

Sleep

One of the first conversations I have with the students I coach is about their sleep habits. Often times, they are all over the place. They often report they get up 5 minutes before class especially if the class is remote. They go to sleep when they conk out in the early morning hours. There is not a lot of consistency. One of the things we work on together is creating a sleep schedule. A consistent time for waking up in the morning and for winding down and sleeping at night. If a student is struggling, there is a change in their energy and progress as they begin to honor their sleep schedule.

What is your sleep schedule? Do you know how much rest you need? Are you turning off your screens an hour before you go to sleep?

Breathing Exercises

4-7-8 Breath

Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of **4**. Hold your **breath** for a count of **7**. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of **8**. This is one **breath**.

Repeat 4 times

You can do this twice a day or more

Meditative Breathing Technique

Use a piece of ribbon, yarn or embroidery thread and place 10-or 20 knots in it at even intervals.

Close your eyes and take one deep inhale and exhale as you slowly run your fingers over each knot. If your ribbon has 10 knots go up and down the ribbon twice. Having the string in your hand lets you focus on your breathing for 20 deep, long calming breaths.

This is a great grounding breath exercise that can be practiced once or twice a day.

Exercise (30-60 min 3-6 times a week)

Walk: if you can get outside to take a 15-20-minute walk twice a day you are on your way to a better feeling place.

If you can't get outside there are walking in place video's that are free on Youtube.

Throw yourself a dance party! Start with one song and build your way up! This is a great way to get some movement in your body and we all know that even a 3 minute dance party can lift your mood!

If you want to step in up a notch set yourself a challenge. Practice some Yoga, set a goal to run a block, a mile a 5K, take a bike ride, walk to the grocery store. Make sure you are moving, stretching every day.

If you need to set a timer to get up from your seat, make a plan to do something active for 5=10 minutes before you sit down again.

Daily Action plan, Creating a Schedule or Ritualizing your days

Do you have a planner, a calendar on your phone, something to set your schedule?

It is a handy dandy tool that allows you some freedom from carrying around all your plans in your head.

I recommend writing out your schedule in your calendar long hand before your transfer it digitally to your online calendar.

When you are creating your schedule the first things that get blocked in are things that we KNOW.

Work, School, homework (with commute time)

Kids (activities and care)

Social Activities (including time with your partner)

Meals (including prep time)

Personal Maintenance (Bathing, Exercise, Laundry, Cleaning,)

Shopping (grocery, online shopping)

Internet/TV/Social Media use(solo games, staring at your phone)

I believe in framing your day with your Morning and Evening Ritual.

Start your day with “Wake-Up” and “Morning Ritual” whatever that is to you. (brush teeth, make bed, coffee, breakfast, touch toes 10 times, etc.)

End the day with Wind Down/Evening ritual and “bedtime”.

On a weekly basis leave time for regular life maintenance. (Doctors’ appointments, car maintenance, home repair, etc.)

The open spaces in your schedule I refer to as Flex Time. You can fill flex time any way you want or need to. If you need more time for work/homework, relaxation, hobbies. I think there is a benefit to diagraming your time. You often find you have more than you thought or if the opposite is true, you can see what you need to cut back on.

Try it!