

A Brief Theory About Life and Beyond



CHAPTER 01

A Good Morning

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A Good Morning

Good morning my dear reader,

Yes, it is a good morning today. Wherever you are right now at this given moment, look around you and appreciate why it is (or was) a good morning today. If you can't think of something out of the top of your mind, no worries, no need to travel far, in search of some great grand gestures or ideals. Simply stay here, on the ground, next to me. Hello.

There's something outmost magical about mornings.

First of all, we all have them in common, all of us. And in front of a bright morning, we are all equal to its glory. Mornings signify a new day, they equal hope, life and even birth. I recall my mum often comforting me to put any worries to sleep and on the dawn of a new day, when the sun would rise up, everything would be better. And it was. It's like every day we are alive and we wake up to experience this, every day is almost like a rebirth and a reason to be grateful for. We are still here, so it means we have lessons to learn, experiences to live and knowledge, love and compassion to share. With every new morning, we are required to not only open our eyes, but to open our heart, minds and soul *to and with the world*. And for this, we need vital activities or tools to help us awaken and live our best versions of ourselves.

Practices such as meditation, gratitude and even writing or simply paying attention to our breathing are aimed to connect us better with who we truly are. To get in touch with our inner self. Because I strongly believe that it's only by understanding and loving ourselves perfectly, it's only by having a real «γνώθι σαυτόν» (*know thyself*) (as the ancient greek aphorism) that we will be able to love and help everyone else around us and pay it forward. *To know our true self*, not the physical vessel we look at the mirror, the one that society is forcing us so much and so often to solely identify with because there's a clear financial interest. But our *true, imperishable self*, the one beyond the body and beyond the mind, our inner eternal self. Rest

assured: focusing on ourselves first is not selfish, but it's the perfect way to be strong enough before we are able to teach and pass the light and raise those good vibrations. It is what will help us be strong enough to carry someone through, to push our mum's wheelchair with a smile when needed, to motivate our partner or coworkers to continue fighting the good fight. And what gives us unconditional hope.

In this chapter I want to show you how we can both have a good morning every single day and most importantly how we can be grateful with the simplest of things. Throughout our lives, we are all programmed to always look for something unreachable, for the most exquisite or extraordinary things in order to evaluate a morning as *good*. But here is a little trick for you: **extraordinary**. Read that again: Extra - *ordinary*. The word ordinary is still there and it's no coincidence: my theory is that beauty and gratitude can be found right here in the ordinary, even within our own home, within ourselves. You see no one really educates us on how we can enjoy a good morning. And that my dear reader is where a lot of the trouble lies, and today is the perfect opportunity , a perfect silver lining, that this current pandemic is offering us. An opportunity to unlearn old habits and re learn our daytime routines just like brushing our teeth, wash our face and having some breakfast.

For this introductory, hands on chapter, i'm asking you to take the time and do the homework, because unless we experience something actually ourselves, no matter how much we read it about it, it's only via continuous practice that we will get to understand, then fully experience and hopefully pass on our knowledge to others. A good morning is only the beginning of a good day, so investing your time and energy to it will automatically unlock anything that you wish to achieve and help you be fully content with your life.

Let Us Start

A good morning is easy to obtain and unless you are unfortunately in a state of coma (and even then we still can't scientifically tell what and how we feel and perceive), at that very moment you open your eyes, there's no reason really why a morning can't be good. Before you hate on the alarm clock, or the neighbours or that dog for waking you up, I want to reassure you that we can take control of that, of all that. So, whenever you are ready, get comfortable and let us start.

The following steps are a mash up of personal intuition, techniques that I have read or that friends have suggested here and there, over the years. I feel they will give a good overview of possible activities we can take in order to make our morning not only good, but a morning full of mindfulness, gratitude and imagination, **3 key ingredients to a wholesome lifestyle**.

For the change to kick in and old habits to fade away, experts say we should give it at least 10 consecutive days of practice before making a change into a viable lifestyle choice.

So let's give ourselves these 10 days, where we try a mix and match of the different activities described below. The amount of time you choose to spend on each activity is completely personal. And day after day it can and it will most certainly vary, some days you may not feel like exercising or reading every single day and that is perfectly fine. To begin with, the primary secret is to wake up earlier than anyone else in the house. One hour earlier, or more, but for good long term results, no need for less.

