

THE GOLDEN EVENING ROUTINE



Your perfect finish for the day





Our Newsletter: *Your Mindful Three*
Every two weeks, three exquisite tips on how to live a
simpler and more mindful life on createurbestself.com.

For inspiration and motivation:
Instagram: [createurbestself](https://www.instagram.com/createurbestself)
[#6minutediary](https://www.instagram.com/6minutediary)
[#CreateUrBestSelf](https://www.instagram.com/CreateUrBestSelf)

For questions or suggestions:
createurbestself.com

Second Edition: June 2019
ISBN: 978-3-9818450-5-1
Copyright © 2018 Dominik Spenst

UrBestSelf UG
Aslaner Straße 3, 33100 Paderborn
Germany

We support copyright because it fuels creativity, promotes free speech and diversity of opinions, and creates a vibrant and dynamic culture. Since any use beyond the strict limits of copyright law without written permission of the author is not allowed, we thank you for complying with copyright laws by not reproducing, scanning or distributing any part of this book on any form without permission. In this way, you are supporting writers to continue publishing books for every reader.

All data and information in this book have been elaborated to the best of our knowledge and belief. We try our best to constantly keep all contents up to date. Nevertheless, errors and ambiguities cannot be ruled out which is why we cannot assume any guarantee for the correctness, topicality, quality and completeness of our content. No liability will be accepted for damages resulting directly or indirectly from the use of the information contained in this book.

Contents

Your Evening Routine	5
EVENING SCENARIOS NIGHT OWL VS MORNING LARK	
Time for You	10
JOEL GASCOIGNE ROSIE HUNTINGTON-WHITELEY BILL GATES JEFF BEZOS OPRAH WINFREY	
Mental Advantages	17
RICHARD BRANSON JENNIFER ANISTON OLIVER SACKS ELLEN DEGENERES JOHN ADAMS	
Physical Advantages	21
GWYNETH PALTROW THOMAS HOBBS JAIME KING TIM FERRISS ARIANNA HUFFINGTON	
Time with Your Loved Ones	26
STEPHEN KING SHERYL SANDBERG NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE HILLARY CLINTON LEO TOLSTOY	
Your Productivity	30
KENNETH CHENAULT MICHAEL LEWIS MAYA ANGELOU BRETT MCKAY LEO BABAUTA	
Start small today rather than big tomorrow	35
References	36

“

*Happiness
is to fall asleep
with the thought
that tomorrow
will be a
wonderful day.*

PIERRE FRANCKH

Your Evening Routine

... and why it can be so valuable for you.

A pleasant morning routine knows no better companion than a soothing evening routine. The eBook "The Golden Morning Routine" already gave you practical tips on how to establish a suitable morning routine. In this eBook, we are turning our focus to the second pillar of your well-being. What are the benefits of a fixed evening routine? How can you make the most of this time and what helps you to unwind in the evening? We will take a close look at these questions and – as always – support all arguments with studies and illustrate the theory with practical examples. To that effect, each chapter will be rounded off by five thematically linked evening routines of famous personalities. Allow yourself to be inspired by these examples and feel free to question our advice as often as possible. If you already have your own evening rituals, you are certain to find some food for thought on how you could complement or modify them. Pick out what works best for you.

*Relax.
Let the steering wheel go.
Spin around through the world.
She is so beautiful.*

KURT TUCHOLSKY

EVENING SCENARIOS

Scenario 1

After a long day at work, you finally get home, take off your clothes and notice how exhausted you are. You don't even want to think about all the chores that are waiting for you. So, you procrastinate at a professional level and allow the evening to pass by: getting comfortable on the sofa with your mobile phone, scrolling through your news feed several times and watching *YouTube* videos or series on *Netflix* in a vegetative state. Eventually you decide to have an unhealthy snack; because after all, that is faster than standing in the kitchen and preparing a whole dish. When you realise how late it is, you decide to call it a day. Your head has barely touched the soft pillow, when your brain decides to play all your worries in a never-ending loop: you think about all the appointments and unresolved issues and add one worry after another to the list, as if that were all there is to life... When you finally enter the mental recovery phase – beep beep beep beep – the alarm goes off. Yet, it feels like you've just fallen asleep. After hitting the snooze button countless times, you begin your new day in an irritated and half-asleep state... Oh boy, that's asking for trouble.

Scenario 2

No matter what your day was like: you enjoy a cosy and harmonious evening because you stick to your sacred evening routine. Once you arrive home, you put down your bag and change into your comfortable jogging pants. You prepare the delicious meal that you had planned for that evening and listen to relaxing music to unwind. After putting out your outfit for the next day, you make a note of important tasks for the upcoming day, always including something you look forward to. Now it's time to go for a walk where you can ponder on the highlights of your day. Back home, you take a soothing shower and go to bed early. There, you allow yourself to reflect upon the special little moments of the day, you think about what good you have done for someone today and what you will do better tomorrow. Before you have finished reading the first page of your new exciting book, you realise that your eyelids are getting heavier and heavier. Deeply relaxed

and contented, you fall asleep and the next day you're awake before the alarm goes off: your body tells you it is well rested and ready for another great and productive day.

Which scenario sounds more desirable to you? Probably the second one, right? Unlike with the morning routine, you cannot easily apply the argument of lack of time to the evening routine. The evening is the perfect time to loosen up and is predestined to proactively shape it to suit your own needs. An evening routine should help you go to bed on the right foot and provide your body with the vital elixir – a good night's sleep. Since we spend about a third of our lifetime sleeping, it is an essential part of our lives.¹ With your nightly routine you can give it the attention it deserves.

An evening routine is not about desperately clinging onto some rituals that do not create any noticeable added value and at worst, feel like additional burden at the end of the day. What works for others will not necessarily work for you. Your evening routine should primarily benefit YOU and increase your well-being at the same time. It is supposed to set you free and allow you to go to bed with a positive feeling.



***Man needs time to collect his thoughts
and focus on his inner self.***

ALBERT SCHWEITZER

NIGHT OWL VS. MORNING LARK

What is your sleep-wake cycle like? Are you the morning lark who goes to bed early and wakes up the next day happy and jolly to catch the worm like an early bird does? Or are you someone who is rather grumpy in the morning and reaches their peak in the final hours of the day like an owl?

What time you get up and go to bed is determined by genetic and social factors. Accordingly, the renowned genetics researcher Dr Eran Tauber highlighted that there are almost 80 genes in our DNA which are responsible for whether we are night owls or morning larks.² These genes are entirely different depending on the chronotype (owl or lark) and have far-reaching implications, because night owls in particular face complex challenges as a result of social factors: In a working environment in which most people start work between 8am and 9am, time runs against their internal clock. They work when their body needs rest and "have to" sleep when it wants to be active. This phenomenon is also known as "social jet lag".

