

Energy Management:

“And what is a man without energy? Nothing – nothing at all” – Mark Twain

By Liggy Webb

What are your energy levels like? Are you “ready to go” in the morning? Are you able to maintain high levels of energy throughout the day? Do you rely a lot on caffeine or sugar to keep you going? Do you have much energy at the end of the day?

During the day we all go through stages of feeling up and down, feeling awake and feeling sleepy, being alert and being distracted. Our bodies go through a repeating energy cycle (ultradian rhythms) every 90 to 120 minutes. The implications are that we only do solid work for up to about 90 minutes at a time and we then need a break or switch to something lighter.

The trick to managing your daily energy is to work on the more difficult things when you are alert and focused, and work on the easier stuff (or take a break) when you’re feeling lower in energy. To make the most of your time, work in short bursts or sprints and then recover. To maximise your energy, you need breaks.

One good tip is to get up and get going in the morning. The brain is a goal seeking mechanism and likes to get going once we are awake so, if we refuse the snooze on our alarm, we will embrace our day already more energised.

Typically, everything we do either builds or takes away from our energy reserves. Effective time usage depends on looking after multiple sources of energy. These include physical, emotional and mental energy.

Eating well with plenty of vegetables and fruit and being light on the fats and sugars is important, as is making sure you are hydrated by drinking sufficient water. A good slow carbohydrate-releasing breakfast like porridge is excellent for sustaining energy levels. Sugar-rich food will give you a quick energy fix but will leave you feeling even more tired later on.

Exercise is an excellent energiser – I saw a strap-line in my gym that said:

“Energy – the more you give the more you get”

which, I thought, sums up exercise very well. People who exercise regularly are likely to live longer and enjoy a better quality of life.

Regular exercise also improves mental and emotional health.

The chemicals and hormones that are released in the brain through exercise can help deal with stress, promote wellbeing and provide us with more sustainable energy.

Cultivating good relationships with those you live and work with is really important as constant conflict can really drain energy resources. Learning to forgive and not hold onto grudges is really helpful; otherwise they will eat you up and consume not only your energy but your time as well.

Learning to chill out and relax and let go of worry and stress at the end of the day is key. By keeping a clear conscience so that you can relax in the knowledge that you have stuck to your values and principles is one way of being able to clear your mind of anxiety.

“Enthusiasm finds the opportunities and energy makes the most of them.”

Henry S. Haskins

Stress can affect sleeping patterns, and poor quality sleep will most definitely affect energy levels. If you are worried about something, it can often be on your mind even when you try to forget about it.

This may cause sleepless nights or bad dreams. You may find it difficult getting to sleep or you may wake up a few times during the night. This can also make you tired and groggy the next day.

With regards to mental energy, it is important to be careful with what we feed our minds with, as negative thinking can be a real drain and we can be our own energy saboteurs.

“We need to learn to switch off so that our mind and body has time to recharge”

so some kind of meditative activity would be good, even if it just going for a walk, having a hot bubble bath or spending more time with loved ones.



If natural resources continue to be depleted then every part of our lives will be detrimentally affected.

By taking responsibility and initiative ourselves, we can actively encourage others to be an active participant in taking better care of our planet and our environment.

There are many great initiatives that the UNEP (United Nations Environmental Programme) have set up and many other organisations have implemented campaigns and initiatives to support the environment. You don't have to be an eco-warrior to make a difference; you just need (in the words of Ghandi) to be the change that you would want the world to be.

Energy Management - Useful Tips

- Refuse the snooze on your alarm.
- Always eat breakfast.
- Drink 2 litres of water a day.
- Exercise for 30 minutes every day.
- Take a walk in the fresh air.
- Develop healthy sleeping patterns.
- Reduce caffeine and refined sugar.
- Live by your values and principles.
- Take breaks every 90 minutes.
- Visualise yourself in an energised state.

Life is what YOU make it!

The above article is an extract from *The Happy Handbook* - A



Compendium of Modern Life Skills by Liggy Webb which is out now.

Liggy Webb is widely respected as a leading expert in the field of *Modern Life Skills and Workplace Wellness*.

As a presenter, consultant and author she is passionate about her work and improving the quality of people's lives. She is the founding director of The Learning Architect a consortium of niche industry experts. Liggy has developed a range of techniques to support individuals and organizations to cope more effectively with modern living and the demands and challenges of life in the twenty tens and beyond.

As a consultant with the United Nations she travels expensively and has recently returned from Afghanistan which she describes as biggest life education to date!

For more info visit:

www.liggywebb.com

www.thelearningarchitect.com

email: info@liggywebb.com

call us: 00 44 (0)1242 700027