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SPEAKERS

Art Gelwicks, Voiceover Artist, Raymond Sidney-Smith, Francis Wade



Voiceover Artist 00:00

Are you ready to manage your work and personal world better to live a fulfilling productive life, then you've come to the right place productivity cast, the weekly show about all things productivity. Here, your host Ray Sydney Smith and a goose open out with Francis Wayne and our gal wicks.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 00:18

Welcome back, everybody to productivity cast, the weekly show about all things personal productivity, I'm Sydney Smith,



Francis Wade 00:25

Francis Wade,



Raymond Sidney-Smith 00:26

or gal works. So welcome, gentlemen to the show. Today, we're going to be talking about Chrono types, Chrono typing, and the construct of ideal daily schedules for optimal

productivity. And what I'd like us to do is to define Chrono types for our audience. And we're going to be talking about Chrono types and ideal daily schedules through the lens of actually two books. The books are the power of win by Michael Bruce. He's a PhD sleep psychologist, and Dan Pink, many of you know that Dan Pink from his other books, but he recently came out with a book called when the scientific secrets of perfect timing. And I feel like the two books really blend well together, they both talk about common typing, and they're talking about how to set up ideal schedules for for having a productive life. And I think they work well together. And you gentlemen can tell me if I'm, if I'm wrong. But let's let's get into first, the construct of a chronic type. Can anybody describe for our audience? What is a chronic type? What What does it What does the concept of a Chrono type mean?

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Francis Wade 01:38

I think of a crowd tap as a preference for doing certain activities at certain times. And the way the I believe the book has it structured is it focuses on when you're at your sort of most alert, your most able, when your thoughts are flowing freely, freely when you can produce your best work. And different people have different preferences or contacts for the specter when they can do their best work. So for example, I'm am so obviously a morning person, it's it's painful to anyone who ever watches me who happens to be an evening person. Because it, it's almost as if I turn off, I literally turn off at about eight o'clock, and I become totally useless. Maybe seven. Definitely, not the best family. For me, best time for me is the early morning, which that's about five o'clock, and goes terrible. 1011 sort of degrades during the day, and then after that coffee at about one o'clock so they can sort of last and still be productive. But it's all a matter of sort of managing myself. Around my time. The Best Times for me, where do I miss work? I think knowledge of a corner type knowledge of one's quantum type leads a person to better manage his or her own internal state.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 03:05

And I would only add to that to kind of clarify for folks that you use the word preference. And I think that it's important to understand that our Chrono types are ours are set biologically, we lean into these Chrono types, the research has unfolded for us to give us a picture that most of this is based on our sleep. And when we sleep. And therefore what happens in the time opposing that sleep. Some of the famous Chrono biologists that people who've studied the rhythms of our, our days, right, so Kronos, you know, covering the rotation of the sun, and of that is the rotation of the earth. Each time the Earth rotates, we have a day, right. And so our whole construct of understanding this is based on mostly the circadian rhythm, but to some extent, the old trading rhythm. And so the

difference between that is that the circadian rhythm is our rhythm throughout the day of our metabolism. So our metabolism, increases in the morning, has a bit of a dip, and then increases again, mid afternoon, usually, and then finally starts to subside as we make our way toward sleeping hours. And our old trading rhythm is actually a cyclical 90 minute, up 90 minute down energy pattern that falls along the metabolic or the circadian rhythm pathway. And so keep that in mind that this is there's a lot of this that is just biologically set. And it's something that was interesting to me. And I want to get your thoughts on this gentleman, which is in the power of when Dr. Bruce brings up a new perspective on chronic types. So the the customary Chrono types that were developed by German quantum biologists basically had the morning Lark and the night owl, as you talked about, Francis, you are a morning Lark. And if I understand things, aren't you are as well, very much. So yeah. So in that vein, we have, we have the morning Lark, and we have the night owl. And then those are actually more unique than the vast majority of people 60 to 80% of people are hummingbirds, as they call them, neither morning large nor night owls. And, and so Dr. Bruce thought, well, in his sleep psychology practice, he wasn't seeing that he was actually studying insomniacs, and people with severe sleep issues. And so he got interested in figuring out, well, does this really make sense. And he came up with a new paradigm, which has four different distinct personality slash Chrono types. So these aren't really purely Chrono types, these are actually a lot of personality plus Chrono types. And that immediately made me kind of suspicious to the whole construct. But ultimately, when I looked at the book as a whole, I really found there to be a really strong argument for it. And so he has these four pieces, the bear, the lion, the wolf, and the dolphin. And he chose to use mammals in his sleep paradigm has his chronic typing paradigm, which I think is appropriate, since humans are mammals. And, and so he goes on to talk about bears being traditionally what we would consider the every person hummingbirds, people who are neither morning larks, no night owls. Then he talks about lions, the traditional morning, Lark, Wolf, which is traditionally the night owl. And now this new, other Chrono type that he's called dolphin. And these are the folks who traditionally have sleep issues. And and this is near and dear to my heart, because upon taking the power of one quiz, which you can take on his website, I'll put a link to in the show notes. But if you go and take the quiz on on his website, you can figure out which of these Chrono types you are, it's actually another test in the book that he talks about where you can actually take your temperature throughout the evening, starting, I think it's 7pm. It's every hour, you take your temperature, I'll have to look it up in the book, I'll put it in the show notes. But you know, he gives very explicit instructions on how to use a digital thermometer to see whether or not your temperature increases or decreases over the course of the evening hours. And that actually dictates what your current type is. It turns out, I'm a dolphin. And that's a real problem for me. I hadn't realized that for many years. But upon reading the material on what a dolphin is and how they experience sleep, I it was just it was very, very eye opening. So with that, what did you think about the construct of the four Chrono

