

# Habit 7 – Sharpen the Saw

---

By C. Kohn, Waterford, WI

Based on the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People

# The Habits – A Review

- 1. Be proactive – “I am the force.” I have the power and control to be responsible.
- 2. Begin with the End in Mind – Control your own destiny. Know where you are going and how you are going to get there.
- 3. Put First Things First – Have the will- and won’t-power to do the most important things.
- 4. Think Win/Win (or No Deal) – Everyone can be successful and share in the pie of success.
- 5. Seek First to Understand – Listen genuinely to understand others and then communicate effectively to be understood.
- 6. Synergize – Collaborate with others using our individual ideas to create something more interesting and exciting, “the High Way.”
- 7. Sharpen the Saw – “Me time”. Seek daily renewal to prevent ‘burn-out’

# Sharpen the Saw!

- Suppose you came upon someone in the woods working to saw down a tree.
  - They are exhausted from working for hours.
- You suggest they take a break to sharpen the saw.
  - They might reply, " I didn't have time to sharpen the saw, I'm busy sawing!"
- What's wrong with their reply? Discuss:





# Sharpen the Saw

- Sharpening the Saw means that you are taking time to relieve stress and seek personal growth and improvement.
  - “If you’re not green and growing, you’re ripe and rotting!”
- Failing to take the time to refresh yourself means that you are not improving, are not becoming more effective, and are heading towards burnout .



# The 4 Dimensions

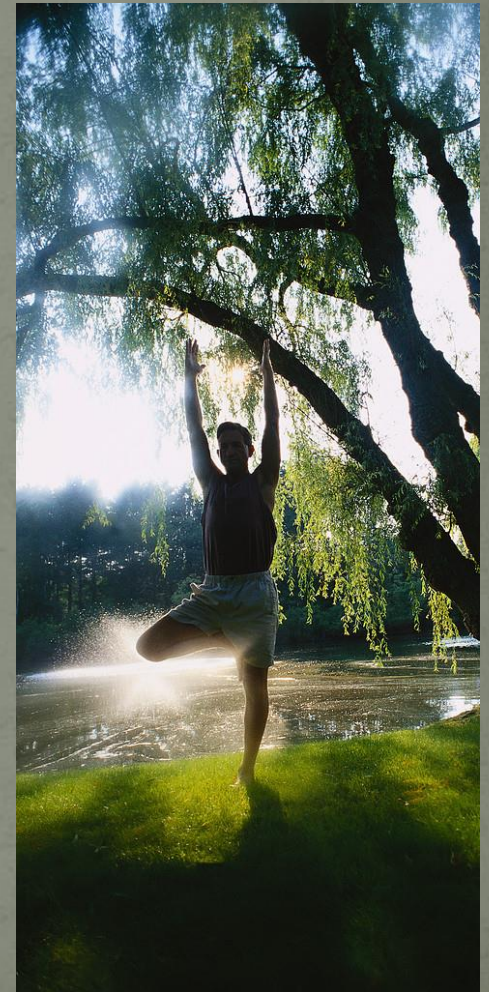
- There are 4 aspects of your life that should receive daily or weekly improvement
  - 1. Body (Physical) – your physical health and well-being
  - 2. Brain (Mental) - your cognitive development and ability
  - 3. Heart (Emotional) - your emotional bank accounts
  - 4. Soul (Spiritual) – your sense of inner peace and direction





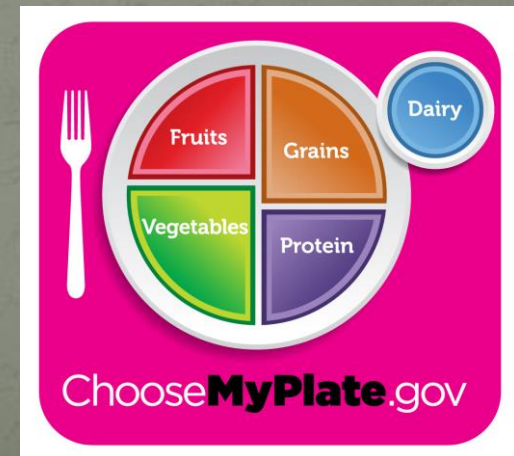
# Your Body: The Physical Dimension

- The physical dimension consists of –
  - Eating right
  - Getting enough sleep
  - Reducing Stress
  - Physical Activity
- You should exercise at least 3-6 hours per week, or a minimum of 30 minutes per day (on average)
  - Those who think they don't have time are not considering the eventual impact of an unhealthy lifestyle.
  - Exercise prevents burnout and helps you to maximize your physical productivity.



# You are what you eat!

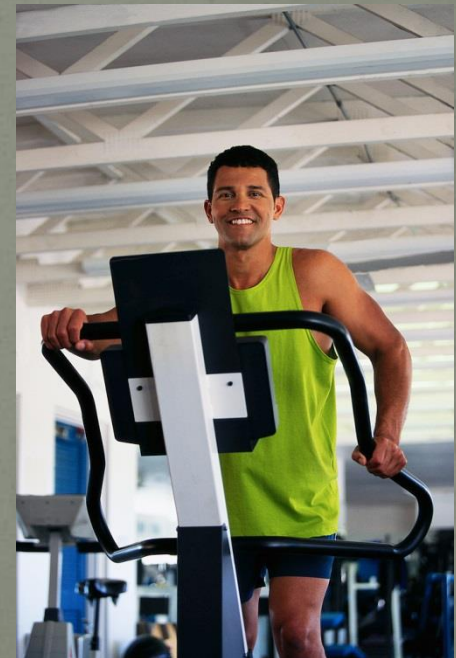
- Listen to your body: if the foods you are eating make you feel horrible, maybe you should limit these (e.g. too much pizza, fried or greasy foods, etc.)
- Be moderate and avoid extremes: There is no reason to jump back and forth between eating like a rabbit and eating like a pig. A little junk food won't hurt, but just don't make it every day.





