

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen.

Ray and I have been married for 23 years and he continues to be my partner, my best friend, and my rock.

Thank you Patty [Barron] for the opportunity to speak again this year to the Family Forum.

[Recognize DVs in audience]

I believe that **this audience** is the key to influencing the health and wellbeing of our Army and our Nation.

And I need your help.

Let me show you a video.

It starts with a 102-year-old gentleman being interviewed...and part of a song many of you already know.

The beginning is a little hard to understand so listen closely.

Screen: Computer/Video

Video: Don't Blink

Length: 1:54



That kind elderly gentleman in the beginning of the clip brings back fond memories of my own grandfather.

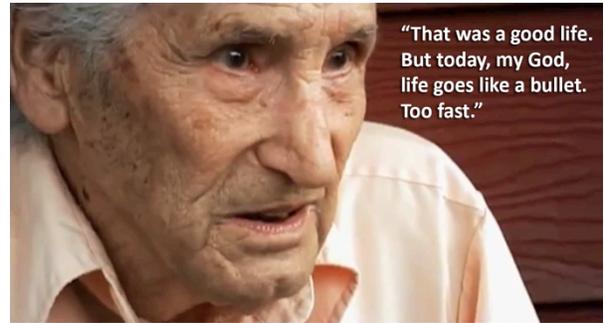
Like most grandfathers, he'd share his wisdom in short, succinct, statements of fact.

Important things about life that he wanted his grandchildren to know.

This is one that he would have shared.

[1. Introduction]

Screen: Computer/Image
Image: Old man with quote



In the film, he said “I used to lie in the grass with my buddy and we counted the stars.”

“That was a good life.”

“But today...my God, life goes like a bullet.”

“Too fast.”

It would be **tragic**...if in the evening of our lives...as the shadows grow longer...we come to the realization that life could have been better.

...that we could have lived a better life...

Or that we didn't live up to our full potential.

So the take away lesson for me was:

We live in a modern, high tech, fast paced, always connected crazy busy world.

We need to:

Slow down

Simplify

Stop "**doing**" all the time...
and start "**being**" more of the time.

Because the stakes are simply...**too** high.

Blink and it's tomorrow...

Blink and "I can't believe its Thanksgiving.

It was just the Forth of July."

Blink and we're 90...

Screen: Computer/Image
Image: Number 20,000



We blink on average 20,000 times a day...

...15 times a minute...once every four seconds...

“Don’t blink” is a metaphor for slowing down so you don’t miss the important things.

Consider using **two** of those 20,000 blinks...

one early and one late...each day as a cue.

A cue to reflect on what you’ll **do** and what you **did** that day to make **better** decisions towards better health.

At the **end** of this talk, I'm going to ask that you give me just **24** hours.

The **next** 24 hours.

To give **yourself** a chance.

I want you to **seize** the moment...today...before something else gets in the way.

To **experience** what I've **discovered**.

My hope is that you'll find it as surprising and powerful as Ray and I have.

And that's the reason why I'm here today; to share my passion.

I believe in my heart of hearts, this is a path to a better life.

A better life **today**... being more present... more engaged...and more energized.

...and a better life **tomorrow**... no regrets... fulfilled... and satisfied.

So let's get started.

You might expect the Army Surgeon General to stand up here and lecture you on better health and personal responsibility.

I'm not going to do that.

You already **know** all of that.

Why isn't it working?

We're smart people.

We all **know** that we need to be more physically active in order to be healthy.

Yet we skip exercising.

We all **know** that eating a lot of sugar and fatty foods isn't good for us.

But yet we do.

We all know that **sleep** is important, but we rarely get enough of it.

How have we gotten ourselves into this situation?

The answer **isn't** more willpower, more self-control, or simply eliminating unhealthy options.

It's going to take a **different kind** of thinking to get us out of this situation...than the kind of **thinking** that got us into it.

And that's the unexpected insight.

It's about **thinking**.

And that takes us to our brains.

It's where habits, both good and bad, reside.

It's where impulsive behaviors originate, and are controlled...or not.

It's **in the brain** where the answer to some of societies wicked problems reside.

Problems like sexual assault, domestic violence, substance abuse and suicide.

