

Bonus Tactics From

MAKE TIME

HOW TO FOCUS ON
WHAT MATTERS
EVERY DAY

JAKE KNAPP AND
JOHN ZERATSKY

New York Times Bestselling Authors of *Sprint*

11 Bonus Tactics from Energize

We wrote these tactics for the first draft of *Make Time*, but decided to cut them to make the final book as short and sweet as possible.

Some of these missing tactics are pretty good, and some of them are just plain silly (seriously, “Pee Breaks”?) but we’ll let you decide for yourself. You also might like to geek out on some early versions of the illustrations.

Enjoy!

—Jake and JZ

BONUS TACTIC

88. Pajamas to Spandex

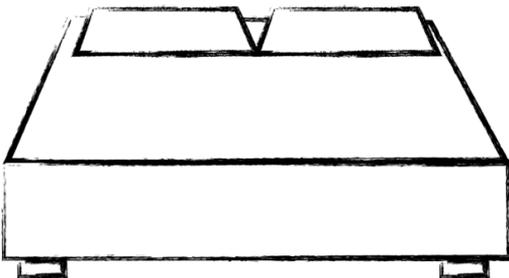
Morning is the best time of day to exercise, because when you move your body in the morning, you get to enjoy the resulting energy boost—and a nice sense of accomplishment—all day long. And the best time of the morning to exercise is before you've done anything else. Before you've checked your email. Before you've gotten caught up in the demands of the day. Before new and surprising priorities scramble your schedule and push exercise out of the way.

So here's a trick: If you want to exercise in the morning, climb out of bed and put on your workout clothes first thing. We call this going from pajamas to spandex, and it has three key advantages:

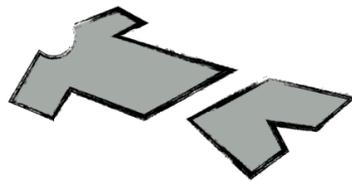
1. Everyone who sees you (significant other, kids, roommates, pets) expects you to exercise.
2. You're telling yourself you expect to exercise.
3. Once you're ready to actually exercise, you have one less thing to do, because you're already dressed.

This tactic starts the night before. Put your yoga pants or running shorts or swimsuit by the bed. When you wake up, there's your first outfit. All you have to do is put it on to change the morning default to exercise.

Step 1:
Wake up

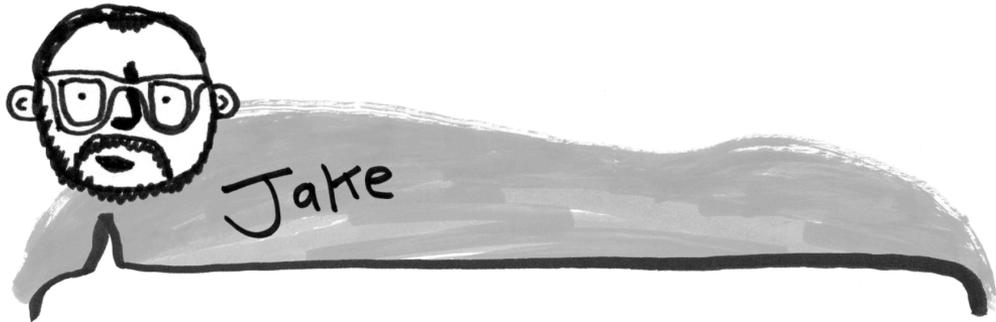


Step 2:
Put on workout clothes



BONUS TACTIC

89. Kleenex to Spandex



Exercise habits can be easily disrupted. My workout routine used to go out the window every time I caught a cold. But a decade ago, a newspaper article changed everything for me.

It was late December 2008, and I had a real nasty cold. Runny nose, sneezing—you know the routine. As I sat at home, miserably flipping through the news on my laptop, a headline in the New York Times caught my eye. It said, “Don’t Starve a Cold of Exercise”. I wiped my nose and read on with great interest.

