

FORT NEWS

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EDITORIAL

LIMITLESS

“My Personal Journey Into Brain Health, Maintenance Regimen, and Quality of Life”

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As I knock on the doorstep of the half century mark, I can't help but feel both a sense of anxiety and urgency slowly creeping into my brain. Feelings of mortality are forever present, and that bravado and care-free mindset which perhaps led me to this wonderful place in life, have begun to slowly shift into a more calculated, observant, and sustainable approach towards my future, regardless of how long that future may be. Life has a beautiful way of humbly reminding us that we are here for a very short time; That this movie where we are the lead protagonist can end anytime, and that we ultimately are nothing but co-writers of our own screenplays.

At around 5pm on March 4th 2020, 10 days before the Covid-19 lockdown, I found myself curling on the floor in agonizing pain from what felt like glass ripping the inside of my left knee. I had torn my ACL, MCL, Meniscus, had micro fractures of both the Medial and Lateral Condyle Bones and this all happened at a time where I was in perhaps the best shape of my life, and sadly in front of my 11-year-old son. 7 days later while sitting on my desk an uneasy feeling crept in, my foot began to feel extremely cold, my heart began to race, and I could feel myself breathing with concern. I rushed to the ER where they found a blood clot on my left calf.

This type of injury couldn't have

come at a worse time. A global pandemic was in the air, halting travel to a standstill effectively affecting a number of industries, including ours, as half of our partners were Hotels. We were on pace for a great year, and in the blink of an eye, it all changed. Hotels closed down, April sales in the hospitality sector tanked, and there I was, unable to physically move at my usual pace. However, my brain was intact, so I got to work.

THE SILVER LINING!

“ACCEPTANCE IS THE KEY TO ALL MY PROBLEMS TODAY; ONLY WHEN YOU ACCEPT YOUR SITUATION CAN YOU BEGIN TO WORK ON A SOLUTION FOR THEM”.

Roughly 25 years prior a Rabbi had gifted my mother a little booklet. The exact title escapes me, but on the cover it read "All Will Be Well". After no more than 24 hours of anger and frustration, accepting my situation and making the best of it became my focus. Having trust in my maker and believing wholeheartedly that this setback was necessary for some reason I'd eventually understand, I began to focus on the fastest way to get myself back on track. It all started with the brain!

Since my teenage days I've had a curiosity for the brain and its power. How it works, what makes it efficient, and how it controls everything we do, our central command station. This moment in life was the perfect time for me to dive into the principles of its functionality, not only to heal faster, but also to optimize my productivity since my motor skills were truly limited.

I would be having surgery in 90 days time once the blood clot dissolved, and I wanted to make sure I did all in my power to not delay what I already knew would be a lengthy and hard recovery.

BRAIN FUEL

Research shows that approximately 20% of all nutrients consumed are allocated to the brain, and although the brain is roughly only 2% of your body weight, what your diet consists of significantly impacts its output. If your diet primarily consists of



processed foods, processed you will be, and you will perform as such in all aspects of life. That's a scary thought!

I discovered supplements such as Phosphatidylcholine and revisited others like Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) and began to appreciate their significance for maintenance and repair of nerve and brain cells. This was huge as I needed to think clearly and stay as focused as possible while dealing with the pressures of maintaining the business afloat, keeping our entire staff, and pivoting to offer pandemic related new products to our customer base. This meant establishing new manufacturing partnerships and logistic pipelines, all while maintaining sales targets and the operational wheels turning. Coupling this with the personal side of the lockdown and the beauties it came with (mainly the emotional toll on kids and family), it was tough at times, especially while hopping on one leg as more energy was needed to move around.

It is in these times that you will confirm not only what's inside of

you, but also the strength of your mind. It's easy to talk a good game, but what spills out of you in hard times paints a true and accurate picture of who you really are. When you squeeze out a lime you get lime juice, you don't get honey.

So try not to be bitter at the tough circumstances you find yourself in, but focus on positivity and trust that the hardship is necessary for your own evolution.

I began to slightly increase the healthy fats in my diet and studied the best times to consume them. Lower doses in the morning and began to increase them



progressively throughout the day to not feel sluggish. Please note, by all means I'm not a dietician, and I'm simply sharing what works for me.

