

Elevating Your Energy for Life

TRANSCRIPT

Good morning, and welcome to this month's Your Health and Wellbeing Hub's live session, we are or I am talking all about elevating your energy. And that means both for your working life and for your personal life, of course. And I'm really excited to share this topic with you today because in nearly 20 years of working with, you know, groups of people within organisations, with individual clients, the number one thing that people say to me is, "I'm so tired". And "how can I, you know, how can I have more energy?" So I want to share with you, I know I said it's two, but I'm pretty sure now it's three major causes of fatigue that very few people are aware of, and how to go about mitigating those, so that we can elevate those energy levels and really get as much out of life as possible.

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But firstly, we can get the, there we go, if we can get the slides to work, the first question to ask ourselves is, why is energy so important anyway. And, you know, I guess the first potentially obvious thing to say is that without energy, we can't be alive. Unless our cells are creating energy, then we just don't function, not any of ourselves, any of our tissues, nothing works. And above and beyond actually being alive, we need energy to be able to grow. That's more of more importance when we're younger. But we need to be able to repair our bodies throughout our lives, we need to be able to stay warm, we need to be able to move our physical bodies, through the energy that that's provided for our muscles and our skeletal system. And, you know, emotionally and mentally, if we don't have great energy levels, then we tend to be less motivated, less inspired, less joyful, less fun to be around. And so you know, the more that we can support our production of energy in the body, the more that we can give those 37,000 billion things happening every second, as close to what they need as possible, the more abundant and consistent our energy levels will be. And we're going to start with the beginning of our day, which has a huge influence on the energy that we then carry into our entire working or, you know, into a day that we're not, we're not working. And I'm not talking about needing to get up at, you know, five o'clock, and perform the Miracle Morning, I'm not talking about needing to take an hour extra out of bed to create this. I'm simply talking about starting the day by putting your positive pants on. So really fostering an optimistic outlook because I don't want you to ignore the challenges that we all have in life, you know, and fall into a kind of toxic positivity situation. But if we are optimistic, then we can choose our focus for the day and make a conscious decision as to what energy we're going to put into how we're feeling. So consider this if you wake most mornings feeling you know, as the alarm again, you know you're lethargic or maybe a little bit demotivated, you're thinking already don't want to have to get out of bed.

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You're not necessarily looking forward to the day. What attitude and emotional energy are you going to be taking into that day?

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Well, I would suggest that if you don't start with a particularly well, you might gradually come to with you know, some water and some coffee and something to eat. But you're not necessarily going to be feeling emotionally energised, mentally energised.

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But if you wake up and you might be in that same state, but you decide that you're going to have a good day. If you set a conscious intention to feel joyful to remain light hearted. Then what do you think might happen?

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The thing is that, you know, as humans, we have a evolutionary tendency towards negativity, we have what's called a negativity bias that tend to lower our mood at times, but the trouble is that the more our mood is lower, the lower our mood becomes, it's a self perpetuating cycle. That natural negativity bias was a very helpful survival mechanism A long time ago. But it's still with us. But as a result, if we can consciously create this positivity bias, which means being more optimistic, creating things like a gratitude practice, knowing what pieces of music help to energise us and snap us out, are feeling more pessimistic and focusing on the things that aren't so great in life, then that will improve our emotional, and often our mental energy.

