

Family  
Teams

# LEVELING-UP DAILY RHYTHMS

A PDF RESOURCE



Let's find ways to continuously improve and upgrade our daily rhythms.

We shared the principle of one improvement per day during the 5 day challenge. If you have not listened to that please start by reading the section toward the bottom called "One Improvement Per Day" and listen to this podcast: [Apple](#) | [Spotify](#).

Once you understand the principle of one improvement you need to become skilled at diagnosing the common rhythm destroying problems.

Below are the top 5 that we hear about all the time.

Take the time to read each one and pay close attention to any that especially resonate with you, your spouse or anyone else on your team.

#### **NUMBER 5: TOO MUCH TOO FAST**

**What this Problem Sounds Like:** I went from no schedule to scheduling my day in 15 or 30 minute increments and after just a few hours I'm ready to give up!

**Why is this a Problem?:** Sustainability is 10x more important than perfection. We tend to vastly overestimate what we can change in a day and vastly underestimate what we can change in a year so we have to approach this rhythm thing slowly and sustainably. If you are used to living by a rhythm you might be able to sustain a pretty detailed rhythm but if this is new to you you'll need to give yourself a lot more grace.

**How to Fix:** Starting slow looks like starting with one section of your day at a time. Usually I recommend starting with the morning rhythm. Then the evening. Then mid-morning. Then afternoon. Also make sure you're aiming for following your rhythm 50% during the first month and improve from there. Once you get to 70-80% you're ready to tackle the next section of your day.

**What to Remember:** You will make tremendous progress against the chaos in your life if you can follow a rhythm sustainably but you will see the fruit of that progress really compound in about 1-2 months not all right away. It may be tough at first but there are

huge payoffs if you don't give up. But remember to start slow! *Be kind to yourself and your family as you bring this tool online.*

#### NUMBER 4: **IGNORING TIME BOUNDED LIMITS**

**What this Problem Sounds Like:** I started something on my rhythm that I had scheduled for 30 minutes but once I completed it I realized two hours had passed.

**Why is this a Problem?:** There are two very different ways to order a day. One is through task lists and the other is through a scheduled rhythm. Task lists are important but they ignore the reality of your most scarce resource - your time! When you budget a certain amount of time for a task it's important to try and respect the other things on your rhythm.

**How to Fix:** Of course this kind of bleed from one section into another will happen and will sometimes be necessary. But if you really want to get used to a new rhythm it's important to do your best to stick to your time boundaries and then change the time allocation for tomorrow (or next week if it's a weekly activity).

**What to Remember:** Try not to feel guilty if tasks don't get done because time is finite. Become more interested in being a good and wise steward of your time than checking everything off your list. Those who master living rhythmically become far more productive at accomplishing tasks over the long-run.

#### NUMBER 3: **AN IMBALANCE BETWEEN PURPOSE AND PLAY**

**What this Problem Sounds Like:** I don't like my rhythm. I dread my days more than I have rhythm than I did before.

**Why is this a Problem?:** You will quit. And, maybe you should if this problem persists. But it's relatively easy to fix this and allow your rhythm to become more sustainable AND enjoyable.

**How to Fix:** Put more time in your rhythm for fun. Most people see rhythmic living as a productivity method so they only schedule stuff that needs to be accomplished. This is a recipe for burnout. Fun, rest, renewal, recharging are all rhythmic activities that need to be done with the same intentionality as productive activities. Put in your rhythm things you

enjoy or activities that recharge you at the points during your rhythm you need them most. And if you miss spontaneity put that in your rhythm. Create a couple of blocks per week where you do whatever you feel like doing.

**What to Remember:** The rhythm is there to serve you not the other way around! The only way to make rhythmic living sustainable is for you to love your rhythm. So make it enjoyable!

## NUMBER 2: MISMATCHING EVENTS AND ENERGY

**What this Problem Sounds Like:** When I get to a certain part of my rhythm I find I just don't have the energy to do that particular activity and find myself drawn to do other things.

**Why is this a Problem?:** You won't trust your rhythm. If this gets really bad you might even be more productive without it but again there is a clear fix.

**How to Fix:** Tweak your rhythm to match your energy. Sure sometimes it's just a lack of discipline but I've found that when I live rhythmically my energy changes throughout the day. I'm way more creative first thing in the morning so I do 100% of my writing then. I have energy for heart to heart talks but mostly in the late afternoon over coffee. I like to workout but have the best energy for that after lunch. Study yourself and understand how your energy changes throughout the day. Some people are way more sensitive to this than others. So if you find yourself deeply influenced by these shifts then you'll need to do a lot of trial and error. Swap different activities on your rhythm until you find the best flow.

**What to Remember:** You are unique. You don't necessarily know how you work but you can learn. By living rhythmically you will learn all kinds of things about yourself that will make your days more fruitful.

## NUMBER 1: NOT ASKING FOR HELP

**What this Problem Sounds Like:** I feel stuck about something and I don't know what to do and I'm getting ready to quit.

