

### Transcription - Aaron Dozier Part 3

Welcome back, I'm Kim Baillie, she's Fulyana Orsborn and this is Inside Exec. This is the third part of our conversation with Aaron Dozier about exercise physiology. Today we're going to talk about developing a healthy sleep hygiene routine and also we hear the secret behind the 10,000 steps a day metric that many of us use. Let's get started.

The other thing in talking about that routine of your day and how movement oriented you are, I know that this is an issue for many of our listeners, it's about the stopping and the winding down and getting that good sleep. Is there a process that you use for getting yourself into a sleep routine?

Definitely. We call this sleep hygiene. Have you ever heard about that term before? That's how we refer to it, as sleep hygiene. One of the things that people should begin to consider when they do this, is setting a very routine sleep time and wake time. Generally, the way we go about this with people is we have them turn off all their alarms on some weekends and sleep for as long as they can. Then we figure out this is roughly around where your body likes to be. Then we almost reverse engineer it. On the work days, you need to be up at 6.15. Where do we need to reverse that bed time to so you get that adequate amount of sleep? That way we can start to set that consistent schedule.

Circadian rhythms are very powerful and very influential. That's your natural kind of up and down. You want to go to sleep and wake up and that kind of thing. We want to tap into that as much as we can and figure out that ideal range. Once we figure out that ideal range with a consistent sleep time and wake time, then we begin to start that wind down routine before bed. So generally no screens for 30 minutes. Dim the lights as much as you can. If you can get a little activity in like reading a book or something like that, which kind of helps the mental process slow down a little bit, they're all very important. I think setting up your room correctly, making sure it's dark and cool so you have the best sleeping environment you can for that. And then yeah, if you can have some routines. For some people music works, some people use meditation, some people it's reading, but a little something to do for about 20, 30 minutes before you kind of let that brain wind down and calm down, is a very good idea. And then there's a few other things. We try to discourage people from eating very close to bedtime. I don't like athletes to work out in the evenings if sometimes it can't be helped because that's just the way they're schedule is, but if we can get them working out early in the day, the body has a little bit easier time falling asleep. It's very hard if you go to the gym and go all right, turn the music up and get a big workout in and then later on you can't get to sleep. And then we look into other things. Obviously caffeine sensitivity, I don't drink any caffeine after lunchtime just because I know that it messes with my sleep a little bit there. I try to front load my hydration. So I try to get in about 80% of my water before 3 pm. So that way, you're obviously not having to get up and use the bathroom frequently throughout the night. So little things like that. But generally, the first step really is finding that consistent sleep time that's based around how many hours you need. And then finding a little routine before that to help you wind up down a little bit. Once you get those two things really in place, yeah, we can begin to tinker a little bit with some other nuance around it from there. So yeah, a lot of people are not getting quite enough sleep. and stuff.

Just in terms of the reading because I know that's something that the listeners will probably like to say, oh, yeah, well, I can do that. I can do the reading. Couple of things around that. We're talking recreational reading, not business reading? And do we do it on paper or from a book rather than an electronic device that's backlit?

Absolutely. They are really good questions. Yes, ideally a paper book because you're trying to avoid any artificial light, if you can, around that time. So you definitely don't want to be staring at a Kindle screen or your phone screen. A lot of them do have some little blue light blockers these days. It's a kind of help. But ideally, yes, it'd be a paperback novel that is something that you're just going to relax into and read recreationally. Yeah, I don't think profit and loss statements or emails, that's not going to count as light reading before bed. You want something that's going to help the mind switch off a little bit too. Some people have the little headbands that have a little speaker built into them and you can just listen to a little bit of something that's relaxing. There's a whole host of podcasts that are sleepy stories and things like that or rain or water. So just something like that to help you unwind and switch off a little bit. No emails from the accountant before bed.

A lot of our listeners work for big corporates. And the biggest problem is all the different time zones and they have the phone or tablet or whatever close by and they hear that ding and it gets a reaction. So as you said then, all our devices off, including emails.