The Australian psychologists Kyllonen and Roberts have also found that – in addition to our genes – age is a key factor when it comes to our sleeping habits.³ This is why younger people tend more towards the night owl type, while the older we get, the more we transform to early birds. In our society, the age factor is not really factored in, for there is a significant discrepancy between the externally defined time and our biological clock: When school starts at 8am in the morning, it is particularly teenagers who are still programmed for sleep. Their performance curve only reaches its peak after 9am and around the age of 16, even at 11am.⁴ However, this is not only the case for young people: According to Professor Roenneberg, current work

schedules are widely out of sync with adults' natural body clocks: "more than 70% of people get up earlier than they should if the goal is to be well rested and perform their best".⁵ Thus, their bodies are always in the "wrong time zone". It seems that early risers have a distinct advantage as their internal clock is aligned with the external time – a "time" determined by society.

So, it turns out the early bird is much more likely to catch the worm. This, however, is not due to the nature of early risers, but a result of the inherent characteristics that underpin our modern society.

A little tip: Do you want to know if you're more of a morning or an evening person? [Then take this test.](#) Once you know how your inner clock ticks and at what times of the day you're at your peak, you can structure your daily routine to match it to your biorhythm: you can get up, eat, be physically active, work and take breaks at times that are right for you. This way, you will give your body the chance to blossom within its fixed cycle and experience how your productivity, creativity and your well-being go through the roof.

“

*The night hides a world,
but reveals a universe.*

PERSIAN PROVERB

Time For You

... and why you should frequently press the reset button.

*No man is so busy
that he does not have time
to tell everyone how busy he is.*

ROBERT LEMBKE

Making time for you is a conscious decision. Most of us, however, forego it because they are "too busy"... But is someone holding a gun to our head and forcing us to do the things we do, the things that seem to make us so busy? You can often read that good time management is necessary to make time for yourself. Whether we manage our time or ourselves is beside the point, though. Ultimately, each day has 24 hours. In this sense, "self-management" is a more appropriate term because it stresses that we are the masters of our actions and therefore, set our priorities ourselves. So if you claim you do not have any time for yourself, the bottom line is that other things are more important to you. And yet, retreating into ourselves is incredibly valuable for both, your mental and physical recovery,⁶ and harbours numerous other advantages.

Having time for yourself and being alone are not the same thing as being lonely. Despite the fact that "loneliness" and "solitude" are often associated with one another, they are two separate concepts: "Loneliness is marked by a sense of isolation. Solitude, on the other hand, is a state of being alone without feeling lonely and can lead to self-awareness."⁷ Being alone can therefore be a proactive and conscious decision that does not make you feel lonely at all, but rather gives you a good feeling. How you spend this time alone is entirely up to you: whether you're taking a nap, filling pages in your *6-Minute-Diary* or working on a personal project. Time for yourself should be just as important as time for your job or time with your loved ones.

Time alone also goes hand in hand with tranquillity. Our brain has evolved to what it is today through times of genuine tranquillity, campfires and clear starry skies. A healthy portion of tranquillity has thus been anchored inside

the human brain over the last three million years, and the overstimulation of modern times such as traffic noise or smartphones will not change that so quickly. Against this backdrop, the following section focuses primarily on creating time for yourself. The purpose is to provide an outlet for breathing spaces and to create a vehicle to find more tranquillity in your life. The evening time, when the world seems to turn more slowly, is the perfect time to practice the art of being alone. As you will read below (and probably already know from your own experience), any quiet moment to yourself may turn out to be time excellently spent.

Tranquillity in an event society

Although tranquillity in finely dosed portions is one of the greatest blessings for our psyche, it is becoming an increasingly rare commodity. In our event society, we are so used to being busy all the time that we can hardly bear moments of (seeming) emptiness. Once we are alone and not extremely busy, we usually get a queasy feeling... Often, our first reaction is to pull out our smartphone, to look for our headphones or to play videos so we do not feel alone or idle. This inability to "not be busy" was impressively demonstrated in various experiments conducted at the University of Virginia. Study participants were asked to just sit in a room immersed in their own thoughts, while a device was situated on the table that enabled them to give themselves electric shocks. The result: although the subjects would receive money by simply sitting quietly for a given time, they preferred to hurt themselves with the shocks, play with their mobile phone or put on their headphones.⁸

But why do people these days feel uncomfortable just doing nothing for a few minutes? Simply daydreaming, letting the mind wander and being caught in a reverie. Simply gazing out the window, going for a walk or a bike ride through the neighbourhood. The answer to this question is largely influenced by the consumer industry: major global corporations do not make any money when you aren't busy. A large portion of all the information that we use in our day-to-day lives is some form of advertising. For decades, the consumer goods industry of the Western culture has been working hard to anchor our permanent desire to be occupied. That is partly why we feel lazy or even useless if we are not doing anything. In this performance-oriented society, we are conditioned to associate the above-mentioned activities with inactivity which, in turn, is associated with failure. It is no wonder then that we have forgotten

to simply let our mind wander. Yet, there are so many good reasons to regularly and deliberately interrupt the stream of constant sensory overload. A whole group of brain regions – the so-called “Default Mode Network” (offline network) – only becomes active when you are resting mentally and not involved in a specific task.⁹

Tranquillity – the key to your innermost feelings

*Silence asks no questions
but it can give us an answer to everything.*

ERNST FERSTL

When we are talking to others, working on a task or drowning in a flood of outside influences, our brain is too busy to reflect properly. If, however, you shift your attention away from all external circumstances and from what you are currently doing, your offline network becomes active and millions of grey cells awaken from their hibernation. Only then can you concentrate on what is really on your mind and decipher your emotions. The offline network allows your experiences and goals to float in your subconscious, it allows your brain to open up new pathways and you can gain wonderful new insights about yourself. In this seemingly inactive state, it is easier for you to access your memories, emotions and ideas and your brain is better able to draw links between pieces of information.¹⁰ Reflection simply becomes easier in this mode.

In a nutshell, tranquillity is a fertile ground for your self-reflection, while constant occupation is a barren desert. And in order to achieve this tranquillity, you don't need to practice monastic silence or take part in the next meditation retreat. It is enough to take a regular mental timeout from the furious pace of modern life for just a few minutes. Of course, you can take such micro timeouts at any time (e.g. on the train or on the toilet), but the inhibition threshold is often at its lowest in the evening. Why not try a mental timeout before you begin your daily evening routine in the *6-Minute Diary*?

Tranquillity as your creativity catapult

*Silence is the element in which
great things fashion themselves together.*

THOMAS CARLYLE

You cannot fully express your creative streak without sufficient rest and periods of inactivity. Tranquillity does not only promote your capacity for reflection, but also your ability to think and act creatively. Creativity requires peace of mind. If you think about it, you are probably aware of this little paradox: Ideas or insights often emerge in moments when you are not making a conscious effort to come up with them. Accordingly, J.K. Rowling was sitting on the train lost in her own thoughts when she came up with the idea for *Harry Potter*, and Albert Einstein's *Relativity Theory* came with crucial flashes of genius while daydreaming. As Mozart said: "When I am, as it were, completely myself, entirely alone, or during the night when I cannot sleep and go for a walk in the silent night — it is on such occasions that my ideas flow best". In the same way, daydreams and "time alone" are the key sources of inspiration for many others.