The reporter, Gina Kolata, wondered whether it was a good idea to exercise with a cold. It’s a pretty simple question, but the experts she interviewed—doctors at the Mayo Clinic, Vanderbilt University, and the Infectious Diseases Society—weren’t aware of any research on the topic.

So she dug deeper, and unearthed a couple of small studies run at Ball State University back in the 1990s. Apparently, the researchers intentionally infected volunteers with colds, and then, once they were good and sick, made them run on treadmills and monitored the results. (Are researchers jerks, or what?) You might expect their ability to exercise to be hampered by their colds—but their lung capacity and endurance were unaffected.

The Ball State researchers were intrigued (or sadistic, depending on how you look at it) and decided to run a second study. And I have to warn you, this one is a little gross. Once again, they infected volunteers with colds and made them run on treadmills. Every 12 hours throughout the duration of the cold, the researchers quizzed the volunteers about how they were feeling, and—this is the gross part—they collected and weighed the volunteers’ used Kleenex. Blech.

Personally, I always believed I should rest when I had a cold—heck, this golden excuse was the one redeeming thing about being sick. But as I read Gina’s article, my jaw dropped. The researchers analyzed the surveys and weighed the Kleenex (the idea being, the lighter the Kleenex, the less severe the cold) and compared the data with a control group of non-exercising volunteers with colds. Turned out there was no difference in the duration of the colds. In other words, exercising did not prolong the symptoms. What’s more, many of the exercisers reported feeling better.

The Neck Rule



So moderate exercise doesn’t make a cold any worse, and it might make you feel better. The article went on to emphasize the “neck rule” of exercising when sick: If your symptoms are only above the neck, like sneezing and runny nose, it’s probably okay to try exercising—but if

you have chest congestion, are coughing up anything gross, or have a fever, you should not exercise.

This revelation was a really big deal for me. Previously, I'd always struggled to maintain an exercise habit through the winter months. Every time I got a cold, I'd stop my routine for a week or more, and then it was tough to get started again. But now that I know I can keep exercising as long as I'm not severely sick, I don't fall off the exercise wagon nearly so often. This was a small but significant key to my shift from being an occasional, heroic exerciser to an everyday exerciser.

Nearly a decade later, my sample size of one has turned out just like the study: When I exercise, my colds don't seem to last any longer, but I do feel better and more energized. But just to be clear, you'll never catch me collecting and weighing my used Kleenex.



BONUS TACTIC

90. Hara Hachi Bu (Don't Clean Your Plate)

We grew up in the USA, in families that enforced the classic mealtime rule: You don't get dessert till you clean your plate. As grownups, “clean your plate” is still stuck in our heads. We don't feel like we've done our job until we eat every morsel that we're served—even if it's more food than we really need.

Our friend Manami, on the other hand, grew up with a different rule. She spent her early childhood in Queens, New York, but she was born in Japan and moved back to Tokyo after elementary school. One of the biggest differences between Japanese and American food cultures, she told us, is this “clean your plate” mindset—it's completely foreign in Japan.

Instead, Manami said, many Japanese practice a philosophy called *hara hachi bu*¹. The idea is simple: Stop eating when you're 80% full. Since the stomach takes a while to register the feeling of fullness, *hara hachi bu* prevents overeating and the energy crash that comes with it.

The idea of *hara hachi bu* is simple, but the reality is complicated. Whether you were raised with the clean plate rule or not, it's tough to stop eating something delicious. In fact, it can be hard to stop eating something that's just mediocre, especially if it's crunchy and/or salty. (We're looking at you, Fritos.)

We've tried Manami's advice, and eating 80% meals does wonders for your post-meal energy level. The best part is, to experiment with *hara hachi bu*, you don't have to change your eating routine dramatically. You can make an upfront default switch by buying slightly smaller plates or bowls, or by ordering a slightly smaller lunch—or you can just try leaving at least a couple of bites on your plate every meal, rather than eating everything by default.

