

## Ep #5: How Is Your Rest Ethic?



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With Your Host

**Diana Murphy**

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## Ep #5: How Is Your Rest Ethic?

Welcome to *Empowered Wellness for Leaders*, a podcast that teaches CEOs, entrepreneurs and sales leaders how to deal with the unique challenges of balancing a high-stress career, family, AND their own health. Here's your host, Certified Executive Wellness Coach, Diana Murphy.

Happy Monday, everybody, I am just so glad you're here. And I want to thank you so much for listening, for commenting. And it really means a lot for me when you make comments on my website, but even more than that, taking some time to make an iTunes review. That just really helps how I get seen in the market and my most important goal is I get out to people that might be suffering in some of these areas and need some better ways to look at things.

And that's what I'm all about – kind of being empowered versus feeling like there's a lot of shoulds and rules around wellness; so enough about that. Thank you so much for being here. I have been my own Petri dish, or best client, this week. I literally was studying rest and yet living a week where I wasn't getting very much. I walked into my gym this week and I was called out on it. I was yawning like crazy and kind of complaining about how little rest I'd gotten or little sleep I'd gotten.

And my sweet workout partner, Barbara, looks at me and she goes, "So, are you not taking your own advice, Diana?" Busted, I haven't, and I haven't been very wise about how I've been dealing with it. So it gave me some things to think on, and as I was doing my research, I have a lot to offer you in this area.

Alright, I've been doing some big projects, been rattled, nervous, been working some long hours, and usually after a long day, I want to wind down. And I was just finding myself watching Netflix later and later at night and getting into a cycle where I was sleeping really from midnight, or so I would get to bed, until 6AM, and really experiencing a lot of physical stress

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last week. And after all the work I did in getting ready for this episode, guess what – I think I actually caused my stress by not sleeping well.

And we all know when one night is disrupted, but I was in one of those cycles, thinking it was super relaxing and the way I wanted to spend my downtime was watching Netflix.

Now, I think the choice of show was an issue. I have been watching Walking Dead. I'm totally at the end of one of the seasons, and guess what – that is probably one of the most un-relaxing shows, especially as we get deeper into the seasons, right. So I wasn't serving myself very well.

And as synchronicity would have it, I walked into my home that evening and found an email. Listen to this, "Hi Diana, rest is crucial for impactful leaders; do you get enough? It's a dangerous misconception that rest is only for the weak or lazy. Intentional rest is a necessity, and in fact, a powerful tool for any leader who wants to experience maximum productivity and energy and creativity. This week's magazine focuses on how napping, margin, and relaxation are vital to a leader's energy management, and therefore impact. Michael Hyatt."

A well-known coach, and I'm part of his LeaderBox, and that's why I got this note. I'm on his magazine list. And oh my gosh, the articles were really helpful. But I couldn't believe that in these 24 hours that it got my attention in a way that it really hasn't before.

If this is your first podcast with me, don't worry, this isn't all about what you should be doing around rest; that's not really helpful. We all know what we should be doing; eight hours of sleep, eat really well, exercise three times per week, love your children. Like, we know that. But I want to help your awareness around these issues as I go through this whole topic in helping you to make these shifts that, you have a hunch, could make an impact.

My experience was that I really was called out on not getting enough sleep, and so I went to bed earlier that night. And guess what – less stressful and more energetic the next day, immediately. It's not like I had to bank up all

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these hours for all the bad nights I'd had. That's really good to know because our life is real. We don't always have ideal rest or sleep.

I don't even know where I heard it. It must have been another podcast, but somebody just offhand said, "Do you have a rest ethic?" I'm like, "There's a rest ethic?" I think for most of us, our work ethic and our beliefs around hard work are competing with rest and recovery. Why would we even have a rest ethic? Well, most of us are geared to be full steam ahead most of the time.

I don't know about you, but when we have a new project or a very full travel or work schedule, we move full steam ahead, put our blinders on and get it done. Does this sound familiar? But we do nothing for ourselves, perhaps in an intentional way, around resting; thus the need for a rest ethic. And I'm not just going to hit the issue of sleep, but also play; time away from work.

