

Toastmasters in the AM — My Favorite Elixir In Celebration of Morning Clubs

By Craig Harrison

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People marvel when I tell them about my 7AM Toastmasters meeting. Especially when they learn we have no food or drink. Yet the meeting itself gives me all the sustenance I need for the rest of the day, and the rest of the week. Best yet, it's healthy for body, mind and spirit.

Many people have difficulty awaking early and attending a Toastmasters meeting before beginning their workday. Whether due to staying up late the night before, driving kids to school, a long commute or just feeling tired in the morning, strangers shudder when I suggest they attend a 7am club. I too felt that way when I first learned of my morning club. But that all changed once I attended.

Energize Your Day

You would think that getting up an hour earlier once a week would make me more tired, yet after participating in my club's one hour meeting I hit the street energized. I feel a perceivable advantage over my work colleagues when I arrive at my job. After all, I had already given a speech, listened and laughed and otherwise participated at my club's meeting. I feel I have an advantage over sleepy eyed colleagues just awaking at work.

The Nourishing Power of Laughter

When we experience fun, frolic and spontaneity in our club it gives me an endorphin high. I relax and revel in the humor that derives from Table Topics, various funny asides and the unexpected that always occurs in our club. Best yet, the laughter is contagious. When others laugh I do too. All the while we're learning. Dr. Smedley long ago identified that we learn best during times of enjoyment.

Meetings: A Pulse Pumping Experience

Some people drink coffee in the morning to feel alive. I find attendance at my morning club increases my heart rate naturally. The excitement of giving a speech or evaluation, participating in Table Topics and of dealing with the unexpected all get my blood flowing. When the meeting's finished I hit the street "pumped" and ready to take on the world. Meetings give me energy, confidence and a desire to infectiously spread my enthusiasm.

Success at Sun-up (or Earlier)

There's something powerful about starting your day with success. After participating in my Toastmasters club meeting each week I have tasted success. The speech well-delivered, the Table Topic handled with aplomb, the evaluation delivered cogently and confidently, the joke of the day delivered with élan, each bolsters me and sends me on my way with satisfaction and a feeling of accomplishment. No wonder I am smiling as I arrive at work later that morning.

I did get a laugh when I learned from past International Director Darleen Price DTM that she considered me somewhat of a slacker. That's because her weekly morning club, Sunrisers (2205-32), begins their Tuesday morning meetings each week in Tacoma, WA at 6:49AM!

AM TM Lasts into the PM

You would think on mornings I awake early for Toastmasters I'd be dragging by day's end. Yet the opposite is true. On days I attend my morning club I have energy to burn the rest of the day. The concentrated nourishment I receive in my one-hour morning club carries me through to the wee hours that night. It's like having that fifth gear...an overdrive to access the rest of the day.

So don't mourn the loss of sleep in the morn, instead affirm the vitality that awaits you at your morning club. Mother was right. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Nourish yourself with a morning club and you'll find Toast(master) in the morning translates into vitality all day. Have your morning cup of T. Try it, you'll like it!

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Professional Speaker Craig Harrison's Lakeview Toastmasters club (2767-57) in Oakland, CA meets at 7:00AM Thursday mornings, in a hospital no less! Craig is convinced his "early to bed, early to rise" Toastmasters club keeps him healthy, wealthy and wise. Visit www.ExpressionsOfExcellence.com for more insights from Craig.