People who often indulge in daydreams are proven to be exceptionally original in creativity tests.¹¹ It is therefore obvious that purposely letting the mind wander can boost creativity. Maybe you switch off when you are taking a shower, doing the ironing or simply watching the clear starry sky for a few minutes. Ideally, you would use the force of habit to your advantage by making such mini-breaks an integral part of your daily routines. Treat yourself to short breaks from your everyday life and return not only more relaxed but also more creative!

Build pockets of stillness into your life.

MARIA POPOVA

The fact that our brain is so creative when left alone does not seem plausible and even counterintuitive at first glance. So why can you be so much more creative and productive if you take more quiet time for yourself? Brain scans shed some light into the dark: when we relax, daydream or just think about

nothing, our offline network continues to be fully active, forming new connections, and triggering creative processes that might otherwise not have taken place.¹² Inactivity thus harbours an array of activities, meaning that a state of purposelessness suddenly holds a great deal of purpose. Twelve-minute breaks with the aim of letting the mind wander aimlessly are enough to increase creativity and the associated problem-solving abilities by 41%.¹³ This boost in creativity not only helps you increase your productivity at work but it is also conducive to your capacity for self-reflection. The latter is ultimately nothing else than a creative process consisting of various ideas and findings about yourself.

To cut a long story short: Self-chosen alone time is a value-adding investment that yields greater benefits than any stocks or shares in the world. Whether you want to prevent stress, bring your capacity for self-reflection and creativity to a new level or just enjoy a restful sleep: you can already reap the rewards of your “Me-Time” the next morning. Make a date with yourself like you would make a date with others and make your well-being a priority. Just as relationships with others give us security and stability, we can find the same within ourselves. Nurture your relationship with yourself just like you would nurture any other relationship and make time for yourself in your daily routines.

“

***Time is here for man,
not man for time.***

JOHANN GOTTFRIED SEUME

JOEL GASCOIGNE

Many modern companies could no longer imagine life without the social media management platform *Buffer*. The 60-million-dollar start-up was co-founded by Gascoigne, who has gone through all the ups and downs of a Managing Director in *Silicon Valley*. For a long time, his stress-related chronic sleep problems represented a seemingly insurmountable hurdle. However, when he began to establish some time for himself in his daily evening routine, he managed to return to a healthy sleep pattern. Now, he goes for a daily 20-minute walk at 9.30pm reflecting on his day's work and upcoming challenges. This enables him to let go of his worries and to slip into a relaxed and sleepy state. His adjusted routine does not only benefit his health but also his business.

ROSIE HUNTINGTON-WHITELEY

The *Victoria's Secret* model does not only feel home on the catwalk, but also on Hollywood's red carpets. She starred in films such as *Transformers 3 – Dark of the Moon* (2011) and *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015). More than seven million people follow the fashion icon's every move on Instagram. Before she goes to bed, she likes to watch her favourite series. She then takes a hot bath and devotes time to an extensive facial cleansing. If she is not tired after that ritual, the 31-year old tidies up her kitchen or wardrobe. At 11pm at the latest, she goes to bed so she can start off the next day well rested and relaxed.

BILL GATES

Already during his school days, young Bill Gates showed an extraordinary aptitude for engineering and mathematics that even allowed him to skip lessons. He used the time for independent learning which helped him make far greater progress. Bill Gates dropped out of *Harvard University* at the age of 20, when he was already busy building his company *Microsoft*. The multi-billionaire spends his evenings in a rather unusual way: He is known to wash the dishes in the evening. The 62-year-old is also a passionate reader who enjoys browsing through biographies (such as those of Warren Buffett or Franklin D. Roosevelt) before going to bed. Unlike many short sleepers in the business world, Gates is dependent on a specific amount of sleep: "If I really want to be creative, I need 7 hours of sleep."

JEFF BEZOS

His company *Amazon* has not only revolutionized the retail industry and our understanding of online shopping, but it has also made Jeff Bezos one of the richest people in the world. In 2000, he also founded the aerospace start-up *Blue Origin* and bought the *Washington Post* from private funds in 2013. Like Bill Gates, he spends part of his evenings washing the dishes. Studies suggest that these kinds of simple activities reduce stress and enhance our levels of inspiration. To be on the safe side, Bezos treats himself to 8 hours of sleep every night before he goes back to managing his empire.

OPRAH WINFREY

It is enough to mention her first name when Americans talk about “The Queen of All Media”. The talk master grew up in impoverished circumstances and was left to her own devices from an early age. While at school, Oprah landed her first job at a local radio station where her talent and her originality were recognised. From there, the today 64-year-old’s career skyrocketed. The self-made billionaire is regarded as one of the most popular and well-known US Americans these days. Oprah’s evenings typically begin with a healthy dinner, always with the right balance of fat, carbohydrates and proteins. After 8pm, she spends two hours reading books to unwind. Before going to sleep at 10pm, Winfrey writes into her gratitude journal – a ritual she has been following for more than 20 years.

Mental Advantages

... and how you end your day emotionally strengthened.

Adhering to a daily regimented routine is just as important in the evening as in the morning. Knowing what awaits you, will save you the burden of having to make conscious decisions for every tiny activity you perform. Consequently, you get more rest in the evening.¹⁴ There are no requirements for how long your evening routine should last. You alone decide whether you want to take 20 minutes or several hours before bedtime. It is important to know yourself and to know what helps you tune out. For some, it is watching their favourite series, for others it is spending time with family or friends, cooking, exercising or reading.

A small recipe for “mental order”

Do you like putting off your household chores? And do you also start cleaning and tidying up like crazy just when you should really be working on an important task? But what about maintaining a tidy home when the act of cleaning up does not serve as a means of procrastination? Scientists at the *University of Princeton* and the *University of California* have found out that untidiness in our environment prevents us from focusing on what is important. Thus, when our homes are disorganised we actually work less efficiently.¹⁵ Surveys were also able to establish a link between chaos and mental issues such as sleeping disorders, depression, or anxiety. For example, 75% of people reported they get a better night's sleep from having clean sheets.¹⁶ So why not take a few minutes in the evening to establish a little order at home? We are not talking about a thorough spring clean in the evening, but rather about putting things back to where they belong. Order in your surroundings translates to order in the mind. The saying “A tidy house, a tidy mind” does literally apply here.

Gratitude as a natural sleeping aid

If we keep order in our homes, why not do the same in our minds? Especially the evening – a time when everything around us quiets down – seems to be suitable for a “mental spring clean”. In itself, that’s not a bad idea. The thing is: we all have bad days, arguments with our partners, moments when we are angry with ourselves or even at the whole world. However, it doesn’t help to spend the night mulling over all the negative experiences. In fact, this is a sure-fire way to make the subsequent slumber as unpleasant as possible. One natural aid that will gently lull you to sleep, though, is gratitude. In a study, the Canadian psychologists Digdon and Koble found that grateful people sleep much better.¹⁷ They are also more resistant to stress, have more empathy and better physical health.¹⁸ No matter how bad the day was, if you consciously take a moment in the evening, you will find at least three small things that you would not have wanted to miss that day. What are you waiting for? As already mentioned in the diary: Take the time to celebrate each day’s small moments of happiness and success. If you can’t manage that, it is very unlikely that you will be able to celebrate the big moments and successes. Because it is precisely these little things that make a big difference.

