

MAKE YOUR MORNINGS MATTER

Morning Routines to make
you happier and healthier

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MAKE YOUR MORNINGS MATTER



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MAKE YOUR MORNINGS MATTER

Why have a morning routine?

Is there any truth in the saying "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a woman/man healthy, wealthy and wise"? I think so. Well, I do now.

I used to hate getting up in the mornings, and definitely wouldn't call myself a morning person, but I now love my 'Morning Routine'. It gives me a reason to get out of bed in the morning, one that I actually look forward to. My morning routine is made up of things that I know make me feel better about myself and prepare me for the day ahead.

Before I set myself the goal of making my morning matter, I found it really difficult to get out of my nice warm bed in the mornings. I had no real plan or intention for my mornings apart from putting on some clothes and getting out of the door as close to 'on time' as possible. I wasted far too much time watching breakfast TV and opening and closing Facebook, whilst drinking mug after mug of tea. This is fine, but it wasn't enhancing my life and it didn't give the momentum I needed for a productive day.

“

*You will never change your life until you change something you do daily.
The secret of your success is found in your daily routine.*

John C. Maxwell

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A morning routine is a great place to start if you feel generally overwhelmed with life. It's one of the best things that you can do for YOU. The time that you get to yourself in the mornings may be the best chance of getting some 'Me Time' all day.

How you start your day is so important for setting you up for a successful day ahead and has a huge impact on your energy, motivation and your self-control - All important factors in achieving your goals and moving you closer to the life that you want to be living.

“

*How you wake up each day and your morning routine (or lack thereof) dramatically affects your level of success in every single area of your life.
Focused, productive, successful mornings generate focused, productive, successful days - which inevitably create a successful life. By simply changing the way you wake up in the morning, you can change any area of your life*

Hal Elrod ~ Author of The Miracle Morning

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MAKE YOUR MORNINGS MATTER

The Benefits of a Morning Routine



Reduce Decisions

It's hard to start the day having to make decisions when our brain hasn't yet woken up. We only have limited energy and willpower resources when we wake up, and having to make decisions can reduce this even further. Instead of creating each day from scratch, your morning routine will give you a step by step guide of your perfect morning, with the decisions already having been thought through and made.

Avoiding mental fatigue is the reason that Facebook founder, Mark Zuckerberg, wears the same clothes every day.



Reduce Stress and Anxiety

Start your day off calmly and quietly, without feeling rushed. Knowing what the first hour of your day looks and feels like is a powerful feeling. It helps you to start off the day feeling in control, which reduces anxiety and helps you to have a less stressful and more productive day. If you are feeling down, anxious, overwhelmed with life in general, being able to look forward to and having the first part of your day already planned can help you get started. Start off with a clear head, ready for whatever the day has to throw at you.



Save Time and Energy

As well as not wasting time and energy not having to think about how to get started in the morning, creating routines and habits mean that you naturally start to use your time better and get more out of it.



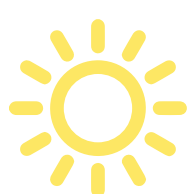
Intention and Purpose

By starting your day off with more intention and purpose, you'll be pushing yourself to start doing the things that you know that you really need to do for yourself, and to advance other areas of your life. Increasing the chances of being happier, feeling better, being more productive and successful.



Look and Feel Better

By reducing stress, re-connecting with yourself, keeping calm and exercising you will notice the difference in how you look and feel.



Increase Confidence and Motivation

In his book 'The Motivation Hacker' Nick Winter talks about Success Spirals. Where you consistently see yourself succeeding at something, it helps build your confidence and increases the likelihood that you will succeed at the next thing you do. Motivation increases with expectancy. Developing and sticking to a Morning Routine gives you several things that you can see yourself succeeding at every day. This in turn builds your confidence and you will see yourself succeeding at even bigger goals.

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Can I really get up earlier?

Yes

You can! (but you might not even need to if you're just not making the most of the time that you already have in the mornings) It might be difficult at first - leaving a lovely warm comfy bed is never easy, but it will be worth it. Why would you not want to wake up a little bit earlier if it's going to make your life better?

Waking up as late as possible and losing precious time in the mornings puts pressure on both our minds and our bodies.

Don't press the snooze button - Apparently our minds know all about the snooze button, so you won't fall back into a deep sleep and will, therefore, wake up more tired than you would have done if you had just got up. Put your phone or alarm clock across the room so you actually have to get out of bed to turn it off. Tell yourself it is going to be a good day and you have lots to look forward to!

Let some sunlight in if you can, to awaken your senses and let your body know its morning so it can stop producing melatonin and help you to wake up.