Amazon's boss, Jeff Bezos, thinks the extra hours of productivity some folks steal by changing their sleep are largely an illusion because quality is more important than quantity when it comes to making key decisions. To make great decisions, leaders have to be clear-headed, and the best way to clear their minds is through rest and recreation.

Wow, I can really relate to that, and I think I have enough examples to prove him right. We all know that getting less ideal sleep can affect all the ways we're taking care of our health, but I've found some really specific ones. Did you know that it really does affect us biologically than in our own mental acuity?

When we will literally reach for carby, sweet, sugary foods when we've not gotten enough sleep because our brain is wanting that energy, and carbs are a sweet top quick kick. Alright, so that can explain your sugar cravings. This might be why Starbucks and the really yummy Starbucks drinks are so enticing in the afternoon and something that we've kind of gotten in a cycle about.

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We also overeat when we don't get enough sleep. Without enough sleep, the hormone leptin is reduced. This hormone is the one that helps us to know when we're full. That is new to me. When our exercise is disrupted, we don't feel like it, for one thing. And actually, if we're really sleep-deprived, sometimes a nap is actually the best choice.

I even wrote a blog once that – we were talking about napping and we have so much shame around napping, we top performers and high-achievers, but frankly, sometimes a nap is the best workout. It restores your body and actually gives you the opportunity to work well the next day and workout even stronger.

I want to talk about resilience. You know those afternoons where we tend to be a little more stressful? I know that for me, I'm less emotionally resilient at the end of the day. I think this is sometimes why we can have an amazing day and call it a bad day because of one conversation at four o'clock.

You know, we notice that we're crabby when we're tired, but I think it also leads to less energy and just that feeling of stress, and so we're crabby. It just doesn't help us get much work done either. Our acuity and energy are down, and I think when we're trying to hit deadlines, we're not getting as much done because of that lack of sleep, and now we're getting stressed, and it just creates an awful cycle.

What if we took naps, took breaks, really restored our brain in a way that really works so that we get more done? So I want you to be thinking about all these things as I go through this episode. We would all be getting beautiful rest if we were on vacation or had a perfect life, but that just isn't real. And if we continue to think that working all the time is the only way to be successful, we're going to have trouble with this, right.

The thing that is getting in our way is the way that we're thinking about our work. You guessed it; our work ethic. Literally, our work ethic can be

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competing with our rest ethic. But I love that we can combine the two and choose the ways to think that work better for us.

So if we start feeling guilty at night that we're not working, we're literally not going to relax and totally engage in our lives and our hobbies and things at home. If we are constantly thinking that 50-hour work weeks and working another hour is going to make or break a project and robbing ourselves of regular sleep, we're just not ever going to be as productive as we possibly could. So I want to help you now just to start learning a way that you can establish a rest ethic for you. We're going to start with a really cool story.

I was working with a client who was sharing with me – and I want to share with you during this story, many of our stress triggers go way back. Like, my stress trigger was trying to meet deadlines and working long, long days, but it started way back with me not getting enough sleep. I really suspect that. so we may have to trace back and be a little bit of a detective in our lives, and this story might help you understand that.

I was working with this gentleman and he was sharing with me that he was overeating a lot in the afternoon, or hitting the pantry, like constantly just was not satisfied with food in the afternoon. So we talked a little bit more about his day and I asked him to kind of go back and – I wasn't even onto the fact around rest or sleep. His day starts at five, he was running out of the door unprepared, not any food with him in case he got hungry, and literally in solid coaching meetings until two.

These might have been lunchtime meetings, but because he was running them, he did not eat during this time. He might eat on the later side, but he noticed, even if he had lunch, that he was snacking in the afternoon when he got home. So we backtracked even more and talked about his work day in general. And especially when he shared with me that he was getting up at 5Am, I didn't realize his mornings were that early. And he was doing email until 9PM.

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And I asked him, why? And he said, “I must always be available to my clients.” I’m like, really? We talked about that there weren’t really important emails during those evening hours, but he loved just paying attention and being a great coach for them, but it wasn’t serving him. So he stepped back and he made a new plan, and he really designed something that worked well for him.

