

Are you stressed and don't know it? Are you caught in a constant cycle of doing more, wanting more and achieving more? If you're not sure of your emotional state right now, take a minute to focus on your body. Are your shoulders tense? Is your breath shallow? Is your stomach in knots?

While five minutes of meditation every day may feel like the antidote to a hurried life, experts will tell you it's simply not enough. The body, mind and soul require adequate doses of rest — simply doing nothing — to recharge, rejuvenate and rewire. It's only then that we can truly live the lives we dream of. Rest is a portal to the flow, a way to reach our maximum potential.

Doctors will tell you how important rest is to your physical health, while athletes will spout the benefits of relaxation as an elixir to overused muscles. Philosophers such as Leonardo da Vinci knew retreating into oneself was crucial to having a clear, inspired mind. Religions from Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity to Baha'i, Islam and Wiccan also teach the importance of being rather than doing.

The *Tao Te Ching* a 2500-year-old book written by Lao Tzu says, "Do nothing and you'll actually achieve more." Animals,

regardless of their species, don't have a to-do list. They just are. They follow the flow with trust and without question, knowing that everything is in perfect order. So why do most of us consider rest to be a time-waster when its importance has been known across cultures and throughout nature since the beginning of time?

According to leading board-certified hypnotherapist, Cynthia Morgan, our results-oriented culture is taught from a young age to "make it happen", "go after what you want", "be number one" and "don't waste your time". This, she says, teaches us that our worth comes from doing.

"While no one would argue all of that can be good advice, it can also be exhausting because much of the time when we seek those externals, it's to fill a lack we feel within," Morgan says. "In the end, all that doing and achieving just makes us feel like we need a good nap! We can never be truly fulfilled solely through activity. Fulfilment only comes from the state of just being. Restfulness reconnects us to that place within that assures us we are already worthy," she adds. "We don't need to do anything to establish our worth. Once we know that truth, we can be more effective in the world."

One of the great spiritual teachers, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the founder of Transcendental Meditation, likens rest to the sport of archery. The technique of shooting is in pulling the arrow back — even though the principle of pulling the arrow is completely opposite to the principle of shooting the arrow. The principles of pulling (resting) and shooting (acting) add efficiency to the other. In order to hit our target we first need to pull back. Just as it's true that, to construct a building six storeys high, we first need to go three storeys deep into the ground. "Rest and act," Morgan says. "It's the key to being effective."


Couple regular time-out with a healthy enzyme-fuelled diet and you'll soon have a recipe for balance that will serve you well into old age with less chance of ailments, illness and disease. Neurophysiologist David Jubb agrees. He says rest and an adequate diet are integral to achieving and maintaining complete cellular health. "Rest allows one to regain nervous system energy potential," he writes in *Jubb's Cell Rejuvenation: Colloidal Biology: A Symbiosis*. "This, coupled with lifefood nutritional fasting and wholefood vitamin-mineral complex supplementation, allows the

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The importance of DOING NOTHING

DOING NOTHING IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT KEYS TO GOOD HEALTH. YET FAST-PACED LIVING AND A SEEMINGLY INSATIABLE APPETITE FOR ACHIEVING MORE ARE PUTTING OUR WELLBEING AT RISK. SO PUT YOUR FEET UP, DO ABSOLUTELY NOTHING AND YOU JUST MIGHT ACHIEVE MORE

BY SHANNON DUNN

A woman with long dark hair is sitting on the grass, leaning against the trunk of a tree with peeling bark. She is wearing a grey sweater and white pants, and is smiling slightly. Her hands are clasped in her lap. The background shows a grassy field and distant hills under a clear sky.

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body to possess a readiness potential. Extending the hours one can rest can halve the time it takes to heal. When the body is at total rest, the cell recovery of energy reserve is accelerated.”

Without rest, our quality of life is compromised and our wellbeing is thrown out of balance. This not only results in working harder and faster but ultimately makes us fall further behind. Choose one day each week as your dedicated rest day and you will begin to notice how your life starts to flow again. Relationships heal, stress is forgotten and life simply becomes happier.