Wake Up Naturally

First things first, we all have a natural self timer, an integrated alarm clock that our body sets for us on a daily basis. Of course, some days it's harder than others, so if you want to be safe and starting from tomorrow, put an alarm clock an hour earlier than your usual time. Otherwise try to test your body by internally thinking the desired waking time. Maybe it will work, maybe not. All you need for a good morning is one hour, so why not give it a go.

Stay Offline

In order for this to work, being offline is key for this magic hour. Putting our phone on airplane mode and avoiding by all means to play around on social media. It is a proven fact, that regardless of a lot of positive impact that social media apps have indeed brought, their creators tend to use mechanics that stimulate the release of dopamine, a bodily chemical known to be associated with pleasure, just like when we play slot machines at a casino. And since there's no current government regulation, we need to be conscious and self regulate ourselves first.

Open Your Eyes & Listen

Now as you wake up, try not to do anything else other than opening your eyes and looking around you. No judgement, no stress, just be a passive viewer of your surrounding environment. Slowly pass your focus to your breath. Be the most loyal listener of what your

breath is telling you this morning. For example, is it slow to build in, is it sharp, is it quiet, does it fill your lungs enough and so forth.

Be Grateful

I personally like to start my day by practicing gratitude cause it is my way to thank the universe and the world for having me here yet another day. To make this work, I suggest mentally identifying 3 small reasons, 3 small daily moments that helped put a smile on your face yesterday. Maybe you listened to your favourite song, maybe some stranger smiled back at you in the line to the supermarket, maybe you saw a beautiful flower, maybe a friend called to check up on you, maybe you tasted something delicious, or maybe you laughed with your whole heart. That simple. Remember the rule: **extra - ordinary**.

Once this is done, think of 3 reasons why you are grateful right here and now. Is it because you are blessed to have a roof over your head, is it because you can start to see some first rays of sun picking through the blinds, is it because you hear your children's laughter sneaking in the living room, or a photo you saw across the room? Maybe because your bed feels so comfortable or you hear some birds singing and signifying the morning start. Finding these 3 reasons should almost feel like a small game. And you will see the more frequently you do this simple exercise, the more reasons and little magic moments you will be able to identify and be grateful for.

Visualize

Close your eyes again. Now let us think of ourselves in the future, almost like a bright vision. Notice where you are, with who, what you do, how do you look and most importantly how do you feel. Notice the colours, the brightness, maybe some sounds. Are you outside on a sunny day, are you happy and laughing, are you interacting with family and friends. What we are looking for in this exercise is getting that feeling of warmth and placing an interior smile on that face. I believe that if you find that place, even only a minute of that is enough to momentarily brighten your day.

Note that this exercise should not be seen as a form of escapism from the ever powerful present, but if anything, a form of inner soul searching, trying to connect with our inner world and maybe a way of getting closer to our inner mission, our very own *raison d'être* on this planet for this lifetime.

Meditate

Over the years I have come to the realisation that meditation tends to be most efficient when it occurs first thing in the morning and on an empty stomach. I believe that a good session can be from 10 to 15 minutes but at the beginning even 1 minute of calm and mindfulness can do magic for our mind. As a beginner, my best advice would be to use an app that works offline such as *Headspace* or *Calm* so as to guide you through the breathing process. Alternatively, there's a vast selection of books and tutorials out there with golden rules and ways to achieve that meditative state. In my perspective, a good meditation session consists of 3 main stages:

Firstly, start by focusing on your body, from the bottom of your legs right up to the top of your head, and notice if there's any tension or stress. Just observe, like a doctor would perform a scan test, without getting attached to that feeling of comfort or discomfort.

Secondly, pay attention to the breath: count 1 for inhale, 2 for exhale, ensure breathing in and out only from our nose for quite a while.

Thirdly and most magically, once you have done the breathing a couple of times and your mind slowly empties, try to let go, almost like you are adding wings to your mind, flying up and away from the ground.

And from this viewpoint any problem or worry should feel like a cloud passing on a crystal clear blue sky. No pain, no stress, just observation and calm. Once you get there, it's an exhilarating experience, that to me almost feels like creating more space in my head, releasing some of the pressure, creating *head space*. Once you get to master it, meditation can slowly sneak in your each and every activity. Meditation is also synonymous of silence. Being able to be alone and not lonely in absolute silence, making that little voice stop. Here's a tip: Every time your minds drifts away, the secret is to always bring your focus back to your breath, think of it like your grounding point.

Make Your Bed

After meditating, I enjoy making my bed. It gives me some structure and some calm through this simply mundane yet necessary act that can mechanically awaken our body and also start putting our mind slowly in action. And in a way, even if we don't achieve anything else for the

rest of the day, at least we were able to complete one task without an inch of laziness or regret.