types, as opposed to nutritional most people only really talk about larks and night owls? If anyone really talks about larks even and not hummingbirds? I think most of the time I hear people talking about night owls, and not necessarily talking about morning locks and hummingbirds. And now we have this fourfold paradigm. What did you think about the paradigm,



Art Gelwicks 08:14

I do struggle with it a little bit, I think they're very accurate in their assessment, when you give it when you go through the entire prototype definition, where I get I get hung up on it a little bit is and this is going to sound silly, it's on the animals themselves. And here's what I mean, I think what happens is, people hear these definitions that I'm a dolphin, or I'm a lion, or I'm a bear. And they lose sight of the fact that it's, it's basically just a name for this definition. And they mentally slip back into what's the personality type that I assigned to that animal. So when you hear that somebody is a bear, you're you're assigning personnel of the future. So which may have nothing to do with the prototype itself. When I look at and when you look at the definitions of it, you know, I started off, I followed the normal evolution of this being a wolf in my teenage years and becoming much more of a lion. Now, again, you see, you hear those terms, it's like, oh, well, he's that type of a person. It doesn't necessarily have anything to do with that. It has everything to do with this hardwiring. And using that as a way to either validate or not validate the behaviors you have, and your energy levels, and when is it best to do things. The other thing I have with the prototypes, though, is and I know we have to do this to understand this kind of thing, because this can get very navel gazing, is it creates boxes, I mean, we're going to keep throwing animals into this, it creates pigeonholes. So you, you look at this and say I am either one one or the other. That's not necessarily the case you it flexes back and forth at times, you can do things that will push you into one area for a while. And then back to the other. There's more of a standard that you get to you know, if you look at a larger time period of Yes, I am more typically this type. But it's not they're not clear cut off points. And I think people can get themselves trapped if they say, Oh, I must be this, or I must be that it changes over time. And you have to think about that.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 10:34

There's a lot of good evidence to show that anthropomorphizing animals has caused some really unfortunate science, I recently was watching a YouTube video about penguins, a lot of the ways in which we look at penguins, today is actually based on a little bit of a puritanical view of the world, because penguins are supposed to be cute and cuddly. And, and all of this other stuff. And a lot of the science that came from the study of those penguins, back in the 19th century, was whitewashed, because it was fairly aggressive, you

know, that the species when they come into their reproductive, you know, cycles, their phases, they become very, very sexually active because their body is flooded with hormones. And, and it can be quite, you know, violent, if you want to call it that. And since the researchers were, brought this material back to the, to the Americas, and explained this all and in essence, the publishers of whatever publications publish this stuff at the time, the scientific journals, in essence, just kind of, like deleted that material. So that penguins could stay cuddly and cute, because it was conforming to the human perspective that, you know, penguins should, you know, they make for life kind of thing. And all of these kinds of, you know, things that we want penguins to feel like humans. And and I think that same problem happens when you know, in looking at these prototypes, looking at the dolphin and going oh, you know, those are the fun loving creatures that we see performing at zoos. And and that could be problematic for you. So I fully hear your criticism, art. And I think that it is important for us to take a step back and remember that this is just a label for us to be able to identify a particular Chrono type.