Doing nothing at least once a week can lead to the following benefits.

A healthy body

Just as we eat and drink in order to stay alive, adequate rest is essential to our bodies' functionality. Strokes and heart attacks are said to be more common during the early morning hours, which experts believe could be associated with the way sleep — or the lack of — interacts with blood vessels. Sleep deprivation has been associated with high blood pressure and cholesterol, which are both risk factors for heart disease and stroke. Seven to nine hours of sleep per night is crucial to good physical health.

Dedicating one day to rest forces us to reflect on our lives. Why are we running around in an endless tail-chase? Why do we need to be everywhere at once? What is the race all about?

Less stress

When your body is constantly fuelled by adrenaline from lack of rest it goes into a state of stress. All the body's functions are put on high alert, causing stress hormone production and an increase in blood pressure, which leads to health complications. With rest, stress is lessened, positively affecting all areas of your life.

Better relationships

When we take time to rest, we open ourselves up for communication. If we're not rushing around from one task to the next, it enables us to enjoy each other's company and create a feeling of connectedness and community.

A sense of balance

Dedicating one day to rest forces us to reflect on our lives. Why are we running around in an endless tail-chase? Why do we need to be everywhere at once? What is the race all about? It also enables us to stop and detach from our identities while opening the channels for exploration. Doing nothing one day each week can lead to new-found



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passions and hobbies beyond hectic work routines, to activities that help to create balance and peace within.

Increase productivity

While burning the midnight oil may seem like the best solution to achieving every goal you've set for yourself, it actually does the opposite. Just as resting rejuvenates our muscles, it also allows our minds time to refocus and rewire. Resting helps us to work smarter, not harder.

Fostering reserve

You never know when you're going to need to tap into your energy reserves. While no one likes to think about life's emergencies, it's still a good idea to be in peak physical, mental and emotional condition for when those unexpected, taxing moments crop up. In Morgan's soon-to-be-released book, *You're Already Hypnotised: A Guide to Waking Up*, she details a five-minute program that can take you from a stressed, too-much-to-do state to one of rested tranquillity. It also teaches how to deprogram outdated, false beliefs such as

the need to constantly do and be more. "The daily reprogramming consists of three steps: relax, release and reprogram. In hypnotherapy, an induction is the method used to facilitate a trance state," she says. "The goal of any induction is to relax the conscious mind and the best way to relax the conscious mind is to get it singularly focused. From there, we can bypass the conscious mind and access the subconscious mind. This is the hypnotic trance state."

Five minutes a day dedicated to relaxation through the following exercise can literally change your life, she adds.

DE-HYPNOTISE YOURSELF TO RELAXATION

Quickly enter a daily five-minute self-hypnotic state to deprogram outdated, false beliefs, to neutralise past traumatic events in the mind, to reprogram new healthier ideas and to simply relax.

1 Relax

Before you begin, turn off the phone. Make sure you will not be disturbed. And definitely sit up; otherwise, you will undoubtedly fall asleep. To induce hypnosis, find a spot to stare at and take three deep breaths, relaxing more and more with each exhalation. On the third inhalation, shut your eyes down while saying (out loud, whispering, or silently) the command, "Sleep now" on



Putting your feet into the sand or grass not only feels great but also connects you to the living, breathing earth and is literally very grounding.

the exhale. We will use these key words to program your mind with a specific command (in this case, relaxation), making it easier to more quickly induce future self-hypnosis sessions by saying this simple phrase.

Now, starting at the top of your head, move through your body relaxing each area. While inhaling, name the body part, such as “face”, and on the exhale, give it the command, “relax”. When you sense you have sufficiently relaxed that body part, move on to the next, inhale “neck”, exhale “relax” and so forth. “Shoulders, relax”, “arms, relax”, “fingers, relax”, “chest, relax”, “stomach, relax”, “back, relax”, “hips, relax”, “legs, relax”, “feet, relax”. Do this at a comfortable pace. It should take only a few minutes.

