

# Morning Rituals: Set the Tone for Your Day

“How you start your day is often how you live your life.” —Louise Hay

Your morning self-care routine is all about setting the tone for your day. Each day, we get to choose the day that we are going to have, and morning rituals really allow that to come into reality. This is when you have your opportunity to choose your intention and flow for the day. Not every day is the same. If you wake without a morning routine, you will be subjected to a random flow that depends on other people's needs and agendas, your caffeine intake, and your blood sugar levels. Set your body and mind for success in the morning with rituals that will support you throughout the day, especially when you have a lot on your plate. Here are some powerful rituals to consider for the beginning of the day. This may mean getting up a half hour earlier to have this time to yourself, but I promise you, it's worth it.

## Gratitude Journaling

Taking a moment to write down what you are grateful for in life is arguably one of the most important steps of your morning routine, in my opinion. This is something that I have been doing for years and can't imagine starting my day without. This step is about personal growth, making positive daily change, and contributing to your self-care first thing in the morning. And it only takes 5 to 10 minutes. All you need is a notebook or journal, a pen, and my favorite essential oil blend: Gratitude Blend. This blend awakens the mind and allows you to hack into your happy chemicals to get you centered to start your day.

## GRATITUDE BLEND

**YIELD:** 1 application

2 drops frankincense essential oil

2 drops bergamot essential oil

1 drop ylang ylang essential oil

**DIRECTIONS:** Before beginning your gratitude journal or meditation ritual, add the blend to your hands, rub your hands together, and take 3 deep belly breaths with this blend. You can substitute sandalwood for frankincense if you prefer. Other essential blends to consider are Focus and Concentration Blend (page 151), Self-Love Blend (page 146), and Motivation Blend (page 147).

## Establish a Meditation Practice

When it comes to a meditation practice, you only need a few minutes. There is no wrong way to meditate and no set amount of time. I recommend five minutes for meditation. Your meditation ritual may vary day to day, depending on your needs. Meditation allows you to gain mental clarity and set an intention for your best day.

Set up a sacred space in your home where you can sit in silence and turn inward. Deep breathing and focused concentration slows down brain waves, making them more organized. It allows you to activate the parasympathetic nervous system, releasing endorphins in the bloodstream and allowing the brain to emit happy hormones. This helps you have presence and peace of mind, and maintain a practice of gratitude.

Use the Calming Meditation Blend or even just wild orange to start your meditation practice for brain-boosting benefits. If you prefer sandalwood essential oil for meditation, feel free to substitute it for frankincense. Sesquiterpenes, found in cedarwood, myrrh, frankincense, and vetiver, are ideal for mental clarity and focus.

## CALMING MEDITATION BLEND

**YIELD:** 1 application

- 1 drop frankincense essential oil
- 1 drop cedarwood essential oil
- 1 drop wild orange essential oil
- 1 drop rosemary essential oil

**DIRECTIONS:** Apply 1 drop of each essential oil into your palms. Rub your palms together and take 3 to 5 deep belly breaths before starting your meditation. Apply the remaining essential oil to your palms and on the back of your neck for added benefit.

## Exercise and Yoga

Motion is life, and moving your body in the morning is great for feeling energized, loving your heart, and getting focused on the tasks for the day. A 10- to 15-minute brisk walk or 5 to 10 minutes of yoga in your living room is exactly what the doctor ordered. Taking a whiff of peppermint and grapefruit essential oil will help energize your mind and body. Try the Instant Energy Blend (page 153) or Vitality Blend (page 154) prior to moving your body.

My favorite morning yoga practice starts with the sun salutation sequence. Practicing at least three sun salutations in the morning is a wonderful way to awaken your body, stretch, and say good morning to all of your muscles. The sun salutation is also a great way to know your body and its limits, since in the morning you are “raw,” so to speak—your muscles and joints still need to be warmed up. Practice being gentle with yourself.

Feel free to practice your morning sun salutations with modifications depending on the needs of your body. This will set you up for success the rest of the day.

## Get Hydrated

Make drinking water a priority every morning. If you forget to start your day with an adequate water intake, you are likely to remain dehydrated for the rest of the day and feel tired and sluggish. Hydrating your body and cells with 16 to 32 ounces of water first thing in the morning is one of the best rituals you can implement for yourself and it only takes a couple minutes.

Drinking water first thing in the morning helps with mental clarity, energy, mood, and skin complexion. When you hydrate first thing in the morning, you replenish fluids lost from sweating and urinating

throughout the evening, and provide the water your cells need to function properly.