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Art Gelwicks 12:23

The other thing though, to keep in mind is that this is a hard wiring thing. When you look at it, it's based on the science is pointing that it's based on specific DNA markers, and length of chromosomes. This is, it's okay to be one of these types. It's not one of these, oh, man, I am a lion. And I really want to be a bear or I'm a bear. And I really want to be a lion, which when you look in like entrepreneurial circles, that's the the common misconception is that I have to be this early to rise work at seven hours a day. And this is the right type of person to be successful. You know what wiring is wiring, you can't change your DNA that easily on a conscious level. So you have to work with what you've been given. And it's one of those pieces where I think we have to give ourselves permission to say, Okay, this is the set of rules that I have to operate by. And I'm going to make the most out of those rather than saying, No, I don't like those rules. I'm going to go by these rules and wind up incredibly frustrated.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 13:25

Absolutely. Actually on on the bulletproof blog, they do a fairly succinct summary of the chrono types. And so I'm going to I'm going to cover these for listeners just so we're all on the same page. And it's fairly brief. So this should take just a minute. And so let's just go through these. So the bear, it says, I'm quoting here from the article, and I'll put a link to this in the show notes. But it says most people fall into the bear Chrono type category, bears sleep wake patterns, follow the sun, and they have no difficulty sleeping, I would couch that they rarely have difficulty sleeping bears and most ready for intense tasks,

smack in the middle of the morning, and I feel a dip in the mid afternoon, jumping forward, lions wake up early. These are the go getters, the leaders or what they say and in the Scandinavian countries as a person's and so that they go on. They may not they might not reach for a cup of coffee until a little bit before lunch. And the most productive hours have already passed by that time. Because of their Action Pack mornings, they tend to fizzle out in the in the evening and turn in early. Allah what Francis said further, again, quoting here, wolf wolves are on the nocturnal end of the spectrum. And so they have to peak periods noon to 2pm. And again, just as most of the world working world is clocking out so sometime in the late afternoon, it says wolves tend to be makers, writers, artists, coders, the creative areas of the wolf's brain light up when the sun goes down. Most often than not wolf types tend to toward introversion and crave there alone time. Then it goes on. Finally for the dolphin. It says dolphins may or may not have a regular sleep routine. As light sleepers. They frequently wait throughout the night, and often do not sleep enough. Dolphins struggled to fall asleep, ruminating over the days failures, dolphins extreme intelligence and tendency toward perfectionism probably explain why they spend so much time shooting over the day. They do their best work from mid morning through early afternoon. And so just to the listeners have a flavor of what we're talking about here. Those are the four Chrono types, as Dr. Bruce has outlined them



Francis Wade 15:34

up play the devil's advocate a little bit I think, man, these sort of tests or these attempts to type us, I think they're that a lot of them don't get past the sort of interesting insight. Stage, they give you explain some kind of behavior. And you say, you know, you take the test or you do the analysis? I know. Yeah, look, that's just like me, and many of them stop there. I think the real value comes from a behavior change that results from the inside if there is one, but I did the test. And I already knew what contact I was based on prior tests. So this wasn't brand new to me. But I think the real sort of question which goes past the initial typing. So initial tapping, I think is somewhat instructive. But I think the real meters, what behavior change, does this translate to that would make a difference. That's, I think it's a difference making that is the real point.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 16:30

And he does something really brilliant in the book, which is he covers each of the chrono types one by one. And he covers them in the areas of relationships, Fitness, Health, sleep, eat and drink, work, creativity, money, and fun. So those who are listening, you can, you can in essence, look at the book as kind of one about one fifth the size, because you have to read this first few chapters. And then as you make your way through each of the other subsequent parts of the book, he's covered what to do in those areas for your own Chrono

type



Francis Wade 17:04

that's going in the right direction, because I don't think there's a whole lot of behavior change that changes to implement based on this in this particular way of categorizing us, I don't think it's, it's going to be a huge transformation for most people, it's going to be made me be a way in which they view their scheduling once they've accepted that they're a particular type. But the behavior changes are going to be pretty subtle, and probably won't come I don't think all of a sudden, and oh my god, I'm going to change everything that I do every day, I don't think it's going to be more it's going to be more a case of or with accept who I am, then I don't need to struggle in this area. And I need to put in place this support and that support and this allowance of data loans. And more and more like tinkering around the edges than a fundamental transformation of the individual.



Art Gelwicks 17:55

Here's where I get into the dilemma with this stuff. So for example, I'm and I'm going to jump down in the weeds real quick. If you look at the definition around our lions, one of the things that they'll comment around fitness is that you should exercise in the evening, if you're a lion Krone type because you've are your peak expert or your peak energy level is in the morning. Therefore, if you exercise in the morning, you are not increasing your energy level because of exercising, therefore you should exercise in the evening to increase your energy level when it's dropping, that's great. But then if you look at common wisdom around getting a good night's sleep, exercising before bed is frowned on. So which is it? This is where I think people get hung up with this stuff. There are so many conflicting and contrasting ways of looking at this, that they're like, I have no i no closer to being able to improve my process and situation. Because everybody's telling me two different things.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 18:54

