

# THE LEAN AND MEAN TIMES

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



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By Eddie Henry, XR Lifestyles, October 2017 – Issue 28

One of the most interesting books I have read this year is *Tools of Titan* by Tim Ferriss. In this massive book, Tim deconstructs world-class performers and producers to discover what habits and protocols they use for success. Morning routines are one of the things Tim is always exploring. I have a similar obsession with morning routines and have seen my energy, focus, and productivity increase drastically with some morning experimentation. This experimentation has allowed me to achieve goals at a much higher success rate. Basically, my mornings are now designed for mental and physical performance, which make my days much more limitless. Let's discuss how you can optimize your mornings so you too can seize the day!

Waking up is the first step in optimizing your morning. It doesn't matter so much if you are an early or late riser, although most of the experts in *Tools for Titans* wake very early to get a jump-start on the day. However, if possible, it is important to finish a full sleep cycle. We cycle through 5 sleep stages that take anywhere from 90 to 110 minutes. Each stage lasts between 5 and 20 minutes. Ideally, you wake up at the end of a full sleep cycle. This pattern allows for the most clarity upon waking. Waking up in stage 4 for instance can leave you groggy and irritable.

We naturally wake up in stage 1 without alarms in most cases. There are plenty of sleep monitors that can track your sleep stages and wake you when in stage 1 within a given time frame. In time, you can train yourself to do this naturally.

The next few points are debatable, but these things have worked for the majority of those interviewed in *Tools for Titans*, as well as for myself and for most people I have trained. After waking and while lying in bed, perform about a 2-minute body scan. This scan teaches you to be present and in tune with your body as well as identifying any issues that may be festering. Keep your mind clear for this scan. The reason you are performing the scan now is because of the lack of distractions. Identifying issues during this scan are addressed in the next few steps.

While still in bed, work on gratitude. Some like to journal this reflection time, but I have seen good results without recording as well. Think about everything you are really grateful for, all the good things. Most people wake up worried about something initiating a cortisol response to start their day. The goal with gratitude is to normalize your hormones through happiness. If you identify psychological

stress present during your body scan, then the gratitude can help alleviate it.

Now it is time to head to the kitchen for proper hydration THEN some coffee or tea. At this point, I normally feel totally relaxed and excited to attack my day. If I am still stressed or worried, I continue to practice gratitude or meditation here, but additional reflection is not often required. Once my coffee or tea is prepared, I turn my phone on to check for emergencies only. I typically sort all of my emails and texts in a later time block of the day to optimize efficiency. While I consume my morning beverage, I study or research for about 30 minutes. I have found when it's early and quiet, and while I am fresh, my retention rate is about 100%. Studying the same material at night takes me at least twice as long.

Exercise is normally next for most busy people. This time period of exercise doesn't have to be your big workout of the day; you are just addressing whatever you noticed physically during your body scan. I typically perform body work as my morning exercise. Dynamic stretches, fascial work, and inversions fill about 20 minutes to get my body sorted.

Breakfast is next and optional. I find a ketogenic breakfast, including fish and veggies, increases my mental performance, but this type of breakfast is subject to the individual. Some people perform better without breakfast. Experiment to see what suits you best. My 13-year-old daughter prefers little to no breakfast and a large dinner. My 4-year-old prefers a massive breakfast and very little dinner. Gene variances do play a role here so find what works for you.

Most people now head into the bathroom for their personal hygiene. Getting a

bit personal, but there are a few things that really help people across the board. First would be to release your feet while brushing your teeth. Simply step on a fairly hard ball and roll your foot around while brushing. Second, bounce a bit after brushing to get your lymph flowing (read last month's article on lymph fluids) and help create an epic poop, which is necessary to attack your day. Then, take a cold shower, which is my best buzz of the day. I have seen more results from a cold shower than any other thing I have EVER tried for mental performance. I just need to figure out how to keep this buzz all day.

Lastly, before I leave the house, I perform a few key functional movements. I keep a few kettle bells and a pull-up bar below the house by a picnic table. I typically do a set of pull-ups, pushups, squats, balance training, and kettlebell swings before getting in the car. These moves do two things: 1. I get an effective workout in case I have to miss my afternoon session that day. 2. It gets my body tense and contracted, which then creates an antagonist reaction. This reactions means that after you stress heavily (from physical stimulation), your body then relaxes heavily. I like to walk into work relaxed.

This daily morning routine may seem extensive and elaborate, but it makes my day better, which is the goal. There are so many things that are unproductive and wasteful in so many ways, like social media, that I can't get into them now. Experiment with things that get your mind and body right and see how it serves you. I bet if you crack this code, you can accomplish stuff in your day you never thought possible.