And it's also where individual solutions reside that affect our health, happiness and wellbeing.

Let me explain what I'm talking about.

<p>Screen: Computer/Image Image: Rested, Fueled, Perfused</p>	
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Rested, Fueled and Perfused.

Perfused, here, means increased blood-flow to the brain.

So what we've long known to be healthy for our **body...**

...turns out to be even more important for our **brain.**

To make this easier to understand, **bear with me** and follow along for just one minute. I'd like to walk you through the brain.

[**CSM Brock** to the stage..."battle buddy".]

Put your **right thumb** in the air.



Now surround your thumb with your fingers.



Now take your **left** hand ...

...and place it **over** your right.



That's your brain.

Your **thumb** [], represents your **survival brain**...

...You all remember H.S. biology...

This part of your brain is **powerful**...it's **hungry** and it keeps us **alive**.



Your closed fist represents your **emotional brain**,
your **limbic system**...

...it's your social center, it's your feelings...

...it wants to keep us **happy**.



This is our **thinking brain**...the **cortex**...

...it's logical, rational, and analytical.

...it's the conscious part of our brain.

Everything below... []

...your **survival** brain and your **emotional** brain...

...is your **subconscious**.

It can be your **best** friend, or your **worst** enemy.

The majority of things we do: getting dressed, driving to work...even shopping...all occur with minimal conscious thought.

Without really thinking. We're on autopilot.

When it comes to day-to-day decisions, including those affecting our health, we rarely make conscious decisions.

Which is ok, until it's not.

Let me show you what I mean.

Lights...

Screen: Computer/Video

Video: Desserts

Length: 0:32



What just happened in your **mouth**?

What just happened in your **mind**?

You just experienced **physical, psychological, and emotional** responses triggered by **sights** and **sounds**.

But there's no **food** here. How did that happen?

What happened was **real**.

At least to your subconscious brain.



...Could you control it?

Probably not...

It has a **mind** of its own.

And its just been tricked...

And that happens **hundreds** of times each day.

But in ways we don't even realize.

Before we've even had a chance to **blink**, our subconscious mind has already rendered its verdict.

Which is ok, until it isn't.

In today's environment, it is often wrong...leading us to **eat** more and **move** less.

And that threatens our short-term **wellness** and long-term **health**.

And there lies the reason we need to **think** differently.

We can surrender to these misguided **impulses**...
...or we can learn how to **master** them.

OK, here's an example.

<p>Screen: Computer/Image Image: Cupcake</p>	
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So what's your **survival brain** saying?



It's saying – “Eat it...**Now!**”

What's your **emotional brain** saying? “**Like it**”

I remember all of those birthday, Halloween and Christmas parties.

How about your **thinking** brain?

It's saying "**Leave it!**"

"I don't need the extra calories"

So who wins?

What if we give your **thinking brain** more information?

Screen: Computer/Image
Image: Cupcake w/ 500
Calories



Okay...would you eat it now?

Is it worth 500 calories?

Screen: Computer/Image
Image: Cupcake w/ jogging
time



How about now?

Is it worth an hour of jogging?

It's **that kind** of thinking, informed by a clear understanding of consequences that we need more of.

I might **still** eat the cupcake...but probably not a second.

And **that** is a step in the right direction.

Why is this awareness so important?

What's happened?

The world around us has changed.

We exist in an environment of low-cost, highly refined, high-caloric food...

...and there are consequences.

Did you know that only **one** in **four** Americans, aged 17-24, are eligible for military service today because of medical, weight, or legal issues? **That's 75% unfit for service.** This is a clear and present danger to our national security.

Listen closely to the opening line of the following clip.

Lights.

Screen: Computer/Video
Video: Forks Over Knives
Length: 1:30



This could be the first generation of children in the United States that lives less than it's parents.

There is a **crisis** in America.

9 out of 10 Americans, 9 out of 10 of us in this room, will die of a preventable illness.

Heart Disease, Diabetes, Stroke, Cancer...

Most accept this as inevitable, not a matter of **if** but **when**.

But it's not **when**...it's **if**.

[4. Why Isn't It Working?]