When we are looking at any of these assessments. One, this is a wellness research assessment that Dr. Bruce has created, you know, he's asleep psychologist, he's not just some Tom Dick or Harry who's off the street throwing together material, the book is actually very well researched. And while there's always a sense for me that when we when we look at personality type indicators, or or social style indicators, like the QC temperament, Saunders, Mike Myers, Briggs disc, any Graham, any of those are malleable and subjective. And so the idea here of using, say the line or the dolphin for looking at how

personality bleeds its way into those various Chrono types can be subjective. But I think that what he does really well for us is to recognize that social behaviors, that is our social organization of the day, impacts our biology, and vice versa. And so making minor changes, he's not asking you to make big changes, he's asking me make minor changes throughout your day, so that you can have the most optimal sleep, and therefore have the best functioning on the other side of it. And I think that's, that's the most important thing here. So I think I agree with you, Francis, in the sense that none of these are our major changes, but it's actually the small incremental changes throughout your life that create the biggest benefit. How do you eat an elephant, bite by bite? How do you get a better, more productive day, and have more energy to do things that you want in your day? I think the Dr. Bruce would argue, just do these minor changes that fit into your life, so that you can have optimal sleep. So you can bet get better on the other side of that, that when you wake you have you feel refreshed, rejuvenated and ready to tackle the day. And we can't do that. I mean, fundamentally, we can't be highly productive if we're not getting sleep. And it's a it's just a very important aspect of our lives, as I frequently explain to to, you know, what I'm doing today about productivity, I explained that sleep hack has two functions. You know, one is cellular repair, it's helping our bodies repair itself. But the other side is that the brain needs downtime in order to do pattern recognition and memory consolidation. So you can't remember what you learned today, if you don't sleep on it, and allow your brain to do the work of doing that kind of consolidation, what they call consolidation in psychology, and neuroscience, it's the idea of your brain, taking the data that it collected today, and attempting to code it into more longer term storage, I guess the ethos

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Francis Wade 21:39

with which to approach research like this is I think experimental is still say, when this is the first thing not hold it as a dogma, and as a hard and fast. But you know, as I said, you know, we probably move between the chrono types, depending on our age, or, whoa, where this is going or what our relationship is, with our suppose we might even move around a bit just just depending, you know, but the focus on on sleep, and how and the quality of sleep is true regardless of what contact we happen to identify with, or which whichever one we believe we're hardwired. I'm thinking of an example that happened with me has happened to me very recently. So I used to not be a coffee coffee drinker, about three years ago, I didn't touch the stuff. And it didn't, it didn't taste good, didn't smell good. I couldn't understand the attraction. And there were, you know, one of these bits of research that said, Oh, Green Coffee will will lengthen your life by how many years? And I said, Okay, let me try. What is this thing? So going from not being a coffee drinker to going to be a coffee drinker is a bit of a revelation. It's like, you know, you get the bang, because your body his body doesn't know what caffeine is, on a regular basis hasn't

added before, because I was not a coke drinker. So you know, the first few weeks of drink coffee were like, wow, God is talking about, okay, no, I understand. And, of course, over time, that sort of lesson, so I go on coffee fast, where I stopped drinking coffee for a week or two, just so my body can sort of readjust and reset itself. But the big change, I made that so that was the first experiment was to try coffee and realize, okay, it does work, I am more alert, I can work for longer, I does have some benefits. But I didn't read read a bit more research that said, you get a bigger bang for the buck if you do caffeine up. So I tried the coffee nap. And if for listeners who may not know what a caffeine app is, it's it counterintuitive action of drinking coffee and then taking a nap right after the last sip. And then that needs to be only 15 to 20 minutes long. There's good science behind it. And it's, I guess proven. But in my case, it does work, you wake up with a very, very clear mind. Clear then if you took a regular nap, and clearer than if you just took the coffee by itself. So the coffee now platform does work for me. So wake up early in the morning 530, to caffeine up at 10 and get the results. And then the final experiment I did which, again has to do with sleep was to move my coffee drink into the afternoon. Because being being a lion with lots of morning energy meant that after lunch at around, I take a late lunch at around two o'clock, I will fall asleep right after lunch. Take a quick nap. So what I did was I said okay, given what I'm learning about myself and all this research, let me move the caffeine up to the afternoon. So no coffee in the morning, and have it have my coffee at about 132 o'clock. Because I would have that usually have that deep lol in the afternoon conquered totally Well, it's worked like gangbusters. The combination of these experiments have allowed me to lengthen the feeling of being productive throughout the day, it's given me gives me more at least another hour, maybe a couple of hours of productive time and my mind is clear. And I'm not falling off, you know, falling falling asleep in front of a laptop. It really has worked. But but the principle that I've used all the way throughout is where do I take the the stimulant, which is the coffee? Where do I take the nap and being willing to experiment? And I've done three experiments which have sort of worked so far,



