

## Ep #14: Morning Routine



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With Your Host

**Diana Murphy**

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## Ep #14: Morning Routine

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.

Good morning. I am coming to you from cloudy Florida today and finishing my time here working remotely in Florida. And so by the time you hear this podcast, I'll be back in Atlanta. I'm not so sure I want to return. It rained three inches last night and it's going to pour again today.

And I've really reneged on my promise to not talk about the weather. Why do we let it affect us so much, right? We could have an entire podcast on how we're affected by the weather. So I want to share with you something even more important. I want to share with you something that just broke my heart last week.

I was on a call with a new client and she and I - she's rocking it, just going all in in the goals that she wants to achieve and our work together, and she is listening to the podcast pretty regularly and realized she shared with me that she doesn't like listening to the beginning.

And I chose out my intro very carefully because I love attracting and working with people that are rock stars in their business life, top performers, people that are pretty intense, people that really love their work lives, and but want to learn ways to really live life well while doing that. And I really know she's one of those people.

But she felt like she wasn't that leader. That just breaks my heart. So if that is happening to you a little bit, know that your mind will tell you lies about your life. It really will. We try to make sense of maybe why we're not as motivated or as enthusiastic about work and we start telling ourselves these lies that we aren't good enough or we're not capable, et cetera.

[Empowered Wellness for Leaders](#) with Diana Murphy

## Ep #14: Morning Routine

So I'm going to help you turn that around if that's you, and just ask you - this is one way that I start my workshops is by asking you a better question. And I love better questions because we can put our mind to work in a better way. So if you're finding a little disparity between how your life is rocking out and what you'd like it to be or what it has been in the past, you're in the right place. That's what we're all working on is growing because we as humans desire to grow.

But I'm going to help you with a question, and I bet you can answer it. If you can't, send me an email. But what are you amazing at? We're all so uniquely wired, there's always something that we know we're really, really good at that might be a little unique. If you need some help figuring that out, please let me know.

I know I'm amazing at listening to people's emotions. So this works really well in coaching because I can sense when there's a shift in the conversation or whatever, but that is just something I know that as I became a coach it was something that I did really well. So what are you amazing at? I'd love for you to take note of that before you get started in the podcast.

Alright, are you living a life where it's so busy, you have so much to do that you just can't imagine slowing down for a few minutes in the morning? Or to get quiet? Are you so frustrated that work isn't going smoothly, your efforts are not showing the results that you'd like to in your business? Maybe it's not growing like you'd love for it to. You're really ambitious in the things that you're doing but you're just not seeing the results or your career path is just not growing in the way you'd love it to.

Then this podcast is absolutely for you, and I'm going to share with you a way that we can set off our day in our morning routines in a really, really powerful way. This is all about training your mind through the practice of both gratitude and getting quiet to give you more space, kind of more space

[Empowered Wellness for Leaders](#) with Diana Murphy

## Ep #14: Morning Routine

in your brain, more feeling a little more ease in your life, as well as creating more of what you want. And then blending the two things I'm going to talk about, but don't worry, I'm going to explain it fully.

I really believe that if we take some time, and I'm taking five to 15 minutes, and please start small if this is new to you. Taking some time just to yourself, whether it's with a cup of coffee, outside, whether it's a sweaty AM workout to let all those thoughts kind of ramp through your body and process them or a fresh air walk. Taking some quiet by yourself time very deliberately every day as well as practicing gratitude.

These are the two things I'm going to talk about today. How it can truly give you more calm, more peace, and more space in your life, and it's fascinating to me that we can invest five to 15 minutes and get so much benefit out of it. And the cheerleader in me is going to convince you of this but I really want you to sit back and think about times that you have practiced this in your life or you have had the opportunity to have it.

I think this is why vacations are amazing. They're amazing because we absolutely stop in the mornings, right? There are a lot of other reasons why vacations are amazing, but when I look back at transitioning from vacation to going home, and honor some of the things I learned on being away, one of them is really being quiet with yourself and just having some time to yourself in the morning to process what's going on in your mind. But I've also learned from a practice of gratitude that it helps me have a lot of energy to move towards and be more positive towards the growth or the changes in my life.

Alright, and again, I'll be that cheerleader all the time that'll say - try to convince you that these things are amazing, but I'm going to give you some evidence and I'd love for you to just think about one or two things that you'd like to apply after listening to this podcast today.

