

CAREER HEALTH

Getting to Peak Performance

By Peggy McNamara

Many people have a desire to consistently live their lives at **peak performance** level. This means that whether you are working, taking time for yourself or enjoying activities with family and friends, you want to use the time that you have in the most effective way.

One step to beginning that process is to create the habit of consistently asking yourself the following question, "What is the highest and best use of my time, energy and talents?"

Whether you are a corporate employee, business manager, entrepreneur or stay-at-home parent, it is easy to get caught up in distractions and activities that do not fall into the category of "the highest and best use" of your time. There are a myriad of items that can, and will, get in the way of you accomplishing everything that you set out to do on any given day. (Every single person that reads this will have a different definition or meaning of "highest and best use." There is no definitive answer to this. It is up to you to decide what that phrase means for you and your life.)

If you don't get to this on a daily basis, at a minimum do it weekly. Take time at the beginning of your week to reflect upon what you accomplished in the previous week as well as write down what you hope to do for the week ahead. Figure out the activities that are of your "highest and best use."

A second step is to learn how to harness and utilize the energy that you have towards increasing your productivity. This goes hand-in-hand with step number one. One of the primary keys to accomplishing whatever it is that you want to accomplish in your life; amazingly enough, is also one of the most overlooked techniques.

Whether you realize it or not, you all have peak energy times, throughout every 24 hours of the day that you are given. Work on understanding what those times are for you. Be cognizant of how you feel at different times throughout the day. Do you awake with unlimited energy for the day ahead? Are you at peak performance level mid-morning? Are you a night-owl? When do

you feel you have the most energy to tackle the tasks that lie ahead?

Then, the key is to, act on that information. Adjust your activities in accordance with your energy level. If you're a morning person, do your most creative work then and leave the mundane for later in the afternoon. Likewise, if you're a night-owl, do the reverse; get the mundane out of the way in the morning and save the best for the end of the day. Regardless of your chosen career there are a multitude of tasks that must be accomplished. Why not bundle those tasks, to the best of your ability, and structure your day around them?

One challenge, though, comes into play with this and that is, what if you are one of those people that doesn't ever feel at peak energy level? What if you can't remember what it was like to feel energetic about the day ahead of you? Well, you are not alone. The National Sleep Foundation, as reported by the Associated Press on March 27, 2001, discovered that Americans are sleep-deprived workaholics, with only about a third of us sleeping the recommended eight hours a night. About 40 percent of Americans say they have trouble staying awake on the job.

Getting enough sleep is crucial to peak performance. Richard L. Gelula, the foundation's executive director, said "...the bad news is far too many adults still sacrifice sleep, which is unhealthy and counterproductive...A good night's sleep is a necessity, not a luxury."

See what can be done about allowing yourself to get the amount of rest that you need. Take time to discover your energy levels throughout the day. Make some adjustments, if needed, to align your activities with that energy level. Figure out the highest and best use of that energy and before you know it, you will be accomplishing more in a shorter time frame...which will allow you to get more rest or relaxation or have fun with the people that are important to you - which, in my opinion, are what makes life worth living.

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Most Common Vitamins - What Do They Do for Our Bodies?

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cardiovascular health. Antioxidants are also essential for the prevention of aging and disease.

Folic Acid

Folic acid is widely known as a vitamin for expectant mothers to take during pregnancy to prevent neural tube defects in their unborn baby, but it does serve more than just that purpose. This vitamin can also help maintain a healthy intestinal tract, is necessary for amino acid metabolism, helps with the formation of nucleic acids that form DNA, is important for normal growth and development and assists with red blood cell formation.

So, now you know what the most common vitamins are and what they help the body with; you can take a look at your diet and see which ones are required so your body is in tip top condition!

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"Courage and perseverance have a magical talisman, before which difficulties appear and obstacles vanish into air."

-John Quincy Adams

VALUES - BASED QUALITY OF LIFE™ Newsletter

Because Making Smart Choices About Your Money Impacts The Quality of Your Life

Over the years, we have found that there are elements of your life that are more important than money.

These elements - Physical Health, Relationship Health, Inner Health and Career Health - cannot be delegated.

