



the supplement  
FACILITATING VITALITY

# SEPTEMBER 2019 TRAINING CORPORATE ATHLETES

Athletes have seasons. They prepare, they play, they recover. Corporate athletes are no different, but their seasons are not nearly as predictable. They may have to be ready not only for an hour, a day, or a week, but occasionally for entire months, quarters or years. How can a corporate athlete sustain high performance in light of these demands? In "The Making of a Corporate Athlete," Harvard Business Review (2001), Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz suggest that corporate athletes must learn what professional athletes have known all along: recovering energy is just as important as expending it.

Contrast the average career of a professional athlete with that of the typical corporate athlete:

Demands	Professional Athlete	Corporate Athlete
Career Length	7 years	40 - 50 years
Hours Competing	2 - 4 hours per day	12 - 15 hours per day
Hours Training	6 hours per day	40 hours per year
Season	1 per year	Variable

Couple these demands with the global marketplace, the multiplication of communication channels and the Type A inability to satisfice, and the result is relentless energy expenditure. Its manifestation in the short term is fatigue and apathy; in the long term it is burn-out, breakdown and diminished performance.

By studying thousands of successful corporate athletes, Loehr and Schwartz note that the best of the best practice rituals that move them consistently between energy expenditure and energy recovery. Their rituals vary across four realms of well-being including physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. Unerringly, the foundation of sustained high performance begins first and foremost with physical well-being.

Rituals that promote physical well-being are small conventions that when practiced over time become habits. Habits require little or no conscious thought once ingrained, but making them and breaking them requires intention and practice. You will know that you have crafted a successful ritual when you can hear yourself say "I can do that!" You will know that it has become a habit when it occupies no intentional thought and you can hear yourself saying when asked: "I don't know. I just do it."

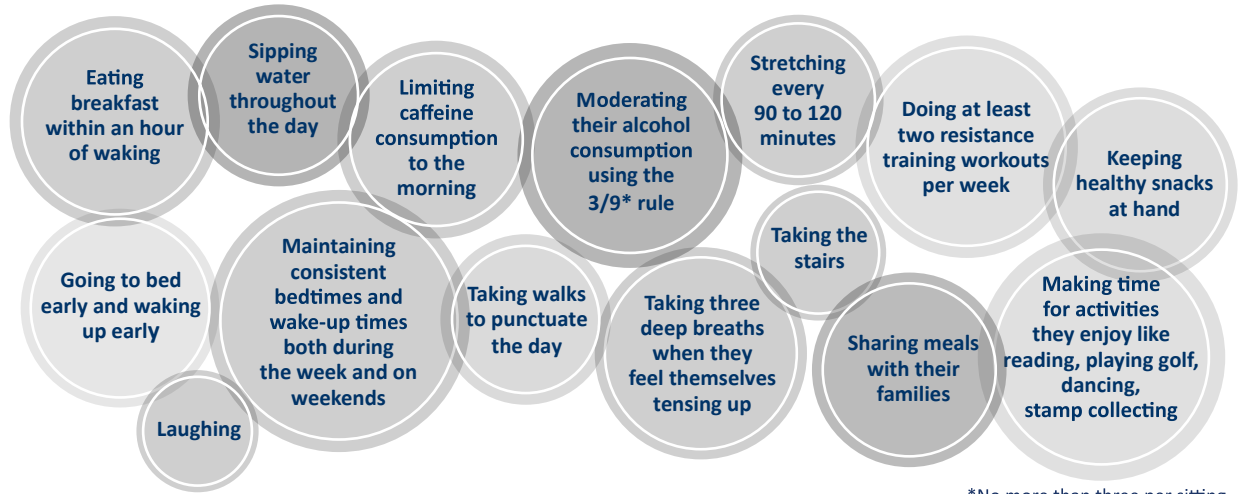
It is tempting as Type A's to fall into the "all or none" perfectionism trap. It is critical to your long term success that your rituals be undertaken no more than three at one time. Fifteen rituals undertaken on Monday will barely make it until Thursday. Three rituals adopted daily over 28 days can become a lifelong habit and an opportunity to "reshuffle the genetic deck in your favor."



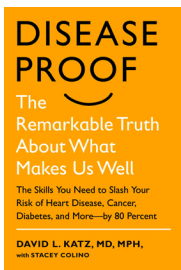


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Some examples of rituals practiced by successful corporate athletes include:



\*No more than three per sitting.  
No more than nine per week.



### BOOK REVIEW

*Disease-Proof: The Remarkable Truth about What Makes Us Well* by David L. Katz, MD, MPH

I was fortunate enough to meet the author in the fall of 2012. He is a dynamic young physician with a very simple message: You don't have to be gluttonous or lazy to fall prey to obesity and chronic disease. They are the default of living in the modern world. His answer is as simple as paying attention to your feet, your forks and your fingers.

#### YOUR FEET

Perform three and a half hours of intentional physical activities per week.

#### YOUR FORKS

Eat a nutritious diet that includes a high intake of fruits, vegetables and whole grains and a low intake of red meat.

#### YOUR FINGERS

Be a non-smoker

By flipping the switch on any one of these factors, Katz claims that you can reduce the probability of chronic disease by 50%. If you add maintaining a BMI of less than 30 to the other three, you can reduce the probability of chronic disease by 80% and of diabetes by 93%.

He is adamant that disease is not a random occurrence, but the consequence of the things people do every day. He calls practicing healthy behaviors the opportunity to reshuffle the genetic deck in your favor. I call them rituals.



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Director, Wellness Engineering

Patricia M. Fuller has dedicated the last 20 years to designing and delivering wellness programs. Her events earn consistently excellent ratings for her holistic approach and her real world application.

Prior to concentrating in wellness, Pat taught accounting and auditing as an adjunct professor at the University of Tampa. She earned her CPA designation in 1992 as a senior associate for Coopers & Lybrand. She has a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Utah.

Pat has a PhD in holistic nutrition. In 2010, she was board certified by the Holistic Nutrition Credentialing Board. Her areas of research include stress management and eating habits. She is a Certified Wellcoach and a member of the Institute of Coaching. She is an annual attendee to The Harvard Medical School Conference, Coaching In Leadership & Healthcare.

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