



Wake up and smell the coffee...

Coffee is a much-needed survival item for many people to kick start a busy day. It provides an instant energy kick, but also has a load of health benefits too. Drinking a cup or two of coffee a day can increase your life expectancy and reduce the chances of strokes, heart failure and other heart related issues. Here's some more reasons why every morning should start with a fresh cup of coffee:

Keeps you mentally alert – We've all had those days where you wake up feeling groggy, can't think straight and can't begin to contemplate settling down to work; this is where the magic of coffee comes in. According to research, a cup of coffee in the morning stimulates your brain and helps to get you alert much faster than you normally would as the caffeine helps to stimulate your whole body kick starting it. In small doses, caffeine gives the heart a 'kick' which makes

it pump blood faster, meaning more blood reaches important areas of your body, in turn they get more oxygen and you feel more alert.

It can enhance your performance – Science has shown that coffee increases your ability to workout as it provides you with extra energy which can boost your workout to the next level. If you're looking to give yourself a performance boost for your workout, drink a cup of coffee beforehand and see the improvements you make

Coffee can prevent and get rid of headaches – Waking up with a headache is one of the worst ways to start your day. Drinking caffeine can help narrow the blood vessels in your head, therefore greatly reducing the throbbing sensation of a headache.

Coffee can boost your mood - Caffeine is scientifically proven to be a mild antidepressant as it helps to produce more chemicals in the brain that make you feel happier. It can also work to prevent sudden mood swings – so when colleagues claim to 'need a coffee' to improve their mood, they're not making it up!

Coffee is an odour fighter – A cup a day can help to keep any unpleasant smells from foods you have eaten at bay. While your breath will smell of coffee, it is a much more enjoyable smell to colleagues around you than the other food smells.



START YOUR DAY THE RIGHT WAY BY ELAINE

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Without it, we're prone to weight gain, lack of energy and low blood sugar. Nutritionists recommend that we have something to eat within 30 minutes of waking.

Here is what a good breakfast can achieve:

- Reduce inflammation
- Slows the aging process
- Reduce sugar cravings
- Reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes
- Reduce the risk of heart disease
- Enhances our moods

If you're in a hurry and need something quick and healthy for breakfast, here are some ideas below:

- Greek yoghurt with fruit
- Hard boiled eggs
- Smoked salmon and avocado on wholemeal toast
- Overnight oats – can be prepared the day before
- Porridge

I always mention how great **fruit, vegetables and nuts** are for our health, but did you know that each group are amazing for our general make up:

Fruit – brain and nerve foods as well as cleansers of tissues

Vegetables – builders for our body – they are great for muscle and skeletal tissue

Nuts and seeds – they strengthen the body as a whole

Try adding a handful of nuts / seeds or slices of fruit to your daily breakfast for an added boost.





Bright beginnings at the start of each day

by Andy Holter

Early mornings bring great beams of sunlight, replenishment of energy and the opportunity to change each waking day. As funeral professionals, our daily demands can be particularly challenging, emotionally draining, and at times incredibly tough, our ability to function can be compromised and we can struggle to make it through the day. So this week we're going to look at how starting our day differently can make a huge difference to how we manage our emotions, workload, mindsets, and general wellbeing.

Fact: Psychologists reveal the benefits of being an early riser (6am) include success in love and a lowered risk of depression. While many shudder at the idea of waking up before 6am, new research has found that early risers may be healthier and happier than those who sleep in.

Here are 10 benefits of rising early

1. Greet the day – try creating a morning ritual that includes saying thanks for your blessings. The Dalai Lama, said, "Everyday, think as you wake up, today I am fortunate to have woken up, I am alive, I have a precious human life, I am not going to waste it. I am going to use all my energies to develop myself, to expand my heart out to others, to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all beings, I am going to have kind thoughts towards others, I am not going to get angry or think badly about others, I am going to benefit others as much as I can."



2. Amazing start – How many of us start our day by jumping out of bed, late as usual, and rushing to get yourself and the kids ready, rushing to drop them to school and arriving late to work? It's hectic, stressful and not a great start to your day. By renewing your morning ritual and getting up earlier, the kids should be ready in time and so will you be. By the time everyone else gets into work, you will have already grabbed a coffee and got a head start.

3. Quietude – No kids yelling, no babies crying, no indoor ball games, no cars, no television noise. The early morning hours are so peaceful, so quiet. It is my favourite time of day. I genuinely enjoy that time of peace; that time to myself, when I can think, relax, breathe and be ready before the noise begins.

4. Sunrise – I really do love how the day slowly gets brighter, when the midnight blue turns to lighter blue, when the brilliant colours start to seep into the sky, when nature is painted in incredible colours. I like doing my early morning run during this time and fully taking in the wonders of our natural world.

5. Breakfast – Rise early and you have time for breakfast; it is the most important meal of the day. Without breakfast, your body is running on fumes until you're so hungry at lunchtime that you eat whatever unhealthy thing you can find. Eating breakfast while reading and drinking a coffee in the quiet of the morning is eminently more enjoyable than rushing something down on the way to work, or worse still, at your desk.

6. Exercise – There are other times to exercise besides the early morning, but I have found that while exercising right after work is also very enjoyable, it is also liable to be cancelled because of other things that come up; those little tasks, shopping trips or other last-minute surprises. Morning exercise is virtually never cancelled.

7. Productivity – Mornings can be the most productive time of day, when there are no distractions. You can get so much more done by starting on work earlier in the morning. Then, when evening rolls around and you have no work that you need to do, you can spend it with family.

8. Goal time – Got goals? Well, you should. There is no better time to review them and plan for them – do your goal tasks first thing. You should have one goal that you want to accomplish this week and every morning you should decide what one thing you can do today to move yourself further towards that goal.

9. Commute – No one likes rush-hour traffic so try commuting early, the traffic is much lighter and you get to work faster saving yourself more time. Or better still, walk to work or commute by bike.

10. Appointments – It's much easier to make those early appointments on time if you get up early. Showing up late for those appointments is a bad signal to the person you are meeting. Showing up early will impress them. Plus, you get time to prepare.

"One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well." Virginia Woolf