As a side note, you will have extraneous thoughts during this entire process. It would be near impossible not to because that’s just what the conscious mind does. It chatters and analyses. And since the conscious mind isn’t asleep but just quietening down, we

can’t expect not to have random thoughts. However, don’t judge yourself; let them come up and watch them float away or with the next exhale blow them away and gently bring yourself back to your process. Remember, this is mind-training. It’s going to take some diligence. As you practise and strengthen your mind/body connection, entering hypnosis becomes easier and you’re able to stay there longer.

Next, imagine you are standing on top of a beautiful staircase with 10 steps that take you down to a peaceful place where you can enjoy being alone and unwinding. Create a place you can immediately escape to any time you choose. It can be a place you have been to in the past or you can make it up in your mind. Count yourself down the steps. This is called a “deepener” in hypnosis. Its purpose is to bring you deeper into relaxation.

Once relaxed, find the stillness between your thoughts and hold onto it for a minute. Get in touch with nothingness. Emptiness is the goal of meditation and we’ll use that goal for a moment in our self-hypnosis practice. The key is to hold onto that moment a little longer each time you practise.

TIPS FOR RELAXATION

In the fast-paced, results-driven world we live in, it may feel difficult to find the time to just stop and take a check of our emotional and mental states. But getting in the habit can not only bring greater joy to your life but also prevent the onset of illness and disease. Doing nothing at some point every single day can bring you closer to your true self. Here are some tips to put you on a path to daily rest:

- **MEDITATE** The morning is the perfect time. The day is fresh and so are our minds, especially if we’ve had a restful night’s sleep. When sitting in silence to meditate is challenging, reach for your iPod and select a guided meditation.
- **WALK IN NATURE.** Getting away from the concrete jungle if you live and work in a city environment is crucial. Putting your feet into the sand or grass not only feels great but also

connects you to the living, breathing earth and is literally very grounding.

- **SPEND TIME IN THE KITCHEN.** Food is much more than something to stop hunger. While the art of at-home food preparation has been greatly lost with food-to-go and frozen meals in a box, taking the time to connect to our food through conscious preparation can do wonders for our mental, emotional and physical health. It’s also a great way to forget about everything and focus on being in the moment.

- **HAVE A REIKI SESSION.** Reiki connects us directly to life-force energy through the hands of the practitioner, who shares it. Reiki not only puts us in a relaxed, meditative state but it also allows the receiver to work through particular issues they may have to restore physical and emotional wellbeing. A

qualified Reiki master can also teach and attune you to this energetic healing modality so you can give yourself the gift of Reiki energy whenever you need it.

- **TAKE A CANDLE-LIT BATH.** Breaking out the lavender oil and soy candles and playing some chilled tunes is a great way to de-stress. To clear your mind while you’re soaking, concentrate on your breathing. Be sure not to load up your tub with toxic bubbles; instead, pop in a couple of tablespoons of extra-virgin coconut oil to give your skin a moisture infusion. Also, as many city municipal water supplies are often polluted with fluoride and chlorine, which put stress and unwanted toxin overload on the system, it’s best to have your home plumbing fitted with a reverse-osmosis filtration system.

2 Release

When you feel ready, say out loud or in your mind, “I now release all thoughts that no longer serve me.” You don’t need to consciously know what these are.

3 Reprogram

Introduce a new daily reprogram statement such as “Every day, in every way, I am getting better and better”. Repeat the statement until you feel the truth of the suggestion. Be still for another minute and, just when you feel ready to open your eyes, continue for another minute. Often that extra minute allows you to go even deeper. Count yourself out of hypnosis by saying, “On the count of three, I will open my eyes and be fully alert and refreshed.” Open your eyes and repeat the reprogramming statement as many times as you remember throughout the day. ☺

Shannon Dunn is a writer, eco-beauty editor and Reiki master. She is also studying to become a BodyMind Institute-certified nutritionist. Contact her at shannon@shannondunn.com and visit her blog at www.shannondunn.com