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Water, it's as simple but a fundamental need, of course, for the body. And even mild dehydration can reduce our mental energy and our physical energy levels. Mild dehydration can manifest as a mood issue. So being irritable, a bit snappy, it can reduce our focus and concentration. And it can also also cause us to feel physically tired for similar reasons. And that's because water is the conduit, it's like the river in the body that carries around all the nutrients, it carries around the oxygen that we breathe in, it carries around the hormones that are the messengers to signal different biological functions. So if we want those 37,000 billion things every second to be working as well as possible, then we need to be mindful about how we're drinking. And you know, how do you know if you are drinking enough? Well, you know, back when I was younger, the rule of thumb was to ensure that your urine was clear. that's now been slightly debunked. And the general recommendation now is to look for a light straw coloured urine as a way of knowing if we are dehydrated or well hydrated. You can also use a very simple calculation, take your body weight in kilogrammes and divide by 25. I'm just going to say that again. So there are there are different schools of thought around this. But this is a fairly simple one. So take your body weight in kilogrammes and divide by 25. So for instance, if you are 75 kilos, then, you know, as a starting point, you'd be looking at three litres of water on a day to day basis. That's without taking into account activity where you might be really sweating. Or if you were in a really hot climate, for instance. We we've been blessed with the sunshine recently. But that's not the general general thing in the UK is it. So food, it would be remiss of me to talk about elevating your energy levels without having another little look at food. Some of the things I'm going to talk about we have talked about last month, so go and check out that session or refresh yourself of that session at some point. But as I may have said last time, the winner of the best diet for overall health and that includes energy levels. You know, at this point, there isn't a winner, because there just aren't enough head to head dietary studies comparing the various approaches to eating to make any real conclusions. So if anyone ever tells you they've got the perfect diet, you know that that's actually a complete fallacy. However, the evidence has shown two things conclusively. One is that we thrive on diets that consists of mainly minimally processed foods that come direct from nature, and also foods that are made up of those types of ingredients. And that secondly, humans thrive on a diet that is rich in plants and plant based foods. Now, there are various ways that food affects our energy levels. Firstly, and this is one of the little known facts directly and immediately through something called orexin in the body. Through our secondly through our overall energy supply imbalance and the effect that that has on our hormones starting at the digestive system and and you know going through the processes

of the body Thirdly, more subtly and over the longer term, due to the impact of things like our meal timing, our feeding and fasting windows, I, you know, when we're eating, and when we're giving a body, our bodies a restaurant eating, I'm going to talk about that as well.

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Fourthly, the inflammatory and anti-inflammatory impact of our food has an effect on our energy levels, for sure, and the effect of those foods and our eating pattern on our mitochondria. And if you haven't heard of mitochondria, they are the engines of our cells, absolutely fundamental in the creation of energy for us to feel amazing, you know, every day or, you know, as consistently as possible. So let's talk about orexin and because it's the single most important compound to understand when it comes to how food impacts our energy levels. And like I said, many people haven't ever heard of it. So whenever you feel tired, whenever you feel fatigued, it's likely that your orexin levels are low, or have been suppressed. That's because orexin is a powerful stimulator of feeling wakeful, alert, and energetic mentally and physically. And, you know, there are lots of different factors that impact our energy levels, but a lot of them do so by indirectly impacting this, this particular compound direction, and food is hugely important in this. So in our brain, orexin essential to us functioning at our best, including being in a good mood, and having those high energy levels that we all want to have. So the nutritional factors that affect orexin include carbohydrates, in high doses in you know, eating large quantities of carbohydrates, particularly the refined starchy ones that come from white flour, so pasta, bread, pancakes, you know, all those things. They suppress orexin. So this is one of the reasons that you can sit down and you know, maybe lasagna with some garlic bread, or a plate of pasta and some garlic bread, and feel quite sluggish and tired afterwards afterwards, because your orexin levels plummet in response to those carbohydrates. And that's the main reason that most people feel tired after after food.

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And also fatty foods, obviously, some fats are really, really good for us. Other fats not so much. But generally speaking, too much fat, if we a meal that has too much fat in it, then again, we'll feel sluggish, we'll feel slow. And we might want to you know, slumped in front of the TV feel like having a nap. And again, this is the other main reason that many people feel tired after eating. And this can be this can be even more compounded when we eat a meal that combines lots of carbs, and lots of fat. And that's when you maybe feel yourself like nodding off or feeling like you need to go and get a pick me up an hour or so after a meal like that. The good news is the fact that positively influences orexin levels is our protein intake. So, protein is broken down into the body into tiny little amino acids. And some of these amino acids excite or stimulate orexin. So that improves our alertness, our mental focus, concentration and our physical energy. These amino acids from protein also block the impact of the glucose from the carbohydrates in a meal to suppress orexin so we don't feel the the influence of the carbohydrates reducing the orexin as as profoundly. So increasing our protein intake is going to be beneficial for many, many individuals. Now if you have an existing health condition, if you have kidney disease, for instance, you may be on a protein sparing diet. So please, you know, do check with your doctor as to whether or not you you can increase your protein intake but generally speaking for an otherwise healthy, individual adult with no existing medical conditions, making sure that you're getting between 1.2 and 1.5 grammes of protein per kilo of your body weight is a really good idea to let me say that again. So you can write it down, having a look at your food. And if you are a smaller female like myself, I would be looking at 1.2 grammes of protein per kilo of my body weight. If you are an athletic male male, then you want to be doing at least 1.5 grammes of protein per kilo of your body weight. To give you a little idea, in a three ounce or 75 gramme, a piece of steak of lean meats, you got about 25 grammes of protein in a large egg, you've got six grammes of protein roughly. In tofu, you've got 11

