



THE ART OF RELAXATION

PRESENTER: Mark Arnold
DATE: March 30, 2022

EFAP INFORMATION

English: 1.800.663.1142
 French: 1.866.398.9505
 TTY: 1.888.384.1152
 Online: www.homewoodhealth.com

Confidential Counselling Available 24/7

© Homewood Health™ | Confidential & Proprietary



I would like to begin by bringing to mind the Indigenous Peoples of all the lands we are on today, and the significance of these lands.

From coast to coast to coast, we acknowledge the ancestral and unceded territory of all the Inuit, Métis and First Nations people who call these lands home.

To learn more about whose land you are on please visit Whose Land at <https://www.whose.land> or download the app:



App available in English and French

© Homewood Health™ | Confidential & Proprietary

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH: AN OVERVIEW

Social determinants of health are the living conditions that individuals experience:

- Education
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Ethnicity
- Housing
- Income and income distribution
- Social exclusion
- Social safety net
- Immigration status
- Unemployment and job security
- Food insecurity
- Indigenous status
- Disability
- Early life
- Health services
- Employment and working conditions

These determinants impact and influence our health, at all stages of life and beginning in childhood, and are critical when it comes to fully understanding and appreciating a person's health and why some people are healthier than others.

OVERVIEW

- Are you stressed?
- What are your triggers?
- What are your current coping strategies and how do you recharge?
- Barriers in using coping strategies
- Mini-break options
- Commitment
- Reminders
- Helpful tools



OBJECTIVES

- Realize the benefits of taking more breaks in our days
- Discover tools and mini-break options that are right for you and can assist with the ease of making brief relaxation moments a part of your daily routine
- Overcome barriers to taking mini-breaks
- Commit to taking mini-breaks
- Remind ourselves to take mini-breaks

ARE YOU STRESSED?



- yes
- no
- maybe

HOMewood HEALTH INC. | THE ART OF RELAXATION | WWW.HOMewoodHEALTH.COM

7

WHAT ARE YOUR TRIGGERS?

Example:

Time	Situation	Feelings	Negative Responses
8:25	Stuck in traffic	Worried that I will be late for work	Shouted at other drivers
9:45	Computer crashes	Frustrated that can't get on with work	Complain to everyone at work about computer system
12:30	Unpleasant phone call from irate customer	Upset, angry. Not my fault	Drank more than usual after work
18:00	Shopping in crowded grocery store	Frustrated, irritable, angry	Bought comfort snacks and went home without several items

HOMewood HEALTH INC. | THE ART OF RELAXATION | WWW.HOMewoodHEALTH.COM

8

YOUR COPING STRATEGIES

- What might be some ways to cope better with the constant stressful events in our days?
- How do you recharge?

HOMewood HEALTH INC. | THE ART OF RELAXATION | WWW.HOMewoodHEALTH.COM

9

COMMON BARRIERS

- No time to spare
- I feel guilty because I should be doing x,y,z instead
- Stuck in the office
- No privacy
- Always on my feet
- I can't sit still or focus

WHAT IS A MINI-BREAK?

- "Short break in your day when you recharge your internal batteries"
- "It is whenever you give yourself permission to step out of your full-speed life and shift into neutral for a little while"

BENEFITS OF MINI-BREAKS

What are some of the benefits of making mini-breaks part of your days?



MINI-BREAKS – IN THE MORNING

- Morning meditation
- Shower refresher
- Morning walk
- Stretching
- Playing with kids or pets



MINI-BREAKS – AT YOUR WORKSTATION

- Walk around the block
- Watch a funny video clip
- Take a tea/coffee break in another room
- Rub lotion into your hands



MINI-BREAKS – WHILE COMMUTING



- Power nap
- Guided meditation
- Reading a book
- Listen to music or a podcast

MINI-BREAKS – AT WORK

- Take the stairs
- Watch a funny video clip
- Take a tea/coffee break



MINI-BREAKS – AT YOUR WORKSTATION

Benefits of Stretching

- ✔ Increases blood flow
- ✔ Improves posture
- ✔ Helps you feel refreshed
- ✔ Reduces stress
- ✔ Alleviates and prevents strain and muscle pain
- ✔ Reduces the risk of musculoskeletal disorders



