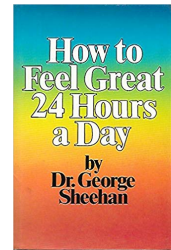


How to Feel Great 24 Hours a Day

Dr. George Sheehan (1983)



*Notes by Bob Evely
Wilmore, Kentucky; 2019.*

The Basics

The following basics are offered by the Breslows, a famous husband-wife team of public health experts at UCLA.

1. Eat a good breakfast. Wherever hard work is done, a big breakfast becomes the rule.
2. Don't eat between meals.
3. Maintain your weight – lean body weight. We should not gain in fat or lose in muscle.
4. Don't smoke. Avoid all pollutants as much as possible. Arthur Morgan, the famous educator and founder of Antioch College, once said he treated his body like a Stradivarius.
5. Drink moderately. Two drinks a day may help an individual to live longer than one who drinks more or less.
6. Get a good night's sleep. Sleep needs are particular to each individual. It is essential to discover your sleep requirements.
7. Exercise regularly. Use large muscle groups in activities such as walking, cycling, swimming, jogging, etc. at a comfortable pace for 30 minutes, four times a week. The more muscles used in the workout, the better. Exercise only every other day, giving the body a chance to recoup. Glycogen replacement in the muscles will usually take 48 hours.

Planning

In 1910 Arnold Bennett wrote about “the daily miracle;” our supply of time. We wake in the morning and our day is magically filled with 24 hours. No one can take it from you, and no one receives more or less than you receive. Genius is not rewarded with even an extra hour. Time cannot be bought. And no matter how much you waste it; the next day's supply will not be withheld from you. It is impossible to go into debt for time. Tomorrow is always there.

Like so many, the author found the day gone and nothing to show for it. Bennett proposes we find 90 minutes a day for our own exclusive use. With this we can approach each day with zest. We will rise to our work, free of the nagging knowledge that we are doing less than our best.

Early Rising

Early rising puts us in harmony with our internal physiological rhythms. Early rising followed by an early morning workout is even better.

Bennett suggests: Rise an hour earlier, bring your mind to heel, avoid the harsh word. He suggests only minor adjustments, and everything he suggests requires only the will to do it.

Abraham Maslow said, “People who are self-actualizers go about it in these little ways: They listen to their own voice, they are honest, and they work hard.”

Changing

When practicing medicine and running every day, writing a weekly sports column and racing almost every Sunday, people would ask the author how he did it. 24 hours did not seem long enough to accomplish all activities.

It was difficult at first. Running could not simply be added to his day. Something had to go to make room for running and writing. And because both are play, Sheehan was able to take his 24 hours and find a place for them. Once you find something that is playful and addictive and filled with satisfaction, your daily budget takes care of itself. New priorities are set. A new perspective takes over.

Over time, Sheehan eliminated a number of activities from his usual day. Most were painless. Lunch was unnecessary after a big breakfast. Thoreau once said we should not lunch with people unless we have a new idea to impart.

Sheehan's rule for budgeting his 24 hours are simple: No lunch, no novels, little TV, a rare movie, few magazines, a quick pass thru the newspaper. Thus, he reduces the hours in which he is a *spectator* and a *consumer* and increases the time when he is living his own life.

Don't underestimate the difficulty of turning over a new leaf. Even minor changes in our daily routine are resisted by forces as powerful as any commitment we can make. Change is a matter of willpower, and no matter how strong the motivation we cannot add a new activity to our life without taking something else out.

Sleep

The human animal was built for early rising. The human condition is best worked out when we get up with the dawn. Rising with the sun, the early morning walk or run or cycle, the pace that allows for meditation – all are necessities for the practice of living.

Caffeine

Next to cigarette smoking, the most important single prediction of poor achievement on the treadmill is caffeine consumption.

Dietary rules

The following basics come from Godfrey Fowlere, an Oxford University physician:

1. Avoid obesity.
2. Average sugar intake should be halved. Cut down on candy, soft drinks, sugar in tea or coffee.
3. Fat should be reduced to about 30% of the diet. Cut down on butter, margarine, cream, fat on meats, and fried foods.
4. Increase intake of fiber. Use whole grain cereals.
5. Keep alcohol intake to two units per day.

Dieting need not be complicated. The author looks for two special requirements in his diet.

1. To carry the least weight possible.
2. To have the most energy available.

He observes the following dietary habits:

Breakfast: Almost all fat and protein. Steak or bacon and eggs provide a slowly rising blood sugar. There is no 10 a.m. letdown, and there may not even be an appetite for lunch.

Lunch: He runs 10 miles at midday, and afterward may have some yogurt and a diet cola. He eats nothing until supper.

Supper: Always includes potatoes or rice or spaghetti, always with fruit and vegetables and bread.

Before bed: Ice cream, cereal with bananas, pretzels, saltines, possibly a beer.

Relaxing / Stress

The most dangerous thing a man possesses is a logical mind. It knows the price of everything and the value of nothing. It accepts work but not play.

Stress expert Hans Selye sees no need for relaxation techniques. He feels we should simply take a different *attitude* toward the events in our life. Attitude determines whether we perceive an experience as pleasant or unpleasant. We can therefore convert a negative stress to a positive one.

Stress makes us fit, ready of mind, complete.

Exercise / Fitness

1. It streamlines the body by reducing the percentage of body fat.
2. It delivers more oxygen thru an increase in blood volume and an increase in capillaries in the muscle tissue.
3. The heart pump is improved. Everything works more easily and efficiently.
4. When oxygen is sent to the muscles, more of it is taken up.

