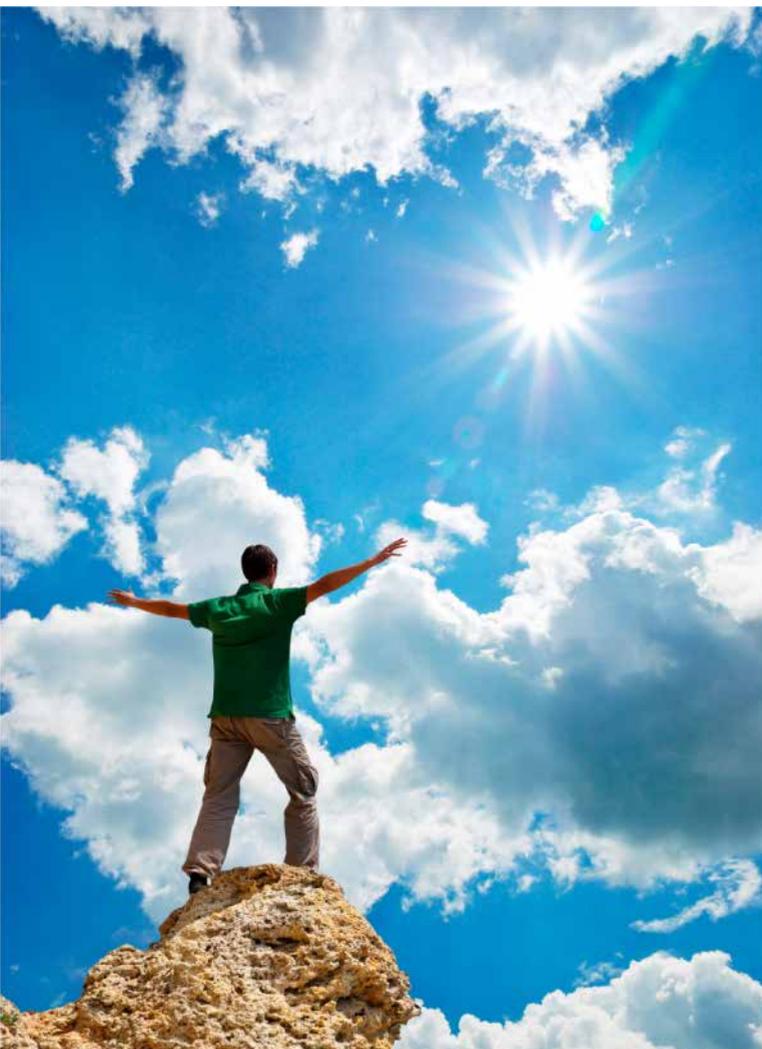
Let's begin with why this matters.

In my executive coaching practice, I've observed that nearly all my clients are plagued by what I call the Big 3 Ps:

- Lower productivity
- Lower profit
- Lower peace of mind

As you can probably see, these three problems are related – lower productivity leads to lower profit which in turn leads to reduced peace of mind.

What you might not see is that all three have a single common root cause...



A Desire for Control

It seems that we humans are control freaks.

We want to be the writer and director of the play that is going on in our daily lives. This extends to business as well.

And while control can be positive in the right situations, desiring too much control can wreak havoc with both our business and personal lives.

We have a term for this: micromanagement.

Micromanage:
control every part,
however small, of an
enterprise or activity

Most people have an instinct to micromanage.

We see others performing certain tasks and our first

thought is that we could do it better, faster, or more effectively. Sometimes we can't resist the urge to jump in to give specific direction.

Do you exhibit any of these signs of micromanagement?

- Requiring your approval on everything
- Requiring frequent and detailed updates
- Difficulty delegating (it feels easier to just do it yourself)
- Asking to be CC'd on every email
- Making every decision
- Insisting on a specific process instead of allowing employees to do their work their way
- Being overly "picky" about small details

All of these point to a need for control.

The High Cost of Micromanagement

Micromanagement has many negative impacts including:

- Loss of focus and momentum as we try to control too many things
- Poor time management – spending too much time on trivial matters and losing sight of what’s truly important
- Resistance and resentment from our staff – who are doing their best and want to do their work in their own way
- Frustration and disappointment when things don’t turn out exactly the way we envisioned them. Which can lead to toxic emotions like anger and resentment.

All of this impacts your ability to profitably lead your company.

People DO NOT like to be controlled. And since people are one of any firm’s most important assets, you need to set the stage for them to succeed and not control them.

Frustration shows up when things don’t go the way you want them to, yet you don’t have control over the situation. Frustration is a super toxic emotion that interrupts your thought process and destroys your attitude.

All of this causes an enormous amount of stress that negatively affects all aspects of your life.