A healthy outside starts from the inside.

ROBERT URICH

Postpone your worries until the next day!

Sleep not only serves to regenerate our body but also allows our brain to process the thoughts and impressions of the day. So, if you have had a particularly long and stressful day, and did not have enough time to “think out thoughts to their conclusion”, they may keep you awake at night. Health experts have found a little trick that provides mental remedy for such cases: Postpone your worries until the next day!¹⁹ This surely is not the saying you are familiar with (“Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today”), but particularly during restless nights, it can do miracles. How does it work? Put a small notebook and a pen on your bedside table. Every time you cannot stop thinking about an uncompleted task at night, just write it down – no matter how small or big it seems in that moment. It is unlikely that you will be able to do anything about whatever keeps you up whilst you are lying in bed

in your pyjamas at night. Hence, you might just as well postpone it until the next day instead of letting it rob you of your sleep. Writing the tasks down helps to clear your mind, for your brain treats tasks you have noted down similarly to tasks already completed. You can learn more about this psychological phenomenon in the “Productivity” chapter.

RICHARD BRANSON

The adventurous philanthropist started out his first business ventures at a young age. After the financial success of his music label *Virgin Records*, Branson established the *Virgin Group*, which controls more than 400 companies in the music, mobile communications and aviation industry today. In addition to his business activities, the native Londoner is known for his social commitment: he promotes climate protection and invests in renewable energies. Despite his love for adventure and risk, Branson values his evening rest periods. More than anything he loves dinners, as they give him the chance to spend time with friends and colleagues engaging in conversations and sharing ideas. After dinner, Branson likes to keep up to date and browses through social media for a while. To give his mind a much-needed rest, he literally “switches off” and turns off all digital devices. Before bedtime at 11pm, he reads a little or watches a documentary.

JENNIFER ANISTON

The American actress, film producer and director rose to prominence for her portrayal of *Rachel Green* in the sitcom *Friends* (1994-2004). For this role, she was awarded the *Primetime Emmy Award*, the *Golden Globe Award*, and the *Screen Actors Guild Award*. Today, she is one of Hollywood’s best-paid actresses and in 2016 – at the age of 47 – she was named *The World’s Most Beautiful Woman* for the second time. The *Friends* star is a big fan of meditation and dedicates 20 minutes each morning and evening to it: “Starting and ending your day with meditation gives you a persuasive force. Twenty minutes and you can feel the difference”, says Jennifer.

OLIVER SACKS (1933-2015)

The recently deceased British neurologist and author had a way of describing his patients' neurological diseases in a casual, commonly understandable and entertaining way. One of his most famous works is *The man who mistook his wife for a hat* (1985). The evening hours were sacred for Sacks: He ate dinner early and liked to listen to classical music – mostly Bach – and played piano himself afterwards. He loathed watching TV and preferred reading biographies and novels to let his thoughts run free. The neurologist would go to bed early where he always kept a notebook to write down memories of his dreams or nocturnal thoughts. According to Sacks – especially at night – many unexpected thoughts enter our mind and that they are often worth being recorded.

ELLEN DEGENERES

From dropping out of university and making a living with odd jobs to becoming a television icon in today's America, Ellen DeGeneres can look back at a career that virtually exemplifies the American Dream. Currently, the 60-year does not only host her own talk show, *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, but also promotes the equal treatment of homosexuals. DeGeneres owes her stamina not least to her strict evening routine in which she practices transcendental meditation. "It is the only time I have that stillness, it's the only way I've ever been able to sit long enough that I opened my eyes and I'm sad that it's 20 minutes later," says DeGeneres. The presenter and comedian also swears by a steady sleep rhythm which gives her strength for her busy day-to-day life: Every night she goes to bed at 11pm, and starts the next day full of energy at 7am.

JOHN ADAMS

The American composer – who shares his name with the second President of the United States – is one of the most famous interpreters of the minimalist music style. His famous composition *On the Transmigration of Souls* – written on the occasion of the first anniversary of the 9/11 attacks – was awarded the *Pulitzer Prize* and three *Grammys*. As Adam deals with sounds and

rhythms all day, he prefers to spend his evenings “free of music”. He switches off by preparing a delicious dish followed by reading a book or watching a movie with his wife. Despite his relatively established routines, the composer likes to keep a random freedom about his daily life, so he can be open for ideas when they come because “you never know when they come...”, he says.

Physical Advantages

... and how to ensure a healthy harmony between body and mind.

The significance of sleep has changed over the course of time. Sleep was long considered the sworn enemy of capitalism, for sleeping time was non-productive time.²⁰ But especially in today's meritocracy, the significance of sleep and, by association, health is increasingly coming into focus: the *World Health Organisation* warns that lack of sleep is increasingly becoming a risk for heart disease²¹ and the bookstores are brimming with literature on sleep disorders and the phenomena of our chronically sleep deprived society.²² The issue of sleep and health is in trend, and now that the consequences of sleep deprivation are more evident than ever, we understand that a good life also requires a healthy lifestyle.

How much sleep do we need?

There should be little doubt that sleep is of vital significance for our body and our mind, but how much sleep does our body actually need? Many adults believe that six hours are sufficient. In this context, researchers at the *University of California* have found that some people have a gene that in fact helps them cope well with six hours of sleep.²³ However, less than 3% of the population have this gene. The remaining 97% of us need an average 7-9 hours of sleep, teenagers between 8-10 hours, preschool children 10-13 hours and newborns (just like Mariah Carey) even considerable 14-17 hours per day.²⁴ Thus, getting older also has its merits as our need for sleep decreases with age, which gives us more waking hours per day.

A healthy mind lives in a healthy body:

JUVENAL

Light: the enemy of sleep

With regard to our sleep quality, there is another important factor which is light. In former times, people spent a lot of time outside in natural daylight. Today, however, we reside indoors most part of the day – surrounded by artificial light. The reason why light is so important to humans is because it controls our hormones, our metabolism and our well-being. One particular hormone that is affected by light directly is melatonin. This hormone is responsible for making our body realise when it is time to sleep.²⁵ However, when our body is exposed to light at unnatural times, especially to harmful blue light from screens, it upsets our internal clock and inhibits our melatonin production. This phenomenon can be counteracted by consciously spending more time in natural daylight, for example by taking a walk outside during your lunch break, by dimming the light at home in the evening, and by avoiding the use of smartphones, laptops and other screens at least an hour before going to sleep. There are numerous apps that allow you to adjust the light of your mobile display to the time, and thus to the natural light. That way you can give your eyes a rest, your brain a healthy production of melatonin, and your body its well-deserved sleep.

“

*Sleep is to a man what
winding up is to a clock.*

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

The daily walk

If you want to have a good night's sleep and keep physically fit, you don't need to turn to a fitness studio, do zumba or run a marathon straight away. Studies have shown that going for a daily walk of just 20-30 minutes is already enough to render numerous health benefits. For example, a daily walk eases joint pain, reduces the risk of breast cancer, helps with weight loss and even tames the sweet tooth.²⁶ But above all, walking boosts the immune system: A study of over 1,000 men and women found that those who walked at least 20 minutes a day, at least 5 days a week, had 43% fewer sick days than those who exercised once a week or less.²⁷ Especially during cold and flu season walking can work wonders. So, why not go for a walk around the block in the evening breathing in the invigorating fresh air and do something good for yourself this way? A small tip: Leaving your mobile phone at home might allow you to take in your surroundings more mindfully and to unwind without any digital distractions.

