

## The Power of Full Engagement

*Managing Energy, Not Time, Is the Key to High Performance and Personal Renewal*

BY JIM LOEHR AND TONY SCHWARTZ

Feeling as though you're not performing at your maximal potential? Feeling as though something is lacking or not like "it used to be"? Or feeling tired, anxious, disinterested, or irritable? Then this is the book for you and one that has been on my reading list for much too long. Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz's *New York Times* Bestseller focuses on the four areas of our lives that must be actively engaged to maximize energy and performance: Physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. When any of these are ignored, it's much like the resultant decreased performance of an engine when any of the fluid levels drop too low. And in contrast to many management and leadership books focusing on time management, Loehr and Shwartz make the compelling argument that it's our management of energy (and the time invested into these four areas) that make leaders organizationally and personally successful.

“Performance, health and happiness are grounded in the skillful management of energy”

The book is divided into three sections: the first details the four sources of energy, the second on the “training system” one can use to improve in these areas, and the third is a variety of assessment tools and development plans to make you successful in this pursuit. One of the most beneficial aspects of the book are the multiple real world examples (either clients of theirs or famous persons) and how lack of energy in the different components affected their home lives, work lives, and their outlook on the future. I promise you will see yourself in many of these examples.

The energy sources build on each other and it starts with your physical health (exercise, diet, sleep, etc.). Without maintaining your physical strength and stamina, how can you expect to perform at work and home at the highest level. Second is the focus on your emotional energy stores. Feeling underappreciated, anxious, irritable, or distant in relationships all have negative impacts on our ability to perform. The authors then concentrate on the mental realm and the need to stimulate your brain to stay sharp. Specifically, we must determine how to say “no” in order to give us time to think. As Leonardo da Vinci said, “The greatest geniuses sometimes accomplish more when they work less”. Busier doesn't equal better; all

too often we multitask and waste time and energy on things better delegated to someone else or not done at all. In the final section, and what the authors believe to be the most important, is the spiritual component. Although religion can be part of this, it is much more about your attention to what inspires and drives you and what matters most to you. Or as Simon Sinek says, “Start with Why”. The authors also probe into the values we rate greatest and what actions we take to live consistently within those values (which they term virtues). For a very detailed breakdown of the specific components of the book, please refer to the detailed book summary COL (Ret) John O'Brien wrote on this book in 2004 which is posted to the USAFP Leader's Book Club webpage (as are all our book summaries).

“To maintain a powerful pulse in our lives, we must learn how to rhythmically spend and renew energy”

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To be successful, not only must we be intentional, but we must be realistic and honest with ourselves. We've all heard the analogy that life is not a sprint, but a marathon; however, how many of us still sprint everyday all day long? I know I'm guilty of this. As the authors emphasize throughout the book, we must take time to refresh and renew. The way by which we do this can be unique to us, but the value of doing so is universal. This allows us to focus and maximize the quality, not just the quantity, of our energy.

As I mentioned in the opening of this article, this book has been on my list for a long time and I wish I had read it earlier. I assumed it would be more of an overview of the

four different areas and advice for improvement, but the book became much more of a philosophical analysis of myself and my life, reminding me of many of the things that I have let slip. This past year has been one of the most professionally successful in my career and one of the most challenging for me on a personal level. Despite being selected early for Colonel, completing Senior Service College, and being selected for O-6 command, my personal well-being and relationships with my family and friends have suffered. I stopped taking care of portions of all four energy areas and also (ashamedly) fell back on unhealthy and self-destructive coping mechanisms. With the help of family, friends (many who are amazing members of USAFP), my church, and counseling, I am becoming me again. However, as the authors so well describe in this book, if I fail to address all four of these aspects in my life, I cannot and will not perform at my highest level. My goal this year is to refocus my energy to be the best Christian, Husband, Father, Friend, Leader, Officer, and Physician I can be.

To those who have helped me (specifically in the last year), I give you a very heartfelt thank you. For any of you who are currently struggling, please don't be stubborn and resistant to getting help. And I am absolutely willing to talk with any of you any time if I can be of help (C: 931-436-5146; mnfandre@gmail.com). And finally, please take the time to read this book and invest in yourself; you're worth it and it will help you! All God's Blessings to you and best wishes for an amazing 2019!

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