

A Healthy Day - From Dawn to Dusk

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“Thank you sun for rising once again and I didn’t even have to ask you...”

“Bring on the new day!”

These are examples of enthusiastic expressions which, when practiced, empower you to awake with verve and live life to the fullest. The first statement could be one of 3 or 4 on your gratitude list each day, and the second, a mantra or incantation exuding confidence to contribute your special talents to the world we all share.

How does one develop a discipline to live conscientiously and be “green?” It all begins with connecting to your will power, then acting on your thoughts to enrich your soul and spirit. This is accomplished through practices proven to uplift you to a fulfilled life; the one you desire.

Decide today to create your schedule. Organize and prioritize what you are going to do, how you plan to eat, work, rest and play. Then live it!

One of my goals is to love, smile, and laugh a lot everyday! Another is to be “green.” So, what does it mean to be “green?” A tip for eating green is to follow the mnemonic “eat-SLO” which stands for Seasonal, Local, and Organic foods.

A tip for living green is to be conscious of the body lotions, cosmetics and household products you use. Be aware of their detriments to your skin and

biochemistry, as well as our environment. Finally, please practice methods of energy conservation, minimize waste, and definitely, recycle!

The following is an example of a conscientious approach to a balanced lifestyle:

The alarm wakes you @ 6:55 am and you make a b-line for the bathroom. I learned at the Chopra Center to follow the mnemonic “RPM,” which stands for rise, pee, meditate! I have made it my own, but added a couple of steps. Hope they inspire you to get going with a spiritual practice!

After splashing water on my face and blowing my nose, I drink some pure water, light some incense and sit upright in my favorite chair. I close my eyes, say three “Oms” and begin concentrating on my breath. Meditation is now my only priority and I begin increasing the gap between my thoughts. When you are meditating in the morning before getting ready for work, you are going to want to be able to easily see a clock to manage your time with just a subtle opening of the eyes. It has been determined that 30 minutes is the ideal time to meditate and you probably don’t want to guess at how long you’ve been meditating, especially if you’ve got to be at work by 8:30 or 9:00 am.

Okay, jump in the shower @ 7:30, (but be careful not to slip and hurt yourself), so you are ready to eat breakfast by 8:00 am. My favorite morning culinary celebration is blueberries, raspberries, blackberries or strawberries and organic vanilla yogurt with a couple tablespoons of granola. One might choose a protein shake, hard boiled egg, or a couple pieces of rolled up turkey breast and cheese, if you’re running behind schedule.

The reason we choose proteins for breakfast is to help balance the high cortisol level in your blood. Cortisol is a stress hormone secreted by your adrenal glands. Studies have shown its concentration is highest between 6:00 – 8:00 am. If you were to eat sugar first thing in the morning, it would put an excessive drain

on the body's nutritional need for proper and efficient energy production, thereby making you more susceptible to fatigue around mid-morning. Too many carbohydrates in the morning cause biochemical stress and imbalance to healthy cells and their ability to regenerate and thrive.

Okay, it's now about 10:00 – 10:30 am. Time for a healthy snack! And drink some water! We want to graze throughout the day to balance our insulin output and maintain energy production for our bodies and our minds. This is a great time to eat some fruit, though some people choose to have a couple cheese sticks, protein bar, or some cottage cheese with raw almonds or cashews. Fruit is best eaten alone, as it may ferment in the stomach of some people with compromised digestive systems, and will tend to clash with other foods.

12:30 – 1:00 pm... Time for lunch! This is the time to have 4 – 6 oz. of fish, chicken, beef or pork. The complimentary dish should be a sautéed vegetable or a side salad. Some people may choose a Chef's or Cobb salad or maybe a blackened chicken Caesar salad at this time. Be sure to have a glass or two of water for assisting with digestion, cleansing the palate, and continuing to hydrate your body.

Now is a good time to be aware of the other time we want to concentrate on eating mainly proteins. And that's when we are experiencing a perceived stress at work. Cortisol will be excreted by the adrenal glands whenever we are stressed. So remember this tip on eating proteins to maintain an adequate energy level throughout your day. Especially if you've got a long afternoon ahead of you!

3:00 pm. Take a break! Drink water! Eat some chopped veggies (celery sticks, zucchini, cucumber, baby carrots, edamame (soy beans), broccoli or cauliflower. It's okay to have some kind of dip too! If there's one thing we have come to recognize; it's that fat is not the problem... Sugar is!

Are you ready to head home? 5:00 – 5:30 pm... Time to reflect on a good job done! Did you make a difference in someone's life today? Did you smile, say please or thank you at least a few times? And did you transform your perceived stressors into welcomed challenges? One of the things you will learn is how to stay present and avoid disconnecting, denying or internalizing your thoughts and feelings. When we have the tools, strategy, and support to embrace our experiences throughout the day we are better prepared to live a conscientious lifestyle.

At dinner time whenever possible choose organic chicken and beef. You should also choose wild fish as opposed to farm raised. They are much more delicious and nutritious. There are too many hormones and antibiotics added to the animals these days to manipulate stock and availability. The added chemicals get passed on to us and can compromise our bodily functions and systems. See the menu insert aside this article for dinner ideas!

It is the evening and time for some fun and/or exercise. For some people, you've already ventured here at lunch time or bright and early after meditation. I have really developed a passion for tennis after work. My wife and I play tennis at least three to four times a week and like to go jogging together a few times a week as well. A couple other great exercises are 15 – 30 minutes on a tread mill, Nordic Track, or Elliptical machine.

Around 8:30 – 9:00 pm it's a nice time to have a snack which may include watermelon, cantaloupe, honey dew, or sorbet while reading or watching TV. Then around 10:00 – 10:30 pm begin your "getting ready for sleep" routine to help your body and mind prepare for a good night's sleep with quality rest and hopefully pleasant dreams. I have helped many patients realize the importance of a preparatory program to train the body and mind for sound sleeping habits. Sleep is the time for cell growth and repair. Make healthy choices at this time

and stay away from the news and action-packed movies. Sleep well... you deserve it!

You have had a full day choosing to live conscientiously.

* Please note: If you are in training for a triathlon or another endurance event, the food plan is slightly altered, allowing more carbohydrate intake.