Do it gradually if you need to. 15 minutes earlier each day for 4 days will add up to an extra hour.

If you have a family or children that need you, you should wake up before them and not to them, so that you can take care of YOUR self and complete YOUR morning routine before their needs kick in. Your time with them will feel less pressured.

Stick a copy of your routine on the back of a door or your bathroom wall if you need to, until it becomes habit and you won't have to think about it anymore.

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The reason that I like having a routine is that not only does it install a sense of purpose, peace and ritual to my day, but it ensures that I am getting certain things done every morning - namely my goals. It's full of small productive habits that act as quick wins. Starting your day off with habits and routines builds up momentum which helps to carry you through the day. Get a sense of flow rather than have to get your thoughts together and start cold every morning.

Leo Babauta, Zen Habits

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Tips for how to get started with your morning routine?

Ideally, it would be great if you give yourself, or build up to, an hour in the mornings but even 15 minutes can make such a difference.

The most important thing is that you have a routine - it doesn't have to be perfect. The goal is simply to have more time and energy for the things that matter most and take the time to refuel and refresh yourself for the day ahead.

What you do during your morning routine is completely up to you. Keep your routine as simple as possible. It should be easy to repeat and stick to each morning so don't try and cram too much in.

First of all, decide what you would like to do for you. Think of all the things that you need to, or would like to do, no matter how small. What would your ideal morning hour look like? What benefit does each of these things give? Are they helping you get closer to your goals?

Your routine should include things that you enjoy doing, that you can look forward to, that will make you feel good, energised and set the right tone for your day. Your morning routine should not be about your 'To Do' list. You need an incentive for getting out of bed, not a reason to avoid it.

If you are not doing any of these things now, why not? What obstacles are you facing and what can you do to overcome these obstacles?

How much time does each of these things take you? What time do you need to get up so that you can complete your routine without feeling rushed before your other commitments start? You should create your routine with rough timings, but you don't have to stick to them exactly.

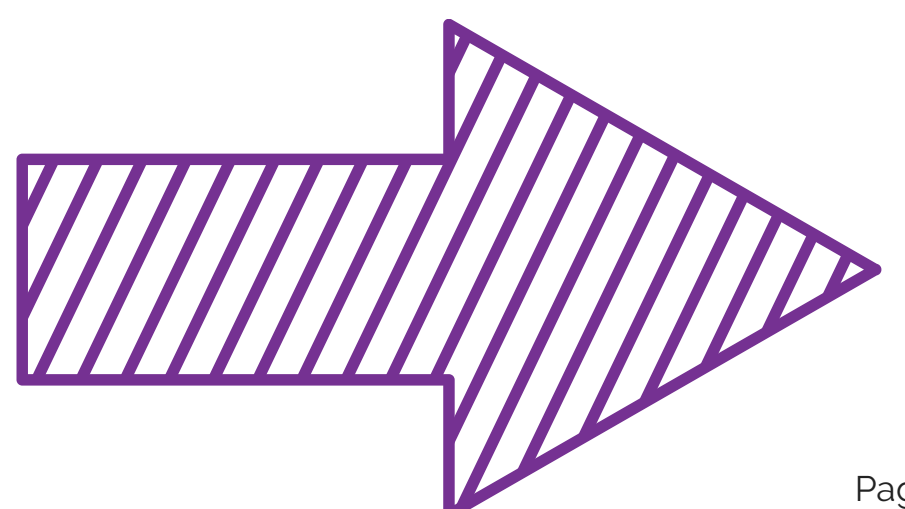
Make sure that you tell family and friends that you are committing to changing your mornings, and the reasons why you are doing it, so that they can support and encourage you.

It won't be easy, you will need some pre-planning and determination to make it work. It probably won't flow effortlessly every day and may never be perfect. Life isn't perfect and is full of unexpected interruptions. You will need to learn and change to find out what works best for you. Your routines will change over time as you, your goals and your family grow and change.

Reset

Once you have finished your routine, make sure you take a couple of minutes to reset each area that you have used. Make your bed and tidy your bedroom and bathroom. It's much nicer to start your night time routine in space that is calm. Tidying and resetting sets the tone for a productive day and builds momentum for you to keep putting things in order. It can be tempting to leave clothes on the floor, or toiletries all over the bathroom, but procrastination over tidying up after yourself will also hold you back in other areas and realising your full potential.

USE THE PLANNER PAGES AT THE END OF THIS GUIDE TO HELP YOU TO
DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT YOUR MORNING ROUTINE



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What should you include in your morning routine?

Rehydrate



Drink some water as soon as you wake up. Your body shuts down while you are sleeping, so drinking water helps to provide energy by replacing the fluids lost whilst you were asleep.



