

# Morning Routines Set Us Up For Success

Efficiency

Contrary to some trains of thought, routines are not about rigidity and control. Our brains like patterns. Setting and following a daily routine supports your mind by giving it the structure it needs to achieve your goals. But that's not all – routines are good for your heart and soul! They contribute to feelings of familiarity and reassurance and help you respond better to change.

How do you set up a routine that works for you? Well, don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. Creating a routine isn't about completely overhauling everything you do and arbitrarily putting a whole new "system" of how you "do mornings" into place. Some commentators suggest massive lists of tasks for a magnificent morning but it's important to be realistic. Most school staff have a very precise "start time" and trying to squeeze in stacks of personal care before you even arrive at work could be counterproductive. Remember, it doesn't need to be right for everyone, it just needs to be right for you. Keep it simple and start where you are.

When planning a morning routine for home, examine your rhythms. Think about the last few days and weeks and reflect on what you currently do that energises you as well as what drains you. Some ideas could be:

**The way you start your day determines how well you live your day.**

- Movement (intense or gentle) or meditation /affirmations
- Journaling, reading, listening to a particular type of music
- Consuming nourishing and energising food and drinks
- Planning your day/week (including workouts, social life etc)

**Robin Sharma**

Once you get to school, maintaining your rituals helps in many ways - maintaining a sense of internal calm and externally exuding a composed, professional persona. To plan your school morning routine, think about what is essential for a successful work day – and then think about what isn't! List your non-negotiables and estimate how long and what order of priority each one should take. Be firm with yourself. Other tips include:

- Be intentional: set boundaries about what you will and won't do before you officially start your work day (eg no social media or checking email until you've checked your 'to-do list')
- Before you walk into school, do a quick mind-body scan and adjust your body language accordingly (eg shoulders down if you're stressed, chest out if you're lacking confidence)
- Avoid areas of the school that are congested or 'procrastination zones'; seek positive engagement only

Set up for success in 2021 by establishing a routine that works for you.

## Key points

Start small – pick one habit to focus on and apply it consistently over three weeks.

Seek inspiration from people who you respect for their efficiency and positive energy (ASK them what they do)!

Be gentle on yourself – if life throws you a curveball and you don't get to enact your usual routine, let it go and commit to regrouping the following day.

Stay hydrated – water is essential.

You've heard it before – a million times no doubt – but BE SELECTIVE about your technology use.

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Steve is an expert in school leadership and work-life satisfaction. Steve was a Principal for 20 years and is the author of four books, 'Time Management For Teachers', 'A Gr8 Life...Live it Now!', 'First Semester Can Make or Break You!' and 'Attitude is Everything'. Steve lives in Brisbane with his wife and family but works with school leaders and staff in schools across Australia and internationally.

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