



# Masterclass

## OVERCOME the OVERWHELM



Presented by  
**Lauren Parsons**

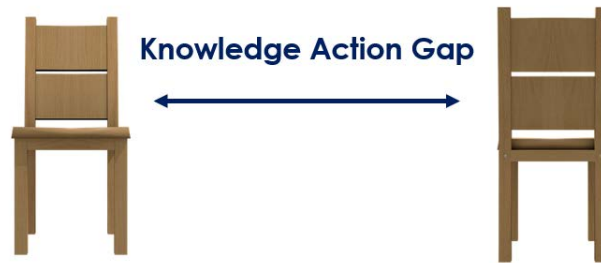


Presented by Lauren Parsons, Wellbeing Specialist

[www.LaurenParsonsWellbeing.com](http://www.LaurenParsonsWellbeing.com)

#### IN THIS SESSION YOU'LL DISCOVER:

- The **worst way to start your day** and what to do instead
- How to 'win the day' from the moment you wake and the **top morning routines** successful people use to ensure a magnificent day
- Discover the **negative consequences of poor sleep** and how **restorative sleep** enhances every system in your **body** and **brain**
- Improve **cognitive performance** and decision-making ability by establishing daily routines that will **augment your sleep** and **boost your vitality**
- Learn how to engage in deep restorative sleep and **wake up feeling refreshed** and **energised** ready to perform at your peak
- Understand how to apply this learning to your teams and **workplace culture**



To create any positive change, requires action. Often there are things we know that we could do or should do, yet there is this gap between knowledge and action. Once you close that gap, you can achieve anything. It's your daily practises that will make the difference.

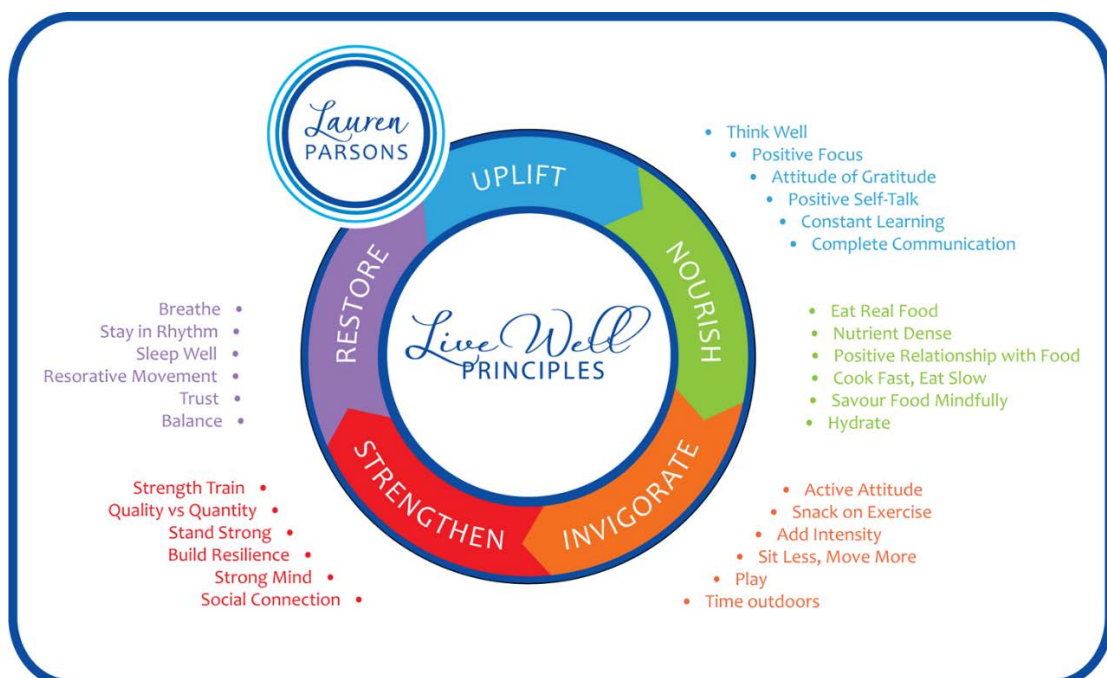


Always remember that you are capable of more than you can ever imagine. Think back over times in your life when you've surprised yourself with what you've been able to do or achieve.

If you have a goal in mind, whether big or small, personal or professional, you have the ability to create massive change and can achieve that goal, when you believe in it and commit to taking daily action towards it.

## The Five Live Well Principles

A holistic approach is essential to total wellbeing, which is why I have developed these **five Live Well Principles**. Each principle is underpinned by **six pillars**.

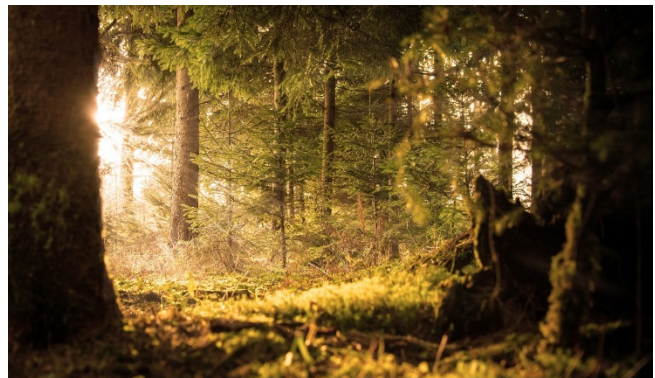


## Start the Day Right

The way that you begin your day has a huge influence on the course of your entire day. When you create a powerful morning routine to set yourself up well, you will feel calm and centred, happy and alert as you head into your day. That will flow on to everyone around you.

### Nine morning essentials

1. W\_\_\_\_\_ & g\_\_\_\_\_ up at the same time
2. S\_\_\_\_\_ into your r\_\_\_\_\_
3. Uplifting m\_\_\_\_\_
4. M\_\_\_\_\_
5. B\_\_\_\_\_
6. G\_\_\_\_\_
7. Positive i\_\_\_\_\_
8. Staying o\_\_\_\_\_
9. N\_\_\_\_\_ breakfast



Regardless of what happens in the middle of your day, you can generally control and protect the way you start and finish your day. Be intentional to **bookend your day well** with a morning routine and evening routine that you choose.

Brainstorm what you could build into, or change, about your morning routines:

### Start Doing

### Stop Doing

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## Why Quality Sleep Is So Vital

A good night's sleep is essential for all aspects of your health. A lack of sleep not only increases fatigue, errors and irritability, it also shortens your life, increases the incidence of major diseases, and negatively impacts on reproduction. Good sleep makes you smarter, healthier and happier.

It is not a 'nice to have' but an essential part of life. See Matthew Walkers TED Talk – "Sleep Is Your Super Power".

Experts recommend 7 - 8 hours of quality un-interrupted sleep a night.

