

Retirement Morning Makeover Challenge

*Make Over Your Mornings
to Make Over Your Life!*

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Morning Makeover Challenge LINK LIST

Day 1 - Why Making Over Your Morning Has A Huge Impact On Your Entire Day (download: [affirmation for Morning Gratitude](#))

Day 2 - Define Your Perfect Morning (download: [affirmation for Good Mornings](#))

Day 3 - Energizing Activities to Kick-Start Your Day (download: linked to [YM-Affirmations](#))

Day 4 - Making Smart Choices About Your Morning Makeover (download: [Smart Choices worksheet](#))

Day 5 - Coming Up With A New Morning Game Plan Using a Few Simple Steps (download: [Morning Game Plan](#))

Day 6 - The Importance Of Habits And Routines (download: [21 days new routine/habit worksheet](#))

Day 7 - Take Time To Review Your Morning Routine Regularly (download: PDF book of the challenge)

Day 1: Why Making Over Your Morning Has A Huge Impact On Your Entire Day

Are you a morning person like Wendy? I love mornings! Each new day brings new opportunities, and it's a chance to start fresh and do some things better. I am bright and fresh in the morning hours, and I love my quiet time in the morning when my brain is in high gear and ready to take on my day.

Now if you aren't a morning person, we'll look at ways to make your mornings better for your personal lifestyle.

How you start your day, or more specifically, how you spend those first few morning hours, has a big impact on the rest of it. Think of it as setting the tone for your entire day. That's why making over your morning is so important. It's about much more than those first few hours.

Wake up and say "thank you" for another beautiful day on God's earth! Breathe Deeply! Say a small prayer of gratitude for all you have (not what you don't have)...there is much to be thankful for.

WHY do retirees need a Morning Makeover?

We are "stuck". We've retired, done the same morning routine for years... and yet, there could be a better way! In fact, it probably no longer fits our retired years...

When we worked, we had to get up and get moving in the morning. In retirement, we become lazy or complacent, with little motivation. This can often lead to retirement depression.

Life is limited. Why not do whatever you can to live the best life possible for as many years as you've got left? You owe it to yourself to live your best possible retired years.

Retirees who Use an Alarm

I'm sure you've experienced this yourself. Let's use the snooze button as an example. You set an early alarm to make sure you have time for exercise, meditation, or simply some much needed "me time". When you set the alarm, you have every intention of getting up and doing whatever you have planned.

Some mornings (hopefully most mornings) you get up when the alarm chimes, and go for that walk, do your meditation exercise, or read a book for twenty minutes. Then there are those days when you just can't seem to make yourself get out from under those covers! You hit the snooze button multiple times, or turn the alarm off altogether and go back to sleep.

Think about how those days went. Did you notice a difference in how you felt? How much did you get done on the mornings when you got up with your first alarm? Were you able to do all the things you set out to do? How did those days compare to the ones when you hit the snooze button over and over again?

If I had to take a guess, I'd say that the mornings when you got up as soon as the alarm went off turned out to be a lot smoother. I bet you accomplished what you had planned to do, too. Chances are that sleeping through the snooze button didn't just affect your morning, but the entire rest of your day.

Are you an Early Riser?

Let's face it -- we have retired and can sleep anytime we like. We don't have to jump out of bed to get ready and race to work any more. Time is on our side.

There are benefits to being an early riser. Getting up early puts you ahead of the game. You're in control. You can take care of everything that needs doing in a calm manner and still have time for the important things you want to work on. In short, getting up early enough sets you up for an amazing, productive day.

You start the day on your terms. You have peace and quiet. When else do you have this same level of serenity? Wendy enjoys writing in the morning... all is quiet, tv isn't on, and she is looking through the big picture window at nature waking up! What might YOU do with this perfect time of day? You have time to pray or meditate. You can start your day on a positive note and create a good frame of mind for the rest of the day. Wendy's sister spends time in prayer and meditation every morning. Have you heard that prayer is speaking to God where meditation is listening for his direction? Notice how much better your day goes when you do this first.

You can get more work done. An extra hour of work each morning can make the rest of the day go more smoothly. You could clean up the house or prepare dinner ideas... or do any task while you've got the energy.