Yes, all notifications, yeah, definitely. We definitely want to try to get away from that as much as you can because it is very stimulating. We're kind of very wired to that stimulation and that response. And the dopamine response at the phone signal and the screen all well is quite powerful. So you definitely need a little bit of time away from that to allow the brain to wind down.

I've got these different strategies. I've had some chronic scrollers that wake up in the night and after checking emails, and go through all of that. So for them, the phone needs to go in another room. Leave that out of the room for the time being on charge somewhere else, right out of the way and different little bits and things like that. I had one that just could not stop looking at Facebook at 3 a.m. for some reason. She was just totally addicted to getting in and scrolling. So we made her delete the app every night and then reinstall every morning. (That's a good idea.) Yeah, I was like, when you get to dinner time, you need to delete Facebook and Instagram and everything and then you can reinstall them after breakfast in the morning because she'd wake up and just start immediately scrolling, that's just not a healthy practice. So yeah, we had her delete them all and reinstall them and she's sleeping way better.

Oh, good.

Yeah. Technology is a big one. And the only other thing I'd add to that is if you can, in the mornings, get a little bit of natural sunlight. It's a really good way to start to set that circadian rhythm. Your body starts to adjust a little bit. So avoiding the natural, I mean, the unnatural light at night and then getting natural light in the morning helps us kind of orientate ourselves. It's very good for melatonin production and things like that as well.

The work from home practice is certainly helping office people. It has lots of pluses and some not so plus.

Yeah, they're not walking as much because they're in the house, they're not going out in sunlight because, you know, they maximize their time. Some are not smart about it and they think, well, I go for a run and they do, but it's good to keep that top of mind and saying, yeah, sunlight exposure as well as moving away from the screens, all of that to make it work. And a lot of it is just building in these little habitual practices. I think that's probably 95% of my job. It's a lot more about addressing those very small kind of intricate behaviors. So looking at ways they can get more physical activity.

We actually have quite a huge amount of people that have vitamin D deficiency, which is very interesting, just not getting enough of that sunlight. So trying to get them to get some early morning sunlight, trying to get those little behaviors, try not to get too tied to the screens throughout the day. When we look at our data that we've gathered from our best approximations of hunter-gatherer tribes and those still living quite permanently, yeah, we find them moving frequently throughout the day. Around about 15,000 steps, quite a lot. Generally, the average Australian is around 6 or 7,000, so about halfway there. But a lot of people I know that work in offices or have jobs that are quite focused on the computer or the phone, sometimes it's quite low, it's 3000, it's 4000, which is quite a huge metric off. We know again, going into that kind of, or causal mortality data, they're getting someone up to around 7,000 steps is just a dramatic improvement in their health and their life. And it's quite accessible for everyone. It's free, it's easy, you don't need a gym membership, but it can be one of the most profound and healthy things you can do.

Have you had the 10,000 steps one? (Yes.) Do you know where that came from? (No) A Japanese company trying to sell pedometers. And the 10,000 steps was just a really nice neat number, so they just went to 10,000 as the goal, and it would count down from 10,000, so you were trying to achieve them, but there's actually no place in the literature that suggests 10,000 is actually ideal. It's just become a very, very good marketing, very good advertising, because obviously everyone goes with it, but where we look at the research, it's much more about 7,000, or up to 12,000, somewhere in that range, but with a few strategies, it's quite manageable for most people throughout the day. You can usually get them into that 7,000 range.

Well our time has flown by, we've got a little bit of time left that we might focus a little bit more on you and on your business. You talked about what you're doing now and what you've done in the past, are there things business-wise that you would like to achieve or program wise that you would like to achieve, that you're working towards, that you're actively working towards?