Walking is man's best medicine.

HIPPOCRATES

Personal hygiene

Last but not least, did you know that personal hygiene in the evening yields both physical and mental benefits? After our skin has been exposed to a range of environmental influences throughout the day – including heat, cold and cleaning agents – personal hygiene in the evening can provide relief. Whether it is in the form of a warm shower, a hot bath with aromatic oils, a soothing face mask or thorough dental hygiene is completely up to you. One thing is for sure: personal hygiene does not only protect you from potential diseases but also helps to relieve stress. Especially after a long day at work, you can relax your body and your mind to slowly lull yourself to sleep.

GWYNETH PALTROW

In the romantic comedy, *Shakespeare in Love* (1998), the US-American celebrated her international breakthrough as an actress. She last appeared in *Iron Man 3* (2013) and *Spider Man: Homecoming* (2017). In the evening, the 45-year-old leaves nothing to chance. As a rule, the mother of two has an early dinner because she believes that a meal break between 8pm and 8am is conducive to her health. In addition, Paltrow swears by salt baths and pressure point massages, which help her leave exhausting days behind and enter a deeply relaxing mood for sleep. She usually gets by with seven or eight hours of sleep but says "10 hours are ideal for me". By the way, to get the most out of her sleep, Paltrow has come up with something special: she uses copper infused pillowcases, which are said to positively affect the quality of your skin.

THOMAS HOBBS (1588 - 1679)

The state theorist, philosopher, mathematician and author of *Leviathan* (1651) – one of the most famous works of political philosophy – was at home in many scientific fields. Early on, Hobbes showed the talents of a true prodigy: At the tender age of four, Hobbes could read, write and count, and at the age of fourteen he began to study logic and physics at the *University of Oxford*. Besides his impressive curriculum vitae, he also had a somewhat different evening routine: Every night before going to sleep he sang at the top of his voice. Hobbes believed that singing would strengthen his lungs and prolong his life. It seems that he was right: Thomas Hobbes lived to the age of 91.

JAIME KING

At the age of 14, Jaime King started her modelling career and among other things appeared in the prestigious fashion magazine *Vogue*. As a 19-year-old, she decided to try her luck as an actress. Since then, she has had leading roles in movies such as *Pearl Harbor* (2001), *Sin City* (2005) or *Silent Night* (2012). Even after stressful days, the mother of two sons always dedicates her evenings to an extensive health and skin care. Wholesome food and adequate fluid intake are a must for the 38-year-old to preserve

the purity of her skin. Moreover, she pays attention to maintaining a low room temperature at bedtime to ensure a comfortable and healthy sleep. For King, bedtime is also digital detox time: All electronic devices remain switched off during the night so that she is not even tempted to look at her phone.

TIM FERRISS

Since the success of his book *The 4-Hour Workweek* (2008), Tim Ferriss has attained legendary status in the self-optimization scene. In his podcast *The Tim Ferriss Show*, which boasts more than 200 million downloads, he regularly interviews high-profile celebrities such as Arnold Schwarzenegger, Peter Thiel and Jamie Foxx. Plagued by constant insomnia, he developed an eccentric yet equally effective evening routine for a better sleep. An hour before going to bed, he drinks a mixture of hot decaffeinated tea with two tablespoons of cider vinegar and a tablespoon of honey. He does not exactly know why this cocktail helps him sleep, but he swears by its effectiveness. After that, he takes a bath and reads a novel to unwind. According to him, this is just what helps him to shift down from the mental sixth gear.

ARIANNA HUFFINGTON

The editor-in-chief and co-founder of the online newspaper *Huffington Post* is regarded as a workaholic and has suffered from burnout in the past. The “blogging queen Arianna” has since found ways and means to make her days more productive, yet less stressful by giving her sleep the attention it deserves. Her book *The Sleep Revolution: Transforming Your Life, One Night at a Time* (2016) deals with the 67-year old’s own sleeping past and shows ways to escape the cycle of sleep deprivation and waning energy. iPhone, iPad & Co. – all these are now banned from her bedroom. Before going to bed, Arianna likes to read books that have nothing to do with her daily work, preferably books on poetry and novels. The native Greek also swears by a hot bath in the evening to relax after a hard day’s work.

Time with your loved ones

... and why it is good for you.

“Talking to the people you love every day is the recipe for a long life,” says one of the oldest members of Ogimi, the “Village of Longevity” in Okinawa.²⁸ The exceptionally high life expectancy of its residents makes Japan’s southernmost prefecture an object of fascination for the Western world. More than 900 people here are at least a hundred years old. To put this number into relation, one can think of Switzerland where there are six times more inhabitants and not even twice as many reach the age of 100. For their book *Ikigai*, the authors Héctor García and Francesc Miralles interviewed several inhabitants of Okinawa who were over 100 years old asking them about the secret of their longevity. The evaluations showed that in addition to good habits and an optimistic attitude towards life, the secret was the amount of time they spent with close friends and family. Would you have thought that one of the recipes for longevity could be that simple? Just like you take time for yourself, you can also take it for the people who are important to you. Why this is not only important for a long life but also for your mind and body will be explained in further detail in this chapter.

The health benefits of interpersonal relationships

It is very likely that most of us don’t live in a close-knit community on a tropical island in the Pacific Ocean where life is anything but fast-paced... But especially in our kind of society, in which we race through days full of obligations, piles of unanswered emails and WhatsApp messages, it is all the more important how we decide to spend our leisure time. It is the time in the evening that we can dedicate to family and good friends – to people we really care about. It is the time when we can deliberately put our phones to the side when having dinner with our best friend, when listening to our mothers while they are cooking our favourite dish or when having a nice and hot drink on a cold Sunday morning in the garden with our partners. It is these small actions we take which make a big difference when it comes to strengthening our relationships.

Having regular contact with friends does not only bring forth joy but also a variety of health benefits. Researchers have studied friendships over and over and unanimously found that social interactions boost our immune system and reduce the risk of depression as well as high blood pressure.²⁹ Interpersonal relationships are also a soothing balm for our brain. More recently, there has been evidence that people with an active social life fared better in memory performance tests and had higher cognitive skills than those who live in relative isolation.³⁰ Last but not least, socialising also lowers the risk of dementia in the long run.³¹ So no matter how you decide to connect with others, make sure that it is in a way that is enjoyable to you. Since most of us are at work for most part of the day, evenings represent the ideal time to get together with your loved ones – far away from rush and stress – just savouring the moments of You and I.