You can get in shape like Wendy's husband does. Working out later in the day is often more difficult. You're too tired or busy to make it to the gym. If you get up early, you can head out the door early for the gym. You can do yoga on the living

room floor. A treadmill in front of the morning news can work well, too. Whatever works for you...

Indulge in a quiet hobby. Whether you like to read, do needle point, or play the violin, the morning can be a great time to enjoy yourself. Renew your soul with something you love early in the morning when the mind is waiting for stimulation, and is clear and ready to go!

Are you convinced enough to set your alarm clock earlier? If you've been very consistent with your bedtime and wake time, your body has become used to that schedule. Consider going to bed and waking up just five minutes earlier for the first few days. Then work another five minutes into your schedule. Continue on... until it feels perfect for you!

Set the Tone of Your Day

You can set the tone for how your day is going to go first thing in the morning. That's what the old saying about "getting up on the wrong side of the bed" is all about. Let's make sure we get up on the right side and start our day off in a positive and productive way.

Over the course of the next seven days, we want to guide you through the process of making over your morning. As we've already established, this is an important task, and a good thing to work on and pay attention to. Not only will you enjoy your mornings more even if the alarm goes off much earlier than you'd like, it will also make the entire rest of your day go much smoother.

Start the Morning Challenge off right -- download this **Morning Gratitude Affirmation**. Simply print or right click to SAVE!

Day 2: Let's Define YOUR Best Morning

Your best morning -- who doesn't want a best or what some might call, a perfect morning? So how do we define what that is? Well let's begin with a few questions as we think about what your best day might look like.

What's most important to you?

What is the one thing you really want to do on a daily basis that would make a big difference, but you just can't seem to find the time for?

In short, what good habit do you want to cultivate that would make a real impact on your life?

Think about this for a moment. It could be in any area of your life from exercise and healthy eating, to self-improvement or getting ahead in business or at your job (yes, some of us are still working). It could be working on your relationship with your kids or significant other, finding time for creative pursuits, or getting in the habit of reading every morning.

Once you've figured out what you want to work on, what you want to improve, and what's important to you, we'll think about how you can make it part of your morning routine.

Sit back and imagine your perfect morning. It isn't stressed or rushed. Most importantly, it's a day when you have time for everything on your list. Maybe it means having time for a long shower. Maybe it's going for a morning walk before breakfast. Maybe it's having a few minutes to connect with your spouse over coffee, or maybe it's carving out an hour first thing in the morning to work on your side-business.

That's a lot of "maybes" but the key is to start with what's most important to you, and to think about how you can best fit it into your morning routine. Remember, you're just dreaming and imagining at this point. We'll work on figuring out where to find the time to fit it in, and how to make it all work out later on. For now I simply want you to paint a vivid picture of what your new morning could look like.

I want you to become very clear on what you want that perfect morning to look like. Imagine it in as much detail as you possibly can. Write it down in a journal or on a piece of paper that you can refer back to as needed. In short, describe what your best or perfect morning would look like.

Why is this so important? Because you can't start to make any meaningful changes until you know what your goals are. You need to know your destination before you can start to pick a route and figure out how you'll get there. That's what today's task is all about. It's figuring out where you want to get to. Don't stop until you have it figured out and firmly pictured in your mind.

Download [**Affirmation for Good Mornings**](#) Here! Click and print -- or right click the mouse and SAVE!

Day 3: Energizing Activities to Kick-Start Your Day

Mornings can be a tough part of the day. We don't have to get up for work any more, but mornings are still important. A good morning is the most important step to ensuring that you have a good day.

You can't be rushed and be at your best. You also can't lie around half the day and be at your best. Right?

Here are some ideas to get your day off to a good start:

1. Make a to-do list the night before... or heck, a week ahead!

It doesn't have to be a long list, but pick a few goals for your day to have meaning.

You can't get your morning off to the best start if you don't know what you have planned for the day... you feel a little lost, right? If you know what's planned for the next day, you can get your mind in the right place overnight.

You might use a calendar to scribble in something every day. It might be simply a doctor appointment, or a morning walk in the park and lunch with a friend, or a day at home alone reading, or planning ahead to clean that one kitchen drawer that's been bothering you. Sheer Simplicity!