If you don't enjoy the taste of water or you are looking for ways to incorporate antioxidants into your water, I recommend making a water infusion two to three times a week. Dressing up your water with an infusion of herbs, essential oils, and/or fruits is a great way to drink delicious water throughout the day. I have included one of my favorite recipes from my *Water Infusions* book below. I love to start my day with this recipe because you can find the ingredients all year long and it's incredibly renewing. If you would like more water infusion ideas, please check out *Water Infusions* for recipes on detox, energy, and renewal.

## DETOX AND RENEW WATER INFUSION

**YIELD:** 1 pitcher

½ cup blueberries

1 lemon, sliced

½ cup sliced cucumber

1½ liters water

2 drops lemon essential oil

**DIRECTIONS:** In a small bowl, muddle blueberries. Combine muddled blueberries, lemon, and cucumber slices into a 2-quart pitcher along with the water. Add lemon oil and stir. Refrigerate for 3 to 5 hours before serving. May be consumed at room temperature, or chilled with ice. Keep refrigerated and consume within 2 to 3 days.

## Morning Green Smoothie

Drinking green smoothies every day is one of the easiest and best habits you can have if you want to see an improvement in your energy levels. Drinking your green smoothie for breakfast is also a great way to start the day. It only takes a few minutes to prepare. This is my absolute best daily habit/tip that will increase your nutritional intake by 700 percent. I take my green smoothie on the go each morning or sip on it as I start

my morning routine. Fueling your body in the morning is the best way to set yourself up for success.

Now if that is not convincing enough, a daily green smoothie can also increase your fiber intake, ramp up your fruit and vegetable intake, and of course, support your energy levels.

## POPEYE GOES TO THAILAND GREEN SMOOTHIE

This is just one way to use essential oils in green smoothie recipes. Play around with your favorite fruits and vegetables to create a delicious and energy-boosting smoothie that nourishes your body, fights fatigue, and tastes amazing at the same time! For more green smoothie recipes, check out my other book, *The DASH Diet Cookbook*.

**YIELD:** 1 smoothie

3 handfuls spinach

1 cup frozen or fresh mango

15 mint leaves

½ cup frozen or fresh strawberries

½ banana

2 cups coconut water or filtered water

2 drops lemon or wild orange essential oil

**DIRECTIONS:** Place all of the ingredients in a high-speed blender, and blend until smooth.

Note: Blend spinach and coconut water by themselves first for the smoothest consistency.

## Two-Minute Shower Ritual

We all shower sometime during the day to clean our bodies. If you typically take a morning shower to wake up and feel refreshed, here is a great ritual for you. Each morning when you take a hot, steamy shower, add this essential oil blend into your palm and breathe in. This 2-minute ritual will open your airways, send oxygen to the body and brain, awaken your senses, and energize you. Before getting in the shower, grab one

to three essential oils or a blend that really resonates with you that day. I recommend keeping the Mental Clarity Blend (page 151) or Breathe Deep Blend (page 156) in your shower or trying out these invigorating oils: grapefruit, wild orange, peppermint, and eucalyptus. Below is my favorite shower blend to use for your next shower. It reminds me of living on the coast.

## COASTAL LIVING SHOWER BLEND

**YIELD:** 1 application

2 drops frankincense essential oil

2 drops cedarwood essential oil

1 drop rosemary essential oil

2 drops wild orange essential oil

**DIRECTIONS:** In the hot shower, add two to three drops of this essential oil blend into your palm and breathe in.

## Adorn Your Way to a Good Mood

“There is a science (encloded cognition) about how what you wear influences the way you feel. Reframe ‘getting dressed’ in the morning to ‘adorning yourself,’ and the moments you spend preparing yourself for the day are charged with ritual.” —Latham Thomas

Just because it’s gloomy outside doesn’t mean you need to reflect that in the way that you dress yourself. I like to take this ritual a step further and adorn myself throughout the day with mood-boosting essential oils. To be honest, I don’t always adorn myself with the best clothing; sometimes I live in yoga pants from morning till I go to bed, but I do use essential oils all day long, especially for mood balance and energy.

For your morning “adorning ritual,” choose a blend of oils that will support your mood for the day. I love adorning myself with essential oils that make me feel abundant and energized. Be your own alchemist and choose a blend that resonates with your mood and abundance mindset. Essential oils that are wonderful to combine are clary sage, bergamot,

jasmine, sandalwood, and ylang ylang. Below is a beautiful superwoman rollerball bottle blend for inspiring your inner rock star!

## SUPERWOMAN BLEND

**YIELD:** 10-milliliter rollerball bottle

12 drops sandalwood essential oil

10 drops clary sage essential oil

8 drops bergamot essential oil

4 drop ylang ylang essential oil

fractionated coconut oil or almond oil

**DIRECTIONS:** Place the essential oil in a 10-milliliter rollerball bottle and then fill to the top with your carrier oil of choice. Roll the blends over the pulse points on your neck, ankles, and wrists.