Raymond Sidney-Smith 25:42

you bring up some really important thoughts there, Francis. So thank you. And I will say this about reading the power of when, and the changes that I had to make. Because of that, the realization, the assessment that ultimately, you know, told me that I was a dolphin explained a lot about why whatever you guys feel and experience regarding sleep has never been what I have felt about sleep. I just fundamentally never slept well. And I didn't I didn't understand why, you know, it just is what it is. And I probably considered myself a a morning Lark. I, you know, I tend to get up on the early side of things, is a struggle to get out of bed every day. I'm not gonna lie. And but that's how I have really managed my life. You know, I've always wanted to do that, you know, there's a lot of

prejudice against people who are late risers and those who are who are night owls. I guess just culturally, I forced myself into that perspective. And Dr. Bruce allowed me to be able to understand, really, what I was, he described it to such a great detail that I just was like, Oh my gosh, that's me. That is you know, and this is not like horoscope level stuff where you like read yourself into it. This is, you know, verifiable data, because as most of you know, who listen, I track a lot of my data. I'm a quantified self, you know, fan not fanatic. And so I track a lot of my biostatistics, all of this bio data that I've been tracking about myself, I can I it's, it's represented in the data exactly what he was saying. So I was like, What should I do, and recognizing that there are social structures in place in my life, that conflict with various things and how I can do it, you know, I'm travel for work. And so, you know, they're just natural things that compete with my ability to sleep well, I don't sleep well, in hotels, for example, just generally. But the first night that I'm in a hotel is, is basically a last night, I just don't sleep well, the first night in any hotel, no matter how many times I stay in the same hotels, and I've had to make adjustments or over the years to compensate for that, that poor sleep, and recognizing that I'm never going to sleep, the way that a lion, a wolf or bear sleeps. And that took a huge like weight off my shoulder, I kid you not how much stress, especially since dolphins tend to be perfectionist, who were type A personalities, it was a huge stress on me that I was not sleeping well, to know that I'm just not going to sleep, the same way other people do was just a really nice paradigm shift. For me, I wasn't just nice. It was it was I think, life changing for me, to not worry so much about that component of my world. And to just do what I could to have better sleep. And my sleep quality has remarkably increased since I started doing the things that he talks about for dolphins. And that's been, that's just been a huge change for me. So while some of us, and I imagine that that probably the lions, and the bears won't see much change in their sleep, but based on the power of when those of us who tend to be wolves, and dolphins, I imagine they would see a market change in their life circumstances and their ultimate productivity, if they adhere to some of the things that he's talking about, because we're the minority. And when you're in the minority, you don't tend to get the the attention on how to deal with some of these things. So I think that's really important.

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Art Gelwicks 29:32

Here, this isn't this is intriguing to me a little bit, because it's starting to force me to rethink about some of the things that we we talk a lot in productivity circles about maximizing the time that you have available and you maximize an eight hour day or 12 hour day or 16 hour day, I'm beginning to wonder, are we looking at this entire thing wrong? Should we not consider productivity, a 24 hour effort, and all the apps aspects of what we're doing have an impact on how productive we are? I mean, not wanting to sound like a mattress ad. But yes, sleep is critical. It's one of those things that you know, a third of your life is going to add a minimum is going to be sleep. For some of us, you know, for dolphins,

maybe a quarter, but looking at fitness and nutrition, and sleep and work and all those different pieces. If we consider all of this part of our productivity system, and we neglect any part of it, are we doing a disservice to our overall productivity, if we truly want to be productive, we need to be at our best, what are the things that are necessary for that to happen. And if you think about it from a tool perspective, if you've got a saw that you're going to cut a tree, it's the old axiom, if you're going to cut a tree down using an extra saw, you're going to spend your time sharpening that Sofres get the work done faster and more efficiently. If you don't, it's going to take a lot longer, it's going to be less efficient and less effective. So is it unrealistic to say, hey, you want to be productive, then we look at the whole package, we look at all the aspects of it, it's not a matter of which To Do List you're using, or what note taking tool you're using, that's not going to change this, that's just one little notch in this long string of things that you have to look at, to be able to get as close to optimal as you're going to get.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 31:32