From Fish oil to MCT oil I began to pay attention to all fats, Carbs and Protein sources. Eliminated all juices and replaced them with raw fruits, and became even more adamant about my water intake.

Granted, I have been a health enthusiast all my life and fascinated by the body and its capabilities, so these changes were not drastic for me. The foundation was already there, so eliminating and subbing certain foods was not a hard transition, furthermore I was motivated not only to get back to my old self, but was also bent on building a better, clearer, and cleaner version of yours truly.

H2O

Going down the rabbit hole of curiosity becomes extremely easy when you are motivated. After researching and visiting a number of physicians, I finally chose my soon to be surgeon.

He was great! Surgery was scheduled for July 21st 2020, and luckily all the changes I was making were in line with my Dr.'s orders. Cleaning and strengthening my body as much as possible was the prescription given to aid my post-surgery recovery efforts.

We all know that our bodies are predominantly made of water, but what many of us don't pay attention



to is the oxygen component. So I got to thinking... if water is literally Hydrogen and Oxygen, I needed to find a way to boost the quality of the oxygen I inhaled to aid both my brain functionality and muscular recovery.

According to research at the Cleveland Clinic, brain cells begin to die within 5 minutes of low oxygen. The brain uses about 20% of your body's total oxygen supply, but the question arises... If in metropolitan cities the air quality is not optimal, how much of the air we breathe is actually doing what we need it to do in times of stress or physical injury?

Per NASA, the air in our atmosphere is roughly 78% nitrogen, 21% oxygen and 1% other gasses such as Carbon Dioxide, Neon and Hydrogen.

So, what happens to your brain if you inhale 100% oxygen? Well, the short answer is you would die if not under the right pressurized conditions. However, under the right environment and proper

medical supervision, it does wonders. If you are not familiar with Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT), I encourage you to research it.

Oxygen therapy is extremely powerful; it puts oxygen into the plasma of the blood through pressure and not just into the red blood cells. This helps oxygen reach muscle tissue at approximately 5X, while also reaching the mitochondria (the powerhouse of the cell) creating ATP (Adenosine Triphosphate) assisting most regenerating functions at the muscular, nerve, and cerebral levels.

CIRCADIAN AND ULTRADIAN CYCLES FOR FOCUS AND RESTORATION.

Lastly, understanding my biological clocks/cycles for productivity and recovery were the last piece of the puzzle.

I was now eating extremely clean, my mind felt clearer, my body stronger, and I was anxious and excited to get this surgery on the way. It was a bit frustrating at times to know that I literally had to get better to get worse in order to sustainably get better. In essence 1) Workout 2) Eat clean and 3) Get in great shape before my date with a scalpel. I guess it's the same principle for childbirth if you ladies want to bounce back quickly after pregnancy.

Understanding the rhythms with which my body functions made

it easier to do all these things. I began paying attention to my sleep patterns, work and efficiency patterns, and ultimately came to structuring a schedule which allowed me the best chance to become who I'm ultimately striving to be.

JULY 21ST

I had been under the knife before, trusting my life to another human on one separate occasion many years back. I woke up as you could imagine; tired, groggy and sore. But my 90 days of preparation gave me something to look forward to. I had a goal... Getting back as soon as possible to playing with my kids, to my professional mission, to the BJJ Mat, and to be able to run again, move again, and continue improving both my body and mind.

My HBOT sessions were lined up, my food menu was ready, and physical therapy began literally 24 hours after surgery. I can honestly say that the focus on my brain health gave me the edge necessary to come back mentally and physically stronger after an injury which truly limits mobility at the age of 42.

Consuming the right nutrients, coupled with the oxygen therapy and being 100% dedicated to being able to continue training and participating in the sports I love with the people I cherish, truly were the recipe to assist me overcome this obstacle.

Life does humble you. It sometimes

pulls your ears in ways we don't like but are necessary in order to shift our focus to those things which are truly important and meaningful. I do believe that this was the case for me.

“Study yourself and begin the conscious efforts of self-mastery. I don't know if I will ever achieve such heights, but I will die trying.”

