

# Fragile quiet

Ever since I started running, I've gotten up earlier than the rest of my family. I like running in the mornings, especially since I don't have the time to talk myself out of it as I do when I run in the evenings. Midday just doesn't work for me. I sweat a lot and I don't have access to a shower most days. I will run midday if it's the only time I can, but I'd prefer to run before the sun comes up.

Rest days are a conundrum. Do I allow myself to sleep in, setting myself up for irritation when the dog wants to go out at her normal time? Do I get up early anyway and feel a little bit like a martyr, getting up when I don't really need to? Do I split the difference? I've tried all three of these, but now that I've started meditating in the mornings, I need that time even if it isn't a day I exercise.

Meditation, as I've mentioned, is difficult for me. If our almost-three-year-old is awake, it's almost impossible. Even if Xander is taking care of her, letting go of thoughts becomes much more difficult when I'm listening to make sure he couldn't use my backup or listening to her push his buttons in quick succession, just as she does with me sometimes. If I wait until later in the morning to try to meditate, it doesn't happen. Getting up before everyone else seems a small price for being able to quiet my mind, even if it's only for fifteen minutes a day.

I don't get sunshine to help me wake up first thing in the morning, but I drive east every morning so there's no question about whether I get a dose of sunlight. I'm back to walking at breaks and lunch at work now, so that should help with my state of mind, too. My stress levels are slowly easing back down to something manageable. I'm working on being more present, putting my phone away when I'm with my family, and not trying to multi-task, since it doesn't seem to work well

anyway. I'm better when I'm focused on one thing. I can enjoy it more fully, too, when I can completely engage with what I'm doing.

If it helps my overall well-being and sense of self, I'm willing to adjust my sleep schedule.