I couldn't agree with you more, I think that most people look at personal productivity from the margins, there trying to make incremental change from the margins, as opposed to making maximal change from the center. And this is actually the core of of a book I'm writing. And it really makes a lot of sense to me that you would do the things that are going to provide you with the greatest amount of productive benefit, as opposed to the marginal things that maybe you get all the fundamentals down, then you can work on the margins, and that's going to eke out a little bit more output for the inputs. But by and large sleep is one of those big seven areas of your life that if you don't have this stuff down, all the other productive work you can do is marginal, it's going to make marginal increases. And that's that's not productive. You know, if you're going to work, if you're going to work for maximal productive gains, why would you work on the marginal skills that are going to get you there, and that doesn't make those marginal skills, lack importance, it just is a timing issue. Right? It's when you you make those effective changes. And I think that you should make these fundamental changes. First, this is a nice segue to when the scientific secrets of perfect timing by Dan pink, most of us know Daniel Pink, as the author of Dr. and several other books, and his ongoing interest in social behavior and behavioral science. And what he talks about in the book is really this this whole productive world construct that you're actually talking about here art, which is we spend a lot of time talking about just the times when we're trying to be productive. And he says there's actually more productivity, when we think about the times when we're not being productive. That is when we're sleeping. And when we're taking breaks. And one of the big lessons from the book that I got, I'd be curious to hear your thoughts on it is he talks about the idea that he talks about the lark, the night owl and what he calls third birds or what's traditionally called hummingbirds. But then going beyond that, he talks about the idea

that if we take effective breaks throughout the day, and if we have a good lunch, then we can actually increase the the peaks of our productive output, and, and lessen the productive valleys of our of our days, and therefore be more productive on the whole. I'm curious if you if you see it from that perspective, what you think is useful about taking taking breaks throughout the day. And he uses a lot of really good social science research in the book that he kind of describes in furtherance of his arguments in the book, I just think that this is useful to us to think about, not just sleep, but also the times when we're taking breaks throughout the day. Francis, it sounds like you take several breaks throughout the day, both for these power naps. Do you do you take other breaks in the day? And how does that help move you productively?

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Francis Wade 34:45

Yeah, I do. I'm going to take one right after this call. No coffee, though, because coffee is now in the afternoon. But I think the notwithstanding the current research, because I didn't, I didn't read the book. But I read the thought of the cliff notes version. And it struck me as the same principle applied over and over again, based on the most recent research, which five years from now, unfortunately, is going to be forgotten because there'll be new research that replaces the old research. But the thing to sort of the keep in mind as we go along is that there are there are unchangeable principles. And art mentioned one, which is sort of this 24 hour productivity, where you're productive, when you're sleeping, you're productive, when you're awake, you're productive, when you're resting, you're productive, when you're exercising, you're productive when you're eating, that there's sort of a mindfulness to bring to everything, and to the sequencing of everything and the timing of everything. I think that's the big message of his book, which is that the timing of your activities makes a big difference. And you always sort of need to be on the cutting edge to look for what's the most recent and research saying my wife is a longtime coffee drinker. And when she sees me take a coffee naps, you know, she's like, You gotta be kidding me. That's crazy. But what research is, you know, it's brand new, or fairly new, it's counter intuitive. And I think we need to sort of keep it in mind the overall precepts as we encounter this each bit of new research and then ask yourself, okay, what does this mean for the overall precept? Does it mean that we change what we're doing? Is this enough evidence? Do I try and experiment to try to see if this particular new finding actually applies to me? But but the overall sort of Gestalt of productivity, I think, to pick up on what art is saying, or I'd said, I think it's important to accept the premise, and then look for data to change the way we sort of manage ourselves as we go along. So yes, I take a take breaks during the day, no, but you know, if I found if I found information that changed the way I think about my breaks, or iPhone, new research, I would change it in a flash, I'll do another experiment. And I would say, Oh, look, if I take a nap at five, then I could be productive until nine, I would try it, you know, just for the heck of saying, you know, maybe

I'm one of these people who is that is reflected in the research, but I'm always scanning. And I think that's, that's sort of the the mindset, I think that if you want to be productive, you always have to be sort of paying attention to what the latest research is seeing, and then continue that somehow.



