



Rupert Murdoch is said to have been turned on to 'TM' by local actor Hugh Jackman. PHOTO: THE NEW YORK TIMES

Murdoch in meditative mood

Dominic White

Rupert Murdoch's new pursuit could lower his blood pressure, reduce his anger and sharpen his cognitive abilities—should any of that be needed—as well as increase his lifespan, according to recent research.

The 82-year-old mogul tweeted this week that he has taken up the mantra meditation technique introduced by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in India and popularised in the West by The Beatles in the 1960s.

"Trying to learn transcendental meditation," tweeted Mr Murdoch, to titters from detractors. "Everyone recommends, not that easy to get started, but said to improve everything!"

Dr Larry Clarke, managing director of the organisation that teaches "TM" throughout Australia, says his students have included chief executives of some of Australia's largest companies, as well as an archbishop.

"I'm not surprised by Rupert's interest," he said. "Research on the brain shows TM increases

'coherence', in particular within the pre-frontal cortex, which is like the CEO of the brain and controls judgment, planning and decision-making.

"Rupert's made some pretty good decisions down the years but has been having a few problems recently. My only advice, and he will get this from his teacher, is to stop 'trying'—it's a forbidden word in TM."

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Mr Murdoch, who is rumoured to have been turned on to the technique by the Australian actor **Hugh Jackman**, joins a growing list of famous practitioners of the trademarked, secular technique. They include billionaire fund manager **Ray Dalio**,

financial analyst **Monty Guild**, actor **Clint Eastwood**, British Foreign Secretary **William Hague**, US chat show host **Oprah Winfrey** and film director **David Lynch**.

A study funded by the US National Institutes of Health found in November that African-Americans with heart disease who regularly practised TM reduced their risk of death, heart attack, and stroke by 48 per cent. Other studies point to its benefits in reducing anxiety and depression and improving academic performance.

Tim Carr, a Sydney-based GP who teaches TM, said: "It is a regular practice just like exercising. It makes the brain more efficient and able to cope with life's challenges."

James Doty, a former dot-com millionaire, now a neurosurgery professor at Stanford University, said: "Stress in the workplace is an epidemic. Meditation can significantly decrease levels of stress and, by doing so, improve attention, focus and productivity while also decreasing blood pressure and increasing longevity."