Quality sleep assists the body and brain to restore itself ready for the following day. Stressors and poor habits can affect our sleep quality, leading to additional stress and it can become a vicious cycle that needs to be addressed.

## Common Sleep Issues

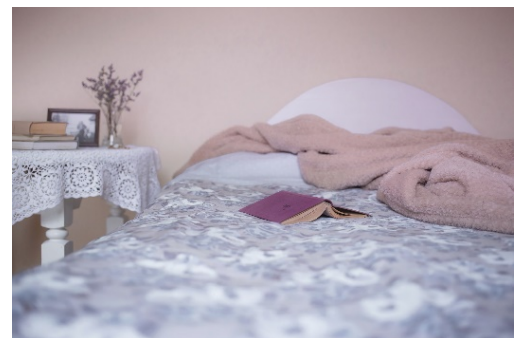
- Difficulty falling asleep
- Restless sleep
- Waking during the night
- Feeling tired upon waking in the morning
- Feeling sleepy during the day



**What challenges do you currently experience?**

## What Happens When We Sleep?

- Blood pressure drops & breathing slows
- Muscles relax & blood supply to muscles increases
- Energy is replenished
- Hormones are released, such as growth hormone, which promotes growth and muscle development
- Tissue growth and repair occurs
- The brain consolidates and enhances memories

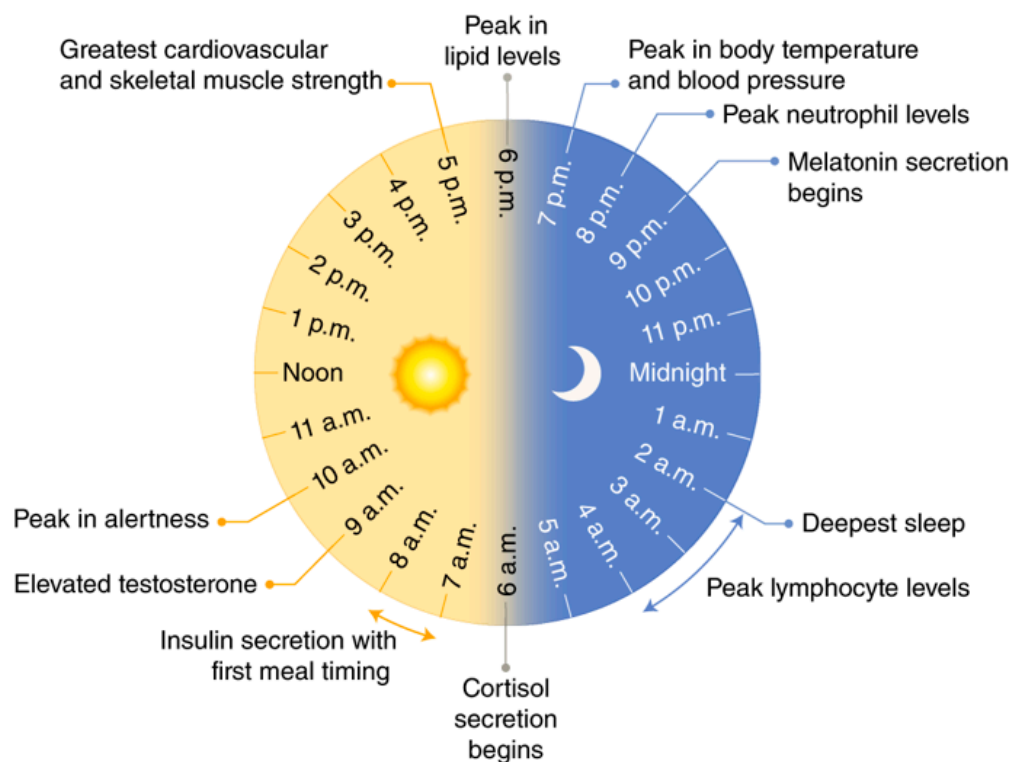




## Adequate Quality Sleep Leads To

- Better Immunity
- Less Stress
- Less Pain
- Healthy Weight
- Better Mood
- More Creativity
- Increased Focus
- Improved Memory
- Higher Accuracy
- Faster Work Pace
- Improved Reproductive Potential
- Longer Life

## Understand Your Body's Rhythms



Nerves in the center of your brain, called the suprachiasmatic nucleus, oversee your natural body clock or circadian rhythm along with your blood pressure, body temperature and sense of time. It helps you get to sleep and stay asleep overnight and to wake feeling refreshed in the morning. It also includes a lower dip midafternoon when some sort of rest or lower energy activity is ideal.

Going to sleep and waking at the same time each day is beneficial as your body produces hormones, such as cortisol, to help you become more alert and wake up feeling refreshed and ready to go. If however you wake at different times each day you confuse your body clock, which may result in feeling groggy upon waking.

Hitting the snooze button exacerbates this sending mixed messages to your hormonal system which no longer knows if you want to be calming down or gearing up for the day.

## Sleep Regularity Is Key

- Go to bed and to sleep at a s\_\_\_\_\_ time each night and wake at the s\_\_\_\_\_ time each morning.
- Get up without hitting s\_\_\_\_\_
- Avoid s\_\_\_\_\_ during the day – except for short “power naps” of around 20 minutes prior to 3pm



## Sleep Hygiene

These things are important for quality deep sleep:

- C\_\_\_\_\_ – 18 -19 degrees C
- D\_\_\_\_\_ – black out curtains, lights
- C\_\_\_\_\_ mattress, pillow and linen
- No d\_\_\_\_\_ (avoid pets or children in the bed/bedroom if at all possible)
- Clearly a\_\_\_\_\_ your bedroom with sleep
- Make it a t\_\_\_\_\_ free zone
- Clear the space near your h\_\_\_\_\_



Note that smartphones and tablets emit a short wavelength blue light that disrupts sleep patterns. It is also important to keep headspace clear of technology (think about what might be through the wall behind your headboard.)

### Practical tips to avoid the negative impact of technology

- Have rules about where/when you access your phone (and be strict with these)
- Limit social media time (set a timer or uninstall them from your phone and only use them on your computer so you're more mindful of the time)
- Use airplane mode from a set time in the evening and overnight
- Charge your phone in another room. Consider setting up a charging station in the lounge for the whole family
- Have your wifi connection programmed to switch off at a set time each evening
- Rather than being on technology last thing in the day, use that time to prepare for the morning before going to bed, e.g. get breakfast set up, clothes for the day, tidy kitchen bench, clean shoes, iron shirts etc
- Add in tech-free activities that relax you such as manual tasks (knitting, crochet, wood working), playing an instrument, board games/card games, or reading a book

## ***Getting to sleep is like catching a wave.***

Make sure you don't miss your window and end up over-tired.