In many families, the “clean your plate” mantra was meant as a reminder that if you have abundant food, you're fortunate. We agree with this sentiment. But there are better ways to show your gratitude than eating everything when

¹ Short for *Haraguchibu me ni isashirazu*, or “one who restrains from overeating does not need to see a doctor”.

you don't need it. So don't finish that pizza crust. Throw away the last corner of that cookie. You get the idea. You really *don't* have to clean your plate. We promise, your parents aren't watching...

BONUS TACTIC

91. Eat Like a Hobbit

As *Lord of the Rings* fans know, hobbits eat five or six meals a day. To most people, the hobbit diet is just a humorous detail in a fantasy world, but to Jake, it's a way of life.



A few years ago, JZ and I ran a design sprint with a startup called Rise. Rise offered nutrition coaching via a smartphone app—the idea was you'd take photos of what you were eating, and a nutritionist would send you comments and suggestions.

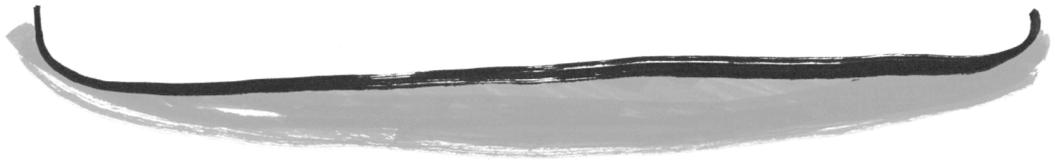
Naturally, I tested the service, and soon I was snapping photos of my meals and chatting back and forth with my nutrition coach about my energy level. It was totally great—kind of like Words with Friends for time dorks.

After watching my eating habits and quizzing me about my energy for a few days, my nutritionist, Anar, questioned whether the standard breakfast-lunch-and-dinner schedule was best for me. She recommended I try eating five small meals per day—a light breakfast, a light “second breakfast” at 11am, a light lunch at 1pm, a nutritious “tea time” snack at 4pm, and a light dinner.

I was surprised, but I gave it a shot. And the new meal plan worked totally great. I'd never noticed it, but I used to get super

hungry before lunch and have an energy crash, then compensate with a big meal and crash again as my body struggled to digest. The new schedule helped my focus so much that I tried it in our design sprints, where I could also control what other people ate and experiment on them. It worked there, too—people had better energy in the afternoon because they weren't in a food coma.

Four years later, I still follow this schedule... at least, on most days. It makes it a little easier to eat *hara hachi bu* style (tactic #91) when I know I don't have to wait so many hours for my next meal. Now, this isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. Everyone is different, and neither one nor two nor three nor four nor five nor six meals is perfect for everyone. But it's an experiment worth trying—your number might be different than you think.



BONUS TACTIC

92. Hydrate for Pee Breaks

Staying hydrated is supposed to be good for you. But there's another good reason to drink plenty of fluids: Pee breaks.

Sorry for the potty talk, but if you have to pee frequently, you'll have to get up from your desk frequently, and those breaks are good for your brain and your body. So drink up!

And don't forget to wash your hands.

BONUS TACTIC

93. Thanksgiving Every Day

Gratitude is clinically proven to increase happiness. Perhaps it makes sense: When you pay attention to the things that are going well, you start to be on the lookout for things that go well. You're tuned in to Channel Happy.

That's why one of the most common recommendations for boosting mood is keeping a gratitude journal. We've incorporated a gratitude question in the daily Reflect journal (see page TK). But we like gratitude—and the energy-boosting happiness that comes with it—so much that we want to suggest another way to include it in your day. It's a bit old fashioned: When you sit down for a meal with family or friends, say what you're grateful for before you eat.

Here's a script you can experiment with: “Okay everybody, this is dorky, but I'm trying this Make Time thing and they suggested gratitude is good for energy. So I'm going to say what I'm happy about today and I invite you to join me.”

Then you say: “I'm grateful for meatloaf.” (Or whatever.)

Then either everybody else will do it too, or there will be a super awkward pause. But most likely they'll join you. And if you can start this little tradition with your significant other or family, you'll have peer pressure to keep you grateful—and you'll be more likely to keep it up.