The decisions we make every day determines **if**, not **when**, we will contract one of these life-threatening conditions.

A **choice**, not a sentence.

Screen: Computer/Image
Image: Fast Food Street



Food alone does not fully explain the epidemic of **lifestyle-induced** disease in our culture.

Our 24-hour lifestyle, lit by neon and fueled by caffeine, bears part of the blame.

That's **you** and **me**.

[4. Why Isn't It Working?]

Too much coffee, too many sweets, too many pills,
and not enough sleep...

Too much of the **wrong** foods and nowhere **near**
enough activity.

Screen: Computer/Image
Image: Nighttime at Desk



And it's not only us, but our spouses, children,
coworkers, bosses, and just about everyone else
around us.

I've seen the enemy, and the enemy is us.

In Army medicine we have a strategy. We call it Army Medicine 2020.

Instead of pills and procedures, we have a **prescription for health.**

We are moving from a **healthcare system** – a system focused on illness and injury – to a **System for Health.**

A System for Health recognizes that Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

Health and wellbeing happen outside our hospitals and clinics.

In an area I call the **Lifespace.**

It's our time at work and school, our time at home with family and friends, and the third of our lives we spend sleeping.

Within the concept of Lifespace, we have an initiative called the **Performance Triad**, a focus on **eating right, being active, and sleeping well.**

By focusing on these **three** elements, we can improve health beyond the clinic.

The average 20-minute appointment, 5 times per year, is not sufficient to improve overall health.

I'm not going to go into detail here, but my experts are in the room and are available afterwards.

So, performance here doesn't mean maxing your PT test or winning the Army 10-Miler next year.

Performance means being better spouses, better parents, better **Soldiers**, better friends, and better members of your community.

Our prescription for a **better today**, and a **better tomorrow**, is a **better you**.

But what makes this different is that for the **first time** we'll look at these interventions:

...activity...

...nutrition...

...and sleep...

...through the unique lens of the **brain**.

Both conscious, and subconscious.

So lets talk about activity.

Why don't we move more?

Your **survival** and **emotional** brain don't want you to move unless you have to.

Your **thinking brain** knows that you should.

Who wins?

<p>Screen: Computer/Image Image: Number 21</p>	
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The winner is obvious.

This is the number of hours the average American is either sitting or lying down each day. 21 hours...

That's sitting at breakfast, on the **way** to work, **at** work, at lunch, on your way home, at dinner, on the couch and then off to bed.

For our kids, that's in the van, at school, at lunch, in front of the TV, the computer, the Nintendo or PlayStation, the cellphone, and then off to bed.

...We weren't built for this...

It's toxic. And it's a problem.

I need **you** to drive that number down.

Move more.

We need to instill activity into every aspect of our lives, all day, every day.

I'm not knocking 30 minutes at the gym or PT, but that's simply not going to offset the adverse health consequences of prolonged sitting.

A small amount of awareness can go a long way.

This little device I wear on my wrist.

It measures my activity by counting the number of steps I take.

It makes me **park** a little farther away, it makes me take the **stairs** rather than the elevator, it makes Ray and me take the dogs for longer walks.

It's my **nudge**.

I've found that unless I'm measuring my activity, I simply don't know.

Think about it, if I asked you how much you moved yesterday, what would you say?

And how about today?

Unless you are measuring, you don't know.

You're not aware.

If you **do** want to know, then you will need to count.

[Point to Up on wrist] These devices help.

Many track not only activity but also monitor sleep and most have an App you can use to track nutrition too.

There are plenty of options available in all price ranges.

What else is important when it comes to activity?

Screen: Computer/Image
Image: Number 7



Get at least **7** hours of uninterrupted sleep a night.

It may seem strange to prescribe **rest** for movement, but it's probably the single most important thing you can do to increase your chances of becoming active.

If you wake up tired, your done.

Why?

When you're tired, your thinking brain is at it's weakest.

You don't stand a chance.

Let's move on to nutrition.

Why do we **eat** what we eat? And why so much?

Your survival brain is primed for hunger, instilled long ago by evolutionary pressure.

Your emotional brain craves comfort foods...foods that we associate with positive experiences.

