



# Getting Out Of Survival Mode

The Keys to a Perfect Morning

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## How This Checklist Works

Obviously, you don't need to do all of the things on the following four pages. Think of this checklist as a buffet from which you can select the one's that work for you.

Note: there are likely several things you may try that aren't on this list. Also, your morning routine will likely change over time depending on the various seasons of your life. For example, sometimes I'm highly focused on writing and thus my morning routine is directed toward focused work. In other seasons, I spend more time in the mornings with my kids, or running.

No matter which season of life I'm in, a few things remain constant:

- Prayer/meditation
- Journal writing
- Cold showers

If you only have a few minutes, try one or more of the following (if you have more time, experiment with different combinations of the checklist):

- The cold shower/breathing exercise (3-5 minutes max)
- Prayer/meditation to orient yourself toward your highest intentions and gratitude (2-10 minutes max)
- Journal thought-dump and writing vision (10 minutes max)
- 5-15 minutes of intensive physical activity (e.g., burpees, air squats, push-ups, lunges, planks)



Scroll down for the checklist

## The Keys to a Perfect Morning

- Spend 5 minutes before you go to bed mapping your top 1-3 priorities for the next day**
- Spend 10 minutes before bed thinking about your #1 goal or #1 problem you're trying to solve.** This will prime your subconscious while you sleep. As Thomas Edison has said, “*Never go to sleep without a request to your subconscious.*”
- Go to bed 7 hours before you intend to wake up**
- Don't look at any electronic screens 30-60 minutes before going to bed**
- Don't check email/social media within 60 minutes of going to bed** (this is unplugged time to be present with family and to rest/recover from day)
- Have an alarm set across your room so you have to get out of bed to quiet the alarm**
- Spend 2-10 minutes in prayer/meditation**  
Focus on gratitude, your goals, and where you are most needed today. This will set your day's trajectory on the things that really matter. It will also provide you with an abundance mindset where you expect good things to happen for you.

## The Keys to a Perfect Morning

- Pull out your journal and write by hand anything that comes to your mind related to your #1 goal or #1 problem you're trying to solve.** This will arouse your subconscious breakthroughs you had while you were asleep. As Napoleon Hill has said, "*Your subconscious mind works continuously, while you are awake, and while you sleep.*"
- During your journal session, write your big picture vision/goals down in bullet point form and in present-tense** (e.g., I'm a best-selling author, I'm making over \$250,000/year, I'm fully connected and present with my wife and kids, etc.).
- Spend 15-45 minutes in intensive physical fitness**
- Consume 30 grams of protein** (plant-based protein powder in water is great)
- Spend 15-60 minutes in focused activity on a big picture goal or passion project** (one of those things you've been procrastinating but want to do)
- Don't check email or social media for at least 60 minutes after waking up**

## The Keys to a Perfect Morning

- ❑ **Take a cold shower.** If this shower is immediately following physical fitness, just start with cold. If it is not, start warm and wash your body, then completely switch the temperature to cold for the last 30-60 seconds of shower. During shower, breathe heavily in and out through your mouth. This breathing technique comes from “Iceman” Wim Hof, who holds 7 world records for withstanding extreme cold. He has a method to withstand cold: breathe deeply yet relaxed for 30 seconds, until you can feel what Hof calls the inner fire—a sense of euphoria that extends from cranium to toes.
- ❑ **Listen to or read uplifting content** (you can do this while you exercise if that’s convenient). This will get you motivated and energized to tackle the day. A few recommendations:
  - ❑ *The Compound Effect* by Darren Hardy
  - ❑ *Awaken the Giant Within* by Tony Robbins
  - ❑ *Essentialism* by Greg McKeown
  - ❑ *Daily Stoic* by Ryan Holiday and Stephen Hanselman
  - ❑ *Big Magic* by Elizabeth Gilbert
  - ❑ *As a Man Thinketh* by James Allen
  - ❑ *Relentless* by Tim Grover
  - ❑ *The Power of Starting Something Stupid* by Richie Norton
  - ❑ *The Power of Intention* by Wayne Dyer
  - ❑ *Grit* by Angela Duckworth

## The Keys to a Perfect Morning

- After you've spent a few minutes purposefully preparing yourself for HOW YOU INTEND TO BE that day, lovingly interact with your loved ones.** If you live alone, send a few kind texts to important people in your life
- If you have kids, play with them for as much time as you can.** Be sure to take a few minutes before interacting with them to orient yourself. Don't reactively wake up and then go be with them. You won't be on your A-Game.
- If you have creative endeavors, spend 60-90 minutes in focused activity on a big project.** Research has found that your willpower is highest when you first wake up, and your brain is most attuned to creativity. Thus, if you make the time, the morning may be the time when you produce your best and most important work, as is the case for me!
- If you're doing creative “Deep Work” immediately upon waking up, try listening to instrumental/ambient songs on repeat.** In her book, On Repeat: How Music Plays the Mind, psychologist Elizabeth Hellmuth Margulis explains why listening to music on repeat improves focus. When you're listening to a song on repeat, you tend to dissolve into the song, which blocks out mind wandering (let your mind wander while you're away from work!).

# Most people are in SURVIVAL MODE

**People are living their lives reactively.** They wake up and immediately check their smartphone. They feel RUSHED and BUSY immediately upon waking up.

Their whole day and life reflects how they wake up. Consequently, their health and relationships suffer.

Moreover, their overall happiness and well-being are lacking, as they are not living according to their highest values and goals.

**The purpose of the MORNING ROUTINE is to GET YOU OUT OF SURVIVAL MODE.**

You do that by giving yourself space in the morning to orient yourself with the person you intend to be. You also orient yourself toward your highest goals and priorities.

If you have a consistent morning routine, your life will be very different in 3-6 months. No longer will you be RUSHED and REACTIVE. Rather, you'll be living with INTENTION and PURPOSE.

If you are serious about developing a MORNING ROUTINE and want more information, systems, coaching, and accountability, I have created an online course that will help you. Click the button below for more information.

**Learn about the Morning  
Routines course**