Art Gelwicks 37:39

From the break standpoint, I'm going to look at it from somebody who sits most of the time in a corporate environment, where crawling under your desk, George Costanza style, and taking a nap is relatively frowned on. So for me, the idea of breaks is I'm a big game player. I love games specially for games. To me, it's like shop reshuffling the deck. So to use the analogy, if you were playing solitaire, that's the time you're trying to get a project accomplished. You're laying the cards out, you're analyzing, you're putting things in the right but then the game ends. And what do you have to do, you have to reshuffle the deck before you can do the next one. Well, that's shuffling action. That's the break. So if you're thinking about it, not so much for game context, but any other type of work, that transition, every time can be the break, what you're doing is you're changing the focus of your mind, giving your brain the opportunity to in the background process, everything that you've done so far, and possibly come up with new ideas. It's often the same thing people will say, I come up with my best ideas when I'm in the shower, you know, that type of thing that that disconnected mode of thinking, allowing your brain just to run the way it needs to well, it doesn't do that, well, if it's tired, if it's underfed, if your body's not in decent physical shape, that hampers that disconnection process. I do it literally all the time. If I'm working on something, and I'm kind of hit that wall, I'm going to get up and I'm going to walk off, I'll go fill up my coffee mug with water, I'll take a walk downstairs and back upstairs, do something completely unrelated and almost nine times out of 10. By the time I get back from whatever I'm doing, a thought will have occurred that yeah, this is what I need to do. This is how I need to solve this problem. It's just a way of that disconnect. So breaks don't have to be 30 minutes down in a cafeteria sitting there with a soda, it can be something as small as five minutes, it can be something as small as 30 seconds. It's that reset that your brain needs. At least that's the way I view it.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 39:47

Yeah, and I think I think that Dan pink brings up some interesting things about what he calls temporal landmarks. And they can be one of two different things. And so moving the conversation forward, I just want to talk about how some of these, the ways in which we can get ourselves to effect positive changes in our productive worlds time wise, is to look at look at those temporal landmarks. One are the social landmarks and to our personal landmarks, he talks about some research here of university students and them tracking

them checking in at the gym, it looks as though at the start of a new semester, that temporal landmark is that they start a new semester, all of a sudden, people start going back to the gym again, that's a that's a natural point of reference, because they're back at school, they're back on campus, they're going to start going back to the gym in larger swathes. But they have other types of of landmarks. That is the start of a new year, most people think about New Year's resolutions. And if we think about it from that perspective, it is it's not really a personal landmark, it's more of a social landmark, we all talk about our new year's resolutions and our goals for the coming year. And that's enough social pressure to get us to start going back to the gym. Many people do marathons, when they are just about to be 30, around that age, just about to be 40, or around that age, just about to be 50, around that age. And that research actually shows us that you're no you're no real different than you were 26 to 28, or 32. Or from 38 to 42 or otherwise. Yet, for some reason, these these landmarks in our life are drivers for us to say, I'm going to show myself, the world whatever, that I can still run a marathon. And so we can use this research to help inform the fact that these temporal landmarks can actually be very useful to us, for us to say, I'm going to I'm going to do X at the start of a new week, well, that's going to be something that's going to be useful to you're going to say I'm gonna start this at the start of the month, these kinds of landmarks in our world in our time, gives us the opportunity to have a reset, and to give us that opportunity to now be more productive. And I'm curious about both of you, do you do you make new year's resolutions? Do you make goals for the new year? And do you use that on any other time scale, you know, I have something I call the day reset. And that's if my day has gone off the rails, I will reset my day. And it's actually very productive for me because I go through these little this little, you know, set of routine that helps me deal with the fact that my day may not be going the way I want it to. And to become more productive, I just need to do this simple set of tasks in its order. And that allows me to get myself back on track their personal things for me, you know, including doing a bit of journaling, reviewing my calendar, it's it's similar to kind of like a, a an abbreviated, weekly review. But it's more about self care than it is about looking at the productive aspects of my day. Whenever we are not being productive, it's likely because we are in fight flight or freeze response. Most people only notice fight or flight response. But it really is fight flight or freeze. And so the the idea here is that when your your day is going the wrong way, it's likely because you're doing the wrong activity that's necessary to counteract the negative components of the day. And so that activity for me is to decide on am I fighting when I should be fleeing? Am I freezing when I should be fighting or other, you know, any number of those combinations. And so that's the goal of the day reset for me is to really determine what my fear state is, and then respond more aptly. And to do the self care necessary to reduce all of that stress or distress at that point. So that I can go on with the day,

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Francis Wade 43:53

the beginning of a new year. Marks does a number of things I do I have a usually have a retreat with my wife of some kind. And it's a planning retreat for my business. I also assemble a compilation that I send out of all my newspaper columns for the year. That goes out to all of our everybody on our on our mailing list was probably we would do a recap of the year when we do the when we do the strategic plan and decide what to how to proceed in the next year. So that kind of thing is definitely kicked off at the start of the year for for me, and it's and it's definitely I don't know why, you know, January is the perfect month, but it just seems that the energy is right after the holidays, to slip back into work and ask Okay, well, what are you going to have the next year available? So yet? The answer is

