

## THE 15-MINUTE SPIRIT CHARGE

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### *A cosmic tip for people on the go*

Today I want to take a break from the headlines and urgent human-survival issues we all have to address and talk about peace of mind.

Many of you are engaged, as I am, in the vital universal cause of liberty—thank you—and many are not so deeply into that. Yet we all work hard within our personal and social lives to do the right thing. Life is a struggle.

How do we stay spiritually motivated? How do we maintain a calm center of inexhaustible energy? Here's my system:

Note: each of these points warrant a full page or more of description, and I'll hopefully develop them further in subsequent columns.

- a) Have good genes and be lucky—Slightly facetious, but it's hard to reach the peak of cosmic consciousness with a toothache. (Good spiritual exercises still help.)
- b) Be young—Ha ha. Youth is nice, but much of the energy advantage we enjoy during youth is often dissipated through hormonal excess and gaps in "mindfulness."
- b) Eat right and exercise—As living organisms we need to process energy the right way. Good nutritional and body-conditioning habits are essential. Drink lots of water. Aggressive supplementation can be desirable.
- c) Develop goals, plan, work the plan—Also covers the need to come to a meaningful, rational philosophy of life. Once the purpose is set, go for it steadily yet unhurriedly. Also, treat reason and knowledge as gods.
- d) Visualize and affirm success [1]—This habit is needed for good energy flow and to stuff negativity.
- e) Cultivate healthy, loving relationships—Flesh and blood needs flesh and blood. Also, put fun in your life... strive for a full belly laugh three times daily.
- f) Connect to the life/love-energy source—Sleep well for your body charge. Mental/spiritual charge requires meditation... which is what this column is about:

Meditation optimizes human health (check the Web for tons of useful information on how it does so); I only offer my own simplified method for connection:

### ***The 15-Minute Soul Groove***

Do this 15 minutes at least once a day. If you can't get 15, at least quiet your mind for 5 minutes, every day.

Find a private room without distractions. I use my bedroom and close the door. I have a plant and a tape that plays wave sounds softly. A candle helps to center attention.

Stretch and center yourself briefly (it helps to have some familiarity with a discipline like Tai Chi or yoga). Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position; I'm not very flexible and I set my back against a dresser for support. This is okay.

#### *First Five Minutes*

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This is the segment where you transition your mental state from normal wakefulness to your spiritual place:

- Breathe evenly and deeply being solely aware of your breath
- Imagine you are out in nature in a comfortable place.
- Stretch briefly in place your neck, arms, fingers, toes, but stay relaxed.
- Empty your mind of all thoughts except what you're doing now. Think of leaving all your concerns in a bag by the door, and you'll pick them up afterward.
- Slowly, silently go through your affirmations image by image, i.e. don't attempt to verbalize them literally.
- Keep your breathing deep and regular, and attend to it.

### *Second Five Minutes*

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I incorporate this segment as a physical component, to work the body into a complementary state to the mind:

- Continue breathing evenly and deeply.
- Move to a supine position, lying down with your arms extended overhead parallel to the floor. Feel the yoga idea in this part, stretching (but not straining) your spine, and from your fingers to your toes.
- After 10 breaths or so, raise and extend your legs, then move them back down and rotate your feet, curl your toes back and forth.
- Sit up and slowly extend your torso toward your legs
- Move your back in all six degrees of freedom, i.e. curl forward, extend backward, tilt to each side, then rotate to either side. Hold each movement a breath or two. (This helps to massage your internal organs.)
- During this segment as all segments, keep your mind quiet and simply aware of your breathing.

### *Third Five Minutes*

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Here's the payoff segment. It's fairly easy to achieve a few moments of this rather incredible natural high, and I can't really explain it (get the inside skinny with your local Buddhist guru or similar). Here's what I do:

- Return to the cross-legged position (I like to cross my feet the opposite way from the first segment). Continue breathing deeply and regularly, being aware only of your breathing and some other thoughts as follows:
- In this segment start by sensing you're connecting to the life force by virtue of the oxygen that you're breathing in generated by the green plants. Then you give back the life force in the form of carbon dioxide the plants need.
- From this awareness of natural connection and balance, I focus again on my breathing and develop a feeling of deep peace and love.
- Now just simply focus on the breathing. Some meditation techniques use a mantra for your mind to attend to so your mind doesn't wander. (The mind wandering is the main challenge; you'll be surprised how difficult it may be at first to quiet your mind.)
- Become aware of how still and quiet you are inside.
- As you continue to be still and monitor your breathing, with or without a mantra, out in nature, beautiful natural images will tend to come unbidden into your consciousness.
- For me these cosmic images are like clouds and deep-vegetation-lined mountaintops, with rich sunsets, by deep blue skies, beside endless expanses of oceans. It's different for everyone.
- This is when you become one with the universe, and it's definitely a peak experience. If you can spare another 5 or 10 minutes, go for it, because when you come down you're really ready to rock and roll. [2]

All right. You can see that meditating regularly is an antidote to addictive behaviors (and inconsistent with them, too). Aside from that, one of the main benefits I personally derive is it dissipates anger and keeps me encouraged that human beings and the world are evolving the best we can.

In between sessions, at various times throughout the day I also like to silently repeat the well-known Buddhist chant: Nam myoho rengo kyo. Which basically means, "everything is going to be okay and life is unfolding for you as it should." Try it. In these times, we need all the help we can get.

There's a lot more to discuss here, but I'm going to cut it short. I have much to learn, I'm only showing you my own peculiar direction, and you'll have your own spiritual signature. I do feel if more people would connect to the universal energy in a routine fashion, more happiness would materialize.

Good karma to you.

[1] I have linked to a commented version of what I've used for my own affirmations, without any too-personal specifics, just to give you an idea of one way to lay these things out.

[2] I'm suggesting something like the 15-Minute Spirit Charge is a necessary, and possibly even sufficient, tool for evolving into a more spiritual existence. My favorite current conception of what such a life entails is from James Redfield's, *The Celestine Prophecy*. Again each individual finds his/her own path

to the higher power. Ironically achieving these cosmic peaks requires a full embrace of reason and letting go of the primitive superstitions and infantile delusions that accompany many religions. True spirituality is a rational exercise. On the social, sharing side of this emerging rational-spiritual consciousness lie several fine humanist groups. My own current personal favorite meeting ground of kindred souls is the seekers.