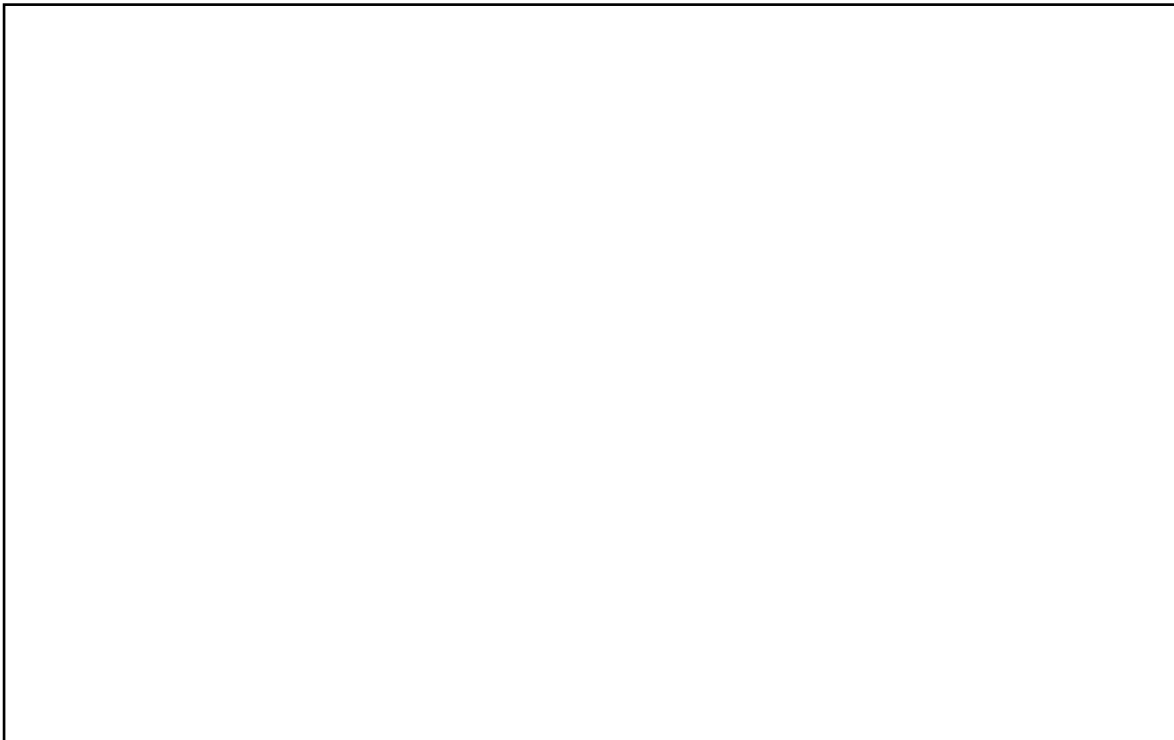
### **Bedtime Routines**

Take note of when you start feeling sleepy and use your bedtime routines to wind down before you become over-tired or get your 'second-wind' after which time it will take much longer to get to sleep. Here are some ideas:

- Dim l\_\_\_\_\_
- Reduce n\_\_\_\_\_
- Avoid s\_\_\_\_\_
- Put t\_\_\_\_\_ out of reach/out of sight
- Have set h\_\_\_\_\_ – e.g. shower/bath, PJs, herbal tea, calm music, brush teeth, stretching, reading by lamplight
- W\_\_\_\_\_ in a journal - Let go of mental clutter, Sign off the day - top 5 list
- Practise g\_\_\_\_\_

### **Plan Your Ideal Bedtime Routine**

Brainstorm a list of ideas of what you would include in an ideal bedtime routine for yourself.



Treat it as an experiment this coming week. Try out different approaches and take note of what works best for you.



## Four healthy daily habits to improve sleep quality

What you do all day sets up your sleep quality.

### 1 Leverage S\_\_\_\_\_

- Get sunlight into your eyes first thing in the morning – go for a walk or eat breakfast outdoors
- And again around midday get ten minutes of direct daylight, to help keep your body clock in sync and lead to a deeper sleep at night.



### 2 E\_\_\_\_\_ Your Heart Rate

- Get your heart rate up daily to promote deep sleep
- Try snacking on exercise in short sharp bursts throughout your day, making it easy to fit in. See [www.SnackOnExercise.com](http://www.SnackOnExercise.com)
- Avoid vigorous exercise within 3-4 hours of bedtime

### 3 Optimise Your N\_\_\_\_\_

- Eat the Rainbow
- Support your bodies rest and repair phase
- Have lighter meals in the evening
- Avoid spicy foods close to bedtime



### 4 Avoid S\_\_\_\_\_

- Caffeine
- Theophylline
- Alcohol
- Tobacco

## Additional Sleep Aids

- White noise – instrumental music, waves
- Aromatherapy – lavender, chamomile, ylang ylang
- Herbal teas
- Heat – wheat bags
- Magnesium – muscle relaxant
- Homeopathy – rescue remedy
- Sleep inducing foods – milk, bananas, honey, chicken



## What About Night Time Waking?

- Avoid phones, screens or any bright l\_\_\_\_\_
- If you have something on your mind – w\_\_\_\_\_ it down and let it go
- If you feel r\_\_\_\_\_, stay in bed and breathe diaphragmatically and simply rest and focus on gratitude
- If you don't, g\_\_\_\_\_ u\_\_\_\_\_ and go into another room and do something relaxing – e.g. reading beside a lamp, stretching, checking on your children
- When you feel t\_\_\_\_\_ again go back to bed and relax
- You may like to r\_\_\_\_\_ part of your bedtime routine, e.g. have a stretch, brush your teeth, go to the bathroom

## Progressive Muscle Relaxation

By tensing and relaxing all the muscle groups in your body, you can relieve tension and feel much more relaxed in minutes. This can be a great way to finish the day and ease yourself into sleep.



Get comfortable – lying on your back, (with knees bent up if preferred), otherwise with legs relaxed and feet flopped outwards, arms relaxed with palms facing up. Alternatively you can be seated with a neutral spine, with your feet relaxed and flat on the floor and with your arms resting on your lap.

Begin by focusing on breathing completely (diaphragmatically as if your belly is a balloon filling with air). Inhale and take a deep breath in ballooning your belly and holding gently at the full point before exhaling slowly allowing the stomach to relax back and in.

Tense and hold, then release each muscle group in your body one at a time breathing out deeply and slowly after each one. Start with arms, then legs, stomach, shoulders, face and then all over. After tensing each muscle group leave them totally relaxed and still. Continue focusing on breathing and allowing your whole body to relax. Often this will lead straight into sleep.

