

# RISE & SHINE



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*How many of us willingly wake up at crack of dawn? On weekends and holidays, by the time we wake up, it's almost high noon, sometimes even after. We stay up late, rummaging through social media's metaphorical undergarments drawer, finding things weirder and weirder than we could have ever hoped for, only to curse ourselves the next day. Most of us generally enjoy assigning the "night-owl" epithet to ourselves, because the internet tells us that Einstein too, burned the midnight oil.*

*Mornings really aren't our thing (as if it weren't obvious by now), but that's because we don't fully understand, let alone appreciate, the benefits a good night's sleep and early morning can have for us. Our thing is that we excel at making getting up and out of bed a task of Herculean proportions every day, and then hoping, that we can overcome the waves of drowsiness by drowning our insides with sugar and caffeine. While some of us may not be the natural chronotype or have the body-clock that makes us "morning people," we all can do certain things that would make mornings seem a little more tolerable, if not pleasant, and definitely, a whole lot less soul-crushing.*

## GET YOUR GROOVE ON

Who likes waking up to that shrill, annoying contraption called the alarm clock? Instead, why not set your alarm to your favourite song, or any upbeat and galvanising track, and begin the day by clapping along to Pharrell's *Happy*? You can easily set any music of your choice as the alarm on your phone, so really, why be moody when you can shake that booty? Just make sure you don't set a snooze, and keep the phone away from your bed.

## EMBRACE THE MORNING

Nothing jolts the senses to a sharp awakening like a cold shower, so freshen up and then get yourself some Vit-D. Open up the windows, or step out into the balcony, so that you can get some fresh air and warm sunshine. This will serve to make you more productive, keep you invigorated and happier throughout the day.

## REPLACE CAFFEINE WITH ENDORPHINS

Endorphins are your body's natural feel-good chemicals, and a good boost of these babies early on will make the rest of the day much better. Any sort of exercise can give you an endorphin-rush, which is why running in the morning makes so much sense. If you can't go for a run, try lifting light weights or doing calisthenics workouts – like push-ups and sit-ups – indoors. Yoga, too, will work wonders in liberating endorphins, and incorporating even 20 minutes of exercise into your mornings will make you healthier and sharper. Rockin' summer bod, here I come!

## #BRINGBREAKFASTBACK

The reason why we skip breakfast is because it is usually the most boring and drab meal of the day, and it's mostly the same, every day of the calendar. So, take a little time, planning to make breakfast enjoyable. Don't be afraid to mix things up. The best bet is by learning to prepare your own

breakfast, and keeping your options wide. But then again, it's always okay to ask Ammu the night before for your favourite chow, and chomp down on that delicious *shujir halwa* in the morning. It is most important to keep your breakfast healthy and fulfilling, so that you don't feel starved until lunch. And do drink sufficient water to keep yourself hydrated.

## PREPARING FOR CLASS/WORK

If you have class/work in the morning, try waking up at least 45 minutes to an hour before you intend to leave the house. This should give you adequate time to accomplish everything mentioned above, and get yourself dressed. Preparing everything the night before is easier said than done, and there's bound to be some things left incomplete. In that case, prepare a list – before going to bed – of the things you need to do in the morning, as well as the things you need to take with you. This will save you time on multiple fronts, and you can be assured that you haven't forgotten anything back home.

## TROUNCING TRAFFIC TROUBLES

One of the most treacherous parts of the morning, especially for those who commute, is the traffic. It can be a Dementor's Kiss, sucking all the joy out of going to school/university or office and can leave you feeling drained even before anything's begun. Try carpooling – travel together with a bunch of your friends – and you'll surely have a good time. Having good company will greatly enliven the atmosphere and cut down on any stress, making the commute seem considerably shorter. If carpooling isn't feasible, try following one of the many radio stations, and maybe engage with the RJs on the morning shows. Send them texts about how the *jam* is making you feel terrible, and it'll only get better if they heed your request, and play Blank Space. Since RJs don't roll

like that, or if you can't find a good show to follow, prepare a traffic playlist that specifically counteracts all those homicidal tendencies that arise when you're stuck on Bijoy Sharani, and hope for the best.

## THE NIGHT BEFORE

Lastly, the most important thing that determines how the next morning will go, is how the night before went. Finish everything you can the day before, so that you won't have to stress out over anything in the morning. Prepare a list of things you'll need or things to do, for the next morning, and go to sleep early. Set a schedule, and maintain it. Aim for around seven to eight hours of sleep every night. Get rid of any distraction, e.g. put down that Jeffrey Archer thriller-suspense for now; you can pick it up again tomorrow. Trust me when I tell you that your crush is not going to message you on Facebook all of a sudden to profess undying love, so you can turn off your phone notifications with that sound knowledge. The radio is a no-no too, since *Bhoot FM* isn't what it used to be. Fall asleep relaxed, so that you can wake up early, and with the appropriate mind-set, geared for the next day.

Just like Rome, neither early birds nor night owls are made in a day. Stay determined and disciplined in your efforts, because we all know how hard it can be to change a sleep-cycle. In the off-chance that you do manage to convert into a morning person, you will find yourself happier and enjoying a plethora of various benefits, which should turn you into a much more "sunny side up" person.

*Hopeful doctor-to-be and lover of murgi roast, Nibras Wadud Khan spends his free time stalking you on Instagram. So DM @ niibbzzz*