# Exercise

- Exercise is very much an important but not urgent activity (Quadrant II).
  - It can revolve around other components of your schedule, but it has to happen!
- Exercise will also work to reduce stress, improve appearance and confidence, and enhance mental performance (the body feeds the mind).





# Your Brain: The Mental Dimension

- Developing brainpower through school, extracurricular activities, hobbies, jobs, and other mind-growing activities.
- Most mental development occurs while you are in school.
  - At the end of schooling, many people stop studying and learning, allowing their mental abilities to atrophy and dwindle over time.
- A responsible, proactive person seeks to grow mentally each week.
  - Read, debate, write, listen, and observe as often as you can.



# The Mental Dimension

- READ!!!
  - The simplest and most straightforward way to expand your mind is to read.
- The consideration and understanding of new and sometimes oppositional ideas is crucial to your personal growth and development as a person.
  - The most ignorant among us assumed long ago that they knew more than they needed to know.
  - The most educated and able among us long ago decided they could never know enough.
  - It is up to you to choose which will describe you 10 years from now.
- Find your niche=find subjects you like to study and build upon that!
  - Let the world be your campus.





# Mental Growth

- The world is full of different and changing ideas
  - Your place in the world will be largely determined by your ability to understand all sides of an argument.
- You must seek to understand all that you can if you ever expect any one else to seek to understand you.
  - Those who understand others will themselves be better understood and in turn will have more influence, more control, and more impact.



# Your Heart: The Emotional Dimension

- You will develop many emotional bank accounts in your life.
  - You must take time to develop each account, ensuring that no account ever becomes overdrawn, and at worst only becomes forgotten for a short time.
- Writing letters, personal phone calls, small gifts and favors, and an active commitment to maintaining your personal relationships should be a part of your weekly routine.
  - It should be scheduled into each week.





# The Emotional Dimension

- The ultimate emotional bank account is between ourselves and the rest of the world.
  - If you cannot find reason to commit yourself to a cause greater than yourself for no other reason than it is simply the right thing to do, you should be concerned.
  - “We should all be ashamed to die until we have won some victory for humanity.” - Horace Mann.
- If we are emotionally insecure, or socially self-centered, we will be unable to commit ourselves to the well-being of others and will be unable to see wisdom, power, guidance, and value beyond the things that are immediately and personally beneficial.
- Take time to laugh! It is the key to keeping your heart healthy and strong.



# Your Soul: The Spiritual Dimension

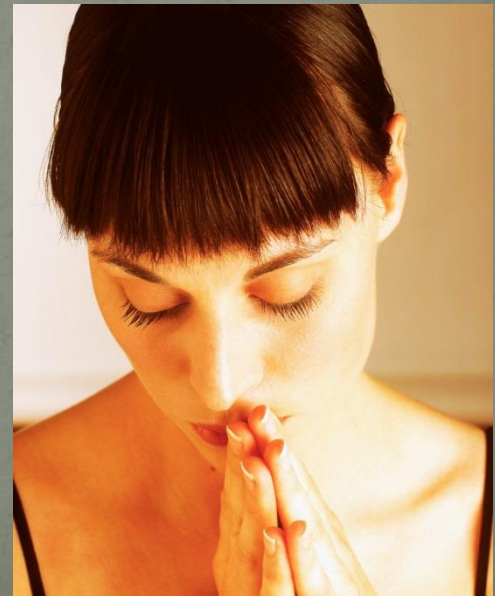
- The spiritual dimension is your center, your commitment to your value system.
  - It draws upon the sources that inspire and uplift you.
- It may be religion, but it can also be nature, personal meditation, or reflection exercises
  - It is what gives you greater meaning as a person, whatever that meaning may be.
- Keeping a journal can do amazing things for your soul





# Personal Mission Statements

- Part of the Spiritual Dimension is the personal mission statement
  - A personal mission statement should cause you to reflect on your motives, analyze your shortcomings, and clarify the things in your life that are absolutely not negotiable
- Public victories cannot occur if there is internal personal conflict.



# The Upward Spiral

- The more proactive you are (Habit 1), the more effectively you can exercise personal leadership (Habit 2) and personal management (Habit 3).
- The more effectively you can manage your life (Habit 3), the more time you will have for self-renewal (Habit 7).
- The more you renew and improve yourself physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally, the more you can understand the views of others (Habit 5 & 6) and identify ways in which their success can also be your success (Habit 4).
- The more you can seek interdependent success, the more you will be able to benefit from life, enabling you to become more proactive (Habit 1) and seek change that will at its best change the world (Habit 4) and at very least make you a more effective person (The 7 Habits).

