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How To Become an Extraordinary Human

by Shelby Dioum | Nov 22, 2021 | Aggie Life, Culture, Health

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that life can change in an instant. But according to UC Davis Assistant Professor Mohammad Sadoghi, we can learn to become more resilient to abrupt changes.

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Tamarkoz is a heart-focused meditation method rooted in Sufism and unique to [M.T.O. Shahmaghsoudi](#). Its benefits could be appealing to people who struggle with change, Sadoghi said.

Sadoghi teaches the practices of the Tamarkoz meditation method in his first-year seminar “Becoming an Extraordinary Human.” The course description boasts goals such as “higher levels of cognition,” “stress management,” and “increased self-confidence.”

“I have discovered the benefits, the power, and the joy that it has brought into my personal life,” Sadoghi said when talking about Tamarkoz.

Sadoghi started practicing the Tamarkoz meditation method 13 years ago, and he began offering his seminar to UC Davis students in 2019. The method has also been taught at institutions such as UC Berkeley, where health benefits were published in [Scientific Reports](#).

The Tamarkoz method is defined as the art of self-knowledge through concentration and meditation. Its benefits are yielded through practices such as mind relaxation, slow meditative movements, visualizations, and heart concentration. Sadoghi said that according to Sufism, strengthening the heart can make a person more resilient to changes that life may bring.

“Whatever the environment is, whether it’s wildfires, COVID, or civil unrest, you can still be stable and

continue moving on,” Sadoghi said.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic changed many lives in uncontrollable ways. Anxiety and depression rates increased significantly, with young people being affected more than other age groups.

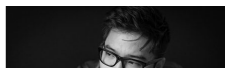
In the fall of that year, Sadoghi and his co-instructor Bahadorani Nasim conducted a 16-week Tamarkoz study. For 50 minutes a week, 20 UC Davis students practiced Tamarkoz techniques. The study’s final results showed a significant decrease in depression, anxiety, and perceived stress among participants.

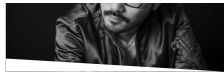
Though pain, discomfort, and stress brought about by change is natural, being grounded from within can make these challenges much more short-lived, he added. “Everything is centered from within,” Sadoghi said, “and within cannot be touched.”

The first-year seminar is scheduled for both the winter 2022 and spring 2022 quarters.

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