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Art Gelwicks 44:50

yes, I made a resolution many years ago to never make resolutions. So I've been holding that one strongly. So for me beginning or the end of each year is the idle time, the call time that I look for, which sounds completely counterintuitive to what most people's holiday seasons and the end of year are. But I look at that window between, you know, just up to the end of the year, and about the two weeks prior as an opportunity to put everything away, whatever, just stop dealing with it stuff, get this stuff out of my way, because everybody else is doing their holiday things that you don't really have commitments, I work in an IT space. So a lot of things have been locked down at that point, don't have a lot of change going on. That all kicks in at the beginning of the year. And for me, it's that end window that I need to say, Okay, let's just calm things down. Before we start to ramp up again, coming the beginning of the year. For me the the chronological landmarks are actually more important on a daily basis and on a weekly basis than they are they are on a yearly basis. Because for me on a daily basis, I said such a difference, it nine o'clock starts to creep up and I start to nod off in my chair, I know there are certain points where I'm just not going to be able to get things done, because of what I'm going to physiologically do at that point in time in the day. And I have to plan and account for that same thing on a weekly basis, I'm looking at things going, Okay, I need to get a bunch of stuff done during this time period. And I'm down to the point of compression, where I'm only going to have this evening to be able to do the kind of work well evenings not the good, good time for me to do this type of work, that's going to be a problem. And I have to start to shift. It does require again, that navel gazing, looking ahead and trying to figure out what are the best slots. But I think that's okay, if you go through and you evaluate what you have to do based on when you are most likely to be able to do it successfully, that can make all the difference. One of the things I was just sitting here, because I made a list of the chrono types on my screen earlier. If you go through and you have all the tasks and activities, let's say for a week that you've got

assigned prototypes to say this is a bear looking activity, this is one that kind of has to happen in the middle of the day or, or this is one that requires a lot of you know, energy, just to push something through project management type of things, or this is a creative type of activity, and then try and match that up with your Corona type cycling, you have a better chance of it being successful. Again, for me, there isn't a rigid structure that I follow. Because I find that, you know, Murphy and the rest of the world likes to laugh when I try and put a rigid structure in place. But I have to kind of adapt as to whatever else is being pushed my way.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 47:53

The idea of, of using landmarks that are that are much more that are shorter in time horizon, I think is really powerful here. And I think this is where this is a really great point for us to start winding down the conversation actually, because this is important for us all to take heed to is that it doesn't require us to have a 20th, 30th, 40th, 15th, 16th birthday, and or 17th birthday even for us to decide to do something with our world, we can we can choose to do these things on New Beginnings on much shorter time horizons. So you decide whether or not you're going to reset your day. And you're going to start a new day right now. Or you're going to start a new week tomorrow. And that's going to help you jumpstart some of your projects that might be more short term, and or say, you know, starting next week, I'm going to launch this new project, find a landmark that whether that be a social or personal landmark in your in your world, that's going to help you determine that's when you're going to start heading back to the gym, eating a more nutritious diet, looking at having a better relationship with your brother or sister, you know, these are the times when you have the opportunity to say, Okay, this is not the way that I want it to be. Let me make a commitment to changing that. And using time as a mechanism for doing that. So we have this this wonderful ability to change our daily schedules. And to then extrapolate that that level of change by using the new and novel approach to change at any other timeframe. And so this is the end of our conversation. Thank you, gentlemen. And we're going to segue into some announcements before we close out. First and foremost, do you have a question or comment about this cast or something we've discussed here on this episode of productivity cast. If you're listening from anywhere other than the podcast website, we invite you jump over to [productivity cast.net](https://productivitycast.net). And there at the bottom of the page is a comment field you can leave a comment or question and one of us here on the team will be glad to respond. Also here at [productivity cast net](https://productivitycast.net), you'll find that the show notes, PDF transcript, and links to anything we've discussed are easily jumped to from the show notes. They've links to all that stuff. And you can learn how to subscribe here on the website by clicking on the subscribe button. Otherwise, if you have a question about personal productivity, generally that you'd like us to discuss on the podcast. Go ahead and visit [productivity cast net](https://productivitycast.net) forward

slash contact and fill out the form or use the voice input field we have a we have a voice, voicemail widget, you can just leave a message directly from the website. Thanks to Francis Wade in our galaxy for joining me here on this episode of productivity cast. If you could please add a rating or review and iTunes or Stitcher we just love kudos. But it also actually helps us grow our personal productivity listening community. And so thank you. That brings us to the finale of this episode of productivity cast, the weekly show about all things personal productivity. I'm Sydney Smith with Francis Wade and Alex. Thank you gentlemen, here's your productive life.



Voiceover Artist 51:14

That's it for this productivity cast. The weekly show about all things productivity with your hosts Ray Sidney Smith and a goose no pun out with Francis Wade and art gallery.