Without the right mental mindset, you won't achieve anything meaningful in life, and truth be told, if your brain is not right, neither are you, so pay attention to your brain, what you put in it through all your senses. Study it... Study yourself and begin the conscious efforts of self-mastery. I don't know if I will ever achieve such heights, but I will die trying, trying to find that balance that leads me away from a potentially wasted life and continues to push me into a purposeful meaningful one. One which will allow me and those I leave behind the comfort of knowing I went out on my shield and tried my best to leave a positive footprint behind for others to perhaps follow one day. We get one go at this ride. We must make it count!

MY CURRENT BRAIN HEALTH REGIMEN!

- Rise B4 the Sun
- Water, Water and More Water. Always at room temperature.
- Quiet/Give Thanks Time 15 Min. Coupled with a Cup of Hot Water/ Fresh Squeezed Lime Juice / Teaspoon Moringa Plant Powder.
- Work in Silence - No Phone - 1st round (Push for an 1 hr)
- Direct Sunlight Exposure early am/ Fresh Air & Breathing exercises 10 min
- Cold Exposure (Ice bath Min 3 xs per week)
- Exercise - Gym or BJJ - STRETCH Everyday. 10-15min
- Fruits: All Berries / Banana/ Grapefruit / Clean Light Foods/ MCT oil / Phosphatidylcholine/ Clean Proteins
- 15-30 min Breaks in between work sessions (No phone)/ A walk/ Power Nap/ Sit in Silence to regather yourself when Brain & Body Feel fatigued.
- No late Meals (2hrs B4 bed), Low carbs, Healthy Fats and Clean Protein/
- Walk for at least 10 Min after Meals
- Small Piece of Dark Chocolate 😊
- Minimum 6.5 hrs Sleep



CVO & Founder
FORT International

9/11

The Impact

Residual Casualties/Survivors and Their Health Struggles

The aftermath of the tragic events of September 11, 2001, left an indelible mark on the lives of countless survivors and their families. Amid the chaos and destruction, the haunting sound of sirens blaring was a constant and eerie backdrop that echoed through the streets of New York City for days on end. These sirens were not just a cacophony of noise but a chilling reminder of the relentless search for survivors trapped beneath the rubble. They represented the unwavering dedication of the first responders and rescue teams who risked their lives, often working tirelessly around the clock, to find and rescue those in need.

These brave men and women embodied the very essence of selflessness that

defines our nation. They toiled in hazardous conditions, battling smoke, dust, and debris while racing against time to save lives. The sound of sirens was both a symbol of hope, signaling the arrival of help, and a somber reminder of the immense tragedy that had unfolded. The emotional toll on these first responders was immeasurable, as they bore witness to the unimaginable destruction and loss.

However, the impact of that day extends far beyond the immediate casualties. Many survivors continue to grapple with physical and emotional health struggles, as the toxic dust and traumatic experiences have left lasting scars. It is essential that we remember and support these individuals



as they navigate the enduring consequences of that fateful day, ensuring they receive the care and recognition they deserve. The sirens may have eventually faded, but the echoes of their sacrifice and the resilience of survivors continue to reverberate through the collective memory of our nation.

The profound impact of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks goes well beyond the immediate casualties and the collapse of the World Trade Center towers. The heroes who rushed to Ground Zero, often referred to as first responders, firefighters, police officers, and paramedics, faced unimaginable dangers to rescue survivors and search for victims. They inhaled the toxic dust and were exposed to hazardous materials, which have taken a devastating toll on their health over the years. Many have been diagnosed with respiratory diseases, cancer, and other life-altering conditions directly linked to their heroic efforts on that fateful day.

The physical health struggles of 9/11 survivors and first responders are only part of the story. The psychological trauma they endured is equally significant. Witnessing the horrific events, losing colleagues and friends, and living through the chaos of that day has led to a high prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression,



and other mental health issues among this group. The emotional scars of 9/11 continue to impact their daily lives, relationships, and overall well-being.

