



## 5 QUICK WAYS TO GENERATE ENERGY & FOCUS ON DEMAND (THAT TAKE TEN MINUTES OR LESS)

If you're reading this right now, you're most likely tired of slaving away at your keyboard in a dark room and never having enough energy to do anything other than "just get by." **The key to generating more energy and focus on demand is constant movement throughout the day**, especially when confined to a small space for long periods of time. But how can you move more if you're working 16 hours a day? Going to the gym is definitely not an option. But there are other ways, and they're easier than you think.

In my podcast [How Movement Makes You Smarter](#) with Dr. John Ratey we talk all about the science behind physical movement and how it can decrease the symptoms of ADD, improve your focus, and even help improve your cognitive abilities (i.e. make you smarter). Furthermore, in my podcast with Dr. Joan Vernikos, formerly the director of life sciences at NASA, we discuss [How Being Sedentary is Killing You](#), and while it's true that sitting all day long is horrible for you physically, **being sedentary is also killing your creativity and focus.**

### UNDERSTANDING "EXERCISE" VS. "ACTIVITY"

Most people operate under the false assumption that "exercise" and "activity" are the same thing and define 'being active' as engaging in activities that get your heart rate up and make you sweat: High intensity training, running, cycling, swimming, weight lifting...you get the picture. In order to partake in these activities you need to go to the gym, buy expensive gear and clothing, and most importantly find extra time in your already hectic day.

When you already work 12-16 hours in front of a computer in a dark room, it simply isn't feasible to magically conjure up more hours in the day to exercise. And even if you could...who has the energy!!!

The solution is simply reframing your mindset and understanding that **activity and exercise are two completely different things**. Then you can compartmentalize activities that can be done habitually throughout the day without needing extra time or an expensive gym membership.

***The key is finding things that you are already doing anyway and just modifying them slightly so you can do them more actively.***



## SMALL CHANGES CAN LEAD TO GIGANTIC RESULTS

Which option do you think is better for your health?

**OPTION A)** You *think about* running 3 days a week, going to the gym 2 additional days a week, and doing yoga and meditation on your day off. But you never actually do anything because with you it's "all or nothing." Instead you come home exhausted after another 14 hour day and unwind for 2 hours in front of the tv with a beer and Netflix.

**OPTION B)** You take a 15 minute walk around the block every afternoon.

I'm hoping you see the obvious answer is option B. Take small baby steps forwards towards your progress. Small changes can lead to gigantic results.

Below is a screenshot of a normal day of activity for me (courtesy of my [Fitbit Charge HR](#)). On average I get around 10,000 steps per day. On this specific day I did not dedicate any time to exercise, and I was in front of my computer from 6am until 10:15pm with the exception of meals, phone calls, and reading my kids a bedtime story.





## 5 QUICK WAYS TO GENERATE ENERGY & FOCUS ON DEMAND (THAT TAKE TEN MINUTES OR LESS)

Here are 5 easy ways that you can modify your daily habits to effortlessly stay active at work (that take 10 minutes or less).

### #1 - PARK FAR AWAY

The first activity most people get when they start their day is walking from their car to their office. Turn this into your first activity break by parking as far away from the front door as humanly possible. I pick the very back corner of the parking structure as far away from the elevator (or stairs) as I can get. This will get me more steps, and it also means I'm never stressed out looking for parking because nobody ever parks as far away as I do!

*BONUS:* Carry this habit into your personal life. Park further away at the grocery store, the post office, or anywhere else you drive. Pretty soon you'll habitually look for the easy spots and not the close ones.

***Added minutes to your day: 1-5 minutes (depending on where you park)***

### #2 - WALK WHILE ON THE PHONE

Everyone talks on the phone during the day. When you do have phone conversations, simply choose to walk and talk. Whenever a director or producer asks for my office number, I just give them my cell number instead. And if someone calls me, I start walking. If I'm in my office, I walk in circles. If it's a scheduled phone call, I walk outside and go around the block until the conversation is over.

On an hour long conference call I can accumulate upwards of 7500 steps!

***Added minutes to your day: 0 minutes (You'd be on the phone anyway)***



### #3 - MODIFY YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Forget feng shui...go out of your way to make your work environment *less efficient!* While you may be thinking you are saving time by having all of your essential tools within arm's reach (e.g. your printer, stapler, file folders, trash can, etc), the lack of activity you get throughout the day by never moving actually makes you infinitely *less productive*.

Rearrange your environment so you are forced to get up every time you need to reach for frequently used items. For example, I have my office trash can in the opposite corner of the room so every time something needs to be thrown away I have to stand up and walk a few steps. The frequency that you change positions is infinitely more beneficial for your health than whether or not you stand all day.

This includes your water bottle as well (you are drinking water, right?). If you are in a work environment that frowns upon getting up from your desk, simply put your water bottle on a shelf above you. Then every time you want water, you have to stand up. (If your colleagues or your supervisor frown upon you standing up to drink water...you need to get a new job)

***Added minutes to your day: 1-5 minutes***

### #4 - TAKE RENDER & EXPORT BREAKS

Anytime you see the dreaded bar creeping across the screen, turn this into a trigger to do quick bursts of activity. Your workstation is most likely rendered useless for this period of time anyway (depending on your choice of software), so instead of hitting Facebook or Twitter, use this time wisely and move a little.

Here are some suggested activities: 60 seconds of jumping rope, push-ups, jumping jacks, wall squats, burpees, plank, downward dog, neck stretches.

***Added minutes to your day: 0 minutes (You'd be sitting there anyway!)***



## #5 - WORK IN TIME BLOCKS (AND THEN TAKE ACTIVITY BREAKS)

When people ask me how I'm able to accomplish so much, my answer is always "time blocking." For specific blocks of time during the day I eliminate all outside distractions and focus intensely on one task at a time. This means no email, no Facebook, no social media, no news feeds, nothing. I essentially "go dark" for 50-60 minutes at a time. This increases my efficiency by upwards of 30% which buys me more time to be more active.

Every hour or so I will take a 5-10 minute break and take a quick walk, fill up my water bottle, hit the rest room (because I drink a lot of water) do a few jumping jacks or push-ups, or a few times a day I may take higher intensity breaks and swing kettle bells or use my speed rope for 60-90 seconds.

At my current job I work on the 19th floor so often in the afternoon I will take the stair to the ground level and then walk up the stairs to the roof...on the 27th floor.

***Added minutes to your day: 0-10 minutes (depending on the activities you choose)***





## GETTING STARTED

Admittedly you are not going to implement every single one of these steps today. Change takes time. When traveling the road to better health, do not try to change your direction by yanking the steering wheel as hard as you can. Instead think of your journey like an aircraft carrier or cruise ship. After turning the wheel it may take a while before you even notice you are changing direction, but once you do start to change it will be much more profound...and it will stick.

Simply try instituting one of these steps per day or per week, and once that step becomes habitual, move to another. This list is designed so each change is progressively more difficult than the first, so by the time you decide you are going to accumulate 100 burpees per day, the idea of being active all day long is no longer a foreign concept.

If you are interested in learning more about the importance of movement throughout your day, properly setting your goals, creating a more dynamic work environment, and building healthier habits (that stick), keep an eye out for more information about my brand new online learning program 'Move Yourself.'

Be well.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zack Arnold'.

Zack Arnold