If you need to declutter or accomplish a larger job, break the tasks into smaller chunks. For example, pick a place or two that you'll clean up daily (one kitchen drawer, the floor of the bedroom closet, under the sink). Put them on your to do list

for each day of the week. You'll feel great that you have those small goals in place -- and I hope you do them too!

2. Drink a large glass of water.

After a night of sleep, you're dehydrated. So when you wake up, your body craves water.

Consider avoiding caffeine. It's hard on your body. If you're too tired in the mornings, try going to bed earlier. I will admit, this point is not my advice... experts say water is better.

As for Wendy, I will continue my tea or coffee every morning -- but I am a morning person, right? I get up ready to tackle the world!

3. Take a walk.

Put on your running shoes and head outdoors. The treadmill is another option. Feel free to run if the urge strikes you. A morning walk is a great way to wake up and clear your mind. You'll feel great and get a jump on your day.

Walking in a local park, any time of the day, is great for you. There is a concept out there called "forest bathing" where nature mends your mental status... you can't help but be happier!

4. Have a good breakfast.

A good breakfast should make you feel good and provide the nutrition you require until lunchtime. You already know which foods are healthy and which aren't. Make a few wise choices and note how you feel during the morning.

5. Recite affirmations.

You can say affirmations while in the shower, exercising, or driving to work. Find a time that works for you and be

consistent. Use affirmations that address the challenging areas of your life. The things we say to ourselves repeatedly, and with emotion, become the truth.

There are oodles of affirmations on Wendy's your-mindset.com site. Find a few that really sing to you! The categories are after the article... lots to choose from! Learn more here: Your-Mindset.com

6. Get up earlier than necessary.

If you start your morning behind schedule, you're not able to take control of your morning. It's much more enjoyable to spend your morning without the pressure of being on time. Go to bed earlier and get the sleep you require.

7. Be prepared to deal with the most important task first.

This should be easy, since you made a to-do list the night before. Know your most important task and be prepared to face it head-on.

Our resources are at full capacity earlier in the day. We start to run out of gas by the afternoon as evidenced by retiree afternoon naps! Yes, I love mine! Put your resources where they can do the most good. Have a plan and get busy.

Life can be hectic. A good morning increases the odds of having a good day. Give yourself the time in the morning to gather your thoughts and prepare properly for the day ahead.

Restructure Your Routine

Before we wrap this up, spend a little time thinking about your current morning routine and where you're spending time.

Look for things you can change and tweak to find more time for the things you really want to do. For example, if you want an extra 20 minutes in the morning to meditate, look at what you could take care ahead of time, eliminate, or delegate to make that time. Get the coffee ready in the evening, so all you have to do in the morning is push a button. If you have to leave the house early, have your clothes laid out. Get your daily meds into a pill organizer. Use a free meditation app on your phone, at night, to get to sleep faster so you wake up refreshed.

Small changes like this to your routine can make a big difference. I challenge you to come up with a few small tweaks that will save you at least 30 minutes in the morning.

Day 4: Making Smart Choices About Your Morning Makeover

Yesterday we talked about how you might energize your mornings!

Today, I want you to think about what you should and shouldn't be doing in those first few hours of the day. In other words, we want to consider our choices, so that we make the most of the day.

That's an important idea to ponder. So often we get stuck in a rut or a routine, and do things because that's what we've always done. We do it without really thinking about whether or not it's the best use of our time.

Now, retired, we can do what's best for our mornings!

It's Not About Cramming More Things Into Less Time

Making over your morning isn't about figuring out how to cram more tasks into fewer hours. We are retired, we have time on our sides -- we only need to consider how to use it wisely for our best lives!

Shift your thinking and don't try to add to what you do in the morning. If you want 15 minutes for bible study, meditation, or exercise, don't just think about getting up 15 minutes earlier, or shaving 15 minutes off your morning routine by showering faster, getting dressed in record time, and rushing through breakfast. In other words, don't add to your already lengthy list of things that need to get done. You'll only feel more rushed and stressed if you do.