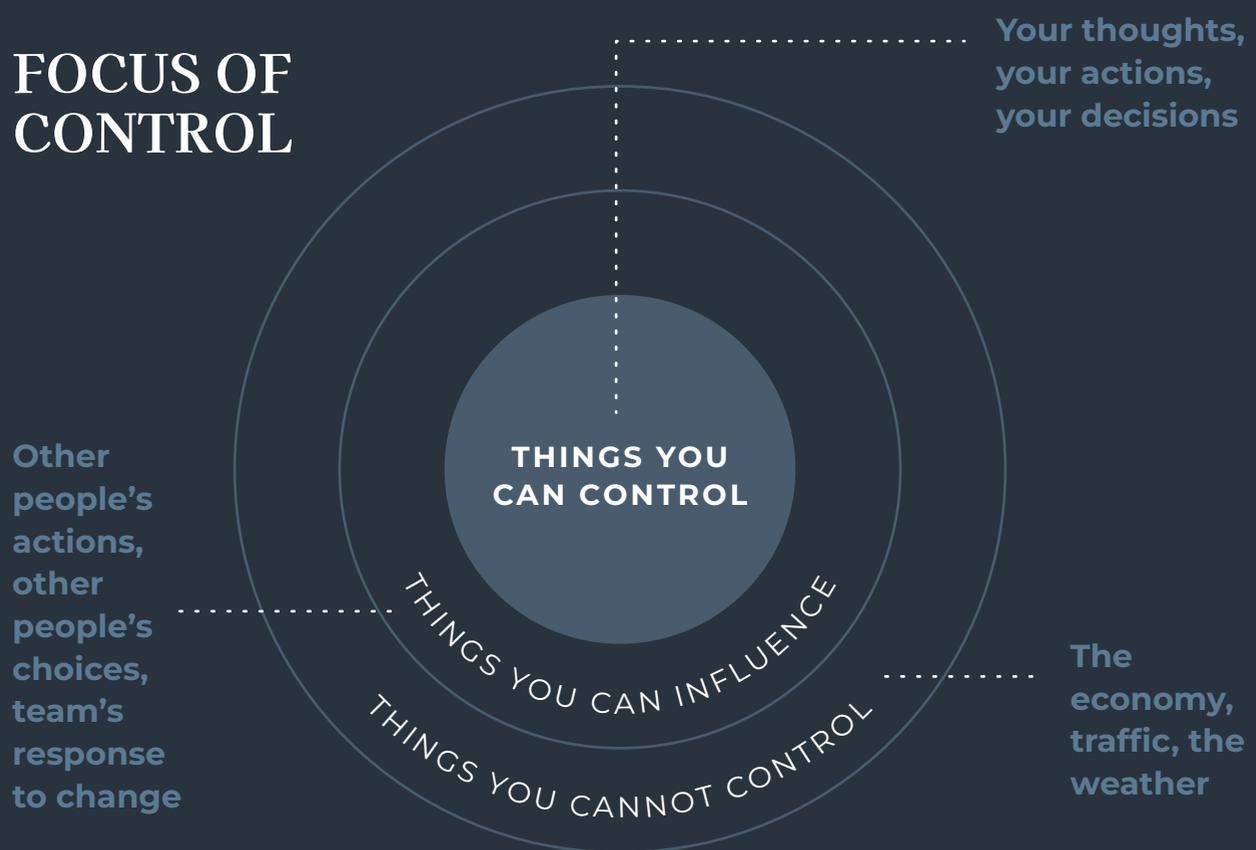
The answer is simple.

Want to change your life and business?

Learn to let go of your need for control

The first step is to recognize what is *truly* within your control – and what isn't.

The following diagram illustrates the difference.



How often do you find yourself wanting to control other people or getting frustrated about things like traffic or the weather?

You'll soon realize that when you engage in that fight, you never or rarely win.

Peace of mind comes from accepting people, places, and things for what they are. In most cases you cannot FIX people and only have a minor influence on other things/situations.



Breaking this habit of control is the single biggest breakthrough I have witnessed in business owners that I have coached

After discovering the truth about the negative consequences outlined above, they are ready to get out of that rut.

They are ready to work ON their business - not IN all the details.

Like right NOW.

They reaffirm what they already know: they should spend their time on the areas where they can be of highest and best use, instead of on the minutia that comes from micromanaging.

But habits can be hard to break.

Fortunately, there is a system that makes it MUCH easier.

I call it the Serenity Method and it has its roots in one of the most effective habit-breaking organizations in the world: Alcoholics Anonymous.

Central to this method is the serenity prayer:

“ God grant me the serenity

To accept the things I cannot change;

Courage to change the things I can

And the wisdom to know the difference

”

How to Develop the Habit of Letting Go

There are 3 simple steps to this method:

- 1 Commit to me and another person, to give up fighting to control people and things
- 2 Carry a copy of the serenity prayer with you.
- 3 When you notice yourself becoming agitated with people or circumstances, PAUSE. Pull out the serenity prayer, read it, and think about it.

The most challenging part of this system is recognizing the urge to control and remembering to do it. It gets easier with practice and repetition.