Look Closer

Next stop, let's try to sit by the window and look at the sky or the current possible view. For those not fortunate enough to see the sky directly, let us get creative. There's always the rooftop of every single building or maybe getting out in street and looking up. What we need is just a sneak peak of nature. So if it comes down to it, even interior flowers can be beautifully effective. Now let us look at that natural view. But really look. Don't just skip elements cause we are so confident and even frustrated that we have seen this view 1 million times. Trust me, you would be surprised to notice every day something different, as long as you don't force it. And already by doing that, you will even reach some form of meditative state. As long as there's no judgement, no stress, no emotion attached, whether good or bad, we are always on the right track.

Read Or Write

Morning seems to be the perfect time to get physical, brain first, by activating our core imagination skills and also energising our system without a drop of sweat. Reading must be curated of course. I always suggest avoiding reading the news or a tasteless magazine, but going for a novel, a self care book, a collection of poetry or even a cooking book if that is something that may help you day dream. If you are the creative writing type, write your own words on a little notebook or diary, without thinking of a specific goal or structure, just go with the flow and just leave it at that. Over the years I am still fascinated to discover and re read diary entries from university or even high school as we more often than not come to realise how we haven't really changed our core values or how certain questions we may have had, have finally been answered with time.

Get Physical

After a mind stretch, a good physical stretch can make wonders. For this one, options are plenty, if you are more into a balanced offer for body and mind, I suggest going for yoga or any of its derivatives. If you are a gym bunny at heart, now it's the time to leave the house (if you can) and go for a run in the park or do some cross fit exercise. If you do need a playlist, (cause look life is better with a musical soundtrack to it), make sure to have one downloaded

on your phone, as (surprise!) we should still be on airplane mode. For a workout session to be beneficial, aim for at least 20 minutes. The secret is to be fully present at it and if you do it right, your body and mind will be in sync, working at the same task and the feeling of that can be almost out-worldly.

Get Wet

And by that I mean nothing more than jumping in the shower. Especially given our confined times at home, it could be extremely tempting to just skip that daily shower. But trust me, water is therapeutical. Of course if you feel like taking a bath, do it (and while you are at it why not light some candles or add some music to it). My only request is that given our planet's scarce water resources, take a bath exceptionally and not on a daily basis. Personally, water has always been associated with new beginnings, with a pure state. Every morning I need that shower to fully wake me up but that's just me. The goal is to be in tune with very our own body and mind in each of these steps and we will naturally be led to what works best - what unlocks a certain inner peace and calm.

Grab A Bite

I'm putting this next phrase in capital letters as a personal and collective reminder for us all: *WE ARE WHAT WE EAT*. And when, how and what we choose to put in our digestive systems has been proven to eventually affect our daily attitude and even psychology. Choosing something nutritional and healthy over something processed is always better. One note, this is a *break-fast* and if we were to be literal with the term it means we are breaking the fasting period. A good rule of thumb that personally works for me, the later you eat the night before, the later you should eat the morning after - try to always give your body at least 10 to 12 hours of digestion.

To Do List

Writing down what you want to achieve today can be extremely helpful. This list should include everything from calling your loved ones, to doing invoices, getting the groceries, finishing one chapter etc. Every activity, even if it's one that you do every day should be noted. Cause once this activity is done by the end of the day, once you cross it off your list, the pleasure can be enormous and even if you haven't completed much of anything else, you have at least achieved to cross one thing off that list. I always prefer using a pen/pencil and

paper cause I find writing something down and then crossing it off so much more fulfilling than just deleting it from my phone - again the key here is to feel and know what gets to you.

And now we are finally ready and prepared to start our day. Once we do some of these steps/activities on a daily basis, we will be able to fully connect, work, share, play and love with others. In absolute presence and in peace. Oh and **GOOD MORNING!** And most likely, I promise you this will also be a *good day* and most probably it will end up being a *good evening*. And remember, don't wait for miracles to happen, create a miracle morning for yourself every single day, by watering your inner garden and offering yourself flowers whenever you need to. And remember: *Everything is possible, cause you and I are limitless.*

Share Your Morning Rituals With Me

Of course there is an endless list of other possible activities that seem to work for people with regards to a good morning: reading post its with positive quotes that you have put around the house or stuck previously to your mirror, building a visual moodboard with photos and images, painting, making music if you are the artistic type and so forth - any activity that engages all senses and help us be in the present are equally welcome.

XXX

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