Quality over quantity

How often we spend time with our loved ones indeed plays less of a role than with whom we spend it. Together with his colleague Edward Diener, the founder of *Positive Psychology*, Martin Seligman, studied what distinguishes very happy people from others. The psychologists found that the key factors of these people's happiness were the subjectively perceived quality and depth of their interpersonal relationships.³² It is therefore important to question your existing relationships from time to time. If you tend to feel drained around certain people and have the feeling that their (often toxic) negativity has an impact on your energy levels, the formula is simple: Let go and dedicate your evening hours to those who are worth it. Who is good for you? Who allows you to grow? Who do you feel fully accepts you? And who can you help and draw energy for yourself as a result? Treat yourself and your loved ones and give them a few of your peaceful evening hours.



***The real wealth of a person is
the richness of his real relationships.***

KARL MARX

STEPHEN KING

Along with Carrie, Pet Sematary or The Green Mile there are many other world famous works written by the American horror, thriller and science fiction author. In total, they have sold more than 400 million copies worldwide and many of King's novels were made into a film. The author of 56 novels writes 2000 words every single day – even on holidays and on his own birthday. King keeps his evenings free in order to be productive again the following day. He prefers spending the evening hours with his family, often writing letters or watching his favourite baseball team, the *Boston Red Sox*. Just before going to bed, King washes his hands with soap and makes sure that the open side of his pillow is always aligned in the same manner. Why he does that, he doesn't really know himself, but it's part of his ritual.

SHERYL SANDBERG

Together with Mark Zuckerberg, she is the face of *Facebook*. The Harvard Business School graduate strictly separates her professional and private life: At exactly 5.30pm, the Facebook CEO leaves work to have dinner with her children and to reflect on "the best and worst moments of the day". Having been an enthusiastic reader from a very early age, she still enjoys spending her evenings reading books. During this sacred time of the day, her mobile phone is switched off without exception. From time to time, the 48-year-old also treats herself to a few hours of what she calls "bad TV".

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE (1804 -1864)

The American made a name for himself as a writer of short stories and novels. *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), one of his most famous works, is a classic that has become an indispensable part of the American literary canon. Just like his days, his evenings also revolve around literature: As a young man, he used to spend the evening hours discussing books with his two sisters. Later, as a married man, he would finish work at sunset and go for a walk along the river together with his wife. Before calling it a day, the couple would have a cup of tea and of course literature was not to be forgotten: At the end of the day, he would read to her for 1-2 hours before they fell asleep.

HILLARY CLINTON

The 2016 U.S. presidential election candidate and former *Secretary of State* in Barack Obama's government led a very hectic life, which was marked by countless trips and irregular sleep times over the years. During this time, she discovered yoga and breathing techniques in order to cope with particularly stressful days. Today, free evenings represent a time she enjoys spending with her loved ones. Since her husband Bill contracted a heart disease, nutrition has also come to play a larger role for the Clinton family: Fresh fish and vegetables are most commonly on the menu at dinner. She spends the rest of her evening going on invigorating walks with Bill, while Saturday and Sunday evenings are reserved for relaxing visits to their daughter Chelsea and the one-year-old grandchild Charlotte.

LEO TOLSTOY (1828 -1910)

Most people are likely to have heard of Tolstoy's best-known works, *War and Peace* (1868) and *Anna Karenina* (1877). Over the course of his life, the Russian author stood up for the social concerns of his time, but his biggest passion had always been writing. No one was allowed to disturb him while he worked, although he lived on an estate with his wife and their 13 children! After the day's work, he used to go for a walk or ride out on his horse and then sat down for dinner with his family in a much more sociable mood. He would share his impressions of the day and read out to his family and present guests. After having tea together at 10pm, Tolstoy played the piano, read something and then went to sleep at about 1am.

Your Productivity

... and how you can plan your day the night before.

At first glance, it might seem odd to associate an evening routine with the subject of productivity. After all, why would you want to be productive in the evening when you have almost no willpower left and finally want to relax? The night owls among us surely wouldn't mind to roll up their sleeves and get started as the sun goes down. However, this isn't about doing the work but about laying the groundwork for the next successful day. For, the golden key to productivity lies in the planning itself!³³ Giving some thought to the next day the evening before and writing it down has some advantages and doesn't take more than a few minutes.

The MIT method

When the work day is coming to an end and you are still in "work mode", you are very much aware of what hasn't been achieved that day and which of those things are actually important. Before closing your laptop, collecting your tools and thinking about the way home, take a moment to prepare your to-do-list with the 3 most important tasks (MITs) for the following day. Many successful people, such as *American Express* CEO Kenneth Chenault and *Zen Habits* blogger Leo Babauta follow this habit and swear by its effectiveness. MITs can make life much easier because they give your next day a structure and save you from wasting energy on planning your tasks in the morning. Rather than gravitating towards the easiest task, as we do when we are tired in the morning, you commit yourself to your most important tasks the night before when your mind is tired though fairly calm.

The 1-3-5 method: Eat the frog

While the MIT method is well suited for focussing on the most important tasks, for some three tasks may be too few. After all, busy bees also pollinate more than three flowers a day... Hence, if you want to plan more than three

tasks, the 1-3-5 method might be suitable for you. Number 1 is the most important task, which is at the top of your to-do list. It is likely to be the task you are least keen on but one thing is for sure: it needs to be done! So why not do it while you still have a lot of energy? It is the unappetising frog you need to eat as soon as possible to get it over with: "If you are tasked with eating the frog, it is best to do it first thing in the morning. And if you have to eat two frogs, eat the big one first!", said Mark Twain.³⁴ Eating the frog first or performing the most important task number 1 first thing in the morning, gives you a great sense of achievement and motivational impetus for the remaining tasks on your agenda. Number 1 is then followed by another 3 important, but less urgent tasks which usually feel like a breeze after the big frog has been swallowed. Finally, you add 5 further tasks to the list, that you can do on that day but which are not that urgent. These are small to-do's that take less time than number 1 and 3, and thus can be done in the late afternoon when you do not have as much willpower. Writing down your 1-3-5's the night before will give you a clearer view on your priorities, you will be better able to focus on the essentials and to start the next day proactively and productively.

*The slowest, who doesn't lose sight of his goals,
is still faster than those straying without aims.*

GOTTHOLD EPHRAIM LESSING

The Zeigarnik effect & the superpower of to-do lists

If you're wondering why you should write down your tasks even though you have them in your head, you will find plenty of evidence for a plausible answer at this point at the latest: After several experiments conducted at Florida State University, it was found that writing down unfinished tasks has the same cognitive effect as if they had already been completed.³⁵ Creating to-do lists in advance, therefore, helps you not to think about what's left to do when you are in bed at night – since it has already been written down and scheduled.

Like many of us, you might be familiar with the phenomenon of laying in bed at night, unable to fall asleep, because you're worrying about all the unfinished business. The name for this "sensation" is *Zeigarnik effect* and states that people remember uncompleted or interrupted tasks better than completed tasks. It was discovered by the Russian psychologist Bljuma W. Zeigarnik. In the 1920s, whilst sitting in a cafe in Vienna, she observed a waiter who successively took several orders and was able to remember them without any problems. Right after he had completed an order, however, he no longer remembered what he had just served. To study this further, Zeigarnik then conducted several experiments with students and noted that our brain quickly erases completed things from our memory, while all unfinished tasks are retained until they are done. Further studies confirmed this observation, and also showed that unfinished tasks even block our mind and prevent us from fully accepting new tasks.³⁶ Hence, unfinished tasks and projects roam somewhere in your world of thoughts and – without you noticing – they permanently reduce your ability to process information. One good way to create clarity in your mind is to write down your open tasks and thus, to get them out of your system. What is important here is to be detailed when writing down the tasks and to stay realistic as to what is achievable at the same time. The evening presents a good time to do this, not least because a quiet mind ensures a much better sleep.