Feel free to download my 8 minute audio recording of a guided Progressive Muscle Relaxation here:

<https://laurenparsonswellbeing.com/download-your-progressive-muscle-relaxation/>

or <https://bit.ly/downloadPMR>



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## IN THIS SESSION YOU'LL DISCOVER:

- The **biggest mistake** that makes you lose hours every week (and how to overcome it)
- How **clarity** around what is truly important will transform your **decision making ability**
- How and why to carve out **time for yourself as a leader** to increase your **resilience**
- The critical **mindset shift** and practical steps to ensure you take regular time to recharge - **completely guilt free**
- How to create a **calm, positive atmosphere** in which you can **thrive**
- The steps to reduce **anxiety** and be **confident** and **centred** within seconds, regardless of what's going on around you

## The Biggest Mistake

Not being \_\_\_\_\_ on what's \_\_\_\_\_

## The Rocks & Jar Analogy

What are the rocks in your life and in your day? What are the pebbles and sand that sometimes get in the way?

The key is to identify the real 'rocks' in your life, the things that are truly important to you and to prioritise time for them first.

Let's identify the rocks in your life that you want to prioritise...

A large inverted triangle containing six empty circles, each with a horizontal line for writing.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## What's your WHY?

When I picture ideally how I want life to be,  
this is what I would describe:



I am ...

My family are ...

My relationships are ...

My home is ...

My career is ...

I enjoy spending time ...

Life is ...

## Your Golden Bucket of Resilience

What are some of your favourite things to do, that recharge you and make you feel great?



What things drain your bucket?

## Time to Re-Charge

How do you feel about taking time out just for you?

What words come to mind...



## Creating a Mindset Shift

If you feel that taking time for you is selfish or it makes you feel guilty, let's re-write the statement:

Taking time out for myself is \_\_\_\_\_



Remember that when you take time to 'fill your own cup' that flows on to benefit everyone around you! Not taking that time is really the selfish option as you show up as a 'less than your best' version of yourself.

**Ask yourself** - If I had all the time in the world and absolutely no constraints, the top three things I love to do to re-charge, lift my mood, and bring me joy are:

- 
- 
- 

How will I feel if I do these things regularly?

### Making it happen:

- P\_\_\_\_\_ ahead
- Block it as an a\_\_\_\_\_ in your diary
- Have a h\_\_\_\_\_ t\_\_\_\_\_ for changing it
- N\_\_\_\_\_ it
- Be p\_\_\_\_\_
- Grab small m\_\_\_\_\_



### What would you add to your joy list?

Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly

## Create & Maintain the Atmosphere You Want

What 5 words would you use to describe the atmosphere you want to create?

**At home**



**At work**



## Allow Yourself to Leave Work Worries at Work

### The Story of the Carpenter and the “Worry Tree”

*“I know I can’t help having worries on the job – but one thing’s for sure – my worries don’t belong in the house with my wife and the children. So I just hang them up on the tree every night when I come home. Then in the morning I pick them up again.”*

*Funny thing is,” he smiled, “when I come out in the morning to pick them up, there aren’t nearly as many as I remember hanging up the night before.”*



It’s up to every one of us to decide what is truly important to us and to choose what to focus on. Worries and self-doubts can be infectious and lead to a downward spiral that will feed off of itself to negatively affect your health and become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

There will always be worries, but it’s amazing, when you look at the things that have been worrying you in hindsight, they only seem like minor challenges and you wonder why you thought they were so major at the time.

You may not be able to eliminate worries, but you can control how you react to them. Choose to leave your worries to rest and to learn from them, instead of feeding into them, and you will be able to remain calm and resilient even during challenging times.

**What ritual or routine will you use as a way to create a separation between work/home and allow you to leave work worries behind?**

## Instantly Restore Calm with Belly Breathing

Deep diaphragmatic breathing is one of the most effective and instant ways to relieve stress in your body.

It has numerous benefits, including oxygenating the blood, which 'wakes up' the brain, relaxing muscles and quieting the mind. Breathing exercises are especially helpful because you can do them anywhere, and they work quickly so you can de-stress in a flash.



Breathing is the only part of your Autonomic Nervous System that you can control. It signals to your entire system that you are calm and relaxed. This really is the number one strategy for evoking your body's relaxation response and shifting your bio-chemistry to a state of well-being.

Tip – Relax your stomach and picture your belly expanding like a balloon as you inhale, then relax back in gently as you exhale. Relax your shoulders and buttocks.

Practise being mindful of your breath throughout your day. Mindfulness practises are proven to reduce stress, boost resilience and improve wellbeing.

## Mind Full, or Mindful?



## Being Present is a Gift

Living life in the present is like living life in \_\_\_\_\_

Life is happening \_\_\_\_\_

The more that you can be present, rather than worrying about the future or reliving the past over and over in your mind, the more joy you will experience.

### Ways to become present

- Connect with your body
- Pay attention to your surroundings
- Notice the smells, sounds, sights around you
- Focus on your breathing
- Listen deeply
- Ponder what you're grateful for right now
- Connect with someone - make eye contact and smile, have a 4 second hug
- Get involved – dance, sing, draw
- Focus on a manual task



For further help, check out full the range of articles and resources at [www.LaurenParsonsWellbeing.com](http://www.LaurenParsonsWellbeing.com)





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### IN THIS SESSION YOU'LL DISCOVER:

- The **best places to focus your time** and effort to live life the way you really want
- The secret to overcoming the '**tyranny of the urgent**' to get the right things done
- A revolutionary way to **plan and schedule your week** that will transform your life
- **How to achieve more** by mastering daily success planning so your **highest objectives** are never missed
- **Productivity techniques** that top-performers use to create more **freedom** and **flexibility**
- The best **time-savings tips, hacks** and **strategies** you can integrate and implement team-wide to **maximise productivity**