It's About Making Smart Choices About Using Your Time

Instead, what you should be thinking about is the best use of your time in the morning.

Compare your perfect morning with your current morning routine. What aren't you doing on your ideal morning? If you can start by cutting things out, finding time to do what's important to you becomes much easier.

There are two great ways to find things you can stop doing:

Busy Work: The first is to look for busy work. This is something you do out of habit that doesn't necessarily need doing every day. Maybe it's checking your email first thing in the morning, or playing around on Facebook for half an hour while you drink your coffee. If that's how you choose to spend your time, that's perfectly fine, but if you're doing it out of habit, it may be time to rethink it.

Delegate: The second way to quickly earn back time is to see if you're doing things for others that they can do themselves.

Maybe there was a time when you had less to do in the morning and it made sense to take on the majority of morning chores. Did things change and if so, is it time to lighten your load and get help from your partner?

Maybe you have adult kids who have moved back into the home? We start out fixing their breakfast, making their lunch, cleaning up after them, because they are busy working. All too often we continue this long after they're fully capable of doing things on their own. Why?

Don't do it -- you should now live YOUR life to it's fullest! A few small changes may be all it takes to make the time in your busy morning for what's important to you.

Download the [**Smart Choices Worksheet**](#) here!

Day 5: Coming Up with a New Morning Game Plan Using a Few Simple Steps

Hopefully, you now have a pretty good idea of what you want to do in the morning. You should also have a good sense of what you don't need or want to do. It's time to put it all together in a new morning game plan.

The best place to start is with the new set of tasks that are most important to you. Figure out a preliminary time during which you want to get your tasks accomplished.

If your goal is to go for a walk in the morning, you may decide to do that first thing before getting a shower and having breakfast. If your goal is to meditate each morning, you may decide it would work best after you've had a cup of coffee. If your goal is to find some time for reading or enjoying your favorite hobby in the morning, you could carve out some time before everyone else gets up, and while you enjoy that first cup of coffee. The same goes for wanting time in the morning to work on your business or taking an online class to learn something new.

Then work the rest of your morning chores around these new plans. It may take some shuffling around and mixing up of your current routine, but with a little creative thinking, and a bit of flexibility, I'm sure you can come up with a plan that will work specifically for you!

It's YOUR retirement and YOUR morning routine!

Making over your morning, and turning it into a new routine, isn't something that comes naturally to most of us. It takes a little while to get into the groove of things. We'll look at this

in a little more detail tomorrow. For right now, my suggestion is that you write your new morning game plan down.

It's easy to forget what you're planning to do. Writing it down will not only give you a reference to refer back to, but also solidify your new plan in your mind. Even if you simply add your intent to the Facebook group, the act of spelling it out helps loads.

Be sure to put the note, or notebook where you jotted down your new plan on your night table, or in an area where you'll see it first thing in the morning. It will serve as a great reminder of what you're intending to do differently in the morning.

It is also important to understand that even though you've written your plan down, it's not written in stone. Sometimes even the most well-laid out plans

don't always work when put into action. It's okay to make adjustments and changes as needed, until you come up with a new morning game plan that works well for you and the rest of your family.

It's time to make it the new routine... something we'll talk more about tomorrow.

Download your [**Morning Game Plan worksheet**](#) Here!

Day 6: The Importance of Habits and Routines

With your new morning game plan figured out, it's time to put it into action, make it your new morning routine. Why is this important? Because your current routine is not working very well, and it is time to implement something new.

You want to make sure your new plan happens every morning without fail, and making the choice to stick with your new routine is the best way to make sure that happens.

Before something becomes a habit or a routine, it takes a lot of willpower and a firm decision to change, and make things happen. Yes, it will take some willpower, mental energy, and drive at first to create the new morning habits, but once they are set, it will become automatic just like brushing your teeth before bed.

Once you come up with a good morning routine, stick to it for a few weeks. That's the best way to turn it into a strong habit. They say it takes 21 days to change a habit. Before long, it will feel like the new normal and you will no longer have to remind yourself to do each thing along the way.

It will become a habit and a routine you'll follow automatically. It will take a lot less effort and mental pep-talk to get things done... even if your new routine includes a 30 minute run, or getting up early to work on your new online class.

