



COWORKING

by Corin

A community to help you grow, scale and thrive.

Just Push Pause



To function at your best you need rest, relaxation, and sleep, not one or the other. Frequent periods of proper rest and relaxation will energize you. This guide will give you tips for making time in your schedule for “me” time to unwind and remove the tightness from your body and the stress from your mind.

Push Pause for Proper Rest and Relaxation

It can be a challenge to maintain a healthy lifestyle in the hustle and bustle world that we live in. Time seems to vanish. We all know that taking good care of our bodies and minds can make a difference in how healthy we are in general and how well we cope or enjoy life. Yet, many people feel guilty when they rest so they do not do it enough. Making time to chill out through rest and relaxation is an important part of maintaining good health.

To function at your best you need rest, relaxation, and sleep, not one or the other.

We hear a lot about the need for rest and relaxation, and because both occur while you are awake the terms are used interchangeably. Rest and relaxation work closely together to remove the tightness from your body and stress from your minds. Both are energizing. These periods of “me” time are the best natural remedy for good brain health, boosting spirits, enhancing cognitive function and also key tool in working smart. Rest and relaxation work hand in hand, but there is a difference.



Rest is a period of physical inactivity when you take time to calm your mind and let your muscles and organs recover strength. When you rest you do not need to sleep or even lie down. You can take a break from the hectic pace and pressure of daily life by simply closing your eyes and quieting your thoughts and give your neurons an opportunity to recharge from the busyness of doing, thinking, or being engaged in activity. Do you rest only when you feel tired? Frequent, rest periods of even one to five minutes will energize you.

Most importantly rest is getting a sufficient nightly sleep that repairs your body. Most adults require between 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night. Sleep deprivation can result in changes in your vital signs, like body temperature, breathing and heart rate, and blood pressure. These changes can result in the increased risk for the development of a variety of physical and psychological impacts.

Relaxation occurs while you are awake and usually entails engaging in activities that you enjoy. Relaxation, be it a spirited time with friends or a quiet game of chess, is your mind's way of rejuvenating. Relaxation reduces stress or anxiety, improves mood and cognitive functioning, boosts immunity, and improves ability to cope with adversity. Even a five-minute relaxation break at various times throughout the day leads you toward better health and spirits.

Investing in both rest and relaxation will prepare you for a more restful sleep. They protect you from burnout. This is particularly important when you are having a stressful day both mentally and physically. Make down-time a priority by introducing any of the following rest and relaxation strategies outlined in the next two sections.

Chill Out – "Me Time" is Rest Time

Remember frequent rests are beneficial; they will energize you. Taking a restful break does not require a big chunk of time and most restful breaks can be accomplished at any time of the day or at any place.

In task-related activities that increase energy expenditure, your body regularly releases adrenaline and cortisol which can result in muscle tension. Being immersed in the busy noisy world takes its toll on the brain, too. To ease both your body and mind, the important thing is to be alone and tune out of the hustle and bustle around you. Taking five minutes to be alone without the distraction of a cell phone or being engaged in a conversation or work project can make a big difference. It is your time to chill out, do your own thing. There may be days when you can make time to stroll in the park, get away to a quiet corner to eat lunch alone or read, but when time seems at a premium you can still engage in a state of calm by adding some of these one-minute or five-minute calming techniques to your daily routine:

Take One:

- Stand tall and proud with a power pose.
- Do nothing but stare out the window.
Study a tree, or see life in high definition or slow motion.
- Count backwards – choose a number at random and start counting.
- Perform deep-breathing exercises – remember to breathe, slow deep breaths, ones that you actually hear and cause your diaphragm to visibly rise and fall. Try inhaling through your nose, then exhaling through your mouth.
- Simply lower your eyelids and be still for a few heartbeats.



- You can lie down and doing nothing, but when that is not feasible a comfortable change of body position is important.
- While your eyes are closed massage the edges of your scalp, across your forehead to your eyebrows.
- Brush your hair.
- De-stress your muscles with a body scrunch. Take a deep breath and squeeze all the muscles in your body into a compact bundle. Hold that scrunch for ten seconds, relax with some deep breaths and repeat the move.
- Spend an extra minute at the sink to run cool water over your wrists.
- Appreciate mother nature.
- Drink water. Good hydration keeps headaches at bay and leaves your mind calm.
- Pause to smell some flowers or the peels of lemons or oranges or the aroma of coffee.
- Do some easy stretches several times a day. Sometimes simply reaching for the stars or slowly shrugging your shoulders can relieve you of tightness. Mimic the stretching motions of cat.
- One minute of silence.

Take Five:

- Create instant daydream or visualization moments. Imagine opening the door to a hero or idol and what you might say to each other. Mindfully consider a particular word or phrase, like the word "pleasure" or a phrase like "my favourite toy" and enjoy where the images and thoughts take you.
- Do nothing but be in the fresh air/sunshine for five minutes.
- Breathe deeply. More oxygen equals more energy.
- Stretch and Breathe. Recoup energy with a five to ten minute stretching routine that works for you. Bringing attention to your body will quiet your mind. Do yoga. The act of stretching and breathing exercises have a calming effect on the body.
- De-stress your muscles with a body clench. Concentrate on tensing the muscles in one part of your body for five to ten seconds, relax for thirty and repeat. Start with your toes and work your way through the muscle groups up to your neck and head.
- Give yourself a hand massage starting at the wrist and working your way to your fingertips.
- Give yourself a foot massage by rubbing your feet back and forth over a golf ball.
- Squeeze a foamy stress ball or rotate a golf ball between your fingers.
- Enjoy a shower.
- Listen to music, playing at a slow rhythm.
- Meditation – two bouts of silent meditation per day is all you need.
- Satisfy your taste buds. Brew your favourite tea; slice fruit, savour the taste; munch on something crunchy like carrots or celery and concentrate on the chewing action and the sound.

Do you need a reminder to chill out once in a while? Set an alarm for random times of the day so you will be reminded to stop and disrupt your body's stress response cycle. Take just a moment for yourself, even if all you do is simply appreciate what surrounds you. It might be a tree swaying in the wind, the sight of a mother and child holding hands, or enjoying a photograph of a peaceful place. People find different things relaxing so you could make a long list for yourself and pick something new to try everyday.

Pause to Unwind with your Relaxation Joy List

Think about the last time you did something truly joyful or mellow? When you are suddenly faced with free time are you able to engage in an activity that truly mellows you out or energizes you? Wouldn't it be wonderful to make a "Joy List" identifying the perfect things you would like to do, so when you do have leisure time something on your "Joy List" will look appealing!

Put Relaxation on your Daily Agenda.

We live in a work-driven culture where relaxation is perceived as unproductive. Chilling out or pausing to unwind is hardly unproductive since its value is in keeping you healthy and happy. It is probably safe to assume that a huge part of your day is scheduled – getting to classes or work on time, meeting deadlines, doing what you are paid to do, or doing what is expected of you. Schedules are an effective tool for keeping life organized or making sure you get things done so why not make sure you focus your attention on ways to enjoy life and schedule those things into your day as well.

Silly antics are not just for children in the school yard. Do something silly and playful. Laugh out loud; it relieves physical tension, reduces stress and increases immunity. Set aside time in your schedule to do something you find relaxing:

- Take a walk and engage your senses
- Engage in a hobby
- Pamper yourself
- Watch a sunset
- Look in the mirror and make funny faces
- Sing a song or listen to music you like
- Write in your journal
- Listen to an audio-book
- Explore the wonders of something new



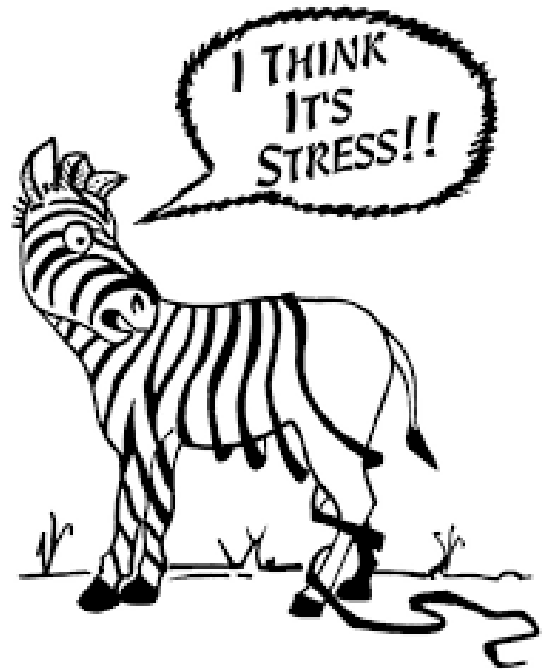
- Get or give a good long hug
- Do something creative
- Solve a word puzzle
- Run in place when you cannot go for an outdoor jog
- Watch a movie or nature documentary
- Cuddle a pet
- Massage your temples
- Gaze at the stars
- Visualize a happy place
- Coloring or doodling
- Plan a vacation
- Enjoy a cup of herbal tea or some other warm drink without any caffeine
- Keep an inspirational or funny book of short stories, anecdotes, quotes, poems, or trivia by your bedside
- Concentrate on clenching the muscles in one part of your body for five to ten seconds, and relax for thirty. Start with your toes and gradually work your way through the muscle groups up to your neck and head
- This relaxation exercise may make you look a bit constipated but give it a go! Starting with your toes, go up through your body, gradually clenching each of your muscles right through to the tiny ones in your face, keep your whole body clenched, hold and then release to let go of all the tension. Feels good, right?

Be Proactive at Work

Investing in periods of rest and relaxing is particularly important at work, especially when you are having a stressful day both mentally and physically. Your brain takes a heavy hit from chronic stress, persistent overwork, a hectic and energy-draining lifestyle, and anything else that lessens your attention span or makes you feel frazzled and dull-witted. So much time is spent at work, so there is no point in enduring day to day stress or exhaustion.

When you take regular relaxation and activity breaks several times during the work day you actually boost brain power and the benefits will be reflected in the work you do.

- If you have the opportunity, you should never feel guilty for taking a power nap while you're 'on the clock'.
- Get up and visit with some of your co-workers. Socializing and laughter are relaxing. Having conversation that does not involve work can break up the day and recharge you to tackle the next project.
- Breathing and stretching exercises can calm your frazzled brain and reduce levels of stress.
- Being more observant more often helps your mind perceive things from a different or creative perspective.
- Walking can be a restful break. Outdoors is best, but if all you can spare is five minutes walk around the office.
- Take your lunch and activity breaks away from your workspace.
- Take a day off here and there – just to pursue your interests and passions.
- Determine a start and end time for work and forget about the demands of work in off hours.
- Use “rituals” to transition into relaxation breaks and start or end your workday. Rituals are symbolic actions performed at key moments that help you to switch context to keep work at work and focus on “me” time or chilling out. Even if you're working a flexible schedule you need little reminders to help you move between the different “states” of your day and actually focus on what's in front of you especially when it is time for relaxation.



A Relaxation Break Before Bedtime is Crucial

Doing something relaxing for at least thirty minutes before bedtime is one of the best things you can do for yourself in preparation for a restful sleep. But choose wisely. Not everything we do is ideal for sleep. Heavy exercise may tire you, but it does not induce good sleep. Accessing the TV, laptop, or cell phone in bed is not good for sleep. You may not be aware of how the light may be keeping you awake. Doing stressful things – like trying to multitask at night or long hours of study – will keep you from sleeping. It's better to plan to study in the morning or curtail study by early evening. If you must study or doing something mentally stressful you should plan to stop early enough to allow for at least thirty minutes of time to relax afterwards to prepare you for seven hours of good sleep.

Could it be that you are too anxious to relax? Worry causes stress and can be counterproductive to relaxation. Try scheduling an anxiety break into your day. Spend fifteen minutes to write down your most pressing worries and work through them so that you can stop thinking about them when it is time to relax and go to sleep.



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At Corro, we believe in the power of people. We are inspired to expand humanity's capacity for wisdom, compassion, and courage.

In our commitment to helping you achieve long-term personal development and use your organizational platform for positive impact, we celebrate the journey of lifelong learning while fostering an all-inclusive community driven environment of meaning, personal connection, and fun.

Corro is not just a Work Space – Our Aim is Helping the Community Thrive through People Success