

TURNING UP THE HEAT AND GETTING PROPER SLEEP

January 28th, 2021

Wow! I have been off my game for a bit when it comes to these! I realized I didn't post last week and then I missed it yesterday. I totally got sidetracked. In that case, I'll make it up with talking about two topics today- vitamin supplements and sleep!

First of all, this entire process is highlighting aspects of myself that I need to improve besides simply what I set out to do for *That First Step*. I often put my hand in way too many pies, and I can get sidetracked and overwhelmed. I'm also realizing I have not been the greatest at time management the same way that I used to. And this is partly what I believe it all boils down to- my sleep pattern.

You see, during the summer, I had a pretty good routine of waking up relatively early, going for a run, and then proceeding with my day. Nowadays, I struggle so much to get up early. I have been sleeping in late and staying up to all hours. Back around the holidays, I gave myself a bit of a break and started being more lenient about my hours, schedule and overall work. That sent me into a shift of hours that I can't seem to get out of. Now, I have always been a night owl, and I often thrive at night, but there is more to this recent shift. Many of my friends are back to school or work now, so if I want to communicate with them, it is late at night. Also, I have a number of clients or interview guests who are also busy during the day, and cannot communicate until after dinner. This has shifted my whole work schedule to much later in the day to compensate with the late hours. Now, I may be up until 2am consistently now, but I am still putting in 15-16 hour days with 8-9 hours of sleep. It is not that I am not getting enough sleep, but my internal clock is off. And because my internal clock is off, my days are often thrown off. It can be really disappointing and discouraging to look at the clock, see that it is 3pm and realize you've hardly accomplished anything; however, if I was working a 9-5 schedule and getting up around 7, in comparison, I've really only been clocked in for an hour or two. As the day gets later, I get inspired again and I get to work. As I said, I'm a night person, so I thrive with creativity and productivity then. But what a mental game I am playing with myself! It can be torturous at times. It's not like I don't make the most out of my days- I do! They are often filled with constant communications, emails, research, productions, commissions, writing, recording, editing, etc. It's my internal clock that's convincing me that since I am not conforming to the standard, I feel that I am ticking away at the days with little to show for it. Until I can shift my schedule around, I have to keep reminding myself that it is all relative, and the day is whatever I put into it, not the time I get up or go to bed. Essentially, I need to think as if I'm a late shift worker or something.

I don't know if any of that made any sense to anyone else except me, but writing it down sure helped. The next thing I want to discuss is heat; however, I am going to go into two completely different directions with that concept. The first derives with the actual temperature outside, and the second has to do with internal body heat.

Okay, I HATE THE COLD!!! Winter can leave as soon as the holidays are over, and then give me Spring. Now, living in New York, I know I don't get that option. Instead, I get several months of a Tim Burton movie, where everything is grey, cold, and lifeless, and I can't tell if this is supposed to be creepy or a joke (all kidding aside, I like most Tim Burton films. Don't come at me). I freeze in the winter, and I do not deal with the cold well at all. When I freeze, I shut down. I get very tense, I get distracted easily, and all I want to do is surround myself in warmth and do nothing else. Last night, I was wearing 6 layers of shirts, sweatshirts and jackets when it was 68 degrees in the house, just to give an idea of how well I deal with temperatures. I thrive in the summertime because it is warm and empowering. When I look back at all the home improvement projects I did, along with work I did for my grandparents, and various other things I accomplished, I thrived. And that's because I was in my preferred element- heat. I'll admit, I sweat like a pig, but I'd rather be breaking a sweat than freezing, needing to bundle up to feel somewhat normal. So the cold is another thing that has impeded some of my focus and productivity. I have not been nearly as good about running each week because I can't stand going outside. I'll try to come up with alternatives in the house along with my other exercises, but it's not the same- whether I can't commit or it's just not working how I hoped. In the words of "Yes Theory," which Harrison and I are big fans of, I should "seek discomfort." We do not grow and improve unless we put ourselves into challenges that will push ourselves. Speaking of comfort, I have gotten too comfortable living at home. I have been living back at home since last March now, so it has almost been a full year. In the early days, I had school and then I had at home projects to keep myself active in my space. Now that I did a lot of things to improve my current space, I have gotten too comfortable in it, which is hindering me from doing anymore work on it. For instance, I want to set up a better mixing station in my family room, where I do most of my work. I bought new studio speakers, stands, and other cool equipment, but I'll need to do some rearranging to make it happen. My comfort in my current situation is making it hard to motivate myself to do the proper rearranging and organizing I need. Though this is something I really want to do and I know will benefit me a lot, I've been having a hard time stepping out of my comfort zone. The fact I recognize this is the first step. The next is to act upon it. Hopefully I can inform y'all on some improvements soon.

Wow, this has been such an interesting stream of consciousness, hasn't it? I guess this is what I need to let out, though. As I mentioned above, I wanted to talk about body heat, specifically in terms of weight loss, metabolism, and nutrition. So, the other day, when picking up a couple of daily vitamins, I spotted a bottle of Cayenne tablets. I found this very interesting because I have done a decent amount of research on spices and the benefits that can have towards proper digestion and the metabolism. Cayenne pepper has been a staple in my spice cabinet for some time now. Cayenne pepper contains capsaicin. Capsaicin is a chemical compound found in peppers that give them their spicy kick. Capsaicin works by increasing oxygen consumption and body temperature, which can help burn calories, fat, and overall boost your metabolism. Capsaicin is also said to be helpful with inflammation and pain. To get enough capsaicin to actually take advantage of such properties, you would get sick from all the peppers you would eat. You'd also probably lose feeling on your tongue from the heat. Sprinkling some cayenne powder onto dishes can help to a degree, but your meal would be awful spicy to get the benefits that you want. Coming back to the Cayenne pepper supplement I found, it is 500mg per tablet.

This concentrated dose of the herbal supplement provides anywhere between 40,000-100,000 SHU (Scoville Heat Unit) per dose. With this increase in internal body heat, paired with good nutrition and exercise, this could possibly be a game changer moving forward in my wellness journey. Now, I only picked up the supplement last week, and I think it is too soon to tell what kind of difference this is making, but hopefully I'll have some results to share soon enough.

I apologize for the rants and odd streams of consciousness, but as Harrison and I stated before, this whole process is to document our progress, work out things we need to succeed, and to aid ourselves in our journeys however we need. I hope some of this made sense to you all, and perhaps some of you relate. Regardless, I'm looking ahead with my head held high, with plans in mind on how to move forward!