



TAKE
YOUR
BREAK



OHS
SUBSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT



In Québec between 1998 and 2010, the amount of time devoted to work increased by 3.9 hours a week, while the amount of free time decreased by 3 hours a week. Everything points to this trend continuing in the coming years. Often directly associated with stress, depression and burn-out, fatigue is behind at least one of out of two visits to the doctor. And balancing family, work and studies is becoming increasingly difficult.

The pause is also part of the music.

Stefan Zweig

*IN THIS CONTEXT, TAKING BREAKS
TO RECHARGE IS ESSENTIAL!*

BREAKS ARE BENEFICIAL

Breaks are essential for workers to stay healthy and motivated, and thus have a positive impact on the way an institution operates.

During breaks, our brain processes and sorts through a myriad of information and retains the most important.

BREAKS ARE A RIGHT

Our collective agreement indicates that an employee is entitled to a 15-minute rest period for each half-day of work. For atypical schedules of between 8 and 12 hours a day, an employee is entitled to an extra number of minutes.

The vital need to recharge our batteries is imperative for all of us in our daily lives. Breaks enable us to replenish, relax and unwind, take time for ourselves, and interact with others. There are as many types of breaks as there are individuals.

BREAKS CAN TAKE A VARIETY OF FORMS AT WORK

Rest breaks, coffee breaks, union breaks, health breaks, nap breaks – whatever we call them, they remain essential to restore balance. There are two kinds of breaks: physical and mental.

PHYSICAL BREAKS

- ▣ changing posture, doing a stretching or breathing exercise, looking away from the computer and focusing on distant objects to reduce eye fatigue
- ▣ taking a walk at lunch
- ▣ taking the time to eat a snack



MENTAL AND SOCIAL BREAKS

- ▣ talking with co-workers, discussing topics not related to work
- ▣ eating with co-workers a few times a week
- ▣ leaving your work setting for the time it takes to have a coffee.

TAKING A FEW MINUTES TO TALK WITH CO-WORKERS INCREASES OUR ABILITY TO CONCENTRATE BY TWO HOURS A DAY!

Link: <http://blogue.uqtr.ca/2014/04/29/prendre-pause-ca-du-bon/>

BREAKS ARE A WIN-WIN SOLUTION FOR EVERYONE!

We know that there are renewable sources of energy, but some sources are not renewable. What about our energy? What is crucial in order for us to perform, function or merely have a bit of fun? Human beings are not machines, but it's easy to forget that when we're giving 110% in all spheres of our lives.

Taking a break means taking a moment for ourselves – a moment of down time. To keep some balance in our lives, daily down time is essential.

REDISCOVERING OUR RESTING MECHANISMS

Our bodies have a finely-tuned mechanism for resting. We just have to learn how to properly use it to reap the full benefits. We have the ability to effectively rest and recuperate at various times of the day – not just at night.

Link: <http://www.passeportsante.net/fr/Actualites/Nouvelles/Fiche.aspx?doc=bienfaits-pause>

“I DON’T HAVE TIME TO TAKE A BREAK”

Between addressing various issues, writing e-mails and handling emergencies, we don’t always have time to take a break at work.

What’s even worse is that besides having no time for breaks at work, some of us don’t manage to stop even when we get home.

Perhaps not coincidentally, people who take few breaks at work tend to stay at their work station for their breaks, and also put in work outside their office hours.

According to the findings of a recent survey, 37.94% of workers reported taking less than 30 minutes of break a day, on average, including their lunch break. And more than half the survey participants who reported working at home outside office hours (i.e., 51.85%) took less than 30 minutes of break a day.

Link: <http://www.jobboom.com/carriere/pas-toujours-facile-de-prendre-une-pause/>

Yet taking a break, thinking about work from a fresh perspective, having a change of pace, recharging and staying healthy are all choices in how we handle our lives that can make the difference between a decent life or one that’s inhuman.¹

*DON'T FORGET: IT'S GOOD TO TAKE A BREAK,
BUT IT'S EVEN BETTER TO TAKE A BREAK
AWAY FROM YOUR WORK STATION!*

THE PROBLEM OF IMMOBILITY

Periods of intense, repetitive or sustained effort constitute risk factors for the human body. When we have to stay in the same position for a long time without moving, we feel discomfort. Blood circulation slows down and tension is felt in various areas.

Movement is vital for the human body.

TO PREVENT DISCOMFORT, GET MOVING!

THE SOLUTION: ACTIVE MICROPAUSES

This refers to regular, systematic moments of relaxation, such as every 30 minutes, to do stretches and light exercises. This helps give our muscles a break.

Micropauses are especially beneficial for those working on a display screen or in a stationary position.

They are also a valuable element when combined with traditional breaks.