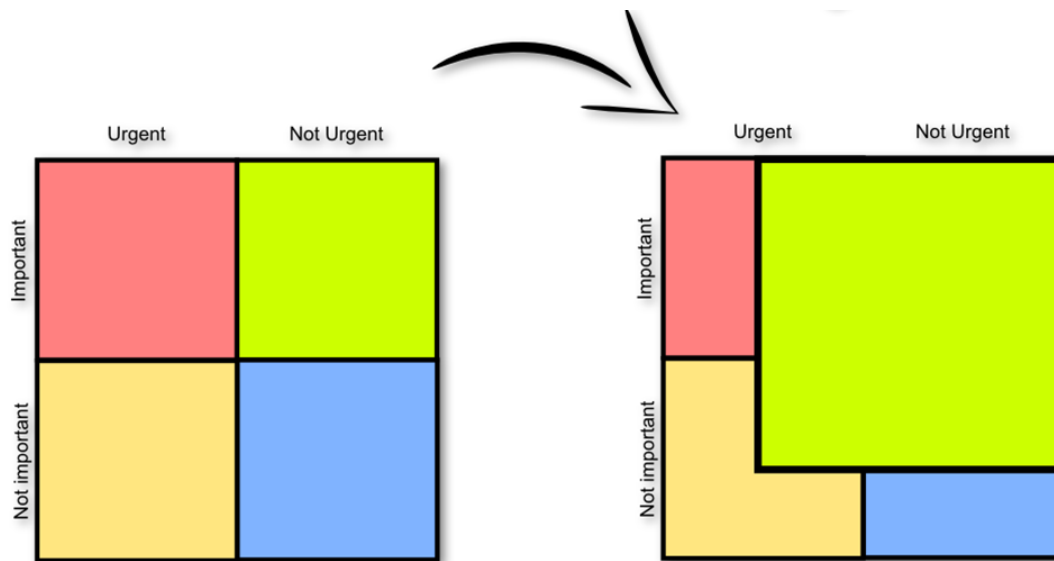
## Important vs Urgent Matrix

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important		
Not Important		

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wildly important goals</li> <li>• Vital customer calls</li> <li>• Major deadlines</li> <li>• Last-minute assignments from your boss</li> <li>• Pressing problems</li> <li>• Crises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wildly important goals</li> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Continuous Improvement</li> <li>• Professional development</li> <li>• Defining contribution</li> <li>• Coaching &amp; mentoring</li> </ul>
Not Important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too many objectives</li> <li>• Unimportant meetings</li> <li>• Meaningless reports</li> <li>• Needless interruptions</li> <li>• Low-priority email</li> <li>• Other people's minor issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workplace gossip</li> <li>• Busy work</li> <li>• Aimless internet surfing</li> <li>• Perfectionism</li> <li>• Time-wasters</li> <li>• Irrelevant phone calls</li> </ul>



## The Ultimate Goal



## Strategic Weekly Planning

The key to making your 'rocks' a reality is to schedule in blocks of time to work towards those non-urgent yet important tasks. If you don't plan for them, they most likely won't happen. In short to-do lists are not enough – **scheduling is key**.

Rather than just filling your weekly planner with meetings and appointments and having a disconnected to do list, which is what most people do. Instead, set aside time at the end of the week, or on a Sunday evening to follow this process, ideally with a 'week to view planner'. I prefer a planner system with vertical columns for each day. You may prefer an electronic version.



1. Identify the \_\_\_\_\_ you want to achieve
2. Block out your \_\_\_\_\_ (including both professional and personal tasks and appointments)
3. Schedule r\_\_\_\_\_ blocks of time for your key goals
4. Allow extra time for \_\_\_\_\_

Picture how great it will feel one week from now having progressed or achieved those three key goals. Schedule time slots for those priority goals for times when you'll be at peak performance. Having blocks of time scheduled into your week planner – as opposed to a vague to-do list – transforms the way your week will unfold.

For example if you're completing a course you may schedule reading or assignment writing time; if you're training for a cycle race it might be planning your training rides, distance and dates; if it's delegating a work task it may be documenting the systems and procedures, then the time to train and follow up with the team member; if it's decluttering your house it may be setting aside time for each area you want to focus on.

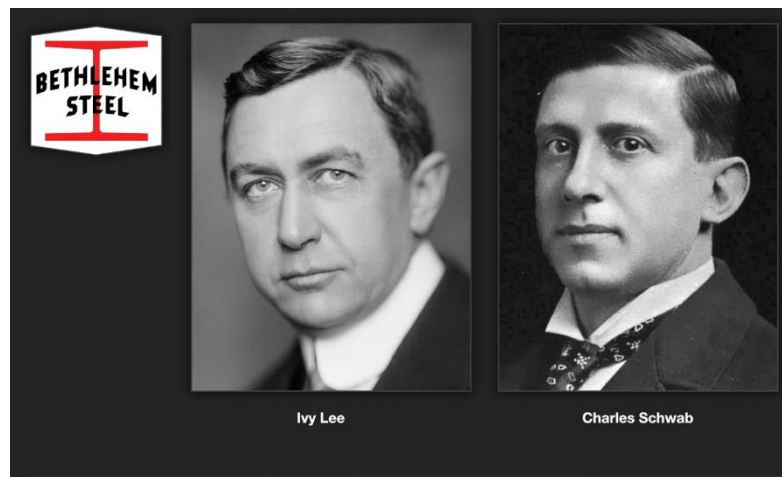
## Prioritise Your “Frog”

Mark Twain once said *“Eat a live frog first thing in the morning and nothing worse will happen to you the rest of the day.”*

Your ‘frog’ is the most important task for the day, often the one you are most inclined to put off till later. See Brian Tracey’s book *“Eat That Frog.”*



Getting it out of the way first thing in the morning does three things. First, you are much more likely to complete it within the day if you start it first thing. Also, you are tackling it when you have the best energy and clarity in the day. But best of all, once it’s complete, the weight lifts off your shoulders and it gives you more energy to continue achieving throughout the day.



### Lessons from the Bethlehem Steel Story:

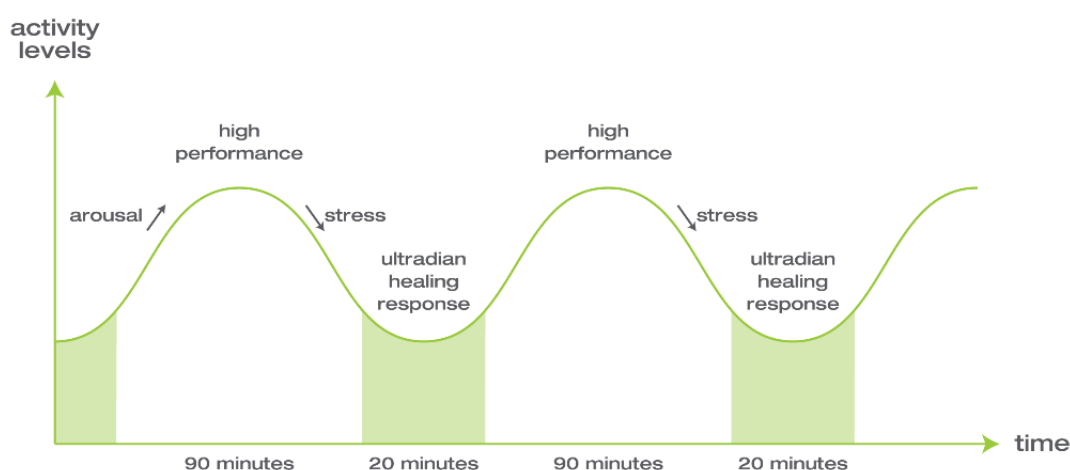
- At the \_\_\_\_\_ of each day identify your top five goals
- And \_\_\_\_\_ them 1 – 5
- When you arrive in the morning start on your \_\_\_\_\_ priority and be disciplined to work through them in order of importance
- ALSO - Take charge of \_\_\_\_\_ by jotting them down on your list rather than reacting

Over the years, I have learnt a huge amount about time management from New Zealand based Time-Management Specialist, Robyn Pearce, known as ‘The Time Queen’. I highly recommend subscribing to her updates at [www.gettingagrip.com](http://www.gettingagrip.com) and get her free report, “How to Master Time.”

