



My alarm went off at 6:30 this morning. I'd like to say that I bounded out of bed, dressed, ran a few miles, ate a healthful breakfast and then reported to work bright and early, ready to take on the day.

Unfortunately, in the statement above, only the parts about the alarm going off and my showing up at the office before 9 a.m. are true. But don't we all wish we

folk? "I'm skeptical," he replies. "There's probably a strong genetic predisposition to 'morningness' and 'eveningness' – maybe as much as 50 percent." In his studies, however, Thayer has found that people who experience the universal low ebb of energy – that dread midafternoon slump – are able to revive themselves and rev up to their highest energy levels of the day with as little exertion as a brisk 10-minute walk. In fact, he points conclusively to exercise as the single most effective strategy for managing your energy and mood.

In light of that, we've devoted this issue to techniques and tips about getting and staying energized, including

energy: lost and **FOUND**

Our special "Get Energized" issue examines this elusive entity.



were able to say that every day we rise and shine, full of vim and vigor, eager to get going with our tasks – after acing a full-fledged workout?

Of all the elements that go into a successful fitness routine, managing our energy level is one of the trickiest. What we sometimes mistake for a lack of motivation or willpower is simply a lack of energy; we are either too stressed, too hungry or too sleep-deprived to find the wherewithal to go to the gym or slip on our running shoes. Professor Robert E. Thayer, author of *Calm Energy* (Oxford University Press, 2003) and a leading expert on mood, notes quite correctly that "at low-energy times, the prospect of exercise can be unpleasant" and that you are most likely to stick with your exercise plans when you are at a natural energy peak.

So, I ask Thayer, is there hope for people like me – who yearn to convert from being night people to morning

two special workouts. The first is a total-body routine designed to help you maximize your energy level, no matter what time of day you exercise (page 222); the second is a yoga-based workout to show you how to manage your energy so you can turn frenzy into focus and exhaustion into motivation (page 230).

What Thayer terms "calm energy" is the ideal state in which we are in the best mood, at our most creative, least likely to binge and most likely to exercise. So even if I can never achieve "morningness," I will still strive for that balanced state of alert relaxation, and I hope you will too.

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