[Link: info.universante@usherbrooke.ca](mailto:info.universante@usherbrooke.ca)

THE BENEFITS OF MICROPAUSES

- ▣ improved sense of well-being
- ▣ less fatigue
- ▣ reduced muscular tension
- ▣ less musculoskeletal pain
- ▣ prevention of repetitive strain injuries (RSI) and musculoskeletal disorders (MSD)

Micropauses play a preventive role in maintaining cardiovascular function and reducing mental stress.² Priority is given to stretching exercises to reduce musculoskeletal pain.³

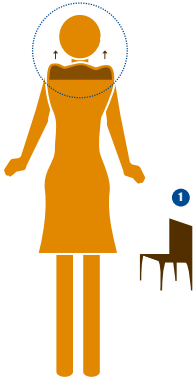
- ▣ to stretch areas that are overtaxed or injured
- ▣ with a series of exercises for the eyes, neck, shoulders, forearms, hands, wrists and back.

***TAKE YOUR MICROPAUSES
BEFORE YOU FEEL DISCOMFORT –
THE IDEA IS TO TAKE PREVENTIVE ACTION.***

Link: https://www.aptsq.com/AxisDocument.aspx?id=8230&langue=fr&download=true&document=Broch_SST_balle-A.pdf

SEE THE EXERCISES IN THE BROCHURE “THE BALL IS IN YOUR COURT.”

In a standing or sitting position, you can perform the 9 short stretching exercises at work that we recommend to relieve muscle tension in your upper limbs.



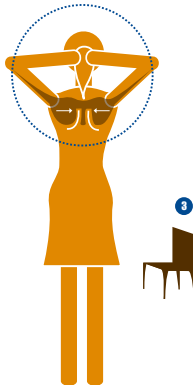
Shoulder shrug

Raise your shoulders as high as possible and lower slowly.



Neck stretch

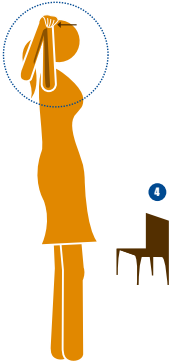
Tilt your head to the side, ear toward your shoulder.



Shoulder blade stretch

With your hands behind your head, slowly bring your shoulder blades closer together to relax your upper body.

EXERCISES (CONTINUED)



Arm stretch: triceps

With one arm behind your head, grasp the elbow with your other hand, gently drawing it backwards and behind your head.



Back shoulder stretch: deltoid

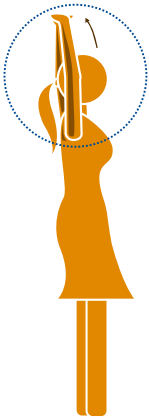
With one arm bent in front of you, grasp the elbow and gently draw it toward you.



Torso side stretch: latissimus dorsi

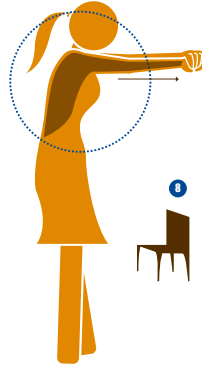
With one arm extended over your head, bend your upper body to the side.

EXERCISES (CONTINUED)



Back and arm stretch

With both arms above your head, gently stretch them upward, bending back slightly.



Upper back stretch: trapezius

With arms extended in front of you gently grasp one hand and draw arms forward, bending forward to stretch the entire upper back.



Torso twist

With hands on hips, rotate your pelvis to the side, looking over your shoulder.

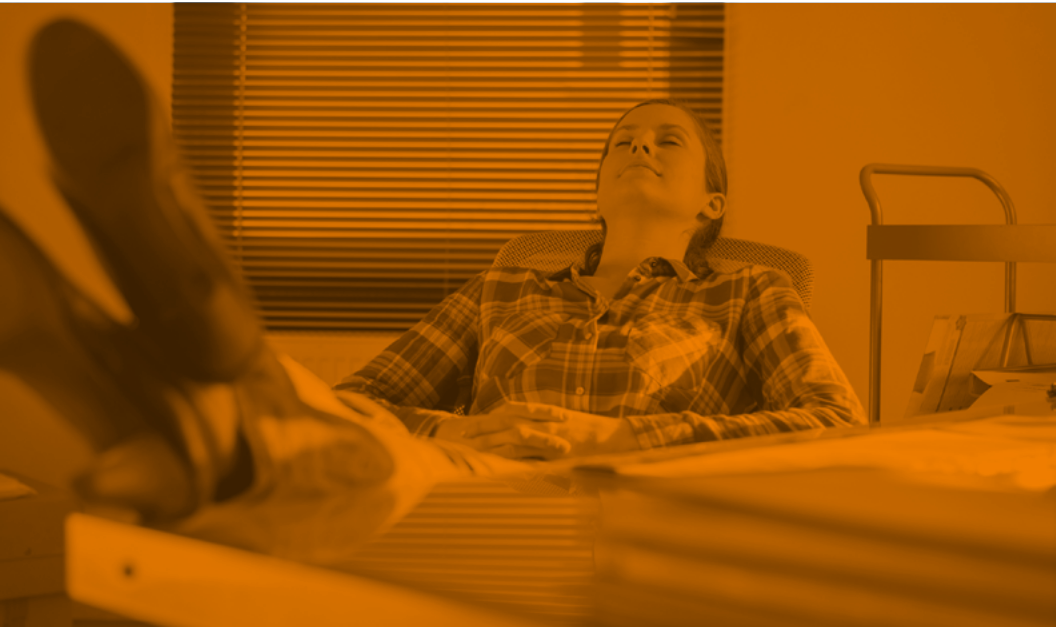
Moreover, a number of studies reveal that incorporating active micro-pauses at work has beneficial effects on individuals, without undermining the sacrosanct principle of productivity.⁴