MINI-BREAKS – WORKSTATION YOGA

Mountain Pose

- Can be done either sitting or standing with your feet approximately four inches apart
- Benefits include improving posture and stretching shoulders and upper back



Eagle Pose

- Benefits include improving posture and concentration and stretching shoulders and upper back



MINI-BREAKS – WORKSTATION YOGA



Thread the Needle

- Benefits include improving posture, stretching the hip rotators and outer thighs, and relieving tension in the lower back

Lotus Pose

- Benefits include calming the brain, stimulating the pelvis, spine, abdomen, and bladder, and stretching the ankles and knees



MINI-BREAKS – AT LUNCH OR BREAKS

- Eat a meal in gratitude
- Shop online
- Power nap
- Read



MINI-BREAKS – IN THE EVENING

- Gratitude journal
- Soothing bath/sauna/steam
- Read a book/magazine
- Watch comedy or uplifting tv
- Progressive muscle relaxation



PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

Step 1: Tension

Step 2: Relaxing the tense muscles



MINI-BREAKS – WITH KIDS

- ✔ Bedtime story
- ✔ Family meal
- ✔ Playground fun
- ✔ Family dance party
- ✔ Paint night
- ✔ Blow bubbles
- ✔ Build a fort
- ✔ Singing



MINI-BREAKS – FOR COUPLES



- ✔ Hug
- ✔ Partner gratitude journal
- ✔ Weekly date night
- ✔ Hold hands
- ✔ Laugh
- ✔ Unplug

MY COMMITMENT TO MINI-BREAKS

My Commitment to Mini-Restarts
 I RESOLVE TO RELAX AND RECHARGE

WITH MY COMMITMENT TO TAKE MY REST BREAKS, I AM SET TO:

PROVIDE
 RELEVANT TIME
 PARTIAL MENTAL BREAK
 THROUGH
 PRACTICE

I AM MAKING MY COMMITMENT TO TAKE MY REST BREAKS WITH:

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

THESE BREAKS WITH RESTORATION:

When	Where
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

© 2022 HomeWood Health, Inc. All rights reserved. HomeWood Health, Inc. is a registered trademark of HomeWood Health, Inc. HomeWood Health, Inc. is a registered trademark of HomeWood Health, Inc. HomeWood Health, Inc. is a registered trademark of HomeWood Health, Inc.

REMINDERS

- Learn to recognize your own signs of stress and fatigue . . . what are you going to do when you recognize your signs?
- Visual reminders using Post-it notes
- Book an appointment with yourself
- Talk about mini-breaks
- Notice and create supportive places in your environment

SUMMARY

- Recognize when you are exhibiting signs of stress
- Take action to decrease the key stressors in your life that you have some control over
- Practice regularly the de-stressing techniques that work best for you



HELPFUL TOOLS

Meditation

- **Meditation Oasis App**
 - Guided meditations, instructions for meditation, and music for meditation
 - www.meditationoasis.com

- *Mindfulness for Beginners* by Jon Kabat-Zinn

Yoga

- **Yoga Journal**
 - Journal articles, blogs, and instructional and guided videos
 - www.yogajournal.com

REFERENCES

Anxiety Canada. (n.d.). *How to do Progressive Muscle Relaxation*. www.anxietycanada.com/articles/how-to-do-progressive-muscle-relaxation/

Fritz, C., et al. (2013). *Embracing work breaks: Recovering from work stress*. *Organizational Dynamics*, 42, 274 – 280. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2013.07.005>

Global Wellness Institute. (2020). *Positively well - Resetting the world with wellness*. <https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/positively-well/>

James, J. (2010). *The Mini-Retreat Solution*. New York City, NY: Sparknotes.

James, J. (2017). *Julia James - About*. <http://julijames.ca/about/>

McGee, K. (2010). *Office exercise: Yoga at your desk*. Popsugar FITNESS and Fla. www.popsugar.com/fitness/8-Poses-Yoga-Your-Desk-7114943

Yoga Journal. (2017). *Yoga poses*. www.yogajournal.com/poses

EFAP INFORMATION

English: 1.800.663.1142
 French: 1.866.398.9505
 TTY: 1.888.384.1152
 Online: www.homewoodhealth.com

Confidential Counselling Available 24/7