## Maximise Your Productivity by Working in Sync

Once you've got your priorities defined, the next key is to manage your energy well. As Robyn Pearce says – "Time management is really energy management."

As well as having a daily circadian rhythm which controls our sleep and wakefulness periods, we also have several shorter ultradian rhythms. 'Ultra' means 'many' and 'dian' means 'day'. Ultradian rhythms are natural, undulating cycles of energy. After about 90 minutes of sustained energy output and mental focus, the body and brain need a 10-20 minute break.



When you understand your ultradian rhythms you can capitalise on them by working in sync and taking regular breaks to boost creativity, accuracy, efficiency and effectiveness.

### Signs Your Body and Brain Need a Break

- Easily Distracted
- Tired
- Drowsy
- Irritable
- Hungry/Thirsty
- Emotional

### Ignoring your body's signals = fight or flight mode

This reduces cognitive capacity, lowers performance, increases errors, impairs digestion, increases inflammation, and lowers immunity.

It's possible to push through when your body signals it needs a break, this will send you into fight or flight mode giving you a kick of adrenaline and that second wind-feeling), but over time may lead to chronically elevated cortisol levels and head you towards burnout. Instead, when you notice the signs, take a break or have a change of state. It will make you much more effective and productive overall.

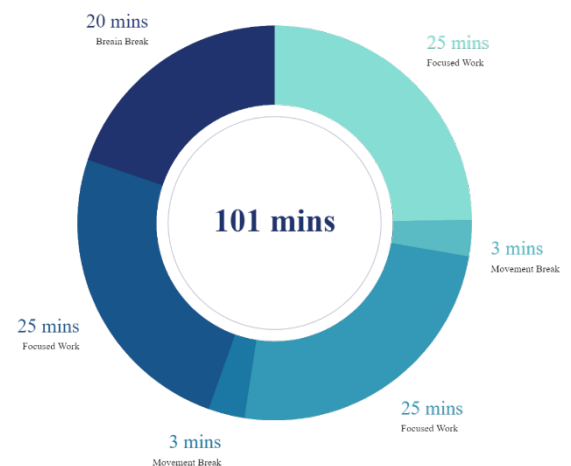
## Master the 101 Minute Productivity Cycle

By setting a count-down timer, you can create focused work periods interspersed with breaks to create the ultimate work rhythm in your day. Set a timer for 25 minutes of focused work, followed by a 3 minute movement break. Repeat this three times, on the third time taking a restorative 20 minute ultradian break.

The timer gives you a false sense of urgency, helping you stay focused and overall achieving much more. Most people can get 4 of these ultra-productive cycles into a typical work day. This productivity hack alone can save you hours a week.

## Make the Most of Your Ultradian Rhythm

- Set a timer for short focused periods
- Add movement breaks in between
- Use the 101 minute productivity cycle
  - 25 mins focused work : 3 mins movement
  - 25 mins focused work : 3 mins movement
  - 25 mins focused work : 20 min break



Try it out with a timer and see what a difference it makes for you.

## Snack on Exercise

Adding small bursts of movement into your day, even just 4 minutes a day – the amount of time we spend brushing our teeth – can boost your brain, body and mood.

Numerous clinical research studies show that sitting for long periods increases early death, diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity and heart disease. Most importantly, this remains true even if you exercise at other times.



UK Endocrinology Researcher Dr Emma Wilmot says "We now know that going to the gym at the end of the day is not enough to undo the harm of hours and hours of time spent sitting at a desk."

Breaking up long periods of sitting by snacking on exercise is hugely beneficial in terms of health outcomes as well as improving mood and cognitive performance. Organisations that encourage an active workplace culture where movement is the norm have smarter, healthier team members who are more engaged and more effective.

See my 2018 TED Talk on this topic at [www.SnackOnExercise.com](http://www.SnackOnExercise.com)

## Quick Tips

- S\_\_\_\_\_ while talking on the phone, making a list or checking your emails.
- Learn some brief 'd\_\_\_\_\_' routines you can use while you're at your desk to easily integrate movement into your day
- Rather than having individual rubbish bins /printers beside each desk, have c\_\_\_\_\_ ones which encourage movement
- Choose to use the b\_\_\_\_\_ upstairs at the other end of the building
- Have s\_\_\_\_\_ meetings or 'walk and talk' meetings (use dictaphone technology to take notes.)
- Get o\_\_\_\_\_ – at least once a day and get sunlight into your retina, ideally close to midday. This helps to regulate great sleep patterns which in turn gives you more energy.
- Sit and eat in a relaxed setting, a\_\_\_\_\_ from your desk. Avoid eating while standing or doing other things. Not only will you improve digestion and increase satiety as you'll be more aware of what you've eaten, you'll also return to your work space refreshed and recharged.

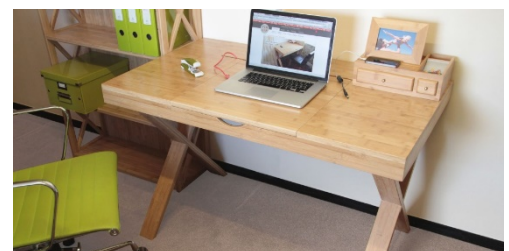


## Extra Time-Saving Strategies

### Declutter

It's worth doing an audit and setting aside some time to get your office and workspace set up for maximum productivity.

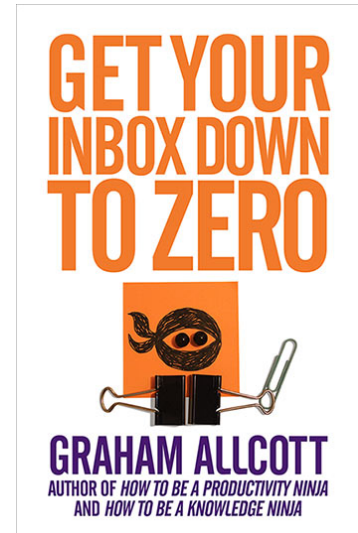
- Remember that everything that is in your line of vision will clutter your thinking and impact on your productivity - especially if it involves people - so step back and think about your entire workspace set up.
- Take note of the things you use daily and have those within immediate reach (in your immediate circle.)
- Keep things out of sight as much as possible. Use top drawers for stationery and keep your desktop/workspace clear and clutter free.
- Use an action folder and/or separate project folders for current work and keep it in your closest vertical drop file for easy access.
- Avoid horizontal piles – instead store everything vertically, ideally in labelled L pockets or folders.
- All of your other reference materials and things you don't often use can be stored further afield in your office.
- Have a space away from your desk for when you want to chat, relax, be creative, etc.