Birthdays, Reunions, Fourth of July picnics, Thanksgiving.

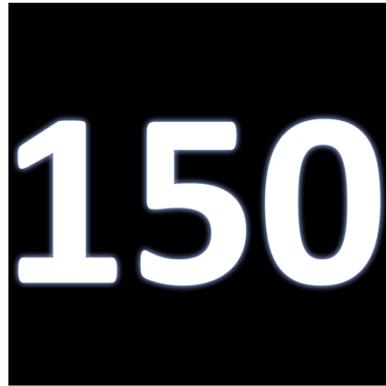
And the thinking brain...

It knows what you should eat...

Fruits and nuts, vegetables and protein while limiting sweets.

So who wins?

Screen: Computer/Image
Image: Number 150



This is the number of pounds of refined sugar that the average American consumes every year.

The winner is obvious.

And we don't need **any** of it.

Refined sugar has crept into all areas of our daily diet; it's **everywhere**.

You would have to look hard to find a food without some added sugar.

But I'm not asking you to eliminate it.

What I **am** asking is for you to **eat** your calories,
don't drink them.

That's sodas, juices, sweetened coffee and tea, and
so-called "Energy" drinks.

A good reason to think **twice** before adding sugar to
your morning...

...is that with your first **taste** it sets off a reaction that
makes you crave even **more** sugar throughout the
day.

Now for the keystone...**sleep!**

It's the game changer!

Nothing good is going to happen without sleep.

Nothing.

Did you know that your body can go longer without **food** than without **sleep**.

We are just now discovering what happens when we sleep...and how important it is for your brain.

It doesn't simply shut down for the night like we used to think.

In fact...at times it's even **more** active when you're sleeping than when you are awake.

We know now that when you go to sleep, that's when your memories are consolidated.

That's when **learning** actually happens.

When your child comes home from school, or your soldiers come in from the field...or you...from a hard day wrestling something new ...

...all that knowledge...those mental facts and physical skills, haven't been consolidated and **are at risk** until we sleep.

Risk of **not** being retained.

Consolidation means safely filed away into our long-term memory and available for future recall.

Not only is sleep essential for learning, it's also the **key** to health.

It's the **key** to a healthier you. And here is why.



Your survival brain **knows** the importance of sleep.

Without sleep it compensates by craving rich foods and minimizing energy expenditure.

Your emotional brain is also active during sleep.

It's actually the part of the brain that does the consolidation of memories

Your thinking brain...it gets a well-deserved rest.

Sleep isn't only important for your learning center, it's also critical for your health.

We trade hours of sleep for mindless channel surfing, Facebook and tweeting...

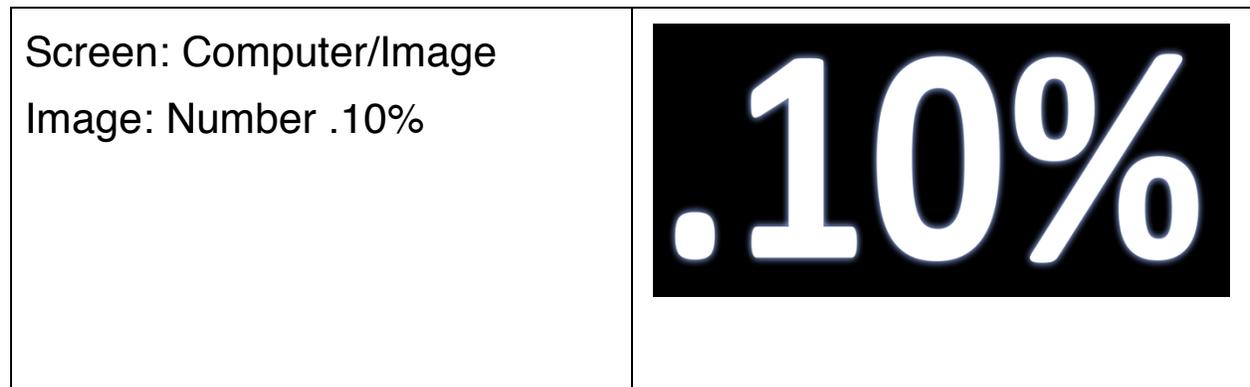
...and we think there is no real cost.

