

all over the shop

THE CULT SHOP

A pleasing purveyor of quality and quirk

FOR GOODNESS' SAKE

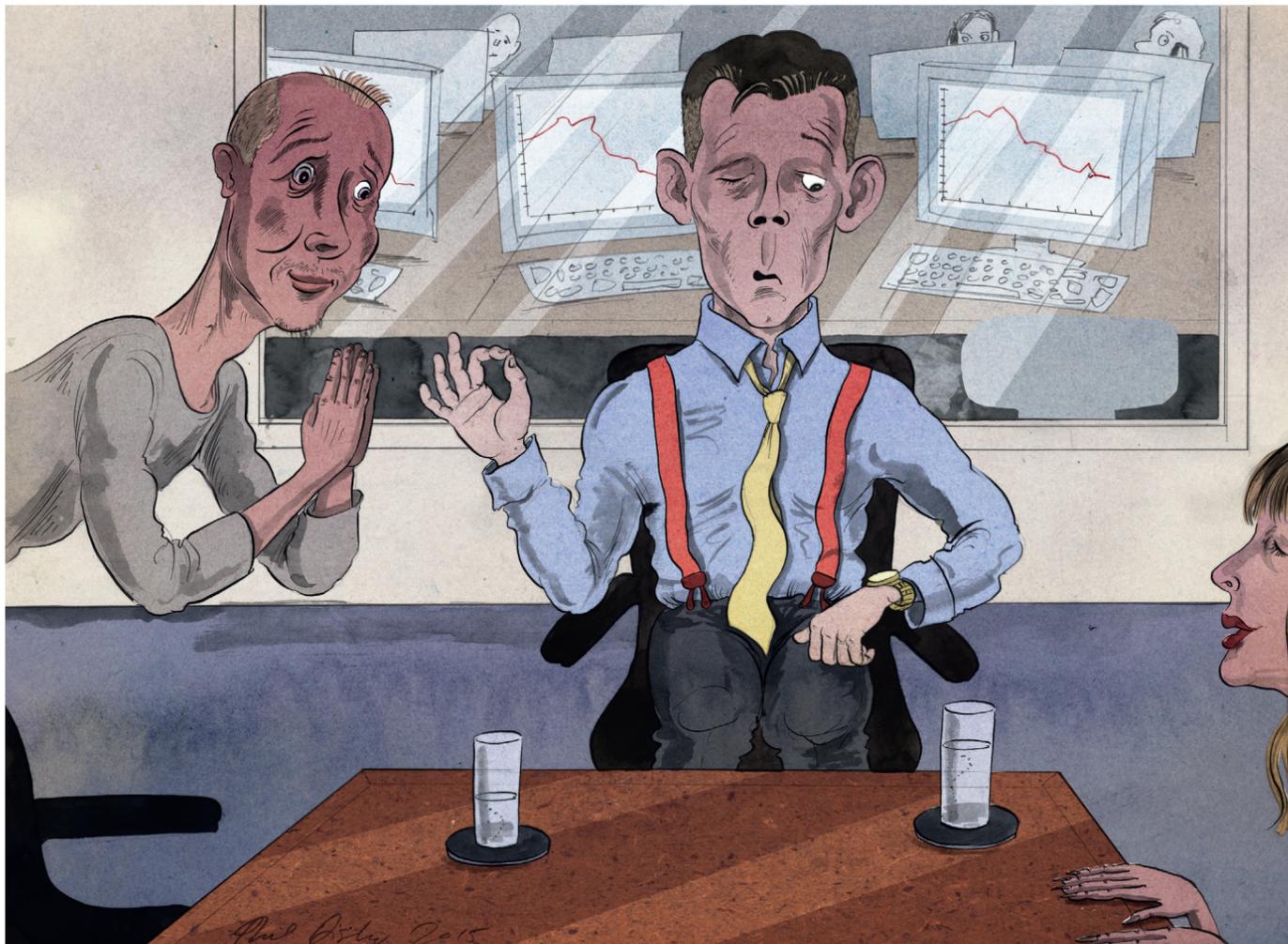
A trinity of channels for charitable urges

THE SMART MONEY

Studying form for the speculative enthusiast

THE GANNET

Tucker tips for the galloping gourmet



WRY SOCIETY

the mindful banker

Will it be meditation or the synapse-snapping thrill of the FTSE 100 that leads a stressed executive to his happy place?