He knew that he wanted to be spending more time with his wife in the evening and enjoying his evenings. And so he made a decision to shut off his laptop at five, take an evening walk with his wife, enjoy dinner and really truly enjoy the entire evening. He might go and check his email to check there’s not any new messages for the day, but he wasn’t rigid about this. But he started shutting off at five and enjoying his evenings and getting to bed in the 10 o’clock hours; some range there.

Guess what – he started losing weight immediately. That was his goal in working with me, and he started naturally eating better to his appetite. He was clear in the morning and remembering to take something with him to eat. He was getting more in the rhythm of his appetite. It all started from getting more rest at night and shutting off his brain a little bit.

So I want to help you to develop a new pattern. Decide when to shut off work. Set a time. There’s no judgment here. It does not have to be 5PM; you might be someone that works until seven. You might be someone that stops at four but opens your computer for an hour or two at night or works on a project at night.

But shut off work – set aside work times and off times so that your brain can be restored in between. But making this decision can really help you to start enjoying your life. And that’s my next one – engage in your life in the evenings, even if it’s an hour or two. Being available for your family, being available to do hobbies, not zoning out in front of the TV – and I’m going to get to that in a minute – but truly engaging in something that gives you a lot of energy.

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I know I miss cooking, and literally, on my most exhausted week, I had worked a 15-hour day on a Friday and I cooked two or three recipes on Saturday, because for me, that gave me a lot of energy. It was a creative effort. It really felt good. So pay attention to some of the things you're missing because you're working so hard and notice that you might feel guilt not working and that might be creating more of a chill-out night where you don't engage in another activity because you're guilty you should be working, but in essence, you're not doing anything at all but zoning out for the evening.

So help yourself to switch gears and engage in the evenings with things that you really want to be doing. Choose a bedtime ritual and be consistent. That is my next best tip. You know, even on the most stressful evenings, if I go through my routines and put myself to bed, it's amazing, I will eventually fall asleep. But it's also being really deliberate – if you know that you'll do better getting more rest, you may have to do a little yoga breathing, that kind of thing, but choose a ritual that works for you.

I've got a couple that might help you. I know that when I go to bed, I start fretting about the next day, so part of my bedtime ritual is getting ready for the next day. And it clears my mind because I put my top important to-do list on a calendar, I will set up my workout clothes or what I need to wear in the morning if I do some morning networking. So that bedtime ritual is very individual, but do set a time to start winding down for the night.

Alright, last but not least, we put our kids to bed all the time; why don't we take care of ourselves in this way? I think it's really important, from what I'm reading, that healing this bedtime approach is not going to happen in one night. In fact, we've developed a rhythm. And even if it's a rhythm you don't love, you high achievers out there just change 15 minutes at a time.

You know, if you are going to bed at midnight, start going to bed at 11:45, and then the next night, and eek it out. When you're starting to get sleepy, do honor that just like you're thirsty and start moving upstairs. Getting in a better rhythm of your own great sleep cycle is absolutely powerful. And in

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one of the studies I read, even when we're not getting ideal, quote end quote, sleep, if we keep it to a consistent rhythm, that really works for us.

So just look at what's going on for you, but also know that you can't catch up with sleep. What's so fascinating on my most stressful week ever, one night of rest kind of turned it all around for me. Oh, I'm so glad. It can be that easy, right; we can just break some of those patterns.

Alright, so we've healed, kind of, the daily routine of sleeping and getting enough sleep at night, but I want to talk about having some fun. We need to break from work. We need to mentally get restored. This is one thing that working out in the evenings in a place I love everybody that's there, I have a great time. It has more of a social impact for me as well as the physical. I know that that's my fun, truly.

Obviously, it works out for me for health reasons, but I really do know that this is a part of my wellbeing. So what are things that you're doing to break totally away from work? I want to share another story with you on a personal note.

One of my work ethics is that I really cannot treat myself – it might even be something as simple as a pedicure or even taking time to cook – until I get blank done. So that's a belief, I'm just going to share with you. You might have something different. But that belief was making me withhold having fun or having those breaks.