### **Food of the Month: Cacao**

Everything we know of chocolate starts from the

Theobroma Cacao tree native to South America. These trees have seeds that contain cacao beans. Beans are normally fermented and dried before any other processing occurs. What happens next determines if they become cacao or cocoa. Cacao is rich in antioxidants, flavonols such as Epicatechin, and nutrients like manganese, magnesium, iron, potassium, zinc, and copper. Cacao is a nutrient powerhouse with very little sugar. Cocoa is much more processed, typically at high heats, which degrades the nutrients. Most cocoa products also have a lot of added stuff making it less desirable. Steer clear of cocoa and try to train your pallet to accept the more bitter and much more nutritious cacao. Here is a video I made on my favorite cacao concoction(dessert.) Enjoy!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eN7-awQZiUU>

### Exercise of the Month: Indo Boarding



Ever wonder why so many people are injured these days? One reason is that they rarely use their stabilizer muscles anymore, which weakens the joints. When seated or standing all day, your supporting muscles don't get activated and begin atrophying. Playing outside in general

would be the best fix, but as cell phones take over, a balance trainer like an Indo Board is a good addition. This board will make all of your stabilizers fire at once, and this is why I typically stand on one before getting in the car every morning and when drinking wine in the afternoon. Try playing on some type of balance trainer this month so we can become more injury proof.

### Monthly Challenge: Consolidate Duties

What I mean by consolidate duties is to do stuff more efficiently to make time for additions. For example, I fascial release my feet while brushing my teeth, release my IT Band while showering, perform happy baby while doing gratitude, check social media (THE ONLY TIME) while pooing, and do box breathing on the way to work.

### Supplement Spotlight: Oregano Oil

I always resort to Oil of Oregano as my go-to for all health related issues...from flesh eating bacteria to open wounds, fungus, viruses, infections, colds, etc. I have touched on this product before when flying, but I thought it was good to mention it again since oil of oregano has become a staple in my medicine cabinet. I use Wild Mediterranean Oil of Oregano from Greenfield Fitness Systems. A few drops will work wonders!

### What's Trending: [www.Directlabs.com](http://www.Directlabs.com)

We know that to manage something you must have the ability to measure it. This process is how we achieve results, but it can be a huge pain in the ass getting appointments and the run around. Now you can order tests directly on the internet. Check out the website above and take your health into your own hands. I highly recommend working with a functional medicine practitioner to help you choose the test and explain the results.

### **Monthly Goal: Wake up a bit earlier**

Try waking up a few minutes earlier for the next month to have the ability to squeeze in some morning practices. In time, you will find ways to consolidate things and eliminate less important habits. For the time being while getting motivated, set the alarm 10 minutes earlier than normal to help win your morning.

### **Q and A with the XR Professionals (sent in from members via email):**

**Q.** Why do none of my friends want to exercise?

**A.** Because they feel like shit. If you feel good from living right, you want to do active stuff. That is how the body works. Unhealthy people don't know what this feels like. They unfortunately live inflamed and lethargic. I walk after dinner because I feel like moving. I don't do it to get lean. I just don't feel like sitting down and watching TV. I literally have too much energy. Now if I eat pizza and beer, it's a different story. Then it's movie time because of the toxic load and inflammatory response. Remember that you become a sum of the 5 people you spend the most time with so make sure you don't hang out with a bunch of potatoes.

**Q.** What alcoholic drink do you prefer?

**A.** I like a good dry farm wine preceded with a kombucha. The carbonation and probiotics in the kombucha tends to help the absorption rate of the alcohol, which can increase the buzz. I do like a good buzz, but I don't like having more than two drinks a night, and this combo tends to make the two drinks more potent.

### **A Final Note:**

The bottom line is that you can find a way to make your morning work better for you. All of the techniques discussed will only add about 10

minutes to your current regiment, maybe less as you eliminate the unimportant stuff. Tony Robbins says, "If you don't have 10 minutes, then you don't have a life." I totally agree with this statement. Work on some subtle, yet targeted, changes in your morning, and I bet things start falling into place a bit more effortlessly.

### **Monthly Recipe: Banana Bread**

Prep time: 10 mins. Cook time: 55 mins. Yields: 1 loaf.  
Ingredients: 1/3 cup melted coconut oil, 1/2 cup local honey, 2 eggs, 2 mashed ripe bananas, 1/4 cup water, 1 teaspoon baking soda, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, 1/2 teaspoon pink Himalayan sea salt, 1/2 teaspoon Ceylon cinnamon, 1 3/4 cups of gluten free flour (we use Bob's Red Mill), 1/2 cup chopped walnuts. Instructions: 1. Preheat oven to 325 and grease a 9x5 loaf pan with grass fed butter. 2. In a large bowl, beat the oil and honey together with a whisk. Add eggs, water, and bananas and beat well. 3. Add baking soda, vanilla, salt, and cinnamon and whisk to blend. Switch to a big spoon and fold in flour and walnuts. 4. Pour batter in greased loaf pan and sprinkle lightly with cinnamon. 5. Bake for 55-60 minutes. Let the bread cool in the loaf pan for 10 minutes and then transfer it to a wire rack to cool for 20 minutes before slicing.



Want to learn more tips and tricks to optimize your health and fitness? Check out XR's virtual training at [www.xrlifestyles.com](http://www.xrlifestyles.com). Online training customized for your unique needs and goals.

