

Slow Burn Main Text

Hello, this is AJ. Welcome to our next lesson. This lesson is called “Slow Burn” and this is about one of my favorite topics...energy. This topic today is about energy. How can you have, how can you get more energy in your body and in your life? Slow Burn, of course, is the name of a book by a man named Stu Mittleman. Now who is Stu Mittleman? Stu Mittleman is a maniac. He’s an amazing guy. Stu Mittleman, who I may have mentioned already before but we’re going to talk about him today in more detail, he is an ultramarathon runner. Now a marathon is 26 miles, 26.2...well, that’s not enough for Stu, that’s boring, that’s a short distance. Anybody can run 26 miles so Stu runs 100 mile races.

He also does crazy races where he will run for 6 days without stopping. Just running and running. He doesn’t even sleep. He runs for 6 days, 6-day races. And they see who can run the longest amount the farthest in 6 days and Stu has won several of these races. I believe it was for his 50th birthday, he ran across the United States from San Diego, California to New York City. Just to celebrate his birthday, he ran two marathons every day until he reached New York City. He did not take a break, nope. I mean he did sleep, I think, but he did not skip a day. Every day he ran two marathons until he went from San Diego to New York City.

So as you can guess, Stu Mittleman has a lot of energy. He’s an energy maniac. He’s full of energy. And he’s very, very, very healthy, obviously. You can’t keep running that amount unless you’re very healthy. So Stu’s one of my heroes. I want to be like Stu. In fact, I have decided to run a 50 mile race to challenge myself to get healthier and stronger. So my goal now is to run a 50 mile race. And you can check on the forums and see if I’m doing it. So that’s my challenge.

So this book, Slow Burn, that Stu wrote is about energy and it’s about his system of training your body, of getting your body healthier, stronger and more energetic. And what’s interesting is that Stu has a very different approach than a lot of other fitness coaches. In fact it was a little surprising to me. I’ve been running many years during my life. So I was a little surprised by his training method. So I’m going to read a little bit from his book and then I’ll talk more about his specific training method. Something that anybody can use because it’s actually very easy, so I love it. Here we go. This is from his book, the book Slow Burn by Stu Mittleman.

“Life is a marathon not a sprint. And you must prepare accordingly. Unlike sprinters who focus on how fast they can get to the finish line, endurance athletes have no finish line. There is only the present moment in which they must remain connected to their body,

in tune with their every move. In a place that feels comfortable and productive and that they are able to maintain indefinitely. People today have challenges that are comparable to an endurance event that seemingly never ends. We have to get up earlier, work longer hours, and attempt to carve out high quality family or personal time. Then we have to wake up the next day and do it again and again and again and again.

To be productive in the long run of life you have to pace yourself in order to feel strong, alert and energetic. With the right pace, with the right mindset, with the right diet, anything is possible, constant energy, feeling as strong at the end of the day as when you started and maintaining a consistently positive attitude. For most of my life I've been a professional endurance athlete. And now, like you, I am participating in the marathon of life. I still run every day. I manage a business. I raise a family with my wife. Running gives me the energy to do this. No matter what's going on in my life, I run a couple of hours a day. Not because I think I have to, but because I am certain that when I am moving I feel great. I also know that after I run I will have even more energy for the rest of the day. I'll be able to think more clearly. I'll be able to concentrate better. I'll feel more relaxed and at ease.

When I'm in this state anything and everything is possible. The experience is magical. I consider it a gift, one that ignites my life's mission, which is to get people to transform movement into an act that is absolutely satisfying. I recognize that in order to receive the gift that running offers me, I have to commit some of my time. Yet in this instance, the relinquishing of my time actually creates more time. An hour set aside for generating reliable and everlasting energy frees up two to three or more hours in a day that might have otherwise have been allocated to sleep or rest. Suppose you could sleep less yet feel even more rested and alive. What would you do with the extra hours that suddenly appeared in your day?"

Okay, wow. That's from Stu Mittleman's book, Slow Burn. So, Stu is saying that actually the time he spends running gives him more time to do other things. So what does he mean? He means if he runs two hours it gives him so much energy that he can sleep less and still feel great. So maybe he sleeps two or three hours less every day. Because he has so much energy he still feels fantastic. So it's actually not costing him more time. He's actually gaining time, productive time, by spending time for running, by running every day. And then more generally what he's talking about is the fact that by moving, by running, and by also eating very well, that he is giving power to everything in his life. He has more energy for his wife. He has more energy for his children. He has more energy for his business. He has more energy for everything.

