

The Science of Rest

3 Reasons To Stop And Take A Break

by Vanesa Pizzuto

Avoid Compassion Fatigue

When your emotional attention is stretched too thin, you can develop compassion fatigue. Flooded with images that previously would have shocked you, you may feel numb to them when you are exhausted. Unplugging by taking a tech break can be a great way to combat compassion fatigue.

Enjoy Better Health

Working long hours can damage your health. After reviewing 27 medical studies, Monique van der Hulst, of the University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands, found that the research results "showed that long work hours are associated with adverse health," including cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Overworking will damage your health, sometimes beyond repair. That's why rest is crucial to health.

Boost Your Creativity

Neuroscientists have recently discovered that a rested brain is more creative. In fact, the parts of our brain that drive creativity are most active when we don't have to focus.

“When we are idle, in leisure, our brains are most active,” says Brigid Schulte, author of *Overwhelmed: Work, Love, and Play When No One Has Time*. “The Default Mode Network lights up, which, like airport hubs, connects parts of our brain that don't typically communicate.” In other words, relaxing makes us more creative.

Growing up in Argentina, Sunday afternoons were a sacrosanct time for the entire community. Everything slowed down between 2:00 and 5:00 P.M., during siesta time. Shops would close, and you could hear the sound of cicadas as the whole neighborhood took a nap. Young and old, rich and poor were unified by this wonderful tradition. Well, I think it is wonderful now. As a child, I felt sleeping was a complete waste of time.

Many of us still think that. On one hand, we feel exhausted and desperate for rest. On the other, our half-hearted attempts at carving out time for relaxation prove we think we have better things to do with our time.

I realize that our postmodern world is weary of universal claims. But there is still something inviting about the fourth commandment: “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8, KJV). God is basically saying, “Remember to rest.” Work six days, but take the seventh to rest. Why? Because if we forget to rest, we'll overwork and numb ourselves to the tender mercies around us. We'll forget that our identity does not come from doing, but from being. If we forget to rest, we won't have time to love, to laugh with our children, to wander in nature.

Sabbath restores a sense of natural rhythms: inhale and exhale, give and take, work and rest. But it is much more than that. Sabbath restores our true identity. It is a revolutionary invitation to simply *be* — unhurried and content. And to be whom? To be sons and daughters of God (1 John 3:1), loved without measure.

Remember to rest. You can't keep going full speed day after day. Your body, mind, and spirit are crying out for you to stop and take a break.

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Vanessa Pizzuto is a journalist and freelance writer who works for Adventist Radio London. This article was originally published in *Vibrant Life* (<http://vibrantlife.com/>) and is reproduced with permission. Vanessa Pizzuto holds the copyright to this article. It may not be copied, printed, or used in anyway without the authors consent.