And... in through the nose, out through the mouth..."

Try as he might to focus on his breathing and empty his mind, Max couldn't quite get rid of the niggling panic that the ListenIn shares he'd bought last week had bottomed out spectacularly this morning. This had been an unexpected shock. Surely in these tempestuous times legal phone-tapping technology had a bankable future?

"Now, touch your thumb and forefinger together veery gently and imagine yourself in your happy place..." Beach in

Corfu. Sun on his back. Sound of the sea lapping on the sand. *Boss's office being promoted. Biggest bonus since the crash.* Beach in Corfu. Sound of the sea lapping on the shore. *Huge bonus. Enough to buy a chalet in Gstaad outright!* In through the nose, out through the mouth. *ListenIn. Breathe. Don't listen in! Breathe.*

"Hey there, buddy. Are you doing OK?"

Backlit by boardroom sunshine, the office mindfulness instructor Patrick was smiling at him beatifically. This was a man who existed on a diet of tumeric, raw food and meditation.

Even Patrick's bald head glowed with good health. Since giving up his £250,000-a-year job as an advertising director, Patrick had found his happy place teaching de-stressing techniques to flustered executives for a very reasonable £180 a session.

Max had resisted the classes at first.

After all, what could meditation achieve that a couple of vodkas and half a pack of Marlboro Lights couldn't?

But then the HR department had, with Patrick's gentle encouragement, gone and made the weekly sessions compulsory. According to the market research conducted by Patrick's recently launched company, MindPlace.com, businesses that operated from a starting point of Mindfulness had, in the past year alone, seen their annual output quadruple. Far from being an anathema to one another, it seemed Alpha rhythms

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and the FTSE 100 had the potential to be each other's happiest happy place.

"I'm fine, Patrick; just finding it hard to switch off today." Max tried and failed to look at his watch without Patrick seeing.

"We're only 15 minutes into the session, buddy," Patrick smiled.

Max felt his stomach twist with irritation. He didn't want to be here. He wanted to be at his desk watching the ListenIn shares and making an impulsive-yet-informed decision whether to hang in there or cut his losses. That was where he felt his synapses snapping – in that no man's land between loss and gain. That was his happy place – that swivel chair on the edge of oblivion.

"I'm sorry, Patrick, I need to go. But hey, I've downloaded your De-stress For Less podcast and I'll listen to it in my cab home this evening."

Patrick put his hands across his chest and bowed gently, like a martial-arts expert about to deliver a paralyzing karate chop.

"Before you go, can I just ask what's bothering you, Max? You seem agitated. Is there anything I can do to help?"

"Not unless you have a top investment tip that could make up for the half a million pound losses I've made in the past 24 hours, Patrick, no."

"Well, you know what, buddy. I just might..."

"Thanks, pal," Max laughed, heading for the door. "Call me. Or MindPlace.com me if it's easier?"

Back at his desk, two espressos and a deep draw on a menthol vape later, Max slightly regretted behaving quite so unmindfully towards Patrick. It wasn't his fault that even his voice was annoying. He would make much more of an effort at next week's session and be sure to log onto MindPlace.com next time he had

absolutely nothing else to do but die of boredom.

Max looked back at his screen with a heavy heart. ListenIn really was over and out. He had to do something, and fast, if he wanted to rescue his client's investment. As he scrolled down the share index

something caught his eye.

A new listing with a 40 per cent rise in its first 24 hours. Hang on... It couldn't be. Oh God, it was...

MindPlace.com.

In through the nose, out through the mouth. Happy place, happy place. Buy. Buy now! And breathe... **CHLOE FOX**