

This text and these exercises are based on:

7 Habits for a Healthy Mind in a Healthy Body

The secrets to well-being can be found in our evolutionary biology.

By Christopher Bergland, author of *The Athlete's Way*

At <<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-athletes-way/201302/7-habits-healthy-mind-in-healthy-body>>, posted Feb 13, 2013, retrieved September 4, 2018.

To find clues for healthy living today, we must look to our past. The history of human evolution shows a definitive link between our physical health and psychological well-being. The Greeks understood the importance of a Sound Mind in a Sound Body. That credo became the foundation of their civilization. For clues on how we can best survive the 21st century we should look to the wisdom held in our ancestry and evolutionary biology.

In this entry I will explore ways in which modern living is causing our bodies and minds to short-circuit. I will recap the major periods of human evolution and offer a simple prescriptive that can insulate you from the 'future shock' that rapid advances in technology have created in our bodies, minds, and society. "Future shock" is a term for a certain psychological state of individuals and entire societies, introduced by Alvin Toffler in his book of the same name. Toffler's most basic definition of future shock is: "too much change in too short a period of time." Do you feel future shocked? What ways are you coping with it?

Meaning and translation:

Clue _____

Wisdom _____

Recap _____

Discuss with your neighbor or in small groups: Do you feel "future shocked"? What ways are you coping with it? Write down some key ideas:

The *7 Habits for a Healthy Mind in a Healthy body* are simple daily lifestyle choices. These 7 principles are the foundation of *The Athlete's Way* philosophy:

7 HABITS FOR A HEALTHY MIND IN A HEALTHY BODY

1. **Daily Physicality:** Exercise for at least 20 minutes most days of the week.
2. **Intellectual Curiosity:** Spend some time in focused thought, exploring new ideas every day.
3. **Foster Creativity:** Challenge your mind to connect unrelated ideas in new and useful ways.
4. **Human Unity:** Create and maintain close-knit human bonds and a social support network.
5. **Spiritual Connectedness:** Identify a Source of inspiration that is bigger than you.

6. **Energy Balance:** Balance Calories in/Calories out, and reduce your carbon footprint.
7. **Voluntary Simplicity:** Embrace the liberty that comes with wanting and needing less.

Technology vs. Evolutionary Biology

A visual image that I find useful for putting human evolution in perspective is to picture that if the entire length of your arm represented human evolution, the past 200 years would be represented by the white tip of a freshly clipped finger nail. [...]

Here is a quick timeline of major inventions that have changed our lives since the 1800s: The steam engine and locomotive were invented in 1804, the telephone in 1876, the first electrical power plant in 1882, the production-line automobile in 1902, the television in 1927, the jet airplane 1943, the ATM in 1967, the cell phone in 1973, the internet in 1983. Isn't it amazing to realize how recently these changes have occurred considering the first primate fossils date back some 20 million years? [...]

The digital revolution was officially born late in 1947 when two Bell Labs scientists demonstrated a transistor that could take electric current, amplify it, and switch it on and off. By the late 1960s, large companies used computers. Personal computers were introduced in 1975. The internet and social media have changed the way we live, work and communicate in ways that would have seemed unimaginable just a decade ago. We are all scrambling to keep our bearings in this digital whirlwind.

Like many people, I believe that we have to be proactive in order to combat the potential of digital technology to zap our minds and bodies of their vitality. [...]

Technology has the ability to greatly enhance our lives, but it also has the power to cause our bodies and brains to atrophy. What are the consequences to our biology of living in a virtual reality, where we don't have to work physically to stay alive? Will our children be able to adapt to these changes better than we did or will it only get worse? The advice herein is a prophylaxis to help insulate your biology so you can continue to climb ever-higher and maximize the potential of your body and mind.

Meaning and translation:

Timeline _____

Power plant _____

Production line _____

Scrambling to keep up _____

Discuss with your neighbor or in small groups the questions asked by the author in the last paragraph:

Humans are Built to Run

As hunter-gatherers, the human body evolved to run great distances hunting prey and gathering food. The ability to spring through the air using our gluteus maximus muscles is what sets us apart from primate cousins. [...]. We are very fuel-efficient machines. As our brains grew, so did our prefrontal cortex, the seat of human intelligence, and we became better hunters. [...].

Endurance running is unique to homo sapiens among all other mammals except for dogs, horses and hyenas. [...] The scientists concluded that running improved our chances of survival and reproduction. Although we were not as swift as our four-legged competitors, we could (and still can) out run and hunt over greater distances than other predators. [...]

Socio-Economic Stratification

With industrialization, people moved into cities and began to work in factories. The human relationship to physicality and to nature changed. [...]. How is the disconnect from nature and our own biology impacting our spiritual connectedness today?

I decided to embrace voluntary simplicity and live closer to nature a few years ago. Getting out of the city and de-cluttering my life was the most liberating thing I've ever done. [...]

The socio-economic stratification of those who make a living doing creative jobs and who also exercise regularly is a point of interest to me. [...] I fear that exercise, obesity, and creativity will become more and more of a class-divider in years to come. [...]

Conclusion: Sweat is the Most Effective Elixir for Future Shock

I strongly believe that the 7 Habits for a Healthy Mind in a Healthy Body presented here are an antidote for future shock. [...] Adopting these habits into your daily routine will keep you healthy, happy, and young at heart. Daily physical activity is ultimately the single most important elixir for staving off the negative impacts of modern life. Just 20 minutes most days of physical activity makes a *huge* difference in your state of well-being.

Meaning and translation:

Hunter-gathers _____

Swift _____

De-cluttering _____

Discuss with your neighbor or in small groups: Is it necessary to replace physical work with other activities in today's urban society and if so, how? Make some notes below:
