**MORNING RITUALS**

**Male speaker**: Welcome to the Chalene Show. Chalene has helped thousands with her books, seminars, and online academies. She’s the author of the New York Times bestselling book Push, and A Mother of Two.

**Chalene** **Johnson**: My name is Chalene Johnson. I’m a New York Times bestselling author. I am the co-creator of the Smart Success Academy, the Marketing Impact Academy which is an online school that teaches you everything that nobody else is teaching you about everything you need to know in order to build and grow an online business that’s pretty much automated. That’s the Marketing Impact Academy. You might also be seeing me if you wake up really early in the morning right now, my PiYo infomercials on TV, if you watch TV.

I’m so happy that you’re here. And I’m here to tell you that we’re all capable of growth and realizing when it’s time for us to look in the mirror, understand that we’re human, realize we have to be honest with ourselves, stop kidding ourselves, stop pretending. And that’s what I had to do this year. Because truth be told, if I’m going to be completely honest and completely vulnerable in this moment, I have to tell you I have been being dishonest, not just with you but with myself. And a little bit of a phony when it comes to my rituals.

 Here’s what I mean. For the last 15, 20 years, I have been prescribing to people to follow a morning ritual. My own morning ritual worked great for me, I thought. That morning ritual started at 4:30 a.m., sometimes 4:45 a.m. Waking up every day at that hour to first listen to my personal development, go and exercise. I will listen to personal development for about 30 minutes or I will use that time to pray or listen to a bible-based podcast. And then I would go and exercise for an hour. Then I would come home and create my to-do list and so on and so forth.

 Now, why I need you to understand that I am human and it’s important to be honest with yourself is because others are watching you, you know, number one. And number two, if we’re not willing to say, "I have fault and I need to grow." Like, kind of what’s the point, right? First of all, you’re not that believable then. You’re not that likeable because nobody likes perfect people. We really like flaws. And that’s why we’re always desperate to find them and like, “Oh, did you see how she’s got some cellulite?” “Did you notice that he’s kind of balding on top?” Did you see how - yeah, did you notice that?

 And we don’t do those things only just to find fault, but more so that we can find something we can relate to. We’re like, "Whew. They’re human." Right? So it’s okay to be honest and realize that you are human and you find error in your own ways as long as you are honest about it. And work to improve yourself. That’s what makes life fun. It’s the journey. It’s not the destination. It’s the journey.

 So the thing I had to realize this year was that I wasn’t doing well with my focus. Every single day, I would struggle to stay awake all day long unless if I rested for a moment. Like, I couldn’t meditate. I couldn’t relax. If I did any of those things, I would fall asleep literally. Like, driving got to the point where it’s dangerous for me to drive because if there was a stop light, there’s a pretty good chance I’d fall asleep at it.

 So I first had myself tested. Well, I thought I might be narcoleptic. I really did. And you probably saw that I’ve done several sleep studies. I’ve had my brain scanned at the Dr. Amen clinic. And while I did find out that I have ADD - inattentive ADD which is a form of ADD. There’s seven different types. But I have inattentive ADD which, you know, "Well, so what?" You know, I’ve survived my whole life with that so you know, I’m fine. I’m good.

But what wasn’t good on my brain scans was seeing that I had these bumps and dimples and toxicity in my brain. And the only thing that we could attribute it to was that there’s something going on from a chemical standpoint or I had a sleep disorder. Like maybe I wasn’t sleeping while I was asleep. And we thought, well, there’s a very good chance that while I’m sleeping, because you see, my story was, I go to bed every night around 9:30 or10:00. That was my story. And I wake up around 4:30. That was my story. That story was partially true. The part that wasn’t true, is, I wasn’t falling sleep at 9:30 or 10:00. I was falling asleep more like 11:30 or midnight and then waking up at 4:30.

So that had to be changed. My morning routine now looks like this. Now, I wake up most days around quarter to seven, and some days, I just allow myself to wake up naturally. That’s crazy to me. Do you understand, for 15, 20 years, almost 20 years, I woke up with an alarm.

**Male speaker**: Coffee in bed.

**Chalene Johnson:** What?

**Male speaker:** Just coffee in bed.

**Chalene Johnson:** Yeah. Oh, yeah. That’s true. My husband brings me coffee in bed now. I didn’t use to have that because I would be gone before the sun came up. I would go exercise with people, my friends, at like, you know, 5:00 a.m. And now, I have coffee in bed with my husband. What? That’s so crazy.

 And I used to think, "Oh, I can’t do that." If I did that, I would be a slacker. I would be lazy. I would not get as much done. So I will tell you that this has not been an easy transition for me. I wouldn’t call it depression, but I really struggled once I realized, like, okay, I have to change this. I really, really struggled mentally with this. My attitude struggled because I’m, like, I don’t know how I’m going to be who I was. I don’t know how I’m going to get done what I need to get done. I don’t know how I’ll be productive. I don’t know how I’ll do what I’ve done. I don’t know where my anchors are.

 You know, when you are in such a routine and you do the same thing day after day after day, many of you probably know this. If you’ve ever changed jobs or had your kids move out, when you lose your anchors, you know, your rituals, your patterns, your triggers, if you will, it’s very disconcerting. Like, I felt very disjointed for several weeks, maybe even a month. And then I finally realized, okay, I can get into the same routine. I just have to shift it. I have to shift it to later in the day.

 Now, could I have kept my exact routine and just gone to sleep earlier? Yes, but I wasn’t. And so I had to just be honest with myself and say I’m never going to do that. I’m never going to do it. I’ve been saying for years that I would, and I haven’t. So clearly I’m never going to do it. Cleary, it’s not going to happen. I need to get a grip and just realize it’s not going to happen. So I have only one option left. I have got to wake up later because I won’t go to sleep earlier. I am going to sleep a little bit earlier because I think, you know, it’s starting to make sense to me. It’s starting to feel good.

But this is what my days look like. It starts everyday with exercise. Exercise is not to help you get thin, exercise is not to help you get skinny, exercise is not to make sure that you have a six pack. Exercise it to make you happy, productive, confident, feel sexy, more patient. Exercise is how you take care of your holy temple. Exercise is how you honor the gift that God has given you. It is a gift. Ask anyone who is lying in a hospital bed, ask anyone who is struggling with MS, ask anyone who is in a wheelchair, if they would give anything, if they haven’t prayed to God every single day for the gift, the ability to do what you take for granted. It is a gift. Honor it.

Leaders, business owners, if we’re looking at you and we can tell you’re not taking care of the most prized possession, I question your ability. I’m not saying you need to look like Shaun T., I’m not saying you need to be able to be so lean that I can see the outline of your kidney. But I’m saying, if you’re not exercising every day, you are not honoring God’s most basic gift. It is not about getting skinny. It is not about a six pack. It is about honoring a gift, it’s about being a better person, it’s about setting an example for the team that you lead, it’s about showing your kids that you want to be alive longer, you want be to more energetic, that you want to set the world on fire, that you care about yourself, that you care about the people that are around you. That’s what it says.

And if you don’t get that, then you’ve got to change your thinking because for whatever reason, I don’t blame you, but for whatever reason, the association that you have with exercise, is unhealthy. And we can change that and I want you to change that. That’s the first thing that I do every day.

The next thing that I do every day is, prayer or meditation. Now, usually if I’m here by myself, I do both. I’ll do prayer by myself in the morning. And I pray twice a day. I pray before I go to sleep by myself. And this is the truth, I pray for so long, I fall asleep. It’s like counting sheep. And then I try to wake up and say, "Sorry, God if I was, like, mid-sentence." But I think he understands. But in the morning, I like to do it devotional. So I like to watch if any of my favorite faith-based Periscopers are on; I love Dr. Sims; I love Mindy and Lee Lawhorne, I love Michelle Myers, I love just listening to faith-based podcast like Andy Stanley’s, Your Move Next, I love Joel Osteen, he’s just Mr. Positive, I love - there’s quite a few. So I do that in the morning and at night, I pray by myself.

Meditation, I do with my office staff. So my office staff comes over and we exercise together in my gym. And we love it. We just randomly like, most of them are going to come over tomorrow morning, it’s a Saturday. Most people don’t want to see the people that they work with on the weekends. I do, because I freaking love them. I love my office staff.

Like, this weekend is Jacqueline’s birthday, and we all exercise today this morning. We all went to a cycling class this morning together. Then everyone went out to breakfast for Jacqueline’s birthday. Tomorrow morning, Jacqueline texts me, she’s like, "Hey, are we going to do a workout tomorrow morning?" I’m like, "Yes." So I texted the whole office staff and I said, "Do you guys want to come over here and exercise?" And they’ll come over and exercise. We’ll do a Tabata in the gym and we’ll do weight training. And then when we’re done, we almost always meditate together and sometimes we pray as well, together. Because everybody on my team is a Christian or at least believes in God.

Next, after that, then I go upstairs and this is step number three, I make the big list. Yes. So now, here’s what my big list looks like. All I do is I take out note cards and I just write down anything that pops into my head whether it’s something that has to be done a week from now, two weeks from now, or today. Okay. So this is what it looks like. This is my big list. I’ve already crossed some things off. And I’ll tell you why I have some of these things crossed out. Because Bret and I make our big list together, we’ll say ready, set, go. This takes less than five minutes. And we write down anything and everything that pops into our head. Now, sometimes I’m like this should really be in his list. And just in case it’s not, I’ll put it on my list, and then I’ll read it out loud. And he’ll go, "Oh hey, I can put that on my list." I’m like, "Oh, you can? Oh, okay." And I just pretend.

Listen, those of you who are married, your spouse is never going to be like you. As much as you try to change them to be like you, they’re never going to be like you. So one of you is the person who thinks of everything that needs to be done in the list. And the other one is the person who finds creative ways to get it on your partner’s list. Sneaky. Pretty sneaky.

Here’s another sneaky. He is a rescuer. He loves to come in and solve your problems. He wants you to be comfortable. He wants you to be taken care of. That’s my husband. So sometimes when I’m really overwhelmed, I’m like, "Dude, put some things on your list, right?" Instead of saying which wouldn’t get me nowhere, so then when I feel this urge like I want to, like, yell at him or be like, "You need to –" Because one of you has the long list and the other one’s like, "Oh, why are you stressed, right?" Am I right or am I right?