THE PROBLEM OF FATIGUE AT WORK

Alertness, immune function, hypertension, memory, creativity... a number of studies highlight the benefits of napping, which are far too often overlooked.

THE SOLUTION: NAPS OR RESTS

Long vilified in a society that values work, siestas (naps or rests) are sparking the interest of many researchers, given the many benefits they offer to adults. "In reality, siestas are not a cultural thing, they are natural."⁵ (ed. Josette Lyon, 2011) Practically everyone has the need to rest their mind. Taking a nap or rest results in better concentration, fewer mistakes and improved reaction time during the day. In the long run, the practice of taking naps and rests prevents medical conditions related to stress.



THE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF BRIEF RESTS

A brief rest involves slowing down, disengaging, and breathing slowly and calmly. It entails a deep state of relaxation. In less than 10 minutes, a rest can restore full concentration and energy when we feel the need for it.

TO IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH AND ENHANCE YOUR SENSE OF WELL-BEING, DISCOVER THE BENEFITS OF A BRIEF REST EVERY DAY!

Link: <http://www.comby.org/sieste/sieste-flash-fr.htm>

THE BENEFITS OF SIESTAS

Daytime naps are clearly different from night-time sleep, and offer a number of benefits. They have a restorative effect for those who are suffering from sleep deprivation, which has many harmful repercussions (stress, fatigue, mood swings, a weakened immune system, poor concentration, etc.). All that's needed is a 10- to 15-minute nap. This amount of time corresponds to the initial stages of sleep: drowsiness and light sleep. The person relaxes but remains sensitive to external stimuli. Upon reawakening, the person is immediately functional.

To find out more, visit:

http://www.lemonde.fr/sciences/article/2015/10/19/la-sieste-ce-petit-somme-au-mille-vertus_4792578_1650684.html#KzOhgkSXvxbo3P3X.99

*THE SPECIALISTS ARE UNANIMOUS:
WITH A LITTLE TRAINING, ANYONE CAN DO IT!*

AT HOME, DISCONNECT FROM WORK

It's not always easy to "disconnect" from our work. In addition to the demands and concerns of our work, we have to contend with constant access via portable phones and the Internet. This hampers our efforts to live fully in the moment. Once we're at home, it's essential to unwind, clear our minds, let go of our work concerns, and learn to live in the present without feeling guilty. That allows us to renew and replenish our energy.

*CONSCIOUSLY LETTING GO IS ESSENTIAL FOR
A BALANCED MIND AND BODY!*

Link: <http://www.psychologies.com/Therapies/Developpement-personnel/Epanouissement/Articles-et-Dossiers/Savez-vous-deconnecter/De-l-importance-de-deconnecter/4Plus-de-sens-moins-de-stress>

Hopefully, the importance of taking your breaks is now etched in your mind after reading this pamphlet. Don't hesitate to contact your local team about fully exercising this right.

- ¹ SOARES, Angelo, *Le temps d'une pause: La santé et le travail inhumain*, Essai, UQAM ESG, mai 2014, p. 25.
- ² XINXIN, Liu et al., *Differences in Cardiovascular and Central Nervous System Responses to Periods of Mental Work with a Break*, *Industrial Health*, No. 51, 2013, p. 226-227.
- ³ OSAMA, Muhammad, *A randomized controlled trial comparing the effects of rest breaks and exercise breaks in reducing musculoskeletal discomfort in static workstation office workers*, *Annals of Allied Health Sciences*, Vol.1, No. 2, April 2015, p. 47.
- ⁴ GALINSKY, Traci et al., *A Field study of supplementary rest breaks for data-entry operators*, *Ergonomics*, Vol.43, No. 5, May 2000, p. 622.
- ⁵ Mullens, Eric, *Apprendre à faire la sieste*, Éditions Josette Lyon, janvier 2009.

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