

## **Rest , relax and enjoy**

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## **Rest, relax and enjoy more beats!**

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We are forever darting back and forth. Goals to achieve, places to go and problems to solve. Perhaps, we fear that life will pass us by if we don't get a move on. Imagine the anticipation of an interview. Meeting that girl, the one you've been chatting with, for the first time. Nothing at all wrong with having a little bit of adrenaline pumping through our veins, spurring us on. But, the tide works against us when the excitement, the huffing, and puffing prolongs, turning into fatigue. That 'lean, mean, grilling' machine we call the body cannot cope. And before long, disease has found a home. So, it is time to stop and consider these consequences?

It's not news that lack of rest and relaxation is detrimental to our health. And yet, we do not seem to take heed. Rest and relaxation imply that we allow ourselves the freedom from the cares of this world. That we give ourselves the opportunity to slow down and enjoy that well-deserved break. Could be a mean feat for some, considering the fact that we are not always in control of our circumstances. Challenges, troubles, and strife grip us when we least expect, sucking the life out of our very souls. Nevertheless, the body was not designed to continue gripping and grinding. It thrives when we give ourselves time to breathe and just be in the present moment. When we give nature a chance to revive and restore us.

### **The following are some of the ways in which the body is revived and restored:**

**Sleep** – not only does sleep give our musculoskeletal framework a break, it gives our brain time to process and digest information absorbed during the day. It is a well-known scientific fact that people filter a lot of information in order to retain specific information, therefore, when you give the brain a chance to rest, it sorts and synthesises this information for retrieval from the long-term memory.

**Rest** also decreases the chance of us making mistakes, both at work and within the home as the mind is more alert, focused and rejuvenated. This, in turn, avoids the stress that comes with dealing with disgruntled colleagues as well as restless family members. The equation is that simple!

We often come across the expression 'I need my beauty sleep. I use it quite often and I find after I've had a good night's sleep when I look in the mirror the following morning, I like what I see. I do not see those unsightly bags under my eyes or so-called 'panda eyes'. Not only that, my skin glows too. Nature's way of letting me know the body is doing well!

**Physical activity** - there is scientific evidence to suggest that physical activity reduces the risk of developing chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease, diabetes, stroke, some cancers, mental health problems and musculoskeletal disorders. Not only that, physical activity has been shown to play a part in the reduction of psychological conditions such as depression, anxiety and other emotional disturbances. Relationships are also strengthened when we engage in physical activities as this encourages social interaction and give the mind that well-needed break from overthinking and focussing on what it cannot change.

**Admire Nature** - Flowers for example - Several medical studies, including The Harvard Home Ecology Study, have revealed that looking at flowers first thing in the morning brings about a feeling of relaxation, cheerfulness, and energy throughout the entire day. The magic is in their colours and scents. And here are a few examples:

- a) The scent of lavender flowers has been found to contain compounds which lower the heart rate and blood pressure thus putting you in a relaxed state.
- b) Blue/violet flowers are known as the garden's harmonisers with their ability to help you feel serene and self-assured.

There are lots of flowers to pick from, so next time you pass by the flower shop pick one or two bouquets of your favourites. Better yet grow your own and pick whenever you choose, or just take the time to sniff or stare!

**N.B.** *Please be mindful that some people may be allergic to certain flowers!!*

Therefore, I encourage you to find that which enables you to relax at your very best and give yourself that well-earned break. Go fishing, play a game of cards with a friend, laugh, lie naked on the beach (okay maybe put some clothes on) and breath some fresh air or indeed spread a blanket under a tree and stare at the leaves rustling up a tree. Take off your load for a while.

Rest, relax and enjoy more beats!

*References: The Benefits of Rest, Reprieve, Relaxation, and Rejuvenation by John A. Lanier.*

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*BMJ, Harvard Family Health Guide*

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