Preparation is more than half the battle

At first glance, the above-mentioned results speak for keeping to-do lists. One universal principle that applies here too though, is: everything in moderation. For instance, it does not make much sense to meticulously put every tiny task to paper. What this will do is create lengthy to-do-lists that might give you the buzz of putting lots of check marks eventually, but in terms of prioritisation it will most likely not get you very far. Just try the methods mentioned above (MITs & 1-3-5) for yourself and adjust them to your individual daily and biorhythm over time. Pull out your pen and provide more clarity, time and capacity for the more important decisions on the night before.

To increase your productivity for the next day on the evening before, you can do a few further simple things before bedtime: preparing breakfast or

lunch for the next day, putting out your next day's outfit or completing a small household chore. The latter, as we already learned, helps clearing up your mind and makes you to feel more productive.³⁷ Treat yourself to a well-deserved sleep knowing that you've accomplished something and cleverly planned out the following day.

*Your future is created by what you
do today, not tomorrow.*

ROBERT KIYOSAKI

KENNETH CHENAULT

The American business executive, Kenneth Chenault, was the CEO of *American Express* for 16 years. During this time, he steered the company through the 2008 financial crisis and generated a turnover of more than \$30 billion. The graduate lawyer had developed a simple daily routine that helped him to successfully lead one of the largest companies in the world. Every evening he would record exactly three things (the MITs: Most Important Tasks) that he wanted to have achieved the following day. This encouraged him to prioritise his time and focus for the next day.

MICHAEL LEWIS

No other book has shaped the understanding of the modern financial world like Michael Lewis' *Liar's Poker* (1989). Before becoming an exceptional author, he studied Art History and Economics, and worked as an investment banker at Solomon Brothers, one of the most history-steeped companies on Wall Street. Lewis created a rather unusual evening routine and it is thanks to that routine that he was able to publish nine bestsellers. Every day at 7pm he withdraws to write on his books until 4am in the morning. For him, this time is particularly advantageous, since he does not expect any disturbing phone calls or other interruptions. Another benefit is that he starts the next working day the night before and is, therefore, one step ahead of everyone else.

MAYA ANGELOU (1928-2014)

Along with Martin Luther King, Malcolm X and James Baldwin, Maya Angelou is regarded as one of the most important figures of the African-American civil rights movement. The writer and professor became international known for her autobiography *I know why the caged bird sings* (1970). After a long work day, Angelou would read back through the texts she had written during the day and then would then dedicate her time to preparing dinner. The rest of the evening she would read her texts out to her husband. Listening to her own words again helped Angelou to reflect on what she had written and to develop new ideas she could follow up on the next day.

BRETT MCKAY

In 2008, the author Brett McKay from tranquil Oklahoma founded the blog *The Art Of Manliness* which revolves around all aspects of modern masculinity. With 1 million followers, it has become the most influential independent men's magazine and McKay an icon for adolescent men. When his workday end at 9.30pm, he uses the quiet time to look back on his day's work and to reflect on whether he is still focused on his short and long-term goals. Afterwards, he plans his work for the upcoming day keeping in mind the readers' and his own expectations. When he is finished, McKay writes in his diary and uses the final half an hour of his day to read a book and switch off before going to sleep at around 11pm.

LEO BABAUTA

The blogger, journalist and author is the founder of the world-famous blog *Zen Habits*. It covers topics such as establishing healthy routines, nutrition, parenting and happiness. Just two years after the first post was published, his blog was nominated among the top 25 blogs by the *Time Magazine* in 2009. An integral part of his evening routine is writing down his three so-called "MITs" – the most important tasks that he absolutely wants to get done the next day, preferably first thing in the morning. "Do I get a lot more done than three things? Of course. But the idea is that no matter what else I do today, these are the things I want to be sure of doing. So, the MIT is the first

thing I do each day, right after I have a glass of water to wake me up”, say Babauta. His evening routine also includes making various preparations, such as checking the weather forecast and putting out appropriate clothing for the next day, packing lunch and cleaning up in order to wake up in a tidy house the next morning.

*A good plan today is better
than a perfect plan tomorrow.*

GEORGE S. PATTON

Start small today rather than big tomorrow

The *6-Minute-Diary* is already a cornerstone of your evening routine. Why not lay the foundation for the next building block tonight? This doesn't mean advice à la “work out every night for an hour, then meditate for half an hour and read for 45 minutes”. Fortunately, the small things can make a big difference to our quality of life. Start out by putting out your clothes for the next day, taking a short 5-minute walk in the evening or going to bed earlier for the next 3 days. You could also try writing down your tasks for the next day, turn off the internet one hour before going to bed or watch your favourite series on the couch after a nice hot bath. We are all capable of freeing up a few extra minutes.

It cannot be said often enough: Nothing is particularly hard if it is divided up into smaller tasks. The most important thing is that your evening routine completes the day perfectly for you. No matter which activities you fill it with, one thing is clear: The time you invest in yourself yields greater benefits than any share in the world.

THANK YOU

In this day and age, it's almost crazy to found a small publishing house. However, we made the bold move with our vision to develop unique books that spread more gratitude, mindfulness and self-love. So far, no regrets :)

To avoid being eaten up by the big sharks, we highly depend on recent reviews. They allow us to appear in search results and to practice what we preach.

Therefore, we would be deeply grateful if you could take a little moment to leave us a review on Amazon. Even if it's just one sentence, this little favor would be of immense value to us!

In any case, we want to thank you for your time and wish you all the best on your happiness journey with *The 6-Minute Diary Pure*.

Your *UrBestSelf*-Team

References

1. We spend about a third of our lives sleeping

Aminoff, Michael J / Boller, François / Swaab, Dick F. [2011]: "Foreword" in: Handbook of Clinical Neurology. Sleep Disorder Part I, ed. by Pasquale Montagna, Sudhansu Chokroverty, Volume 98.

2. Our genes decide whether we are a night owl or a morning lark

University of Leicester (2015): Geneticists clock genetic differences between "larks" and "owls". <https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/press/press-releases/2015/may/geneticists-clock-genetic-differences-between-larks-and-owls>, [09.07.2018].

3. Age affects our sleeping pattern

Roberts, Richard D / Kyllonen, Patrick C (1999): Morningness±eveningness and intelligence: early to bed, early to rise will likely make you anything but wise. <http://emilkirkegaard.dk/en/wp-content/uploads/Morningness%E2%80%93eveningness-and-intelligence-early-to-bed-early-to-rise-will-likely-make-you-anything-but-wise.pdf>, [26.09.2017].

