VIRTUS *et* AMOR · CONSULTANCY



ANDREW MITS

HEALTH ENERGETICS PHILOSOPHY

The body as energy that knows where it is going.

VIRTUS ET AMOR · THE FIRST BOOK OF THE GRANDMASTER POSTURE

HEALTH ENERGETICS PHILOSOPHY

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01 · THE GOLD OF GOLD

Health is energy that knows where it is going.

I have found the gold of gold. It is energetics. And the first place it lives is not in a book or a bank. It lives in your own body, every second, whether you look at it or not.

Health is not only the absence of sickness. Health is energy that knows where it is going. A body that is gathered, guarded and given on purpose: that is a healthy body, whatever its age and whatever its story.

Aristotle had a word for it: *energeia*, being at work. A seed is a tree in possibility; only work makes the tree real. Your body is the same. Every plan you have is a seed, and your energy is the seed at work.

97 W

Two thousand kilocalories a day, spread across the 86,400 seconds of a day, is about 97 watts: the power of one bright bulb. Your brain, about 2% of your weight, takes about a fifth of it.

So here is the first truth of this book. **You are not short of energy. You are short of attention to where it goes.** Attention is the steering wheel. The ego is the engine, God the driver, and energy the fuel.

THE THREE VERBS

Health energetics has three verbs, and the rest of this book is their detail.

- **Gather.** Breath, sleep, food, water, light, love. The ways energy comes in.
- **Guard.** The leaks closed: the borrowed energy, the noise, the resentment, the scroll.
- **Give.** Movement, work, service, love. Energy spent where it multiplies.

> **THE PRACTICE**
>
> Tonight, before sleep, ask one question: where did my energy go today? Name three places it multiplied and one place it leaked. Write them down. That is your first reading of your own body.

02 · THE TWO LAWS

Energy is never lost. Order always costs.

Two laws run the universe, and they run you too. Learn them once and you will see them everywhere: in the gym, in the office, in the kitchen and in the heart.

THE FIRST LAW

Energy is never lost. It only changes form. Sunlight becomes bread, bread becomes the beat of your heart, and the beat becomes a deed. Nothing you eat, breathe or feel disappears. It becomes something.

That is good news and a warning. What you take in will become you. What happens to you does not have to be wasted either: gratitude is the art of changing what happened into strength.

THE SECOND LAW

Left alone, everything runs down. A room gathers dust, a body gathers weakness, a mind gathers noise. Order costs energy, every single day.

That is not a punishment. It is the price of being alive, and the reward is a life that is yours. The body pays it every night when it repairs itself in sleep. The champion pays it every morning in training. You pay it every time you choose the harder right over the easier wrong.

> *Such as are thy habitual thoughts, such also will be the character of thy mind; for the soul is dyed by the thoughts.*
>
> MARCUS AURELIUS, MEDITATIONS, TRANSLATED BY GEORGE LONG

> **THE PRACTICE**
>
> Choose one small order to keep every day for thirty days: the bed made, the bottle filled, the walk taken. Small order, kept daily, is how the second law is beaten.

03 · BREATHE

The one rhythm that runs by itself and also obeys you.

Your heart beats without asking you. Your gut works without asking you. Your breath runs by itself too, all night long. But breath is different: the moment you choose, it obeys. That makes it a lever, and the lever is in your own hand.

Pull it before the moment pulls you. Before the start line, before the meeting, before the difficult call: the breath decides how the body enters the moment.

CYCLIC SIGHING

A breath in through the nose. A second, short breath in on top of it, to fill the lungs. Then a long, slow breath out through the mouth, longer than the breath in. That is one round. Five minutes of it is enough for a day; one minute of it is enough for a moment.

> **THE SCIENCE**
>
> In a month-long randomised trial, 111 volunteers practised one of four five-minute daily exercises. Cyclic sighing, the long breath out, lifted mood more than mindfulness meditation and lowered the breathing rate. (Balban and colleagues, Cell Reports Medicine, 2023.)

IN FOR FOUR, OUT FOR SIX

When you have no minute to spare, breathe in for four and out for six. Six breaths a minute. The long breath out is the brake; the breath in is the accelerator. A grandmaster uses both, and the brake first.

> *Be water, my friend.*
>
> BRUCE LEE

> **THE PRACTICE**
>
> Morning: five minutes of cyclic sighing before the phone. Before every big moment: three rounds. After every hard moment: three rounds. Breath first, then thought.

04 · SLEEP

The night is training.