Exercise offers the attainment of maximum work capacity. Exercise makes you fit; no more and no less. Fitness is the ability to do more work. It enables the body to function at a higher level.

Fitness enables the body to push back the barriers to fatigue, exhaustion, shortness of breath, pain, or whatever limits work.

Working / Morale

What health is to the individual, morale is to the corporation. Morale is based on pride of achievement, faith in leadership and its ultimate success, a sense of fruitful participation, and devotion and loyalty to other members.

George Allen, who transformed the lowly Washington Redskins into an NFL contender, used seven basic rules:

1. Work hard.
2. Improve every day.
3. Have a positive attitude.
4. Do not complain.
5. Know that no one can beat you but yourself.
6. Ask yourself how badly do you want it.
7. Work together (the hardest to implement, according to Allen).

Fitness is only part of the formula. The secret ingredient is morale. That is what motivates the best to get better. You must love what you do and the people you do it with.

Aging

Jonathan Swift said, "No wise man ever wished to be younger."

Age constantly confers new privileges, new abilities, new insights. We have grown in wisdom and experience. We are superior to the individuals we were in our youth, and we have sacrificed very little.

Emerson said, "What we lose with age we can afford to lose."

We have focused on what is important. We have discarded the second rate. We do not want to be young again – we just want to feel young.

Modifying type-A behavior

In 1898 William James said that our physical breakdowns were due to the turbulence of our inner environment. The solution is to modify our type-A behavior and thus reduce coronary risk.

James spoke again and again of changing our inner climate. His cure for “hurry sickness” was to become physically fit.

If you wish to reduce all risk you must change behavior. It’s our attitude that raises the cholesterol.

Meaning – bringing interest to that which is boring

Sheehan admits that running is boring. The major obstacle to a successful fitness program is boredom; the feeling of wanting to be doing something else. But exercise can be interesting and satisfying. It should be filled with pleasure and excitement.

1. Try thinking of something interesting while you are doing something boring. This is called dissociation. While trotting down the road, most runners’ minds are miles and possibly centuries away.
2. Make what is boring interesting. Take an interesting companion along.
3. Make it competitive.

Exercise is a science. Play is an art. Sport is both.

Motivation

Sheehan doesn’t believe in will power; but in *want* power. If you want a thing badly enough you’ll do whatever is necessary to obtain it.

The common aim of athletes is consistent top-level performance. Whatever helps them do this (like exercise) is worthwhile, however dull and mindless and boring it might be.

Bank robber Willie Sutton said, “Don’t serve time. Make time serve you.” Fitness programs should not be cruel and unusual punishment. The time spent getting fit should be as interesting and happy as other parts of the day.

George Allen said of his aging Redskins team, “We took that over-the-hill gang and out-conditioned every team in the league.”

Corporations are engaged in competition as fierce as any encountered in the NFL. Are you coaching, training, prodding your corporate team to do its best? Have you out-conditioned the rest of your league?

Choose your employees like a football coach. “Give me men; not players. Players are a dime a dozen,” said Vince Lombardi.

Motivation must come from deep within. Passion enables us to face up to and even revel in stress.

In an address to the American Philosophical Society, Williams James chose the theme “The Energies of Man.” He considered two questions.

1. To what extent do we have energies?
2. What are the keys to unlocking them?

“How to Feel Great 24 Hours a Day” (George Sheehan)

The answer James settled on was excitement, ideas and effort. We must discover something that demands incredible efforts, both in degree and duration. We need incitements, passions and enthusiasms. We need to give our word of honor.

Sports motivates an athlete. It demands supreme effort. Once we find our sport, we become athletes.

Anyone can get fired up for a while, because most of us have ideals. We all wish, but we don't always have the desire or ambition required to make our wishes happen. We don't really want to change the world; we'd rather go down to the corner and have a beer.

The need exists for a continuing ideal; a persistent value for which we live, love, and fight during every waking hour.

Thinking

Train your brain and your body at the same time. The mind actually works better when the body is in motion. Take 90 minutes a day and use half or more for a walk, run, cycle, or swim. Then come back and put the products of your brain's activity on paper or canvas.

Whatever you decide to meditate on before you leave the house, require the brain to consider it. Push it to the limit.

Your body and brain will at first balk at the effort, but don't give in. Make the effort as comfortable as possible, but don't stop or turn back. Each day ask a little more. In a short time, your work capacity will increase by as much as 400%

Dr. Thomas Tutko, sports psychologist, says, “I can't wait to get out on the roads to find out what I'm going to think about.”

Sheehan says there are days when the hour is a stream of one idea after another, and then there are days when he disciplines his mind to concentrate on one particular theme. The mind attempts to wander, but he brings it back like he would a bird dog who wanted to play instead of hunt, and his 10 billion cell computer in the skull is focused on the problem at hand.

Becoming an athlete

Fitness is the ability to do work. It is a scientific, measurable fact. Being an athlete is pushing one's physical capabilities to the limit.

Fitness is attention to the minimum daily requirements of the body. Being an athlete is attaining the maximum daily output; and paying what it costs.

Notes by Bob Evely



Evely Enterprises LLC

Bob Evely, President

(p) 859.967.9955

bob@EvelyLLC.com

www.EvelyLLC.com

www.linkedin.com/in/bobevely