

What A "Normal" 24 Hours Looks Like

Living for a Healthy Body

- Melanie Redington, MAT



Sleeping – In my 20’s, I lived on less than five hours of rest. Like many, lack of sleep was directly related to an ambitious nightlife, college, wanderlust and a baby; life’s instant game changer. In my 30’s, I continued to live on less than five hours of sleep. I was working full time, had a second part time job, was raising a child, all while returning to school to obtain a Masters Degree. That particular decade and its lack of sleep had a different purpose. Now, in my 40’s, eight hours of sleep is protected like my favorite candy bar. On my best nights, I get an hour to prep for a full night’s rest. I have taught myself to give focused credit to its restorative properties, especially when my nutrition is aligned to support recuperative sleep. I readily admit I had to learn to do this and I continue

to be a “Work in Progress”. To make my bed inviting and to take my body to it in a healthy form, took some conscious effort and practice, practice, practice. Everyday I try to take time to make the bed, load it with pillows to make it pretty, and at least throw unfinished clutter in the closet and shut the door. I have made my bedroom a sanctuary and trained myself to treat it that way. As a result, it has become much easier to visualize my body happy at work repairing for the night (not loaded with junk food) and I’m drawn upstairs to my heated bed with a good book.

Having addressed rest, for me, the last two thirds of a 24-hour day can really fit into one of two camps; preparing for a successful tomorrow/future and living/engaging in the present.

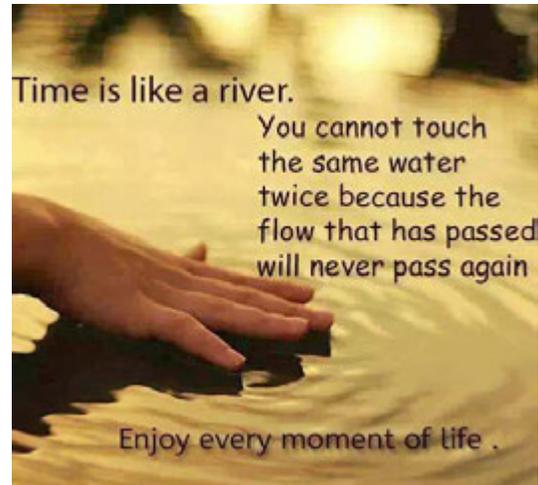
Preparing - It is as necessary as it is boring. Its needs are also widespread. By widespread it could mean planning out finances, professional development, personal and spiritual growth, but I’m going to touch on nutrition and exercise.



Nutrition is ever evolving in our home but one bottom line will always apply. It has to be food. This means if we want to eat we cook and if we want to cook we need real ingredients.

Chicken, beans, rice, moose, potatoes and if we want to eat we need to shop... Between slicing, dicing, eating, shopping, baking, cleaning, driving, reminding, re-doing, correcting, fixing, etc. I'm going to say I dedicate about five of my eight hours here. So I try to make it fun – my hubby and I shop and cook together, we all take part in cleaning and other household chores. Healthy eating takes some time planning, however, we are worth the investment. As a grown adult I really do feel an obligation to lead by example and model a strong work ethic. After all, my parents dedicated 18 years to instill those qualities.

Capturing the Moment – Being well rested, feed, and exercising regularly is pointless though, if you can't enjoy the present. We need to be mindful and thankful for shared family meals, small victories, fulfilling employment, and more. This is actually my toughest area, but I am improving. Luckily, it's my smallest time bracket with less than three hours daily. In the bigger picture, the ability to be thankful for ALL moments; whether they are designated for rest, preparation, or enjoyment is personally one of the true keys to life. I figure I'm lucky to get three unclaimed hours a day. With this time I have learned to be greedy, to say no, to cherish myself and sometimes even relax. It also embraces the time I am with my family simply enjoying each other, watching movies and the like.



24 hours come and go every day. We choose whether or not we participate in our own lives or simply let the time pass. For me, I see and experience the power of very small actions repeated daily and how they can accumulate to create a life of purpose and example while enjoying the bounty life has to offer.

**You have BRAINS in your HEAD.
You have FEET in your SHOES.
You can STEER yourself in any
DIRECTION you CHOOSE.
– Dr. Seuss**