We hope that you find these articles to be of value in improving the quality of your life.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Most Common Vitamins - What Do They Do for Our Bodies?

By Ralph Lauren

The world is a very busy place and many people turn to vitamins to get the nutritional value needed when their diet just doesn't suffice. When diving into the world of vitamins for the first time it can be quite daunting; and taking the wrong types of vitamins can not only be expensive, but also pointless if they have been selected without the right information. Below are the most popular vitamins on the market and the benefits they can offer our well-being and body when taken.

Vitamin A

This vitamin is perfect for those wanting to improve teeth, skin and bone health. It's also great for building up the immune system and improving vision. Vitamin A isn't essential for a daily multivitamin as the body stores the vitamin in the liver, with the average person's liver containing about two years supply of vitamin A.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D assists with calcium absorption, helps maintain healthy bones in adults and allows the body to maintain regular levels of phosphorus and calcium. For kids, the vitamin is necessary for strong bones, general growth and also can pre-

vent and cure rickets. A vitamin D deficiency can come from the body not being exposed to enough sunlight! Natural vitamin D such as D3 is the best form to take as it is more readily absorbed.

Vitamin E

While you're slathering on moisturizer, take a look on the bottle's list of ingredients - it no doubt has vitamin E in it! But it's not just great for the skin; vitamin E is necessary for the formation of normal red blood cells and immune function, DNA maintenance and also helps protect lipids and cells from free radical damage.

Vitamin K

Going through the alphabet of vitamins, vitamin K is important for blood clotting and maintaining bone mineralization.

Antioxidants (Beta Carotene, Gingko Biloba, Lutein and Lycopene)

Many scientists suggest that diets rich in antioxidants can help with the maintenance of memory, mental alertness, concentration, blood flow and

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RELATIONSHIP HEALTH

You Are the Problem!

By Steve Roberts

You have a choice right now. It's about your perspective and your sense of empowerment.

You can perceive the title of this article as a shaming statement that says there is something really wrong with you, so, shame on you. Therefore, you must feel bad about yourself.

Or, you can feel empowered by this title because you know that the ability to make your life as you want it is in your hands. You are the source of all the choices that have put you in a place of discomfort, pain, or misery. You have also made the choices that brought to you joy, enlightenment, and serenity. You have the **choice** to make things better for yourself by making better choices.

I received many questions this week from people who would truly like to improve their lives. One of the main themes was (my summary), "How can I change my partner, my friend, my parents, or my world so that they will love me appropriately, do what I want, or do what is good for them?"

The questions come out of pain and dissatisfaction, and from situations that cry out for change. However, these questions all assume that the solution will be arrived at when other people change.

This is the same problem I face with couples doing marriage therapy. We almost always have to go through several sessions of the "**Blame Game**" before we can get down to business. It's "he said" and "she said" ad nauseum. She says he should change, and he says she should change.

But finally, we start to break through to a key question, "If your partner doesn't change, what will YOU do, how will YOU think, and how will YOU take charge of yourself from here on?"

"And, how will you do that with justice, fairness, respect, self containment, and belief in your inner sense of direction regardless of your partner's attempts to change you back?"

A fear at this point is that if you take good care of yourself then your partner may leave you. This leaving could be through silence, hostility, finding someone else, or physically leaving entirely. The good news is that this rarely happens in a severe way. Usually, your partner will try ingenious ways to trick you back into the old behav-

"Character is like a tree and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing."

-Abraham Lincoln

iors. And, you will fall for it many times.

If the leave taking actually happens then we have a much more serious problem going on with your relationship and simple **self-help** is not going to fix the problem. Professional counseling is required.

Another fear is that you don't know what good self-care is and that you will make a mistake, creating unnecessary problems and pain.

If this is true for you, then educate yourself about it. And then, trust your sense for what is respectful treatment of others and treat yourself the same way. It's really not so complicated.

And finally, feeling guilty about self-care sabotages this whole thing over and over. We think we are being **selfish** rather than practicing self-care. I'm not going to try to cover this one today. It will take another whole article to address. Let me just say

that this argument against self-care doesn't hold up too well.

