DEVELOPING A MORNING ROUTINE FOR SUCCESS

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Yes, morning routines ARE that important.

Most people begin their day with a neutral attitude. They don’t shudder at the day that lies ahead, but they don’t necessarily welcome it either. They wait for the circumstances of the day to shape their attitude. For example, if you stub your toe on the way into the bathroom in the morning, it can cause you to have a negative attitude for the rest of the day. Things like a rude email, a flat tire or simply an overwhelming schedule can affect your overall outlook for the day.

You can see how easy it is to start the day on the “wrong foot.” Once your attitude is negatively influenced, it’s very difficult to get refocused on making progress and moving forward in a positive manner. So, what can we do to make sure that we begin each day with enthusiasm, prepared to seize the day?

It starts with our morning routine!

If you thought only dull, rigid people have systematic morning routines, think again. A healthy, positive morning routine can benefit anyone. According to research, people with a solid morning routine are less likely to become obese, twice as likely to be physically active, more likely to be proactive and set goals, more likely to anticipate and minimize problems and more likely to make things happen [see note A]. So, why should YOU consider starting a well-defined morning routine immediately?
Morning routines prepare you for the day mentally.

Remember how easy it is to develop a negative attitude early in the day? Any trivial annoyance or distraction can set a person off. When we have a negative attitude, it affects our decision-making ability, our motivation and overall quality of work. Not to mention, a negative attitude is detrimental to our bodies [see note B].

One of the best ways to prevent developing a negative attitude is with a solid morning routine! Instead of starting the day in neutral, we’re choosing to approach the day in an intentional way.

When you start the day off with a routine, activities you enjoy and time to yourself, you’re prepping your mind with a positive perspective. This doesn’t just make you feel good either; your performance will increase, you’ll have more stamina and you’ll be more focused throughout the day.
A strategic morning routine can also help you prepare for the day mentally if you make “preparation” a part of your morning routine. What does that mean? Ideally, part of your morning routine will include reviewing your task list, daily schedule and visualizing your day. I’ll talk more about this when we get into the structure of your morning routine. For now, let’s just say that when you are able to visualize what your day will look like, you’ll be better prepared to face any challenges and obstacles.

**We are at our peak in the morning.**

Our bodies need sleep at night to regenerate and recuperate. So while you may feel groggy pulling yourself out of bed in the morning, you’re actually in the most rested state you’re going to be in all day long. You can use this full-tank of energy in the morning to exercise, reflect, and even dabble in creative thinking. You might be amazed at what you can accomplish during your morning routine. Your morning routine will help keep you in a refreshed, peak state throughout the day too.
Morning’s often the only time to ourselves.

Once the ball gets rolling for the day, it’s almost impossible to stop it. Work is busy, we have fires to put out and when we get home for the day, we have a mountain of chores to do. After a full day’s labor, all we can generally muster is a little couch time and then off to bed so that we can start the whole thing over again the next day.

That’s why having time for yourself and a routine each morning is crucial. It’s often the only time during the day where we have a chance to be alone. We can use this valuable time to work on accomplishing personal tasks, self-improvement and maintaining a healthy lifestyle, both physically and mentally. It’s when we don’t make time for ourselves that we become burnt-out and fail to make progress.
Structuring Your Morning Routine

Now we know how crucial morning routines are. The next step is to define what a well-structured, beneficial morning routine looks like. The short answer is, it will be different for everyone. I wish I could tell you to get up at 6am, go for a 3 mile run and finish off with a smoothie of some kind. The reality is, though, that type of routine wouldn’t be most beneficial for everyone. You need to create a morning routine that gets you energized, prepares you for the day and most importantly, is something you look forward to waking up for.

While each person’s morning routine is going to look a bit different, there are a few items and activities that should be a part of everyone’s morning routines.

**WAKE UP CALL**

Your morning routine should start with a set wake-up time, which is the same each morning. That’s why it’s called a routine. Getting up at a different time each day will make it hard for your body to get into the groove, and your morning routine won’t be as effective. Set your alarm for the same time every night, and when it goes off GET OUT OF BED! Don’t hit the snooze!
Structuring Your Morning Routine

PERSONAL HYGIENE

Having a routine for your hygiene sounds silly, but it can make a huge difference in how you feel for the day. Make your hygiene order the same each morning.