**Why is this a Problem?:** Because the chaos will win.

**How to Fix:** Ask for help! Turn to a mentor or local community to help you think through the issues you're running into

**What to Remember:** Other people struggle with similar problems. You are not alone. Often we just don't know enough people like us to feel like asking for help will work.

## DISCUSSION

- Which one of these five issues do you think you are likely to struggle with the most?
- As you look at the ways to fix this area do you have hope you'll be able to overcome the struggle?
- Each of you share one more area of improvement to your daily rhythm that comes to mind from reading the above.

We don't just need a rhythm, we need a rhythm improving mechanism. Having both is what leads to long-term success. With the one improvement per day practice (see below) and the rhythm problem diagnostic (see above) I'm confident you and your family can get through your first 30 days of living rhythmically and things get easier and more fruitful going forward.

**You can do this and...we can do this together!**

# One Improvement Per Day

Now we are going to share with you the single most effective tool in helping your family come out of chaos....make one improvement to a negative issue that repeats in your family. Do this daily. We didn't say solve it in one day, just try to make a tweak or fix proactively either daily or weekly (Team Bethke with toddlers, do this exact same rule but concentrate on one breakdown per week).

You have no idea how quickly your family will rise above the chaos if you start this one habit. And here's why - without realizing almost every family in the west is deeply reactive, but rarely proactive. We only react to problems and try to put out fires. But proactively trying to solve problems changes the family immediately! And make it fun and light and a team effort :)

And here's also why it matters more than you think - the real thing that sinks a family is all the little breakdowns throughout the day. Over and over and over and over again. You get overwhelmed and exhausted then short with your kids. There is a better way!

Everything that causes family chaos:

- Messy kitchens
- Bad attitudes
- Financial stress
- Shoes in the entryway
- Loading up the car
- Leaving the toilet seat up
- Delayed obedience
- Everything in its place and a place for everything

Whatever your list is, and if you're a normal family, that list is long, each of these problems have practical, workable, sustainable solutions.

But, we get overwhelmed, so we do nothing.

Or, worse, all the slack is picked up mostly by one member of the family (moms! Dads, this is such a great place to step in and share the burden).

Not cool!

Some problems took years to create and you can't fix everything all at once.

But you can make steady progress that compounds over time.

If you start this habit you'll notice very little improvement over 3 days.

A little improvement over a week.

A lot of improvement over a month.

And a few months from now you'll wonder how things got so much better.

We want every family in this challenge to experience the power of improving one thing per day.

So here's how you do it.



**STEP 1: In your daily routine add a 10 minute team meeting.**

This can be just you and your spouse but if your kids are 7+ years old involve them as well.

Make this at a time when everyone can be there.

Morning, after work, noon maybe through Facetime. Just make sure it works for everyone and you have some energy in the tank.



**STEP 2: Ask one question - what's one thing that's not working?**

At first try to find things that create a lot of chaos but not too complex.

- Kids leaving dishes out.
- Something broken that needs fixed. (a faucet, a door knob, a dangling shutter)
- Shoes left where people can trip.
- Not cleaning up toys or after your activity.

We'll use this to go after bigger problems as well but we need to break them down into bite-sized pieces.

We're not connecting well as a couple	=	Date Night Schedule, Date Night Ideas, Evening Routine
Menu planning is out of control	=	Grocery List, Shopping Trips, Menu Ideas, Specific Meal times
Mom feels taken for granted	=	Verbal Appreciation Ideas, Training Kids to Pick Up

Hopefully you get the idea.

Keep in mind it's OK to spend a couple of days working on the same problem until you gain traction. We'll cover this more in step 5.

Take time to really understand the problem.

And DO NOT indulge in heaping problems on top of each other.

STAY FOCUSED!

Isolate one clear issue.



**STEP 3: Brainstorm ideas to solve the problem. Try to gather 2-3 ideas before you decide.**

Pick the best one.

Create a plan to implement.

Be diligent and follow through.



**STEP 4: Agree on the Solution**

Ask everyone to agree on the solution.



We'll often write the solution on a small whiteboard or piece of paper and post it somewhere where we'll all see it.

With kids we'll often make it a game.

If they remember and do their part there will be a reward.



### **STEP 5: At tomorrow's meeting ask how it went**

Start each meeting discussing yesterday's improvement.

Will this solution help solve the problem? Is it sustainable?

If you choose to change the solution or need to refocus on yesterday's solution make that the only topic of the meeting.

**Try not to move on to a new problem until you've gained traction with the old one.**

That's it.

Sometimes people struggle with the brainstorming phase. They need creative input from others.

There's a super simple solution to this problem that works 99% of the time.

That's what we're going to share tomorrow.

Until then, try your first daily team meeting.

Post in the group and let us know how it went.

You'll be amazed at the progress you'll make if you make this a habit.

# Go team!

**Team Bethke & Team Pryor**