Absolutely. Yeah, there are some plans in the future. I kind of work in a small-ish space at the moment, it's not too big, it's big enough for one or two people at the moment, which is great, which I really like. As I said, I have come from a strengthening conditioning background in the past, so I would like to maybe move into a bit more of a bigger facility at one point, but to be honest, we have the one little baby, I work five meters across the lawn from there now, so I'm just here, which I absolutely love. A lot of my focus, I went into almost what I, this is a very fitness term, but a maintenance phase with the business for a little bit around the birth of my first daughter, and now with the second one, we're in somewhat of a holding pattern. Somehow I just managed to get busier than I've ever been in the industry, which is always good when it just happens without you trying, so I'm kind of focusing

on that for now. I think a bigger facility in the future, I'd like to have a little bit more reach to a few more people, and be able to work with a few more people throughout the day. And then at the moment, we're offering a very personalized exercise programming on the, I use an app for that, so a lot of that's remotely done, and people training for events or doing different things, or just those looking for lifestyle change. One of the things we might launch soon is less of an individualised approach, and we might take, hey, this is just a fitness for everyone approach, like here's a really good program, if you're not training particularly for anything, or you don't have an event in mind, so on and so forth, you're just like, hey, I know I need to do some healthy, I need to do exercise throughout the week, so we would incorporate a lot of those steps, we talked about, simple resistance training and stuff like that, so a little bit away from, yeah, that very individualised design, and a bit more general, popular fitness.

So it sounds like, because my next question is going to be, how do you improve the offering to people when so much of what you do now is based on you and your involvement, and your programs? How do you duplicate yourself, or how do you duplicate the level of service and involvement that you give?

Yeah, so it's been an, uh, a question that's arisen before, it's like, how is this scalable? How do you scale this? And I'm like, oh, I'm not actually sure at the moment, because a lot of it is based around, yeah, myself and that kind of thing, but I think, like we talked about before, a bigger facility, so being able to just get some people in. I've done a few mental shifts in the past with the fitness professionals, I'd like to get back to that a little bit more, that gives you, I think, a unique opportunity to influence them, and then obviously they influence a lot of other people, so within a bigger facility, there'd be more chance to interact with those coaches and kind of work with them through there. And then, yes, I think some more just generalized accessible programs for people that sy, hey, I'm not really trying to win this race, or I'm not trying to train for this event necessarily, but they're just like, I just need to do something. I think that'll be a good little opportunity to reach more people.

Sorry, before you wrap up, I just want to say one more thing, particularly because of our international listeners. I just want to point out that you mentioned that you live in the Atherton tablelands, I just want to say, it is a beautiful part of the world, and it's in far north Queensland, for those who don't know.

Absolutely. It's a lovely place. Come visit it, you can come to the gym and work out and see it yourself.

Well, Aaron, thank you so much for your time. I know that you've made special time to fit us in with all these other things that you're doing. It has been very educational, for me and I know it's been inspirational for Fulyana, let's say. (Very much.)

That's awesome. Hopefully we've made it seem a little less daunting and a little more accessible. That's usually the way I like to go.

I think that's the case. I think that's very much the case, is that the people can see that it is achievable, that it's not needing to be in any particular pattern or

membership or program or any of those things. I think that we'll put your details onto the website so that when you start to develop these other more generalist programs, people can come back and they can find them easily.

Absolutely. We're always working with people that are just looking to improve their health. So if anyone is and they want to reach on out, that is exactly what we do.

I think, as an industry, we need to do a better job of making it accessible, making it seem less daunting. I think we've spent too long, I think, selling niches and trying to make it seem like it's really hard or we have the super special secret, which no one really does. So my goal generally when I talk about it is to, yeah, make it seem accessible and possible for everyone because it really is. And it's little steps.

Yeah, they don't need to do a whole lot. It's not a complete change of lifestyle. It's just much more sustainable if you can take little ones and then stack those days on top of each other with that little habit and then find other ways to build little habits on top of that. That will take you a long way.

I think there's been a lot of good takeaways for people today. So thank you for your time and for sharing of your expertise. We wish you well.

Thank you.

There is our conversation with Aaron Dozier. I encourage you to listen to the first two parts as well to get a complete picture of what you can be doing as we talked about, those little steps that you can take that are going to improve your health so that you can work better. For now, I'm Kim Baillie, she's Fulyana Orsborn and this is Inside Exec.