



## Using ritual to boost productivity and health

### Same circus, different tent

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When I asked a colleague how they were feeling recently I received the following response ... "Ah you know, same circus, different tent."

When asking people how they are doing, do you stop and listen, I mean, *really* listen? You may realise that many responses are not so chirpy... 'Ag, surviving'; 'Can't wait for the weekend'; 'So so'; 'Cant complain'; 'Ag you know'.

Pretty dismal since we are still at the start of a new year! Should we not all be bright eyed and bushy tailed, not tired and overwhelmed?

Just eight weeks ago many of us were making resolutions to be more balanced, to exercise a bit more, to eat better, to lose some weight and so on. So how can we stick to our wellness goals despite the fact that we live and work at a frantic pace approaching 24/7?



Do you start off each day with the best of intentions, only to have them derailed?

#### **The challenge, as always, is execution.**

Jack LaLanne, the fitness guru, knows all about execution. He is famous for handcuffing himself and then swimming a kilometre or more while towing large boats filled with people. But he is not just a showman. He also invented several exercise machines including the ones with pulleys and weight selectors that are still used in health clubs throughout the world. He continues to reach prodigious acts of strength and endurance.

What is it that makes Jack LaLanne achieve what he does? His power comes not from physical strength or mental ability. It comes in the form of **RITUAL**.

At the age of 95, he still spends the first two hours of his day exercising. Ninety minutes lifting weights and 30 minutes swimming or walking. So he works, consistently and deliberately, toward his goals. He does the same things day in and day out. He cares enough about his fitness and to build it into his schedule.

Managing our health and energy needs to become a ritual too. Not simply something that has a vague sense of our attention or focus. That's not consistent or deliberate. It needs to be an ongoing process we follow no matter what.

The power of **RITUALS** is their predictability. You do the same thing in the same way over and over again and you get the same results.

- Graze on smart snacks rather than gorge and you will sustain your energy levels.
- Drink enough water each day and you will avoid headaches and unnecessary snacking.
- Breathe deeply and you will calm your mind.

These small rituals may not help you swim a kilometer while towing a cruise ship with your hands tied together. But it may just help you make it through each day with energy and leave you feeling productive and healthy.

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**"The first wealth is health."** Ralph Emerson

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