Wellness Weekly: Learn how your leaders ‘move forward with self-care’

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1. Do you have any advice for individuals wanting to live a healthier lifestyle?

Turning a new habit into a lifestyle is challenging at best. The greatest challenge for me is implementing a new routine in the morning, especially when I did not get enough sleep. While many articles suggest finding a buddy or rewarding yourself, my first secret (and recommendation) is to just not think about it. Do not dwell on how arduous it may be or the alternatives to doing that one thing. Cut off all thought, get up and take the first step — whether that’s turning your light on, putting on your glasses, brushing your teeth or getting dressed until you finally make your way to the thing you’ve asked yourself to do. My second secret is to plan ahead. If I know I want to run three times in the week, I’ll look ahead at the weather to ensure a rainy morning will not interfere with my plans, and adjust accordingly.

2. What are you doing to help manage your stress during the pandemic?

I’ve been in and out of meditation for years. When things become overwhelming for me, I always go back to meditation. Just listening to my breathing for as little as five minutes calms my body and can help me to refocus my energy on the most pressing needs. If I can’t sit still, then running helps by allowing my brain to roam free while I’m focused on the road and breathing.

I also got a COVID puppy. He has helped me to develop more relationships in my community and neighborhood, which has been invaluable during this time.

3. What strategies do you have in place to balance work and the rest of your life?

I believe it’s near impossible to have a healthy lifestyle with long work hours, and I advocate for my employees and for others to work smarter, not longer. I worked very long hours before and during the first couple months of the pandemic. Due to exhaustion and the uncertainty of the time, I was forced to take a look at how I was investing in my personal and professional development. Your well-being, community and hobbies are just as important as your career.

4. What nutrition principles do you try to follow?

I ran the gambit of diet fads when I was younger, and I am now content with my body and what I eat. I have one rule that I abide by: Eat when you’re hungry and stop eating when you’re full. Enjoy your food! Make it an experience. Given the impact of the meat market on the environment and its nutritional quality, I’ve begun to reduce the amount of meat I intake as well, and focus on getting more vegetables into my diet. I also try to stick with salads and soups for lunch, which I find keeps me more energized throughout the afternoon than a sandwich or other carb-filled meal. However, if I want that chocolate truffle after dinner, you can bet I’m treating myself, because I deserve it!