

One thing I've noticed, in my conversations with entrepreneurs over the years, is the incredibly high energy levels most of them possess. It would be interesting to find out whether they've always been that way, or whether they started working at higher energy levels as the amount of fun and reward in their lives began to increase after they started their own business.

I'm convinced that, within reason, physical activity generates more energy than it consumes. All the years when I was on the road, I made a point of working out almost every day. (This was back in the days before running became popular, and I used to attract some interesting looks from hotel guests as they encountered this character running around the periphery of the parking lot in the dark.) Physical exertion makes you sleep better and think better, and may permit you to sleep fewer hours with no ill effects. And the more stress you're under, the more you will benefit from exercise.

I remember when a Goldman Sachs partner, Connie Duckworth, gave an informal talk at my kids' school a number of years ago. (The talk was sponsored by Dare to Dream, a foundation headed by my wife, Grace, that tries to inspire girls and young women to aspire to high professional achievement.) Duckworth was telling her young audience about her schedule, which might best be described as murderous. At the time she had three children (ages one, two, and five), worked a million hours a week, and had no free time. But she treasured her exercise. Her solution? To work out at 4:00 a.m. three or four times a week. Duckworth was performing at a high energy level!

You will have to do the same. Think about it: The engine that makes your small business go is you. So take care of your engine. Give it a proper physical regimen and diet, which is very important and usually overlooked. Read a book, get a video, put an exercise machine in your home or office, go to classes, hire a trainer—whatever it takes to get into the habit. But above all, use common sense. And don't let yourself say that you don't have enough time. Make exercise a priority, and you'll be paid back with increased efficiency, and a good shot at a longer and more satisfying life.

Photo by [Caleb Woods](#) on [Unsplash](#)