4. Early school start times do not coincide with teenagers' biological clocks

Kelley, Paul / Lockley, Steven W. / Foster, Russell G. / Kelley, Jonathan (2015) "Synchronizing education to adolescent biology: let teens sleep, start school later", Learning, Media and Technology, 40:2, 210-226,

5. Work schedules are wildly out of sync with our natural body clocks

Rayasam, Renuka (2016): Why sleeping in could make you a better worker. <http://www.bbc.com/capital/story/20160224-why-sleeping-in-could-make-you-a-better-worker>, [06.07.2018].

6. Why time for you is so valuable

Morin, Amy (2017): 7 Science-Backed Reasons You Should Spend More Time Alone. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/amymorin/2017/08/05/7-science-backed-reasons-you-should-spend-more-time-alone/#7cbf941a1b7e>, [11.07.2018].

7. The difference between loneliness and solitude

Estraff Marano, Hara (2003): What is Solitude? <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/articles/200307/what-is-solitude>, [10.07.2018].

8. Our inability "to not be busy" - study

Hutton, Matthew (2014): People Prefer Electric Shocks to Being Alone With Their Thoughts. <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2014/07/people-prefer-electric-shocks-to-being-alone-with-thoughts/373936/>, [18.07.2018].

9. Letting your mind wander activates your offline network

Lehrer, Jonah (2012): The Virtues of Daydreaming, in: The New Yorker. <http://www.newyorker.com/tech/frontal-cortex/the-virtues-of-daydreaming>, [19.07.2018].

10. Our brain can access memories, emotions and ideas better when at rest

Raichle, Marcus E. (2010): The Brain's Dark Energy, in: Scientific American. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-brains-dark-energy/>, [20.07.2018].

11. Mind-wandering facilitates bursts of creative insight. Lehrer, Jonah (2012):

Lehrer, Jonah (2012): The Virtues of Daydreaming, in: The New Yorker. <http://www.newyorker.com/tech/frontal-cortex/the-virtues-of-daydreaming>, [20.07.2018]

12. Relaxing and daydreaming set off creative processes in our minds

See source 10.

13. Twelve-minute breaks increase our creative and problem-solving abilities

See source 11

14. An evening routine is just as important as a morning routine

Rao, Srinivas (2016): The Importance of a nighttime routine, in: The Mission Daily, <https://medium.com/the-mission/why-having-an-evening-ritual-is-as-important-as-having-a-morning-one-ab973d7dea4c>, [01.08.2018].

15. Untidiness prevents us from focussing on what is important

Ryback, Ralph (2016): The Powerful Psychology Behind Cleanliness, in: Psychology Today, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-truisms-wellness/201607/the-powerful-psychology-behind-cleanliness>, [22.09.2018].

16. The link between chaos and mental issues

See source 15

17. Grateful people sleep better

Digdon, Nancy / Kable, Amy (2011): Effects of Constructive Worry, Imagery Distraction, and Gratitude Interventions on Sleep Quality: A Pilot Trial, in: Applied Psychology. Health and Well-Being, Band 3 (2), <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1758-0854.2011.01049.x/full>, [23.09.2018].

18. Grateful people are more resistant to stress, have more empathy and better physical health.

Morin, Amy (2014): 7 Scientifically Proven Benefits Of Gratitude That Will Motivate You To Give Thanks Year-Round, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/amymorin/2014/11/23/7-scientifically-proven-benefits-of-gratitude-that-will-motivate-you-to-give-thanks-year-round/#41fd601183c>, [13.09.2018].

19. Postpone worrying until the next day

Smith, Melinda / Robinson, Lawrence / Segal, Robert: Sleep Needs. What to Do If You're Not Getting Enough Sleep, <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/sleep/sleep-needs-get-the-sleep-you-need.htm>, [03.09.2018].

20. Sleep as the sworn enemy of capitalism

Teurlings, J. (2016): Review of J. Cray's Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep (2014). Cultural Geographies, 23(2), 363-364. DOI: 10.1177/1474474015580273. https://pure.uva.nl/ws/files/2594626/172927_363_full.pdf, [17.09.2018].

21. WHO warns about health risks related to lack of sleep

Chai, Carmen (2015): Why the WHO is warning about poor sleep and heart health, <https://globalnews.ca/news/2054861/why-the-who-is-warning-about-poor-sleep-and-heart-health/>, [24.09.2018].

22. Western society is chronically sleep deprived

Devlin, Hannah (2017): "Western society is chronically sleep deprived": the importance of the body's clock, <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2017/oct/06/western-society-is-chronically-sleep-deprived-the-importance-of-the-bodys-clock>, [18.09.2018]

23. Gene that lets people get by with 6 hours of sleep

See source 19

24. Sleep duration recommendations

Hirshkowitz M. (2015): The National Sleep Foundation's sleep time duration recommendations: methodology and results summary, *Sleep Health*, (2015), https://www.sleepfoundation.org/sites/default/files/STREPCchanges_1.png, [24.09.2018].

25. Melatonin tells our body when it is time to sleep

Rae, Leah (2014): Effect of Artificial and Natural light on the Human Body, https://www.ledinside.com/knowledge/2014/4/effect_of_artificial_and_natural_light_on_the_human_body, [24.09.2018].

26. The benefits of walking

Harvard Health Publishing: 5 surprising benefits of walking, <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/5-surprising-benefits-of-walking>, [15.08.2018].

27. Walking boosts the immune system

See source 26

28. Quote by Okinawa inhabitant

Garcia, Hector /Miralles, Francesc (2017): Ikigai. The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life, p. 115.

29. Social interactions boost our immune system and reduce health risks

Brody, Jane E. (2017): Social Interaction Is Critical for Mental and Physical Health, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/12/well/live/having-friends-is-good-for-you.html>, [02.09.2018].

30. Social people have higher cognitive skills than those who live in relative isolation

Troyer, Angela K. (2016): The Health Benefits of Socializing. 4 reasons to connect with friends, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/living-mild-cognitive-impairment/201606/the-health-benefits-socializing>, [31.08.2018].

31. Socialising lowers the risk of dementia

See source 30.

32. The role of the subjectively perceived quality of interpersonal relationships

Diener, Ed / Seligman, Martin E. P. (2002): Research Report. Very Happy People, in: *Psychological Science*, edition 13 (1).

33. The key to productivity lies in the planning itself

Tracy, Brian (2012): Plan Ahead And Increase Productivity.

<https://www.briantracy.com/blog/time-management/plan-ahead-and-increase-productivity/>, [03.09.2018].

34. Mark Twain and Eating the Frog

Merlo, Stefano (2016): What it Means to Eat the Frog,

<https://blog.noisli.com/what-it-means-to-eat-the-frog/>, [03.09.2018].

35. The effects of writing tasks down

Masicampo E.J. / Baumeister Roy (2011): Consider it done! Plan making can eliminate the cognitive effects of unfulfilled goals, in: Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 101 (4).

36. The Zeigarnik Effect and to do lists

Chunn, Louise (2017): The psychology of the to-do list – why your brain loves ordered tasks, <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2017/may/10/the-psychology-of-the-to-do-list-why-your-brain-loves-ordered-tasks>, [24.09.2018].

37. Why an evening routine makes you more productive

See source 34.