Calm Your Mind

Meditation, silence, affirmations, visualisation and gratitude are all ways that you can achieve a sense of calm and peacefulness. Breathe deeply, centre yourself and clear your mind for a couple of minutes.

Think about the things that you appreciate and are grateful for each day, whether it is your family, friends or even a cup of tea! The more things that you can find, the more positive energy you will bring to your day.

There are lots of apps that you can use for guided meditation if you have never tried it before, such as Calm and Headspace.

Try and avoid looking at your phone, emails, social media or TV during your morning routine (or, at least, the first 15 minutes). The time should be reserved just for you so that you can start your day on your own terms. How often do you wake up in a good mood, only for that to change when you see something on Facebook that brings you down. Take control of your emotions for the first part of your day.

Plan Your Perfect Day

Putting your thoughts and feelings down on paper helps to clear your mind. Do a brain dump! Write down the things that are on your mind and the things that you need to get done during the day

Check your master diary or calendar for any events or appointments for the day ahead and then plan around them. .

Thinking and planning ahead allows you to be more productive but feel less rushed. With a pre-thought out plan, you will save time and stress of having to think about what you need to do next. Decide on the goals that you want to achieve today (make sure that these are in line with your long-term goals), set your intention and visualise a good outcome for the day.

Commit to your goals and plan as much as you can. Leave yesterday behind - A new day is a new start to life!

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Get Moving

Get your body moving and blood flowing and you'll feel more energised and ready for the day. It can be any type of exercise that you enjoy - Yoga, Pilates, running or a walk in the fresh air. Put on some uplifting happy music or a listen to an audio book whilst you are walking or running.



Take care of your skin

Have a shower and take care of your skin. The best thing for your skin and hair is what you feed your body with - lots of fresh, clean foods and water, but paying attention to the outside makes us feel more confident as well. Always keep it simple as possible with as few products as possible.

Dress for Success

Make sure that your wardrobe is organised, so that finding and choosing clothes that are going to make you look, and feel good, for the day ahead is quick and easy. Getting dressed for the day ahead should be enjoyable not rushed and stressful trying to find something to wear.

Fuel Your Body

Your breakfast is your initial fuel for the day. Eat a clean, healthy breakfast to energise you and get your brain functioning.

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When you arise in the morning, think of what a precious privilege to be alive, to breathe, to think, to enjoy, to love.

Marcus Aurelius

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My Morning Routine*

Claire, Every Little Thing
Life Organising Coach, Wife and Mum.



Wake up
6.00 am

Using 'Sleep Cycle' App. Think about the things I have to look forward to in the day. Drink some water to rehydrate.

Quiet & calm
6.05 am

5 minutes guided meditation using the 'Calm' app.

Exercise
6.10 am

15 minutes. I do either Pilates or Yoga (using Blogilates or Yoga with Adrienne on YouTube), or The 7 Minute Workout app, depending on how I feel.

Shower
6.25 am

10 minutes. Shower, wash and clean teeth.

Skin and Hair
6.35 am

15-20 minutes. Cleanse and moisturise skin, style hair and put a bit of makeup on.

Set my intention
6.55 am

I'll have a cup of hot water and lemon or chamomile tea and write down in my planner the things on my mind and my plans for the day. I might also make a green juice or a smoothie. (I usually try and have breakfast with the rest of the family later).

'My' Morning Routine Ends
7.15 am

Kids wake up around this time and their routine and my responsibilities start!

* On week or work days

The things that you would like to do for yourself, by yourself each morning

My ideal morning routine would be made up of the following things...

1

Doing this will make me happier because...

I am not making my mornings matter by doing it now because...

These are the things that I can do to make it happen...

Resources needed....

Time :

Things:

2

Doing this will make me happier because...

I am not making my mornings matter by doing it now because...

These are the things that I can do to make it happen...

Resources needed....

Time :

Things:

3

Doing this will make me happier because...

I am not making my mornings matter by doing it now because...

These are the things that I can do to make it happen...

Resources needed....

Time :

Things:

4

Doing this will make me happier because...

I am not making my mornings matter by doing it now because...

These are the things that I can do to make it happen...

Resources needed....

Time :

Things:

5

Doing this will make me happier because...

I am not making my mornings matter by doing it now because...

These are the things that I can do to make it happen...

Resources needed....

Time :

Things:

6

Doing this will make me happier because...

I am not making my mornings matter by doing it now because...

These are the things that I can do to make it happen...

Resources needed....

Time :

Things:

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Your Morning Routine

am

am

am

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am

am

Your 4-week challenge to...

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TRACKER PAGE

Week One	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
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Week Two	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
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Week Four	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
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Notes