We couldn't be more wrong.

Sleepy people make poor decisions.

Sometimes oversights. Sometimes mistakes.

Sometimes catastrophes.



Recent studies have shown that 24 hours without sleep or a week of sleeping less than six hours per night, is the same **cognitively** as a blood alcohol content of 0.10%

That's legally drunk.

That's not the person I want performing surgeries in our ORs.

Not the person I want driving our children to school.

Not the Soldier I want at a security checkpoint deciding **friend or foe**.

Sleep matters.

So how do we get more of it?

It doesn't have to be complicated.

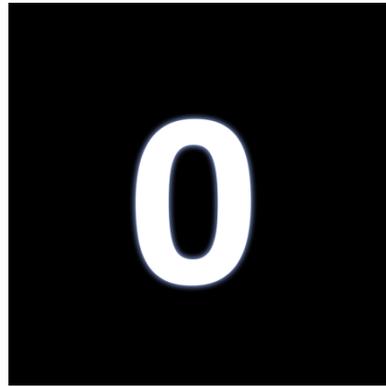
But we **do** need to understand that **environmental** factors affect our ability to sleep well.

For instance, exposure to artificial light between dusk and bedtime suppresses the release of our sleep promoting hormones.

Making it **more** difficult to fall asleep.

We need to establish an environment that is conducive to sleep.

Screen: Computer/Image
Image: Number 0 (zero)



ZERO. That's the number of blinking lights that you should have in your bedroom.

Right now the typical bedroom resembles a modern day science laboratory.

Remove chargers, Blackberries, iPhones, computers, TV's, cable boxes.

Anything that emits light or makes a noise.

[Personal story about removing blinking lights.]

So, back to my challenge.

I asked that you give **yourself** the next 24 hours.

Starting now.

Take a few simple steps to a better tomorrow.

And here is my prescription...for the rest of today.

<p>Screen: Computer/Image Image: Rx</p>	<p>LTG Patricia Horoho U.S. Army Surgeon General 7700 Arlington Blvd. Falls Church, VA 22042</p> <hr/> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>R Activity: 30 minutes tonight. 30 minutes in the morning.</p> <p>Nutrition: Eat your calories, don't drink them. No caffeine until tomorrow a.m.</p> <p>Sleep: Remove electronics from bedroom. Get 7 uninterrupted hours.</p> <hr/> <p>Refills: Lifetime  @LTGHoroho Signature</p>
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30 minutes walking this afternoon...or early this evening when you get home.

And then start your day tomorrow with 30 minutes of brisk walking.

Eat your calories, don't drink them.

Avoid caffeine for the rest of today...tomorrow morning is fine.

No flashing lights in your bedroom.

Get to bed in time for 7 hours of **uninterrupted** sleep.

Try to follow this prescription for the **next 24 hours** and then see how you **feel**.

Consider this a **health** visit...

You didn't even have to wait for the appointment and the prescription was free.

But...

I want you to follow-up.

I want to **know** how you felt.

Catch me here at the conference tomorrow or
connect with me on social media.[]

As I wrap up...I want this talk to remind you that the things you do for the rest of **today and tonight**, can lead to a **better tomorrow**.

And if we string enough of those **better tomorrows** together, we have a chance, **a good chance**, at a better life.

A better life is a decision you make. You choose.

Lights

Screen: Computer/Video
Video: Make Health Last
Length: 0:56



It's time to decide...

Use a blink as a subtle reminder, think about today, what you are doing in the moment, be present, be engaged, **matter**.

We only live once. Let's make the most of what the Lord has given us.

I opened by saying I need your help.

If by next week you too are a believer in the importance of **activity, nutrition and sleep**, I need you to share those lessons with your family, friends, colleagues, and others in your community.

A System for Health is based **in** and **on** the community.

You **are** the System for Health.

You can help carry this message across our Army.

Take care of yourself.

Be healthy.

Be well.

If you do that, you **will** live a better life.

Screen: Computer/Image
Image: Army Medicine Logo



Serving to Heal...Honored to Serve.

I think we have a few minutes for questions...

<<END>>