*brush teeth -> shave -> shower ->
  dress -> fix hair*

The specific order you choose is not important, just keep it consistent.

THE MOST IMPORTANT MEAL

Experts have long said that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. I have a hard time believing it, mainly because breakfast-style food is not my favorite. I will say though, that I do make it a point to eat something every morning. Your brain and your body need food to get it going and help you stay focused. Whatever you do, DON’T FORGET THE COFFEE!
Structuring Your Morning Routine

STIMULATE YOUR MIND
As I mentioned earlier, one of the biggest reasons to develop a morning routine is to get you mentally prepared for the day. Your morning routine needs to include some type of activity that will put your mind in gear. Examples of activities would be reading, listening to audiobooks, creative thinking, or prayer and reflection. You can see more activities listed on the next page. The important thing is to program your mind for a successful day.

UNPLUG
A morning routine is about preparation, relaxation and time for yourself. It should never include:

- checking/responding to emails
- work
- watching TV

*It is acceptable, however, to use technology for reading, learning or constructive listening.*
Other Morning Routine Activities

The rest of your morning routine should consist of other activities that will get you motivated to seize the day. The activities you choose to fill up your morning routine with are completely up to you, so long as they make you feel excited, energized and you look forward to doing them every morning. You don’t need to do the same activities each day either. Maybe on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays you choose to work out, and the other days of the week you choose to read. Try keeping your routine and activities consistent from week to week, so that your body and mind become acclimated and comfortable. Here’s some examples of excellent activities you can include in your morning routine [check the boxes you like!]

- Exercise
- Prayer / Scripture
- Reading
- Journaling / Writing
- Building things
- Nature walk
- Reflection / Meditation
- Listening to audiobooks
- Creating Art
- Learning something new
- Stretching
- Creative Thinking [“Twenty Ideas” in resource section]
- Reviewing your schedule
- Gardening
- Solving the world’s problems
How to Get Started with Your Morning Routine

#1 Determine Your Wake-Up Time

The easiest way to start a helpful morning routine is to get your body acclimated to a specific wake-up time. For an entire week, set your alarm to your desired wake-up time and simply get out of bed at that time. *Make your wake-up time so that you have at least one hour to enjoy a full morning routine.*

#2 Implement One Activity

Don’t attempt to pack every single activity into your one hour morning routine. Ideally, you’ll want to limit yourself to one or two activities that you enjoy (in addition to your hygiene and breakfast). To get started, though, try implementing just one activity when beginning your morning routine!
How to Get Started with Your Morning Routine

#3

Evaluate Your Routine After a Week

The purpose of your morning routine is to prepare you to seize the day! If you’re putting activities in your morning routine that don’t get you excited or prepared, you shouldn’t continue them. Likewise, you don’t want to feel exhausted from your morning routine because you’re trying to do too much either. Evaluate your morning routine after a week’s time to see if you feel more prepared each day, more relaxed and enthusiastic. Adjust your activities accordingly!

Map out your ideal morning routine for the week by using the helpful planner on the next page!
MY MORNING ROUTINE

NAME

MY WAKE-UP TIME!

#1. ______________________________________

#2. ______________________________________

#3. ______________________________________

#4. ______________________________________

#5. ______________________________________

#6. ______________________________________

TIME

M  Tu  W  Th  F  Sa  Su

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“Twenty Ideas” - Activity for Creative Thinking

Nothing gets your mind flowing like creative thinking. One of my favorite morning routine activities is to brainstorm 20 ideas about a specific goal or problem I have. This exercise has lead to some of the best ideas and breakthroughs in my life.

Give the “Twenty Ideas” exercise a try yourself, and see the results it can have in your life!

- https://www.andrewheim.biz/20-ideas-free-download/

“Scheduling Your Day Like a Pro” - E-Course for Productivity

After you’ve experienced the positive results of implementing a morning routine, you can continue to improve your day-to-day by dramatically increasing your daily productivity! In my e-course, “Scheduling Your Day Like a Pro,” I’ll give you all of the tools and ideas you need to become a highly productive individual and increase your daily productivity by 30% or more!

- https://www.andrewheim.biz/scheduling-day-like-pro/


[NOTE B] “How do thoughts and emotions impact health?” - University of Minnesota