Watch out for moments when you slip back into your old habits and routines. It's going to happen!! The key is to catch it early, and get back on track as quickly as possible.

For example, let's say you've been doing well with waking up 30 minutes earlier and going for a walk before you start your day. Then one day you oversleep and can't make it out there. Or the weather turns too bad, you get sick or hurt, or something else pops up that keeps you from going on that run. That's life. It happens. What's important is what you decide to do the next morning.

Do what you can as soon as you notice the disruption. If the weather is bad, do a quick workout at home, or head to the gym to run on the treadmill. If you overslept, try to squeeze in a few minutes of meditation or doing something to grow your business before you get back to the rest of your day. Most importantly get back on track with your regular morning routine as soon as possible. Actively remind yourself to get back on track for a few days until it routine is firmly back in place. You'll be glad you did when you start to see the results you've been hoping for.

Please download the [**21-Day Worksheet**](#) here. Use it to record this action, daily, for 21 days... simple pen and paper to make your new morning routines work!

Phases of the 21 Days it Takes to Form a New Habit

HONEYMOON

You are thinking “this is easy.” The honeymoon phase is likely happening during this challenge. You are inspired by the challenge and the other participants ideas, but after we are gone, what happens? Don’t let your momentum end!

FIGHTING OLD HABITS

Inspiration begins to fade and reality sets in. You begin to struggle with the same old habit. Those old habits are always waiting for you to comply... after all, you’ve done them for years. Just tell yourself you joined the Morning Makeover challenge for a reason and intend to keep on moving forward!

Ask yourself: How will I feel if I fall back to the same old morning routine? If you don’t mind, then you will fall back. If you care enough to change, if you’ve found a new routine that you know will work better for your retired lifestyle, you certainly will follow through!

MAGIC HAPPENS -- New Morning Routines = Better Life!

This is where you are getting in the groove. Your routine becomes second nature. You have worked through the 7 days of the challenge, maybe twice... and you know this is working well for your daily life. You visit the Facebook group frequently, even when you mess up, seeking support of others looking for their best mornings! Keep it going!

Day 7: Take Time to Review Your Morning Routine Regularly

Creating routines and habits for your mornings are a great thing. They allow you to do what you need to do to move ahead, without having to spend a lot of energy and time thinking about it. That's a good thing.

It can also be a dangerous thing when you focus on the wrong things and are in the habit of doing things that don't help you reach your goals. It becomes an unending, frustrating, and unending cycle with little to no productivity or enjoyment in our daily lives.

When we get into a routine, it's hard to stop and ask ourselves if it's working as well as it could be. Even more importantly, with a routine and a set of habits firmly established, it's easy to keep going even when the circumstances changes. That's why it's important to take some time every now and again to review our routine and habits, including the new morning routine.

Set aside a little time every few weeks, or even a few months to review your routine. Put it on the calendar and make sure you do it. It won't take long, and it will be a very valuable exercise in the long run.

Our lives and circumstances change. Our routines should change with it. Just because something has served us well over the past few weeks and months, doesn't mean it will continue to do so. Which brings up a good point...

When you sit down to review your morning routine (or any routine or habit you've been working on for that matter), ask yourself:

- Is it working?
- Is it working really well?
- Am I happy and enjoying life?

If it is, simply carry on. If it isn't, it may be time to make some changes and tweak it until you find something that works well for you at that particular point in time.

Another way to look at it is to find what you love, and what you hate about the new morning routine. Change it accordingly until you get as close as possible to loving everything about it and still able to get the results you want.

Your Morning Routine will Change... Life Changes!

Remember, this morning routine will change and evolve over time as you, your circumstances, and the people in your life change and evolve.

Embrace the changes and look at them as an indication that you're making progress.

Keep tweaking and improving your morning routine and don't be afraid to mix up your goals for it. Maybe you started out by making exercise a priority first thing in the day. As time goes by and you become more fit and make time for it later in the day, your focus may shift to meditation, or learning a new language. Keep evolving, keep changing, and keep using those precious first few hours of each day to establish some positive change in yourself and those around you.



**Congrats for
Completing the
Morning Makeover
Challenge!**