That's the gift of running. And, you know, he is a runner of course you can also swim or you could ride a bicycle if you prefer those activities. Running is a quite nice activity because it's so simple. There's no equipment. There's no special place you need to go. You just need shoes. Or, you don't even need shoes actually. There's a lot of professional runners in Africa who run without shoes. So you don't need anything. So, anyway, this is a great book.

Now let me talk about specifically Stu Mittleman's running program, because he has one very important idea about running that really is the most important. It's the foundation of his running approach and it's the reason his book is called Slow Burn. Stu Mittleman advocates, Stu Mittleman teaches slow running. Most people, he says, run too fast. The reason that's bad is that when you run fast you start breathing heavy. If you're breathing heavy it means your body is burning mostly sugar. You're using mostly the sugar in your blood and in your muscles. You're burning sugar for energy. That's what happens when you run faster.

So anytime, if you're running or exercising, any kind of exercise...if you're breathing heavy, like that, it means you're burning sugar. The problem with that is sugar gives you quick energy in a short time but then soon after your energy drops suddenly. So you go up with energy very high and then suddenly it drops, right? If you eat a lot of sugar you'll feel very good for maybe 30 minutes or an hour and after that your energy drops a lot and then you feel very tired after that. So it's up-down, up-down, it's not good steady energy.

So Stu trains his body to burn fat. Fat is better for steady energy. If you burn fat then you just always have high energy, all the time. It doesn't go up and down, up and down. It's nice and steady, just a high level of energy all the time. To burn fat you must exercise more slowly. So when I started using Stu's program, I was surprised. I used to run a lot. I still run some. I've already run in two marathons and finished two marathons so I thought "Hey, I'm a runner." But when I ran I was running too fast. So now I'm training with Stu's program, it feels so slow. It's a very, very, very slow jog. In fact, San Francisco has a lot of big hills. When I go up the hills I walk, so I walk up the big hills and then I jog slowly if it's flat and then I run a little faster if I'm going down the hill. But the main idea is that you want to exercise slowly.

So you should never be breathing hard. If you're breathing like that it means you're going too fast. You should slow down. If necessary, just walk. Walking, you know you can walk quickly. That's still a great exercise. If you want to run, if you can run, that's fine, too. But job very slowly. A good rule, a good idea is you should be able to have a conversation while you're jogging. If you're jogging with another person you should be able to talk to them comfortably and easily. If you can't, if you're breathing too hard and you can't really talk well that means you're going too fast, slow down.

So again the general idea of Stu's program is slow exercise for a longer time. So, of course, you can do it longer because it's not so difficult. You're going slow, it's very...it feels nice. It's very easy actually. And because it's kind of easy you can do it for a

longer period of time. And that's why he calls this Slow Burn. When you exercise in this way you teach your body to burn fat. Now one great thing about that is you will lose weight. If you're overweight, if you have too much fat on your body, you'll start to burn that fat. And that's a nice side effect. But more importantly, for me, is that you will get more energy for all of the day. Recently I've noticed that I have more energy. In the past I used to eat a lot of sugar and my energy would go up and down and up and down. And now I'm trying to eat less sugar and I'm also exercising more slowly and I'm feeling more steady energy. Now sometimes I still feel tired, of course, and sometimes I still have really high energy. But in general, most of the day, I just feel better. I have a more steady high level of energy that doesn't change as much.

So I encourage you to get out and when you're listening to these lessons, walk quickly. Or even jog very slowly. You can do two things at the same time. You can learn English and you can make your body feel better. But when you do it just go slowly. Enjoy it. The nice thing about training in this way, exercising in this way, it feels good. You're not killing your body, right? You can get out. You go for a nice fast walk. You can smile, look around, enjoy the city if you live in a city. Or enjoy the trees and the sky if you live in the countryside. Look around. Look at people, smile. Or you can maybe walk with another person if you want and chat with them. Or put on your iPod and listen to me and just do a nice slow jog or a nice fast walk. And you can do that for an hour, it's very easy. You can do it an hour every day. You're learning English at the same time so you're doing two great things at one time.

So please, I recommend this book very highly, Slow Burn by Stu Mittleman. And Stu's name is spelled S-t-u, that's his first name, Stu. His last name is Mittleman, M-i-t-t-l-e-m-a-n. Alright, I hope you use this program. I especially hope you use it at the same time you're listening to me. Learn English and get energy and health for your body at the same time. Alright, I will see you for the vocab and mini-story and you have a great day.