



The Transition Network

TTN-NYC Newsletter June 2017

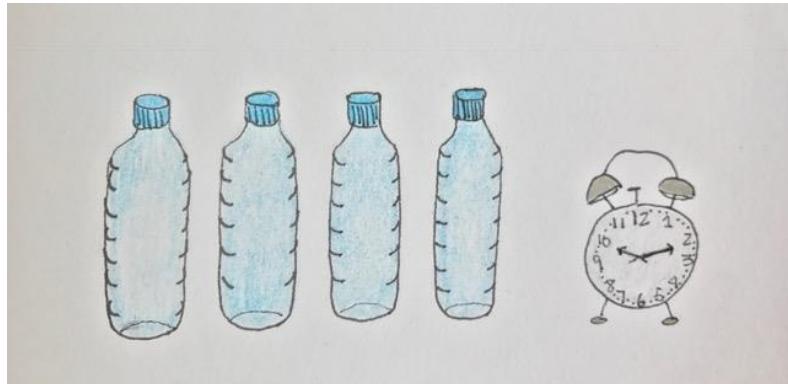
Feeling Older? Puleeze. "Water and a 10-Minute Nap!"

by Amy Epstein

I read with some interest an article in the December 2016/January 2017 issue of AARP's The Magazine. The article was titled, "Healthy You" with a subtitle, "Fast Fixes for What Ails You." A subtitle held out this alluring claim: "Too busy this season to focus on your health? You might be surprised by what you can do in just a few minutes."

I am always seduced with the prospect of a "fast fix" and even better if it improves my health and sense of well-being. Plus, the AARP had some "cred", to use common slang.

The article listed 21 recommendations. However, I'm just going to pass along two:



1. "Drink a Glass of Water"

"Even a slight dip in hydration levels can cause fatigue", according to scientists at the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine.

How much fluid do you need? In general, men require around 3 liters (six 16.9-ounce bottles) per day; women, around 2.2 liters (about four bottles).

2. "Take a Power Nap"

"In a study of four nap durations-5, 10, 20 and 30 minutes-the 10-minute nappers won out, reporting more energy two and a half hours later."¹

Let's examine the first recommendation.

I definitely do not drink four 16.9 oz. bottles of water each day. On a good day, I probably drink 3, at the most, and that many if I've been to the gym, walked a fair

¹ Robin Westen, "Healthy You", AARP The Magazine, December 2016-January 2017, 20-21.

amount or, perhaps, jogged. It also would have been a day when I would opt to drink a glass of water with meals instead of other beverages. If I'm out with friends for lunch or dinner, my beverage of choice might be iced tea. Does that count, I wonder, toward my water quota? Or, it's likely to include a glass of wine. That certainly would not.

There's no question that when I do consciously make an effort to drink more water, I might feel less hungry between meals. I also know it helps my gastrointestinal tract, which, as we get older, gets more ornery.

In my calculus of why it is I don't drink more water, I can think of only 2 explanations. The first is that I simply forget. If I'm not thirsty, I don't instinctively reach for a water bottle. To remedy that, I've decided to keep one visible on my desk when I do any work, or by my side when I read or watch anything on a screen. When it's there in front of you, it's easier to remember to pick it up.

The 2nd excuse for not drinking more water is concern for the consequences, especially if my bladder requires more frequent trips to bathrooms. The worst might be at night, with more trips to the bathroom or, heaven forbid, during a play intermission. We all know the length of the women's room lines in the theater district. Certainly, my new plan for increased water consumption will need to be tweaked to not chug down a bottle after about 8 pm or a glass with a meal before a play.

The second recommendation is a delightful one and I can honestly attest to its value.



Twice a week I audit a class in the afternoon. My former college has a very generous policy with regard to allowing alumnae to audit lecture classes at no charge. I've taken full advantage of this generosity for the past 5 years since I've lived on the Upper West Side. The art history and history classes I've audited have all been exceptional and I've enjoyed them immensely.

The biggest problem I have with the auditing experience is mid-afternoon drowsiness, since most classes have occurred in large, overheated and dimly-lit lecture rooms.

Even with a Starbucks Venti by my side, I struggle to stay awake, unless I can somehow squeeze into my schedule a 10-minute "power nap" beforehand. Sometimes I can, and sometimes I can't, but when I do, I am so much more alert, and the Starbucks coffee stays unconsumed.

You might try one or, better yet, both of these recommendations and see if they do make you feel better. I'm sure they will.



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