I know this tactic sounds pretty corny and hippy-dippy, but it really works! My wife and I have been doing this for a many years with our boys. We call it "saying your gratefuls" and we do it before we eat, just like families who say grace.

It's a really cool moment when you hear the highlight of everyone's day. And it's really not too hard. I always remind my younger son that you can be grateful for anything, no matter how small: The sun, a piece of bubble gum, anything. And if you can't think of anything, you can say "I'm grateful for this food and this family" which makes everybody else feel good, too.



BONUS TACTIC

94. Take a Breath of Fresh Air

In the modern world, the default is indoors. Our homes, vehicles, offices, shops, and restaurants are (mostly) in buildings. But we're built for fresh air. Urk lived outdoors—even if he literally slept in a cave, and even if the weather was miserable, he'd need to go out to find food, get water, and so on.

Perhaps that's why fresh air is so invigorating. It's a cheap, fast, and easy energy boost. So try stepping outside for a couple minutes, or walking around the block. Experiment with adding one extra outdoor activity to your daily routine, and watch what happens to your energy. Heck, even if you just crack a window, we predict you'll feel better. It doesn't matter if the weather is hot or cold, sunny or rainy—our hunter gatherer bodies feel more alive outdoors.

BONUS TACTIC

95. Know Your Pumpkin Hour

Some people say the best part of the fairy tale *Cinderella* is the ending, when (spoiler alert!) the heroine slides her foot into a glass slipper. But for us, the best part is earlier: when the clock strikes midnight, the magic spell expires, and Cinderella's enchanted carriage turns back into a pumpkin.

Like Cinderella, we've got our own pumpkin hours. JZ's is 10pm. Jake's is 11:30pm. You've got one, too, even if you don't realize it. Your body has its own unique natural cutoff time, and if you're not in bed by then, you'll have less energy the next day—no matter how much sleep you get.

If you don't know your pumpkin hour already, simply keep a log of when you go to bed and how you feel the next morning. It may take a few nights to figure it out, but once you do, you can plan accordingly—turning down the lights (tactic #84), turning off the internet (#28), and possibly setting a reverse alarm (#97) to make sure you're all tucked in before your horses turn into mice.

BONUS TACTIC

96. Set a Reverse Alarm

Once you've found your pumpkin hour, the hard part begins: Pulling yourself away from whatever you're doing so you'll go to bed on time. One simple strategy we like is a reverse alarm. Instead of waking you up, a reverse alarm tells you when it's time to go to bed.

There's nothing fancy about a reverse alarm—you can set a recurring alarm on your phone, your wristwatch, or an analog alarm clock. Our friend Talia sets two reverse alarms: one to remind her it's time to go to bed, and another, a few minutes later, to remind her **SERIOUSLY GO TO BED NOW**.

BONUS TACTIC

97. Read Books, not Clickbait

Between the internet and the apps on our phones, there's a lot to read everyday. But most of it is just clickbait: catchy headlines and just enough content to grab our attention and hold it for a few precious seconds.

The benefits of this kind of reading are minimal. Clickbait hijacks our hunter-gatherer instincts and tricks us into "information foraging", making our attention jump from place to place like a squirrel scampering after nuts.

But it's still reading. And when we spend time and energy reading clickbait, we're less likely to read something worthwhile. So make time to read intentionally, not reactively. If you want to stay up to date on the news, don't settle for a news feed. Read the best news (tactic #25). If you want to learn something new or get better at your work, don't read any advice. Read the best advice—which is usually found in books rather than blog posts (we've written both, and trust us, the books are better).

And if you want to read just for fun, that's fine too. Reading fiction can be excellent way to rest and recharge the brain. But you should still choose your entertainment deliberately. We don't care whether it's *Hunger Games* or *Harry Potter* or *Fifty Shades of Grey*². Whatever you read, a book is always better than clickbait.

2 Jake has read two of these three series, but he's not saying which.

BONUS TACTIC

98. Splash Your Face

Sitting and staring at your computer screen, trying to get into Laser mode? Stop it! Stand up. Walk to the bathroom. Splash some cold water on your face.

Now get back to work.