

Healthy Habits for Your Best Writing

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1.1.2009

Hand Writing The phrase a reasonable portion of health has been repeated for over a century now. It was used by William Craig, [in a letter to his wife](#), after suffering poor health and then recovering some. Today, we seek much the same thing, our best health to live, work and play—even if you're just writing. Key areas overlap and take a holistic approach; they include **mind**, **spirit** and **body**. Now, let's take a closer look at each of them.

MIND

When you want to do your best writing, you need to collect and order your thoughts. You know those times when it seems impossible to sit still to write, much less to clear your thoughts, those are not your best writing times. Many people, at any rate, don't write well when their thoughts are in chaos. For me, when my thoughts are running every which way and touching on everything pertinent and not, it's time to slow them down.

Meditation offers a great way to slow your thoughts, to control your focus and to regain the clarity that you need. It's a way to take a mental time-out from all your concerns. Emptying yourself of all concerns for a short time, has a way of allowing you to regroup and to learn more about the version of yourself that you present to the circumstances of your life. It can help you to regain the balance you sometimes lose when you all you do is rush and forget to rest.

There are many ways to quiet your thoughts, many different types of meditations. Find what works for you. And remember, the best methods don't require you to strain to reach the quiet space. If your thoughts are insistent to be heard, then you may need to hear them for a time, and then quiet them. Through the years, I have tried several meditations and my favorite is [Morning B.R.E.W.: A Divine Power Drink for Your Soul](#), by Kirk Byron Jones.

Morning B.R.E.W.

This is a very sparse bit of what I got from this book that helped me to develop my meditation practice. Of course, the fullest appreciation for this practice comes from reading the book. Once you read it, and try it out, you'll understand why so many people are using it since Dr. Jones first published the book.

The acronym B.R.E.W. stands for:

- **Be still** - refers to quieting your thoughts or concerns, in respite from the rush of everything
- **Receive God's love** - acknowledges the fact that God loves you by reflecting on how you see His hand in your life
- **Embrace yourself** - this is the practice of appreciating the best version of

yourself, reinforcing your positive attributes and leaving behind the lesser self-images

- **Welcome the day** - set the tone for your day by cultivating an attitude of anticipation, an attitude that expresses your enthusiasm for the unknown and trust in your preparedness to handle what comes your way

This is the barest explanation of B.R.E.W., strictly to whet your appetite for the book. Get the book to learn the details and discover the full measure of this powerful brew. I use it in the mornings and sometimes as a refresher during the day. When I'm finished, I am invigorated as well as clear-headed, and empowered to face my day.

SPIRIT

I need to have clear thoughts to write. And it's important for me to have a positive spirit. A positive spirit helps me with my sense of confidence and freedom. Because there are things that prod me toward a negative spirit, I have to remain vigilant to keep my spirits upbeat.

One of the best practices I've found that works is a gratitude habit. When I was very young and unhappy about something, my mother would always remind me of the instructions, *Count your blessings, name them one by one*. Over the years, I've found that it actually helps to soothe any spiritual soreness that I might be suffering.

In my readings I have found that many people have come to learn the power of gratitude. One of my favorite statement of that is quite simple and easy to remember. Erwin Raphael McManus wrote [Uprising: A Revolution of the Soul](#), and a sentence jumped off the page at me in the early part of the book. He wrote: "*Gratitude is the healing ointment of brokenness.*"

It works this way for me, too. And it brings me to a lighter sense of the world around me and the difficulties that can beset me. And from this rejuvenated state, I can stand and not let trials best me. With my spirit adjusted, I'm almost completely ready for my day, my work, my writing.

BODY

The last part I want to discuss briefly is the body. We have to eat properly, exercise and drink the proper amount of clean water.

Nutrition

The best idea I've come across is to eat small meals throughout the day. When you eat small portions spaced throughout your day, you're fueling your body all day. And, smaller portions don't cause the sudden, heavy energy drain on your body that traditional full meals cause.

Several things can enhance your eating. First, eat healthy, live foods, as these are the easiest to digest. Fruit for breakfast is optimal since it presents fiber, amino acids, vitamins and much more that your body needs. Not to mention, fruit taste good. I read that mixing acidic and sweet fruit is not good. The theory says that sweet and acidic fruit don't digest easily when you eat them together. I figure it can't hurt to follow this routine. My fruit servings are generally all sweets, (apples or pears), or all acids, (oranges or pineapples). Easy enough to do, right, just in case it matters.

Another good reason to eat fruit is because you can eat live fruit, and live, unprocessed fruit and vegetables are easier for your body to digest.

I only scratch the surface here. Do the research and learn what's available for you to eat. Explore various foods to see what you enjoy. Proper fuel can sustain you through your daily writing and help to keep your thoughts flowing and your fingers moving. Here are some highlights of my menu:

- **Fruit for breakfast** - only fruit a few times a week
- **Salads for lunch** - herbal blend of greens with extra spinach
- **Beans for dinner** - different kinds of beans as I like
- **Sandwiches for snacks** - tuna, turkey, cheese, PB&J
- Extras includes peanuts, sunflower seeds

These are the healthier things that I eat. I buy organic fruit and vegetables because I believe that it's better for me. I buy organic is because I generally have a very uncomfortable reaction to non-organic fruit and vegetables. I would guess that it's because of the pesticides and herbicides used in growing them. I never had it medically verified—I just stopped eating fresh fruit and vegetables. Then one day, I tried organic produce and discovered that the reaction was greatly reduced, to the point of being tolerable. Often times, I have no reaction at all. I was sold on organic produce with that discovery.

There are many reasons to eat range fed meat, but I've not yet gotten to that point. It's a goal. It's a good idea to minimize the amount of meat you eat since it's one of the more difficult foods to digest. Also, there are better proteins that you can eat which are easier for your body to process. And, since I've read about what commercial farmers feed their cattle and how they raise them, I've really cut back on eating meat at all.

Exercise

It's important to raise your heart rate for 20 minutes daily. If you're able, walking and swimming are the best cardiovascular activities that you can do. Walking is not so easy for me but I try to include it. If I had access to a swimming pool that would be the ultimate thing for me because it's no impact. That's important for me because of my hip. Stretching and movement—some call it dancing—are things that I work at. I push through my discomfort and dance to a few upbeat songs to get my blood pumping.

The key is to find what works for you and get to it. Stick with it, too.

Water

We need water to sustain our bodily functions. There are different schools of thought related to the amount of water you should drink daily. Find out the amount of water you need and drink it. One of the formulas I read said you should drink the number of ounces of water equal to half your body weight. I don't get to that daily, but I feel good when I drink a lot of water. It also fills me so that I am not so hungry and have less of an appetite for other junk food and drink.

Drink the water that you need. Drink the cleanest, purest water you can. Take care not to over drink because like anything else, you can have too much water. Your recommended amount is supposed to be what your body can process. Anything more, and it's like drowning yourself because you're taking in more water than your body can use or excrete. That is a strain on your body that you can and should avoid.

In Closing . . .

These are key areas, mind, spirit and body. And taking the best care of these areas can give you the health that will sustain you as you play hard or sit to write for hours. Take the time to explore these ideas and get the information that **you need**. Caring for these areas can provide you with the balance you need in order to have the fullest, healthiest writing life.

About the article and the author.

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January 1, 2009