



CONCERN:EAP

Healthy & Resilient You



“*The core problem with working longer hours is that time is a finite resource. Energy is a different story.*”
— Tony Schwartz and Catherine McCarthy, *The Energy Project*

There are a finite number of hours in the day, no matter how we may wish otherwise. The same cannot be said, however, of demands on our time. How often do we find ourselves with more to do than a workday can hold? When obligations exceed capacity, our first response is often to chain ourselves to our desks (or devices) in an attempt to power through and increase productivity.

The trouble is, trying to squeeze every second out of every day like that can leave us physically, mentally, and emotionally drained. And, in a counterproductive twist, our work and lives suffer for it.

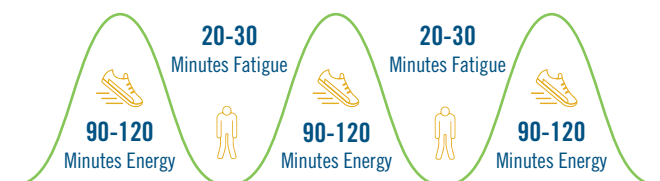
Recent research, like that out of The Energy Project, suggests that if we shift focus from maximizing our time to optimizing our energy, we can get more done in the time we have—and be happier while doing it.

Time Flies. Energy Flows.

Mention maximizing energy, and the first thing that's likely to pop into people's heads is hooking up to a coffee IV or sneaking in a quick disco nap before tackling an all-nighter. While these strategies can give a temporary boost, they're not the only approach to energy management. Not by a long (espresso) shot.

As opposed to time, which flies like an arrow, energy ebbs and flows in waves. These waves are called ultradian rhythms, and our bodies operate in sync with their ups and downs, alternating between states of wakefulness and fatigue.

Ultradian Rhythm: *The natural cycles our bodies experience between relative wakefulness and fatigue.*





Now, we can't do much to change or extend the pattern of this cycle. (No matter how much caffeine we swallow, we can only sustain peak energy for about 90 to 120 minutes at a time.) But we can work in sync with our ultradian rhythms by focusing during the wakeful flow and resting during the fatigued ebb to be more effective throughout the day.

This strategy has been studied extensively with energizing results indicating that people who work with (not against) these rhythms are more productive, more resilient, and feel a better sense of balance than their counterparts.

Learn how to master your body's energy cycles, and you just might feel like you've mastered time itself.

Riding the Energy Wave

The tips below can help you better understand your own energy cycles, and how to work with them to help achieve greater productivity, health, and resilience.

🕒 Observe Your Verve:

You spend more time with yourself than anyone else, and that puts you in the best position to monitor and report on your energy levels. Use a journal to jot down the times of day when you're the most fired-up, creative, or thoughtful, and conversely, when you feel tired or disconnected.

🕒 Schedule Accordingly:

Using the ebb and flow information you've just gathered, try scheduling as much of your day as you can accordingly to help maximize performance.



Peak Energy:

This period is good for problem-solving and tackling mentally demanding tasks



Deep in Thought:

The contemplative times are conducive to meetings, answering emails and completing administrative tasks



Break Time:

When energy flags, pay attention and take a break. Step away from your work and desk to read a book, meditate, have lunch with friends, or take a walk

🚶 Redefine What Work Is:

People often think "I can't take a real lunch break or go for a quick walk or jog during the day, I have work to do!" But the rest cycle is an important part of your work day too. Often the best ideas don't come after being chained to your desk for hours, they come when you unshackle—during a walk, at the gym, or while you're folding laundry. Activities that help us achieve creative mental clarity are important to incorporate into productivity routines.



Establish recharging rituals

We've talked before about the **power of rituals** to build resilience. Try making energy-replenishing rituals part of your daily process. Go to bed earlier for better sleep and a fresh start the next day. Make exercise a morning ritual and preparing healthy meals for work part of your weekend or evening rituals.

For more tips and a guided method to create energy-boosting rituals for yourself, visit **MindSet: The Good Habit App** in CONCERN's Resilience Hub App Garage.

For even more ways to help cultivate mindfulness and resilience in 2017, visit the Resilience Hub™ at www.ConcernResilienceHub.com regularly. First time users may be asked to enter their company ID.

This newsletter is intended for informational purposes only, and should not be used to replace professional advice.

If you find your level of stress is impacting your well-being, you can contact us for additional help and support.

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