grammes per half a cup, which is a serving. And in another plant based option, like black beans, you've got eight grammes per half a cup, so you can go in and have a look at that. So in addition, another really positive factor for orexin not plummeting after a meal, is to get up and go for a short walk. So rather than getting into, you know, the carbohydrates and the fats, if you get up after a meal, you will have a positive impact on your body's ability to metabolise glucose.

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And that will have a positive impact on preventing orexin in levels from falling so much. And research shows that even just a short walk of 15 minutes will have this positive impact on our energy levels. But even five minutes is better than not moving at all after food. Right. So another little known factor in dwindling energy levels is the negative impact of life in the 21st. And also back in the 20th century, on our the impact on our circadian systems on our circadian health. So since we've had electricity, access to electricity 24, seven, our circadian health has been something that we've been certainly from a research perspective, progressively more aware of, you know, potential for less helpful health outcomes. So there's a lot of ill health of ageing that is associated with this impact on our circadian systems. And the circadian system is a collection of biological clocks. That's why I've got the clock up there. And these clocks play a fundamental role in our metabolism, metabolism. So our metabolic health, and the way that our body works through every 24 hour cycle, and also beyond that seasonally as well. When our circadian system is disrupted, our lower lowered energy levels are often an initial sign that we've got an issue. And that can be as simple as waking up every morning feeling unrefreshed physically, you know, not ready for the day, feeling like we need coffee, or some kind of energy drink to get started feeling mentally foggy through the day and really not, you know, like, really having to challenge ourselves to perform at our best. And it's light. That is one of the major drivers to control our circadian system and those biological clocks. And specifically, we've got two issues. Firstly, that we have an excess of blue light now, from our devices, often people are staying on their devices, you know, well into the evening, taking them into the bedroom, if they wake at night, switching them on checking the time looking at emails, checking social media, and so on. So that is one issue. The other issue is that we also tend to have a deficiency of full spectrum light, because we don't get out into natural light as early in the morning as ideally, our biological clocks need and we're not out in the light the full spectrum light often through the day, we might be getting it through a window, but we are not getting enough of the Lux which you may or may not know is how light is measured through a window for instance. So I think from memory, you get something like 10,000 Lux from 15-20 minutes out in full spectrum light. However, if you are you know getting that through a window You're only getting about 100. So the answer is twofold. Firstly, in the morning, whenever possible, get out into full spectrum light as quickly as possible after you get up. So within the first 30 to 60 minutes is ideal. However, even if you're doing that here in the UK, the chances of it being, you know, Sunny enough to really get that full spectrum light for long enough is not necessarily high. So I highly recommend that my clients are working one to one with them invest in a SAD, or what I like to call a happy lamp.

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So, SAD standing for seasonal affective disorder is something that a lot of people are aware of having a degree of, or some people have it very significantly in the Northern Hemisphere, you don't need to have an obvious seasonal affective disorder, you don't have to have a diagnosis to be able to benefit from having the exposure to the full spectrum light in that first 30 to 60 minutes after waking. And if you can get out through the day as well for a short walk, that would benefit both your erection levels, and also your circadian health. So it's a double win for your energy levels there. In the evening. Many of you will be aware that we do have blue light blocking devices, or you know filters on our screens, I would still

really highly recommend that you are off your devices, any device. And that includes television as well, for at least one and preferably two hours before you go to bed. In addition, and this is the third little known way of boosting your energy levels. In addition, we also want to stop eating two to three hours before we go to bed to start our overnight fasting period. And the reason for that is that allowing ourselves to go into that overnight fasting state supports the detoxification and elimination that is going on in our cells known as autophagy.

