

MATTMCWILLIAMS

Live with Passion. Lead with Purpose. Leave a Legacy.

The Best Time to Exercise (Or to do Anything Important)

Creating Your Own Routine for Success

What is the best time to exercise? That one question has stopped more people from getting healthy than just about anything else. It's a question that has such a simple answer, too. And it applies to so much more than exercising. What is the best time to do anything important? That's today's topic.

There is a trend that I've noticed lately among fellow bloggers and podcasters involving sharing their morning routine. I appreciate the intention behind this, but it leads to the inherent problem of their readers and listeners trying to copy their routine.

Stop Copying Others

Sure, we can learn from high performers, but trying to copy someone else's morning routine is like trying to copy Warren Buffett's investing strategy. It doesn't work for most of us. We're all at different stages in life, with different demands and different goals.

For example, for me to try to copy my friend Ray Edwards' morning routine would be ridiculous. Ray is at a different stage of life than I am, has no young children in the home, and has built a successful business that operates without him much of the time. I, on the other hand, have two young children, including one newborn and my business is still very much dependent on me.

Inevitably when I hear others' routines, I feel guilty for not having my own amazing routine. I say things like:

- "Why am I not spending as much time as him reading in the mornings?"
- "I need to spend more time in the morning praying and meditating."
- "Tomorrow I have to start working out first thing in the morning like so-and-so."

I am often asked on podcasts and by others what my morning routine is. But the truth is that I don't have one. My wake up time is determined by two young children and I try as much as possible to give them my best time in the morning. How long it takes before I start my workday is more often determined by what I make us for breakfast than what time the clock says. Every day is unique...and I like it that way.

Paralysis by Analysis

All of this leads me back to the original question: What is the best time to exercise?

The answer has been researched, blogged about, and made the subject of catchy headlines for more than a generation now. Scientists have studied the genetics, taken blood samples, and spent tens of millions of dollars only to miss the most obvious answer.

The best time to exercise is *when you'll do it*.

The best time to exercise is when you put it on your calendar. Intentionally, in advance, and with a commitment to follow through.

If that is at six o'clock in the morning, great. If it's over lunch, that is awesome. If it varies day-to-day, so be it.

The Best Time to do Anything Important

This principle applies to doing anything important.

What is the best time to write? When you'll do it. When you put in your calendar.

What is the best time to meditate? When you intentionally set the time to do it.

What is the ideal time to learn a new language, set goals, or think big thoughts? When you'll actually do them.

It truly is that simple.

Stop trying to overthink it.

Stop trying to copy someone else's routine. Do your own thing.

The best time to do anything important is the time you intentionally make for it. Don't delay. Put something on your calendar tomorrow that you've been putting off.

What have you been putting off while waiting for the 'right time?'