## Ep #14: Morning Routine

Do you have people in your life like myself that are the cheerleader type? I am really enthusiastic, it is not in-genuine. It is the way I'm really wired, and they come up to you in the morning, you might feel like you're not a morning person because this happens, and they feel so good they're like, "How was your day?" Almost with an assumption that thinking positively is the way to go all the time.

And maybe you're even judging why you're not so happy all the time or when a good friend comes to - you know, you're having lunch and it's like, oh gosh, isn't life amazing, and you're like, oh my god, if she just is - couldn't be so peppy.

Well, I think this happens in our culture, I think it happens in our own minds that we start judging our emotions because we kind of have this background that we should be happy all the time. I want to tell you it is just not true. We probably experience 50% of negative and positive emotions in our life, and both are really like, fine because they just are.

Like, we are going to have experiences and thoughts that create all sorts of different emotions. And that we've started judging them as bad, negative emotion as bad is really not serving us. So when we have the happiness principle is even some of the ways that people are starting to honor meditation is - but they're talking about it in a way which I think is really cool, and there's an app called 10% Happier.

And that's what I'm really getting at today, that we can practice honoring emotions that we are feeling and that is the powerful. It's not always changing those emotions to positive.

I am talking about learning to be at peace with what is going on in our minds and allowing and recognizing - not wallowing in negative emotion but recognizing the emotions that come our way. And I've got a lot of resources for you that you can really dig into either of the concepts.

[Empowered Wellness for Leaders](#) with Diana Murphy

## Ep #14: Morning Routine

So what I'm going to be speaking about is getting quiet, almost meditating, or for you it might be lighter than that. It might just be a quiet cup of coffee. But looking at meditation and also the practice of gratitude and how that can just really rev up and change your day.

I read an article from Thrive Global that really got my attention. It kind of backed up what I feel like I'm experiencing. I have started practicing meditation this year in a lot of different ways, and this talks about the benefits of meditation. And the article's name is 5 Science Backed Reasons Successful CEOs Meditate, and it really got my attention because it is I think we all most want in our lives, right?

It's all based on the book and an article by Emma Seppala that wrote The Happiness Track. And again, in the resources in my notes, I'm going to note every article. First, just to honor those writers, but to give you a place to dig in if you'd like to.

These are the five reasons that meditation is really, I think, important. Meditation builds resilience. Meditation boosts emotional intelligence. Meditation enhances creativity. Meditation improves your relationships. And meditation helps you to focus.

Do you have a real busy, busy brain? I do. I want to share with you that I recorded last week's podcast 15 times. And it was like that unlucky 13th episode and just no matter what I did, until I step back and got some feedback on it from my producer, I couldn't figure out the solution to making it flow.

And it really had too much content, I cut it in half. But it was interesting that after I had that experience, I really knew I needed to get more quiet as a regular practice, and I actually went all in on a new app called Headspace. And oh my gosh, my week has been so different. My brain is so busy I cannot meditate really on my own that well. I love lead meditations.

[Empowered Wellness for Leaders](#) with Diana Murphy

## Ep #14: Morning Routine

And so if this is you, just know there's a lot of tools to help you. I want to share with you what meditation is and what it isn't. You know, it's not all about having happy thoughts all the time. It really is about honoring the emotions that are going on, or any of the thoughts. Even if they're kind of arrant and crazy.

It's so much about just allowing and learning to allow what goes on in our mind. For those that live really busy, intense lives, it can also be a practice when you practice this in the morning, you can always apply it during your day where you can bring your mind back from busy and frenetic.

In all of this, the intention is really setting a quiet time in the morning and setting some routine so that you have a better day. Another facet of my morning routine and practice is a practice of gratitude. It is all the rage right now, and it's kind of fascinating. I have a friend that's been practicing it for a very, very long time. And I'm kind of embarrassed to say I didn't listen to her advice, and she really never gave me advice around this, but watching her life, I'm so surprised it took me this long to get with it.

What Mary Ellen did in her years of raising her kids is developed a practice of journaling around gratitude, and she simply noted every day what she was grateful for. So I watched how that was such a grounding force in her life. It helped her to be more peaceful, she really was someone I've always gone to for insight, especially around relationships, but I know that the power of it came from her practice of gratitude.

She offers classes and I journal wholeheartedly through one of her journals, and I'll leave that information for you in the resources. But it is a practice just like the practice of yoga. You know, you don't go to yoga and expect to be practicing or doing headstands like the others. Well, I don't know about you, but sometimes we do.