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So, remember, I mentioned those mitochondria where all our energy is really being made, we want to give them the opportunity overnight to really clean up all the waste products from the energy that they've been making. And essentially let ourselves take the bins out. So have a think for a minute, what it would be like in your house, if the bins weren't taken out from the bathroom. If the toilet wasn't flushed, if the bins weren't taken out from the kitchen, if the composting was left for too long, you know what that would feel like to live in, if we're not giving our bodies what they need in terms of being able to take those cellular bins out to perform that autophagy then you know, you may not be initially aware of a problem but declining energy levels and poor energy levels as a you know, as even a sporadic experience are often related to our detoxification at a cellular level not happening overnight. So autophagy, I just want you to be really aware of that because it was a so few people are aware of it. And yet back in about 2016. So only five years ago, the Nobel Prize for physiology and medicine. So the most prestigious prize in that particular field was won by a researcher might have been a group of researchers for their research in this field because it is so profoundly important and impactful on the way that our bodies work. So the best way to facilitate that, as I mentioned, is to really have a look at bringing back eating and drinking anything that is caloric, you know that has any energy. So a cup of tea with milk, a glass of wine, you know, even an alcohol free beer. Any of those things, we want to bring that back to a point where we aren't eating for two or three hours before we go to bed. And then in the morning when we wake up. Make sure that for the first 45 minutes or so we are just drinking some water, whether it's room temperature water with a squeeze of lemon juice, to just allow our body the opportunity to continue that cellular housekeeping and come to wait for nurse And then get ready for ingesting the food. So if you're like, oh my goodness, I pretty much eat up until I go to bed, then your first job, if you like is to pull that back by 20 minutes or half an hour, do that for a while, pull it back again, and so on and so forth. What you want to do is have a minimum of a 12 hour fasting window. But you might start off with achieving 10 hours. If you can do that consistently, seven days a week, even five days a week, then you are going to be significantly ahead of what you might be doing now. And your energy levels will, your body will thank you for it and your energy levels will improve as a result. Now, I couldn't talk about elevating our energy levels without mentioning sleep. I'm not going to cover it in detail today, because I have got a we have got a session next month lined up all about sleep. But again, if we are paying attention to our cellular housekeeping to making sure autophagy is working well. If we are looking after our circadian health as well, and reducing our exposure in the latter part of the day leading up to bed, then we will likely have a much better quality of sleep, and wake more refreshed in the morning. So that's all I'm going to say about that today. And lastly, it would be remiss of me to talk about elevating our energy levels if we didn't touch on supplementation. And there's a couple of reasons for that. Firstly, I see a lot of people that dismiss supplementation out of hand with this idea that all it does is give you expensive urine. Now, if you buy certain very cheap supplements, multivitamins, for instance, that are found often in supermarkets, and often in mainstream chemists and pharmacies, then that may well be true, because all supplements are not created equal. And all nutrients in those supplements are not created equal. So for instance, you know, take fold eight, B nine most people are aware of women needing that prior to pregnancy. Most women take it in a what's called an in an in active form, when it would be much better if they were given the active form, which we know would absolutely benefit them in the body. Some

people because of the way that their body works have a problem with with a process called methylation. And so they need a certain form of all the B vitamins to really be able to benefit from from them. Other people and generally speaking, one person's need for certain nutrients versus somebody else's need for nutrients is also different. So for instance, your need for B vitamins may be half or double double what I need, but my need for magnesium might be triple your need for magnesium. So this is why generic supplementation isn't always useful. But making sure that you are using high quality supplements really is, you know an investment worth making. For many, many people. There's also a difference between an overt deficiency of something and the amount of that same nutrient that we might need optimally to fuel all those 37,000 billion things. So take vitamin C for instance, you if you don't have enough vitamin C, then you will end up with scurvy, which is where you get kind of like lesions, your skin breaks down, you get ulcers and so on because vitamin C helps to hold you know, tissue together. So that's a very overt deficiency. There's many many people out there who do not have scurvy because they are getting the 60 milligrammes of vitamin C a day that's needed to prevent that, who aren't necessarily getting optimal levels of vitamin C, to ensure that all those 1000s of billions of of different reactions are working to their absolute capacity and giving you the best level of energy possible and that is true of all nutrients. So please don't dismiss supplementation out of hand. If you have any questions about it, you can drop me an email and I can you know, do a session about it down the track. But if in doubt, make friends With your local health food store, preferably an independent one, and go in and talk to them about what might be the best supplement for you because you know I use many different multi what could be considered to be multi vitamins and minerals with one to one clients, but they are chosen for the individual situation.

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So, that's it for me for today. I hope you enjoyed this. If you have any questions, please do email me at Louise at Louise Westra calm, and I will endeavour to answer them in a future session or via one of my emails to you all and enjoy the rest of your day. Bye for now.