

THE LEAN AND MEAN TIMES

ADDING YEARS TO YOUR LIFE BY GROWING YOUNGER, HEALTHIER, AND MORE FIT BY THE DAY



An Exclusive, Members – Only “XR TO GO” Publication

By Eddie Henry, XR Lifestyles, January 2018 Issue 30

This New Year’s newsletter will be the last monthly issue of the *Lean and Mean Times*. I am transitioning to special edition issues when I feel the need to report new and noteworthy items regarding health and fitness. In the last 30 issues, I believe EVERYTHING you need to optimize your health and fitness has been covered, and you have full access to this information on the website: www.xrlifestyles.com. Technology is peaking, and there are new things being discovered daily. When the information is sorted well enough to be conclusive, you will know the facts first on my website. I foresee the future of nutrition moving towards functional foods and nutrients matched with our unique gene sequences that can potentially enhance stem cell regeneration. This development will change everything! Maybe you can even regrow degenerative tissue...too cool! I suspect this topic to be my first special edition so stay in touch.

Now this issue will be the most important information you ever read from me regarding health and fitness. Find a quiet place and devote 15 minutes to soak it all in...no multitasking! You have time, I promise! I recommend being outside in nature, grounded, sun overhead with preferably as little clothes on as possible. Take in a few deep breaths, clear your mind, and read on. Enjoy!

Throughout the last 20 years, I have delve deep into the research and development of health and fitness. I have read hundreds of books, reviewed thousands of articles and studies, and attended multiple conferences yearly. I have applied what I have learned to myself and hundreds of friends/clients to validate the results with one constant goal in mind-to achieve maximum results in minimum time. I believe in doing as little as possible to achieve a certain result, not to do as much as possible to achieve that result. I like to geek out on this stuff and will continue to for my sheer enjoyment. I will close this monthly newsletter with a few points that have become clear to me over the course of my research. These points have helped me achieve the highest level of physical and mental performance I have ever experienced, and I don’t think you can reach this level without learning one main thing-how to maximize happiness. Once you can wrap your mind around this concept, you find things done with purpose are more effective, fun, and fulfilling, which eventually yields better results.

So what is maximizing happiness anyway? It is simply having the most fun possible and being the most fulfilled as often as possible. However, first we must understand what really makes us happy and fulfilled. For most people, happiness is simply feeling good, playing, and giving. Are you doing enough of that? A wise man once told a story of a man who approached the gates of heaven and wondered what he would do now with endless happiness and opportunity. A voice responded, “You just left a world that offered endless happiness and opportunity. Did you seize it?” This story makes me question my actions. In the words of Laird Hamilton, “Do not be afraid of death. Be afraid of the half-lived life!”

The first big realization or step towards this mindset occurred during my second year in the Precision Nutrition Masters Course. One of the initial assignments was on “defining your path.” I was required to define what I was working towards, regarding everything from family to spirituality to career to hobbies...everything. In order to define your path, you must first discover what you value. Think about this discovery for a bit before you read further. Once your values are clear, it is much easier to prioritize and set goals. Remember every plan needs a goal, and every goal needs a plan. I have tiers of values that make me happiest and the most fulfilled. My first three tiers are: 1. Spending QUALITY time with family and friends, 2. Seeking personal health, 3. Giving back. Maybe yours are similar.

Quality time with quality people is badass! Why do you think I cherish my nightly walks after dinner so much? This time is when I connect and converse with my family in nature with no distractions. This family walk is priceless in today’s world. I have a great deal of goals regarding quality time spent with friends and family balanced with the necessary workload to create the financial strength necessary for health and happiness. Ultimately, I will work just enough to make this balance happen and play and focus on the other two tiers discussed below the rest of the time. So there is a plan in place that balances my family and friends with my work. I hope not to share the same regrets as many of my mentors (badass old dudes), which is that they regret not spending more quality time with their families. Maybe consider not working so freaking much if possible or at least work smarter. Get a plan, work accordingly, and play with your friends and family the rest of the time. This balance will help with your personal health as well.

My second tier, personal health, is ultimately creating epic sleep, epic poop, and epic sex. When all three of these things are optimized, I am extremely happy. So these are my focus, goal, and plan. These of course require good food and exercise, but surprisingly not much. I can simply eat quality-sourced foods and dial in my nutrition. I can exercise effectively a few times a week and really dial in my fitness. It’s not that complicated. Don’t be the freaking guy that has “really great at working out” on his tombstone. Exercise has very little value for most people after a few hours a week. Since we are talking about maximizing happiness, it is worth mentioning that I know very few truly happy people who haven’t realized ego is the enemy. Fitness should be less about image and more about longevity. We exercise to have the ability to do more, see more, and experience more.

My third tier is making the world a better place, which currently for me is in the form of helping others, particularly children. This tier really means making others happier. In other words, how can you make the world a better place in the time left from the above two tiers? Or maybe you can combine all of your tiers at once? I happen to believe one of the meanings of life is to discover your best skills, and the purpose is to teach those skills. If you take a moment and find those innate qualities, you might find greater happiness and fulfillment in sharing your best qualities in a humble way.

You can capitalize on this happiness by actually working your values around the pillars of health: sleep, food, movement, and relationships/community. This combination is the goal. For example, coaching beach volleyball after work gives me a killer workout while helping people. Biking to work makes my legs and lungs scream, clears my head, and doesn’t use unnecessary fuel, thus saving the planet and my pocket book. Can your exercise have a purpose rather than to just sweat off the garbage you ate? Make your fitness meaningful and make it work with your values. Eating a quality dinner makes me want to play or walk with the family. Eating pizza and beer makes me a worthless slob, drains my energy, and leaves me with very little energy to give my family, which doesn’t make sense on any level. Is your cell phone serving your sleep patterns or could you be doing something with more value before bed? How about reading a book to sharpen your brain, which you may need later in life?