## Master Your Email

- Avoid checking emails first thing in the day. This is the number one way to get off track and spend your most productive time on tasks that are not likely among those TOP FIVE!
- Have set times that you view and respond to emails and work in 'offline mode' at other times (this is a setting you can click in the top centre when on the send/receive tab in outlook).
- Always ask yourself what is the best way to respond (would a phone call be quicker?)
- Use clear subject headings and highlight what needs to be done.
- Use rules to sort your inbox. These allow you to sort emails from certain senders or on certain topics automatically as they arrive.
- Always include a signature block. You can also create several 'signature block's for common responses you send and insert the text when needed. Any time you type repetitive messages take a few moments to create a template email as a new signature block to save time in future by avoiding repetition.
- Use Graham Allcott's 'Productivity Ninja' technique to get your inbox to zero. This is a life changer! Just be sure that if you're filing emails or articles into a 'read later' folder that you block out reading time on a weekly basis to keep up with them.



## Chunk it / Bulk it

- Don't sweat the small stuff. Chunk small tasks together. For example do all your phone calls, emails, or filing together in one go once or twice a day.
- You might set yourself small goals such 'I'll complete these 5 phone calls in 15 minutes, or send these 3 emails in 10 minutes.

## Delegate-Defer-Ditch

- With less important tasks, always ask yourself "Is there a way that I can avoid completing this myself?"
- Aim to use the three D's when suitable.
  - **Can you Delegate?** If there is someone else you can train up that could perform a task even 70% as well as you do it, it is most likely worth taking the time to delegate it, especially if it's a time consuming and ongoing repetitive task.
  - **Can you Defer?** Is this actually time-critical, or could it be done next week, next month, or next year? Step back from the task and be realistic about what you can achieve and when would be the best time compared to other priorities.
  - **Can you Ditch?** Is this something that is actually vital or important or just a 'nice to do?' If it's not critical, assess whether you can let it go and put your valuable time towards other things.



## Household Time Savers

- Meal plan on a Sunday evening. It's so much easier to make the decisions in one go rather than having that decision fatigue day by day during the week. Be flexible and open to the plan changing as the week evolves.
- Order your groceries online with your laptop open on the kitchen bench in conjunction with planning your meals. This saves time and money and means you're less likely to miss things as you can plan in relation to what's in the pantry and see what's on special while you plan your menu.
- Make it your default to cook multiple meals whenever possible. I recommend quadruple batch cooking and setting aside 3 frozen meals each time you cook, creating a library of meals in your freezer. This way you only have to cook two nights a week and can have every other night off (particularly those busy nights when you have other things on). For more on this see [www.realfoodlessfuss.com](http://www.realfoodlessfuss.com) for my complete time-saving healthy meal planning guide and much more.
- Leave your kitchen benches clear and tidy in the evening so you're ready for a fresh start to the day.
- Prep your breakfast and any lunches required, the night before.
- Have non-perishable snacks at your desk or in your bag so you aren't caught out without fuel when you need it most.
- Choose your clothes the night before as well. Do any ironing or spot cleaning as needed so you're not caught rushing in the morning. Teach your kids to lay out their clothes (and to pack their own clothes for holidays and take responsibility for them.)
- Have a place for everything and use a 'do it now' and 'everything in its place' attitude. Teach this to family members as well. e.g. When you finish with the scissors put them away. As soon as you return from an outing or a holiday pack everything back to its places.
- Clean little and often, e.g. wipe the bathroom sink/vanity down after each use (teach family members to do the same), tidy one drawer/cupboard, dust one room, clean one part of the kitchen for 15 minutes a day.
- If you have young children, make cleaning time a game of chase with the vacuum cleaner or a game of hide and seek. It's amazing how many mirrors/benches you can wipe down between turns.
- Always fold the washing as you take it off the line.
- Gardening is also a lovely chore to share with children of all ages.
- Multi-task mundane household chores like tidying/dusting/ironing/mending (does anyone else still do mending?) with phone conversations with your headphones in so you are hands free.
- Schedule regular bill payments to go through automatically so you don't have to worry about them. Schedule your credit card to be paid in full automatically from your main accounts to avoid ever paying the awfully high interest charges.
- Schedule things like dentist visits, warrant of fitness inspections for your car and other regular annual events as recurring reminders in your phone/email system so you get an automatic reminder.





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#### IN THIS SESSION YOU'LL DISCOVER:

- The most common **communication mistake** you make and how to avoid it
- The fundamentals of assertive communication to **calmly** and **respectfully ask** for what you **really want and need**
- A new way to approach difficult conversations and the **non-confrontational** way to **change the way people treat you**
- How inspirational leaders motivate change and how to practise **empowered delegation**
- How to establish **positive boundaries** that create more freedom and give you hours back every week
- How to **say no**, guilt-free

## Set Boundaries

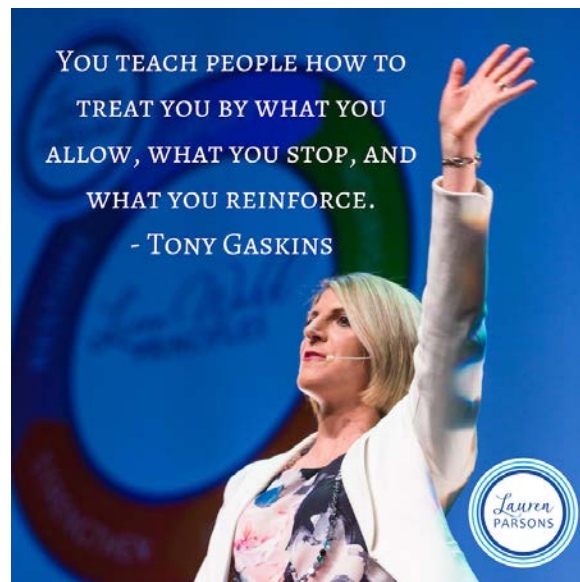
Often it is other people and their attitude or demands that can cause us to feel overwhelmed, so being able to set clear and appropriate boundaries is an essential step to maintain balance in our lives.



People will always treat you \_\_\_\_\_

Consider that statement for a moment and picture any situations in your life where you wish people might treat you differently.

Be intentional to create that atmosphere through the way you act, the way you structure your environment, the way you greet and treat people.



The best way to influence others is by the way that you act yourself.

Remember that people will treat you the way you allow them to treat you.

Learning to practise assertive communication skills, being able to set boundaries and say no when needed are essential communication skills to help you maintain balance.