So, this was last spring, and I was in a tax deadline of some work in to my accountants. And I had a plan to go out with a group of friends on Friday and I swear I would have canceled it if it was just for me, but because I had other people waiting for me, I followed through. And it was reluctant at first. I literally was watching the weather to see if it was canceled because I was feeling so uncomfortable not having my work done and having this whole day out. Feeling guilty – lots of thoughts here, right.

Alright, so I went all in, and I'm telling you, that was one of the best days ever. I have epic memories from it. I did a bucket list item where I took

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some time to go to the Civil Rights Museum here in Atlanta. I hadn't been and it had been open for a while. We went to an amazing restaurant where literally the host – it's almost fast food. You order and go sit down, and it's an Israeli restaurant, Aviva by Kameel, by the way, in Atlanta. And he literally – it was like a fine-dining experience. I would have missed this if I'd canceled, right.

And last but not least, we went on the Ferris wheel in Atlanta. And we had an amazing time. I would not have traded this day for anything. And I really did make a decision as I started that day like, "Yeah you're worried about taxes..." I had plans that night. I knew I only had a short period of time to finish and I just decided to go all in and have my fun Friday, which is a theme in my life. And I had a blast and I would have missed a really epic day; it really was special.

Well, guess what – I went back to do those taxes. I didn't grumble. I felt so restored. I felt like I'd given myself some energy and kind of given myself such a big gift that I was like, "Oh, I can do my taxes." I got them done within an hour, took some time to get ready and was out with my husband as planned.

You know, I was insanely – I want to share this with you – insanely more productive after I'd done that day. And I'm actually looking at ways to spend more time with friends in the evening, that's really energizing to me. And little bites of it, as well as these big days, are certainly a way that we can let our brain really go on vacation from our job. And actually, I think it falls back into and helps our productivity in our job.

What do you want to do about your rest ethic? Alright, I'd love for you to take some small steps, some action where it's important to you. It's so encouraging to me that small steps can be just total game changers. And I want to remind you, every single time, what we're thinking is creating a result in our life. My work ethic, your work ethic, is literally creating your results. And sometimes, it's no getting what you mist want. Set aside those work ethics. They were developed, for many of us, in our young years. We

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can tweak them, we can change them; thoughts and beliefs can always be changed.

But what I've found even more quicker change is to focus on what you do want. Do start laying down some new rest ethics in your life, we just need new beliefs. My first one is that robbing myself of healthy rest does not make me more productive. You know, I tested this theory and I found it to be just absolutely true. But I have to remind myself of it when I feel guilty that I'm not working long enough.

Another one – when I play and take full mental breaks from work, I'm insanely more productive. I even practiced this today. This is not my first go around recording this podcast, and I needed to take a mental break, and it worked. You know, if I'm stressed and I, just one night, honor my bedtime, it doesn't rob my time of work, it actually gives back 1000-fold.

Giving yourself more energy and refusing to believe the lie that taking an hour of sleep back will give you more productivity is just seriously a place to start here. What are you laying down for your rest ethic? It takes some practice because we've been working in that work ethic for a long time.

I have provided some great article links for you. These are all in my show notes, [dianamurphycoaching.com/5](http://dianamurphycoaching.com/5). First is a great book, *Eat, Move, Sleep* by Tom Rath. He's from Gallup. He's written other books which I need to dig into, but that one I a whole plethora of life hacks; to be able to take some small choices and kind of tweak what works in your life. Really great read.

The articles I referred to and looked at in preparing this episode for you are from Huffington Post, and all you need to do is look at Sleep and Wellness. And the Magazine was Michael Hyatt's magazine on February 13<sup>th</sup>, but that's all there for you in the show notes.

You know, my video training was designed just for you. It's up and ready to go. It's all about getting ready to stay and get motivated. It's about eating

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great without thinking about it all the time and how to reduce stress in your life. You can sign up for this on any page of my website.

Until next time, I can't wait to see you again next week. Next week, I'm going to talk about how slow is the new fast, and I'm going to talk about a book that changed my life. This concept works in anything that we do. So if you're worried about eating, if you're worried about how you're working, it applies to everything. It's a universal concept and I can't wait to share it with you. Have an empowered and restful week. I am done eating humble pie and now I am working hard to apply my rest ethic; I hope you are too. Have a great day.

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