## Ep #14: Morning Routine

But if you really talk to your yogi, coming to class and laying on the mat and doing shavasana or child's pose is practicing yoga, just as much as doing a headstand. And so practicing gratitude, and even practicing meditation is all about just showing up every day.

One article that I happened to cross in preparing for this is from happierhuman.com and it was the 31 Benefits of Gratitude You Didn't Know About, and subtitle, How Gratitude Can Change Your Life. There are so many resources there, it's absolutely fabulous, so dig into that from the resources if you'd like. There are five areas. There are emotional, social, career, health, and personality that are affected by practicing gratitude.

It makes us less materialistic, less self-centered, we experience more good feelings, we're more resilient when things don't go our way, we're less envious. I love that one. That one kind of gets me sometimes. We're kinder, it deepens our relationships, it helps us to be better managers, it improves our networking, and increases our productivity.

If those aren't reasons enough then I don't know what, right? That is just fabulous, and I am experiencing many of these results by being someone that has just started practicing gratitude. It's so true that the more we realize how much we have, that it makes such a difference in our lives.

So how do you get started with this type of practice? How do you get started with a quiet practice of not only practicing gratitude but being quiet every morning? And I have three steps. One, start very small with small bits of time. Next, set your best time of the day, and I'm going to dig into best time of day is not always first thing in the morning for all of us.

And three, notice how you're already doing this. Put your brain to work on already finding out ways that you are already practicing being centered and calm and practicing gratitude. I think many of us already are practicing this. This is just a way to build it.

[Empowered Wellness for Leaders](#) with Diana Murphy

## Ep #14: Morning Routine

So first, start small. If you're anything like me, if somebody suggests starting small, I want to triple it, and I set a really big goal. That's just how I am. Okay, so you may not be like that but I have to be reminded that I can grow more and do better in my life by starting with small pieces and just letting it be an organic process.

So I want to suggest to you that if you're not having any quiet time in the morning yet at all, definitely start with at the most, five minutes. And for some of you it might be one minute. Set a timer and just be quiet with yourself for five minutes. And this might actually look different for everyone. I love five minutes of quiet time. I set a timer and I just let myself calm down.

For others, it might be engaging in guided meditation. I need guidance most of the time and I'm actually finding on the app when I expand to 10 to 15 minutes, it just gives me more quiet spaces in between. So it's a wonderful place to grow from. But start small, set a timer and honor it. Remember, consistency is much more powerful than how much you start with.

Alright, I want to talk about setting the best time to do this. If you are parents of young children, your children might be waking up before you, and there is no quiet time. But don't give up. You might find that this is best to do when you get to the office. Or after you've parked your car after a busy commute. Or doing open eyed meditations. You can meditate and just think in a guided meditation without closing your eyes. You can do it in the car.

So don't give up on doing quiet time if you have to be creative about when. Because what I know is this: it doesn't really - I know it starts my day better when I do it in the morning, but what is even more powerful, I know it does better good for me if I'm doing it. So it probably doesn't matter when.

## Ep #14: Morning Routine

So start small, set your best time, and notice how you're doing this already. Are you already someone that's kind of looking for the good in things and practicing gratitude? Are you someone that just takes some time to think at different times of the day?

Before you count yourself as someone who doesn't meditate, do you do yoga? You're meditating while you're on that mat, especially if you're doing any restorative or guided yoga. You know, where it's a calmer practice. Every single time you are meditating. You're being with yourself in those moments.

So I want to start with some simple questions and I'll have this in the show notes, and remember Mary Ellen's journal also this is what is offered to you in her journal every day. So if you really want to dig in, that's available to you as well, but I want you to start with these three short questions.

How do I want to feel today? Did you know you can set your mind on an emotional path by deciding an intention? So decide how you want to feel. For me, I love feeling connected, I love feeling energetic, and a lot of times I choose those.

But you know, when my mom wasn't doing well - there was never a point where she wasn't doing well but when she first was in the hospital and I just wasn't quite sure what this was going to look like, I just set an intention of just being calm. That was good enough. I didn't need to do this big leap of trying to feel positive when I was a little concerned, right? And that's what I think is so important here.

So how do I want to feel today? Next is how will I take care of myself? This is where wellness is such a big piece of this. What is one small thing - and for me it's begun to be something different every day. It's not like I'm going to eat well, I'm going to exercise. Those are certainly important, but I have found by beginning this practice and being more consistent that also there's

[Empowered Wellness for Leaders](#) with Diana Murphy

## Ep #14: Morning Routine

something else that will come up for me that my body is trying to get my attention.

