

Conducting Your Personal Energy Audit

by Chris Vasiliadis

In preparation for upcoming renovations to our home, we've scheduled an energy audit with a local utility company. That got me thinking: we human beings should periodically conduct energy audits of ourselves. Here, we can identify places where we're leaking energy and how we can generate and recover energy. It boils down to paying attention.

How are you consuming your energy? What fuels you? What drains you? We all have the same 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: your energy level is a major differentiator in how you effectively make it through each day.

Think your energy needs some tweaking? Try this experiment.

For 1 week, grab a journal or notebook, and document your energy as follows:

1. When you wake up in the morning, how do you feel? Refreshed and raring to go, or dragging your behind? Note how many hours you slept the night before, and what you were doing before you went to bed.
2. Write down what you eat for each meal and snack, and when. Two hours after each meal or snack, notice how you're feeling. Tune into your stomach: does it hurt? Feel bloated? Satisfied? How's your thinking? Clear and high concentration? Or cloudy and foggy?
3. In the middle of performing a task or activity (from changing a tire to watching TV), stop and notice how your feeling. Are you dreading this task, feeling neutral, energized, or is time flying by, because you're having so much fun. How do you feel after you complete the task?
4. In conversations with people in person and over the phone, notice your emotions and how your body feels during the conversation, as well as when you've finished speaking with them. Is there a lightness or heaviness? Constriction or relaxation? If so, where are you feeling this in your body?

At the end of the week, review your notes. Identify patterns in what gives you energy and what drains your energy. Look at food, activities, people, time of day. Armed with that information, make some changes in week 2 to build your energy and plug the drains. Keep track of how your body responds, continuing to document in your journal.

Some ideas to get you going: pick and choose what resonates for you.

1. If you're not already getting 7-8 hours of sleep per night, try that approach.
2. Don't watch the news or a disturbing/violent TV show or movie right before bed. Read an inspiring book, take a relaxing bath, have a cup of decaf tea, or set your intention for tomorrow and write out the steps to achieve that goal.
3. Avoid gluten at breakfast. Gluten is the protein in wheat, barley, malt and rye. Some people experience fatigue as a result of eating gluten.
4. For lengthy tasks, build in breaks every 90 minutes. At the break, do something that makes you smile. Walk outside in the fresh air, call a good friend for a quick hello, jump rope for 1 minute, do some relaxing stretches.

5. If you're a soda drinker, diet or not, try switching to sparkling water. Less sugar, artificial sweetener, caffeine and chemicals in your body.
6. For the people in your life who may be energy vampires (people who drain the life right out of you), do your best to distance yourself from or limit your exposure to these folks.
7. Spend more time with people who exude positive energy. If you haven't seen one of those people in a while, this is a great opportunity to contact them to catch up.
8. Balance each meal with a protein and good carbohydrate.
9. Inject something fun, that lifts you, into each day.
10. Go TV free for 1 week (that includes not watching TV shows on the Internet).

Review again after week 2, and pick those new habits that you'll continue to use for the long run. Your body is like a lab -- tune in regularly and pay attention to its guidance.

I would love to hear how this energy audit worked for you. What did you discover in week 1? What changes did you make in week 2? Which new habits did you decide to adopt going forward? Share your experience with by emailing me at chris@prioritywellness.com.

Chris Vasiliadis had a wake-up-call to her wellness in late 2005, when she was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis: a chronic disease of the central nervous system. That event initiated many lifestyle changes for Chris, ultimately leading to her improved health and new career as a Certified Wellness Coach. Through her business, Priority Wellness, she helps people regroup, recharge and take control of their wellness. With a special interest in helping sole proprietors and small business owners, clients come to Chris when they're tired, or tired of being tired. They know they're not eating right, exercising enough or consistently, and/or not managing stress well, and they've had enough of living that way. Working over the phone with Chris, they make their wellness a priority and create new habits to master their well-being. Chris can be contacted at 781-791-7642 or chris@prioritywellness.com.