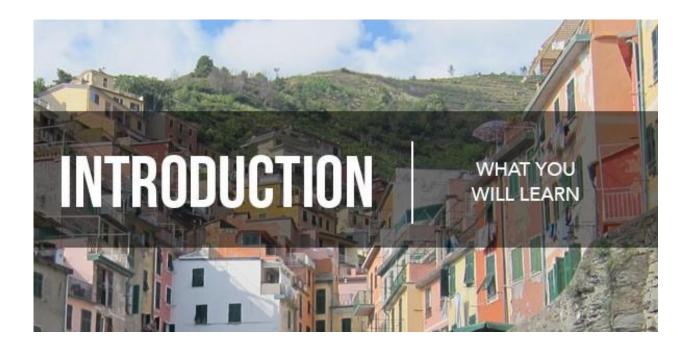# Introduction

Welcome to the digital age.

While we take for granted much of the technology that surrounds us and the way it has changed the way we work and relax; it's actually very important to recognize just how much it has impacted our lives.

Today we are constantly bombarded by information and stimulation and it is taking its toll on our brains. Meanwhile, the expectations placed on us by our work have only increased because of greater productivity tools and enhanced connectivity.

And it is not just technology that has changed life for us either. The demands placed on us in other areas have also increased. The world is more populous, living costs have gone up and our roles in society have changed. More and more women are now working full time, which while a good thing, has created new challenges in trying to raise and care for our

children. The roles of men have likewise become increasingly uncertain and competition for employment is fiercer than ever.

Don't get me wrong – none of this is bad in itself! Having greater access to entertainment, being able to communicate with anyone in the world and enjoying greater equality than ever before are all *good* things. The state of the economy is a little less rosy. But all in all, times are good.

The problem? We're having a hard time keeping up with all this change!

And it's leading to *burnout*.

For a great number of us, the demands placed on us are simply too great for us to shoulder. The constant stimulation and constant bombardment of information is leading to burnout. And knowing how to get what we want from life is seemingly impossible.

Our brains evolved in *entirely* different environments and they simply aren't designed to thrive under these conditions. The result is what we call 'overwhelm'. That means too much information, too much pressure, too much to do and too little time. We end up stressed, exhausted and disorganized and it's just not good for our health.

The Modern Dilemma

Perhaps this sounds familiar:

You wake up first thing in the morning with a jolt because your alarm has gone off. In a rush, you clean your teeth and get ready for work while watching the news on whichever device you prefer.

You pack your family off for school and work respectively and then you set off yourself. You're late, because it took you 20 minutes to choose what you were going to wear and to find your keys. And because you lay there on the couch for 5 minutes doing nothing.

What follows is a tedious and frustrating 10-90 minutes of commuting – complete with angry fellow commuters, stuffy carriages and probably a fair amount of time spent playing Candy Crush. By the time you get into work, you're already stressed, late and feeling a headache come on from peering at a small screen under artificial lighting.

You then have a strong coffee, leaving you feeling wired, and you open your inbox to 10,000 emails (okay, maybe that's an exaggeration but you get the point!). You set yourself some things to achieve for the day – just so you can get back to feeling 'on top' of work, but then you spend the next 20 minutes on Facebook and YouTube watching cat videos.

And staring at photos of your friends on sunny holidays wondering what went so wrong with your life…

Lunch comes and you feel like you've barely done anything. You head out for lunch and grab the cheapest thing you can find that's sugary and have another strong coffee.

This doesn't exactly fuel you with energy for the second half of the day, which is spent largely putting out fires. How can you be expected to progress in your career and to get the kind of lifestyle you want, when you're spending the whole-time treading water?

By the end of the day, you've spent most of your time responding to emails and trying not to get distracted. You end up leaving an hour late, which is followed by another hour of commuting.