Okay. So when I feel like, urge, I’m always like, "Oh, I know what to do." And I’ll be like, "Honey, I’m so stressed. I really need your help." And then he’ll go – and then he’s like, "Hold on, Honey. I’ll go get my cape." And he goes off and he gets his cape and he comes back and he’s like, "How can I help?" And I’m like, "Okay. I just have so much on my list. So I’m hoping you can – if I read to you my list, can you help me, like, organize it or figure out like what order I should do these things in?" And then I read the list. Well, a lot of – and then he’s like, “Wait. You need someone to call and verify that we’re going to be – I can do that.” I’m like, “You can? Oh, that would be so helpful. Thanks, honey.” Yeah. “And I also need someone how can set up a time for a meeting with so and so.” And he’s like, "Well, honey, I can do that for you." I’m like, "You can? Thank you. Oh, honey, that’s so helpful. Thank you."

And then he’s like, "Oh, wait. You got to pick that up and you’re – honey, I can do all those for you. I can do those for you." And I’m like, "Oh my God. This is so helpful. I feel so much better. Like, now, I’ll actually be able to relax and have sex with you." And it works every time. That’s how you stay married for 20 plus years. That’s right, baby. It’s how you get a bigger diamond every ten years.

Now, you know, the people who don’t stay married and the people who don’t get a bigger diamond are these people, "I made a list for you, and you never do anything. How come I always end up having to do everything? I’m stressed out because everything is my responsibility." Like, that’s what I say in my head. But if you do it the way I do it.

Here’s my big list. So it includes, and I’ll just read through some of these items just to give an idea of how random it can be. Send thank you card. Record IG voice overs. Figure out what I’m filming tomorrow. Review applicants for our new writer position. Review applicants for a backup podcast sender. Set up Skype interviews for those new applicants. Review daily assignments for both of our virtual assistants. Add to and reassign topics for one of our virtual assistants. Send login information to Allison. Follow up on a date for a photo shoot. Begin research on platforms for Marketing Impact Academy. Schedule and re-watch every single Marketing Impact Academy video to check for exclusive updates. Film scheduled updates for Smart Success to go out this week. Create a teaching webinar for Virtual Visual Academy. Create a Virtual Business Academy series of freemiums. Create mini clips for another one of my Instagram accounts called Push Me Daily. I want to have video clips for there. Here’s another random thing, buy an extra outlet for behind the couch.

Like anything that comes into my head. And so it’s quite a long list. And some of these things, I obviously can’t do today. But at least once a week, we create what we call the big list. And the big list, I prefer you do it on either Monday or Friday. Your big list is like everything that’s on your head. It’s everything that helps that is preventing you from sleeping, it’s in no particular order, it includes both personal, professional, and anything else you can think of. It’s anything that’s in your head and you have to just keep going and going and going until you’re like, okay, I can’t think of anything else.

Then once you’ve completed your big list then you break these down into smaller steps. So for example one of my steps and it’s another sheet of paper. One of my steps was begin researching each social media platform for Marketing Impact Academy. That’s not one step. That’s seven steps. So I have another sheet of paper where I’ve listed each one of the social media platforms and then action steps for each one.

Now, once I’ve done a big list which takes anywhere from five to ten minutes, then I decide. I look at that list and I say, "What three things must get done today, must get done today." And specifically relate to driving a push goal. So that’s how I organize my list. And that’s something – the big list is something that we do at least once a week, sometimes twice a week if it’s just that kind of a day.

And then we create a mini list. The mini list is simply three things that you’re doing today. Three. Now, the list is quite long. And thank God it was three. You know, not many more that three has been done on each day. I mean on this list. So I’m on track. I don’t feel like a loser. I don’t feel like someone who can’t get through their list. It makes me feel like I’m quite accomplished. And I also take photos of these. So they’re on my phone. That’s it.

That’s what I do every single morning that sets me up for success. What I had to change was the time I was waking up each day because period, end of subject, whatever you start your day, whenever you start your day, it needs to be after a minimum of seven-and-a-half hours of sleep. I, for so long, lied to myself and said, “I was actually one of those few people that doesn’t need as much sleep as everybody else,” because I’m not tired unless I hold still for a second and then I’ll fall asleep standing at the line of the grocery store. I’m not tired. I’m not tired. You guys have heard me say that a million times, I’m not tired. You’re not tired. Well, I was tired.

And so here’s that list again. Every day, every single morning, here’s your success list. Start with exercise, prayer or meditation, preferably both. Make a big list, a big master list, then your mini list. And you set your day up for ultimate productivity.

Thanks so much for listening to this episode of the Chalene Show. I’d like to invite you to attend a free webinar. This webinar has been designed specifically for people like you and I, who sometimes struggle with self-doubt or confidence in certain situations.

I’ve struggled with this and I’ve overcome. And I’ve taught hundreds of thousands of people how to do the same. I’d like to invite you, to join me on this free webinar.

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