So it might be a nap is going to be in order today or I'm sick of processed food, I'm going to go cook fresh today. It might be something a little more detailed and specific. So the second question is how will I take care of myself today.

And then last, what am I grateful for? I love how this question has changed for me. At first I was really annoyed with myself that the answers were always the same. It was incredible how I was of course judging myself while I was trying to practice gratitude, right?

But what I realized is when I took a deep breath and only looked for one, what is one thing I'm really grateful for. Okay, I'll be really silly about this. It can be big things and very small things. So I can sleep really poorly if I don't have the right pillow. So it might be as simple as I am so thankful for that pillow, my neck is feeling awesome this morning.

So don't judge how small it might be and the other has been like - that popped up in my journal so many times this last few weeks is how grateful I am that my 87-year-old mom is acting like she's 75. Seriously. I have a lot to be grateful for. But for others, when you're really in a deep struggle, it might be I am here to see another day and I am just grateful that I feel like I have the strength to handle it. Again, this is not Pollyanna, you must think positive every day. It's being grateful for the little, for the big, and everything in between.

So I have some resources for you on the how, so journaling I think is really a beautiful - you don't have to journal for this to be effective. But if you just let it be three prompts, how do I want to feel today, how will I take care of myself, and what am I grateful for, that is a beautiful way to get started.

## Ep #14: Morning Routine

And for meditation, there are so many options. You could set a five-minute timer and just be quiet with yourself. And set some goals after a week to maybe make it one more minute each week, but see how that works for you. If you love guided meditations, look for some online. There are three apps that I have dipped into and one that I love, and you're going to find your own, and they have - always have free options. Sometimes the free option is all you need to get started.

Welzen is one, Headspace, my absolute favorite. I went all in and I'm doing a year with it because it was quite a cost savings. And 10% Happier is something that my friends really love. A friend of mine, Wendy, has just gone all in on this 10% Happier and she's seeing how that really has improved her outlook and how much action she takes in her life.

And it has actually - Wendy was really an inspiration, seeing her have this practice that to really dig in myself and also to make this one of my episodes. Another thing that really is supportive to me in meditation and really creating a lot of joy in my day is having music around me.

It might be something different for you, you might be needing - I have a lot of clients that love being outside. So what if your quiet time was just simply making sure on a good weather day that you had a cup of coffee on our porch or that you took a fresh air walk during the day? It doesn't have to be a big thing. I just encourage you to be intentional and make it a consistent thing.

So set a five-minute timer or use a guided app or get more music in your life. When I write now I play a lot of classical music and I love it because I look forward to writing more often. Oh my word people, I hope this has been helpful. This has been a life changing practice. I know that I'll have more for you in the coming months around this because - and if there's something that you particularly want me to dig deeper on, let me know. Or

## Ep #14: Morning Routine

if you have questions, email me [Diana@dianamurphycoaching.com](mailto:Diana@dianamurphycoaching.com) if you'd like more

In the resources today, I will have everything that I've mentioned. I want to honor the articles that have been written, and I also want to give you your menu, your way to get started on this, and if you have any questions there's a lot of books I've gone through in the past that have been very helpful in this quiet practice. One of them to mention is *The Joy Diet* by Martha Beck.

I did an entire retreat with Mary Ellen around it and it was one of the best things that we did is learning that practice of letting your thoughts flow by. She gives you a really beautiful way of describing how getting quiet in the morning will work and when it's hard she's very practical with it. So that might be of help.

So I hope to see you on my Facebook lives. If you're not a Facebook person, I'm logging them on as a YouTube subscription, so if you want those in your email box look for me on YouTube under Diana Murphy Coaching or DM Coaching. Search it and find me there. I want to embellish everything that you're doing, if you're investing in your time in the podcast, know that there's always resources outside of that.

Thank you so much for being here today and I cannot wait for next month. I want you to look forward to, or look ahead with me to mindful May. In May, I'm going to do all things about mindset. And they're very small subjects and I bet there are going to be one or two that get your attention and I will be bringing those short, impactful episodes in a way for you to shift your mindset if you want to in those directions.

It's all about being motivated, it's about head drama, all that drama that we have in our lives and in our relationships. I am going to be bringing that all

## Ep #14: Morning Routine

to you in May. I really look forward to it and thanks so much for being a listener. Have a great day.

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