Twitter Thread by Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg



Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg
@TheRaDR



Pick a thing to do and when you'll do it. Start small but assume you're doing it every day.

1/x thread

> How do you recommend someone would *start* a spiritual practise?
>
> — The Longest Rose (@LongestRose) January 8, 2021

Like: set an alarm to remind you to sit meditation on your lunch break. Assume 3 mins every day (use your phone timer!) until you feel ready to move it to 5 min, 10 min, 20 mins.

Or: set the alarm to remind you to write three stream of consciousness pages longhand (google "morning pages") during the time you would usually be drinking coffee and reading the news/messing on social media in the AM.

Or: Decide you'll get up 10 mins earlier to pray, you'll start with saying the Sh'ma, then in a month add the blessings before and after, then in a month add the Amidah after (and/or whatever prayer sequence from your tradition).

Or whatever works for you at whatever time.

Though I very much recommend making it a morning practice if you can/if that works for your biorhythms because there's something to be said for a) starting your day by brushing your soul and

b) days tend to get eaten by unanticipated stuff coming up and interruptions and inertia and "I'm actually getting stuff done now, I'll do the spiritual practice later" and etc. So bake it into your morning routine if you can, and figure out when it'll happen if not then.

And really, put it in your schedule, set alarm reminders on your phone, whatever you need to help keep you on task.

First and maybe second day you might feel real motivation, but it's easy to deprioritize, lose momentum, etc. Just schedule it.

& do the thing even if you don't feel like it! Do the thing even if you're cranky and resistant that day! Some days running you get a runner's high, some days you're just waiting for the thing to be over—but even on the days you're not into it your muscles are getting stronger.

So too with spiritual practice. Do the thing even when you don't feel like starting. & when you start, bring your mind back to the breath, to the words of the prayer, to your focus on what you're doing. Some days the groovy feeling kicks in partway through. Some days? It doesn't.

But again, it still does the thing. Focus on your attention and the task and not how you feel, is it pleasurable. Keep on it for a while and you'll start to experience its impact anywhichway.

Oh, and if you're a parent of younger kids going, "time?! Hahahaaaaaha," I wrote a book on parenting as a spiritual practice. https://t.co/nozCyi4OSO

So many things can be spiritual practices if you a) do them regularly and b) bring your intention to them in a certain way.

"When I cook I will focus all my attention on the sensations of chopping and stirring and do no other thing" can be the start of a spiritual practice. Eg.

But if you're able to take 3, 5, 10 mins, especially in the AM, to have a regular practice, I can't recommend it enough.

Give yourself that gift.