Examples in action

You're driving to work, and you get stuck in traffic. You catch yourself feeling frustrated and angry. You pull out your serenity prayer. You take a deep breath. You read it and reflect. You recognize that you can't control the traffic, so there's no sense in getting upset.



How to Develop the Habit of Letting Go

What you can control are your actions. From this calm frame of mind, you consider your options: do you reschedule the meeting you're about to miss? Send someone in your place? Pull over somewhere safe and attend by phone?

Now let's look at a work-related situation.

You're in a meeting and you're facing some resistance from someone who isn't 100% on board with YOUR plan or ideas. The conversation feels like it's getting a bit heated. Before you follow your instinct to try to push or persuade, you notice that you're beginning to feel frustrated. You remember the serenity prayer and quietly recite it to yourself.

You realize that if you press, this person will likely become more reluctant to agree. From a more serene place, you decide that you've said your piece and your next best action is to leave them alone to think about what you've said. You can revisit the conversation later when they've cooled down.

As humans, we're not that much different from animals. If you pull on a dog's leash or a horse's bridle, they will resist. A human's first reaction when being TOLD what to do is to say (or at least think) "Screw YOU!"

When you give up trying to fix or control other people, you'll discover new and more successful strategies.

I've learned that it's completely ineffective to try to tell people what to do. Instead, I simply share what I have done in a similar situation, or what I would do if faced with the issue at hand.

Having said my piece, I then let them proceed as they will. This creates a win-win scenario: serenity for me – and autonomy for them.



It's simple...and it works!

I have seen this work with many people, myself included. (I still always carry a copy of this prayer in my pocket.)



Pausing to reflect on these words will immediately result in a state of calm and peace of mind.

This will be apparent and positively received by your employees, coworkers, family, and friends.

From this place, you will make better decisions. You will be able to resist the lure of micromanaging.

As you practice this simple method, you'll catch yourself earlier and earlier. Soon, it will become your new way of being. You will be free of the need to control the uncontrollable.

Vastly improved results naturally follow from such freedom.

And you can enjoy the rewards that come with peace of mind.

About Howard Rambin

Hi, I'm Howard.

Let's just say, **"I've been there, done that!"**

Over my career, I have:

- Co-founded Moody Rambin, a successful Houston-based full-service commercial real estate firm where I am currently CEO and managing partner

- Developed, owned, operated, and sold 25 suburban office buildings in the Houston area, along with several apartment complexes and motor hotels.

- With a specialty in office leasing, I have been directly involved in transactions totaling over 15 million square feet.

- I founded and was formerly on the Executive Committee of Keep Houston Beautiful, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the reduction of litter in Houston.

- I am also a member of the Houston Country Club, Silver Fox Advisors, and formerly, the Houston Angel Network, and Vistage.



I hold a B.A degree in Accounting and Finance Southern Methodist University, and I reside in Houston with my wife Karen. We have four children – Jay, Mary, Joe and Leven, and 3 precious dogs.

I've gained wisdom from real-life experiences, not just books, schools, and/or courses.

“Only a fool learns from their own mistakes. The wise man learns from others.”

- Otto Von Bismarck

I am willing to share my wisdom with those who are willing to listen, grow, and reach their potential.

I do this through personal executive coaching.

About Coaching...

All high performers have coaches. We know that high performing athletes like Tiger Woods hire coaches to help them improve their mindset, skills, and performance. Smart business owners and leaders hire coaches for the same reason.

A coach is someone who...

- You form a trusting and confidential relationship.
- Helps you plan and set goals for your mission in life.
- Holds you accountable. Tells you what you need to hear, not just what you want to hear.
- Provides wisdom that decades of experience have taught them.
- Helps set your goals, which will directly improve your quality of life.
- Helps you gain financial independence, peace, serenity, clarity, focus, discipline, accountability, and so much more!
- Acts as a sounding board and confidant, because "It's lonely at the top."
- Offers a reality check by helping you embrace your reality and cut through denial and disillusion.

As your coach, you can expect me to be empathetic, a good listener, non-judgmental, committed to your success, available, honest, and confidential.

I'll tell you what you need to hear, not what you want to hear.

"Howard has encouraged me to think bigger, get off the hamster wheel, and commit to making things happen. As a result, last year was great, this year is on track, and in my heart of hearts I know it's just going to keep getting better. I feel calm, peaceful, and confident about my ability to make that happen.

The thing I appreciate most about Howard is that he genuinely cares and wants to see me succeed. I feel supported knowing that he's only a phone call or email away.

After working with Howard for several years, I find myself saying things that sound like him or hearing his voice in my head as I go about my day. I'm grateful for the influence he's had on my business and life and for his ongoing support."

Patrika Romano

If you're ready to take the first steps towards improving your life and business, click here to book a free consultation:

<https://calendly.com/hrambin>

For more information, visit my website:

<https://rambin-coachandconfidant.com/>