Relationships have much to do with your community. Do you exist in a community that unconsciously nudges you in the right direction or sabotages you? This can be a toughy because in order to maximize happiness you either need to move to an area that supports health and happiness, or you can actively help to create awareness in your own community. Does your locality encourage you to go outside and enjoy activities in nature? Are you excited to try something new afterwork for example or are you so limited that you tend to just head home due to boredom and lack of options? Do your friends like to meet in parks and beaches to enjoy each others company or bars and subpar restaurants? Could you maybe bike to that bar if it was your choice? Or maybe even bypass it altogether and have a picnic and a paddleboard session. Could you possibly help create these options? Little shifts can create massive changes. Get out there and get involved. The happiest communities in the world all share similar values and need help moving in this direction. The relationships you will form along this path may be some of the deepest ever experienced when you are together with like-minded people.

Focusing on these values allows me to get a plan to maximize happiness. I base almost everything I do around them. Without them, I am often just spinning my dials, but we must also identify what makes us unhappy and minimize them. I like to call this “minimizing the suck,” the suck being things that drain your energy. There are four things that can crush your happiness no matter how you spend your days: finances, time, stress, and A-holes.

The first is money...keeping up with the Joneses! WTF. Who cares? The truly happiest people I know live beneath their means. That doesn't mean not spending lots of money. It just means not spending lots of money on meaningless shit that doesn't bring happiness. Spend money on things you value. Spend money on a high thread count for your sheets if you value sleep. Spend money on the best-sourced salmon if you value your health. Spend money on experiences, trips, and bikes for the family. Is that cup of coffee in the afternoon really serving you well? Spending five dollars a day with a company that probably doesn't use fair trade practices is not helping you or the planet. Could you spend \$150 dollars a month on something better? Do you think this coffee is helping your precious adrenals and sleep? Hmmm. Let's minimize the suck to maximize the happiness!

Time spent is the second possible limiting factor. I often hear people say, “I don't have time” for a suggestion I may have, and this may be true, but how did our parents do all of the things they did without technology? I feel like they were a bit less busy, less stressed, and yet possibly happier. Look at your day and see where the majority of your time is spent. Is it spent on what you value? Could you become more efficient by prioritizing certain things and habits? Let's say you look at your cell phone ten minutes an hour by checking texts, emails, social media, phone calls, alerts, etc. I am assuming you spend more than 10 minutes per hour on your phone, but I'll go with that. In a sixteen-hour day, you are on your phone about two and a half hours. Is this time well spent? That's almost twenty hours a week. Imagine the possibilities. Do you think your kids or friends could use this time? Maybe you could volunteer? Maybe mix in a walk? Hmmm. If you look at what you value and your goals, is that cell time serving them well or possibly distracting you? Lots of successful people have found time savings and efficiency with designating a specific time block for these tasks. This strategy has personally saved me over an hour daily. Boom! Maybe give it a try. I am willing to bet most of the people who tell me “they don't have time” can find some time in their day if they want. Get out of the logjams! They are preventing happiness.

Worrying or stress is the third deal breaker. I can't think of anything that wastes more energy than worrying. Most functional medicine practitioners compare us to batteries. We require energy like a battery. We gain or lose this energy from everything, such as sleep, relationships, movement, food, sex, basically all of your actions and thoughts. When these actions are optimized, we are full of energy, which helps maximize happiness. Exercise should give you energy, not leave you drained. Is food creating more energy or making you lethargic? How about alcohol? Wonder why some of the well-known celebrities don't drink? It's because they feel so damn good naturally. Why would they want to numb that feeling? If what you are doing drains you, you may be doing

something wrong. With all of that being said, I know of nothing more draining than chronic worrying. Chronic worrying is a generational characteristic that seems to be growing at an uncontrollable pace. Remember that at the end of the day, you can dwell on the negatives or the positives. Everybody has problems and worries about them differently. I am almost certain nobody wants to hear about your problems, and there are people probably struggling worse than you. Confucius said that everyone has 99 problems, from a cracked windshield to an achy joint to a kid's report card, etc. Typically we will focus on the most important 10 problems, and then we will only be left with 89 and so on and so forth. The issue is that once you knock out 10 of them, 10 more arise creating the chronic worrying, which is an endless energy drain. So maybe a better thing to do is help someone else with their 99 problems, and then your problems will seem less important. By helping someone, you may become less stressed, more fulfilled, and ultimately happier. Seeing how someone else is actually struggling could make your first world problems fade a bit.

The last main tier for me is simply avoiding A-holes. Any way you hack it, you will become the sum of the five people you spend the most time with...period. If these five people suck, then you eventually will pick up some A-hole qualities and become part of the problem. People that bitch and moan all the time might be draining your energy too. Try surrounding yourself with happy, positive, badass people who give you energy.

Now that I took a deep dive into my thoughts on life, I encourage you to find your values and prioritize from there. Nail this process, and you will have the best results ever. Here's a hint...be very mindful when doing something. Ask yourself in the moment, "is this really working for me and my values?" I will always be researching the next big thing in health and fitness and how it can work for you, but in the meantime, do your homework. All of the conversations I have with you guys on health and fitness will become clearer when your path is defined. Then you can actually set some goals, and maybe these goals will pertain to your training, food, friends, actions, or life in general. Remember every goal needs a plan, and every plan needs a goal. The only results you will ever really get will come with consistency. Get a plan, take out the logjams, and make this year your best ever. Quit your BS excuses! Nobody wants to hear them anyway. Maximize your happiness and start living the best life you can! Reset your expectations and remember life is now – PRESS PLAY!