The biggest communication mistake that people commonly make is not saying what you \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ in a clear and \_\_\_\_\_ way with the \_\_\_\_\_ in mind.

## Complete Communication

With colleagues, friends, family and in fact virtually everyone you interact with, it's helpful to learn to use assertive and what I call 'complete communication' to clearly express what you want or need in a positive and firm manner.

### This includes:

- W\_\_\_\_\_ you want/need
- W\_\_\_\_\_ you want/need it
- H\_\_\_\_\_ you want/need it done
- W\_\_\_\_\_ you want/need it done
- THE B\_\_\_\_\_ for Y\_\_\_\_\_ and most importantly
- THE B\_\_\_\_\_ for T\_\_\_\_\_ of it being done



## Communication Differences

- P\_\_\_\_\_
- A\_\_\_\_\_
- A\_\_\_\_\_

## Assertive Behaviour

1. Make an a\_\_\_\_\_ time and place to discuss it
2. Stick to the f\_\_\_\_\_, be fair and kind (don't bring up the past, belittle, or call names)
3. Avoid over-exaggeration and s\_\_\_\_\_ (saying you always / never)
4. A\_\_\_\_\_ questions and aim to understand their motives
5. D\_\_\_\_\_ how you want things to be and how you expect to be treated
6. Be s\_\_\_\_\_ focused and find a win-win situation



## Courageous Conversations

If something is an ongoing problem and needs to be discussed, prior to having that important and potentially difficult conversation, consider things from the other person's point of view and what their wants and needs are. Look for the benefit for them in what you are asking and explain clearly exactly what you want or need including the when, where, how and most of all the why – what the benefit will be both for you and them.

Practising complete communication helps avoid issues that arise when you assume essential parts of your message – such as when or how you want something to be done. When used well, the other person will understand your motives and desires and see a real benefit because you have clearly spelled this out, which will result in a much more positive outcome for everyone.

### IMPORTANT CONVERSATION PLANNER

Use this to plan out a courageous conversation you wish to have with someone:

**The issue I wish to discuss**

**The overall outcome I would like to see**

**When the best time(s) would be to discuss it**

**What I want to happen (be specific)**

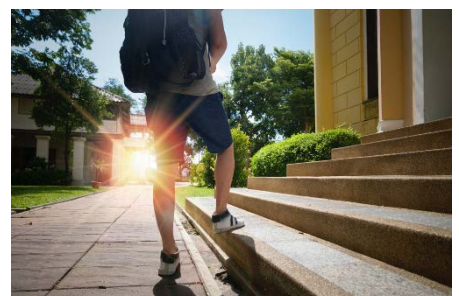
**How, when, where etc**

**Why this is important to me**

**Why this is beneficial to them**

**I plan to have this conversation on \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_**

**My first step will be...**



## The Wonders Of Delegation

We can lose hours every week by not delegating or systemising things effectively. Often times what might appear quicker and easier to do yourself, is in the long-term better to train others to do, even if it takes them a little longer.



For example a parent who continues to lay out clothes for their child or pack their child's bag even once they're old enough to do this themselves creates dependence, rather than independence (plus an extra job for the parent to do.)

A manager who constantly checks or re-does their staffs work or micro manages their team members prevents them from being empowered to learn and potentially develop better ways of doing things.

**What are some specific tasks that you'd like to pass on or delegate right now?**

At Work

At Home

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## Keys To Great Delegation

- Use c\_\_\_\_\_ communication
- Ask the r\_\_\_\_\_ questions
- Pre-arrange f\_\_\_\_\_ u\_\_\_\_
- I\_\_\_\_\_ what you expect
- Praise, praise, praise

### Three key questions to use to ensure fantastic delegation

Once you've explained the task, rather than saying "So, does that all make sense?"

To which the person will always want to say "yes" even if they're unsure. Instead use one or all of these phrases/questions

1. I've just covered a lot of info, I'm sure you must have questions what would you like me to recap?
2. From what I've told you so far, what do you understand as the most important thing about this task?
3. What is the first thing you'll do?

Stuck for ideas of chores to pass on to your children? See this list of 50 age-appropriate chores: [www.theorganisedhousewife.com.au/organising/kids-organising/50-age-appropriate-chores-for-kids/](http://www.theorganisedhousewife.com.au/organising/kids-organising/50-age-appropriate-chores-for-kids/)



## Yes or No?

Saying no to tasks that are not important to you is one of the best time management strategies available. The challenge is that a lot of people find it difficult to say no.



What sorts of things do you sometimes say yes to when really you'd prefer to say no?

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

How do you feel when you say no to someone?

Why do you feel that way? What do you feel it says about you as a person?

What other important things would you rather prioritise in your life (think about the rocks in your jar.)

- 
- 
- 
- 

When you are clear on your priorities it empowers you to say no. How can you clearly, positively express this to the person asking for your time in another area?

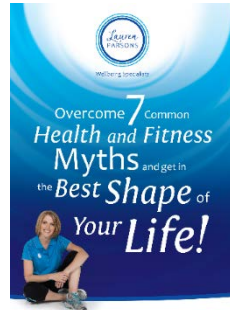
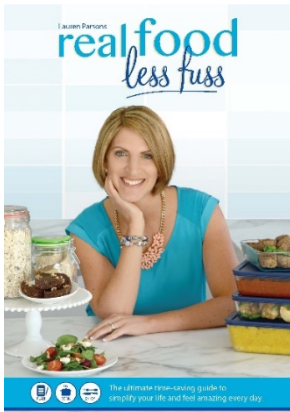
Thanks for thinking of me for the 'xyz job/role/task' I'd love to help with that but

- ...at the moment I'm focusing on xyz
- ...I have (number) other projects I'm working on in the evenings at present and I don't feel I could do a good job of any of them if I take on another project.
- ...I just need to prioritise xyz at the moment, perhaps you can ask me again next year? (only suggest this if you think you'd genuinely like to take part then)  
Or just simply
- "No thank you, I can't at this time."

And you might like some of these 49 ways to say no to anyone

[www.careerfaqs.com.au/news/news-and-views/how-to-say-no-to-anyone](http://www.careerfaqs.com.au/news/news-and-views/how-to-say-no-to-anyone)

## Further resources to help you boost your health and happiness



For daily inspiration join the community at

[www.facebook.com/LaurenParsonsWellbeing](http://www.facebook.com/LaurenParsonsWellbeing)

For all these resources, plus further tips, recipes and articles head to

[www.LaurenParsonsWellbeing.com](http://www.LaurenParsonsWellbeing.com)

To find out more about having Lauren consult with or deliver training for your organisation, simply email Lauren on [lauren@laurenparsons.co.nz](mailto:lauren@laurenparsons.co.nz) and make a time for a chat or to book a Workplace Wellbeing Insight Session for yourself or the key decision makers in your firm.