Every champion trains twice a day: once in the light, and once in the dark. In the dark the body repairs, the muscles rebuild, the memory files the day and the mind is washed clean. Skip the second session and the first one is wasted.

Adults need seven to nine hours. Not as a luxury: as training. The person who sleeps six hours and trains hard is building a house on a weak foundation.

+9% Free-throw accuracy for Stanford basketball players after they slept almost two hours more each night for several weeks. Their sprints got faster too. (Mah and colleagues, Sleep, 2011.)

THE CAFFEINE RULE

Coffee is borrowed energy. It is fine to borrow, as long as you know when the debt is collected. Caffeine stays in the body for hours, and it collects its debt at night.

> **THE SCIENCE**
>
> Twelve healthy sleepers took a large dose of caffeine (400 mg) at bedtime, three hours before or six hours before. Even six hours before bed, it cut their measured sleep by more than an hour, and they did not notice it. (Drake and colleagues, Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine, 2013.)

THE SLEEP POSTURE

- **One waking time,** seven days a week. The body loves a rhythm more than a lie-in.
- **Dark, cool and quiet.** The bedroom is a training room for the night.
- **Last coffee at least six hours before bed.**
- **The phone sleeps outside the bedroom.** The scroll steals the night minute by minute.

> **THE PRACTICE**
>
> For the next fourteen nights, keep one waking time and write down your hours. At the end, read your own numbers. That is the beginning of mastery: seeing.

05 · MOVE

The body is made to be used.

A body that does not move begins to forget what it is for. Movement is not a punishment for eating. It is the way the body says yes to Life.

150 minutes a week of moderate movement, or 75 of vigorous, is the floor, not the ceiling. Up to 300 and 150 brings more benefit, and adults should also strengthen their muscles on two or more days a week. (World Health Organization guidelines, 2020.)

Moderate means you can talk but not sing. Vigorous means you can say a few words before you need a breath. Strength means your muscles meet a weight they respect: your own body, a bag, a bar.

STEPS

> **THE SCIENCE**
>
> Across 15 groups of people and almost 47,500 adults, more daily steps went with a lower risk of death. The benefit levelled off at around 6,000 to 8,000 steps a day for people over sixty, and 8,000 to 10,000 for younger adults. (Paluch and colleagues, The Lancet Public Health, 2022.)

The famous ten thousand is often traced to a Japanese pedometer slogan of the 1960s. The science says something gentler and stronger: every thousand counts, and the first thousands count most.

- **Walk after meals.** Ten minutes after each meal is half an hour a day without a gym.
- **Strength twice a week.** Push, pull, squat, carry.
- **Take the stairs.** Every flight is a vote for the body you want.

> **THE PRACTICE**
>
> Book your training like a meeting with the most important client you have. That client is your body, and it never cancels on you.

06 · FUEL

Food is sunlight you can hold.

Every plant you eat is sunlight caught and kept. Every meal is a decision about what you will become. Eat like you mean to live long, and like you mean to perform tomorrow.

400 g of fruit and vegetables a day, at least: about five portions of 80 grams. (World Health Organization.)

SUGAR, COUNTED

The World Health Organization advises keeping free sugars under 10% of the day's energy, and ideally under 5%. On 2,000 kilocalories, 10% is 200 kilocalories: **50 grams of sugar.** 5% is **25 grams**, about six teaspoons. A single can of sweet fizzy drink can carry most of a day's allowance.

WATER

> **THE SCIENCE**
> European food scientists set the adequate intake of water at 2.0 litres a day for women and 2.5 litres for men, counted from all drinks and food together. (European Food Safety Authority, 2010.) More in heat and in training.

BORROWED ENERGY

Borrowed energy always asks to be paid back: the energy drink, the sugar rush, the third coffee. It feels like power and it is a loan. Your own energy has no crash: sleep, real food, water, daylight, movement and love.

> **THE PRACTICE**
> Build every plate around plants and protein, drink a glass of water before every meal, and read one label a day. Knowledge is the cheapest supplement.

07 · LIGHT AND RHYTHM

Your body keeps time with the sun.

You carry a clock inside you. It runs on a cycle of about a day, and it tells every organ when to wake, when to work, when to digest and when to rest. Light is the strongest signal that sets it. The discovery of how this clock ticks in our cells won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 2017.

When the clock and your Life keep the same time, energy flows. When they fight, you feel it as tiredness that sleep alone does not fix.