The further good news is if I can help one person in a couple start to choose this perspective of self choice and self empowerment, then the partner is usually affected in a positive light. We then move on to stage two of couple's therapy where we can actually work on couple problems.

This can work for you, too. YOU are the problem, not that other person. The sooner you accept your responsibility to treat yourself well regardless of what the other does the sooner you might have a chance of the other person actually changing.

You get to be responsible for you, not for your partner. You get to make the choices for how you will behave, not how the other behaves. You get to perceive this as a choice of empowerment... Or you can see it as just another sign of what you can't do. The choice is up to you...

But I want you to know something; and that is, that I believe in you.

After all my experiences of helping many, many other people grow in this way, I really do believe in your ability to change yourself for the better. I believe you have the strength, the courage, and the inner conviction to make it happen for you. Because, if you are the problem, you are also the solution.

© Steve Roberts is an experienced Marriage and Family Therapist who shares tips and real life relationship secrets from over 20 years of practice. Married 31 years to Pam, his partner in life and profession, he has personally known the peaks and valleys of the couple experience. Get insight and wisdom for your relationships at <http://www.whatworksforcouples.com> and <http://coloradospringscounselor.net>

INNER HEALTH

Yoga & Spiritual Evolution

By Sushant Pandey

Evolution is a process of advancement, growth or enfoldment. Spirituality deals with the issues of experiencing wholeness, integration, as a quest to discovering the meaning and purpose of life, as a journey to contact the source of eternal bliss and fulfillment, balance and perfection in life. Spirituality doesn't mean to run away from society or the regular duties of day to day life as it is thought generally in India. Spirituality expresses itself in many different ways. There are philosophical, psychological and also behavioral perspectives. Yoga addresses this concept of spirituality from a very practical level. Therefore, yoga assimilates the essence of both behavioral and psychological perspectives. Like the field of humanistic movements and existentialistic system of philosophy and psychology, yoga also deals with the issues of finding purpose to life and becoming self actualized. It also talks of the ways which cause betterment of life. Yoga creates a life filled with health, happiness, and holism and for that it harmonizes head, heart and hands.

Process and the techniques:

Yama-niyamas deals with the attitudinal and behavioral aspects of individuals which not only work on restructuring the cognitive and attitudinal structures in mind, but also through behav-

ioral patterns or expression, transforms the traits of personality. Asana and the other hatha yogic techniques also address crucial areas of our life like health and living; meditation involves techniques of gyana yoga, bhakti and karma yoga; which satisfy the quench of the intellectual and the analytical minds and is also a panacea for a restless or stressed mind. Service (vedantic and the bhakti schools of yoga),

"We can be sure that the greatest hope for maintaining equilibrium in the face of any situation rests within ourselves."

-Francis Braceland

karma yoga are intimately related to each other; as both of them are the expressions of heart. Karma yoga can not be perfected until one surrenders one's ego and that is bhakti. But analysis also goes on inside the mind. But bhakti only involves the feeling aspects there is no place for analysis or rationality. It is all about the process to open the heart. To transmit the feeling of universal love towards one and all, is the expression of service which not only serves the purpose of the individual, but also plays a significant role to establish the harmony

in society. These all are the different facets of spirituality which serve the individual and humanity. All great saints serve humanity and that is the culmination of spirituality. Spirituality also means becoming more practical and grounded. It is the process of being in the present and working for the enhancement or refinement of humane qualities and betterment of life. So practicality in life can not be separated from the spirituality in life. We as human beings are not only creatures earning a living in everyday life and maintaining a population, but the evolving consciousness within us implies some specific purposes also. Apart from earning a living and finding physical security in life we also constantly search for a satisfying, life fulfilling philosophy which not only calms the mind and the emotions but also satisfies the soul. To lead a balanced and fulfilling life man needs a constructive and the creative philosophy of life. Man's living is based on certain philosophies of life, which direct and shape the flow of life.

© Sushant Pandey. All Rights Reserved. Sushant began yoga teaching 10 years ago after completing my Post Graduation in Yoga Psychology from Bihar Yoga Bharati (Deemed University).