In recognition of the ongoing health struggles faced by these brave individuals, there have been efforts to provide them with the care and support they deserve. The establishment of the World Trade Center Health Program and the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund has been instrumental in addressing the medical needs and financial burdens of 9/11 survivors and first responders. However, it remains an ongoing challenge to ensure that they receive the comprehensive care and

recognition necessary to cope with the enduring consequences of that tragic day.

As we commemorate the anniversary of 9/11, it is incumbent upon us to remember and honor not only the lives lost but also the resilience and sacrifices of those who survived and continue to suffer the physical and emotional aftermath. Their stories serve as a testament to the enduring spirit of unity, courage, and compassion that defines our nation, and we must remain committed to providing them with the support and care they need to heal and rebuild their lives.



Library Card Sign-Up

The Need to Disconnect the Old-Fashioned Way

In an increasingly digital age, where screens dominate our daily lives, there's an urgent need to rediscover the simple joy of disconnecting the old-fashioned way. One powerful tool that facilitates this much-needed break from our screens is the humble library card. Beyond its traditional role, a library card serves as a gateway to a world of knowledge, entertainment, and community engagement that extends far beyond the confines of our digital devices.

First and foremost, a library card offers access to a vast treasure

trove of books, magazines, and newspapers. It allows residents to immerse themselves in the printed word, savoring the tactile experience of flipping through pages, and escaping into the realms of literature and information. Libraries are sanctuaries of serenity, providing a quiet space where individuals can escape the constant barrage of notifications and take refuge in the solace of a good book.

Furthermore, a library card opens doors to a myriad of resources that foster personal growth and lifelong



learning. It grants access to educational materials, research databases, and online courses, enabling residents to expand their horizons and acquire new skills. Libraries often host workshops, lectures, and community events, offering opportunities for face-to-face interactions and the chance to connect with fellow residents who share similar interests.

Beyond individual benefits, library cards promote a sense of community. They serve as a symbol of inclusion, ensuring that access to knowledge and cultural resources is available to everyone, regardless of

socioeconomic status. By visiting the library, residents can engage in community-building activities, attend local events, and connect with their neighbors, fostering a stronger sense of belonging and unity.

In a world that is becoming increasingly digitized, the library card remains a tangible reminder of the value of disconnecting from screens and embracing the joys of a simpler, more contemplative way of life. It offers not only access to information and entertainment but

also a chance to rekindle our connection with the physical world, our communities, and ultimately, ourselves.



Hispanic Heritage

Hispanic Heritage Month, celebrated annually from September 15th to October 15th in the United States, is a time to honor and recognize the rich cultural contributions of Hispanic and Latino communities. This month-long celebration provides an opportunity to explore the diverse tapestry of traditions, art, cuisine, and history that originate from various Hispanic countries.

One notable aspect of Hispanic Heritage Month is the celebration of the Mexican holiday, Independence Day, on September 16th. This day marks the beginning of Mexico's struggle for independence from Spanish colonial rule in 1810 and is commemorated with vibrant parades, music, and traditional Mexican cuisine like tamales and chiles en nogada.

From Spain, Hispanic culture has given the world the art of flamenco, renowned for its passionate dance, soulful music, and intricate guitar playing. This art form originated in the Andalusian region of Spain and continues to captivate audiences worldwide. In addition, Spain's influence on cuisine is immense, with dishes like paella, tapas,





and gazpacho gaining international popularity.

From the Caribbean, the rhythms of salsa, merengue, and bachata have taken the music world by storm. These genres, originating in countries like Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico, showcase the infectious beats and vibrant dance traditions that have become integral to Latin American culture.

Beyond the arts and music, Hispanic Heritage Month is also a time to recognize the achievements of Hispanic individuals who have made significant contributions to various

fields, including science, politics, literature, and sports. It's a time to celebrate the diversity within the Hispanic community, which includes people from countries across Latin America, Spain, and beyond, each with its own unique heritage and traditions.

In essence, Hispanic Heritage Month is a time to appreciate the rich cultural tapestry woven by Hispanic and Latino communities, recognizing their profound impact on the world's cultural landscape and acknowledging the ongoing contributions they make to society in the United States and around the globe.