- **Morning light.** Step outside early, even on a grey Irish morning. Daylight outdoors is far brighter than any room.
- **Evening dim.** Lower the lights and the screens as the night comes. Let the body know the day is done.
- **Regular meals.** The clock listens to food as well as light.

> *Give God the morning. Before the phone, before the news, before the first worry: one minute of thanks to the One above all.*
>
> ANDREW MITS

> THE PRACTICE
>
> Tomorrow, take your first ten minutes outside before you take your first look at a screen. Then notice how the day starts differently.

08 · THE ENERGY THIEVES

Name them. Close them.

Most people are not short of energy. They are leaking it. A champion does not only train harder; a champion closes the leaks. Here are the thieves, and here is how you shut the door on each.

0 The safe level of alcohol for health, in the words of the World Health Organization's office for Europe: "no level of alcohol consumption is safe for our health." (2023.)

- **Alcohol.** It borrows tonight's joy from tomorrow's energy. The solution: decide the drink-free days in advance, and let them become most days.
- **Smoke and nicotine.** Every breath of smoke is a tax on the one lever you hold. The solution: replace the ritual, not only the substance. A walk, cold water, a call.
- **The scroll.** It steals attention a few seconds at a time, and attention is the steering wheel. The solution: the phone has a home, and it is not your hand.
- **Resentment.** Carrying anger is carrying weight you are not paid for. The solution: gratitude, which changes what happened into strength.
- **Rush.** Hurry spends energy without direction. The solution: speed is not hurry. Speed is energy that knows where it is going.

> *Borrowed energy always asks to be paid back.*
>
> ANDREW MITS, ENERGETICS

THE PRACTICE

Write your three biggest leaks on one card. Next to each, write the replacement: what you will do instead when the old pull comes. Keep the card where you will see it every day.

09 · LOVE IS ENERGY

The strongest fuel is people.

Loneliness drains. Love charges. This is not only a feeling; it is one of the strongest findings in the science of health.

THE SCIENCE

Across 148 studies and more than 300,000 people, those with stronger social relationships had about 50% higher odds of surviving the years of follow-up than those with weaker ones, an effect the authors compared with well-established risk factors. (Holt-Lunstad and colleagues, PLoS Medicine, 2010.)

Gratitude is how love trains. In a ten-week study, people who wrote down each week what they were grateful for felt better about their lives and exercised more than those who listed their hassles. (Emmons and McCullough, 2003.)

- **One real conversation a day.** Voice or face, not only text.
- **One thank-you a week,** written, specific, to someone who did not expect it.
- **Play for someone.** The posture holds when you hold it for someone.

> *Love is above all.*
> VIRTUS ET AMOR

THE PRACTICE

This week, call the person you have been meaning to call. Tell them one thing you are grateful for. Notice your energy after the call.

10 · THE DAILY ENERGY LOOP

Stand. Breathe. See. Speak. Move. Love.

Health is not a project with an end date. It is a loop you run every day, like the infinity at the heart of our sign. Here is the loop, from waking to sleeping.

1. **Stand.** Wake at your fixed time. Feet on the floor, spine tall. One minute of thanks to God before the phone.
2. **Breathe.** Five minutes of cyclic sighing. Then ten minutes of daylight outside.
3. **See.** Three moves for the day, written down. Nothing else gets your best hours.
4. **Speak.** One word for the day, said out loud: strong, calm, generous, fast.
5. **Move.** A walk after meals, training booked like a meeting, the stairs taken. Plants and water at every plate. Last coffee six hours before bed.
6. **Love.** One real conversation, one thank-you, the screens dimmed, the phone outside the bedroom, and sleep on time.

The ego is the engine, God the driver, energy the fuel. Health is energy that knows where it is going.

> **WHEN MINUTES MATTER**
>
> Chest pain or pressure, sudden weakness or numbness of the face, an arm or a leg, or sudden trouble speaking: call 112 or 999 at once. Every minute matters.

SOURCES

Where every number comes from.

Every number in this book was checked against its source. Studies describe groups of people, not you: use them as a compass, never as a promise. This book shares training habits for daily life; it does not diagnose or treat any illness.

THE CALCULATIONS

- 97 watts: 2,000 kcal × 4,184 joules per kcal ÷ 86,400 seconds in a day = 96.9 watts.
- 50 grams of sugar: 10% of 2,000 kcal is 200 kcal; sugar gives 4 kcal per gram; 200 ÷ 4 = 50 g. Half of that, 25 g, is the 5% line, about six teaspoons of 4 grams.
- 400 grams: five portions of 80 grams.

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