-Randall Burks

KSA Student Highlight

Randall Burks, a 2022-2023 King Solomon Award (KSA) recipient, is a remarkable scholar with a clear vision and a heart full of ambition. He is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering at Southern Adventist University, driven by his profound passion for vehicles, computers, and space. Randall's aspirations are nothing short of awe-inspiring—he dreams of becoming an aerospace engineer and working for NASA, a testament to his unwavering commitment to pushing the boundaries of human exploration and scientific innovation.

But Randall's goals extend

beyond professional success; they are deeply rooted in a profound sense of service and spirituality. He seeks not only to excel in the field of mechanical engineering but also to use his talents and knowledge as a means to serve others and grow his relationship with God. Randall embodies the belief that "Service to others is the rent you pay for the room here on earth," as famously articulated by Muhammad Ali. This quote encapsulates his dedication to making a positive impact on the world and reminds us of the power of selfless service.

As a KSA recipient, Randall

Burks exemplifies the spirit of academic excellence, unwavering determination, and a profound commitment to using his education and talents for the betterment of society. His journey in mechanical engineering and aerospace endeavors promises to inspire future generations and contribute to the advancement of science, exploration, and humanitarian service.





Healthy Habits

Incorporating healthy habits into one's daily routine is a cornerstone of maintaining physical and mental well-being throughout adulthood. These habits, when consistently practiced, not only improve immediate health outcomes but also contribute significantly to long-term wellness.

1. Regular Exercise: Engaging in regular physical activity is paramount to overall health. Exercise helps maintain a healthy weight, strengthens muscles and bones, and reduces the risk of chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and osteoporosis. It also plays a vital role in mental health by reducing stress, anxiety, and depression. Incorporating exercise into daily life can involve activities as simple as brisk walking, cycling, or even taking the stairs instead of the elevator. Over the long run, regular exercise promotes longevity, vitality, and a higher quality of life as one ages.

2. Balanced Nutrition: A balanced diet is the foundation of good health. Consuming a variety of fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains, and healthy fats provides essential nutrients and supports overall well-being. Over time, a healthy diet can help maintain a healthy weight, reduce the risk of chronic diseases, boost energy levels, and enhance cognitive function. It also aids in digestion and strengthens the immune system, making the body more resilient to illness.

3. Adequate Sleep: Quality sleep is essential for physical and mental restoration. Adults should aim for 7-9 hours of sleep each night to support brain function, memory consolidation, and mood regulation. Consistent, restorative sleep contributes to long-term mental acuity, emotional stability, and overall cognitive health. Conversely, chronic sleep deprivation can increase the risk of developing conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases.

4. Stress Management: Chronic stress can take a toll on physical and mental health. Developing effective stress management techniques, such as mindfulness, meditation, or relaxation

exercises, can have a profound impact on long-term well-being. By reducing stress, individuals can lower the risk of stress-related illnesses, including hypertension, heart disease, and mental health disorders. Moreover, managing stress fosters resilience, better coping mechanisms, and an improved outlook on life, ultimately contributing to a higher quality of life in the years ahead.

Incorporating these healthy habits into daily life may require dedication and effort, but the long-term benefits are well

worth it. By maintaining regular exercise, balanced nutrition, adequate sleep, and effective stress management, adults can not only extend their lifespan but also enhance their overall quality of life as they age. These habits act as a preventive measure against a range of health issues, promoting vitality, resilience, and a greater sense of well-being throughout the years. In essence, investing in these habits today is an investment in a healthier and happier future.





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Word Search

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Let's Celebrate Hispanic/Latino Culture

G	M	O	V	C	D	V	V	A	M	O	S	G	H
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- FAMILIA
- ABUELA
- INDEPENDENCE
- GUATAMALA
- SPANISH
- SELENA
- VIVO
- GUACAMOLE
- COSTA RICA
- MEXICO
- HISPANIC
- REGGAETON
- GUIRO
- AMIGOS
- VAMOS
- MERENGUE
- POR FAVOR
- LATINO
- MARACAS
- SALSA

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TEAM FORT



Damian



Ely



Danny



Annette



Sebas



Goretty



Keith



Helina

The Social FORT

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